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

ERIC TERZUOLO

Interviewed by: Mark Tauber
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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is December 14, 2017. Eric, where and when were you born?

TERZUOLO: I was born in Los Angeles, California, 60-some years ago, and resided primarily in Los Angeles until I was about three years old, when my parents and I moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Q: What brought them to Minneapolis?

TERZUOLO: I should note I am the child of immigrants to the United States. I actually remember vaguely when my parents were naturalized. My father was part of the continuing Italian brain drain. My parents emigrated as adults. They were accomplished, educated people. Let's say I was part of a very privileged immigration, but nonetheless experienced a lot of the same sorts of issues that less fortunate immigrant children do in terms of acculturation and so forth.

Q: Well then, before we go further, from where did your parents emigrate?

TERZUOLO: From Italy.

Q: Do you know anything about the home area they came from?

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes. Actually, I know it well, because my parents were the only people from their respective families who left and came to the United States and, unlike a lot of immigrants, retained strong ties to home. I think that, for the first few years, they didn't get back to Italy at all, but otherwise we would tend to go pretty much every year. I knew the rest of the rather small family on both sides. My father was basically from Turin. Terzuolo is a name from the Asti area, so south of Turin, but it's all northwestern Italy, the Piemonte region. My mother is from another town in Piemonte, Biella, of wool textile fame. My mother, at 97, is still alive and well and is actually back living in her old hometown, so I get back there frequently. This is not a part of Italy that had a particularly large emigration to the United States. Actually, a lot of Piemontese did emigrate, but they tended to go to South America. There are a lot in Argentina and Sao Paulo in Brazil. They didn't much go to North America.

Q: Interesting. Now what drew them to the U.S.?

TERZUOLO: Well, my father was a scientist. As I said, Italy has had a chronic brain drain issue, basically since about 1600, which does not really seem to be abating. My father had a difficult time finding a good professional situation in Italy. He actually worked in Belgium for a while, at the Free University of Brussels, and then got an offer from UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles). As I understand it, it was what you would probably call a post-doctorate these days. I'm not sure the term existed back then. He married my mom and off they went.

Q: What sort of science?

TERZUOLO: Neuroscience. He was a neurophysiologist. The term neuroscience wasn't really used much in those days.

Q: Wow!

TERZUOLO: So off they went and ended up in Los Angeles, which was in fact a delightful place. They liked it a lot. There were a lot of interesting people. They met Aldous Huxley, who was there at the time. It was really very interesting. My father's initial intention, as I understood it, was to come to the U.S. for a while, try to do some good work, build up more of a reputation—he still was a young man at this point; I'm not sure he was even quite 30 when he came to the U.S.—and then hopefully go back to Italy. I think this was always his hope, although it proved difficult to implement.

Q: So he was doing both some research, but I imagine some teaching?

TERZUOLO: He actually wasn't teaching at that time. It was purely a research gig.

Q: Okay.

TERZUOLO: It was really very much what you would call post-doc now, which doesn't as a rule have a teaching component. It's interesting, though, that he ultimately spent most of his career at the University of Minnesota in the medical school there, where he did teach. He went directly from being a postdoc to being a full professor with an endowed share. He was never an assistant professor. He was never an associate professor. Those were the amazing things that happened in the United States in those days, that sort of post-World War II period. It's not quite as easy these days. But, yes, it was literally the offer he couldn't refuse. He had really no idea where Minneapolis was when the university first called him. They spent five years in the U.S. before moving to Minneapolis, four of those years in Los Angeles and one year actually in Washington. My dad had a fellowship at Walter Reed (Army Medical Center) for a year.

Q: And he remained in neuroscience the whole time?

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Q: Now, did your mother work?

TERZUOLO: She did not work outside the home. She was very devoted to her role as wife and mother, quite understandable of course for an Italian woman of her generation. It was interesting though, that I think in many ways my mother acculturated more to the United States than my father did. My father was a very intense person. He really devoted himself to his science very, very thoroughly. Between the university ambience, the laboratory ambience and so forth, it was a very particular and in some ways delimited slice of American life. My mom had to deal from the beginning with a wider variety of people.

Q: Sure!

TERZUOLO: I think over time she got insights into the society that were a little different from those my dad was picking up.

Q: Did you speak Italian at home?

TERZUOLO: Yes. Italian was my first language, because that was what my parents spoke between the two of them, and I absorbed that. I did learn English basically by osmosis, apparently just by watching the television. There weren't even a lot of children where we were living. I actually got to speak quite good English before ending up in school, but with a very heavy Italian accent, because my parents, although they spoke English well, were not in a position to correct my accent.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: It was an interesting experience washing up in school. By the time I hit school, we had moved to Minneapolis, which was not a terribly cosmopolitan place in those days. I was sort of the odd duck in the room. I had that kind of outsider experience.

Q: Now what about brothers and sisters?

TERZUOLO: I am the only child of my parents. I do have a half-brother. He's quite a bit older than I am. He was also my mother's son. He's lived his life in Italy and actually lives pretty close to where my mom is now, so that works out well. He's keeping a much better eye on her than I can, although she doesn't need much keeping an eye on, frankly.

Q: That's remarkable. So you're growing up in Minneapolis. The school that you are going to, or the schools that you're going to, are regular public schools? Or did your parents enroll you in private?

TERZUOLO: I have very few memories regarding the kindergarten I went to. I really don't know what was going on there. I went to the same school from first grade until I

graduated high school. It was a private Episcopal school in Minneapolis, Breck School. It still exists and is still thriving. I was there from first grade, as I said, through graduation, with the exception of what would have been my fifth grade year, when we were in Italy. My dad had gotten a Fulbright at the University of Pisa, so we were there for that year, which was actually a good thing. Like, I think, many immigrant children who are wrestling with English-language issues, when I encountered this sense of difference as a result of speaking English with an accent, I decided I was going to fit in at all costs. I basically stopped speaking Italian. I identified the problem, and I stopped speaking Italian. My parents continued to speak to me in Italian; I would answer them in English. This was probably at some point in first grade. By the time we got to Italy and what would have been fifth grade for me, my active knowledge of Italian had definitely deteriorated. But the situation there was such that I had to bring it back. That was a great long-term benefit to me, because I did bring it back and then I didn't lose it again.

Q: I have heard from Italians that it wasn't until the 1960s that a kind of a standard, what you might call BBC Italian was spoken throughout Italy as a result of television. There had been a number of dialects that were still quite strong up until then.

TERZUOLO: Well, in fact, long before the 1960s there was a concerted effort in Italy to enforce a standard language. This had been, for example, a huge problem during the First World War. I'm a historian by background, so I'll probably pull in some historical references, but what they found was many of the officers were from the northern parts of the country. The Piemonte, the northwestern region, has a particularly strong military tradition. A lot of the officers were from the north, commanding the troops from other parts of the country who did not speak standard Italian. They recruited on a territorial basis, so you might find yourself with a group of soldiers from Sicily, for example, and this created huge communications problems. Italy wasn't the only country that experienced this. This happened in Belgium as well. Actually, if you look at the Mussolini regime, one of the things they tried to do was encourage the use of a single standard Italian language. That is why to this very day in Italy, films are dubbed rather than subtitled.

Q: Interesting.

TERZUOLO: It's a tradition. They developed a very good dubbing capability, and they have continued to use it, but it actually had a sort of political and social motivation initially. Mussolini, like a number of other leaders of the period, was very attuned to the impact on politics of the new media that were emerging at the time—film, radio, etc. Not surprising that he would try to rope the film industry into dealing with this problem. My personal recollection of the language issue in Italy is interesting I think, because I can remember, certainly in the '50s, '60s, '70s—in fact, for most of the post-World War II era -- the idea was, "yes, we're striving for standardized language," so if you listened or watched television news, there was really a concerted effort to have a sort of standard Italian without strong regional inflections or characteristics. Accents and regional dialects were often used essentially as comedic levers. What has struck me over time, and I would say this is really in the post-Cold War era, has been the revival of regionalism. You turn

on the news in Italy. I go there regularly. I'll turn on the TV news, and it's quite striking to me to hear people speaking in a strongly regionally characterized Italian. It is Italian. It's not dialect, but the inflections, accents, and to some degree perhaps word choice have a distinct regional quality now a lot of the time. It was definitely not what they were looking for in the early post-war decades.

Q: But all mutually intelligible?

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes. The dialects are not mutually intelligible, but regionally accented, inflected standard Italian, yes. It's mutually intelligible, as English is.

Q: Okay. So this fifth grade year in Pisa, besides the return of Italian, were there any other unique experiences that I guess began to make you more aware of the wider world or interested in international relations?

TERZUOLO: Not particularly, I would say. I was sort of navigating life. I was conscious of the language issue. I was conscious of there being things I didn't necessarily understand very well, but deep thinking on the subject, not particularly. I wish in many ways that my parents had sent me to an Italian school for a year. I never had that experience. They arranged tutoring in various subjects, but I think I would have benefited from a year in an Italian school.

Q: What about reading at home? Did your parents read newspapers or magazines? Did they have particular books or kinds of books they were interested in? How about that side?

TERZUOLO: Always lots of books, lots of newspapers, magazines. Big readers all! I would say a good variety of things too. There are a lot of stereotypes about scientists, physical and natural scientists. I know a lot of scientists, hard science people, and I generally have found these people very aware of and interested in much broader questions. There are a lot of scientists who read a lot of philosophy. This was a big interest of my father's—philosophy, literature, and also current events certainly. There was always a strong interest in what was going on. I remember asking my parents questions about things while watching the news, and there were things I didn't understand about the Italian political system, for example. Maybe this was destiny or something. How the political system worked. I had fastened onto the idea that in the U.S. we had a president and then in Italy there was president and there was prime minister, technically the chairman of the council of ministers but often referred to as the prime minister. I remember oddly enough asking my parents about that. I was about 10 years old. I think any time you're stuck in a situation of difference, of cultural and societal difference, it's going to raise questions.

Q: Sure. Now to go back to high school in the U.S., how large a school was it?

TERZUOLO: It was not a very big school. I think we had probably about 500-600 kids total. My graduating class had 50.

Q: So reasonably small?

TERZUOLO: Yes, it was relatively small even by the standards of private schools in the Minneapolis area.

Q: Did your parents ever explain why they chose that particular one?

TERZUOLO: To some degree. For one thing, and this may sound odd, they certainly wanted a non-Catholic school.

Q: Oh, interesting.

TERZUOLO: My parents were not Catholic. My father was an atheist, absolutely. My mother was very, I would say, anti-clerical as well, due to some personal experience factors. For my father, it was really kind of an ideological, philosophical issue, for my mother less. They didn't want a Catholic school. I'm not sure why they seemed to rule out the public school option. Actually, Minneapolis had excellent public schools. That would not have been a problem. I think it was a sort of a protective urge on their part probably.

Q: Okay. Sure. Smaller school, easier to care, smaller class sizes.

TERZUOLO: And I think that actually worked out well, particularly in first grade, which was tough because of these cultural issues and so forth. My first grade teacher, whom I remember to this day, was a very, very emotionally intelligent person who understood my situation and the fact that frankly there were many things I hadn't learned that other children knew how to do. She would help me learn this. It sounds silly, but I had never learned to skip.

Q: Ah! Okay.

TERZUOLO: This was quite embarrassing in gym class when they made us skip! I had no idea how to do this. She was not a young woman at the time, and she taught me how to skip! My mother would come to pick me up and has memories of when we would be coming out at the end of the school. Mrs. Ramsay would have me by the hand, and she and I both would be skipping. I haven't thought about that in a long time.

Q: Sure, these little cultural things that you might have missed.

TERZUOLO: Absolutely. She understood that completely. By the end of first grade, I was in good shape and really owed such a huge debt to her. In a bigger school with bigger classes, that might not have happened.

Q: Right. I imagine given the school size, you were about the most diverse factor in the whole school?

TERZUOLO: Well, no, I can't say that. There were actually two African-American children in my classroom. Well, one African-American, and one girl was mixed race. I was not the most exotic element in that sense. I do remember at that time that there were Jewish students as well. That, I think, was also perceived to some degree as an element of diversity. It was pretty homogeneous otherwise though. It was very frustrating to me. Someone might have a 16-letter Scandinavian surname that everyone knew how to pronounce because it was Minnesota, and my 8-letter name just confounded so many people. That was a little frustrating for me. I developed a more philosophical view over time, but it was hard for a kid.

Q: [Laughs] Did you begin to develop particular interests in high school?

TERZUOLO: Sure. A lot of my interests were scientific interests. I think family influence was definitely in play. There was some emulation. There was an emphasis on math and science in my family, the importance of math and science and less of an emphasis on other subjects, although the emphasis on school—doing well in school, being successful in school—was very strong. I think this is very typical in immigrant families.

Q: Oh, sure.

TERZUOLO: You've got to build that human capital. My particular interest was actually in chemistry. In fact, when I did go to college, my first major was chemical engineering. I didn't stick with it very long. I think somehow I realized it just wasn't that great a fit for me, so I went a little bit against, if you will, the expectations of the family as to what I was going to study. But it was not a big crisis.

Q: Did the school also offer any extracurricular activities that you got involved in?

TERZUOLO: Yes. Again, not a large school, not so many things, but it had some theater. I was in a couple of plays over the years. I liked acting. Well, I was not much of an athlete, although at least up to the junior varsity level pretty much everybody had to compete, just because we had so few students if we were going to field teams. I sometimes followed teams closely, but I didn't have much of an athletic record in school. The other thing that, gosh, in my last two years was a huge activity was high school bowl, which I guess had just gotten started in Minneapolis. In any case, our school began competing toward the end of my career there. I was recruited as one of the high school bowl team members. That was quite involved, because we did a lot of training actually.

Q: Was this part of the televised ones?

TERZUOLO: Yes.

Q: Because I remember it also from childhood. I was never part of a team in my high school. I don't know that we even fielded a team, but I watched and was very impressed

with the students who could answer rather quickly very difficult questions, especially the math and science questions, because often it required some quick thinking and calculation to reach correct answers.

TERZUOLO: We had, I'll say, a diversified team with some degree of specialization. I would say we were all quite strong across the board, but we had different things that we were good at, and we did very well actually. Our first year, we went to the finals and lost that game fairly narrowly. My senior year, we actually won the state championship.

Q: Wow!

TERZUOLO: It was a very big thing.

Q: Oh, yeah. Oh, I believe it.

TERZUOLO: Not having marked myself out in things other than straight academics and grades, doing something like that was very satisfying. I think we benefited from the fact that Breck, at least in those days, had a somewhat unusual environment by the standards of private schools. I think there was really a high tolerance of eccentricity, if you will, in the sense that there was space to be a lot of different ways. There was space for you to be a literature nerd, or a science nerd, or something like that, without getting a lot of pressure from the other students. People sort of let you be. That was nice. I think there was not an insistence on a single product, as it were, from the school.

Q: So the Breck School did not have particular educational philosophy that they were trying to follow?

TERZUOLO: Well, I'm sure they would have enunciated a philosophy. I think they would have argued they were ideally looking to produce well-rounded individuals as a very typical objective of U.S. schools when they state them. I think it was just a tolerant environment and not a cookie-cutter mindset. I was very grateful for that.

Q: Now, other than the year in Italy when you were in fifth grade, did you do other traveling, let's say within the U.S.?

TERZUOLO: Yeah. I remember we did a fair amount of traveling. What stuck with me over time particularly were trips to the West. You know, Montana, Wyoming, Utah—these kinds of places. Monument Valley—all of these sorts of things. When Deborah and I had a daughter of our own of the right age, we made sure to take her out there to see all these places as well. I think for her as well, the memory has really stuck. I think there was a desire to see and understand the U.S., parts of the U.S. besides where we were living. Certainly, travel to Italy was high priority because there were still family members there. We had to go see everybody, had to keep the contacts up. We went pretty much once a year. At a certain point—I think I was still in junior high school at this point—my folks bought a beach place in Italy. Not near where family members were, actually. There was some of that, for a few years. At a certain point, I just really wasn't interested in going to

Italy anymore. Pretty much through high school, it was pretty much an obligation, but not by the time I got to college. In fact, there were quite a number of years when I did not go to Italy, and I washed up there again in 1979 finally when I was doing dissertation research.

Q: Now, of course, the other question is regarding the school in 1960s. Did any of the counterculture affect your school?

TERZUOLO: Oh, sure. I mean it was inevitable. I'd say it was probably more fashion and lifestyle than anything else. It wasn't a very political ambience, as I remember it. I was interested in politics going way back. Probably the first election I got really interested in was the 1964 Johnson/Goldwater election. I was definitely a Johnson supporter. That was the family!

Q: Did you take other languages in high school?

TERZUOLO: Yes. They had a pretty good quality of language instruction. Not a lot of different languages, but I took quite a lot of French and a fair amount of German as well. Spanish was also available, but I didn't do that. I had started on French actually that year we were in Pisa, with a tutor several days a week if memory serves. I learned a lot. Of course, there are enough similarities between Italian and French that I did have a leg up on it. So French and German, and then I got interested in other languages as well. In high school, I was reading Russian literature. I got really interested in Russian history too. I was reading Dostoevsky, Turgenev, etc. So in college I shifted tracks out of chemical engineering and into history. I became a history major.
There was also a lot of language study with that. It was basically Russian and, at the very end—I guess it was actually after my senior year in college—Serbo-Croatian as well.

Q: That's interesting. As you're going through high school, your parents I imagine expected you would go onto college?

TERZUOLO: Oh, absolutely!

Q: What was the thinking about in terms of college selection or specialization? You had mentioned chemical engineering initially, but a lot of times discussion about college goes into what's the best location, the best experience, etc., etc.

TERZUOLO: Not much discussion on that. From my parents' perspective, I did not have the option of moving away for college.

Q: I see!

TERZUOLO: I think there were various things that went into that. I think the protective impulse on my parents' part remained very strong. So I was essentially looking at local options. From a scientific perspective, the University of Minnesota was good. It's a very solid, state university. It had, and presumably still does have, an outstanding chemical

engineering department. It was the best of the options that were available. In retrospect, I imagine I probably could have gotten a scholarship somewhere and gone, but I didn't do that. I was a good son.

Q: Well, there were certain expectations and at that moment you were not particularly interested in breaking with expectations.

TERZUOLO: No. I think that is a very fair encapsulation of the situation. Then when I shifted majors, again it seemed there wasn't much cause to change. Minnesota had a good history department. It was the sort of place where nobody reached out to you. It was a very large state university. You could remain totally anonymous your whole time with no difficulty, but I started reaching out to faculty members who were involved in the things I was interested in. There was a good Russian historian, whom I also liked. So I just stayed on track there.

Q: What year did you begin college?

TERZUOLO: I began in 1973.

Q: Okay. It's the University of Minnesota. Did you live on campus?

TERZUOLO: No. I lived at home with my parents.

Q: All right, so you would just commute to school. What were the impressions you had of the University of Minnesota? Coming from a very small school, you are now going into a giant state school.

TERZUOLO: Oh, it was a huge shock. The University of Minnesota is what it is. It is a large state university. Its purpose, its mission, is to deliver good quality education to lots of students, and I think they meet that. I think for someone who is coming out of a very intimate high school environment, it can be rough. I found it was a tough transition for me.

Q: Did you have friends or school acquaintances who also went to the university that you maintained relationships with?

TERZUOLO: I made some friends at the university. I had some high school friends who were in situations similar to mine and who were also staying in the area, so we socialized. In fact, I can't really complain about my social life. No fraternity experience, but maybe that was a good thing! I don't know. I did keep up with and still keep up with some of these people. I still keep up with a couple of my high school friends.

Q: Were you prepared for the level of work and the level of concentration and academic discipline you would have to have in order to be successful in college? Did Breck prepare you well?

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes. It was a good school. I did find it could be more difficult in the sense that if you were grappling with something you were having difficulty with, the resources to help you were meager at the university. Very large classes. Not much contact with professors, certainly in those first couple of years. Teaching assistants who were of varying quality and also various degrees of expertise in what they were being teaching assistants for, as I discovered. You didn't get a lot of support. I think there is a lot more attention—again I don't know the situation at Minnesota—but I think compared to the 1970s, now colleges and universities are expected to provide a huge amount of support to students. This was also a thing to remember. These were baby boomer students. There were lots of us. I think a lot of schools took the position, "Well, you know, if you can't make it, there are a bunch of other people who will be happy to take your slot, so we're not going to worry about making you succeed at any cost." Tuition was $200 a quarter. The economics of it were not daunting for people. Schools, and this was true at the state universities as well, were not a tuition dependent as they are now. Certainly, the state schools have become much, much more tuition dependent than they used to be, as state funding for higher education has decreased. The lack of tuition dependency at that point also made schools prepared to say, "Well, you're not making it. Well, sorry. We'll find somebody else, and if the slot is open for a term, it's 200 bucks we're out." It was a totally different environment.

Q: As you recall, was it at all diverse? For example, were there foreign students?

TERZUOLO: Sure. Yes, definitely, a lot of foreign students, particularly in the graduate programs. Not only science. The graduate students in the history department were quite a diverse bunch as well. Minnesota is more diverse, and was even then, than people give it credit for. Not everyone was blond, blue-eyed and Scandinavian surnamed by any means. You did have a pretty good mix racially, ethnically, religiously, and by country of citizenship as well. Again, I'm sure if you went back and checked on the sort of diversity criteria we try to apply now, it probably didn't figure all that well against those sorts of criteria, but it was far from homogeneous.

Q: The approach to education and so on, it was just move the students through?

TERZUOLO: Well, I think that in the early phases in particular, you could expect pretty much that whatever you studied, you were going to be in very large classes, lecture halls, and really the professors would lecture. There was not any sort of give and take in those sessions. Give and take was set aside, in theory, for the sessions with teaching assistants, a pretty standard model for the large universities. Over time, as you progressed, there were options.

Q: Seminars?

TERZUOLO: Seminars, smaller classes and so forth. All of that said, still a very different experience to what you would encounter in a small liberal arts college, I'll be honest. Our daughter attended a small liberal arts college in the Midwest and had a great time. It was

truly the life-changing experience that they all promise. I was very glad she did that, frankly, because she clearly thrived in that environment.

Q: That is the question that I was kind of groping at as well. To what extent was college a life-changing experience for you?

TERZUOLO: Not really. The sort of life-changing aspect was that, yes, I got onto one track as opposed to another. But in a sense the objective was essentially the same. Some kids grow up thinking they are going to be doctors. Some kids grow up thinking they have to be lawyers or whatever. I grew up thinking I had to be a college professor.

Q: Very good.

TERZUOLO: There was very little doubt. Then the field change was secondary. The basic objective remained the same. It was not a life-changing experience.

Q: As you are developing as a student in college, where would you say that your critical thinking really began to show itself? I'll give you a little more detail. What I'm trying to get at is, often you'll have lectures from all of these professors. They have an approach to understanding history, for example. A lot of students will absorb it and give it back and do well on tests without necessarily thinking, "Are there biases here, and how do I manage those biases?" That generally happens in college, but it may take time, or it may take a lot of application.

TERZUOLO: I think in that sense it was pretty clear in some of my courses that biases were at work. That was pretty evident. In some cases, there were even biases that didn't rub me the wrong way necessarily, but I could see that there were biases evident. I don't think there was much of a conscious effort to develop critical thinking for the most part. I think overwhelmingly the model was sort of "received knowledge." They did a good job of conveying a lot of knowledge efficiently, in the sense that you came out of a history major there with a well-rounded, relatively in-depth knowledge of a lot of stuff. From what I have seen current history curricula, and I think undergraduate curricula in general, are suffering from excessive of specialization of knowledge very early on. This was still a phase of promoting broad general knowledge. "You're interested in Europe? Okay, you've got to do three terms." It was a quarter school. You would have to do three quarters of the basic European history sequence, trying to cover everything. It was actually in fact quite comprehensive, then you moved from the more general to the specific. I think in that sense it was quite efficient. Some of the professors were more attuned to critical thinking once you got in to seminar sessions. You got more of that. At least you get exposed. In the historical field, you would get exposed to different approaches, methodologies and so forth. I think there was some effort there. In the early phase, I don't think there was any great emphasis on building critical thinking, honestly.

Q: Now as you switch into history, do you begin to think of where you are going to be after college?

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes. Absolutely.

Q: Because you had mentioned teaching.

TERZUOLO: The first thing to figure is graduate school, right? Where am I going to go? What am I going to study? That's a big focus. That I would say certainly consumed a fair amount of my attention and emotional energy. In the end, I had various options of various types. In retrospect, if I had gone one way rather than another, it would have perhaps set me on a different path. I ended up going for the very direct standard academic path. Head toward that Ph.D. as fast as you can. I opted for Stanford for various reasons, but not the least of which being that it was a relatively simple process. They did not have lots of written examinations and qualifying things. It was pretty straightforward. I did have this consciousness of wanting to finish quickly. I'm not sure why that was the case particularly, but getting through quickly was important for me. I had a nice offer, for example, from Columbia. I went and talked to some students there. My parents kindly got me an air ticket. I went to New York and a couple of other places, just to see and talk to people. The students at Columbia I talked to were all going, "Well, if you're going to get the Ph.D., you've got to figure at least eight years to do this."

Q: Oh, my.

TERZUOLO: I thought, no, I don't want to do that. Actually, I have to say, the students I met—I don't know how representative they were, but they were not happy campers. So, mmmm, I'm not sure. I went out to Stanford, and the campers all seemed extremely happy, I have to say. That was a big issue. In fact, it was a great place to be.

Q: You chose what field or what specialization?

TERZUOLO: Okay. For graduate school, I shifted slightly. I was heavily Russian and Western European focused in college. Actually, my major field in graduate school was Eastern Europe, with Russia and Soviet stuff as a secondary field.

Q: And this 1973 to 1977?

TERZUOLO: No, actually I started graduate school in 1976.

Q: Ah, okay. So you graduated a bit early?

TERZUOLO: Yeah, I did college in three years, in part because I was in a bit of a hurry.

Q: The goal was master's degree and then Ph.D. track?

TERZUOLO: In fact, in the Stanford setup, the master's degree was something you pretty much picked along the way. There was not much in the way of specific master's degree requirements. Basically, you completed course work and one of the courses had to

include a large paper. They put you directly on doctoral track. That was what they were trying to do.

Q: Now, throughout this period also in college and as you are preparing for graduate school, did you have work experience or volunteer experience?

TERZUOLO: Not much. I was very focused on my studies and trying to have a social life. I suppose the one volunteer thing that I did, actually quite seriously, in the history department in Minnesota was peer advising. They instituted a system of peer advisors, in part because history departments were big in those days. There were a lot of students. I think perhaps someone perceived the need for a more personal touch, so they put out a call for people who were interested. I did that for the two years, my last two years. That was a very good experience. In part, it forced me to think through some things. Also, from the human angle, it was good. I made some friends through that activity as well. Hopefully, I helped some people sort themselves out and graduate in something less than seven-and-a-half years or something like that! I think that is really the major one, and the only thing of note.

Q: Now you are moving out of the house altogether, out of the immediate family circle to California and to a reasonably well-known large university. How was that experience in terms of integrating yourself into a new environment?

TERZUOLO: That was a good experience. It was relatively easy. Graduate school is very focused on your classwork. I had some fellow students that I enjoyed. We would do stuff and worked a lot. That was comparatively easy, I would say. It was a nice environment. No difficulty getting all the attention I wanted, from particularly from my advisor and major professor, the late Wayne Vucinich, who was very, very close to his students. He was a very giving gentleman as well as a good scholar. From that aspect, I was very happy and had a relatively easy time. There is not that much to say about it because I went along rapidly. I managed to complete my degree in four years.

Q: Was there any study abroad involved?

TERZUOLO: Yes. My dissertation topic was on relations between the Communist parties of Italy and Yugoslavia. Now, I actually did win, if that's the right word, a Fulbright and an International Research and Exchanges (IREX) Board Fellowship. I was supposed to go to Yugoslavia to work on this. However, I did not in the end, because this required a blessing from the Yugoslav authorities, which in the end they did not give. The topic I guess was deemed too sensitive. I never got a clear answer. But they wouldn't issue the appropriate visa for an exchange program. So I recycled and ended up in Italy for most of 1979. I did the bulk of my research there. I also used Yugoslav sources, but largely published sources for that sort of thing, whereas on the Italian side I was able to get into some archives and see some bits and pieces of stuff. It was a topic that, although it was focused on the 1940-1960 period, nonetheless raised sensitivities and some hesitations to let me see everything I wanted to see. From I think January to maybe September or late August of 1979, I was in Italy, based in Rome.

That was an interesting experience. I was doing a lot of my work at the Gramsci Institute, which was the Communist Party's study center. It was interesting too because Italian students chronically suffer from lack of space to work. They are all stuck at home during college, trying to get some breathing room to just stretch their books out. They end up in all sorts of strange places, and so there were quite a number of people just studying at the Gramsci Institute. I was working on my Italian and Yugoslav Communist stuff, while other people were studying for their medical exams or something like that. It was interesting because it gave me a chance to meet people from quite a diverse range of interests. Some of them were Communists. There was still the Communist Party in those days, not post-Communist. Some were allied with the Party. Some were just looking for a place to study. A fellow from those days that I'm still in close touch with, he is actually a psychiatrist. He was studying for his medical exams. We just got to talking and struck up a friendship, and we're almost 40 years into it now. What was fun about this Italy experience, to be honest, is that I had gotten tired of going with my parents and seeing my relatives and all that and not really being able to design my own experiences at all. So there I was, I was on my own. I could do what I wanted. I stayed in touch vaguely with the relatives, but they weren't anywhere near where I was. I got to love Italy at that point.

Q: You know it's funny. You mentioned going every year to Italy, but to the same relative area where your relatives were, and you can hardly walk anywhere in Italy without tripping over something ancient or medieval or something. During all those summers, did your parents not take you to all of the historical areas?

TERZUOLO: Oh, I got marched through all sorts of historical sights, absolutely. I think kids and very young people tend to complain about these things when they are happening, but certainly on reflection later on, I'm very glad my parents did that. I think our daughter had the same experience as well. We marched her through plenty of museums and so forth.

Q: [Laughs]

TERZUOLO: She was pretty grumpy a lot of the time, but later on said, "Yeah, that was good. I've seen all this stuff that everybody else I know has only seen in pictures."

Q: So you learned to love Italy?

TERZUOLO: Absolutely.

Q: What was it that finally made that very positive emotional connection?

TERZUOLO: I think the human dimension in Italy is very good. Lord knows, we all have our defects and such, but just the warmth of people, good friends I made, and so forth. It was just fun. I suppose in part too, I enjoyed the fact that it was a little bit of the Wild West. There was bad stuff going on. There was terrorism going on, etc. But more broadly just the sense that there was not much monitoring and control of things. You felt in some

ways you had a little more space. I don't exactly how to describe this without sounding like I was looking for free rein on everything. It was in fact a very liberal environment in many ways. I was quite young at this point, and I really enjoyed a lot of aspects about that, to be honest about it. The aesthetic dimension also impacted me and still to this day there is unique aesthetic experiences there. Just the concentration of art, architecture… Probably 60 percent of the works of art in Europe are in Italy. It's not really comparable to anyplace else. I enjoyed the political aspects of things, too. I was very interested in that. The Italian Communists by this time were well on their path away from their undeniably rigorously Stalinist past. They didn't quite fit the stereotypes, of course, that we still at that point in the U.S. tended to have of Communists and Communist Parties. It was interesting to observe them.

I managed to go—it was an amazing experience—to a Party Congress in 1979. I don't remember which number it was, but that was a really fascinating experience to see the decision-making apparatus, or what was on display in the decision-making apparatus. The Party was going through great internal tensions at the time, because there was dissent over the policy of cooperating with the Christian Democrats. They weren't in the government, but they were providing external support to the Christian Democrats. This set off a big internal debate that was very acrimonious, and you really got to see it at the Party Congress. It was a fascinating experience in so many ways.

Q: So now this is 1979, you said?

TERZUOLO: 1979.

Q: So you go back and complete your Ph.D. by 1980?

TERZUOLO: In 1980. Yes. I marched at graduation, and I believe it was June of 1980. I just barely made it. Again, fortunately, Stanford didn't have a lot of requirements or a lot of bureaucracy even associated with it, so I managed to write my dissertation. I was doing some teaching as well. It was required of me. Then to make a little money, I was a teaching assistant for the Soviet history and politics class at one point, which was a really interesting experience. The professor, Alex Dallin, who taught Soviet history and politics was a very eminent scholar and a nice gentleman as well. That was fun. I managed to write my dissertation, and then basically in the Stanford scheme of things, your advisor and two other members of the faculty had to approve it and you were done. I had no dissertation defense. It was a very streamlined process, so I was able to get through in four years.

Q: Wow! That's great. What happens next?

TERZUOLO: I actually knew I had a job to go to when I finished my degree. Not the best of possible jobs. It was a one-year replacement job at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota—St. Peter, Minnesota, a couple of hours from Minneapolis. That was a great experience. I really enjoyed that no end. I was used to the weather, so that didn't shock me. I liked the small college ambience. I thought the students were quite good. Okay, it's

not Amherst and so forth. It was, to go back to an earlier question, not a very diverse place, but you were getting good students from high quality, mostly suburban high schools in Minnesota, a good educational system. They were on the whole quite well prepared. Some were really in fact quite passionately interested in the subjects as well. That was a good experience. I had wonderful colleagues in the history department.

Living in a small town was also an interesting experience. I basically had lived in big places my whole live. Palo Alto is kind of a suburb, a glorified suburb, in some ways. In any case, small town America is not something I knew. That was a good experience as well. I learned a lot. I had a nice place to live, lovely landlords who kind of adopted me. It was the way people think about small town America in the movies, the positive side. I enjoyed that aspect of it, too. A lot of nice colleagues, not just in my department. I taught a variety of things. Obviously, in a small college setting you've got to be versatile, so I taught some general European history, Russian and Soviet, which was a lot more marketable frankly than East European stuff, but also a class—because the fellow I was replacing, his research was on medieval Serbian history, and so he had developed a class that focused on the pre-modern, early modern history of Eastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean broadly conceived. That was an interesting class to do.

Q: At that time, in this field that you're in now—Soviet and Eastern European studies, was anybody even seriously thinking about the collapse of the Soviet Union?

TERZUOLO: Not really. I think it was largely assumed it was just going to be a fact of life. That said, there were always people who were attentive to issues such as the Soviet nationalities, but I think those were kind of niches. Actually, at Stanford—I think it was the Hoover Institution that is, on the Stanford campus—my advisor, Wayne Vucinich, had a gig for the Hoover as well. Among other things he was editing a series of books on the various Soviet nationalities. As I recall, it was a very ample series. There was a book on the Crimean Tatars. It really went quite in depth. There were scholars who were very knowledgeable and attentive to these sorts of tensions. I think the general assumption broadly speaking was that the Soviet Union was in trouble, but not in danger of collapse. I think the same assumption was in play for the Soviet satellite countries as well. We need to know about this. There was a certain trace of the "know your enemy" mentality, I suppose, although in my period we certainly tried not to view any of these as enemies and just look at them as objectively as possible, objects for study and understanding.

This is part of why I ended up ultimately in the Foreign Service—I started in 1982 but I actually took the written exam in late 1979 -- when I was working on my dissertation. The academic job market is very bad now. It was starting to be pretty bad even then. It was clear that it was going to be tough to find a job, so I did some exploring with government agencies. Among the things I did was write a letter to the Bureau of Intelligence and Research at State. I said, okay, here I am. I've got this kind of academic background. This sounds like the kind of place that might be able to use my skills. Actually, somebody wrote me back. It was not a form letter. It was a thoughtful and helpful letter, very candid. I don't remember who wrote the letter. I don't have it anymore, but I remember it very well. They said, "Well, to be honest, we're not

interested in Eastern Europe. If you had done a degree in Soviet foreign policy, yes there probably would be interest in your candidacy. The only thing I can suggest is you might try the Foreign Service. There is an exam you have to take, but if you get in, when you are in the admissions process, they would probably give you some extra credit for your studies and your languages." About the time I got the letter, I was walking somewhere on campus, in one of the halls. I saw a poster for the Foreign Service exam. It was being given in San Francisco. There was enough time to register for it, and it was free. That sounded pretty good, so I went and took it. I didn't do any particular preparation or anything.

Q: Well, frankly, if you have a Ph.D. and you've now had several languages and lived in different places, I don't think you could have done much more preparation.

TERZUOLO: Well, I think there is a kind of practical, organizational dimension to it.

Q: Ah. That's true.

TERZUOLO: This was not my strong suit, you realize. As I said, it's not like I had much experience. I had never really had a full-time job. In some ways, I was not optimally prepared, but obviously I was well enough prepared.

Q: So you took the test. Did you pass it the first time?

TERZUOLO: Yes, I did pass the first time.

Q: And then the oral exam?

TERZUOLO: I took the oral. I went to … I think it was a Navy base. I think it was Alameda, near Oakland, on the water. It was very nice. Somewhat to my surprise, I passed that as well. I wasn't feeling too great about the results, but for whatever reason, I passed that. I then began what turned out to be the longest part of the process, which was getting a security clearance, and in my case, my medical clearance. I did everything. I submitted everything, and the medical records got lost. So I basically then had to redo that. By the time this all came to light, I was actually in the greater Washington, DC area. I did my year at Gustavus Adolphus and actually found a tenure-track job at Mount St Mary's College in Emmitsburg, Maryland, south of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. It's about 75 miles from Washington. But I thought I had better keep pursuing the Foreign Service. When it turned out my medical records had been lost, I just came and got the exam done at the medical unit at State.

Q: Very good.

TERZUOLO: That resolved things. My security clearance took a lot of time because I had lived abroad a lot, and had family members abroad, etc.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: I got the impression it ended up at the bottom of somebody's inbox for a while,. Let's see, I took the written exam in late 1979, the oral in the spring of 1980. Between one and another, I started teaching at Mount St Mary's in the fall of 1981. If memory serves, I actually got a call for a placement in a junior officer class sometime in the fall of 1981 and I turned it down.

Q: Really?

TERZUOLO: Well, I had just started at Mount St Mary's. It was a tenure track job. Pretty rapidly I had the sense it was not really a good fit. It's not really a criticism of the institution, but where I was at that time in my objectives and mindset and so forth, and the college, it was not a good fit. Probably later on, as I developed more of a love for teaching, rather than viewing it as an impediment to research, it probably would have been a better fit for me. But it seemed I had pretty recently arrived. I didn't think it was fair not to give the school a better chance, so I turned down the first offer. They said, "Well, you're fairly high up on the list." And I could remain on the list for some time. I think it was a year and a half. They said, "There is a prospect you'll be called again." By the time they called again, and this would have been probably in March of 1982, I had really decided that Mount St Mary's was not a good fit for me. When they called again, I took the job. It was about six weeks before A-100.

Q: So you would have to leave?

TERZUOLO: Yeah, it was a short-notice thing. I completed everything at Mount St Mary's. Normally, classes would have run into May. I made sure to complete the classes, do all the exams, and turn in the grades before I left. It was kind of shock. I went to see my department chairman. He said, "Oh, it's good you came. I needed to talk to you." He started to give me the explanation as to what my raise was going to be for the coming year. It was going to be pretty modest anyway. I said, "Well, I was actually coming to talk to you about something else. I'm sorry but I'm resigning because I've got this other offer, and I'm going to take it." His jaw kind of dropped. People didn't just resign tenure track jobs even then. Anyway, it was fine. We resolved everything. I think it was a win for everybody ultimately because they found a fellow to replace me who I think was really a better fit with the institution. He's still there evidently.

Q: Wow!

TERZUOLO: At least the last time I checked. It was a while back, but he was in it for the long haul. I think it really, accidentally, worked out for all concerned. I think it was the 28th of April of 1982 that I reported at A-100.

Q: Coming from Emmitsburg, Maryland, were you on TDY (temporary duty)?

TERZUOLO: Yes, it was treated as TDY. I actually lived in Frederick, Maryland, which was a little closer to DC. Emmitsburg, there's more to it now, but there really wasn't much to it in 1981.

Q: Sure.

TERZUOLO: Frederick was a bigger town. There was more to do. But, yes, I moved down to DC to be on per diem.

Q: And you begin A-100. How large was you're A-100 class?

TERZUOLO: It was pretty small. I think it was, if memory serves, about 25 or 26 people.

Q: Yeah, you're right.

TERZUOLO: That was another period in which Personnel was under stress. It wasn't clear what was happening. They tried to wedge in a class, I think, out of concern that maybe there wouldn't be another one for a while. I think it was about 25, 26 people, five or six mid-level entries and some very interesting people, including a fellow who had been mayor of a small town in Texas.

Q: Wow! That's great. Mostly in their 20s? The demographic was relatively young?

TERZUOLO: Actually, I think the average age for our class, in part because of the mid-levels, was over 30. I think we really only had one person, one or two who were fresh out of college.

Q: Wow. Okay.

TERZUOLO: It was mostly people with a master's degree, a number of lawyers who had bailed out. They decided they didn't want to be lawyers anymore. A medical doctor as I recall. It was a very mixed bag of people. It was a really interesting group. It was a lot of fun as a result because everyone was bringing this diverse range of experience and a lot of international experience in sometimes very far-flung places. Not the usual, "Oh, I did study abroad in London" kind of thing. A really impressive mix of language skills coming in.

Q: What did you think in general of the preparation? Was it helpful, useful, or not particularly so? How would you….?

TERZUOLO: Preparation as in A-100 or my prior preparation?

Q: Preparation as in A-100. In other words, they are training you for a new corporate culture. How well did they do?

TERZUOLO: I think they did all right. It was kind of a fire hose. For somebody like myself, who had at that point no experience of working in large organizations of any sort, certainly not in a large bureaucracy, it was all pretty dizzying. I don't know how many hundreds of organizational charts we were hit with in the course of A-100. I'm not sure I retained much from the charts. I think in a lot of ways what's useful about something like that is just more the opportunity you get to interact with people and ask questions, and then the down time when you socialize a lot. I spent social time also with the diplomats who were running the class. I think that was probably more useful in terms of socialization than some of the classes. I understand you're trying to explain things. I've taught a lot. I taught before I joined the Foreign Service, and basically since retiring that's been the main part of my activities, so I have ideas about how to teach people things. Part of that is, you really have to boil things down.

Q: Yes.

TERZUOLO: There's just so much. Your slides have to be really simple and clear. But I think what you were faced with is people who were maybe working in a given office or organization. They're trying to explain. What do they do? They reach for the organizational chart. Dizzying. The Q&As I thought were often better, and often it was what people wouldn't say. It became pretty rapidly clear that there were areas you didn't want to go, at least in any public settings. But I think that's probably true with any organization. It's not State Department specific. I think it was okay in terms of preparation, but probably too much of a factual overload. If I were running the class or something like it, I would try to really look at it more explicitly from a socialization standpoint.

Q: Then comes the explanation of how you were going to be assigned to your first assignment. How did that go?

TERZUOLO: Oh, that was fine. I don't think there were any great surprises or great expectations. It was basically all consular or consular/administration rotations. It was quite a mix of places. A number of English-speaking posts with high visa activity, like Jamaica. I ended up in Barbados, which was quite nice—not deadly in terms of visa activity—busy but not crushing. A couple of people I think went to London.

Q: Before we go to Barbados with you, did you also take the language tests and did you test out?

TERZUOLO: Yes. I tested at 5/5 in Italian. I tested in French successfully, but I can't quite remember the score. Maybe it was a 4/3+, something like that. I got some points also for Serbo-Croatian. My Serbo-Croatian was rusty at that point, but I think I came out with a 2/2+, something like that. Anyway, I think you could get a maximum of five steps for language, and I maxed out on that.

Q: Wonderful!

TERZUOLO: And I did get some credit for graduate education. I forget exactly how it worked, but I came in as a FS-05 instead of FS-06, I think because of having the master's degree. Then I think they were giving steps for each year of post-master's graduate study at that point. It's been a while. I actually came in at a pretty good level. Basically, I doubled my salary when I joined the Foreign Service, so I was really happy with that!

Q: Sure. Now, even with all the languages you spoke, the people who were setting your assignments didn't really consider sending you any place where you actually had language capability?

TERZUOLO: They came up with a list of slots to fill. This was not calculated based on the available resources in A-100. As it turned out, there were slots they were trying to fill in places for which people did have reasonable levels of the appropriate language. They were trying to fill a slot in Naha, Okinawa, and one of our classmates had actually to some extent grown up in Japan. He had I think a 2-something in Japanese, so off he went to Naha. Then you get other situations, probably more typical. My wife, Deborah, whom I met my first day in the Foreign Service—we were A-100 classmates and we met over coffee that first day. That was the most important moment of my Foreign Service career, without question!

Q: Incredible! Okay!

TERZUOLO: She was and still is a fluent Arabic speaker. She tested out in Farsi and in French as well and was assigned to Spanish language study to go issue visas in Buenos Aires.

Q: Of course!

TERZUOLO: Nice assignment. A woman. Consular cone. She had been I think encouraged to take the consular cone route, although she did well in other sectors as well. Anyway, I think this was probably somewhat more typical. I was actually happy to do an English-language post. I was looking towards something relatively comfortable, I'll be honest, then with the idea of doing a hardship on the next go-around. They were quite accommodating to my desires on that front. Clearly, it was an issue of "These are the slots we're worried about filling, and we'll assign people to those even if it's not an optimal use of the skills they are bringing." No surprise there.

Q: So this is January 4th. We are resuming our interview with Eric Terzuolo as he is getting ready to go out to his first post. And what is that post?

TERZUOLO: Barbados, Bridgetown to be specific. It was an interesting posting in part because we actually covered a lot of places other than Barbados. We had complete responsibility for not only Barbados, but for St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica and, most interestingly for me, Grenada. This was in the days of New Jewel Movement. Calling it authoritarian rule perhaps might have been an appropriate term. On

the consular side, we had responsibilities also for Antigua and Barbuda, Anguilla, and so forth. We did their immigrant visas, for example.

Q: How often did you get out of Barbados and go to the other small islands?

TERZUOLO: Reasonably often. What we did in the consular section was divide up the various other countries among the vice consuls. Because I had knowledge of, and some experience with, authoritarian left-wing regimes from my previous life, they thought I would be a good person to have the Grenada brief, which was interesting from a number of points of view. Also from a consular point of view, it was very important because of the presence of the medical school there. I believe it was St. George's University Medical School. I could be a little wrong on the name. But it was one of the schools that were cropping up in those times because it was so difficult to get into medical school in the U.S. There were highly qualified students who didn't manage to get in. There was one such school in Grenada. There was one in Dominica as well, Ross University. There were quite a number of American citizens there because of that—students and also some of the faculty obviously. It was interesting from that point of view. I would go maybe every quarter or so. There was a certain amount of consular work that one could do there. Obviously, you couldn't do visas and things like that, but you could provide some sorts of citizen services and certainly look after the American community. Keeping tabs on the conditions of U.S. citizens there was an important part of the job. I ended up talking to a lot of people. In effect, this opened up the possibility of making contacts who were also well informed, or seemed to be well informed, on the political situation. It was a chance for me, since I was a political-cone officer. Although I was on a consular assignment, I did get the chance to do some political reporting as well, which I had the impression actually got read then back in Washington.

Q: Wow.

TERZUOLO: I was not there for the liberation of Grenada. I was already in Beirut at that time, but I think I did make a contribution to our knowledge, our understanding, as the U.S. government, of what was going on in Grenada.

Q: Were there major consular problems either in Barbados or the rest of the Caribbean? You know, you think of Jamaica as being a particularly busy consular post, and certainly Mexico, so the Caribbean tended to be a source of immigration, both legal and illegal.

TERZUOLO: That was true for the area that we covered as well. I would say the consular workload, the visa workload, was not quite as crushing as it could be in Kingston, for example. I think our colleagues in Kingston were doing significantly more non-immigrant visas a day than we were.

Q: I can assure of that, having worked in Jamaica in the consular section.

TERZUOLO: I think it was less intense. With Barbados in particular, the thing to bear in mind is that in many ways, it's really for the most part a first-world country. Everything

worked. It was quite prosperous, good lifestyle, good infrastructure and so forth. That was less the case for the other islands. They were not quite as well off as Barbados. They were also relatively secure places. You didn't have a crime problem comparable to what you had in Jamaica that contributed to encouraging people to leave.

A lot of work was immigrant visas there. Relative to the population of the area, the Caribbean immigration to the United States is quite large and very successful as well in the U.S. But we got to see what people were prepared to do in order to make the jump to becoming U.S. legal permanent residents and, ultimately, citizens. It was striking the extent to which people were prepared actually. Particularly young women, well educated, who had in fact good jobs in the area, were quite prepared to go to the U.S., theoretically on vacation. Hard to deny them visas. They had good jobs. They had ties. But they would stay. They would take jobs in the U.S. that were certainly not of the standing they had in their home community. Basically, they did domestic work, often under really very bad conditions, as we were able to see as we would interview them. The idea was, because this was an underrepresented category, after I believe three years, their employers could petition for them. I guess they were the P6 visas, immigrant visas. You could sort of see the experience these people had had.

What was pretty clear was this was a very conscious and disciplined decision on the part of a lot of people. "I'm going to deal with a situation that is really not very good because I have this objective." Barbados, it's a great place. It's a small island of 250,000 people. The glass ceilings are all built in, and if you will the boredom factor. I can understand perfectly well why people would want a change. Now, obviously, we were not to be facilitating that, but by the time they came to us in the immigrant visa situations, the people had been in the U.S. for quite some time. They had overstayed on their visas, their tourist visas. But the requirements at that point for them to acquire immigrant visas in fact had almost always been fulfilled.

Consular work is very interesting. Not my favorite sort of work, but it is interesting because it gives you a lot of insight into the way societies work, people's motivations, social structure, and particularly on the non-immigrant side, it should be very useful training for people in the fact that others are going to be prepared to lie to your face to get what they want. That is simply a statement of fact. I'm trying not to be judgmental about it, but people will try to get what they want from you. This is a valuable lesson for political affairs officers as well, because often your contacts in the host-country are going to try to manipulate you, tell you what they think you want to hear, etc. You have to keep a very critical approach to everything people tell you. Consular experience is good training for that I think.

Q: All true. Now, it's an 18-month tour?

TERZUOLO: Yes.

Q: As you approach the end, what is going on in terms of the personnel system and in terms of your own thinking for an onward assignment?

TERZUOLO: Well, what was complicated at that point was trying to get assigned with my wife. I was already in Barbados. We got married. We had been A-100 classmates. We got married and then turned to the Personnel Bureau and said, "Can you help us now get assigned at least in reasonable proximity." I have to say, they really made a lot of effort in that respect. Not everything quite worked out in what seemed like the optimal fashion at the time, but Debby was supposed to go to Argentina, which would have been a great assignment, but she was happy to get reassigned to Trinidad, which was close. It was about an hour's flight, so we were able to see each other on weekends. She even got some temporary duty in Barbados, so that was good. The problem was, we were out of sync.

Q: Oh, okay!

TERZUOLO: I had been at post probably about six months or more before she actually started her assignment then in Trinidad. We were trying to figure out how to get back into sync. There were various ways you could do that. I think we were surprised in a lot of ways. We bid on a lot of places that were not garden spots particularly, but where we could go together and the timing was reasonably close, maybe via language training for me or something like that. Places like Kuwait. We bid on Lahore, Pakistan, which would have been a fascinating place to be. For some reason, that didn't pan out. It was tricky. Then, one day we get the good news/bad news call. "The good news is we have a post where both of you can go. There's a political officer job for Eric, a consular job for Debbie. The language requirements are met in both cases, and you can leave right away. The bad news is, it's Beirut."

Q: Okay.

TERZUOLO: This was already after the first U.S. embassy bombing in April of '83. I forget exactly what the dates were, but it was after that. We really wanted to get ourselves in sync and go together to the next post. Debbie had a lot of Middle Eastern experience as a private citizen, as a student. She spoke Arabic, and still does speak Arabic very well. She had worked for a Middle Eastern embassy in Washington, DC. She was a real area expert. I was not, although I had a pretty good familiarity with the history of the Middle East from my academic pursuits. But it was a French-designated position for me, since I was the person who was supposed to keep in touch with Maronites, the Lebanese Christians, who were supposedly French speakers, although in practice I found a lot of them spoke English better than they spoke French. That was neither here nor there. That was basically how we resolved that issue. As it turned out, there had been another tandem couple that was on track to go to Beirut and had ended up pregnant on rather short notice. Obviously, that was not going to work. Let's say, it was a convenient solution, if you will, to various problems, including those that the personnel bureau was experiencing at the time.

Staying in the Caribbean for a moment, before getting us to Beirut, I'm trying to think of things that were noteworthy. I think in some ways, Debbie's experiences at post were perhaps more challenging than my own. Trinidad had a lot of social tensions and political

tensions of a sort that didn't really exist in Barbados. It was interesting how, though it was an independent country at this time, how resolutely in many ways the Barbadians were very British. One had to be wary of making any sarcastic comments about the royal family for example.

Q: Interesting.

TERZUOLO: It was interesting. For all the anti-Colonial movement going back to the post-World War II period, you see there was in fact a lot of residual affection and attachment to the former colonial power as it were. Barbados is in a lot of ways it struck me as even more British-flavored than some of the other islands. It also didn't have the sort of diversified colonial experience that some of the other islands did. You had a place like St. Lucia, for example. You had both the British and French influences. I would say on the whole it was a very pleasant place to be and to live. I've never gotten back there, but I do have fond memories of the place, even though in a lot of ways the work could be very stressful. Dealing with the public, the visa situation, there's always a lot of stress there.

We talked a little bit about Grenada. It was sort of a graduate student gone feral situation in a lot of ways. You've seen some other similar regimes. I was not unhappy to see them go when they were removed from power.

Maybe let's move to Beirut, which has a lot of interesting dimensions to it. Actually, we left post—it must have been the end of August of 1983 roughly speaking—fully expecting that we would transition briefly through Washington and be on our way to Beirut. As it turned out, we got stuck in Washington for a while because there was a lot of fighting. Fighting had broken out in the Chouf mountain range involving various groups. You know the Lebanese situation is always unstable. At that point in the civil war had been going on for you could say 10 years, certainly eight years. A lot of people date the civil war from '75, but I think there's a case to be made for dating it from '73. The Sabra and Shatila massacre, the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon had taken place in '82, pushing the Shiite population, which was very large in the southern part of the country, pushing it up into the southern suburbs of Beirut, as we used to refer to them. So you had a large population that was very discontented living under extremely difficult circumstances. You had the Sabra and Shatila massacres, which had not to do with the Shiites, but Palestinian camps there. Very tense situation. You've got a Lebanese government which rested on a division of powers that was rooted in a census that I think was actually 50 years old at that point. The Christians, Maronite Christians specifically—other Christian groups in Lebanon did not have the political clout that the Maronites did. The Maronites were clinging to an advantageous position dating back to the French Mandate (for Syria and Lebanon) though they were probably no longer the largest group. The Sunnis in Lebanon are sort of an old Ottoman-era elite that had been clearly declining in power and influence for quite some time. It was a period in which the Shiites were really the rising political force.

In the current situation, ultimately it's Hezbollah that calls the shots politically in Lebanon. We were there for the rise of Hezbollah, using religious ideas to tap into what was also profound and understandable social discontent. Since there hadn't been a census, we didn't know what the largest group was, but it sure looked like the Shiites were the largest group by that point—certainly underrepresented, underweighted in the political system relative to their population size—lots of grounds for problems. The Druze, a very idiosyncratic group that's present in multiple countries—they don't quite fit in with anybody else religiously and often are a target for other groups.

Anyway, you have the fighting that breaks out in the Chouf Mountains—Lebanon is a small place—in, I guess, September of '83, August of '83, a very tense situation. A perception of threat to the established Lebanese order such as it was. We, the U.S., were supporting the legitimate government of Amine Gemayel at the time, a Maronite Christian, according to their standard division of power. We were supporting that government. We were supplying the Lebanese armed forces and so forth. There was a lot of concern about spillover effects from the fighting in the Chouf that would threaten the political stability, threaten the regime.

Debby and I—they weren't letting anybody in—we ended up actually for the better part of a month on the Lebanon Working Group in the Operations Center. Because we didn't have day jobs at that point, we did the midnight to 8:00 a.m. shift. That was really interesting because of course midnight to 8:00 A.M. was pretty much Lebanon open for business and stuff going on. We heard a lot. I guess it was Bud McFarlane and Dick Fairbanks there as the Administration's envoys at that point. We really did try to remain actively engaged in peacemaking in Lebanon or the attempts to make peace. It was clear from the conversations over the satellite phone, that McFarlane and Fairbanks perceived a real threat to the Lebanese order. They were audibly concerned, audibly nervous, about the situation I think it is fair to say. We had a lot of that. It was in essence kind of a message-passing job. We spent a lot of time recording things, passing on information to other officials in the Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) Bureau who would check in the morning, to see what had happened overnight. Some would come in during the night as well. NEA I imagine certainly in those days was visibly a 24/7 kind of bureau. So we did that. The situation did ultimately calm down and we were able to travel. I think when we showed up, it was still September of '83.

Q: Before you went, did you get any of the counterterrorism training?

TERZUOLO: Oh, no! No, we had no training specific to that assignment at all. I think there was perhaps some discussion of security issues in A-100, but that was it. No, the anti-terrorism course, that comes in at a later date as I recall. Part of it was also we were in this kind of odd situation anyway. Curtailed out of one post and sent to another on short notice. We were not expecting to get any training. For the Caribbean, we had had consular training, which was quite good. It prepared you for things in general, let's say. Then you get into specific circumstances there is a lot you have to learn. I think we had already experienced, if you will, the relatively weak training culture of the Foreign Service.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: I'm sure we heard the first day in A-100, "Oh, you have to hit the ground running." And that was always our experience. We were in essence expected to be able to arrive, hang up our coats and start working whatever the job was. Things that you had to learn, you learned as you went along. In particular, if you take a high-stress, long work hours kind of post like Beirut, I can understand that the more senior officers had things on their minds other than teaching youngsters how to do their jobs.

Q: [Laughs]

TERZUOLO: You tried to get some guidance and some help where you could, and somehow everything always worked out in the end. I never had a sense of a terribly concerted effort. When we went to Prague years later, we had the language training and area studies that went along with that, so there was some preparation there. Language training was very good. We showed up in Beirut pretty uncertain as to what to do, but got thrown into the breach. I was very surprised that this was still a point at which we were getting quite a lot of visits.

Q: Now wait a minute. With the explosion with the embassy, what were the quarters and the embassy, even the temporary embassy like at this time?

TERZUOLO: Very good question. The embassy was totally destroyed. It was utterly unusable. The classified activities in the embassy were concentrated on a floor of the British embassy.

Q: Oh, interesting. Okay.

TERZUOLO: I got the impression they had reduced their presence significantly, and it was not a big embassy. Our embassy was not a big embassy. So basically political, economic, ambassador, DCM (deputy chief of mission), communications—we could all fit on one floor of the British embassy. The consular section and administrative section were headquartered in what had been a residential building. There were still some residences. The DCM's apartment was still in that building. I forget the name of the building now. Anyway, so you have the consular section and the administrative section there. These buildings were not so distant from one another. Later on, we ended up living in an apartment building that was on the other side of the American University of Beirut athletic fields. That was quite a walk. Sometimes it happened that mortar rounds would be targeted on us as we walked! All good. All our original parts are still here, fortunately.

Q: So no armored vehicles taking you to work? No flak jackets or anything like that?

TERZUOLO: No. At that point, obviously it was an unusual situation, since we didn't have an embassy of our own anymore. Among the quirks of the situation was the Marine protection we had. Of course we had a Marine Security Guard contingent, but what we

also had was Marine Amphibious Unit Marines, amphibious combat Marines with small armored vehicles on the ground by us. I think it reached at one point probably about 80 Marines during the day and 200 at night.

Q: That's an interesting setup, only because typically foreign countries don't allow uniformed U.S. military, so it must have been based on some kind of accord?

TERZUOLO: I don't know what the details were. What was pretty clear was that the Lebanese government wanted us there.

Q: Yeah.

TERZUOLO: To the point that it was believed that at one point actually the Lebanese Armed Forces, i.e. the Lebanese government army, may at one point have been firing over our heads so as to make sure we didn't go anywhere.

Q: [Laughs]

TERZUOLO: This is hearsay, okay. This is hearsay analysis. But they wanted us there. It was a highly bizarre situation. At that point we also had the multinational force that had gone in after the Sabra and Shatila massacre—ourselves, the Italians, the French and the British—with the stated objective of stabilizing the situation, demonstrating support. Also, there had been support for the evacuation of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila aftermath. By the time we got there, my understanding was certainly that the Multinational Force was intended as a message of full Western support and solidarity with the Lebanese government. There were a lot of idiosyncratic aspects to the situation there. We had been horribly attacked once. I don't think there was any great issue in fact on the Lebanese government's part regarding our forces there. Ultimately, DOD (Department of Defense) became uncomfortable with the situation. Again, my understanding, but probably more from reading the (Washington) Post and New York Times than anything else, was that there was a Caspar Weinberger/George Schultz debate over what to do and the possibility of keeping U.S. forces on the ground, and lots off the shore—the Marine amphibious units have specialized ships and warships and so forth. It was certainly a big expenditure of resources. It's my understanding that Weinberger ultimately won the day in the argument that the Marine presence was just not sustainable anymore. But this was further down the pike, not the early period when we arrived.

To continue with the description of the physical setup, consular sections have particular security requirements. You have to have what's called a "hardline" so that you're not literally facing the visa applicant with nothing between you. You had to be very careful in Lebanon because all sorts of people were there who wished us ill.

Q: Sure.

TERZUOLO: If I can tell a story about my wife. It's my wife's story really, but it's sort of illustrative of the situation. She was a consular officer doing visas. As I said, she spoke

Arabic well. She also spoke Farsi pretty reasonably. She had studied it and had spent all told about three months in Iran before the revolution.

Q: Interesting.

TERZUOLO: All sorts of people got Lebanese passports. It was not really secure document anymore. She recounted to me about how, one day, these people showed up to apply for visas to the U.S. with Lebanese passports. But they were obviously Iranian. They didn't speak Arabic. Some of them spoke some English and may have been students in the U.S. at some point, but with a pretty distinctive Iranian accent my wife was well familiar with. These were probably, Iranian Pasdaran (revolutionary guards) based in the Beqaa Valley, which was very close, trying to get visas to enter the United States on Lebanese passports. Needless to say, she threw them out. She told them, "I know you are not Lebanese. You are Iranian. I can tell. Get out of here right away. If you don't get out, I will have you ejected." That was about all she could do. So you've got some really interesting and worrisome people. Also, I would note, the Beqaa Valley at that point, you had sort of the headquarters of some of the most extreme Palestinian terrorist organizations as well. George Habash's group, as I recall, and others. Consular work left you pretty exposed.

Q: Yes. I totally get it.

TERZUOLO: So you had that aspect. Another crucial thing to bear in mind about the way things were set up in Beirut was that the ambassador's residence was nowhere close to the embassy. It was up in East Beirut, the Christian controlled area, near the presidential palace, which seemed to offer, among other things, security. Although sometimes the Lebanese would use the presidential palace as an artillery park as well, so that attracted attention to it and not in a good way. The ambassador's residence was near the presidential palace. The ambassador in fact commuted by helicopter. He had a very extensive security detail, etc., but to get there by car entailed going through essentially the whole area of Beirut that had been destroyed during the civil war. Large swaths of the old city that had been reduced to rubble, some of it probably no more than a foot high or so. The occasional high walls looked like lace, so riddled with fire from various sorts of weapons over the years. Some graffiti wag, on one of the remaining high walls, had written "Crisis Tourism."

Q: [Laughs]

TERZUOLO: That said, near that area was one of the old, fancy hotels where the pool continued to operate. People would be out there as long as the fighting wasn't too intense! This is something to note about the Lebanon experience. I think we don't realize the extent to which we can adapt to situations of high threat. You're not even aware of it as it's happening, but, if you will, your radius of concern shrinks down. Additionally, there were always artillery explosions. When we first got there, everything elicited an "Oh, my gosh, what's that? What's that?" Over time, fairly rapidly, it shrunk down to the

point where, if it wasn't happening in your immediate proximity, you didn't worry about it anymore.

Q: Yeah.

TERZUOLO: Of course, then you get out of that situation and you realize…. When we got back to Washington after leaving Beirut, we came to realize just how distorted, if you will, our perceptions of our surroundings and issues of concern had become over the time we were in Beirut. It took a while to get back to normal.

Q: They talk about that as resilience these days, but back then it was re-acculturation in the U.S. or something. Something much more modest because of course the longer you are exposed to that kind of thing the likelier you are to have some kind of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder).

TERZUOLO: Yes. I know there are issues over how to define PTSD. I won't claim to have suffered from it, but certainly there were perceptions of things after we left Lebanon that really seemed PTSD-like. It was sort of a flashback process. You see something. You process it as if you were in Lebanon, not in Washington, DC. Just an example… So we're back. Debby and I were on 19th Street, maybe dealing with passport issues or something like that. On 19th Street, walking down the sidewalks. There were parking ramps there. A fellow drives up fairly speedily, makes a sharp right turn into what is in fact the driveway leading into one of the underground parking lots. Stops the car, jumps out and runs away. We process that as "Oh, my God, this is a car bomb. It's about to explode, and he is trying to get away." That is how we processed it. In fact, the guy probably was just late for an appointment. I think probably everybody who was there can tell similar tales. I noticed I was very sensitive for a long time about where I sat in restaurants. I wanted to sit with my back to a wall and an eye on the door. It passed.

Q: Now, while you were there, what was the core of your mission as a political officer?

TERZUOLO: In theory, I suppose, my primary job would have been defined as building and maintaining contacts with people on the Christian side of the political reality. You had various Christian groups. You had militias, political parties that were in a sense the political fronts for the militias. The Phalanges, which the Gemayels had built, was the largest of the groups, but there were a number of others at the time.

In practical terms though, there was a huge amount of, you might call it, routine work that really didn't have much to do with that. I think I started to mention before, in the early days, the first few weeks anyway, we had a surprising number of visitors. We had Congressional delegations (CODELs). In fact, the day of the Marine barracks bombing—I believe he was a senator from New Hampshire—was supposed to be there visiting the Marines at their barracks. He was supposed to show up at 7:30, I think. The bomb went off at 6:20 something. Obviously, he didn't come. There was a lot of interest understandably on the part of Congressional representatives about their constituents, so a fair number of them were coming.

I also remember, Nick Rahall, a Congressman from West Virginia, whose family roots were in Lebanon. I remember I was his control officer at a time when there were so many other things going on. Basically, they just got us a taxi, and I accompanied him on a number of calls. He was interested in the substance of the situation there beyond our military presence, as important as that was. Fortunately, I had managed to learn enough spoken Lebanese Arabic, or Levantine Arabic, to tell the driver "Turn left. Turn right. Straight ahead. Go back that way!" We had a very good language teacher affiliated with the embassy. I spoke no Arabic when we arrived, so I was trying to learn some. I learned just enough to get Congressman Rahall safely through his meetings and on his plane back out. *[Laughs]* Despite the very unusual circumstance, there was a certain element of normalcy.

Another thing was that we had a new ambassador, Reginald Bartholomew, who was very active. He was doing his job. He was trying to meet with everybody under the sun. We in the political section spent a lot of time going with the ambassador on his calls. He was insistent on very, very detailed and complete records of his conversations. Even to the point that, if he used not very good language toward his interlocutor, he wanted that written down. The calls and movements under the circumstances were complicated because of security requirements, often long distances to go through these perilous areas, so that was a big part of our work as well. Obviously, it was very interesting. You got to see some people that you wouldn't otherwise see. As I recall, I accompanied the ambassador to a meeting with the Maronite Patriarch. We also went to see the head of the Armenian Church in Lebanon. That was interesting, but very demanding and time consuming.

Needless to say, in that pre-Netflix binging age, we mostly just worked a lot. That was what there was to do! I did have a colleague, the cultural affairs officer—a lovely person and still a great friend of ours. We see each other regularly still. She was trying to do some cultural diplomacy and actually got my wife Debby, is a big opera buff, to go with her to an opera-related event. A lot of cognitive dissonance there. You assume, "Oh, it's a civil war. Nothing else is going on." In fact, people did try to do things that were normal parts of their lives. There were still trying to hold some cultural events. It was very striking actually, the number of incredibly wonderful food stores. Magnificently stocked with very refined items from the best European suppliers. You might have to go through some rubble to get there. It was what people expected.

To go back to my work, yes, building contacts with the Lebanese. A lot of work with visits, at least initially. This understandably died down after the Marine barracks bombing, although we continued to have visits. But let's say the Congressional visits as I recall pretty much stopped after the barracks bombing. Then, of course, there was a huge tightening of security after Bill Buckley was kidnapped. It's not actually a secret that he was the station chief there. The CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) has released a public statement about Bill. Kidnapped and ultimately died under torture, but not quickly. As you can imagine, this triggered a real hunkering down. Until that time, people had gone out for meetings and contact building and discussions. We really had tried to be very

present. People would go out without security guards, without armored vehicles. You might take a taxi. That changed understandably after Bill's kidnapping.

Interestingly, when we arrived in Beirut, we were living in an apartment building with no particular security precautions. It was not that far from the embassy, but it was a very ordinary apartment building where the embassy had had an apartment for a long time. I had some interesting experiences there. Our upstairs neighbor was a gentleman who worked for Middle East Airlines, the Lebanese airlines. Very welcoming and nice. We just had our clothes basically. No tools or anything. There was something I wanted to see if I could fix, so I went upstairs to try to get a screwdriver. He welcomes me in, and says, "Sit down, sit down here." Puts me in the living room. There are little kids running around. I look and in the corner of the living room is a rocket-propelled grenade launcher ready to go. That was pretty shocking. According to my wife, I was absolutely white as a sheet when I went downstairs and told her this story. A very odd place. In fact, our neighborhood, the neighborhood the embassy was in, and a lot of the residences, was in some ways a good neighborhood because it was a heavily Druze neighborhood. The Druze were well organized and well-armed because they were accustomed to ensuring their own security. That sort of security umbrella helped us out in fact. There were a lot of us in basically ordinary apartments. We would go out the door, often unable to vary our routes significantly. One exit. Things that wouldn't happen now probably.

Q: Any reason to travel in Lebanon? And if you did, how did you manage it?

TERZUOLO: We really didn't do too much traveling. Oddly enough, there was some recreation. Recreational traveling meant in practical terms going up into the Christian controlled area. Not that the Christians were 100 percent our friends all the time, but it was thought to be a more secure place for us. There were some interesting things to see. We got to see a little bit of the country, but not much. I didn't do really official travel elsewhere in the country. Some of my colleagues did. Sometimes local power brokers outside of Beirut would be interested in having an embassy person come. Generally, it was thought they could provide sufficient security in the areas under their control. But not obviously a lot of travel. Ryan Crocker is so well known at this point. He was the political counselor, and hence my boss. I remember he went down at least once to the dividing line between the Israeli zone and the Lebanese zone in the southern part of the country post-invasion.

Q: You haven't mentioned the influence of Syria. Was that at all a factor when you were there?

TERZUOLO: Well, it was certainly a factor. We didn't deal with the Syrians obviously. We had an embassy in Damascus, with an ambassador, where Debby and washed up for a number of months actually. It was a very, very interesting place. We really had no dealing with Syrian authorities. What was clear was, of course, that they were influential players on the Lebanese scene. As I recall, in those days a lot of their influence was actually being exercised on some of the Christian groups, trying to keep them to some

degree under their control and influence. The thing to remember about Syria is that from the Damascus perspective Lebanon is just part of Syria.

Q: Right. Yes.

TERZUOLO: It was all part of the French Mandate, divided into Syria and Lebanon after World War II. In the Syrian perception, it's really all their territory. Certainly, they were always concerned with the situation in Lebanon. It struck me, but others might have a different view, they were probably interested in keeping a stable situation and avoiding trouble for themselves in a way. I'm not honestly able to comment at this point on how much they might have been enmeshed with some of the emerging terrorist groups. Now we're used to Damascus/Tehran cooperation. I am not sure to what extent there were inklings at that time.

Q: That's fine. Without telling your wife's story obviously, where there particularly compelling that you were involved in with her that also kind of gave a flavor of what it was like to be in Lebanon?

TERZUOLO: Just to run through the timeline, in February of '84 there was a collapse of Lebanese government control over some areas. The Shiites in particular moved up from southern areas really into Beirut in a way that they had not before. The Lebanese army probably did things that provoked them—random shelling into Shiite areas, if I recall correctly. So you get this big Shiite movement. There was just a lot of fighting going on at this point, so we drew down the embassy. My wife and I had the experience of going to work one morning and not getting back to our Beirut apartment for several months.

Q: Wow!

TERZUOLO: There was a real collapse of the situation.. All of us basically spent the night in the British embassy basement, sleeping on rolls of old carpeting, which we were quite thankful for at that point. Then, the next day, we drew down about 50 percent of the personnel in the embassy. We got helicoptered out to a U.S. Navy vessel off the coast. High seas. It was a vessel designed for transporting vehicles, tanks, etc. It was empty. It was really bobbing big time—lots of seasickness there that day, including among the Navy personnel. It was bad! It wasn't really dangerous, but added a bit to the drama of the situation. We went initially to Cyprus and worked on the evacuation that followed. There was an evacuation of American citizens and nationals of other countries as well. We didn't shut people out if they didn't have a U.S. passport obviously. We worked on the evacuation. We were in Cyprus for a few weeks and then got sent to Damascus. Temporary duty. The chief of the consular section had to depart urgently. They were looking for an Arabic-speaking consular officer, and there was one in Cyprus. That is what they needed, and they said, "Oh, yeah, Eric, you can come, too!"

Q: [Laughs]

TERZUOLO: It was a great experience actually. It was a great experience professionally because my boss there was April Glaspie, who of course became controversial when, in my view, she was hung out to dry over Iraq. I know her to be a consummate professional. She would not have free-lanced in the way she was accused of freelancing while ambassador in Iraq. I can't imagine it. In fact, as I said, she was a consummate professional. She was a great person to work for. I learned a lot from April. I was sort of an extra there, but they had some interesting projects for me. I got to do some analysis. I did a research report on the Ba'ath Party and how it functioned, for example. In fact, compared to Lebanon, being in Damascus was a pleasure. We were a great deal more free in the sense that it was a well-controlled, authoritarian regime where the Syrians, the Assad regime, had no interest in anything happening to U.S. diplomats. We were in fact quite safe.

Damascus of course is a fascinating place to be and to see. We managed to do a little bit of traveling there. Unfortunately, our car had been left behind in Beirut. It was in really bad shape when we got back, although it was repaired. The insurance paid to have it repaired, but it was never quite the same afterwards. It unfortunately was impossible to rent a car in Syria at the time, so that sort of limited what we were able to do. We also got down to Amman, Jordan, a couple of times, which was good for shopping purposes. Food shopping in Damascus left a lot to be desired. Vegetables, meats, etc., had a lot of health concerns associated with them—parasites, etc.—so you had to be very careful on the food front. We were able to get to know some Syrian folks a bit. The folks we got to know were utterly charming and very kind.

In the embassy there were several employees, sisters who were descendants of a very old aristocratic family of the area, and they were all very helpful to us. I actually worked very closely with one. Debby worked closely with another. It gave you an insight into what the upper class in Syria was and had been. Part of what drives the Alawis, the now dominant group in Syria, was a sense of social exclusion, of getting the short end of the stick for centuries, so there's definitely a strong social element that drove the Alawi seizure of power and their exercise of power, which obviously was very favorable to their own group and to groups other than Sunni Muslims. You have this interesting situation—Ba'ath Party dominated by Alawis, but also Christians playing prominent roles.

I'm not sure people appreciated, perhaps until recently, the complexity of Syrian society. I think it tended to be seen as a kind of a black box that maybe played in the Middle East peace process to some extent, but I'm not sure many people looked inside before the events of more recent years where you start to see the inherent social tensions that become dividing lines in the fight.

Anyway, I think I've rather lost my train here! After several months in Damascus, we then returned to Beirut in the spring of '84. We were not there, for example, when Bill Buckley was kidnapped. Obviously, when we did return it was in this new system of very heightened security.

Q: And it was a two-year tour, so it would have been '83 to '85?

TERZUOLO: Well, we departed actually after about a year, between Lebanon and Damascus actually. I think it is fair to say there was a disagreement with the ambassador over some security issues. He was not prepared to have people at post who did not agree with him. In part, this had to do with the solution to the problem I hinted at earlier, which was how to deal with the departure of the Marines who had ensured our security. There was a sort of two-pronged solution to that. When we talk about the second embassy bombing in Beirut, which was in I believe September of 1984, officially what was bombed was the embassy annex. In theory, our embassy was actually still in West Beirut, in the Muslim-controlled part of Beirut, but essentially the only thing that was taking place was consular work, particularly visas, with the notion that if you put up a U.S. embassy sign and issue visas, it would look like the real embassy was still there. Obviously, it didn't fool anybody. Also, there were questions regarding the sort of security that was going to be provided for the consular function and the consular officers in this West Beirut site. To our mind, they were not properly addressed. So we had an early departure.

I do remember the day we left actually because of course this idea of having the real embassy in West Beirut, the Muslim-controlled area, and the annex in East Beirut—as I said it didn't fool anybody. I do remember when we returned to Beirut, I was doing administrative work rather than political work because of this big move. There was an issue with the adequacy of American staff on the administrative side. I said, "Fine. I'm not an administrative officer, but I'll do my best." In essence, to a large extent I ended up supervising and coordinating the move to the annex in East Beirut. I do remember when we left, which was a few weeks before the second bombing at the annex, I remember saying, "Oh, my gosh, the bar blocking the road at the exit hasn't been put up yet." But it was too late for me to do anything about it. I was basically on the West Beirut side in our old digs that we were moving out of, so I hadn't really seen much of the annex. We moved up there shortly before departing and I was at the annex and remember thinking, "my gosh, we need to worry about some security-related things" rather than some of the other things that were getting priority attention at the time.

Q: Curtailing can sometimes be not helpful for your career. Was there a personnel difficulty for you or your wife as a result?

TERZUOLO: No. Things were pretty clear to people once they were explained. My wife's curtailment request had an odd history. She had been told to write a curtailment request that did not reflect accurately her reasons for being rocketed out. She was asked to say she was leaving because of psychological stress. She refused to do that. She wrote an actual account of what was going on, why she didn't consider it acceptable. It was not possible to work out a solution, and hence she was requesting the curtailment. She is a very professional, calm person. It was very factual. This was a message that should have gone out via personnel channel, since it dealt with a personnel issue, a very delicate personnel issue. For some reason, it did not go out as a personnel channel message, so things that were occurring in Beirut got to the attention of people who were not actually aware of them at the time. There had not been evidently, from what we could understand

once we got back, complete transparency about some of the plans. It was actually a very uncomfortable situation in a lot of ways for us. Not because we were subjected to any sorts of penalties, quite the contrary. We had good interesting jobs to do. No problem at all in that sense. But people would grab us and say, "Now, explain this to me. What exactly is this?" Then, after the second embassy bombing, it was very uncomfortable because you would have people say, "You got out just in time. You knew something was going to happen!" No, not really. What happened was not in fact what we had been concerned about. We didn't want to claim any great special insight into all of this. Naturally, after the bombing, the people doing the investigations interviewed us in detail. Add to this the fact that there were funerals to attend, or memorial services at least to attend, for people whom we knew who had died. There were people who were badly injured whom we knew. That was a very stressful period, I have to say.

Q: Wow.

TERZUOLO: Instructive, I suppose, as well. One general consideration… I often talk about the Beirut experience and things associated with it as being instructive, as being learning experiences. What I would like to note is that not all the learning experiences were bad experiences. Those years in Beirut we made friends with people with whom we are still the closest of friends and who are very dear to us. We also saw not only the worst things the human animal is capable of, but also examples of remarkable courage, generosity and self-abnegation. It was the full gamut, in a way that I'm not sure a lot of other experiences would provide.

Q: Yeah. Will it color some of the ways that you work later in your career?

TERZUOLO: I think probably yes. Regrettably, given some of the circumstances that I was discussing, I came away with the conviction that ultimately one had to look out for their own security and wellbeing and not rely on the system necessarily to do so. In other words, don't give up your own judgment. If things don't seem right to you, there's probably a good chance they're not. It's the conflict between individual and institutional imperatives. I think that was pretty well highlighted by that experience. Basically—I'll be honest—I did not make an effort to return to high-threat posts.

Q: [Laughs] I understand. Okay.

TERZUOLO: Let me just mention, as we're projecting a little bit further, this is obviously many years later, but it really struck me and disturbed me when Ambassador Chris Stevens and the others were killed in Libya. Again, I don't have any particular insider knowledge about this, but the things that came out through the press . . . there were aspects of it that were really for me uncomfortably reminiscent of the Beirut experience and some things about the decision-making processes that were disturbingly reminiscent. I think notably the issue of the reliability of local militia forces to provide security.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: I certainly came away with the sense that if the host government cannot fulfill its responsibility to guarantee the security of diplomatic personnel and establishments, it's very hard—probably impossible in my view—to do what it takes to guarantee that security on our own, with our own resources.

Q: I get it. My goodness.

So you are now back in the department with only really one year of a tour. What does the personnel system concoct for you to do?

TERZUOLO: You have to take responsibility first and foremost. It sounds like personnel is a little more forceful now sometimes, but it's something to take into your own hands. Being really more of a Europeanist by expertise, by experience, language skills and so forth, I thought I would go and see what I might be able to do in the Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs (EUR), as it was at the time. It turned out they were looking for a staff assistant. Somehow I was able to convince the powers that were in the bureau that I would be a good person for that. I had basically a pretty seamless, quick transition. It was a few weeks. I spent a little time filling in on the Syrian desk for somebody who was away, as I recall, or the new person hadn't arrived yet. But it was a pretty seamless transition into being a staff assistant in EUR.

Actually, my wife, just to complete the story, had a very similar path. She got a staff assistant job to Ambassador Harry Shlaudeman, who was working on talks with the Sandinistas, so working on Central American stuff. A totally new field for her, but she had a great experience with that. Ambassador Shlaudeman was one of these people who knew everything about Latin America. He had been at it for decades. She loved working for him. She had a good experience. No big problems. As I said before, we came out of the Beirut thing just fine. I enjoyed my work in EUR. It was one of those shift jobs. You had to go in very early in the morning or else stay until everybody in the front office had left. We had a front office that included some pretty considerable night owls, or at least people worked late. I wasn't crazy about the shift work. The good thing about those sorts of jobs, I expect anyone would say, is you see all kinds of stuff.

Q: Sure.

TERZUOLO: You meet lots of people. You get a good sense of how the Department operates, who does what, what the actual responsibilities are as opposed to the officially stated ones. It was an interesting group of people. Richard Burt was the assistant secretary. John Kelly, who later became ambassador to Lebanon although he wasn't particularly a Middle East hand by background, was the principal deputy. James Dobbins, who went on to all sorts of roles, did the political-military stuff. Actually, a guy you see on TV all the time, Richard Haass of the CFR (Council on Foreign Relations), was in a quasi-deputy assistant secretary position. It wasn't actually, but it was a front office job and he had some responsibilities for Southeastern Europe. A lot of really interesting people. Sometimes they would hang out really late and talk, so we stayed. The staff

assistant jobs in a lot of ways don't generate a lot of interesting tales. It's an important job in the sense you are trying to keep the paper moving—bureaucracies run on paper, making sure taskings were completed, alas harassing your colleagues. "You have to get that in today! Remember!"

Q: [Laughs]

TERZUOLO: We would escalate from very diplomatic reminders to less diplomatic ones. It's not the most exciting stuff on the block, but we got to read all kinds of things and would go through cable traffic and so forth before giving it to the special assistant for the assistant secretary. There was a chance to learn a lot. I appreciated that. Given the way the State Department personnel system operates, these are valuable positions, in the sense that you make contacts and earn chips to cash in for your next assignment, which I have to say struck me as most people's concern most of the time. It's not so much what I'm doing now, it's what I get to do next. It's understandable given the mechanics of the system. That's just a fact of life. At least I became a known quantity. I had accumulated some merits, and with the fact of being a 5/5, i.e. native, Italian speaker, I was able to get a very nice job at the U.S. embassy in Rome starting in the summer of 1985!

Q: Very good!

TERZUOLO: I was the political-military officer, the more junior of two when I started.

Q: Today is February 20th. We're resuming out interview with Eric Terzuolo. He has just completed his tour as staff assistant, and we're moving on to…

TERZUOLO: To Rome!

Q: To Rome. What year is this?

TERZUOLO: This is '85. We were there from '85 to '89.

Q: Naturally, in your selection to go to Rome, your fluency in Italian helped. But were there other factors?

TERZUOLO: Well, I think an important factor was that I was a staff assistant in the Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs. I had a leg up in the process honestly.

Q: What role are you going to in Rome?

TERZUOLO: I was the political-military affairs officer. There was also a political-military affairs counselor. When I arrived it was a two-person subsection within the political section. Ultimately, we acquired a third officer, a junior officer. It was, for a time, a section unto its own, but when I arrived it was a subsection.

Q: The other question is, when you arrive what is your portfolio or what were you expected to do as you arrive?

TERZUOLO: Well, the political-military relationship with Italy was and still is huge. It was quite a mixed bag of things, because there is a large U.S. military presence in Italy in a lot of different bases. I think the number of places has been somewhat reduced, but there are some very important places there. Sigonella Naval Air Station in Sicily is crucial for the Mediterranean and, if you will, broader operations. You have the air base in Aviano, which is very important. It was an important forward base at the time for the U.S. Air Force. The army is in Vicenza, and if memory serves there were over thirty military bases in Italy with at least some US personnel. Often we in the political-military wing of the embassy found ourselves acting as political advisors to the commanders of the U.S. units there, because, just in the nature of things, problems and issues would arise that involved the interaction between the military and Italian political authorities, Italian civil society, local populations, etc. We found ourselves dealing with a very mixed bag of things. In addition, we dealt with arms control and nonproliferation issues. That was big aspect of the job as well, because at that point we were still in the process of installing cruise missiles.

Q: Oh, yes.

TERZUOLO: The intermediate-range nuclear forces. There was base in Italy in Comiso in Sicily where the U.S. cruise missiles were going into place. One thing I should note and that complicated matters sometimes was the fact that there were no U.S. bases in Italy. The bases were Italian bases, established in effect under NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) procedures. There was no extraterritoriality for the bases that U.S. forces used in Italy, unlike the situation in Germany. That's changed in Germany now, I believe, but at that point bases that we used in Germany were in fact not German territory. This seems to have contributed to the confusion, to put it mildly, on what the Italians call "La Notte di Sigonella" (The Night at Sigonella) which was when we tried to intercept and seize Abu Abbas, I believe was the terrorist's name, whose people were responsible for the Achille Lauro hostage taking and murder of Leon Klinghoffer. It was an Egyptian plane that was carrying him, and we forced it down at Sigonella Naval Air Station. In retrospect, it appears that people in Washington were not aware of the fact that this was an Italian base. It was quite a terrifying situation, in which we had landed a plane full of special forces operators who came in behind the plane carrying Abu Abbas. They surrounded the plane, but the Italian armed forces then surrounded our people. We had in fact a near shoot-out between allies on the runway at Sigonella. Fortunately, the situation was defused.

Q: Do you know how high it had to go in order to diffuse it?

TERZUOLO: This was being run out of the NSC (National Security Council). I can't remember the fellow's name. There was a general on the NSC staff who was basically running the operation. In fact, I heard this going on in real time, because there was a liaison unit with satellite communications that had been brought into the embassy. My

wife was actually the embassy duty officer. It was kind of dumb luck in a way. We were at home pretty late in the evening. An operator calls for my wife. She says, "There's a call for Ms. Park as the embassy duty officer." Deborah takes the call and turns to me in absolute puzzlement and spews back a bunch of military acronyms that had been used by the person calling. They were calling I think from the U.S. Command in Germany, the special operations people in Germany. It was pretty early days when we were there, but I had acquired enough knowledge about the structure of commands, acronyms and so forth to be able to say, "That doesn't sound good. I really think we need to call the DCM and go to the embassy." The call was sort of "alphabet soup is on their way to the embassy," and they hung up. Had they called somebody else who didn't happen to know about or be married to someone who did political-military stuff, it might just have seemed like a really strange phone call. In fact, by the time we got there, the liaison folks were already in the embassy.

We had a tough situation on the runway. There was a desire on the part of the U.S. government at a very high level to have the Italians hand Abu Abbas over to us. I was translating for the phone call between the ambassador and then Italian prime minister, Bettino Craxi. It was a very short phone call because when the ambassador articulated the U.S. request, Craxi said absolutely not and hung up. They regarded this pretty understandably as a dramatic invasion of their sovereignty. In fact, as we know, the Egyptian plane ultimately did take off with Abu Abbas still on it. We did not get what we wanted in that case. It was pretty dramatic start to the tour.

For the first six months or so, Deborah and I had bad luck on duty officer assignments. I was duty officer when there was a very bad Palestinian attack in Fiumicino Airport. At that point—the setup is different now—El Al and the U.S. airlines were together, just at the end of the regular terminal. In the first instance it was an attack against El Al, but a very significant number of Americans were killed and injured in it as well. That was very difficult. In fact, I think the Italians did a good job of handling the emergency. It was definitely a mass casualty event. We were chasing behind. Not surprisingly, we didn't have anybody at the airport at the moment who was ticking off the destinations—exactly where the ambulances were taking everybody—so there was a lot of work to track down who had been taken where and to make sure that somebody from the embassy visited them and checked on their well-being.

On the whole, the Italians medically did a good job. There was one case of somebody they thought was going to pull through and then didn't. That was very sad. The family was already hopeful and then to get that news was rough. That was one of my first encounters with the press, serious encounters with the press. I have to say I got annoyed, in the sense I kept getting these calls that really shouldn't have been coming to me. I was trying to stick to "We can't comment." Newspaper reporters—I know they're just trying to get a story—asking, "What is the condition of the bodies?" At that point, honestly, I lost it. I just really mistreated that representative of the press because I thought the question was frankly so ghoulish, sensationalistic, and not relevant. I got more adept in my dealings with the press subsequently, but that was quite a baptism by fire.

Q: This is the first six months of your tour? Wow!

TERZUOLO: The aftermath of Sigonella was difficult for a time. As you can imagine, the Italians are, have been, and remain super allies generally, although their interests are not identical to ours. I think on a lot of the international security issues, NATO issues, but also not necessarily NATO issues, they tended always to be very close to us. It was a rough shock for them. There was a period there where everyone was walking on eggshells because of this. But that sorted itself out over time. The degree of day-to-day cooperation on security issues, international security issues, I would say remained extraordinarily good. The Italians in a sense are a bit less ambitious than the Brits, or the French notably. The Italians have never had a global reach. Their vision of their security interests is more circumscribed, so you don't have the same sort of difficulties in collaboration that we sometimes do with the French, before reaching a conclusion and doing things together, which seems to be almost always what we do with the French. Having worked on that a little bit, it can be a more laborious process.

Q: You had mentioned that the intermediate-range missiles were coming in to be based in Sicily. As you remember at that time, there were significant opposition demonstrations in other parts of Europe against the intermediate-range missiles. Did you have much of that in Italy?

TERZUOLO: By the time I got there, not really. It was a decision that played out over time. This is 1985. The NATO dual-track decision that laid the groundwork for bringing in the cruise missiles and other intermediate nuclear forces dated back to '79. I think you had kind of peaks of dissent, people out in the streets and so forth, probably more like about '82, '83. There was ,I would say, persistent unhappiness among certain chunks of the population, but Italy had passed the phase of large-scale demonstrations against the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces) deployments. In Italy, a lot of that was probably driven more by pacifist forces from the Catholic Church side of things than from the political left. Certainly, the pacifist wing in the Church, which was very strong and influential, had a very big role in this. I'm not sure if that's comparable elsewhere.

Q: The other sort of larger political-military questions that arose while you were there—I don't know if you played a role in them—were MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions), preparations for CFE (Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty), and the Stockholm Conference CSBM (Confidence- and-Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe) document. Were you involved in any of this?

TERZUOLO: That was not I would say a big priority, honesty. The MBFR talks really never got anywhere, a lot of talk over time. That was not a priority for what we were doing. The thing that occupied a lot of our attention was everything having to do with the Comiso deployment, including efforts that in the end really didn't go well. But I don't suppose we can be faulted for trying to promote good relations with the local community to the extent possible. Comiso was a huge focus. Later on, it was sort of a paradoxical situation. We spent a couple of years worrying about getting the missiles deployed. Then in 1987 you have the INF Treaty, and there's a lot of attention then to, "Well, how do we

get rid of these things, and how do you work out the inspection regimes," and so forth. That was a very touchy issue because of the need to reconcile sovereignty concerns in quite a number of basing countries. And it's true of other mutual security measures of the sort you mentioned. In the end, this is very intrusive from the perspective of national sovereignty, national territory. You've got to let in inspectors from—still the Warsaw Pact in those days! You've got to work out modalities for letting Warsaw Pact inspectors onto Italian bases, but then to be able to view activities that were conducted strictly by the U.S.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: It was a really kind of down-in-the-weeds work, but very important to make this fly. Again, I would say the Italians showed themselves not overly stiff-necked on the sovereignty issues. They were very happy about the treaty. But just really working out the nuts and bolts of things in ways that were acceptable to all the parties was quite challenging. Things had to be acceptable to the other side as well. That was a big priority.

I had two really good bosses. Peter Semler, who was later consul general in Milan and political counselor in Paris, was the political-military counselor my first year there when I arrived. He was a very smart, interesting, nice man -- an accomplished musician. I enjoyed working with Peter and learned a lot from him.

For most of my tour, the political-military counselor was John Tefft, who just recently—at the end of September—left after being ambassador in Moscow. This is absolutely one of the most distinguished diplomats of our generation. Ambassador in Moscow, in Kiev, in Georgia, and in Lithuania, and a long stint as chargé in Moscow back at the end of the '90s. An incredible guy. Brilliant, but also just a great person to work with. He was really interested in trying to do some good reporting that would give people a clearer picture of Italian security policy—how it's made, sort of the internal political conditioning of that. We did some good writing on that and got nominated for the Director General's Reporting Award. We didn't get it that year. There was pretty stuff completion, but we did get a superior honor award for reporting, so that was gratifying.

Italy had (and still has) a very specific sort of political environment that makes its security policy decision-making complex in that you had to be careful of how things were pitched in the public domain. The balance of power in Italy's coalition governments was delicate. But I think we managed to do a good job of explaining that, with an eye obviously on how you work a security cooperation issue with the Italian authorities in the most effective way. It was not abstract academic research. It was operationally focused and I think it stood us in good stead.

We had really a very tricky issue toward the latter part of my tour, which had to do with the 401st Tactical Fighter, which had been based in Torrejón, Spain. Our base negotiations with Spain had gone south. This was the early period after Spain joined NATO, but it was a close run thing. There was a lot of political neuralgia and the sort of basing relationship had to be rejiggered and basically pared back, so the 401st Tactical

Wing had to move. The Air Force, and DOD (Department of Defense) generally seemed for a long time very committed to trying to keep it forward-based. Keep it based in Europe, rather than moving it back to the U.S. So the issue was where. The Italians, in fact, agreed to take the 401st, but getting to how you facilitate their making a positive decision on that was somewhat tricky. Obviously, we were grateful for their basic inclination, but they had what they felt were their political needs. They had a large, powerful opposition. Again, I think we worked well together with the Italian authorities to craft a decision-making process that was really broadly politically acceptable in the country. Ultimately, though, the 401st Tactical Fighter Wing did not move to Italy!

Q: [Laughs]

TERZUOLO: The Italians understandably felt a need not to concentrate things in any one place. The site that they offered was in Crotone in Calabria. I don't think the U.S. Air Force was ever terribly thrilled with the site. Then, there arose some Congressional questioning of it as well. Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder from Colorado in particular raised a lot of issues. So that didn't happen. I think what happened ultimately was the 401st just moved to Aviano, which in fact made good sense because when it was in Torrejón, its forward deployment location—remember this was the Cold War era—was Aviano, which was in northeastern Italy near the border with Yugoslavia, a presumptive hot area in the event of the balloon going up in a Warsaw Pact attack on NATO. So that made a lot of sense.

In fact, Aviano has always been a relatively trouble-free base, but even there things could happen. We're talking 30 years ago. At that point, the Air Force became aware of the radon danger. Aviano is in a valley, a mountain valley. That is the sort of rocky area where you are most apt to find high radon levels. So the Air Force, what did they do? "Oh, my gosh, we have to start doing radon testing everywhere!" They just charged ahead with doing this. They had a large number of Italian employees at the base. They start doing radon testing everywhere. Radon is radioactive, but not something that is going to turn you into a gigantic anteater or something. It poses long-term cancer risk. Anyway, the Air Force's sudden, massive testing campaign caused a big set-to. The next thing we knew, all the representatives of the Italian unions were on our case going, "What's going on? There are dangers you're not telling us about." I think we've all gotten somewhat better at being proactive about these things. In those days, the Air Force just went ahead and did. Basically, as I was ultimately leaving for my next assignment, we were still trying to calm the waters on the radon thing.

There were a lot of these sorts of things that would crop up in association with the U.S. military presence in Italy. Excess garbage production, for example. It was discovered that a U.S. service member produced roughly 10 times the garbage per annum that an Italian citizen did. So, for example, I think it was in La Magdalena in Sardinia, a beautiful place, and we had based a sub tender, a ship for repairing submarines there. There were actually a fair number of people there. The dump was getting too full. The city fathers and mothers are saying, "It's all you guys doing it!" So we had to work out a situation in which we would try to reduce garbage production and maybe somehow help pay for

some expansion of the dump. There was a lot of this kind of micro-diplomacy, but it was very important to keep things running smoothly. I think we managed to solve quite a number of tricky little problems that weren't so little for the people impacted by them.

That was a particularly good embassy at the time, which really helped. Maxwell Rabb was the ambassador at the time, a political-appointee ambassador. He actually served through both of Ronald Reagan's terms.

Q: Wow!

TERZUOLO: Highly unusual. He wasn't there quite as long as Mike Mansfield was in Japan, but certainly one of our longest-serving ambassadors in the modern era. He was great. I had some good ambassadors, but honestly, if I had to pick one, I really would say Ambassador Rabb was the best ambassador I worked for.

Q: Lovely.

TERZUOLO: He was a prominent attorney in New York, but he had moved between private sector and public service. He was not a young man at the time. I believe he was born in 1910, so he was certainly in his early to mid-70s when we were there. He was very active, extremely energetic. He had more energy than most of the rest of us honestly. What was nice was, Ambassador Rabb had utter faith—I think because he knew government people—he had and showed total faith in his staff. That said, we recognized that he had a comparative advantage in certain things. And we had comparative advantage in others. He was not going to sit down and master the intricacies of the INF Treaty. That would have been an unreasonable thing to expect, frankly. He had in essence a list of issues he felt were particularly important for him to work on personally. It was a list of about 10 items. Over the course of eight years, he ticked them all off. He did very well. He had great confidence and great support for us.

We had a deputy chief of mission, John Holmes, who besides being a great guy and very smart, knew Italy extremely well. This was still in the epoch when the State Department seemed to believe it was important to have people who knew important countries well, spoke the languages well, and had sort of a continuing relationship with the country. John Holmes had done his first tour in Italy. It was at least his third tour in Italy, maybe his fourth. What was interesting and extremely beneficial was people whom he had met and worked with, his Italian contacts from more than 20-some years earlier, who were young people like him at that point, you fast forward 20 years and a lot of these were extremely prominent in the political and private sector. He had just an amazing range of contacts that he could draw on that were people he knew well, who were friends. I think that was extremely valuable and, quite frankly, I think we have totally lost that with respect to most countries. That was quite visible I would say. I think that is kind of a post-Cold War shift. Anyway, it was a very good embassy.

Q: Did you enjoy political-military work yourself?

TERZUOLO: Yes, very much.

Q: Okay.

TERZUOLO: In fact, I do kind of think of myself as a pol-mil weenie basically. I did it then, and some years later I actually returned as political-military counselor in Rome and got booted upstairs to be the political minister counselor. Actually, my last assignment was an arms control/disarmament job. A lot of what I've done subsequently has had a kind of international security policy focus.

Q: Because you're right. It is or can be a very detail oriented compartment of diplomacy that some people do very well with and enjoy, and some people really shy away from.

TERZUOLO: It's actually an area where you have to have a lot of technical expertise to be able to talk about the politics effectively. I think this is honestly true with other sorts of things political officers do anyway. You're going to be a much more effective interlocutor. You're going to be a much more effective advocate for U.S. policy on "X," if you actually understand "X." Yes, the pol-mil stuff requires a lot of detail. Quite honestly, the first few weeks I was there I just trying to learn all the acronyms, to be able to communicate effectively with the military folks within the embassy and the various commands that we dealt with. I just home every night with a splitting headache! There were so many acronyms, but I did learn them. [Laughs]

Q: Speaking of that, how were your interactions with the military? Because obviously they're layered in a country like Italy where the U.S. has bases or bases that we ….

TERZUOLO: That we used.

Q: How were those relationships?

TERZUOLO: I think the relations generally were very good. That said, and in other assignments as well, in a sense you have to earn the confidence of the military, but of the DOD people more generally. You do run into this assumption that State has its own interests and is prepared to sacrifice those of others, which is not correct, but you run into that assumption. I think what we did was consistently prove that we added value to any process. When you can help, time and again, solve a problem, and the U.S. component commander at such-and-such a base can go back to his or her higher authority and say, "The issue is solved," and get a pat on the back for that, that earns you credit. I think we were able to demonstrate the high quality of operational contributions in resolving problems and we had a sympathetic understanding of the military mission. Again, State Department and military institutional cultures are quite different. You have to learn each other's languages. I'm very attuned to issues of cultural code switching.

Q: [Laughs]

TERZUOLO: I had to do it all my life. Between languages, but also I was able to move pretty well between and negotiate, let's say, between two different institutional cultures. Again, depending on the issue, it sometimes took longer to convince folks that we actually did have the right solution to this, even if it was not what they most wanted to do. But you had to be persistent and patient and just keep talking and explaining. I think it worked out fine.

Q: Are there other examples of what a pol-mil officer does that you want to recount in this period you were in Italy? Or are you already thinking now where you are going to go next?

TERZUOLO: The where you are going to go next part is just natural. It's part of the beast, as it were. I'm trying to think if there is anything in particular to add. I reserve the right to come back to things I might want to add.

That was good period in terms of promotions. Before I started bidding, I was promoted to FS-02, so that influenced the bid. I think what I discovered was that, in some ways, no matter how well you do in a post, you can always run into someone who has accumulated more credits to claim a post for which you are extremely well qualified. This is something of the problem with the Foreign Service. Basically, you've got a large number of extremely well qualified people who all, to a significant extent, would probably do equally well in a given assignment. I was actually quite happy with the onward assignment I got, because it was a chance to put some of my academic background to use. In a sense, being in Italy, it was a country I knew well. I had spent time there throughout my life. I had spent the better part of a year there in graduate school when I was doing dissertation research. I spoke the language. In Italy, I was able to use significant parts of my existing skill set, but in terms of using my more classically academic preparation, the next assignment looked like a good option, which was as the desk officer for Yugoslavia.

Q: Ah, okay. So now this would be?

TERZUOLO: 1989.

Q: Okay.

TERZUOLO: I moved back to the U.S. Of course, it was a very particular moment. In my view, honestly, within about six months of the time I showed up on the desk, it was clear to me that Yugoslavia was not going to survive as a country. I knew it quite well. I studied a lot about it, spent some time there. I knew where likely flashpoints were going to be. When I first came to the desk, the big focus was Kosovo. I showed up on the desk not long after Slobodan Milošević had given his St. Vitus Day speech in Kosovo Field, in Kosovo Polje, which really, really was stirring the pot and appealing to his base—an ethnic Serbian base in Kosovo itself, but the population of Kosovo at that point was already primarily ethnic Albanian. He was appealing to his base in Serbia. Yugoslavia still nominally existed at that point. But the centrifugal forces were, I think, already very visible.

When I first showed up on the desk, there was already a lot of Congressional concern about the situation in Kosovo. In particular, Claiborne Pell, was the chairman at that point of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Pell had been a Foreign Service officer as a young man and had a particular interest in the ethnic Albanians. Just as I walked in, there had been a sort of sense of the Senate resolution about the situation in Kosovo, which had of course sent the Yugoslav authorities ballistic. It was obviously very critical. Fingers getting pointed at the Serbs.

I don't remember exactly when he came in, but not long after I showed up on the desk, there was a very fine fellow, Ante Marković, who was the prime minister of Yugoslavia. A business guy. A fellow who said the right things. But it was clear the federal government in Yugoslavia had a hard time in dealing with discontent in the various republics. With Serbia seething over this stuff, obviously the federal government felt they had to try to intervene, so we had a lot of discussions about this. The fact was that, objectively, what Milošević was trying to do was to walk back, very dramatically and drastically, the very extensive autonomy that had been granted to Kosovo in the Tito era. I'm not going to give the details of Tito's balancing act among the various national groups within Yugoslavia, but one of the things that in the Tito era had been done was to create, I think the title was "The (Socialist) Autonomous Province of Kosovo," within the Serbian Republic within the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. What was clear was the degree of autonomy given to Kosovo was very marked. There was also an autonomous province in Vojvodina, reflecting the substantial Hungarian ethnic presence there. But that was a much milder situation.

It was a complex situation. I can understand some degree of frustration perhaps among the Serbs at the fact this was the heartland of the medieval Serbian kingdom. I went to Kosovo before going to the desk. I was still in Rome and went over to look at it. There are very important monasteries, religious sites that are Serbian sites. Cemeteries. The center of the Serbian population did move over time. It basically moved north for a variety of reasons. In the Ottoman period, there is substantial movement of Serbs farther north, going into Hapsburg lands, which seemed preferable to them. So there is this shift. The Serbs tended to perceive this as the Albanians taking their land. They took our graves. They took our historical sites. They are defacing our historical sites. In fact, I was at the monasteries. A lot of them had been defaced. I don't know who did it. There was a lot of rancor at this. In effect, the Autonomous Province of Kosovo was virtually the equivalent of a republic. In essence, it was the Albanian quasi-republic. They had seats in the federal presidency.

Q: Oh, interesting.

TERZUOLO: There was a Serbian seat, but then there were Vojvodina and Kosovo. There was a lot of bitterness. Milošević was just tapping into this. He was basically trying to walk back this degree of autonomy, which was from a political point of view very unsound, because he was not, without very drastic means, going to change the demographic composition of the area. It was an argument that was very difficult to

swallow, let's say, because of increasing repression. As you strip away rights that people have acquired, this does have an impact. It stimulates a reaction, and then there is a counter-reaction. There's already this downward spiral long before. We're talking here about 1989. The NATO intervention in Kosovo is 10 years later, but there's already in '89 a dramatic deterioration of the situation.

Personally, I tried to argue that, without diminishing the Kosovo problem, what would ultimately tear the country apart was a Serb-Croat war, as the two largest nationalities. Slovenia is a relatively compact area, ethnically homogeneous. It's on the fringe of the country. There were not a lot of Slovenes outside Slovenia. There were a lot of non-Slovenes in Slovenia, relatively speaking. Trying to think ahead, it didn't seem to me that an eventual Slovenian exit would be that troublesome. In fact, as we know, Slovenia did exit. They fought a 10-day, I believe, war with a very limited number of casualties. It was different with the Serbs, the Croats, and then the Bosnian Muslims, because here you have the actual intersection and intermingling of these groups, with contestation of pieces of territory, pieces of territory in, for example, Croatia that the Serbs regarded as theirs, or in Bosnia. Bosnia of course was a real patchwork quilt of nationalities. How do you disassemble Bosnia in some way? As we've seen, it didn't go well. It seemed to me these were the issues more important to focus on.

By spring of 1990, so within less than a year of being on the desk, I was convinced the country was not going to hold up. There were a lot of tensions, outbreaks of fighting, sporadic things not clearly generated from centers. Not centers of authority necessarily, but the tensions were already high. The state policy of the U.S. government, which we repeated at every occasion, was that we supported the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. I will say that I tried to convince higher ups in the Department that this was not in fact going to play out as we hoped and that we should think about it more in terms of how we might manage a breakup. Do damage control, basically. I did get a hearing from Larry Eagleburger, who was deputy secretary of state at the time. He had been ambassador in Yugoslavia. We had met. He sent my memo it back to me, and said, "Thanks for doing this. Appreciate your thoughts. I don't agree though." That sort of ended the issue.

Our policy toward Yugoslavia was only secondarily a policy toward Yugoslavia. It was primarily a byproduct of our policy toward the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), which we were trying to preserve. We were hoping Gorbachev was somehow going to save the day, manage to keep it together. We were, it seems to me, really quite terrified of the consequences of dissolution of the Soviet Union and expected probably more violence than turned out to be the case in the breakup of the Soviet Union and probably less violence than was the case in the breakup of Yugoslavia. But there was clearly concern with not doing anything policy-wise vis-à-vis Yugoslavia that would signal U.S. acceptance of the concept of one of these multiethnic socialist states breaking up. I think we got into a bit of a bind there on the Yugoslavia policy. It made it difficult to be, if you will, proactive or look beyond the horizon. But I gave it my best shot.

It was an exhausting job. There was already so much happening. I was the only person doing Yugoslavia. I was not the last person to be the one-man Yugoslav desk, but I think I was next to the last. It was very stressful.

Another aspect of it was that there was a lot of interest in the U.S. among the various ethnic communities to support their co-nationals in Yugoslavia. Some of the people were perfectly nice. But I was it on Yugoslavia, so I fielded a lot of meetings with and phone calls from people, for example, who wanted to register the discontent of Croatian-Americans with U.S. policy on keeping Yugoslavia together. Pretty much on all fronts. The conversations could often be very tough, because these Americans, perhaps through no fault of their own, perhaps willfully, had very skewed, tendentious, very limited understandings of the history of Yugoslavia, of their particular group within Yugoslavia. You would sometimes have conversations in which people would express genocidal views vis-à-vis other groups. These were American citizens, and you just wanted to say, "I'm sorry. You're an American citizen. This isn't what we do. That's not an American point of view." I tried to be diplomatic, if you will, with people, but encountered a lot of really harsh views. If you did not share their aspirations, you might come under personal attack. There was an organized campaign on the part of Croatian-Americans to get me fired at one point.

Q: Sure.

TERZUOLO: That was tough. It was interesting, but sometimes disconcerting. Again, I was the one guy doing Yugoslavia. I got a chance to meet some people who subsequently became very prominent. Alija Izetbegović, for example, who was subsequently president of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who struck me I have to say as a fine gentleman and who did not express himself in any genocidal fashion. He would be subsequently tarred with being some sort of crazed Islamic fundamentalist. I sincerely don't believe that was ever his view. He was, and this was kind of uncharacteristic in Yugoslavia, interested in trying to find a better role, if you will, for religion in life. Perhaps his view of Bosnian Muslim identity may have had a somewhat larger weight for Islam as a defining characteristic. In the Yugoslav scheme of things, Bosnian Muslims were not established as a religious category. It was an ethnic category. I'm intensely skeptical, honestly of the view of Izetbegović as an Islamist. Bosnians did end up accepting military assistance from a lot of hardline Muslim countries, but I think it was not terribly surprising under the circumstances. They were really floundering and looking for help anywhere they could get it. They weren't getting much help from the West.

Another person I met was Franjo Tudjman, who became president for life of Croatia. Tudjman was a highly intelligent man. I think he had understood, or had been sufficiently briefed to know, that he needed to soft-pedal some things. I would say for about 15 minutes, he held out pretty well and then started going ballistic about the Serbs after that point.

A lot of these groups, they assumed that Yugoslavia was a sufficiently unknown entity that they weren't going to run into an interlocutor on the U.S. government side that had a

pretty good knowledge of the place. So I was in a position sometimes to ask provocative questions. Tudjman was noted, for example, as a revisionist regarding the Croatian Nazi puppet state, wartime atrocities and genocide. "Oh, you know, we only killed 60,000 Serbs, not 600,00 Serbs"—this sort of stuff. I was well aware of that. I think I did provoke him a bit.

It was always interesting to see how long people's veneers of civility would last. The Croatian interlocutors could usually do about 15 minutes. In a way, I almost appreciated the Serbian-Americans who would come in and tell me, "All Albanians have to die!" At least they weren't covering anything up. You knew immediately where you stood. It was in fact an interesting aspect of it, but not a pleasant aspect.

Another person who came to see me was Vojislav Šešelj, one of the great Serbian extremists. One of these people who were too over the top for Milošević! He was totally, totally berserk from the moment he came in.

Anyway, I would dutifully write down all these conversations, send them around to a few people, and say, "Not looking good, I think!"

It was an interesting job. I will confess, I got very wrung out by it and had a nice opportunity then to go to Prague. Just the physical and emotional exhaustion of dealing with the Yugoslavia mess made me very happy to seize the opportunity to go to Prague.

Q: Let me ask just one more question before you leave the desk because based on your studies and your experience with Yugoslavia, what was it that made these south Slavs so bloodthirsty? Just a very quick example…

TERZUOLO: It's a very bloody-minded approach to things. I believe that conflict is, alas, an intrinsic part, and inescapable part of human life. Force is inescapable element of international relations. You try to reduce its use to a minimum. I am not a pacifist. I have no great illusions, but I have had the experience of being in a couple of places, or a couple of working situations, in which, yes, there was an extraordinarily bloody-mindedness. Remember Beirut! It strikes me that people can contain within themselves multiple competing souls.

Actually, going back to Lebanon, but I think it's illustrative of this phenomenon—it's actually a friend's story but he recounted it to me in considerable horror. But I think it's telling. This was actually I think after I left, or at least it was at the point when I was doing admin work, when we were moving most of our operations to Christian-controlled East Beirut. I had been following the Christian right, the Phalangists, and so my friend who was still in the political section thought, "Well, I better pick this up a bit and go talk to some people." So he arranged to meet for lunch with this fellow who was fairly high up in the political structure of the Phalange, the Gemayel party, if memory serves. It's been a while. In any case, a guy who is high up in the politics on the Christian side. They have a wonderful lunch actually. This guy is very intelligent, sophisticated, charming. They talked about all sorts of common interests that had nothing to do necessarily with

Lebanese politics. My friend is going, "Oh, my gosh! Maybe this is someone I can have a normal relationship with, maybe just enjoy each other's company." So they are getting up to leave, and the guy says, "Oh, look. Before we go, I have to show you the pictures of the Druze woman I killed in the fighting in the Chouf Mountains last year."

Q: Wow.

TERZUOLO: So there he is. He's got his Polaroids or whatever of this woman he had killed. Talk about a schizoid situation—coexistence of different aspects in the same person. The Yugoslav case was tough because of the insufficient hold of any sort of shared identity. I think the concept of Yugoslavism was probably a kind of elite intellectual concept. You know, South Slav unity. We have more in common than divides us. This goes back to the 19th Century.

Yugoslavism in effect becomes an ideological selling point for Tito during the Resistance. During the war, individual national groups collaborated with the Axis. A sort of higher-minded vision was probably attractive to at least a certain chunk of the population because other people were exploiting exasperated national sentiment. Once Tito took over, however, he also exploited diverse national identities in a sort of balancing act. Tito, say what you want, was a very able guy in many respects and was able to maintain a balance, often however by anything but subtle and anything but gentle means.

Not without reason, I would say, the Serbs had a feeling they had been the losers in Titoist Yugoslavia, because they were the largest group and the balancing was done to a significant extent at their expense. They felt they had made very important contributions to the war effort. Then their territory divvied up, in their view, to help balance things out within the federal structure. In, I guess, the late '60s, there was the Ranković purge. Aleksandar Ranković, who was the minister of the interior, I recall --Tito purged Ranković for being overly Serbian, if you will. There was a kind of purge, fairly moderate, but nonetheless a purge of Croatian nationalist intellectuals in the 1970s. In some ways, and this is often the case, the maintenance of the Federation was done at the expense of the larger groups, with the smaller groups gaining advantages that were perceived as disproportionate.

Q: Okay.

TERZUOLO: There was a lot of unresolved tension that Tito managed basically to keep down, to control, to beat down physically in a lot of cases, but it was probably going to come out sooner or later. I think, too, as the Yugoslavs saw things happening in the rest of Eastern Europe. My office was the Office of Eastern European and Yugoslav Affairs, because we wanted to mark them off. They were not Warsaw Pact. But they're looking at this going on and I think a lot of people in Yugoslavia took the things that happened in Prague and Budapest as validation for nationalism, recovery of national identity. They're not looking at it in the sense of "Oh, great! We're all going to be brothers!" or even

"Yeah, we'll all get to be brothers, and we'll hate each other in our own distinctively national ways. It will be great!"

Q: Then you get ready to go to Prague, where the experience of separation is entirely different.

TERZUOLO: Absolutely. It was interesting. I will say that we had a kind of inkling. Deborah and I both did nine months of Czech language training. We started late because we didn't get the assignment at the usual time. The embassy said, "Well, better if they do Czech language, and we'll wait." It was a good move because I used my Czech a lot as did Deborah. Very helpful. We got a sense of Czech-Slovak tension from our absolutely lovely, rather bourgeois Czech language teachers. Notably, there was a couple. They were both lovely people, but you really got a sense of, "We're Czechs. The Slovaks, they're kind of something else". It's interesting if you think of it. Václav Havel, a great man. Certainly, his stated desire and effort was to avoid the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. I would argue, however, that Havel in many ways was quintessentially Czech in his perception of the Slovaks.

Q: Ah.

TERZUOLO: In his plays for example, there are Slovak characters. The Slovak characters are stereotyped. The men are stupid bullies, and the women are sluts. That's an issue. Czechoslovakia was an odd combination. You took what was in fact perhaps the single wealthiest area of Central Europe, Bohemia—highly industrialized -- and you link it up to Slovakia, which had really never had a meaningful independent existence as a state. It was under Hungarian rule—a very harsh and exploitative Hungarian rule. There are a lot of problems there that the Slovaks faced. Certainly, the developmental difference between the two parts of the country was huge. Often, at this point, it was Czechs talking about their fathers or mothers who in the pre-Communist era had been trying to help the poor benighted Slovaks. They would go, "Yes, he went and taught in Slovakia," with a sense of noblesse oblige. Or maybe a doctor who went and felt it was their duty to go and help the Slovaks, who were so miserable. There was a lot of this, really looking down their noses at the Slovaks.

Temperamentally also. One shouldn't generalize about these things, but they were quite different. Czechs are very Central European on the whole. They are reserved. Slovaks, the ones I knew and met, and I met lots of them, tended to be a little more Mediterranean in a way.

Q: Mmm hmmm.

TERZUOLO: They were definitely less reserved. They were much more prepared to invade your physical space or have their physical space invaded. The Czechs tended to keep their distance. These are cultural things.

I think even before we got there, and after we had been there for a while, we did get the sense of, "You know, I don't think these people are going to hang together. I just don't see them together."

Q: Interesting. Yeah.

TERZUOLO: There, too, our initial impulse was, "Got to keep it together!" I think we had some differences of opinion within the embassy over this, to be honest. For the first year we were there, Shirley Temple Black was the ambassador.

Q: Wow!

TERZUOLO: I had great love and esteem for Ambassador Black. A lovely person. The most unpretentious ambassador I've ever worked with. She ate in the cafeteria. We had this little cafeteria. She was there every day. She would just plop down at whoever's table and start talking. She did not expect to be kowtowed to. She didn't really like all the fancy trappings. A spectacular residence with an actually very small ambassadorial quarters, but she used the big spaces for representational purposes. She and her husband, Charlie, who was a lovely guy, they basically lived in these very modest ambassadorial quarters. She would go shopping. She would go and cook dinner. She had people who would cook dinner for her, but she wanted to do that. I think this is profoundly admirable.

Q: Oh, yeah.

TERZUOLO: She was a truly admirable person. That said, we did not have the same views on the long-term prospects for Czechoslovakia. I think she was much more optimistic about it staying together. She was an optimistic person by nature. In fact, she had overcome a lot of difficulties in her life that people don't necessarily realize. She always tried to keep a positive spirit about things. I don't know entirely to what extent it was that, and to what extent it may have been a sense that, "Oh, my gosh, if the country breaks up on my watch, it's like I have somehow failed." It shouldn't be that way. People shouldn't worry about it. We assume that things that are in fact beyond our control are within our control.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: This is an error we make constantly. Lebanon. People tend not to know that Donald Rumsfeld at one point was making peace in Lebanon.

Q: Wow, you're right!

TERZUOLO: It never appears in his biographies. I was sort of his control officer a few times. I think he realized it was a lost cause and managed to reroute to something else. Yeah, he came in several times. Any biography of his that I've read, this was never included. But, anyway….

Q: Interesting.

TERZUOLO: If Ambassador Black was worried about not keeping the place together being perceived as a failure, I think it would have been an exaggeration. Deborah and I arrived in the summer of 1991. It's really the summer of 1992 that things mature, particularly after the elections in the Czech Republic, which the ODS (Civic Democratic Party), Václav Klaus and company, win. Not that Klaus was, I would say, a separatist, however he didn't have any problem with, in effect, saying to the Slovaks, "You guys want to go. You've been talking about going. That's alright with us."

Q: Today is March 8th. We're resuming our interview with Eric Terzuolo, in Czech language training.

TERZUOLO: Yes. We already talked a bit about the time in Prague, but there are a few things I think are important to say about the language training experience. Czech was the only language I studied, let's say, full time at FSI (Foreign Service Institute), so my experience is limited. I did early morning Spanish for a while, but that was a very different experience. I have the utmost esteem for FSI language training. I think it's virtually a unique asset. I've also had the occasion to collect, over the years, perceptions of people outside the system about the language training process and the results. It justifiably gets high marks, really, I think, from everybody. I just have the experience of dealing with people who have studied at FSI, or people who have had occasion to look at the pedagogy and so forth, say from a linguistics expert approach. I think this is an invaluable thing that the State Department does.

Czech language training was interesting in a lot of ways because the language is particularly complex. I had studied other Slavic languages before—first Russian, and then Serbo-Croatian, when there still was a language called by that name, or Croato-Serbian. My wife, who was taking Czech at the same time, had studied Russian in high school and college quite seriously. We had a Slavic language background, in sum, which was enormously helpful.

The Slavic languages, by European language standards, are relatively complicated to begin with. Czech is probably the most complex of the Slavic languages because of its very odd linguistic history. We soon discovered that in effect with Czech, a little bit as with Arabic, you're dealing actually with two separate languages. The spoken language of educated people is not actually the standard, proper, written language. There is still a disconnect. We realized that what we were taught basically was the written language, and we were expected to, in essence, speak the written language. It was a little bit as if we would be expected to speak Elizabethan English. Maybe not Elizabethan English, but let's say, Jacobean English, or something like that because of the peculiar history of how Czech was for a time a literary language. It was the language of high culture. When the Czechs revolted against the Habsburgs. The Czechs were overwhelmingly Protestant and revolted against the Habsburgs unsuccessfully—there's a repression that then takes place on the part of the Hapsburgs, which is cultural, religious, political but also linguistic as Czech sort of gets driven down into being the language of the peasantry.

Q: What I had heard was if you have a background in Russian, it's easier to learn Czech because Russian itself is such a complicated Slavic language that your mind is already kind of ready for the difficulty of Czech.

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes, definitely. It was certainly very helpful in the sense you get used to the case forms. You know, nominative, dative, etc. Actually, Czech even has a vocative case, which Russian lost along the way. You're used to, at least, the concept of the declensions. It also has the concept of aspect. Those different verbs you use in essence for an action that is or was or will be ongoing, as opposed to things that are completed.

Q: Interesting.

TERZUOLO: These are, in a sense, from a linguistic history standpoint, archaic traits. These are things that you find in the earlier generations, as it were, of Indo-European languages that dropped out. The Romance languages for example lost these things entirely. It does get you used to it. To some extent, it helps with Slavic vocabulary, because the roots are often very similar. Czech is, however, particularly complicated. You might have in Czech, for example, four different words for the same concept—two of them actually Czech words, one maybe very archaic, and one perhaps that entered the vocabulary more recently. Plus, for many things there is often a Latin-based word—obviously, technical things, medical, etc. You've got at least part of the vocabulary where there is a Latin-based term.

Then, very often, there is a sort of Germanic terminology. This also gets you into the issue of Prague dialect, which is highly influenced by German. The proper Czech word for hospital is "nemocnice"—a place of sickness as it were. But in fact, in Prague, well-educated people, but Praguers, would call it the "Spital." So you've got a lot of different layers, and it would happen in our language classes that we would be asked, "How would you say this in Czech?" You might come with something and then the instructor would say, "Well, yes, that is correct, but that's not how we would say it. We would use this word instead of that word." Obviously, there was some shading of meaning, but often shading of meaning or of usage that was sufficiently subtle that it was really hard to put into words.

The fellow I mostly had for language classes, Pan Sablik, Mr. Sablik, he had been a gymnasium teacher in Czechoslovakia and then left. He and his wife left. His wife, Pani Sablikova, also taught Czech. Pan Sablik was in many ways what you would expect of a gymnasium professor. In the Central European scheme of things, being a gymnasium professor was a prestigious job, in which you were the guardian in effect of the highest cultural values. So he wanted us to speak a very fine and literary, if you will, quality of Czech. I really learned a lot from him.

There was also flexibility. I think there were four instructors in the Czech program at any given time. It was enough that they could practice some flexibility. For example, due to

background, maybe just innate aptitude, whatever—having been raised bilingual probably influenced it—I was doing pretty well with Czech. After a while, they put me in a class with John Evans who was going out as DCM. He had served in Prague before, so he came in with a considerable, albeit at that point rusty, knowledge of Czech. I really appreciated that flexibility. John and I were, I think, good classmates for each other. The levels and abilities meshed quite well. They could kind of push us along. I thought the language instruction was in fact very well done.

There were a few, if you will, logistical problems. FSI, the Foreign Service Institute, in those days was all in Rosslyn in rented office buildings. These were small, intensive language classes with no more than four students in any section. What they neglected to do in divvying up the space was to ensure ventilation, so we had a classic "sick" building" syndrome. We all had multiple respiratory infections. The air was just not being refreshed.

Q: Right. In fact, I think around the time finally that building was beginning to be phased out, there were reports in the press about how bad the interior was and the difficult health conditions basically that it created from being so small, so subdivided, and so poorly ventilated.

TERZUOLO: This was not a unique issue at the State Department. It's a weird little story, but when I was the Yugoslav desk officer—we talked about that earlier—I had a wonderful office. It was glorious. Fifth floor State Department facing the Lincoln Memorial—it made a nice impression when I had visitors, I have to say. But it had no connection to ventilation, because they had divided up a larger office, and all the ventilation connections had gone over to the other side! After considerable frustration with this, I actually did resolve the problem. I called OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration). They sent inspectors to monitor it. OSHA said, "No, the air quality here and the temperature is not acceptable." People had been trying to get this done for years. I wasn't the first to recognize the problem. Once OSHA intervened, the next thing I knew there were people there working and hooking up the ventilation and everything.

Q: Extraordinary!

TERZUOLO: *[Laughs]* I actually got a positive mention for this in an efficiency report, of all things!

Q: Wow! I have to admit that is the first time I have ever heard of anyone having a successful intervention from OSHA simply by asking!

TERZUOLO: I dropped the dime! It all flowed very rapidly I have to say.

Q: The other thing is, your entire experience of how the language that you worked on is sort of the more highfalutin literary language, or university-educated language, but then

the language on the street being quite different—that was my experience with Armenian. I got there, and they said, "You sound like a newscaster!"

TERZUOLO: Yes. I left FSI and went to Prague. I scored a 4/4+. I did not then take the test again at the end of my tour because I figured I would actually get a lower score because my speech had become more colloquial.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: Among other things, a lot of the people I dealt with, or a fair chunk of the people I dealt with in Prague, were not on the intellectual elite side. I worked a lot with the police, for example, in these agencies—nothing wrong with these folks. Actually, I think they seemed quite committed to their work, but talking to them involved a different kind of language that you might hear from President Havel or a member of parliament or something like that.

The other problem you have, and this is very common with languages whose speakers perceive their language as being unusual, is that people don't necessarily realize you are speaking their language immediately. I knew some German already and got a chance to practice. Debbie learned quite a bit of German—only nouns, no verbs! Sometimes, people would look at us and simply decided no, these people by definition cannot be speaking Czech, so they must be speaking German. German was the default for foreigners at the time. It may be English now, I don't know.

Q: Very familiar. I've been in some situations where I'm speaking their language, and they are speaking English back to me as if they don't believe I could be communicating in their language.

TERZUOLO: Anyway, going back to the language training, I think the quality of the language training was good, and I think in fact the language instructors were very helpful in providing useful cultural information.

Q: Ah! Okay.

TERZUOLO: Now, I think one of the issues is if you rely exclusively on language instructors to provide information about the country, you are going to get some skewing that somebody who is a bit more removed might be able to avoid. On the other hand, if you took things in the right way—absorbed and thought analytically about what you were hearing and so forth, there is a lot of very useful information. We came away with a very clear picture before we arrived that—we're talking about the Czech part—basically you're dealing with very Central European petty bourgeois reality there. Not surprising, given the fact that you look at the history of these parts of Europe, and they're totally enmeshed in German-speaking Europe, historically, the Czech parts. The Slovaks have a very different history in the Hungarian side of what becomes Austria-Hungary and, in many ways, a very unfortunate position.

The Czechs were Bohemia, Moravia. Important parts of the Central European-German cultural sphere. They were extremely prosperous areas. Certainly, Bohemia and Moravia. Bohemia in particular, was the industrial center of the Habsburg Monarchy. It's a very different thing from dealing with countries farther east, for example, that have much different historical paths, much lower level of average economic development, much lower levels of industrialization historically. It was interesting. Once we got to Prague as well, it was very obvious how despite the ravages of Communism, which were very considerable, not just a lot of bad policies, not just repression, but I think the creation of a climate of mutual distrust, profound mutual distrust, which persists in many ways I think throughout Europe to this day, unfortunately. Nonetheless, you could see in the Czech case it was something of an outlier with respect to the rest of Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe in its political definition.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: Prague is west of Vienna.

Q: Having served in Romania, Hungary and Austria, literally one step farther west, one step farther west, one step almost into Central Europe, that distrust is strongest the farther east you go, and it lessens and lessens until you get into really truly Central Europe where there is still a little. But it's nothing like Romania. It will be generations before they're cured of it. Hungary.

TERZUOLO: Yes, I would argue that a lot of the problems we're seeing in—problems from our perspective anyway—in the current political evolution, or devolution, of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, part of it is the persistence of very low levels of social trust. That opens the way, it seems to me, to xenophobia, racism.

Anyway, I think there was a lot of good stuff from the language part of the program. To be honest, I didn't get a lot out of the area studies portion. For me, a lot of it was very repetitious. I had a PhD in East European history. Czechoslovakia was not my focus country, but I had studied it extensively in graduate school, and my mentor in graduate school actually had spent a lot of time there. I learned a lot anecdotally from him as well. I was probably not, to be honest, the most receptive of area studies students.

It was useful to me many years later when I started teaching area studies at FSI myself. I think I tried to structure things in ways that were not too academic. I tried to structure things that both conveyed information, but were also heavily interactive, and tried to really introduce discussion. People learn from each other, too. You've got a great resource. Particularly when the area studies classes were still large, you had a lot of people with a lot of knowledge and resources who had very interesting and valuable insights, maybe comparative and so forth. Yeah, I really tried to do things I would say a bit differently. You try to make lemons…!

I would say on the whole, though, I felt quite well prepared for Prague.

Q: Remind me, what year do you arrive in Prague?

TERZUOLO: Okay, we arrived in the summer of 1991, and we remained until the summer of 1994.

Q: Okay.

TERZUOLO: It was a very interesting time to arrive. Yes, we missed the Velvet Revolution. We missed the first free elections. But what we were there for was actually the start of the economic and social change. When we arrived, the socialist economy had shut down in a sense. There was real difficulty finding stuff. Czechoslovakia had not suffered from the sort of food shortages that were classic throughout Eastern Europe in the Cold War era. They never had those problems, but the problem was really one of commerce. How do you get things to people? Who's going to run the store? Who's going to mind the store? It was very interesting to see the rise of the private economy from the ground up. I would say the first six months or so we were there, there was really this kind of void. Then, in the beginning of '92, you really you start to see things changing. The change becomes much more visible, more extensive, and then it sort of gains traction.

People would drive out of the country to go shopping. We weren't crazy about doing it, but it was kind of the standard embassy practice was to jump in the car and drive to Germany where there were some commissaries and so forth. We did that. It didn't do a lot for us. We actually found that driving south to Austria in some ways suited us better. It was about the same amount of time. Once you got just across the Austrian border, there were nice towns, nice supermarkets. All kinds of stuff that we liked to eat.

Basically, it was early '92. I do remember this, the first time we went to the Spanish supermarket that opened on the outskirts of Prague. It was a relatively minor Spanish supermarket chain actually, but they opened up, and it was just a huge thing. But after about six months of scrambling around for food, the blackened carrots… Literally, the first time we went we were too stupefied to really buy anything!

Q: [Laughs]

TERZUOLO: We just wandered. Then we said, "Okay, we'll go home. We'll come back. Let's think about this a moment. Organize ourselves and we'll come back and proceed like normal, not mentally disordered people!" It seems like a small thing but boy that made a big change!

There were other amusing things. We did a certain amount of shopping at a gas station actually. At a certain point while we were there, Agip, the Italian energy company that runs a lot of the gas stations still in Italy, started opening up some gas stations in the vicinity of Prague, on the periphery. These had certain things that were very valuable for us. They had nice Italian olive oil. Not just motor oil, there was olive oil! There were good Italian packaged crushed tomatoes, pasta, just a few things but thoughtfully done. You know, if you've got an Italian who is lost in the wilds of the Czech Republic at this

point, what fundamental survival supplies would they be looking for? So oil, pasta, tomatoes! *[Laughs]* It was kind of an amusing experience.

The work in Prague was very interesting. In a lot of ways, it was I think my favorite tour of duty. I loved being in Italy, particularly the first tour of duty that we talked about already. But I loved the opportunity to see things improving. At a certain point, it became quite visible, and it was really a kind of day-by-day process. Actually, the embassy's location was an excellent vantage point for this. We would see buildings around the embassy and say, "Oh, they're there, and they're fixing it up!" Then something would open.

A key was the process of restitution of properties that had been confiscated after the communist coup in 1948. This was a very smart move on their part, because it allowed them to do, it seems to me, multiple things. They were able in this way to forge valuable international connections. The restitutions were going basically to people who were abroad. A lot of American citizens, who had been Czechoslovak citizens but left after '48 or left after '68, recovered properties that had been in their families. This also meant that if they felt like it, if they had the wherewithal, there was some outside capital that could come in.

You also realized the importance of generations in this post-communist reconstruction. I hate to say it, but the generation of Czechs in their late 30s and 40s, basically our generation, had a lot of problems. They had basically grown up under communism entirely. They truly did suffer from a kind of spiritual impoverishment as a result of that. It was also there was only one thing they knew.

In the restitution process, what happens is very interesting—in essence grandparents come back into the fray. The grandparental generation comes back, including people who'd remained in Czechoslovakia or people who had left. In essence, people who remembered what it was like before 1948, when this was one of the wealthiest countries in the world. It was a highly functional democracy, rule of law. All that good stuff, it was there. They remembered this. In many cases, the grandparental generation was then able to partner with the generation of grandchildren. Yes, to an extent they had grown up under communism, but they were still young. They had more mental flexibility. They were able to take on something new. They were not faced with a total change at age 40 of everything they had known their whole life. So they were able to jump into the fray. You saw a lot of these grandparent/grandchildren partnerships, which was a very interesting phenomenon.

Actually, you felt good. I at least felt good about being there and feeling that in some modest way maybe I could contribute a little bit. This was the early days. I'm sure it's different now. I haven't been back to the Czech Republic since '96. I follow events there, but I don't have a feel for what it's like now. In the early post-communist era, there was a real thirst for new ideas, for knowledge, for foreign models and inspiration. Whatever they could pick up, they were interested in. In the end maybe, they wouldn't work out, but there was a sort of receptiveness broadly speaking that, as a foreign representative,

made it a very gratifying place to work. Trying to make connections. I mentioned working a lot with law enforcement there, and I worked hard on making connections between notably FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) and Czech law enforcement, and even more so, DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency). DEA was very activist and, in my experience, not very bureaucratic either.

Q: Was there a major drug or transshipment issue with the Czech Republic?

TERZUOLO: Yes, definitely. It was a transshipment point. It was pretty far north and it was pretty far west. As I recall, they were dealing with problems of Balkan route heroin that would make its way through there. You had efforts, for example, by the ethnic Albanian mafia, which was mostly Kosovar Albanian more than Albania Albanian. The Kosovars had more space to operate. There was certainly indigenous criminality as well. The drug issue, it was more of a transit country than a large-scale consumption country as I recall. It wasn't the Wild West. Nonetheless, you lifted off a highly repressive system that had done terrible things, but had also had the effect of tamping down some of the darker animal spirits as well, or at least keeping them under control. Criminality occurred, but it was probably more regulated, if you will! *[Laughs]* And, frankly, nationalism, the darker side of nationalism also tended to be tamped down in these multinational communist societies. It never got very bad in Czechoslovakia.

I was there for the split. I think I mentioned last time that, having worked recently on Yugoslavia before going into Czech language training and then going to Prague, I was very attuned to the issue of multinational, multiethnic states dividing up. It really seemed to me highly unlikely that Czechoslovakia, or by the time the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic to be precise, would survive over the long haul. As I think I mentioned, we had some differences of opinion within the embassy over this.

It was really interesting to be there for the split, in part because on the Washington side there was great apprehension. "Oh, no, we can't have another Yugoslavia!" By this time, the Soviet Union had collapsed also, so we were worrying about various aspects of that and various consequences. They would say, "Oh, my gosh, this looks like it's going to be another Yugoslavia. I think once it became obvious this split was going to happen, we in the embassy were all of common mind that this was not going to be another Yugoslavia. I remember writing in a cable: "There's not the same sort of bloody-mindedness here that we saw in Yugoslavia."

Q: At the time, I had just arrived at Vienna OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe). Relatively close. Not so close that we could follow it day-by-day, but the sense was, certainly among the Czech diplomats who were there and the Slovak diplomats, that this was not going to be violent. The problems were simply going to be, how do you figure out the border and border regulations, and basically that's it.

TERZUOLO: Yes, border regulations. How you run the economy, aspects of what had been the common economy. Of course, there was the issue of the flag. Who would get the flag? Who would be the successor? They agreed that neither the Czech Republic nor the

Slovak Republic would take up the flag of Czechoslovakia. But then what did the Czechs do with this? I think it really annoyed the Slovaks, comprehensibly. The Czechs adjusted the proportions of the three blocks, the three parts of the flag—blue, red and white. They just altered the proportions.

At the risk of sounding like an unpleasant and snarky person, it was in some ways a very Czech thing to do. There is this kind of Central European, "Yes, we will adhere to the letter of the law," but the spirit is a different matter.

Q: It's the old "Good Soldier Švejk."

TERZUOLO: Yes, there was bit of that. It was interesting to see. I served, as some of the other embassy people did, as an observer in the '92 Czech Republic elections, which people kind of forget about but really were a crucial moment in all of this, when the Civic Democratic Party of Václav Klaus, the ODS (Občanská demokratická strana) for short, won big. A center-right, free market, fiscally conservative party wins the Czech elections in '92. At that point, it was clear that there was not going to be an immediate bond between Václav Klaus and the Slovak leadership at the time.

The Slovaks in my view miscalculated. I don't think they wanted actual independence. I think they wanted an extremely loose confederation in which somehow they could still tap into the benefits of an economy and monetary area hooked up to the objectively better off Czech part of the country. Klaus was not going to go for this, whereas I think Havel was practicing a great degree of political correctness with respect to maintaining the unity of the country. After all, he was the president of Czechoslovakia. What was he going to say? I understand Havel's position. Klaus's position was very different, in the sense that he allowed in essence the Slovaks to make the pitch for what they wanted, and said, "No, we can't agree to that. That's not acceptable, so by implication we will have to divide." That election was very significant for the breakup of the country

It was interesting, too, the way they conducted the election. I remember Washington at that point was really interested in the nitty gritty of internal things. I did a lot of work on that, in part because I had developed a lot of contacts in the Czech political sphere, a lot of members of parliament, etc. Washington actually asked us, "So what is it like to vote? What happens when you go into the voting booth?" With the help of Czech colleagues who worked with us, we did come up with quite a detailed report. I remember the opening line, "To vote in the Czech Republic, one must be a highly intelligent person."

Q: Beautiful.

TERZUOLO: I don't honestly remember the details of the system anymore, but it was profoundly more complex to cast your ballot in the Czech Republic than it was in the United States. The complexities then had implications for outcomes, too, of balloting.

I went to various places. There was no problem. There was no reason to really expect any problems, but it was considered important, and rightly so, that there should be

international observers. Our embassy had a few people who drove around various parts of the Czech Republic that day, the voting day. I think some of the other embassies may have done similar things. There were no irregularities. The Czechs were in fact very meticulous about adhering to the rules, and this regardless of who was running the seat.

One of the people I talked to at a voting station or polling place somewhere—I don't remember—was a very interesting woman . I explained who I was. I asked her a little bit about herself. She was the president of the polling station. She said, "Oh, I am a member of the Communist Party. I'm voting for the Communist Party." She explained to me why she remained ideologically committed to these views and so forth. But I have to say, in terms of the conduct of the balloting and so forth, it was not different than what you saw anywhere else, and it was conducted with the utmost correctness. It's nice when you can say that.

The division, the split was a big topic of interest in Washington. It was a focus of our reporting for a number of months. It doesn't happen to many people, but watching from the offices of the embassy political section as the Czechoslovak flag was lowered from the Hradčany Castle, the presidential palace, which we could see perfectly from our offices, and the new flag was raised was an emotional moment. It was clearly an emotional moment for a lot of our Czech colleagues, probably a few people whose memories stretched back to pre-'48, although they were very young at that point. But clearly there was a certain sense of loss that a lot of people experienced with this, although I would say on the whole the view was "Okay, now we're turning a page. Let's get on with it." Though a lot of Czech high culture involves a certain amount of intellectual game playing—Kundera and so forth, these authors -- the basic approach to the world most of the time is pretty matter of fact and pretty concrete. "Okay, it's a new country. Let's get on with it."

Q: Yeah. And that's exactly how it was seen from outside, at least from where I was in Vienna. Václav Klaus clearly outmaneuvered the Slovaks in the media reporting that I saw. He bet in essence that the Czech Republic—Moravia and Bohemia—would be freed of an anchor and be able to move forward much more quickly.

TERZUOLO: Yes, I think that's a perfect summary of Klaus's view. This guy comes in for a lot of criticism. I'm no resolute Klaus fan necessarily, but I think that, particularly in that period he had a very clear vision of the way ahead was and what the future of the country should be. It was largely attractive to a lot of Czechs at the time. As we've seen, the ODS did not remain in power ad infinitum. I think we actually predicted as a political section that the social democrats would actually prove relatively efficient at adapting to new realities. The communists were out. They really disappeared from the scene in any meaningful way. But Miloš Zeman, who was there in those days as head of the social democrats—he's still there. He's just gotten himself reelected president.

Q: What was the law that was passed that said former communists could not take part for a certain amount of time?

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes, the so-called "lustration." This was a very interesting thing, and this is worth commenting on. The Czech secret police had not acted to eliminate intelligence files. Despite the fact there was some time when it was pretty clear the regime was literally collapsing, the second people really began to push against it seriously. We were frankly astonished. The U.S. government was astonished by the fragility of communist regimes. If I recall correctly, there had been either a CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) study or maybe a national intelligence estimate. In any case, a serious intelligence study of the future of Czechoslovakia, not too long before the Velvet Revolution. It said, "Ah, looks solid. Shouldn't expect any changes." The fragility of these regimes is underappreciated.

The Czech secret police did not destroy their archives, because they couldn't stand the thought of parting with these papers, these documents had been lovingly accumulated over decades. The thought of doing something to this was utterly alien to them. Maybe secret policemen second, but bureaucrats first. They were not going to part with this stuff, so you're left with everything. Vast numbers of files, and you realize that a very significant share of population had files with the secret police, either as subjects of interest or informants.

Another thing we came to realize, I think, was that, while it was natural for people to say, "Oh, throw the bums out," there were large numbers of people with files that were ambiguous. There might be a large file of information that they had "provided." But you had a large number of secret police and other informants and agents out there having conversations, overhearing things, etc. Obviously, the impulse, if you were in the secret police, you wanted to look good with your bosses. You heard something. You had a conversation that was perhaps even relatively innocuous, but it was something you could put down. You went and typed up your report, you built the file, and you showed your boss, "Hey, I did all this work." The internal dynamics of this did certainly favor a situation in which the intelligence officer, the secret police officer, had a strong incentive to present as willing informants and collaborators people who by any reasonable measure actually weren't. People could be presented not just as an enemy of the regime, but also as an informant. This all had to be sorted out.

I have to say it was in a way hilarious. This happened to my wife, who was running the consular section. We had a small number of Czech employees who worked with the political and economic officers. She had a consular section, in which the overwhelming majority of the people were Czechs. It was not classified. It was really interesting. At a certain point, Lidové noviny, one of the newspapers, came out with a special edition, the list of everybody who appeared in the intelligence files. Everybody gets this obviously. This is a big deal. So you've got the people in the consular section, and they're looking, and they're looking for everybody who's there, i.e. in the consular section. Not a single person who was working in the consular section was named. In Debby, my wife's view, they were actually rather disappointed!

Q: I didn't even get a file…?

TERZUOLO: Yes! It was sort of, "Well, we do really important work! You would think they would be trying to keep tabs on us." The other thing was interestingly enough, people would confess to each other, "I always thought you were the one who was reporting on us!" The other said, "No, actually I thought it was you who was reporting on us!"

Q: Right! Beautiful!

TERZUOLO: *[Laughs]* There were intriguing moments anyway.

Q: But it is so Central European to hang on to those files.

TERZUOLO: Oh, absolutely! And it's a great thing, since some of our best sources for a lot of stuff the Soviets were doing are from the East European archives, ever since Putin slammed the Soviet archives back shut. Looking at this from a historian's point of view, I'm very glad these things were kept. Same thing in the former East Germany. Yes, that sort of Central European meticulous recordkeeping, assiduous recordkeeping is a great help. It gives us a lens into the realities of Communist Europe.

Q: Just one quick example of this—how far it goes back and the tradition of this. When I was getting ready to go to Vienna, naturally I read a lot about Austria. The last emperor of any importance, Franz Joseph, loved the bureaucracy of his job. He loved waking up, having his coffee, and getting a stack of files.

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes.

Q: Who knows how unimportant the decision might have been, but he just loved working through those files.

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes. The Habsburg bureaucracy was an impressive thing. And in Prague, there was a lot of actual Habsburg nostalgia.

Q: Oh, sure.

TERZUOLO: People would refer to Franz Joseph, the last Habsburg emperor of note, as František, "Little Franz." There was a sort of affection that remained.

The Czech role in Austria—Austria and Hungary, but let's say in the Austrian half of Austria-Hungary, had been a very particular role. I'm sure you had the experience many times in Vienna of dealing with people with surnames that were quintessentially Czech. How many Novotnys do you find in the Vienna phone book? I'm sure you know these were extremely well integrated people into the Habsburg domains. There is a considerable nationalist movement that takes shape in them 19th Century. I think it's a very high culture nationalist movement in a lot of ways. It was an intriguing place in this sense.

Q: Just to finish on lustration, to what extent then were those who were "lustrated"—not permitted to take part in politics—come back?

TERZUOLO: I think a lot of people had a need to in some way recycle themselves. In a way, I did sort of help someone recycle himself. As I mentioned, we had a small number, a handful, of Czech employees who worked with the political and economic officers. We had to hire a replacement for someone who had retired, I think. I don't remember the background entirely. I was running the political section at that point. Maybe my boss was on home leave or something. Interviewed quite a number of people. Head and shoulders above the rest was this young guy named Jan Strnad. He was young, so he was not a functionary, agent or whatever. His crime in the eyes of some people, was that he had been a privileged person in fact under the old system because he was a singer. He had been in an important choir, the Bambini di Praga, or something like that. Before his voice changed, he had been a singer.

You know how the communist systems work. Artists were privileged people. I think there was a certain amount of envy from that. There were people who didn't like him, let's say, as a result and tried to drop a dime on him. Not that there was really anything. Yes, because he had done that, he had been able to go to university and study at one of the politically accepted faculties. He studied journalism. If you were a kind of dissident—I can think of people who did this—you might be able to study medicine. You might be able to study geology, for example. But things like political science, economics, journalism were considered politically sensitive, and you had to be with the in-crowd. So Jan had studied journalism. He had worked as a journalist. He had actually just recently had a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard when he came to apply for the job. I think it was Nieman. Anyway, a nice fellowship, and he spent a year at Harvard. He spoke excellent English obviously as a result. Let's say, his hiring produced a certain amount of controversy. Even the regional security officer came to ask me about this. I basically told him to "stuff it." In fact, Jan left the embassy after a few years. He was a young, upcoming guy. He had gotten, I'm sure, great offers from the very beginning. We were clear on that. He gave me a commitment to stay for a number of years, and he was good to his word and was an absolutely outstanding employee of the embassy.

Q: And at that time, more than a few years might not be good because in essence he is coming in at a moment when the Czech Republic is undergoing a certain amount of change and churn. It might not be a bad thing to get another new person after several years that has lived through it and now has new connections, or new understandings about the society, to come in.

TERZUOLO: That's fine. It was an important lesson, which we did not adequately learn, as we demonstrated then in Iraq some years later, that in these totalitarian, these authoritarian, repressive regimes, you can't, if you're looking to transform them or at least promote their transformation, you can't throw everybody out wholesale. I knew this as a student of Italian history. The very limited anti-Fascist purges in Italy after World War II on the whole worked. It was a reasonable option that was actually implemented by the minister of justice, who was the head of the communist party at the time. He came in

for terrible criticism for this, but it was a concrete and practical approach to the problem. You can't throw out your entire public administration. We knew well enough how things were organized in the communist countries. You had these structures. The party is one thing. The party is by its very essence political. What you have to bear in mind is that there are a lot of other functions, elements, institutions in the society that actually have to be there regardless of what the political ideological complexion is.

If you look for example in the armed forces or the police as well, what did they have? They had, I suppose you could call them, real soldiers, and you had political commissars. The political commissars obviously had to go and that was taken care of. There was no secret. That was their job. Everyone knew who they were. They lorded it over the other people until the next day when the others pushed them out. In working with the police -- which I worked with a lot—and with the Czechoslovak and the Czech military—you realized that, for a lot of the people who were in these functions, it was not an ideological matter. They were performing a necessary function of the state that was a legitimate function and to which, in many cases, they actually had a certain degree of personal commitment. Hence, these were people who could be preserved in a transformed society, and you needed them because they knew how to do things. The very ill-advised approach that Jerry Bremer, or L. Paul Bremer, took as our proconsul in Iraq after the 2003 liberation, let's call it, was to throw out the baby, the bathwater, the bassinet. We threw out everything. Anybody who served the regime was by definition bad. And we saw what happened with that. It's hard to learn from historical example.

I think you look across Eastern Europe, the former Eastern Europe, the former Warsaw Pact countries—the pattern is pretty similar. You can't replace an entire state from one day to the next.

Q: Yes.

TERZUOLO: It took us a while, I think, to come around to that. With the fall of communism, you basically couldn't run the country based on a not very large group of people who had been overt, public-known dissidents, people of great worth. It took a particular sort of courage to do what these people did, but you realized it had not been a large chunk of the society that fell in that category. But you had a much more broad spectrum discontent, disengagement, i.e. people who fulfilled their responsibilities at a third of their capacities. That was extremely widespread. The overwhelming majority fit into that category. But the people who really stood up and were prepared to pay the large costs of that—it was not a large number and we shouldn't be surprised by that. Anyway, there was a lot of learning to be done there I thought. It was good to leave after three years with a sense of this was a better place than it was when I started there. Maybe I helped a little bit. It was a good feeling.

I think I mentioned in the last session working under Ambassador Shirley Temple Black, which was a great experience. She was there for the first year of my tenure. Her successor was Adrian Basora, a career foreign service officer who had been working at the National Security Council before that. He was a very able man as well. Ambassador Black's style,

she was extremely personable, very casual, very informal, and very non-hierarchical in her approach to things. Ambassador Basora was a more formal person, if you will, or maybe a man of systems and structures and organizational charts and so forth. But certainly very smart, very interested in—and I value this—understanding the society at multiple levels. Some of it was just for fun, but also learning opportunities. "This is a very interesting wine." He liked wine. So he sent me and a few other people off to try to identify interesting Czech wines and wineries. I have to say it was kind of a failure. The intentions were good. Perhaps their wine industry is better now. It was really not in good shape at that time. But he was interested, and he was interested in high culture. He was more of a high culture guy than low culture guy. He liked the opera, which was still in those days a great deal. You could go to the opera, certainly when we arrived, for about 65 cents. We got a box our last year for some insanely small amount of money.

Ambassador Basora got to know people in that world and picking up those perspectives. He also traveled a lot. There's often a tendency to focus on the capital, not the country as a whole?

Q: Ahh.

TERZUOLO: There was so much going on in Prague, the temptation was to stay there, but Ambassador Basora was very insistent on himself and the rest of us getting out into the provinces, as it were, just meeting with people and trying to give back to Washington the sense of what was happening somewhere besides the capital. This was quite interesting. I remember a trip I took out to northern Bohemia, where there were all sorts of interesting, and, in some cases quite dismaying, things going on. It was an area of very early industrialization. It was very rust belt at that point, so they had the kind of economic problems that go with have rust belt industries. It was an area with a lot of tensions involving the Roma. The Czech Republic had a sizeable Roma population that was settled.

Q: Oh, wow!

TERZUOLO: This was communist-era social engineering. They had settled the Roma up in northern Bohemia. I met with them and talked about their experiences and the tensions they felt. It was a tough situation for them. I think perhaps in the early post-communist euphoria, some of these old, long-standing social tensions—problems of racial and ethnic rivalry, hatreds, etc.—tended to be maybe a little bit dismissed or pushed under the rug. The Roma were not in a good situation frankly in the Czech Republic. They definitely felt like an embattled minority. It was further complicated since the people I met with there were settled. They had regular jobs. It was also a problem for them that the Czech Republic was an attractive destination for Roma from other parts of Eastern Europe who were not settled, who regrettably did seek to take money in an illicit fashion. The settled Roma were not completely integrated, and then this new wave came in and cast a pall over this group again as a whole. That was tough. They definitely felt embattled.

The other thing that was really striking there, and I do remember reporting on this, was that Czechoslovakia had large reserves of brown coal or lignite, which they used to produce energy. Electricity. Heating plants as well. They had a lot of centralized heating plants. After communism fell, the Czechoslovak and Czech leadership made a strategic decision that, for a time at least, they were going to keep burning the lignite and maintain these coal-fired plants that were churning out electricity at a really low cost for them. It was a big consideration. Klaus particularly was all about macroeconomic stability.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: He's running the numbers: "Well, if we want to be able to invest in other things or want to move forward on other fronts, we can't sink additional money into the energy sector." But the situation was quite shocking up there. The burning of lignite is extremely polluting. You're getting relatively high Sulphur, and you're getting a lot of hydrogen sulfide in the atmosphere. I had driven my own car up. At one point, it started to rain. The rain was coming down in red sticky globs, which permanently damaged the finish of the car, by the way.

Q: Wow.

TERZUOLO: In fact, in talking to people there, they said twenty-five percent of the children had respiratory problems. Life expectancy there was very significantly lower than it was in other parts of the country, which they attributed to coal and other forms of pollution. There was a lot of old industrial residue. Then, of course, there was all the stuff the Soviets had left. The military bases and so forth, they just threw stuff on the ground in essence and left. The Czech had a lot of challenges on that front. I do think they've been addressing them somewhat. Coming into the European Union (EU) I think in a sense helped because of the environmental expectations that went with that. In the phase I was there, they made a decision, and they knew it had a whole series of costs as well as economic benefits. It was intended as a relatively short-term solution. But you could see the costs.

Q: Now, so far you've been talking about all the internal changes and the political reporting on the internal stuff. Were we doing things internationally with the Czechs at that time that also drew the embassy attention?

TERZUOLO: There is the early phase of international NATO rapprochement with the former Warsaw Pact countries definitely beginning at this time. This wasn't a huge focus of my activity. I was more internally focused. Things like the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program were launched. That was launched in the time I was there and just starting to burble along building possibilities for cooperation between NATO and aspiring member countries, or even not aspiring member countries, that saw an interest in cooperation. You had that whole front going on. Also, in 1993, you had the creation of the European Union, so this is an important phase for European integration, Brussels' eyes are looking toward the east. When they enlarged in '95, it was Austria, Finland and Sweden, so it's a

while before we get to points east. But these are long-term processes that are starting to take place at that point.

We, as the U.S., appreciated Prague playing host to the CSCE (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe) Secretariat. There were a lot of meetings up the hill from us at the Czernin Palace, near the presidential palace and so forth. Just to answer your point in summary fashion, there is the start of ultimate Czech integration into what had been, let's say, the West European club, the West European transatlantic club. That's visible. I think we were making a clear distinction that persisted in essence between the so-called Visegrád countries—basically, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland -- and others farther east and farther south. It was understandable. They then become the first to join NATO. They would be the first to join the EU, etc. Prague was in kind of a privileged position in those days. It was sort of a frontrunner for integration in the European and transatlantic institutions. There was a lot of excitement and happiness about that obviously.

The Czechs fundamentally felt themselves—certainly the people we were dealing with by that time—felt the country and felt themselves to be an intrinsic part of Western and Central Europe. They didn't feel, to be honest, much affinity with their former Russian overlords. They didn't feel a lot of affinity with anybody much to their east. They didn't even feel that much affinity with the Slovaks ultimately.

I'm sure you must have been in Prague many times.

Q: Oh, as often as I could!

TERZUOLO: The CSCE and then OSCE matters.

Q: And personal travel. Yeah.

TERZUOLO: It's an interesting phase. While we're always talking about governmental stuff, it is important to remember societal trends. There was a whole American presence there that didn't have anything to do with the embassy either. Young Americans in Prague. This unfortunately sometimes didn't go well. My wife was running the consular section and there were a fair number of young Americans who got into serious difficulties there. But, yes, there was surprisingly large American presence there.

Q: You saw in the news. In essence, the Czech Republic was on the map.

TERZUOLO: Yes. It strikes me, and I've been thinking about this a little bit recently while doing a little teaching on the U.S. and Russia, that the U.S.-Soviet and U.S.-Russian relationships were and have remained a top-heavy, top-down kind of thing. It's really government-to-government. It's really a handful of people who have any role in this. Whereas, if you look at countries that are long-term allies and partners—France, where I served, Italy, UK obviously, Germany—in these countries, you see a different picture. It's a picture of the United States and Country X, whoever it is, engaged across virtually every possible sector of activity and at virtually every possible level within that

sector. These are extremely, I use the word intimate, relations. It sounds strange, but I think they are intimate relationships because there is so much contact constantly at so many levels. You clearly don't have that with Russia now. Didn't have it with the Soviet Union. I think in a country like the Czech Republic you can really see that sort of thing taking form pretty rapidly once the restraints are off. It's government-to-government. It's economic-to-economic. It's people-to-people.

Q: Mm hmm. Right. Absolutely. You find every now and then--it's only reported on local levels on U.S. television—you know, the little German group that goes to someplace for bluegrass music. There's a bunch of German tourists going to a bluegrass festival.

TERZUOLO: Czechs by the way are huge country and western fans. Debby and her staff in the consular section, they did loads and loads of visas for folks who wanted to go to Nashville, go to the Grand Ole Opry, whatever. To prove their bona fides, they would sometimes show up in the consular section dressed for the occasion, let's say, like they were going to the Grand Ole Opry.. There are all these levels.

The Czechs had this strong tradition of walking. They're called "trampers." People who basically with a knapsack will walk for months, years, sort of surviving as best they can. They don't have much money. They don't really have anything. A lot of Czech trampers started going to the U.S., and they were actually perfectly good bets. They didn't have a lot of money, but they were ultimately so tied to their social reality at home and their trampers groups. You knew they were going to go back. They would march across a few states or something, and then they would go back home. They were utterly reliable. You think about what sort of person-to-person contacts must have occurred with something like this.

Q: Yeah, that's fantastic. Now, to wrap up your tour there, what did you take away in terms of talents and abilities and the general sort of knowledge that you apply later? Were there some that stand out for you now looking back on the tour in the Czech Republic?

TERZUOLO: Well, in part because of people's absences, I did spend a fair amount of time running the political section. When I was a vice consul, honestly I didn't feel like I was managing anybody. I did write efficiency reports on a certain number of people, but I didn't feel it. That was the first time I had to exercise considerable supervision. Made a few management decisions and things like that. That was good. I felt pretty good about that. I think it also offered a great perspective on a world that was changing. It was a very privileged observatory for the post-Cold War period. There's not really anything else that comes to mind. I think I did good reporting and analysis. I called some things right. I left feeling pretty good.

Q: So now what are you thinking about as an onward, or what opportunities begin to present themselves?

TERZUOLO: Well, I'll tell you. The job I really wanted out of there was number two at the embassy to the Holy See.

Q: Ah, yeah. Okay.

TERZUOLO: I was promoted to the right grade for that. During my last year in Prague, I got promoted to the right grade. I really do find the Vatican a fascinating institution. To be honest, I was interested in getting back to Italy as well. Let's be fair now. That did not work out.

Q: It's tough, because it's relatively small and the jobs are so sought after.

TERZUOLO: Yes. Let me just be honest about this. It's a unique embassy, let's say. And, let's say, it is the only embassy where religion has de facto been a decisive criterion for service as ambassador.

Q: Mm hmm.

TERZUOLO: Our U.S. practices are highly unusual. To my knowledge, we have only sent Catholics as ambassadors to the Holy See. This is very different from the practice that other countries have, other multi-religion countries. Germany, again to the best of my knowledge, certainly when I last looked at this, Germany always sent someone of Protestant extraction as their ambassador to the Holy See. Switzerland has done the same thing. Again, it's possible that there's been a change. Of course, those are countries that are sending career diplomats.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: So there is also this element in the mix. I think there have been ambassadors who have not been at all sensitive to the issue of the religious views of their staff. I'm not sure that's necessarily true for everybody, all the people who have held the ambassadorial position. But let's leave it there.

Anyway, didn't get that. I was selected for, I think the term was training for senior responsibilities, and had the option of the War College, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, or going at the State Department Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council of the United States. Seemingly, I was the only person who was interested in the last of those options, so I did go from there as the State Department Fellow at the Atlantic Council.

Q: All right. So this is a good place to break, and then we'll pick up again with the Atlantic Council.

Q: So today is April 19th. We are resuming out interview with Eric Terzuolo as he goes to the Atlantic Council. Eric, what year was that?

TERZUOLO: Okay. So that was 1994.

Q: Okay.

TERZUOLO: It turned out to be an abbreviated stint at the Atlantic Council because in January, if memory serves, I was off to Paris. That was unexpected. I spent the better part of six months at the Atlantic Council.

Q: Not that many Foreign Service officers go with their one year of training or long-term detail to the Atlantic Council. What in general were your responsibilities, even for the short time you were there?

TERZUOLO: Well, it was fairly free flowing. I don't think they had terribly specific objectives for me. They tended to involve me in projects that were already ongoing, but where they thought my particular skill set might be useful. For example, they had been for some time conducting a structured dialogue with a sort of counterpart, or roughly counterpart, organization in Ukraine.

Q: Interesting.

TERZUOLO: This had been going on for a while. They brought me into that, and then basically asked me to do the memcon as it were, the memorandum of conversations or the report, which was fine, and obviously akin to stuff I'd been doing for years. It was interesting. It was rather early days for independent Ukraine. Everyone was feeling their way along rather gingerly. I think the idea of the Commonwealth of Independent States was as a sort of, not really a halfway house, but as a means of trying to smooth a bit the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. That seemed to have quite a bit of traction at that time. Certainly, it had traction at the Atlantic Council, and I think also on the part of the Ukrainians there. I think they were trying to look at it as kind of a glass half full exercise. As we know, it didn't really work out as hoped. That was an interesting aspect of it.

Anyway, I did the report, plus a relatively brief summary for on the Atlantic Council's publication series. It was interesting working in a think tank setting because you see how they operate. Now, obviously, a lot of things have changed, because there is so much emphasis on social media and so forth. But in those days, an awful lot of the work was meetings in groups, committees, councils, etc. You tried to summarize that and come up with some recommendations. Then you publish the report, and you send it around to decision-makers and influencers in Washington and elsewhere and try to get some attention for it.

Q: Were the topics of study in some way related to the State Department? Did major State Department players visit and confer?

TERZUOLO: I don't really recall. The things I was involved in tended to involve more counterpart organizations or special boards, what I might call "wise men" and to a

modest degree, "wise women" boards. You did get a fair number of former senior State Department and former senior DOD people who would participate in these things. I think they were trying to be kind of non-administration, as it were, source of counsel, which makes sense.

Q: Who was leading it at the time you were there?

TERZUOLO: Roz Ridgeway.

Q: Oh, she was still there?

TERZUOLO: Yes, she was still there. Roz Ridgeway was the most senior person I really had a lot of contact with. I don't think she was the president however. Honestly, though I would have to check.

Q: That's fine. I was just curious.

TERZUOLO: I think David Acheson was the president at that point. I didn't really get to know him. Roz actually remembered me from some stuff I had done while serving in Italy when she was assistant secretary for Europe.

I had been hoping to organize a conference on Italian politics, because it was at that point that there was a "sea change" in Italian politics—the unexpected electoral success of Silvio Berlusconi and his Forza Italia party. That would have needed more sustained work over a longer time. It was also instructive. It's all about the money ultimately, and how you go about financing a project like that. I think I had blithely assumed that think tanks had a pot of money from somewhere and would meditate on various projects they might do using that money. In fact, it was a much more project-specific outreach for funding. That seemed to be the model. That was useful to know.

They also involved me in a project on U.S.-French relations. This also had been ongoing for a while, but they asked me to do some further work on that. I think I was able to be helpful on that. It was fitting. This was the latter part of my stay. I already knew I was going off to France, so it was a chance to get some familiarity.

Q: So then how did the France job become available to you? I guess here we're talking now about mid-year.

TERZUOLO: Yes, this was one of these cases in which someone had been offered a key job at the Department and departed post early. It was basically the deputy chief of the political section job in Paris. It was a very large section. I'm sure it still is. It was certainly one of our largest political sections, in a capital which, despite our sometimes difficult relationship with the French, is certainly in the very top tier of capitals we deal with. In fact, it had been considered a promotable position despite not being the chief. The fellow who had the position got summoned to the Secretary's office, so they were scrambling. As often happens in the Foreign Service, one of the political section officers

was someone I had known for years. We are still good friends to this day. We had served in Beirut together. He said, "Oh, I think Eric's at the Atlantic Council. Maybe he could get out of it." It's all just personal stuff. So that's how it happened!

I have to say, the people at the Atlantic Council were terrifically nice about it. I told them, and I said, "I'm really sorry to leave you in the lurch here." They said, "Well, we couldn't possibly ask you to say no to Paris!" One of the people I worked with closely there, Peter Swiers, had been a Foreign Service officer for a long time. It was a very nice ambience I have to say. The person I worked for most directly, and who wrote my efficiency report, as it were, was Job Dittberner, and I really enjoyed working with him. It was also a rather calm environment compared to what you're used to in State Department work.

Q: Now, I imagine the decision or this opportunity to go to Paris, your wife was on board with it?

TERZUOLO: Oh, absolutely! In fact, had there not been something for her, it would not have happened. But as it turned out, the number two position in the consular section was coming open in the summer, and so they were able to panel us both. Debby, my wife was working actually at the Foreign Service Institute at that point. I think the title was "Associate Dean of the Senior Seminar," which was a great job. She was enjoying it a lot. But it was not too difficult to break the assignment. She came out to Paris about a month after I had arrived and then was on leave without pay (LWOP). Then she took up her job in the summer. It was a very good job for her because it was a very large consular section. She ultimately had huge management responsibilities and really ran the section much of the time, because the consul general, a very senior consular affairs officer, was getting set to retire. He had a lot of stuff to do. It was a really good professional opportunity for her.

Working in Paris is not easy, though. It was not easy.

Q: I can imagine.

TERZUOLO: As I indicated before, even if we squabble a lot with the French—probably less now than in those days—nonetheless it's a consolidated idea in Washington that this is one of the absolutely key capitals. With France, we truly had in those days, and I'm sure it's still the case, a 24/7/365 relationship. There was in essence nothing of any note that we didn't talk to them about and seek their support and assistance on. This obviously puts a lot of pressure on an embassy.

Q: Sure. Absolutely. Now, describe what the political section was like, as you became deputy.

TERZUOLO: Okay. It had essentially a kind of bifurcated structure at that point. The larger part of the section was devoted to the foreign policy aspect of things. You had people who were tasked with following France's policy in the Middle East, France in

Africa. The term usually was Middle East Watcher, Africa Watcher, etc. We had someone whose job was to follow French policy toward Latin America. Not really a full-time job honestly. They did other things as well. We basically had all the world regions covered. These folks were among other things going out and delivering innumerable demarches that came into us every day, according to the subject area. Obviously, certain demarches required more senior people to deliver them, but on the day-to-day basis, they were dealing with the relevant country desks at the French foreign ministry other French experts on these given areas, and members of parliament perhaps, if they had special interests in these areas. When I arrived, the external foreign affairs section also included the political-military officer.

Then there was a distinct subsection of the political section that dealt with French internal politics and everything that went with that—the contact building, the outreach to political parties. They did a lot with members of parliament and also again with other experts. It was actually a little chunk of the embassy that had a lot of illustrious people come through there over the years. Tony Wayne, for example, who was an assistant secretary for economics and business. He, at one point, was the head of that unit. We also had a labor counselor or a labor officer. Then we had a couple of French employees as well in the section.

Q: How did they actually make themselves useful? Was it principally in translating, or setting appointments, or…?

TERZUOLO: Sometimes setting up appointments. Sometimes helping with translation, although in effect really everyone in the political section had French that ranged from I'd say solid 3/3, professionally useful French to much higher levels. I think I tested at a 4/4+ before I went out. The chief of the section, the minister-counselor for political affairs, had excellent French. Language was not really a big issue. Mostly, it was trying to follow events. We might task them with analyses, to look at a specific problem, and to some extent have their own contacts as well. In a lot of ways, their work was not dissimilar to that the officers did, particularly the internal political affairs folks. They obviously weren't demarching people at the ministry of foreign affairs. It was very useful to have these perspectives. They could be helpful in navigating the specificities of French culture more broadly and political culture specifically. I think we often get into this notion that our close allies, notably in Europe or a place like Canada: "Well, they're so close that they're just like us." And they're not.

Q: [Laughs] Right!

TERZUOLO: But you lapse into that expectation. Also, when I was teaching at FSI, one of the things I would try to do in various ways was specifically to sensitize the students to the ways in which operating in West European societies actually did require a considerable amount of code switching, or at least adaptation to cultural and political cultural differences, if you wanted to be effective.

It struck me that, in the aftermath of the Cold War, there seemed to be an assumption taking hold in Washington that really we were not going to have to follow the West European societies and political systems as closely as we had before. Unquestionably during the Cold War era, internal politics was a huge priority, because of concerns in a country like France or Italy, all countries really with a strong communist parties, often difficulties with coalition building, notably in the Italian case, lots of things we worried about in the sense that they might put political stability at risk. Support for common objectives. NATO objectives. In a way, there was a sigh of relief of "Okay, Cold War's over. Soviet Union has dissolved. We don't need to worry about the Communists coming to power in Rome anymore." There was, it seemed to me, a relaxation of attention to the specificity of the societies and political systems in the countries with which we had worked most closely over a long period of time. In fact, I mentioned we did have this internal politics unit with the political sections. At a certain point, we actually were instructed to stop following French internal politics.

Q: Wow.

TERZUOLO: I think we gamed this out correctly, however. Our position was, "Well, they're saying that now, but the next time something happens of political interest, Washington will be on our case to report on it." So we did a bit of an end run. The idea was, "Oh, well, we really need to focus on working with the French in all the world regions—advocacy, searching for cooperation—so people really need to be focused on those external political portfolios." What we did was in effect eliminate the internal political unit, but everyone in the section was assigned an internal portfolio as well as an external portfolio. It might be to follow a particular political party. We also had someone who was specifically was tasked to build relationships with pollsters, for example.

We actually did have coverage and, as it turned out, quite good coverage. I guess in '97 it was, Jacques Chirac, who was president at the time, a Gaullist or neo-Gaullist, feeling comfortable with the situation, called snap elections expecting that the Gaullists would do well, and he would then not have to worry. He could look forward basically five years to the end of what I think was then his mandate. They were on seven-year mandates at that time. He was elected president in '95, as I recall. The idea was to get this all synchronized. You would have a nice sturdy Gaullist government for five years, because the parliament goes on a five-year cycle, to the end of Chirac's presidential mandate in 2002. As happens surprisingly often, though, the career politicians miscalculated. Chirac miscalculated markedly. The Socialists won the '97 French legislative elections, and Lionel Jospin, the head of the Socialist party, becomes prime minister. As it turned out, it didn't go particularly well for Jospin.

I do take pride in the fact that, unlike seemingly everyone in Washington, who was absolutely convinced, "Oh, well, of course, Chirac called the elections because they were going to win and obviously the Gaullists will win," we, with I would say with some careful diplomatic language in how we expressed it, picked up from multiple sources indications that in fact the Socialists might do a great deal better than had been expected. I think we did a better job of calling the elections outcome than a lot of people did,

despite having at least theoretically eliminated our internal political reporting and having much less capability. We were pretty pleased with that. I had been tasked with coordinating the internal political function, so I felt pretty good about that.

Q: Now, besides the internal political function, what were the other areas that you followed particularly?

TERZUOLO: I was first and foremost the executive officer. I made sure that everything was tasked out, everything was completed. There was a lot of emphasis on writing reports of high quality. Not merely correctly, but well expressed, well written. A lot of my job really boiled down to that. I spent a lot of my time working with individual officers on pieces they were writing. Again, as you would expect, there is a range. Some people benefited from more attention in their analysis and writing; others needed less. That's fine. That was part of it. It was actually an aspect of things that I liked. I think I was good at it. There was lots of editing. It made for very long days. I was mostly not out until about 8:30, 9:00 o'clock at night. That was really the bulk of the job.

Like everyone, I also spent time taking care of some of our frequent visitors. In particular, for example, John Kornblum was the assistant secretary for European affairs at that point. I was basically Kornblum's perpetual control officer, which was fine. I had no objections to doing it. Visits heavily engaged the whole section frankly. With France, not only are you conducting diplomacy 24/7365, but also it is a magnet for visitors, senior-level visitors. I'd say Paris was the place where, in my experience, the largest percentage of our diplomacy was in fact conducted by senior-level visitors coming from Washington. High officials. Peter Tarnoff, who was the undersecretary for political affairs, came many times. Kornblum was often there. You had very high-level officials constantly and a lot of Congressional visits as well. Part of it also was France's key international role, in Africa particularly. Very active in the Middle East as well. People with African interests, including members of Congress, would often stop in Paris on their way to Africa or coming back. This was a very large part of our work as well.

In terms of a substantive portfolio, primarily I was working on France and the EU. The EU emerged in '93, so it was early days for trying to figure this out. Of course, the EU had multiple aspects. The defense and security side of things was something that fell more to the military folks. We had a State Department officer and also a DOD civilian. They tended to follow the defense and security side. I followed a whole series of other issues, a lot of the emerging institutional architecture issues. Things like, how France was dealing in an EU context with law enforcement matters, which was quite interesting.

Europeans like to perceive, like to believe, that the U.S. is somehow anti-EU, anti-European integration, which of course is ridiculous. It was in many ways, practically speaking, our idea. Go back to the history of the 1940s, the Marshall Plan and things like that. I think we were quite interested in the possibilities of mutual benefits from cooperation among the EU countries and what the possibilities might be for enhanced effectiveness on a series of issues, and what that all meant for our ability to cooperate with Europe. We were kind of feeling our way along with this.

On the law enforcement front, it was quite fascinating. It was evident that we were probably, at some level, more enthusiastic about intra-EU law enforcement cooperation than the French were!

Q: Interesting.

TERZUOLO: I remember talking to a senior official at the ministry of interior about this once, and, boy, did he give me an earful about, "We are not going to let down our sovereignty. We are not prepared to share our intelligence with all of these other countries. We share on a point-to-point basis with ministries, but specifically with people we know and we can trust." This is the way they have always worked. They were very resistant to change on that front. In fact, I have often argued the problems in U.S.-French relations tend to stem not so much from our differences as from our similarities. As we, the U.S., are hesitant to give up our sovereignty in multilateral settings—we're always very careful about this—the same is true of the French. Their view of the EU was not I would say, "Oh, it's wonderful that we're all giving up some of our sovereignty." No. Their view was, it seemed to me, "Well, we're a big player here, and if we work with the Germans, who will follow our lead on the political stuff because they are still afraid after the events of WWII, we can use the EU as a force multiplier for France." They viewed it distinctly from the perspective of, "How does this benefit French interests?" In my view, it's an extremely reasonable point of view. I had no problems with this. I'm just sharing it as an analytical point!

Q: So, from your point of view as deputy, you were not very intimately involved with the whole new European security architecture, the new missions of NATO, how France wanted to kind of reorganize things in the wake of the Cold War?

TERZUOLO: We had basically two officers, a State officer and the chap from OSD, who were focusing on that, for obvious reasons. The thing to bear in mind is that doing pol-mil work in France, for example, was different from doing it in Italy, where I had done it before, and where I later went to do it again. Pol-Mil work in Italy was highly operational, because of the large U.S. military presence there at a whole series of levels, from the sublime to the ridiculous, frankly. There were constantly issues that you needed to work on together. The absence of a U.S. military presence in France made things different. The pol-mil side of our section really focused heavily on these big picture policy issues. Where is France going? What is it's thinking on NATO-EU defense and security roles, etc. They could really focus on that and not worry about issues of excess garbage production by U.S. service members and their families in a small town somewhere, which I had to deal with in Italy! I followed it, and I would have inputs on reporting and so forth, but it was not an issue that I followed personally or was personally responsible for.

Q: Did you get any of those midnight telephone calls?

TERZUOLO: Oh, constantly!

Q: Oh, dear!

TERZUOLO: I don't wish to sound ungrateful, and it may sound absurd, but in a lot of ways that tour in Paris was really the most difficult I had. Beirut was a thing unto itself. Not really comparable to most Foreign Service tours. The tour in Paris was very difficult in part honestly because both my wife and I were in the front lines. What happened was that both of us got huge numbers of phone calls at all hours. Mine generally came from Washington. People who hadn't thought, or didn't care, that I was six hours ahead. The common scenario for me was: I would be in the office. I would leave maybe 8:30, 9:00 p.m., something like that. It would take me about half an hour to get home. At that point, I walk in the door. Usually, Debby, my wife, was there, and she would say, "Oh, so and so called for you. You need to call them back." That was my most common scenario.

I did get one phone call that truly stands out, which was when Peter Tarnoff, who was undersecretary for political affairs, was coming to Paris. He was coming to give a speech. I don't remember the exact context. He had gotten separated from his luggage. At 2:30 in the morning, I get a call. I was supposed to leave at about 6:00 to go and meet him at the airport. At about 2:30 in the morning, I get a call from someone in the embassy saying, "Tarnoff doesn't have his luggage with him. You need to find a size 38 blue, pinstripe suit and men's 9-1/2, black wingtips by 7:00. This was, let's say—I'm not going to name names—this was someone who was in Paris, should have known better, and had been in the Foreign Service longer than I had. At a certain point he said, "You sound like you were asleep!" I said, "Yes, it's 2:30 in the morning. Most people, at 2:30 in the morning, are asleep." This was just the height of ridiculousness. As it turned out, Tarnoff was actually quite an easygoing person. I met him. I had been his control officer before. He said, "Yes, did you hear they lost my bags?" He came out. He was wearing a nice jacket and slacks. "I think I can speak like this." I said, "Sure, if you're comfortable with it." He goes, "You know what I need is a necktie, though. Is there someplace I can get a necktie?" I said, "I know just the place." We went. He got a necktie. Gave a speech. No problem! It was really a ridiculous scenario, but I think it captures a little bit of the high-stress nature of that embassy.

Anyway, I was getting calls mostly from the country desk or something like that. My wife specialized more in the calls in the middle of the night because of large numbers of Americans in Paris. Citizen services. There were lots of American citizens living in Paris. Lots of tourists obviously. An incredible number of lost or stolen passports. In those days, you could go into the embassy when it was next open and they would issue you a new passport. Still, it required dealing with people when they were not at their best.

What they did in Paris also, which was problematic for my wife, was the consular duty officer system. In most embassies there is a single duty officer. A lot of what comes to the duty officer usually are consular matters, American citizens in trouble, etc. You've got a guidebook. You've got some basic instructions. You look in the book and do what you can do.

Q: Just a very quick remark here. I'm not a consular officer. I was the duty officer plenty of times. But I had served in a consular tour, and in my consular tour I had served in American citizen services. Although I wasn't a genius in consular affairs, if an American called me in some kind of distress, I knew the difference between saying, "Wait until the embassy opens tomorrow, and go to the consular section," and having to actually wake up a consular officer at some point in the middle of the night! No, I'm not going to do that if it's a simple question of "my bag was stolen," or this. "Well, go and report it to the police, and then in the morning when we open, go to the embassy." It's amazing how many people wouldn't even go that far. They would put the call right through. Wake the consular officer up. The poor consular officer would have to say the same thing.

TERZUOLO: Yes. Well, what they did in Paris to avoid this problem was they had separate consular duty officers.

Q: Oh, yeah….

TERZUOLO: My wife, being only the number two in the section and not the number one, was in the rotation. So every nine weeks or so, she was the consular duty officer, which basically meant she didn't sleep the night because there were multiple calls. Basically every night, you were going to get multiple calls for that. You had the calls from U.S. citizens. There were other people within the embassy who didn't exercise much judgment and would flip things over to her in particular. You had that issue, but you also had, I would note, a fair number of calls from French authorities at odd hours.

Q: Really?

TERZUOLO: For example, I remember one in particular that involved a friend who was also in the consular section. 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning or something like that. The embassy switchboard patches through to her a call from a French police officer, at the French/Italian border. Someone with the border police who was suspicious about a U.S. passport. Something didn't look right to them. He said in rather peremptory fashion, "Please confirm that this passport is valid." This was essentially 3:00 in the morning. Our colleague said, "I'm sorry. I can only do that once we are in the embassy and have access to our files, to our computer records." The French police officer says, "Well, what good are you then?" and slams the phone down.

This sort of stuff does not make for good and tranquil nights. I would say probably a strong majority of nights, because of these factors laid out, were interrupted. Having your sleep interrupted like that, it does take a toll. That was definitely an issue that made life hard. Basically, in really the two-and-a-half years we were there, we were able to take very little time off. We took a week off at one point, and that was about it. I hope I don't sound like I'm whining, but I think it needs to be understood the sort of stress people can find themselves under, even if they are serving in a glorious European capital.

Q: If a little more thinking had been done, probably you could have taken a little more time off, in the sense of whoever top management was could have said, "Look, people

need to have vacations periodically, even in Paris. I want the sections run in a way that reflects that."

TERZUOLO: I remember one episode in particular while in Paris. It was when we had the shutdown.

Q: Oh, right!

TERZUOLO: You get into all of these issues of who is essential and not essential. Basically, no one wants to volunteer to be nonessential. There are psychological factors also in play. I think anyone who has spent some time in the Foreign Service has run into these situations where the notion of leaving the office at a reasonable hour, maybe because you have other responsibilities to attend to, elicits a negative reaction on the part of management. I tried not to do that when I was supervising people. I tried to work things out so people could take time off. I probably was perhaps more generous on leave issues with the people under my supervision than I was with myself. But, yes, the psychology is very tough. Nobody at the State Department in 1995 had even heard of the term "work-life balance."

Q: Right. Correct. Yes, that is correct.

TERZUOLO: If anyone raised what was genuinely a work-life balance issue, it was counted against them.

Q: You were a whiner, and your expectations were unrealistic.

TERZUOLO: Yes. My daughter was still pretty small at that point. I was trying to be a decent parent to her. Trying to be a non-absentee husband. Those were things that mattered to me a lot. It was a tough balancing act a lot of the time.

Q: Now, you said at the beginning that this deputy job was seen as promotable. Did it end up that way for you?

TERZUOLO: No, but I did get close.

Q: Ah! Mm hmm.

TERZUOLO: It just happened that I caught a year in which very, very, very few promotions were slotted. Under a normal year, it probably would have done the trick for me. In fact, it was a serious job with both substantive and also managerial and leadership tasks. That what you needed. I don't know how they are organized now honestly. It's been a long time. It was a good job from a career perspective.

However, the period in Paris was in many ways a real watershed in my life. There were various things happening at the time in my personal life, particularly things involving my father that I'm not going to go into in this forum. A very protracted and very difficult

situation involving my father that would continue for some years, even after we left Paris. This is something that weighed very heavily on me. In retrospect, I realized that this colored everything for me in a lot of ways. That made life difficult.

The other thing is that I experienced a sort of sense of incompatibility with the embassy. I did good work. I got good efficiency reports. It wasn't that. But it was something within me. Dynamics that I saw there, I had a hard time dealing with. I think part of it was, if you will, the sort of aristocratic tenor of the embassy under Pamela Harriman. I give Ambassador Harriman credit for in fact doing her job in a way that many political appointees don't. She was a serious ambassador. She knew France quite well, or certainly aspects of France quite well. She spoke quite good French. She had a lot of respect and the ear of prominent people in France. She had a lot of strong points that many of her counterparts did not have to the same degree. But, I think I realized at that point to what extent I'm truly and deeply a petty, petty, petty bourgeois man. I got along with Ambassador Harriman, but really I would say the atmosphere in the embassy was one I didn't find myself comfortable in. Also, I think there were dynamics of personal rivalries that I was not directly a part of, but did come to touch my experience as well. Personal rivalries and appallingly intense self-promotion going on that I really had quite a hard time seeing, honestly. It left me with a sense of "If this is what I'm looking at down the pike, how much do I want to do this? How long did I want to do this?"

It was a tough time. As I said, there were non-State Department related reasons that made it difficult. There's no sense blaming anybody. It's just there were some facts of life I was dealing with that were extremely difficult and impacted my overall well-being.

Q: Now, you were there three years?

TERZUOLO: No, actually, two-and-a-half because I curtailed a bit to get in alignment with summer transfer season, as did Debby.

Q: With all this in mind, what were you thinking of in terms of a next assignment? What were the considerations that you had as you looked ahead to a next assignment.

TERZUOLO: Well, I don't know if it still exists, but I had not gotten the multifunctional cone, so I was hoping to do that. I'll be honest. Personal reasons weighed in this heavily, very heavily. I was actually hoping to get back to Italy. Obviously, it's a nice place, but there were serious personal reasons driving me as well to do this. I actually again had my eye on the deputy chief of mission to the Holy See. I devoted quite a bit of effort to that. That didn't work out unfortunately.

Q: It's a tough competition.

TERZUOLO: It's a tough competition. The politics were quite strong, although I had support from some people. The amount of politicking that goes into these sorts of things, I have to say, became really aggravating over time. You spent so much time dealing with onward assignments and so much energy, both physical and psychic. *[Laughs]*

Q: And that particular little embassy is such a plum. There are so many heavy artillery pieces involved on board shooting their own cannonades.

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes. There was another candidate who for a series of reasons was also very hard to knock out of things. In the end, we neutralized each other and someone who was, I guess, working in policy planning for Jim Steinberg, emerged as a candidate, and Jim Steinberg weighed in at that point. He was very influential, and they said okay. That, as it turned out, did not go well. It wouldn't be the first time.

Q: Right!

TERZUOLO: I was left with looking for various options. Again, this sort of Italian desire, my perception of need to be in Italy, influenced that. I ended up pushing for the political-military counselor position in Rome. It did have the counselor title. It was not a career-advancing move, honestly, but it seemed like it would be suitable. It was certainly within my wheelhouse in terms of competence and experience. I knew people in Italy. That job I ultimately did get, but arrived in Rome under a cloud because I was not supposed to get that position. It had been promised to another person, who did not speak Italian. It was an Italian-designated position. I did the inexcusable thing of forcing it to a shootout in the assignments panel. Not bowing to the feudalist rules of how people get jobs, but actually relying on the human resources rules. That was pretty much inexcusable, and I paid for it as a result.

There was another interesting little sidelight to this. The ambassador at the time I was bidding was Reginald Bartholomew, who had been my ambassador in Beirut.

Q: He was going in?

TERZUOLO: No, he was leaving. I knew he was going to be leaving. The thought of working with him again didn't attract me particularly, but I knew he was going to be leaving. I figured, "Ah, if we overlap for a few months, we'll be fine." That's actually how it turned out. As I described, there were some issues in our departure from Beirut quite a few years previously. He remembered, as did I! In the end, I think it worked out fine. But there were other problems. Notably, we had a very difficult situation between the political minister-counselor, who was my boss, and the DCM, who had obviously not reached any meeting of the minds as to what my job was going to be. So, it was very difficult to get any sort of work requirements out. The DCM in essence wanted me to be a full-time political-military counselor. The political minister-counselor basically wanted me to relieve him of series of issues. You can understand how it became a situation in which it was difficult to satisfy either one.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: That was tough. I was looking forward to going back to Rome and being able to deal with some of these personal issues that were perched on my shoulder at the

time. It was ultimately a good thing from the family point of view. Not my nuclear family. It didn't touch my wife and daughter, but it was basically issues involving my parents. It was a good thing I was there when I was. But life continued to be complicated because of that. My father passed away under very particular circumstances. The second two years I was in Rome—we were there from '97 to 2001—the second two years I was heavily engaged in things that stemmed from my father's passing. It would have been very hard to deal with these things had I not been physically nearby. We weren't in the same city, but if I had been trying to do things going transatlantically, it would have been a disaster. You have to put things on a balance. On the whole, I was glad to be there for that, but it was another difficult time! Again, it's not the fault of anybody in the State Department.

The Italy tour was dominated frankly by an episode that was in itself very, very tragic and awful and emotionally draining and physically draining. It was February of '98, so about five or six months after we had arrived. We had this episode in which a U.S. Marine Corps aircraft on a training mission in a ski area in northeast Italy….

Q: Oh, now I remember!

TERZUOLO: Yes. It cut the wire holding up a gondola with about 20 people in it. The gondola goes crashing to the ground. Twenty people killed. This issue basically would then consume my life, really for about two-and-a-half years. As you can imagine, it's something with huge ramifications, not the least of which are the particular circumstances of the accident, which to my mind showed inexcusable negligence on the part of the aircrew. This was a very multifaceted problem. Yes, it's a public relations disaster and, frankly, not helped particularly by our ambassador, who was a nice gentleman. I liked him. I got along with him. But I'm not sure he ever quite got all the nuances of what his job was, though he did some good things.

He was a career politician. He had been a Democratic congressman from Center City Philadelphia. He had been elected maybe 8, 9 times—something like that. Evidently, it looked like his chances were not going to be good. This is secondhand knowledge, not firsthand. Tom Foglietta was his name. It looked like his chances of reelection were not too good. The Democratic organization wanted to run another candidate. I understand he was on Appropriations. He had a lot of influence, a lot of clout. He was loathe to give that up, but they said, "Is there something you want that we can give you?" He said, "I want to be ambassador to Italy." So that's how that happened, according to reports.

I'm not sure being a member of Congress is necessarily the best preparation for being an ambassador. Members of Congress, they're working to make their constituents happy.

Q: Sure.

TERZUOLO: Ambassador Foglietta was an Italian-American. Both his parents, I believe like mine, emigrated to the U.S. He spoke Italian, really a dialect from the Molise region. I think he felt really tied to Italy. There was an emotional thing for him. It was a big deal

understandably being ambassador to your country of origin. I think sometimes he tried a little bit too hard to make the Italians happy, rather than to make Washington happy.

To give you an example, there were I believe two trials. The first trial basically absolved the aircrew. I think everyone was incensed because, if you knew anything at all about the incident, there was no cause for them to be flying that low. It was evidently something they did as a kind of challenge among the pilots, according to reports. Our air attaché, a great guy, Air Force colonel, F-16 pilot, was just livid. "If they did that in the Air Force, they would be out on their backsides! We wouldn't put up with that." These were Marine pilots. I love the Marines, but… Anyway, I think a lot of us were really disturbed at the result. The ambassador was insistent on putting out a press statement condemning the decision of the U.S. military court. We tried to stop it, but ultimately he said, "Do it." As you can imagine, that did not go down well.

Q: Unless his connections were really strong in Washington, you can get recalled for something like that.

TERZUOLO: Yes. Well, I think Marc Grossman was the undersecretary for political affairs at that point. Marc evidently called and just really read him the riot act. Again, I think Ambassador Foglietta had this very strong concern with the Italian public and how they viewed it. In fact, most of the people who were killed were not Italians, but it was an episode on Italian soil. Lots of issues raised about sovereignty. "A violation of our sovereignty." "What's up with those NATO status of forces agreements and things like that?" "Why aren't these people being tried in an Italian court?" You know, the usual things that happen when something bad occurs, but involves people who are covered by a status of forces agreement that grants primary jurisdiction to the sending state, not the receiving state. But, try to explain to the public. It's very hard. Ambassador Foglietta was legitimately concerned about the public impact, but didn't always deal with it in the best way.

On the other hand, he also did something to his credit that I don't think a career officer would have done. It was a long time ago. I don't recall the exact circumstances, but he went to the town, Cavalese, where this occurred. It is often referred to as the Cermis because Cermis was the mountain on which it occurred, but the town closest is Cavalese in northeastern Italy. There was some ceremony, some public event or commemoration, and he very spontaneously fell to his knees in a very affecting and genuine expression of sorrow. He was not one of those really machinating, calculating people. I think it really just from his gut. He was a good person. He just fell to his knees with emotion.

Q: Oh, boy.

TERZUOLO: And that was great, because that was perceived as an act of contrition. We obviously had tried in every possible way to work within all the agreements, the network of agreements and treaties that had governed the U.S. military presence in Italy. We were very concerned about maintaining our status there, heading off political problems. But certainly, our approached risked a lot of the time coming off as very legalistic.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: Legalistic doesn't play well with the public. The ambassador, how much he thought about this beforehand? I doubt very much honestly. That's my assessment of him. It just felt right to him in the moment, and he went with it. But it was a good thing and actually helped us out. I think often political appointee ambassadors, people who come out of political life, have a feel for certain things and situations that is different from the wonky feel, perhaps legalistic rules-based approach, within which career officials tend to operate. This can be a big boon.

I remember Ambassador Rabb, the first time I served in Rome, a number of situations he just handled so smoothly and nicely that from a wonkish perspective were terrible. He would just grab somebody under the arm, take him into his office, and talk about all the great stuff he did with the Ford Foundation after WWII and his experiences there. "Hey, come over to the house for lunch." Everything was good suddenly. He would start out with this thing that looked very conflictual and awful, and, by the end of lunch, they are best friends! These are skills I highly respect.

Going back to the Cavalese incident, there was a real irony to the way the Italian government dealt with it. During the Cold War, we had spent so much time worrying about the communists coming to power, although after 1948 there really was not much to worry about. Maybe a bit around in the mid-'70s. Massimo D'Alema, who had been communist his whole life—the party had changed its name, but he was in essence the head of the Communist Party—became prime minister in '99. This is a huge event. It was a sea change for part of the Italian body politic that had been pushed aside for decades. Kept on the sidelines. Not without influence, but largely kept on the sidelines. All of a sudden, they've got prime minister. Of course, what does D'Alema do? Smart politician that he is—he's still active, although he doesn't have a big role in the party anymore—he goes and is trying to build bridges to everybody who might have a problem with him. He gets named prime minister, and where is the first place he goes? He goes to meet the Pope. In the Italian context, a brilliant move. A lot of my secularist Italian friends were not happy about it, but you've got to respect that it was actually a smart move in the broader Italian context.

D'Alema and his people were just really terrific partners with us in trying to deal with this problem. They basically had to rewrite the law in order to be able to deal with this.

This was the 1990s, so social media is not a big thing. No one had heard of Twitter or Facebook. I'll tell you though, within half an hour of the accident, faxes! We still used faxes. Faxes were pouring into the embassy, into all sorts of places in the town. They are pouring in from personal injury attorneys in the U.S.

Q: Holy cow!

TERZUOLO: They really… You've got to give these people credit, but they pushed so hard that basically, to be very cynical about it, short of getting the attorneys their payday, this issue was going to be kept alive. The families, of course, were heartbroken. I'm glad we were able to get them some financial compensation. A lot of adults died. Families obviously took a hit. You can't compensate for the loss of a loved one, but you can try to help them move on with their lives, and finances, honestly, are a big part of that, yes. The Italian laws and regulations, however, really called for very small damages and payments.

Q: Compensation?

TERZUOLO: Compensation. The way it works under the treaties, status of forces and other agreements that governed this, it was really up to the Italians to pay damages to the people, and then we would reimburse them. That was the mechanism foreseen by treaty. However, the Italians start looking at this. "We've got a problem here because we're not accustomed to these large awards in damage judgments, so this is what we would be able to do." They were talking maybe $20,000 per person or something similar. Miniscule payments. Certainly, the attorneys were not going to be happy with their 30, 40 percent of that. We're going "Oh, my gosh, is there some other way?" D'Alema assigned really good people to work on this. Marco Minitti, who is still an important player in Italian politics. He's pulled in a lawyer, a jurist who was very expert, Domenico Cacopardo, a very smart guy, and said, "You've got to solve this." In the end, yes, the Italians passed a special law allowing them to pay much larger damages.

Now, of course, there was a problem on the U.S. side. As you can well imagine, the people in DOD wanted to get rid of this problem. They said, "We've got the money. We will reimburse. Whatever the Italians can pay, we'll reimburse them. We want to solve this as best we can because we have big interests at stake with Italy." It was the State Department Legal Advisor's (L) office that had problems, because of fear of establishing precedents, putting at risk the SOFA (status of forces agreement) or whichever agreement exactly established how reimbursements were supposed to work. Usually, I don't swear much. I don't scream. It's not part of me. The discussions I had, they weren't discussions. The yelling I did at the State Department legal advisors. I've never done that with anybody else in my life. I guess I finally managed to bludgeon them into submission on this point. Basically, the memos were drafted. Everything DOD was saying, "Yay, rah, let's go. Absolutely no problem!" And L was holding its clearance.

Q: Okay. L was out of its mind. That's where you go to the under secretary, deputy secretary, secretary and just say, "Mm, you know, this just can't be." In other words, somebody at a higher level needs to say, "They need to be explained a certain reality here."

TERZUOLO: Yes, we called in other chips. I threatened them extensively with all the people we were going to get calling into them! We did manage to solve that.

Then, of course, you had to develop mechanisms for dealing with this. Trying to publicize what was going on and making clear we were trying to help people out. That was a lot of work, I'll tell you. It was a horrible thing. You can't make it right ever. But I think in the end, we managed to do things for the families that helped them enough that the attorneys backed off and stopped lobbying members of Congress. In a sense, it probably didn't hurt that there was a second trial revolving around destruction of evidence. I don't recall the details, but some people, or at least one person, from the aircrew did get convicted and sentenced to some time. I'm not sure what he actually served. You're also getting this controversial issue within the broader military community. Military families got involved, demonstrating in support of the flyers. That was probably the single most complex, long-running thing I had to deal with. I think we got a good result in the end.

Q: Wow.

TERZUOLO: It was a bit what I was saying before. With the Italians, even with the first post-Communist prime minister—perhaps even especially with the first post-Communist prime minister—we have been used to solving problems together. But it takes time and work. So that pretty much chewed me up for about two-and-a-half years.

Q: Okay. Boy, that's exhausting! Beyond this particular event, what were some of the other things you covered?

TERZUOLO: It was a very odd tour of duty, because the first year I was political-military counselor and was expected also to cover Italian internal politics, as I discovered when I got there. The second year I was acting political minister-counselor basically the whole year because the minister-counselor had gone. This was now heading into '98-'99. We're heading into problems in Kosovo. This was a fellow with a lot of Yugoslav experience, so he went I think in an OSCE guise of some sort. They didn't fill the position full-time, so I was basically acting for the year.

This included the period of the Kosovo intervention, which was a very interesting time. The Italians, on the whole, really stood up in this case, admittedly with their own particular spin on things. The NATO air operation in Kosovo would not have been possible without Italy's very active participation. Not only did they provide bases for the aircraft missions, and that was crucial, but they also participated heavily in the air missions themselves. In particular, the Italians had a capability that a lot of NATO countries actually didn't have, given the sort of division of labor we have in NATO. The Italians, and I'm not sure why, had invested pretty heavily in suppression of enemy air defense technology. Basically, they had these aircraft that could fly in when the Serbs flipped on their air defense radar. These aircraft would detect it and fire a missile down the throat of the air defense radar.

Q: Interesting.

TERZUOLO: It was a very important capability if you wanted to be able to operate in Syria… (Serbia) Interesting Freudian slip! The Serbs at one point put up a few aircraft they had. We downed them immediately. These sorts of surface-to-air missile defenses were more of a concern. The Italian role with suppression of enemy air defense was very important.

The Italians had to do quite a tap dance. The poor minister of defense at the time, I remember, had to go out and explain how Italian participation in these missions was not a violation of the constitutional prohibition on participation in offensive military operations.

Q: Wow.

TERZUOLO: They developed the argument that, in fact, suppressing Serbian air defense radar was not an offensive military operation, because it was actually conducted in defense of other NATO aircraft. Maybe the defense minister had been to school with the Jesuits or something, but he really came up with this refined distinction! It sufficiently carried the day. Such things were necessary in the Italian case, given the consensus-seeking political system, despite efforts to make it into more of a government vs. opposition kind of system. The old habits of consensus seeking, coalition building, die hard.

So some of the things the Italian government did in the Kosovo intervention, in the interest of managing actual or potential internal dissention in Italy, drove us a little bit crazy, but were, in fact, perfectly logical and correct within their scheme of things. Their political needs were not our political needs, and we had to explain this back to Washington sometimes without sounding too clientelistic.

In fact, they were great on the Kosovo operation. We had some tough conversations. I remember going with Ambassador Foglietta to talk to the president of the Italian Senate. An old Christian Democratic politician, a long-term politician who was obviously influenced by the view that, "Oh, we need to have the UN solve things." That was a tough conversation. The ambassador did a good job. I'm not sure he convinced the president of the Senate, but he certainly laid down the U.S. point of view kindly but very forcefully, very clearly.

Interestingly, a contact that John Tefft and I had made in the '80s, Marta Dassù, ended up as a key policy advisor to D'Alema, who was prime minister also during the Kosovo intervention. She did a great job in crafting an explanation that referenced the actions the UN had been able to take with respect to Kosovo and, at least to a decent extent, got around the fact that there wasn't an explicit authorization for use of force at a given point in time. It left that aspect vague. Long-term contact building, I think, really pays off. Again, this is someone from Communist Party ranks that we had sought out back in the mid to late '80s. Who can we talk to? Who is a communist interested in defense and security policy? We went looking and found her. She was a very young person at the

time, but it was great to have her alongside the prime minister during the whole Kosovo enterprise.

I would say the other thing in my own movements in about mid-1999 until mid-2000, I moved back to being political-military counselor because they would not panel me or assign me officially to the minister-counselor position. That was the point at which USIS (U.S. Information Agency) was being folded into the State Department. There was a USIS officer, a senior officer, who had served in Italy. As it turned out, there were other issues as well, but they put him in that position.

Q: But you would still get for one year, you would get an evaluation as acting?

TERZUOLO: Yeah, yeah. I got that. That was pretty good. Then I go back into my previous guise, which was actually all right because this was also the end game on the Cavalese issue. I was incredibly busy with that. Ultimately, I was the one who had it all in my head. I couldn't really pass it off to anybody else anyway. That actually worked out all right. A year later, the USIS chap left, and I was actually paneled in as minister-counselor for political affairs.

That last year, the big issue was really what was happening to the Italian political system. At that point, I took myself out of political-military stuff. Another fellow had been paneled in as political-military counselor. He was dealing with that. I really ended up focusing that last year very, very heavily on the Italian internal political dimension. I already had a lot of contacts in the system. It was frankly something I could also do well for linguistic reasons, building contacts with various players out there. There, too, I think we did a good job in terms of looking out at the horizon and looking beyond the common wisdom or, I would say, what Washington wanted to be the common wisdom.

There was the whole Third Way move at the very end of the '90s, driven by Bill Clinton. Tony Blair became prime minister in Britain in '97. You've got the kind of pragmatic, not too ideological left. They kind of connected. They also connected pretty well with D'Alema.

Q: Ah!

TERZUOLO: A post-Communist prime minister of Italy in D'Alema, leading a government with issues of interest to us, and an excellent record. We had every reason to be on good terms. There were conferences about the Third Way that D'Alema was brought into. Quite a close relationship that takes shape, as these things go Clinton and D'Alema. But practically speaking it wasn't going to continue.

Though the elections took place in May 2001, it was already visible in 2000, to my mind, that Silvio Berlusconi was the coming thing. This was not where our sympathies lay at the time. Berlusconi was perceived as a man too far to the right for our tastes. It was not in a sense politically correct to advise Washington that Berlusconi was the coming thing. But we stuck by our guns. We had very well documented thinking on why this was likely

to occur. This would be another of those elections in which the polls were not right. At least the highly publicized polls were incorrect. They dramatically undercounted what would be ultimately the votes for Berlusconi, because a lot of people didn't want to say they were voting for him. We had tapped into some other polling data that pointed to different outcomes. Anyway, I think we had a well-documented case and stuck by our guns. We said, "Look, be ready for this!" This may not be our preferred option, but this is to our mind the likely option. We had put some effort into building contacts with people in the Berlusconi orbit, which also paid off. I think that was good work. I feel like it was good work, because you've got to be able to step back and say, "The common wisdom is likely to be wrong here, folks! Our preferred option isn't necessarily the option that is going to materialize. Suck it up!"

As I recall, then President Bush came to Italy very early in his first term. It would have been summer of 2001. That went very well. I think perhaps a perception of ideological affinities and so forth may have helped.

I think there was a very noticeable change. This didn't have much to do with the Italians, but there was a big change between the Clinton Administration and the Bush Administration in terms of style and way of dealing with foreign counterparts, and ways of dealing with official Americans as well.

Q: Yes.

TERZUOLO: The Italians, when they heard that Bush was going to come, were terrified. Not because of Bush, but after eight years of the Clinton Administration, which was extremely difficult to deal with on visits and so forth—just notoriously demanding, never happy with anything, trying to tell other people how to do things in their own country. I say that as a Clinton supporter, but let's say the conduct tended to be perceived as overbearing and arrogant.

Q: Yes.

TERZUOLO: Other governments, after eight years of this, were in great apprehension. I think what the Bush people did was send people out to do the advance—certainly for the advance in Rome—with a very soft touch. They were very systematic. This came from things that the president himself said. "We're going to somebody else's house."

It was sometimes almost funny. My wife was the de facto control officer coordinating the visit. I think she formally was assigned as control officer for the advance team. The head of the advance team, who was a guy with a lot of experience but at that point a volunteer—he wasn't a career guy—sort of latched onto Debby and said, "I'm not going anywhere without you through this whole process." I think they also wanted an alternative perspective in their dealings with the Vatican authorities and our embassy to the Holy See regarding the presidential meeting with the Pope. It's really her story more than mine, but she recalls all these questions asked by the Italian protocol everywhere—presidential palace protocol, diplomatic protocol. "Is this going to be okay?"

The menu. The president of Italy was hosting a state dinner. "Here's the menu. Is it okay?" The US advance guy said, "Well, it looks good to me." "No, please, I want to be sure!" I guess they took it back to President Bush who apparently said, "This is going to be the best dinner I ever have in my life! Just give me apple juice instead of wine."

I found this sort of disconnect in a way between my own political preferences and feelings I might have about people as people. People and their political program can be quite divergent.

Anyway, I think we got that relationship off to a good start and avoided unpleasant surprises. As long as the Clinton Administration was in office, they were not happy at the thought of Berlusconi coming to power, but the Bush/Berlusconi relationship got off to a good start. They might have done it anyway, but the Italians, when it came to the Iraq business, did lend a hand. They took casualties. Carabinieri in Nasiriyah. Carabinieri are great. Talk about civil-military expertise. But a lot of these guys paid with their lives in the end for what they were trying to do. The relationship with Italy was comparatively smooth in the Iraq period, as opposed to things that happened with some of our other key allies. Again, it might well have gone that way anyway. The Italians, left and right, have tended to view the relationship with the United States as very key to their international position and standing.

I left Italy at least with the feeling of having done some good work, even if it was, as I have said, a difficult and complex period for me.

Q: Were you there for 9/11?

TERZUOLO: No. I was actually in Washington for 9/11.

Q: So you had gone back at the end of the regular cycle in 2001.

TERZUOLO: We moved directly from Rome to the Netherlands. I had gotten a job there I was really interested in doing. I really had come to the conclusion that I was just going to worry about doing something I really wanted to do and not try to game the system further. I had the chance to take a weird but fascinating job, which I loved, as the senior U.S. resident representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which no one had heard of in those days. Now it's in the news. Everyone has heard of it, at least if you read a few major papers and watch CNN. No one had heard of it at that point. I had an interest in arms control, nonproliferation issues, and international security policy. They were looking for a Foreign Service officer to do that job. The fellow who had done the job for a number of years, I think, was a retired military officer, presumably a chemical warfare officer. They were looking for a diplomat to do it. It sounded like a good option from some other points of view that were important to us. So, yes, I took that.

Q: Is this the organization that was known informally as Wassenaar (Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies)?

TERZUOLO: No. Wassenaar really never was an organization as such, but essentially a structure of meetings to coordinate on exports of certain types of technologies, dual-use technologies. Wassenaar is a suburb of The Hague, so it had the geographical connection. But, no, the OPCW was charged with implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention that went into effect in 1997. It was a pretty new organization at that point, although it had a sort of predecessor structure.

Q: Our participation was the result of a famous deal between Senator Jesse Helms and the Clinton Administration, where the Clinton Administration said, "All right, we'll get rid of ACDA (Arms Control Disarmament Agency) and USIA, and you stop holding up the Senate confirmation of the OPCW treaty." That's how we finally signed it. That's how we finally had a permanent representative there.

TERZUOLO: That was a really interesting assignment, but I think we're going to have to talk about that next time.

Q: Absolutely!

Q: Today is June 25th. We're resuming our interview with Eric Terzuolo. Eric, you wanted to return to the Vatican assignment.

TERZUOLO: Oh, yeah. It just struck me as an interesting example, my non-assignment to the Vatican. This was in '94. When asked to describe the State Department personnel system, and perhaps it's changed a bit since I left, but certainly the State Department personnel in my day, was "feudalistic," although I suppose in a lot of ways "clientelistic" is more accurate. I have to admit, in fairness, that I sometimes benefited from the clientelistic dimension.

But, yes, my attempt to get assigned to the Vatican was a particular case. In this instance, I am told, serious external influence applied regarding selection of the DCM. There were at least two candidates. Perhaps there were others. I actually went and had an interview with Ambassador Raymond Flynn, former mayor of Boston, political appointee ambassador. Years later, someone said I really could have spared myself the trouble. This is not intended in any way as a criticism of the fellow who did get the job. He was a friend of mine in fact. But it was rather interesting that, in this case, the key intervention reportedly had come from the Archbishop of Boston, Cardinal Bernard Law, whom not a lot of people outside of Boston knew about at that time. He subsequently became infamous for having protected pedophile priests. He was demoted by the Pope, by the Vatican, and ended up with a very economically advantageous sinecure. The punishment was relative, I would say. There was a Boston connection in play with this. Obviously, Cardinal Law and Mayor Flynn, as the cardinal and former mayor, knew each other very

well. So there was intervention, I am told, on the other candidate's behalf with a sort of high spiritual imprimatur I guess.

Q: [Laughs] Nice choice of words!

TERZUOLO: I doubt this is something that happened all the frequently. I think mostly they were matters of internal politics, given a situation in which ambassadors are given wide latitude in choosing their DCMs from candidates identified by the system. But these sorts of things can happen.

Q: Absolutely! You do hear about it and kind of shrug.

TERZUOLO: As the person who told me this whole story years later said, "You never had a chance!"

The second time I made a stab at the same job, the problem was a little different in the sense that I and another candidate had different virtues and different sources of support internally and sort of canceled each other out as it turned out, which left space for another person outside of the polarization that had taken shape, not through the other candidate's fault or my own. A very strange process. It always struck me that people ended up having to spend way too much time lobbying for their next assignments. I ran into many occasions in which people literally arrived at Job X and were already focused on Job Y three years down the line. I don't think that is an optimal system in terms of efficiency in getting today's job done.

Q: Sure.

TERZUOLO: My impression is that the human resources side has a little bit stronger hold now on the assignments process, but it's been a long time since I've had anything to do with this.

My last Foreign Service assignment, which was in The Hague, was in fact another example of clientelism, or who you know to put it in milder terms. It happened that I did know the people who were making the choices quite well.

It was an interesting job and I enjoyed my time at the U.S. Permanent Delegation to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the OPCW. It's not that commonly known as an acronym. Basically, in those days, almost no one had heard of the OPCW. It has a much higher international profile now because of events in Syria over the last few years and the investigations they have conducted and their engagement with this issue. In a lot of ways, it doesn't qualify as a UN technical agency, but it is a highly technical body, also dealing with the implementation of a very elaborate, very detailed treaty—the international convention banning the use, possession, fabrication, production of chemical weapons. It reaches down into a whole series of levels. You're dealing with eliminating existing declared chemical weapons stockpiles. There were a number of chemical weapons possessor countries, including the United States and the Russian

Federation, who were states party. Obviously, there were a lot of non-possessor states. Then, of course, it did devote a certain amount of attention to the possibility that declared non-possessors might in fact be conducting work in this direction. There were a lot of different aspects to it. An interesting blend, I think, of the political, legal and the technical.

In my case, it was helpful that I had studied a lot of chemistry back in the day. My first major in college had been chemical engineering. I didn't pursue it all that long, but probably by standards of Foreign Service generalist officers, I had an unusually good knowledge of chemistry. It wasn't essential, but it was helpful to me certainly. It was the first time I had an assignment involving me in a sustained daily fashion in multilateral diplomacy. When I was in Prague, I had some responsibilities with the CSCE—subsequently OSCE—that conducted part of its operations in Prague. I had some taste of that. A little bit oddly in Paris, a sort of one-off diplomatic forum that really never did much, as it turned out. But this was the first time I really worked in multilateral diplomacy in a sustained way. I have to say, I really enjoyed it.

It was quite different from bilateral diplomacy. What struck me, you're basically involved in a constant negotiation with a multiplicity of partners who have quite different perspectives. When I showed up in the summer of 2001, I think there were 140-some member states. You have a wide diversity of views on chemical weapons issues. Developing countries understandably looked for assistance, advice that would relate to the peaceful development of chemical industries and so forth. As I said, you've got the divide between possessor and non-possessor states. And you could see playing out a lot of the same rivalries that were present in other international organizations.

Basically, most of our work was done in the context of the work of the executive council. The OPCW has the conference of the state's parties, where all the states parties come. Then, a group of, I believe at that point, 41 countries. Generally, the ones most interested in the issues, the possessor states, and then others met multiple times a year. Frankly, a lot of our work between meetings at the executive council was negotiating out, preparing decisions to be approved, hopefully, by the executive council.

At the point I arrived, it was a relatively new organization. There was a preparatory committee. The negotiation of the chemical weapons convention had been a lengthy process. It only finally entered into force in '97, at which point you have the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. It was still relatively early days. There was a certain amount of feeling our way along as to what we could do and how to do it.

Q: The chemical weapons convention had to be approved by the Senate because it's a treaty.

TERZUOLO: Right.

Q: This is one of the famous hostages taken by Jesse Helms, who insisted on getting rid of…. In exchange for allowing the treaty to come up for a vote, since the Republicans had

the majority and he was the head of the foreign relations committee—in exchange for eliminating USIA, ADCA and USAID, he was willing to allow the Clinton Administration to bring it up for a vote and to pay the arrearages at the UN that had accumulated. The big accomplishment of the Clinton Administration at the end of that bargaining was that USAID got to remain a separate agency. But ACDA and USIA were folded into the State Department, and that's how we got the approval of this new organization that entered into force in 1997.

TERZUOLO: You mention ACDA, which no one remembers I suppose at this point, but in a sense I was really working for the residue of ACDA within the State Department, which was the Arms Control Bureau. It was also interesting, because although the assistant secretary when I was there was Avis Bohlen, a Foreign Service officer, it was a very civil service-heavy bureau, with real subject matter experts who knew the ins and outs, the negotiating history in detail of all these things. To be honest, it was quite a different experience from working, say, in a regional bureau in State where people come for a while. They go off to post. New people come in. There was constantly a learning curve.

I was actually the first Foreign Service officer to be the senior resident representative to the OPCW. It was an interesting experience because I think there were concerns. I think we have talked before about how tensions can manifest themselves between civil service and Foreign Service. Not something I have ever tried to engage in. Nevertheless, I think it caused some apprehensions. In fact, I think we got along very well. As I was getting set to leave later, somebody said, "Look, come and work for us!" "No, no, I already gave at the office!" was my response.

Q: Right!

TERZUOLO: Having done a lot of pol-mil work before, I think I was also relatively well positioned to deal with the very tricky relationship with DOD, which obviously has a lot of equity in this question—the chemical weapons we still had at that point, a considerable stockpile that DOD very much wanted to get rid of. Often, DOD people would assume that, as a State Department Foreign Service guy, I did not have their equities at heart. So this took a certain amount of convincing with some people. Explaining why sometimes you do things one way that might not be the way they thought of doing it, or they wanted to do it, but actually would preserve and advance their equities more effectively than what they proposed doing. I think we developed a good track record of getting things done. It solved itself over time.

It was a very odd delegation at that point because really I was the senior State Department rep and the senior resident representative to the organization, but it wasn't really like an embassy where you have formalized country team structure. We had a DOD representative. We had a Commerce Department representative, who was actually a State Department Foreign Service office, but I have to say was really, really immersed in her Commerce Department role. She was very loyal to the Commerce Department, and very, very intent on advancing and preserving their equities in the process. Then there

were other representatives of other agencies who had interests in these issues. There really wasn't a formal structure that allowed me to direct people. I couldn't really give orders, except to the one other State Department, full-time employee and an office manager we hired, who was on State's tab. It was a very diverse situation, putting a premium on moral suasion, could we say, and demonstrated success in getting things done and advancing everybody's equities rather a hierarchical chain of command. That was interesting. On the whole, it went well. Certainly, I couldn't just stomp my foot and make things happen. It took some diplomacy within the delegation as well as outside the delegation, but no problem with that.

Q: Was this a regular three-year tour?

TERZUOLO: Yes. I think I was assigned for three years. In fact, I left after two years. I retired, but not because I didn't like the job. There were other factors at play.

The logistics of it were all kind of tricky, honestly. Dealing with human resources. I knew this when I took the job. It was not a job that fit into the State Department Foreign Service career progression. Nobody quite knew what this meant—how to read it, how to compare it to something else. I would argue it was akin to being DCM at a small post or something like that. In terms of what I had to do, it had that sort of combination of the policy side, but also the administration, management side of things, leadership side of things, so it was somewhat akin to that. But nobody really knew what it was.

I would say at that point in my career, I was more interested in doing things that were of interest to me than necessarily what was the most advantageous from the standpoint of career progression.

I have to say I enjoyed the job. It did change toward the end of my tenure there. We had not had a resident ambassador there. When I arrived and for most of my time there, we had Don Mahley, who was deputy assistant secretary, if I remember correctly, in the Arms Control Bureau and had multiple responsibilities. He was the ambassador to the OPCW. Don had lots of other things he was trying to do, so he would come in a few times a year. Most of the time, I was running the show, which was very nice. There wasn't a lot of administrative overhead in the way you usually have immediately when you get a resident ambassador. We did acquire a resident ambassador before I left, Eric Javits, nephew I believe of Jacob Javits. I think he was an attorney in New York, very smart, very nice man. I enjoyed the time I spent working with him. I think he was good negotiator. Once he was on scene, though, my role changed. For my predecessor, the role became much more one of support to the ambassador, rather than being a largely independent actor with a lot of latitude. I really felt like I got a lot of latitude and a lot of confidence from the Arms Control Bureau senior management. It became quite a different job.

Interestingly, the tale that was told about how Eric Javits ended up as ambassador there had to do with John Bolton, who is much in the news now. In those days, John Bolton was T, the undersecretary for international security and nonproliferation. I forget the

exact title at the time, but the arms control bureau and nonproliferation all came under his aegis. In a sense, I did work for John Bolton for a time. I have to say, although I have always disagreed with him on a vast number of things, I have absolutely none of the animus toward Bolton a lot of people seem to nourish. Actually, quite the contrary. He always treated me very nicely. Toward the end of my time, I injured myself quite badly, and he sent me an extremely nice personal, handwritten note that I still have. You don't get thanks all that often in that line of work. I thought it was a very nice touch. I found him an absolute gentleman in his dealings with me certainly. Actually, the OPCW was an international organization that Bolton liked!

Q: Ah, interesting!

TERZUOLO: I don't particularly agree with his view, but I think he has had over time a consistent view that is highly skeptical of international organizations, the limitations on sovereignty and freedom of action that they create for the U.S., the tendency to result in least common denominator decision making. I think it is rather traditional school of thought with deep roots in the American experience. He didn't make this stuff up. I'm rather on a different side of things, or partially different side of things. But, okay. It's a coherent view. In fact, with the OPCW, things went quite well, in that I think he was quite supportive. I think he viewed it as a pretty pragmatic organization that had a valuable mission. I think he was very interested in the inspection dimension of the OPCW. In a sense, it's probably most similar to the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency). An awful lot of the employees of the agency itself, the organization, were real experts on chemical weapons—engineers, often military officers or former military officers who worked on chemical things. People really knew their stuff.

The inspection teams were multinational and conducted a great deal of inspection activity. Under the convention, you have to be monitoring not only former chemical weapon storage sites, but also places where chemical weapons were being destroyed. It was very intrusive, because the convention controls chemicals that are not in themselves normally considered weapons of war, but precursor chemicals for the manufacture of chemical weapons or, in some cases, are highly toxic chemicals that could be used to very destructive purpose. Chlorine is an example. It's not like nerve gas. There was a lot of inspection activity of, for example, chemical industry plants to make sure they had proper controls in place, were actually doing what they had reported they were doing, producing what they said they were. It was a very extensive inspection regime for a not very large organization. It made a lot of contributions to transparency and to help avoid rerouting of substances for nefarious purposes. It deserves a lot of credit for that. It's a part of its activity that people don't know about.

It was my impression that Bolton viewed the OPCW as a practically useful thing.

Q: Let me just ask a quick substantive question. How does the Wassenaar Arrangement track with the chemical weapons treaty, if at all.

TERZUOLO: Not at all.

Q: Okay.

TERZUOLO: Wassenaar has to do with kind of mechanical technology, electronic technology and so forth.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: It's equipment basically.

Q: Okay.

TERZUOLO: It's not under Wassenaar, but the chemical weapons convention deals not only with substances, but materials that can be used in the production of chemical weapons. But they're two entirely separate things, apart from being in the same location.

Bolton, I would say, had a positive view of the OPCW. What he clearly didn't like—and now I'm going back to the issue of how Ambassador Javits ended up in The Hague; he was originally ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament, the CD in Geneva—it was clear Bolton perceived the CD as pretty much a useless talk shop. Ambassador Javits was a very positive person. He's the kind of guy—you get lemons, you make lemonade. I think he was trying to make something better out of the CD, and I think Bolton had just made up his mind about the CD. In a lot of ways, it was a good move. It brought an activist, good negotiator, positive thinker to a place where we were actually doing some pretty significant and very concrete stuff. I think that was appreciated.

The main issue we dealt with in my time, and certainly the most dramatic episode—it was very unusual in the history of international organizations—was that we, i.e. the U.S., working in particularly close cooperation with Japan and South Korea, but with other like-minded countries as well—actually engineered the dismissal of the director-general. Technically speaking, he was the director-general of the technical secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Normally, if you see this discussed, people will shorten it and just director-general of the OPCW. It was a Brazilian diplomat, José Bustani.

Washington had come around rather abruptly to a conviction that Bustani was a problem. Not all that long before, I should note, we had pushed to get him renewed for his second term earlier than necessary. This was a bit of a problem in the subsequent discussions about Bustani's removal. It took some time after I was there to get a clear bead on Bustani, but I will say I was ultimately very sympathetic to the effort to remove him. It did not pose big problems for me. It was a very controversial move, and widely, widely criticized. Particularly in one meeting of the executive council, he struck me as extremely erratic and not a cool head. This was an organization that really requires a cool head, because you're doing some very delicate stuff. I don't believe this has ever actually been used, it certainly wasn't used in my time there, but the chemical weapons convention has an unusual provision for challenge inspections, if member state A becomes convinced

that member state B is engaged in prohibited activities. It didn't apply to Iraq in my day. It wasn't a member state.

Q: And it didn't apply to Syria.

TERZUOLO: It didn't apply to Syria in my time, since Syria only became a party to the convention in 2013. But, let's say, member country A, if it felt that member country B was violating the convention, a serious violation that was the sort of thing you would need to capture quickly, they had the option of taking a proposal to the executive council for a challenge inspection. The clause was structured in such a way that it would be actually quite difficult to deny that request. It was a very short notice thing, because you didn't want people to clean things up too completely before inspectors could get there. It wasn't used in my time, and I'm not sure it has been used since, because it was politically a very delicate thing. To make the case would involve sharing types of information that countries are used to sharing with only limited groups of other countries, not with 41 others that would include rivals and adversaries. For example, of concern for us would be Iran, which is a prominent player in the chemical weapons control world for understandable reasons. Anyway, the OPCW was an organization that at least faced the possibility of an extremely high stress, politically delicate and conflictual situation. It made sense, I think, to have someone heading the organization side of things who was going to be a cool head. I'm sure Bustani had other virtues, but he didn't strike me as being a cool head.

This would have been early 2002. We, in cooperation with some of the like-minded countries—Japan, South Korea, and Germany were particularly concerned—wanted to press the point, as did we. In essence, we launched a campaign to remove Bustani from office. It was highly unusual. There had been, not many, but at least one or two occasions in which we had blocked the heads of international organizations from getting a second term of office.

Q: Boutros Boutros-Ghali was a famous one.

TERZUOLO: Boutros Boutros-Ghali was one. I think maybe that had already happened at the FAO, the agricultural organization, as well. That was not unheard of, but to basically fire someone in the middle of their mandate was I believe unprecedented at the time. Part of it is, you are making this up as you go along. There's no standard roadmap for how you do this. You're looking at a lot of member states, in essence all the world regions short of Antarctica represented there, with quite different perspectives. It was a sensitive issue for the Latin American group, because they already felt underrepresented in the top leadership positions in international organizations. They were worried about losing one of the key Latin American positions. Just a lot of sensitivities on how far should even very large, wealthy, powerful member states be allowed to muscle somebody out of these jobs. I can understand the concerns. I'm basically fairly critical myself of international organizations. They often have a hard time getting beyond the least common denominator.

The discussion was quite acrimonious. There was a lot of lobbying to be done because you had to try to engage with all of the world regions. Some of the countries didn't have resident embassies in The Hague.

Q: Of course.

TERZUOLO: In our case, we were linked administratively to the embassy in The Hague, but I didn't receive my instructions from the U.S. ambassador to the Netherlands. I received them directly from the AC Bureau in State, and I communicated with them directly. That was a somewhat unusual arrangement. What most countries did, they had an embassy in The Hague. They would have a section that dealt with OPCW matters. But, there were a lot of the less affluent countries that did all of their Benelux (Belgium/Netherlands/Luxembourg) coverage out of one capital, and that was usually Brussels. They wanted to be where the EU was. All very understandable.

I went to Brussels for meetings in the embassies of countries that weren't present in The Hague—a lot of the African countries, for example. It was very labor intensive. I wouldn't say we got wholehearted support for this initiative, but I think we managed to encourage a lot of countries into a position, from our point of view, of constructive ambivalence. As I recall, it was about three months of very intensive work that required me to keep my cool. Some of the conversations all of us were having were very difficult. In the end, it worked. We did succeed in getting a vote to remove Bustani.

His successor was, I think everyone agreed, a notable improvement. Rogelio Pfirter was a very senior Argentine diplomat, so we stayed with the Latin American group. Pfirter was the fellow who had negotiated the Argentina-Brazil nuclear deal.

Q: Oh.

TERZUOLO: He wasn't a chemical weapons guy particularly, but he was very experienced in arms control diplomacy. He was a different personality—a much calmer, steadier person than Boustani. Was quite sound also in his view of the administrative and resource issues, which was good. He got high marks pretty much universally, which is tough in these organizations. He was certainly a less polarizing figure than Bustani had been.

As I recall—and a lot of this played out after I had left—because we had done something so unconventional, later there was some fallout from it. I believe Bustani had to get a settlement. The Brazilians, as I recall, took care of him very nicely. I think they sent him as ambassador to London. I know he was very hurt by this. He was not a bad person. I know he was very hurt by this, very wounded, understandably. In the end, he got a very good onward assignment. I think he got some money out of it that the organization had to pay. It had to be resolved how to do that. Such an ouster is not something I would recommend doing routinely. If you're going to do this, I would say, pick your fights very carefully. But I think it ended up being to the benefit of the organization. On the whole it was the right thing to do.

The other thing that I remember particularly from my time at the OPCW was dealing with the Russians.

Q: Ah. Forgive me, again the year you were there?

TERZUOLO: Summer of 2001 to summer of 2003. So two years, although the last not quite six months, the last several months, were very problematic. I stupidly had a skiing accident in Italy. Spectacularly broke my femur.

Q: Oh, boy.

TERZUOLO: I have about 10 pounds of metal in that leg to this very day. It was a long recovery. It cramped my mobility. For family reasons, I lived rather far away. I didn't live in The Hague, actually, for school reasons for our daughter. There was a period there where my presence was rather virtual. Lots of phone calls, but it was really difficult for me to get into the office for a time. Anyway, 2001-2003.

It was not as interesting as it might have been in 2003, because the OPCW didn't really have an Iraq angle. Iraq was not a party to the chemical weapons convention, which was one of the things people would often mention at the time as a worrisome sign. It's now forgotten. At the time, particularly among policy types—not so much the public—it was always brought up, "Well, what is the problem? We know they have had these things in the past. If they don't have them now, why would they not be a member of the organization?" I think you can turn it around and say probably what they didn't want was discovery that their chemical weapons arsenal was, not completely nonexistent, but dramatically, dramatically degraded. Very few items left at the time. If you looked at the sort of things that Saddam Hussein was trying to do in terms of his image, he was working hard to make it appear that he did have weapons of mass destruction for purposes of internal politics and control as well as the international game, the international dimension.

Q: Oh, yeah!

TERZUOLO: Not being part of the OPCW, not being a signatory to the chemical weapons convention, fit into that quite nicely, it seems to me. This is what I surmise. I don't have any knowledge that this was in fact the Iraqi intention. But it makes sense to me they wouldn't be in.

Interestingly enough, and this goes back to John Bolton whom we were discussing earlier, the Iraqis did ask to be observers at, I believe it was, the Conference of States Parties. I think in 2003, but in any case at the time I was there they asked to be observers. This elicited quite a bit of back and forth in Washington, as you can imagine. Should we agree to this? Should we not agree to this? My position, and the position of the delegation—I think we were quite unified on this, was that there was no harm to be done by allowing the Iraqis to observe what was totally unclassified proceedings. There was

really nothing terribly sensitive that was going to be said in the context that the Iraqis were hoping to observe. Rather, we would lose something in the public relations game by posing obstacles. This may have been the year before we were cranking up the Iraq invasion. I don't remember the timing exactly. Anyway, this was controversial in Washington. People took quite different positions. Ultimately, Bolton took it upon himself to decide the issue. He decided in our favor. He agreed there was more to lose than to gain by keeping them out.
I don't always agree with John Bolton, and I don't always disagree!

Q: Great.

TERZUOLO: There were a couple of other interesting things in terms of the other delegations. We actually had quite a bit of contact with the Iranians. Not surprisingly, having been primarily a victim of chemical weapons used during the war with Iraq, the Iranians, you would expect them to take the issue seriously. They were very active members of the organization. That was very interesting dealing with them. Contact was inevitable. It was not that we searched each other out, but we might end up at a dinner or something, sitting next to each other. We probably had more contact with Iranians at that point than most people in the U.S. government did.

Q: In the unique situation of both being states parties to the OPCW, were you permitted to have substantive discussions with the Iranians?

TERZUOLO: Yes. We did have exchanges with them. What struck me about them, a couple of things. I have a lot of respect, I have to say, for Iranian diplomacy. It seemed to me they had a couple of very strong points in their favor. One was their mastery of the convention, of the negotiating history, etc. Their mastery was absolutely excellent. They had people who were real experts on this stuff. They knew it backwards and forwards. That was very evident. Their political positions, policy positions, were always grounded in a very, very deep understanding of the convention and its implications. Naturally, there were certain elements they would accentuate and or they would downplay. Very professional from that point of view.

I would say also very professional in their way of dealing with other delegations, and their way of speaking in the large group meetings at the executive council. I think they managed to avoid the stridency that some of the other developing country delegations often showed. The Indian delegation also knew their stuff very well. They're also a country with large equities with respect to chemical weapons, but I think the Indian delegation of often assumed a tone that was more strident than was actually constructive. The Iranians always struck a kind of mellow tone in their statements.

Q: Hmm. Interesting.

TERZUOLO: They were also very clever in the way they would spin and describe the requirements of the convention in their statements, probably statements that were very effective with delegations that were not terribly expert. They always sounded extremely

reasonable. In the large sessions, we tended to speak late in the game. In a polite way -- we always tried to keep it polite -- we would point out how the Iranian argument had been based on a specific interpretation of the convention that we did not share for the following reasons. We always tried to keep things substantive.

Somebody from one of the other delegations, after the whole Bustani effort, said one of the nicest things anybody ever said to me: "In the campaign against Bustani, you did something that was very difficult and very polarizing, but you did it in a way that managed to leave everybody feeling respected." That was a great thing to hear. I felt good about that.

Q: Yes.

TERZUOLO: In retrospect, I probably would have liked to spend more time in multilateral diplomacy, but so it goes.

Anyway, dealing with the Iranians was very interesting and very instructive. From time to time, I have written a bit about this.

Dealing with the Russians was very different, but also very interesting. As I think I've already indicated, arms control and nonproliferation diplomacy—OPCW deals with both arms control and nonproliferation -- It requires in a diplomatic generalist an unusually high degree of quite technical expertise. Really, you need to know the characteristics of the weapons, the technologies you are trying to negotiate on, because otherwise it's possible to make bad mistakes. Essentially, it seemed to me the Russian Federation solved their problems, at least on chemical weapons, by carrying over a lot of folks from the Soviet area.

Q: Mm hmm. Sure.

TERZUOLO: The folks we dealt with in the local delegation, but also the ones that would come from Moscow, had been at this for a long time. The Soviet, then Russian chemical weapons program had a long history, as we know. They had large stockpiles that needed to be destroyed. They wanted us to pay for as much of the destruction as possible. This was always a sticking point in our discussions. We would usually, before the executive council meetings, have serious meetings with them because there was so much of an agenda. Often, if we could work things out between the two of us, then everybody else would be okay with it as well. They had a large number of industrial plants that were in essence military plants for chemical weapons production. They said they wanted to reconvert them. Ensuring that a plant was converted in a safe fashion that actually made it a civilian use plant for good was very complicated. We had lengthy discussions about this and a whole series of other issues.

It was interesting dealing with them because it really did feel like being back in Soviet days. You could almost see Khrushchev banged his shoe on the table at the UN. Their basic negotiating approach, their negotiating style, hadn't really changed. These were

basically Soviet carryovers, so I didn't necessarily expect them to be very different. Their idea was to grind you down when we had extended meetings with them.

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: I remember once we negotiated with them for five days, morning and afternoon. It was the same thing every morning and every afternoon. They would begin with a litany of the injustices that we had committed against them. Not entirely without justification, in the sense that we were supposed to pay for some things that we ended up not paying for. But this was really should have been water under the bridge. There really wasn't anything we could do to correct the past. Let's try to look to the future. We had to begin with an hour or two of the browbeating, so my instructions to the other people involved in the negotiation were two things: Above all else, go to the bathroom before you go in and don't drink anything while you're inside.

Q: [Laughs] Right!

TERZUOLO: It sounds gross, but it's very important practical advice. We would listen. I would usually say something like, "Well, as you know, as I know, we can't rewrite this chunk of the past. We have other things that we really need to be focusing on now. Let's now talk about the way ahead."

It was in a meeting with the Russians that I made my only use of a Rolling Stones' song text in a diplomatic setting. You know the one, "you can't always get what you want."

Q: Right.

TERZUOLO: "If you try sometimes, you might just find you get what you need." That was appreciated actually!

It was interesting above all in the sense of style. In these multilateral settings you really see how different national delegations operate.

Q: Did I tell you a very brief story about the OSCE negotiating styles? Right after the end of Communism, there were still plenty of the Eastern European countries that still had their old holdover ambassadors and DCMs from the Communist era. These old holdovers did not learn that in the new era you did not deliver yourself of a presidium-style speech of eight hours, as confusing and abstruse as possible. When one of these Eastern European old holdovers would get the microphone and start, even the translators had trouble. The Swiss delegate would pick up his newspaper and very noisily read from page to page just to make sure those former Eastern Europeans knew he was not listening to one word. Under the heading of negotiating style!

TERZUOLO: Yes! Thinking about the Russians, the Russian ambassador was a smart guy. He was sufficiently a man of the new era. The ones who were really the old guard were the ones who would come out from Moscow for the very technical discussions. The

Russian ambassador fortunately understood the need not to give a presidium-type speech. He actually did have some sense of humor, an odd sense of humor. During the Bustani ouster effort that I talked about earlier, they were basically trying to be supportive of Bustani, at least to a point. At different points of his remarks, he paralleled us both to Stalinists and crocodiles. One of the people in our delegation knew how to draw and came up with a Stalin crocodile, which we slapped on t-shirts. We were thinking about giving one to the Russian ambassador to sign. In the end, decided not to do that, but I still have my crocodile t-shirt.

Q: [Laughs] Oh, that's great!

TERZUOLO: With the right touch, the Russian ambassador might not have found it too offensive, but the old-line experts who had been doing this for decades, they had the presidium speech approach down 100 percent.

I would say in fairness that we did manage to find meetings of the mind and reasonable compromise where everybody's interests were protected to a sufficient extent. But it was tough. There's a kind of negotiational machismo going on, even though there were women involved in these things, too. It was kind of, "Oh, you think you can wear me down? Well, just try, dude!" I don't know if that still happens. It probably does. But it's been a long time since I've dealt with Russians in that sort of context. It was intriguing though.

Without generalizing too much, the issues you had to deal with—with a lot of the African delegations, for example—were quite different from those with the Russians. And Latin America was in a weird situation where there are developing countries, but also very highly developed ones. They were not quite sure where they were. They had their own internal issues between the developing countries and the more developed ones. It was important just how you approached them and tried to show that, within the limits of the possible, that you felt their pain!

Anyway, that was a very good experience. I have good memories of my time at the OPCW. I think it was an enriching experience for me intellectually and personally. It put me in front of some challenges that were quite new to me and give me a chance to develop my expertise on arms control and nonproliferation issues, which have occupied a fair amount of my efforts and energies since retiring from the State Department. I retired on August 1, 2003.

That is about it for The Hague, or at least chemical weapons convention matters. I don't know if there are other things you would like to go into?

After retiring, as I said in August of 2003, I actually had a gig lined up. In my last year there in The Hague, I had applied for the NATO Manfred Wörner Fellowship.

Q: Ah! Describe that!

TERZUOLO: Well, I'm not sure it even exists still, and it went through a lot of changes afterwards, but it was designed to honor Manfred Wörner, who had been a distinguished Secretary-General of NATO. The idea was to promote research on international security policy, ideally with some sort of NATO dimension. I won the fellowship.

Between summer 2003 and 2004, I worked on my research project, which was on NATO policy toward weapons of mass destruction (WMD)—the Alliance in the aftermath of the 1990-1991 Iraq crisis and war. The Alliance had taken a much more serious look at WMD issues, working on adapting doctrine, building new organizational units to try to put these sorts of threats more in the center of its thinking, its planning, its policy discussions, and to acquire specific NATO capabilities relevant to detection, analysis and chemical/biological/radiological weapons situation. That was my primary activity for that first year after retiring. The dates I'm not completely sure of, but it was supposed to be a one-year thing. I started in August, and by the summer of 2004 I had completed a lengthy report, which then became the basis for a book I published. The publication date is 2006. Really, it was ready to go in 2005. That was an important aspect of my activity over those next couple of years.

We remained in the Netherlands until the summer of 2005 because our daughter liked her school. It was not the typical American diplomat kid school situation, but she really liked it. She wanted to finish, so we stayed until 2005.

In addition to working on this research and on the book, I also did some teaching also at a place that doesn't exist anymore—the Amsterdam School of International Relations (ASIR) which later was folded into the University of Amsterdam. It was a distinct foundation at the time I taught there. They called their degree an "Executive Masters in International Relations," as I recall. It was basically for people who already had degrees and usually some amount of work experience. This is still pretty early days of EU enlargement. The EU was funding quite nicely a fair number of students from either recent arrivals to the EU or candidate countries, or countries that were farther afield but were of interest—Russia, Ukraine, etc. That was a rather interesting experience. They had a sort of diplomatic skills class, which I did part of one academic year. The next one I did it all myself and, in addition, there was a separate course on negotiation.

Encountered a few problems. What was pretty clear was the school itself had not addressed the likelihood of—the plagiarism problem.

Q: Oh, boy.

TERZUOLO: For the negotiation course, I got a number of plagiarized papers. I think it was pretty clear there were a couple of things at play. These were students from countries that were still just emerging from the Soviet epoch. The degree of widespread, day-to-day corruption was very high and manifested itself in lots of ways. Fortunately for me, they weren't terribly adept in their plagiarism, so it was very easy for me to track down exactly where they had copied their papers from. I brought this to the attention of the

school, of course. They were actually pretty much unable to do anything about it. That was not a positive experience.

But there were positive aspects to it as well, in the sense that some of these folks did go on to do quite well, taking advantage notably of the fact that, as the EU opens and enlarges, they look for people from the new member countries to put into the EU bureaucracy. Several people who went to work for the EU did very well and were in fact able people. So it was something with its ups and downs.

I also did some teaching at the University of Amsterdam, in the political science department, contributing to their general international relations core course, but also did a couple of courses of my own—one on weapons of mass destruction and one on transatlantic security and policy issues. That was kind of getting back into teaching, which, as I mentioned a while ago, was what I was doing before I joined the State Department. It was rather different from what I did before. Different settings, different subject matter. I wasn't teaching Western Civilization anymore. Anyway, that was a positive experience, and I got back into the swing of things.

I also started doing some teaching at the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, the Sant'Anna Higher School —the Italian university system center of excellence in social sciences.

Q: But in The Hague?

TERZUOLO: No, this was in Italy, in Pisa. I would go to Pisa once or twice a year to do some stuff for them. I did that for a number of years.

I got the book all sorted out, and it appeared with a 2006 date, as I said, but it was really in 2005 when I finished that. At that point, our daughter finished high school and headed off to college. We moved back to Rome, where we still had our apartment from before, and lived there for a number of years.

Again, I was teaching in a variety of places. To me, my most significant teaching was at the University of Rome III, a relatively new campus. It was about 20 years old at that point. They had done some good things. The numbers they had set—a ceiling that by U.S. standards may look rather high—40,000 students, in fact for Italian public universities was quite modest. The political science faculty actually wasn't that large. It was comparatively well set up in terms also of facilities, which is often a problem—classroom space and so forth. That was a good experience. I taught what was formally the political and economic geography. The fellow who had taught the class before needed to get out and do other things and asked if I would be interested in doing it is still today the editor of "Limes," the Italian journal of geopolitics, the largest-circulation Italian journal dealing with international affairs. We maintained the geopolitical focus—it was really not a geography course, a political and economic geography course—and that was the tradition. Everybody was fine with that.

Of the international affairs courses at Rome 3, mine was really the only one that grappled to some degree with contemporary international issues. The approach was not the usual one you get in Italy where the way of teaching about international relations has basically two dimensions. It's either history of international relations. Actually, the fellow who does history of international relations at Rome III, Leopoldo Nuti, is a super guy. A top-notch historian, but he is a historian of international relations. It doesn't come over into current stuff. Either that, or it is a very rigidly international law perspective.

Q: Ah. Aha.

TERZUOLO: What they don't usually have is something that, if you will, is at least to some degree a practically oriented approach. So the course went down quite well, I have to say! It was quite popular. There was a version for undergraduate students and also a version for master's degree student. The Italian university system had only fairly recently at that point split the two degrees. For a long time, they had really a single degree. The *laurea* they called it, which was hard to define in a way. It was something between a master's degree and an undergraduate degree in U.S. parlance. But it was really the only degree there was. If you wanted to go further, you had to find other ways to do it. They also have only recently introduced PhD programs and things like that. It was going through a lot of change.

It was a difficult transition for a lot of people to go from the old *laurea*-type course in their subject matter to having to deal with these two different levels. I had a very good assistant who particularly worked on masters, a couple of very good assistants actually over the years who worked on the master's course. We really tried to do something different in the master's-level course and the undergraduate counterpart course. In a lot of cases, it was chapters 1-10 in the undergraduate program, and then people went on and got chapters 11-15 in the master's level course. That admittedly oversimplifies things. But it was a real baptism by fire in a very different university system.

Q: Now, let me just ask you. In general, having taught both in the U.S. and in Italy, how would you compare the student bodies?

TERZUOLO: Well, the thing to understand about Italian universities, there are some private universities in Italy, but historically very few. The number has now increased significantly, but historically you had basically the Bocconi in Milan and Luiss in Rome with quite long histories as private universities. Pretty much everything else was public. In Italy, as in Europe generally, and I think the UK, certainly continental Europe, what you have is, after 1968, a real sea change in the university systems, where there is a real passage to mass universities. You're dealing with class sizes and formats that are more like what you would get in a large U.S. public university. There is not really an equivalent of the liberal arts college setup.

Q: I see.

TERZUOLO: I had a lot of really good students. Certainly, what Italy does not lack is brainpower. But, their problem is a long-term problem. It has been how to create conditions in which your best and brightest can in effect flourish within home-country institutions, learn what they need, and want to stay and then build things at home. Italy has been for years the number one brain drain country in the world. I am myself a product of the Italian post-WWII brain drain in the sense that my father found no opportunities, and he found wonderful opportunities in the U.S. This is still an issue. A lot of my more ambitious, more capable students—many of them went on to do some further education in the UK. Things have changed a bit, but it was a relatively inexpensive, higher quality and more practically-oriented degree in a lot of cases than they would have been able to find in Italy. Some of them have done very well for themselves.

Unfortunately, what I have seen is, the ones who left for a time in whatever capacity, but then allowed themselves to be drawn back into Italy, perhaps for very good personal reasons, often for very strong family reasons, have encountered really major problems. The system doesn't have the ability systematically to take talented people and use them well. That was always a source of frustration for the students. It was a source of frustration for me, in the sense that I felt for them. I felt their pain. I tried to help them if they wanted to find some alternative solutions. I wrote a lot of recommendations to schools in the UK and feel good about some of the things I managed to do. Smart people in abundance, but not well developed and not well used by the Italian system, broadly speaking.

Also, one of the things that is really striking, because they are mass universities, there is not the sort of hand holding that even U.S. public universities do, more so the private ones. "We're here not only to give you the class, assign you grades, take tests and get your degree, but we're going to help you find a job afterwards. We're going to gear our instructional approaches to help you find jobs, to give you useful skills." That doesn't particularly happen, with a few exceptions. I think it is very tough for Italian students. These are universities are no means actually free. You're dealing with different cost dimensions. What it costs to go to a public university—in-state tuition at a public university in the United States currently—would seem utterly outrageous in the Italian context. Of course, what people don't take into account is the fact that the society pays for these things collectively through higher tax rates. People forget that.

Q: The other question I have is, with that many students, do they grade appropriately, or are they passing through a lot of students who probably shouldn't even be in college?

TERZUOLO: Well, I ran into some who couldn't quite handle the work. Probably, yes, I would say, there is grade inflation. It's a different system. They rely on oral exams.

Q: Oh, wow!

TERZUOLO: And you had to give them in multiple sessions over the course of a whole year following the end of the class. It's very different setup. I wasn't a particularly hard grader, honestly. The students are under no obligation to present themselves for the

exams. It's not like you register for a class. No, it's all about the exam. You could, say, never go to a class session. You read the books, come take the exam and pass. That's fine. You cannot be penalized for not attending class most of the time. They don't really have classes requiring participation, with papers due on certain dates.

Q: Interesting.

TERZUOLO: Very different kind of thing. It always struck me that there were students who managed to do very well to learn a lot and to flourish in these settings. I think people who did find a way to do well and learn a lot showed a lot of fortitude, a lot of gumption, a lot of commitment. If you could get through these programs in what was supposed to be the normally allotted time, it took something. It's not like you have people around you all the time saying, "Oh, I notice you're having problems with that class. You know it's okay if you want to drop before the grade gets registered" –-all this sort of stuff that happens on U.S. campuses. There is none of that! You sink or swim. It's like the University of Minnesota in the 1970s when I went there. Same thing. No one was holding your hand. No one cared. You flunked out? Fine. There was a space for somebody else. It's not just an Italian phenomenon.

Teaching at Rome 3 was, in fact, a really good experience. It was a lot of work. For both the undergraduate degree and the master's degree, there is a sort of thesis requirement. Because I was interested in contemporary things and I was willing to have students work on contemporary topics for their thesis, I got a lot of people who came asking if I would be their advisor on their thesis. I did a lot of that, both undergraduate and the master's counterpart. It was tough because I actually read all of these things from beginning to end. I corrected form as well as substance. Trying to fix their Italian in some cases. I write in Italian habitually, so it wasn't as bad as it sounds.

I would say this gave me the opportunity to work with some really outstanding students. I have one of my students who teaches at Sandhurst now, one who is head of global threat assessment for Morgan Stanley. A lot of these people are really talented and deserve to do well. If I helped them to a small extent, I'm really happy about it. Then some folks, it was just a matter of helping them get through the experience and learn to express themselves in writing a little better. Italian universities don't put a premium on written work. You might well go through your whole undergraduate program without having to do a single paper until you come up against the thesis. At the very least, they were very badly out of practice when it came to writing such things. Then there were also issues of style. I did try to encourage people toward, if you will, a more Anglo-Saxon style, or really more American style of prose. Strunk and White rather than, "we are going to sound like Gabriele D'Annunzio writing in 1910, romantic poetry kinds of things." I think this was also helpful to some of these folks. When they then moved into the world of work, I think in some cases at least, their employers appreciated the fact they had gotten used to writing in succinct, clear, simple fashion.

I did that for about four years. It was really a very meaningful experience for me, and I had some wonderful colleagues there with whom, in some cases, I continued to cooperate and collaborate a bit since leaving in 2010. That was a good experience.

I did some other teaching in were U.S. study abroad programs. De facto study abroad programs, at least. I got a chance to experience what the old Western Civilization course has become, which is now the history of the entire world, World Civilization since 1500, in the course of a semester. It's honestly very difficult to do.

One of the things I got very interested in was study abroad as a phenomenon. Let's say, I became a study abroad skeptic. Everybody in my family has studied abroad. My wife studied abroad. I studied abroad. Our daughter did. All of us had quite different experiences. All had very important and enriching experiences abroad. What became clear to me was, however, that a lot of U.S. students who go abroad do so now in part because it's a ticket you're expected to punch. It's a sort of necessary component of an elite branding education seemingly. A lot of students struck me as not very interested in the societies surrounding them, but very interested in the fact that the drinking age was lower than in the U.S. It didn't seem to me that students were getting as much out of the experience as they should and that encouraged me to turn, once back in the U.S., to the more scholarly study of higher education, and particularly issues of study abroad.

Among the things I have done since retiring from the Foreign Service, was that between 2011 and 2016, I pursued and obtained a second doctorate in higher education administration from the George Washington University.

Q: Interesting.

TERZUOLO: I've also taught a bit. I'll be teaching there again in the fall semester in the education school. My dissertation had to do with study abroad, the impact of study abroad on students' intercultural skills, competence and so forth. My research confirmed my degree of skepticism about the benefits of study abroad. You can't rely on the experience as such to suddenly make people enormously more interculturally sensitive and attuned. Interestingly enough, it seems it's very important what students bring with them into the experience. My research suggests it was more important what students brought into the experience, in terms of their personal history and demographic characteristics, as opposed to the specifics of their study abroad program.

Q: Very interesting.

TERZUOLO: Anyway, I just published an article in the "International Journal of Intercultural Relations," summarizing my dissertation research.

I also wrote another book, published in 2007. At this point, it could really use a lot of updating. It was at the time, I would argue, the only comprehensive book in Italian on weapons of mass destruction, the weapons themselves, who had them, what they had, what are the instruments used to control proliferation of these things, etc. It's a

compendium. It's not really so much original research as putting together a lot of information from the major sources that examine WMD issues.

Q: And this does go beyond the chemical weapons stuff that you've done before, because obviously now you're talking about delivery systems and all kinds of other things?

TERZUOLO: Oh, yes. Nuclear, radiological, biological weapons as well. It was supposed to be a fairly easy guide to the subject matter. I'm still pretty happy with it. Actually, sitting down and writing a whole book in Italian was quite an experience. I was used to writing shorter things.

Q: Is putting out a book in Italy similar to putting it out in the U.S. in the sense that you have an editor, or you sell the idea and an outline?

TERZUOLO: Actually, somebody solicited this book from me.

Q: Ah, okay!

TERZUOLO: I would say there was not much in the way of editorial supervision. I hired a smart, young guy to help me with it, just to give everything a careful read, double check the language, see if it hung together, was convincing and so forth. That was pretty easy. It wasn't a complex process. Not like putting in a formal proposal.

I've tried as best I can to keep using what I learned in the Foreign Service. What I try to do is inject something of the practitioner's perspective into these issues that a lot of times are written about either in very abstract legalistic fashion, or else in very emotional fashion. Also just look things square in the eye. Fortunately, I don't have to repeat the latest talking points that are coming out of the State Department spokesman's office or something like that. Not that those are necessarily bad. I did over time become accustomed to expressing my own opinions as my own. I can also take a hard look at the strengths and weaknesses of policy lines. I was always very skeptical that just saying, "it should be so," would convince the North Koreans, for example, to give up their nuclear weapons, or even that the applications of some forms of sanctions would make them do it.

I continue to write on proliferation-related topics from time to time. My friend who runs the Italian geopolitics journal every year or so comes up with a topic for me that is proliferation related, because there are not a lot of Italian experts on this. I can save him the problem of getting the thing translated, too, which is not a negligible cost if you're a journal editor. So, I keep doing that and also pursue my interest in higher education research and policy.

Q: Very interesting.

TERZUOLO: I do enjoy teaching. I have had a wonderful opportunity over the last few years to teach in the University of Delaware's Lifelong Learning Institute. It's a really

appealing experience really. Interacting with students who want to be there. There are no exams or anything like that. They want to be there. They're trying to learn new things, keep active. The age ranges from 50 to… I have a student who has been in a number of my classes there who must be pushing 100 at this point and is a marvel of lucidity.

Q: So lifelong learning is sort of the most modern term of art for what used to be called "continuing education?"

TERZUOLO: Continuing education, yes. Lifelong learning sounds better. In Italy, they call it "L'Università dell terza età." The t*erza età* being—I'm not sure when it starts—the "third age." Teaching in this context also simplifies my life in a lot of ways. If I'm teaching, and I want to mention something like the Vietnam War, everybody there in the class knows exactly what I'm talking about. Let's say, there is a common body of knowledge that saves me a lot of explaining time.

Q: Yeah!

TERZUOLO: It's no scandal, but certain historical knowledge does peter out over time. So that's been great fun.

I occasionally put pen to paper about things happening in the State Department. I've had a few pieces in about the last year and a half on thehill.com about State Department issues as well as other foreign affairs-related matters. Keeping busy.

Q: Very good! All right. To close then, if you were now to give your students advice on how to prepare to be a U.S. diplomat, or at least a successful U.S. diplomat, what would you tell them?

TERZUOLO: Well, to be honest, they may need to do something a little different from what a lot of the folks who are coming in now do. It strikes me that, compared to my day, incoming Foreign Service officers, of whom I've taught a lot—I perhaps did mention this at some point, but from 2010 on, I've been teaching West European area studies at the Foreign Service Institute, which is a very big part of my life and which I've greatly enjoyed. It has struck me that the students coming in, fairly new Foreign Service officers, seem to have much more specialized educations than was true in my entering class. We were just a mixed bag. There was a little bit of everything in there, educationally speaking.

It seems to me that people have much more narrowly focused degrees now. A bachelor's degree or a master's degree in international peacekeeping. I'm a little skeptical about that, honestly. I'd say a good general education is a really useful thing to have in this business. One, because having done some economics and political history, some literature, I think it gives you a variety of perspectives from which to attack problems. It gives you a variety of perspectives from which to analyze the societies in which you find yourself. I already sensed during my time at State that this was getting lost, the

importance attributed to a really in-depth understanding of the society in which people are operating.

I don't know how you solve this, but certainly if a very young person, say a high school student who is expressing interest in the Foreign Service and getting ready to try and plan out their college program, what they're going to study, I would say study foreign languages. Probably try two. One that is relatively easy—you know, French or Spanish, something like this—for an English speaker. Try something hard that's not Indo-European. It's great mental exercise. Try to open up the mental channels, even if you don't necessarily get all that far with a harder language. Grapple with it for a while. Try to open up the mental channels and try to get familiar with how languages work.

I was lucky. I grew up speaking two different languages, so I had cultural mediation as well as linguistic mediation always. People who are not that lucky need to do something to build that up. Take some linguistics classes. Do some comparative linguistics. All this sort of stuff, I fear it's not very trendy, but language learning is very important to the Foreign Service.

I was really struck while teaching at FSI, particularly when I was doing in the 20-week courses. Twenty weeks that coincided with the Italian classes, Spanish classes for people going to Spain, or French classes for people going to French. About the time my area studies classes finished would be about the time people would be preparing to take their language exams. At a certain point, I started running into students I had had months earlier, who I knew would have been at the time we finished getting ready to take their exam. I would say, "Wait! You should be at post. What happened?" "Still haven't passed the language exam." I'm sure there are various things going into this, but I think the extent to which you can develop and exercise language aptitude early in your life pays long-term benefits down the pike.

I remain deeply immersed in a sort of area studies approach, the way I did it back in the '70s. Yes, okay, I was in a history degree program, but my advisor expected me to be able to converse in languages of the area I was studying. To read and do research in the languages of the area I was studying. But also to know not just the history, the politics, the economics, but the culture, what the music was like, to have a well-rounded view. I do think this provides an insight and an entrée to society. Believe me, people do react well—you know this—when you're in a host country and you show that you know something about the country and culture. They don't expect you to know everything, but to get some of the main cultural references. At a very practical level, it helps, as well as I think in the broader sense helping you analytically and helping you feel more comfortable in a place.

Q: Yes, absolutely.

TERZUOLO: That may be running a bit against the grain. I think the other thing I would say to people who are considering a Foreign Service career, and I have said this many times, is to realize right off the bat… I always tell people this was a very enriching part of

my life. There is a lot I'm grateful for. I learned so much. I had great experiences and unique experiences. There is nobody else who operationally conducts U.S. foreign policy, if that's what you want to do. But bear in mind, and I think this much more true now than it was already when I was in, that it is an extremely demanding sort of work with respect to your personal life, your relationships, your family should you decide to have one, and a lot of the time to your emotional well-being. It can be extremely stressful. Thinking back to Beirut in the '80s, I had experiences that were out and out terrifying and felt like I probably did suffer something maybe akin to PTSD for a while after coming back from there. Certainly hyper-vigilance. Be aware the satisfactions come with costs as well. You have to balance these things and look out for yourself, too.

I still tell people, if you want to do it, just go in with your eyes open and cast off some illusions. But you will have a fascinating ride!

Q: I agree. All right, a good place to end. Thank you!

TERZUOLO: My pleasure!

End of interview