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

AMBASSADOR WILLIAM GREEN MILLER

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Q: Today is the 10th of February, 2003. This is an interview with William Green Miller, and this is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Do you go by Bill or what?

MILLER: Yes.

Q: Could you tell me when and where you were born and something about your family background?

MILLER: Yes, I was born in New York City.

Q: What year was that?

MILLER: 1931, August 15th, and I was brought up in New York. I'm a native New Yorker. I went to public schools until the 7th grade when I went to Trinity School.

Q: I want to take you back a bit. First, about your father, could you tell me about his background and sort of the Miller family on his side?

MILLER: Yes. He was a commercial artist. His family came from St. Petersburg around 1890 and they settled in New York. His father's work was as a contractor, renovation of apartments, things of that sort, although his background was as a soldier, as far as I understand the family history.

Q: Did he get any higher education?

MILLER: My grandfather? No. My father, didn't get any higher education beyond high school, because he was born deaf, and went to primary and secondary schools in New York for the deaf.

Q: This is your father?

MILLER: My father. My mother, who was also deaf, was born in New York. She was of Irish ancestry. Her father was a Protestant from Dublin, and her mother was a Catholic from Dublin. Her mother was disowned for marrying a Protestant.

Q: Oh yes, this is an era ol mean, this is very important.

MILLER: Still is. She grew up in New York. They met in the circles of deaf people in their schools, and married in 1930 and I was born in 1931.

Q: Your father, you say he was an illustrator, do you recall any of the sort of things he was doing as an illustrator?

MILLER: Yes, the company he worked for, which I remember, did various things, maps, advertising, lay-outs, that sort of thing, and he worked on things that go into lithographs particularly. He was very good at drawings that would transfer to the lithographic technique.

Q: How was it growing up with your parents both being deaf? I always think of the Lon Chaney experience, where both his parents were deaf, and the concern with whether the son would be deaf. How does this work out for you?

MILLER: It wasn't a problem at all because New York is so compressed that the isolation of the silent world really doesn't apply. It was just another language to me, realltwo languages actually, that is, sign and being able to read lips and to intuit, I suppose, might also be part of that. I was learning English, of course, and the varieties of American English because New York is such a melting polrish, Italian, German. Those were the major groups I remember, as well as Native New Yorkermeaning those who had been in New York for at least a generation. But the church was very important for me.

Q: Which church was this?

MILLER: St. Mark's Church.

Q: Was this the Catholic Church?

MILLER: No, St. Marks was an Episcopal church. I had a good voice as a child. I sang in the choir. The church was the center of many of my activities and I was given a scholarship to Trinity School in New York. I was a good athlete, as well as the first in my class all the way through.

Q: What sort of athletics?

MILLER: I played everything. I was a five letterman in a small school, Trinity, in a different era of physical demands. So I played football, I ran winter track and spring track, I played baseball and basketball. We were very well coached. All our teams did very well. Our basketball team was undefeated in 1948 in a very tough league. I was awarded the Holden Cup given to the best athlete in the school in my senior year.

Q: What about at home? This is the eras a small lad you were there to catch or at least be aware of the Great Depression toward the end. Did this affect your family very much?

MILLER: No, I don't think so becausno, we were never in poverty. We were poor, but never in poverty. My father was always working so there was never that problem that so many had in the thirties and since everyone else I knew was in the same condition it was not seen by me as exceptional. My childhood life growing up was within a city and a community and a world where everyone shared this experience.

Q: What about New York being such a cosmopolitan placdid the outside world intrude as far as national politics and international events and all this?

MILLER: Oh yes, very definitely, from the beginning. Not only because of the ethnic make up of the city which was heightened, I'd say, by that time, because of tragic events in Europe and the explosion of New York as a city in every way. There were an abundance of newspapers which I saw and read many at the time. I had a radio from my earliest memory so I heard news and music as well. I grew up with WQXR, that music and news station of the New York Times. The schools were very vibrant. The schools I went to had excellent teachers.

Q: How did your family fall in the political spectrum? Was this something which you were aware of?

MILLER: Oh yes, very much. Since it was in New York City, politics it the time of was LaGuardia, while in national politics it was Roosevelt.

Q: This is the liberal Republican and the liberal Democrat. This is very much ?

MILLER: This was, and I like to think is the mainstream majority of United States.

Q: Do you recall Mayor LaGuardia reading the comics?

MILLER: I heard him do this on the radio a number of times. I recall even seeing LaGuardia chasing fire engines, things like that. I was at the opening of LaGuardia airporl went to that occasion when LaGuardia cut the ribbon opening the airport. I remember the first DC-3's land in great majesty.

Q: Oh, yes. Well, you were also there for the World's Fair in 1939. Trylon and Perisphere or something.

MILLER: Perisphere.

Q: Perisphere. Did you get out and around New York a lot, I mean the city?

MILLER: Yes, I went, as many of my contemporaries did, and explored the city in every way. Buses, subways, bicycle and on fool went to every subway stop, explored every neighborhood. Travel throughout the city was encouraged in the schools. The race issue of black versus white was not a problem, even in Harlem.

Q: It really was quite a safe city.

MILLER: It waat least I thought so. I became very conversant with every part of the city, every museum, every church, every monument; we even went to polo games on Governor's Island.

Q: Tell me about Trinity School. In the first place, what grades were there, and what years were you there?

MILLER: Trinity School is the oldest school in the United States in continuous existence, a private school founded in 1709 for the education of the boys in the church choir on the site of the present Trinity Church. It then moved to where Rockefeller Center is now. At that time, it was a part of King's College; it was a preparatory school for King's College.

Q: Which was later Columbia.

MILLER: Yes, later Columbia, and then when Columbia moved up town, Trinity moved uptown as well to 91st St, West 91st Sthat was at the end of the 19th Centurnext to St. Agnes Church. It's been there since.

It was a very rigorous boys' church school from first grade through high school with small classes. My class had a graduating class of 100. They had a work program, everyone had to work, washing dishes, cleaning toilets, working on the athletic fields, although most of the students were from very wealthy families.

Q: I went to a prep school called Kent, which had very much that system. I was pretty good at cleaning the latrines by the time I got out.

MILLER: There's no harm in that. The teachers were superb. We learned a lot, including Latin and a little Greek, even the beginnings of the new physics. In those days they still had a required course on the history of New York, which was my introduction to Washington Irving, among other things. It was an excellent school, and the education I was given led to Williams College. Trinity's headmaster, Matthew Dann, said, "You should go to college," and I said, "I would like to go to college." He said, "You'll have to find a scholarship," and I said, "I understand that." He said, "Well then, you'll go to Williams." Although I had applied to Harvard and Yale, and was accepted to all three, I went to Williams on full scholarshia really remarkable scholarship called the Tyng Scholarship which gave me full board and tuition at Williams and for three years of graduate study at any place of my choosing, which for me was at Magdalen College, Oxford.

Q: Before we get to Williams, at Trinityou mentioned that the school encouraged you to get around. Was there a sort of an active a program in raising the young lads to understand the world about them and get them out and around or was this just ?

MILLER: Well, it was a conscious notion that you had to know your community in order to be a leader in it. They believed their mission was to train leaders of the community and the country, and you had to know about it. The teachers werthey were great and worked very hard with us to encourage us to work as diligently as possible, and to try and excel. There were several of them that I remember well.

Q: Do you recall any teachers that particularly were influential to you?

MILLER: Oh, there were many, but the one who was there for a very long time, a Mr. Chips kind of personality, Clarence Bruner-Smithe just died two years ago at the age of 98. He was my English teacher junior and senior year. He encouraged all of us to write as much as possible. We had to write a piece every day, an essay every day. We had to explicate every day and we had to cover great swaths of reading. Over the four years of high school, of upper school, all of the great classics were read, plus we were required to read the New York Times everyday and make reports on current events.

Q: Well, you went to Williams. You were in what class? '53? I was class of '50.

MILLER: At Williams?

Q: Yes, so we overlapped a little.

MILLER: I remember many from your class.

Q: Our biggest member was Steve Sondheim, who gained a certain reputation thereafter.

MILLER: I guess he learned a lot from Professor Irving Shainman.

Q: How did Williams strike you at the time? What sort of school was it?

MILLER: It was very mixed, I thought. There were people from World War II, the last of those, and certainly the junior faculty were those who had war experience. Williams was in something of a turmoil. It was the end of the Phinney Baxter era, and the end of a gentlemen's college. In a very interesting way, I think the war had a lot to do with the changes. I think the Harvard Red Book, the core curriculum, had a lot to do with it, the curriculum which Williams adopted, a definition of liberal education and the confident commitment to that, and a very serious academic effort to fulfill the goals of a liberal education.

It was the beginning of the end of the fraternities. I was appalled in many ways by the idea of fraternities, even though I loved the life that I livel was in the Kappa Alpha (KA) House, which was a terrific place to live, and I had wonderful classmates and the house was a good one. I think most of my classmates believed in "universal rushing," but fraternities were clearly an anachronism. They no longer quite fit. There were many questions being raised by all of us.

The Korean War I can remember as a freshman. I was drafted. I received a notice to report to North Adams for a physical along with some of my classmates and my fellow Americans from North Adams.

Q: Which was a mill town, General Electric.

MILLER: Yes. So we were all there, the potential draftees, at the North Adams Draft Office standing in our underwear getting a physical examination. We were all exempted because we were students. We didn't have to go to combat. Almost no one in my class went in the draft. Students in good schools were all exempted. The Korean War draft policy created this kind of disparity, some parts of our society were drafted, other parts were not. It was far from equitable. But the influence of the Korean War was there, at Williams. The experience of the past world war was deeply felt as well. There were teachers who taught brilliantly about the Nazis. Professor Robert Waite, as you may recall don't know if you remember him. In the English department for example, there were many brilliant people, many of whom experienced the war, but most of the younger faculty didn't have experience in the Second World War. I think that mix of experiences, both tragic and innocent was a key thing that shaped what I understood to be the meaning of it alwhat might be called my world view.

Q: I remember Fredrick Rudolph was, had been an historian in the army in the Pacific.

MILLER: He was real historian of great depth and quality in my opinion. He conveyed the sense of what historians need to dwhat constituted real research. Almost all of the faculty insisted on their students being able to write, and to read, and understand; the faculty of every discipline worked that way.

I am quite convinced that one of the reasons I received the scholarship that I did, which was the Tyng, was because I was such a good athlete even though I was at the top of my class as a scholar, I played in freshman year, all the sports as I had in school, and was a starter, but I didn't feel the same joy of sports. I could see the division between almost professional and amateur, even at Williams. Not only the "ringers" - as they were called as a group, of which I suppose I was one by definition, were at odds with those who took sports as a pastime and not a way of lifnot as an all-consuming profession. I came to the view that sports that took all or most of your time and effort detracted from the whole point of going to a college of excellence. So that thought was troubling for me all the way through Williams, because I was split about devoting so much time to sports. There were plenty of other diversions, of course, - girls for one. My favorite teachers there were in the English department primarily, and they encouraged me to keep going as hard as I could in my studies.

Q: You were mentioning that things were changing. You were there during the McCarthy period.

MILLER: I saw McCarthy and heard him speak.

Q: I left in '50. Fred Schumann was one of the first people picked on by McCarthy, and I remember him making a rebuttal to McCarthy, but then I left in '50 and was in the military for four years. I got caught in the Korean War.

MILLER: This was Don Gregg's class.

Q: Yes, and I think maybe he was class head. How did McCarthyiswhat was the attitude that you were getting there.

MILLER: He was a monster. He was seen as a threat to intellectual freedom and rational discourse that was the way he was perceived. I saw him in action. I went to hear him speak at Smith. My wife to be Suzanne, who was a student at Smith, and I were in the audience when he spoke. He spoke as a personification of the fear of communism. He spoke as if from authority on high. "I have a paper..." and was a visible confirmation of his qualities, he was a personification of the "threat" the whole idea of the Communist threat. His dark personality shaped our world view. On the other hand, at the opposite end of the spectrum, we read and were influenced by the Mr. "X" paper.

Q: It was George Kennan's.

MILLER: That when I first had the thought that I'd like to go into the diplomatic life, into the Foreign Service. I read that essay and I said, "I want to be like George Kennan." As it turned out, he weaved in and out of my life as a model and as a friend.

Q: It's interestinand correct me, because I wasn't there, but I had the feeling that Williams, unlike some of the other schools, came out fairly well out of the McCarthy attacks, and even later on the Vietnam War. It didn't roll over to the right or the left. How do you feel about saying that?

MILLER: Williams protected their faculty. Professor Fred Schumann, for example, was a target of investigation, and the Williams administration and Board protected him. People who detested his views on the Soviet Union still went to his classes, enjoyed them and were able to have a different viea different dimension. There was very little acceptance of the validity and ideology contained in McCarthy red-baiting. This was so, partially because of the faculty, but I think it was largely because of the student body. We came from sophisticated enough backgrounds to not fall prey to McCarthyism. The curriculum faculty, and the people who came to Williams to speak on these issues, and the opening of mass international reporting and communications still primarily radio, not yet television, was extensive, objective and deep enough to make a difference in our understanding of the realities.

Q: We're talking about the fraternity system, which we both belonged to, but I was kind of uncomfortable particularland I hadn't taken any real stand at that time, but there were sort of mainline fraternities that would not accept Jews. It was breaking down, but this is very troubling and all and I think to the veterans' generation this just didn't play well.

MILLER: That's right. By the time I was there the kind of discrimination, you mentioned, particularly anti-Semitism, although it was latent, had disappeared as a legal matter. The main issue during my Williams years was exemplified by the Garfield Club catch all for non-fraternity individuals. Some who were not taken into fraternities and were therefore Garfield Club members suffered the psychological harm.

Q: You might explain what the Garfield Club was.

MILLER: The Garfield Club was intended for those who were not taken into fraternities. Some few went to the Garfield Club because they were opposed to fraternities on principle. It was a social center that had some of the amenities of the fraternity houses for those that weren't in fraternities. There were a few who, on principle, didn't want to belong to them, but not many. In the 50's, most Garfield Club members were either Jews or outsiders or misfits in the terms of Williams society. Nonetheless, the fraternity system as it existed then was seen by most Williams men as an injustice, unnecessary. Then a significant social change took place when I was at Williamcomplete rushing.

Actually, I was one of the leaders of the group appointed by the student council to consider doing away with fraternities. I was an author of the report summarizing a study that had surveyed other colleges and universities on this question of the place of fraternities in a modern liberal arts college, particularly in eastern colleges and universities. As it happened I later marriethis is getting ahead of the gama niece of President Jack Sawyer who carried out the abolition of all fraternities.

Q: Oh, yes, he was president of Williams. I am thinking of what I heard, today Williams is considered one of two or the top three elite liberal arts schools. Something like 75% graduate with honors. The Gentleman's C has long has left, but in your time how did you find the attitude towards people who were coming in? Were they exceptionally bright or was it a good mix, or how did you find this?

MILLER: I think my classmates were exceptional, and very bright. The Gentleman's C, however, was the norm. Many could have done much much better but it was an acceptable norm mostly for those on the way to Wall Street as a broker or a banker.

Q: Or advertising, in my time.

MILLER: Yes, advertising, the next largest group in my class were lawyers. Government service or teaching were the professions of only 5% of my class.

Q: Way down.

MILLER: 5%, so I was in that small group. I would say my classmates were as good as the students are now. There were a number of legacies, so-called, but there still are, and the legacies on the whole were as good as anybody else.

Q: Legacies being the children of previous graduates.

MILLER: And the relations of graduates and many of whom were donors loyal to the college because of what it gave them, their experience of learning at one of the best provincial New England colleges.

Q: Well, you graduated in '53. How did you feel about what you'd gotten out of it?

MILLER: I valued Williams very much. First, I was grateful because Williams and the Tyng fellowship enabled me to have a superb university education without any financial difficulty. Teaching was superb and the teachers encouraged me to go on and gave valuable guidance and mentoring. I had mixed feelings about the sense of purpose of some of my own contemporaries, because it was very evident to me, and certainly to the thoughtful faculty, that as a nation and as a society, we all were in for a long stretch of difficult times, both and as a nation and as a world. The seriousness of the problems that were ahead didn't seem to be in the minds of many of my contemporaries.

What I was going to do with all of this knowledge and foreboding I wasn't quite sure. The possibility that I would be drafted was always there as a possible future. I was ready to go at any point, but due to the peculiarities and the inequities of the whole draft system I never had to, although I was always on the edge of being taken. In fact I tried to enlist in the navy, and the navy recruiters wouldn't let me, because I was in the possible draft category. It was one of those bizarre circumstances.

The graduation speaker was Governor Christian Herter. He spoke about the challenge of the Cold War and the role of leadership for educated men and women.

Q: Was he Governor at that point?

MILLER: Yes, it was before he was Secretary of State. That whole sense of difficulty before us during the depth of the Cold War was intensified because of the McCarthy paranoia and many of the horrible things that were going on in Europe.

So I was encouraged to go to Oxford and the Tyng ?

Q: That's spelled T-Y-N-G.

MILLER: Yes. The Tyng Fellowship provided for three years funding for almost anything I might want to do. If you wanted to start a business you could do that, or if you wanted to go to Antarctica you could have done that, and so on. Anyway, I choose to go to Oxford, and applied to Magdalen College on the suggestion of several of my teachers: Don Gifford, Jack Ludwig, Clay Hunt, Jack O'Neill among others.

Q: You'd better spell Magdalen.

MILLER: M-A-G-D-A-L-E-N, I applied to Magdalen, because C. S. Lewis was there and he would be the tutor. I was accepted, and went, arriving in the fall of 1953.

Q: Before we get to that, I was wondering you were there in '52. How did the election of '52, which was Eisenhower vs. Adlai Stevenson, how would you say at college it affected both you and your fellow students?

MILLER: I would say opinion was pretty even, I would say the split was 50/50 on Stevenson-Eisenhower. You remember the Whitaker Chambers - Alger Hiss controversy. Liberal values were questioned in this time of international uncertainty brought about by the Cold War.

Q: He had been at Williams for a short time.

MILLER: So that was a dividing line. Did you believe Whitaker Chambers' testimony or not? Was it Hiss or Chambers? Who told the truth? Or was it somewhere in between. This was also the time of the Oppenheimer-Strauss loyalty case.

Q: Alger Hiss.

MILLER: Of course it was also Acheson versus Nixon. All of those were very interesting personalities, so there was a lot of debate about basic ideology. People tended to go down in two categories according to their family backgrounds. It was a very close call because, of course, Eisenhower could have easily been a Democrat and he was a very popular wartime leader, and a decent, moderate man in most respects. Certainly the eastern Republicans who supported that war were at least as liberal as the Democrats.

Q: A different era.

MILLER: Yes, well, they're gone, for the most part.

Q: You were at Oxford from when to when?

MILLER: Fifty-three to '56.

Q: Oxford versus Williams. Could you compare and contrast?

MILLER: Well, yes, I can compare and contrast. I went to Oxford as an undergraduate, again, which was the custom, but it was an entirely different system. I would say that, at least for me, Williams, in many respects, was a preparation for Oxford, as far as intensive study goes. Williams gave a wonderful broad survey of Western learning as we understood it in the '50s, but with very few exceptions, no depth in any particular subject. I had deeply studied some authors, but otherwise I surveyed all of English literature, American, European and world history, philosophy, science. It was the Red Book, core curriculum survey of knowledge. At Oxford you studied, very narrowly, one subject to the point approaching complete learning. That's the approach. It's assumed that when you come to Oxford that you already have the background for everything else. You are coming to Oxford to use scholarship in its received form assembled over the centuries of learning, building your own study with that base of received knowledge. The teaching of the Dons, their behavior, student expectations and behavior, even the examination system, is part of the way of life predicated on an entirely different history, social life, and structure. Oxford and Cambridge was a very different kind of university in a very different society and natioeven if the differences were often subtle.

As an American, I was a rarity, relatively speaking. It was a definitely and proudly British university. Even with the presence of Rhodes scholars, Americans were relatively few in number, there were only or two Americans in each college. "Ex-colonials," was the perception that most of my British college mates who came to Oxford had of Americans..

Oxford had war veterans, who had been in the same wars, including Korea. Many of my best friends, English friends, were veterans of Korea. They were about the same age as I was. The life in Magdalen was wonderful. It was a very beautiful college setting. Magdalen, being first established in the 14th century, had a core medieval complex of buildings. My rooms were in a building called New Buildings which was called "new" because it was built in the 17th and 18 centuries. New Buildings flanked the deer park. My rooms were on the ground floor. My very first morning, upon waking up, began with the pleasure of seeing the deer bouncing by the window and a scout coming in with a cup of tea to wake me up. That was the first day of a different civilization, you might say, although the new civilization used words from my own language. The tutorial system at Oxford was one of the most perfect ways of teaching and learning, it seemed to me. I took to it with the greatest delight.

I had a wonderful tutor of Old English named Jack Bennett who was a New Zealander. We read Beowulf with him and all of the difficult old English and Middle English texts some of which are wonderful, but many unfortunately, that are not so wonderful. Word for word, we read and tried to commit them all to memory. Jack Bennett was a great human being and a wonderful scholar of many things. Henry James for example, but he knew all the American authors. C. S. Lewis for me was a great feast of intellect.

Q: Because C. S. Lewis is so well known, he never wal don't know what you call it had tenure at that university.

MILLER: Oh, yes.

Q: He did? I thought that there was something ?

MILLER: No, no, he was never given the full honors by the University of Oxford of the number one literary professor although he deserved those honors. He was a Don, a senior Don at Magdalen, a professor in the Oxford English faculty, but it was his Christianity, his Christian writings, that got in the way of his natural scholarship reward, I'd say. There was never any discussion of religious matters except in terms of literary texts that were religious in subject matter.

Q: What sort of courses did you have with him?

MILLER: He was my tutor for everything from Chaucer on, till the present. So we read with C. S. Lewis Chaucer, Spencer, Shakespeare, and Miltoeverything up to the 19th century. When you hit the 19th century that was for Oxford modern English. The twentieth century was modern writing. You did that on your own. The formal study of literature stopped at the Victorians.

Q: What was this preparing you for, did you see?

MILLER: The intent of the Oxford Schools, as they were called, was to lay out the full extent of knowledge on particular subjects. Mastery of the subject would prepare you for teaching. You sit at the foot of the master, learning what he knows, and you transmit what he knows through you to others, adding to the total knowledge to some degree. At that point, I was very convinced that after Oxford and Harvard, I would teach English literature. I was very interested in Renaissance literature so I spent a lot of time reading the great works in Italian, and of course English, and French, to some extent. I thought that I would go on and teach at an American university as a life's work.

So that's what I was driving towards, a life of university teaching, but during that time, the Hungarian uprising took place.

Q: 1956.

MILLER: And during that time George F. Kennan was there in London giving the Reith lectures. I had the opportunity to meet with him. This is how it happened. I still had the "fire engine, I'd become a fireman" idea. I wanted to be like hilike Mr. "X". I wrote a letter to George Kennan, having been given his address in London, and said I'd like to talk to him about going into the Foreign Service. He agreed to do so. When we met, I asked him what his advice would be. He said, "No don't go into the Foreign Service. It's not what it used to be. It's no longer relevant to Foreign Policy. It's something else." He was very clear about the diminished state of the Foreign Service. I was not convinced that the Foreign Service was not a key element in our foreign policy. So I took the exam anyway. I took the exams in Frankfurt and I passed them.

Q: What year did you take them?

MILLER: Fifty-six.

Q: I took mine in Frankfurt in '53, when I was still in the Air Force.

MILLER: There were three examinerI remember Ambassador Butterworth was one. There were three officers: one was consular and the third was in public affairs. I enjoyed the interview very much.

Q: Which one of the questions were asked? This is for the oral?

MILLER: Yes, it was the oral exam. The questions were all on the contemporary situation, particularly, attitudes towards Central Europe. There were questions about McCarthy, and some of them werthe initial sewere obviously intended to prove how much I knew about the world in general. That part went quickly, and then they went into really deep questions about the sense of purpose and the breadth of our foreign policy. I found the exam a wonderful experience. The examiners, I thought, were very civilized serious people.

Q: I might just point out, when I started this oral history program back in '85, I wrote to George Kennan saying, "I was trying to start up an oral history program, what do you think of it?" And his advice was kind of parallel to yours. "Well probably not a good idea, but if you do, only interview the right people."

MILLER: He's a wonderful skeptic.

Q: He really is. Let me just flip this.

[END SIDE]

Q: While you were at Oxford, did you have the Burgess, Maclean and some other things happen, because this was throwing a different light on the Oxford experience, actually going back to the '30s and all that. Was this something that was ?

MILLER: No, not at all. No, the revelation of this group of spies comes some years later, I think.

Q: Maybe he came a little later.

MILLER: I think the sense of common purpose, I found in England was powerful. There was also great fatigue from the destruction of the previous war as well as the uplifting united effort of rebuilding. When I was at Oxford, food was still being rationed, as you may recall. Butter, for example, even the dons had a little plastic container with their own butter served along with the gleaming silver of high table. There would be several dinners a week with whale meat as the main course. Many of the dishes were, because of the shortage of normal supplies of beef and pork, were of rabbit and game, but not much of it. There was a shortage of coal, so it was very cold. We wore overcoats to dinner all the time in winter. Gasoline was still short, and the evidence of the war was still therrubble, in the street, damaged buildings. Certainly in travels on the continent we saw the effect of bomb damage everywhere.

Q: Did you ever by any chance run across the Inklings and Tolkien?

MILLER: I knew them all through C. S. Lewis. Tolkien, I knew, because I took his courses.

Q: I was going to say you would have. What was that, which courses?

MILLER: Tolkien taught Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and other works of Middle English. I went for three years to his lectures and he never finished because he was always discovering new things, and thinking them through and literally acting them out in the course of a lecture, so it was ongoing experiment. Pearl and Patience and other Middle English workhe taught me Middle-English, and he was superb teacher, a great character. So through C. S. Lewis, I was invited to meet him at a pub across the High Street from Magdalen.

Q: Did he go into the pub, or whatever?

MILLER: Yes, well there were a number of us, at the Westgate pub, right across the street from Magdalen. Tolkien was a don at Merton, which is right next door to Magdalen. I saw him often as a human being. There was another member of the group named Hugo Dyson, who was a Shakespearean, a little tiny man that looked like Santa Claus or Tom Bombadil. So they were there all together, including Dorothy Sayemost of the main ones. They were also very close to some of the Catholics at Cowley Fathers, which was where the Catholic intellectuals were. It was a natural community because it was a center of the study of Renaissance, and medieval history, philosophy, and religious questions. They were wonderful people, totally devoted to their subjects, and a great inspiration. Tolkien's Hobbit books were coming out at that time, that is, the Fellowship of the Ring, while I was there.

Q: I recall that. I read a good review and I bought Volume One it was so good.

MILLER: Well, the three volumes are worth $28,000, his first editions. They are published in every language and the copies in English number in the millions now.

Q: I'm not sure I got the first but I got something that everyone had.

MILLER: Well, they were published over four or five years. So they were coming out when I was there. It was a marvelous experience to know the author as a teacher, and of course the books are very powerful. My wife and I, we were just married. We lived in a small Oxford flat and would read them together. They were often terrifying. So I knew the Inklings as a student, and I valued them and their teaching and writing enormously.

Q: I'm appreciating this atmosphere of tremendous teachers, I mean, people whose names will ring down through the centuries, probably.

MILLER: Isaiah Berlin, was there at the time toall of his work has a great impact.

Q: In Oxford and all, were you conflicted as far as whither goest Bill Millebecause things were happening in Europe? I mean the Cold War was really at its height and all.

MILLER: Yes very much so. I recall one trip. As you know, at Oxford they had long vacations in between semesters, eight weeks made a semester, then there was six weeks of vacation. So during the six weeks we'd go to different places. On one of these six week vacations, I went with Suzanne to the continent. It was my first time in Vienna. It was New Year's, right at New Year's. We had gone skiing in the middle of Austria, to a very remote place that we could afford, as students, Schladming. Although it was quite remote and hard to get to, it was pretty good skiing, actually. Then we went to Vienna on New Year's Day. It was bitterly cold. The one star, or perhaps minus one star, hotel we could afford had no heat, just many quilts. On the bitterly cold day we saw the changing of the Four Power Occupation Guard in the center of Vienna. I saw the command change from the American to the Soviets. The American honor marching guard had chromium helmets, chromium-plated helmets, and chromium-plated bolts on their, highly polished, Springfield rifles.

Q: Probably because those were better drill things than ...

MILLER: Better rifles, anyway, as far as their accuracy. The Americans wore spats, white spats over their polished black bootand the Drill Team was very swingy, there were a lot of blacks, and the music was loose, loose-jointed. The Soviet guard had a lot of Asians in it. They were terrifying. They all seemed to be giants, chosen probably for their size and fearsome appearance or so it seemed to me. They had among their band instruments, a set of loud timbrels. The clash of our cultures and the differences between us seemed evident in the changing of the guards. It was also evident in the division of the city, and the politics of the citthis era of the Vienna pictured in The Third Man.

Q: Was this in '55 when the peace treaty signed?

MILLER: No. It was a year before that.

Q: So you were there before that.

MILLER: The last changing of the guard, yes. It was wonderful. I had a friend at Oxford who was at Magdalen with me, Peter Szabo, who was an Austro-Hungarian. He lived in Vienna, right across from the opera in the Opera square. We went to dinner at his house, which was in a state of elegant disrepair, but clearly slowly coming back into something viable. There was the whole sense of the new era coming together after a horrible, horrible experience.

So traveling through Europe as a student gave me some sense to the reality of what we were dealing with, but I loved being there and being a part of it. We were, of course, welcomed to be a part of it as students, and particularly with friends from those different worlds. I was drawn into that world because of that experience.

Q: These are really two different worlds. I mean, the very narrow, scholastic, but highly intellectuaand then looking at Europe, in those days ruins were everywhere and the Soviet threat was a very real one.

MILLER: Yes, but the inward looking monastic life of Oxford had been broken by new forms of communications, mass media, the radio, certainly by the experience of the war, the immediate recent experience of the war, and the recovery still underway, and students from the countries of the former colonies and elsewhere. They were very cosmopolitan. It was the number one university in the world at that time. Yet there was also the sense that it was declining. That whole sense of an end to an era was very deep in the European mentality at the time. Americans were looked on as the successors.

Q: When you were in Oxford did you have to make adjustments or to show that you as an American weren't a barbarian? I mean, as part of this Oxford world?

MILLER: Yes, there was always the whole sense that the English were testing yoasking who are you and what do you know, can we ever be friends, and so on. The ultimate test was whether you were ever welcomed into their homes, which of course did take place, but the ties really were what we shared as cultures, I would say, and what we knew we were going to share was a prescient sensitivity. Many of people who were at Oxford at the same time are very important to me now, still, even in Iran, for example. My good friend Hossein Mahdavy who is still living in Tehran was at Christ Church when I was at Magdalen. We saw each other often when I later served in Iran between 1959-1964 and we have been close friends and seen each other ever since.

Q: Were you in the UK during what became known as the Suez crisis?

MILLER: Yes.

Q: That was probably the biggest divide between France and Britain and the United States that we've had. How did you feel about that?

MILLER: Well, the Suez Crisis of 1956 is, of course, complicated, because it was the Arab-Israeli issue in its rawest form. We discussed these issues at Oxford in depth. At Oxford I had a friend, an acquaintance, Sara Rothschild, who had one point of view. So there's one side of it. And Ronny Dworkin, who is a legal scholar and professor at Yale, was also a very special friend. It was possible to discuss the Arab-Israeli issue in depth. There were many Arabs, and Turks, Persians, Pakistanis at Oxford, who were raising the same questions that are being raised now. The difficult question of is it possible to obtain a civilized solution, at a university like Oxford, a center of Oriental study, the answer was quite clear, yes it is possible. That remains my view.

Q: You mentioned you got married. What was the big event with your wife and how did you meet?

MILLER: She's from Providence. She went to Lincoln School in Providence and then to Emma Willard School. Her family is from Providence, living there from the time of Roger Williams, the very essence of New England. We met at Smith, where she was a student. I was returning from a track meet at Madison Garden in New York where I was running in 440 relays and 50 yard sprints. I was a sprinter. Suzanne was a blind date at Smith College. We were married in Little Compton on August 21, 1954 right after my first year at Oxford. It was her junior year. She spent her junior year in Paris and in Geneva. After a honeymoon in France, Belgium, Holland and Denmark we lived in Oxford, in a house on Squitchy Lane, a lovely little house that belonged to a Burmese don who was at Magdalen and was away on sabbatical. His name was Mynt, Hyam Mynt. It was an idyllic place to begin married life actually.

Q: You took the Foreign Service exam in 1956 was it, or '55?

MILLER: Fifty-five. I guess it was '55.

Q: After passing the oral, did you have any doubt that this is what you wanted to do?

MILLER: Yes I did have doubts, because I thought very clearly at that time that I wanted to be a professor in English. Further, I did not want to go into the Foreign Service because of the taint of McCarthy. So I decided to go on to Harvard for three years of graduate study. At that time it was an easy decision.

Q: Good heavens. You went to Harvard from what?

MILLER: From '56 to '59

Q: What were you doing at Harvard?

MILLER: I was pursuing a PhD in English literature. EnglisRenaissance and American studies.

Q: How did you find Harvard after Oxford?

MILLER: It was wonderful. It was Oxford plus, in a way. It was, for me at that time, because Harvard for me was bigger in some sense. For me, it had more dynamism and openness, and it was at that time very experimental. Oxford was set in its wayand had been for centuries, with set pieces, based on the long history of the study of particular subjects. Harvard was also very political, and not only a great mix of people from my own country, a greater mix than I'd seen before, but also of other countries. The English department was brilliant. It had wonderful, wonderful teachers who nurtured.

Q: What were you concentrating on?

MILLER: Renaissance literature. Sir Philip Sidney was the subject of my thesis, which concerns one of the earliest of his works, a novel called The Arcadia, which is something that he wrote in enforced leisure at the age of 30 years old, when he was in exile from the court. I think I was drawn to Sidney not only because he was a great poet and writer, but he was the exemplar of Renaissance literature and action. He was the combination of all the virtues of the time. He, unfortunately, died at an early age in battle in the Lowlands against the Spanish. So my interest in Sidney was kind of a dedication and admiration for the kind of life he led.

Q: What was his period?

MILLER: 1580. He was Elizabethan, late Elizabethan. 158he died in 1593.

Q: What battle was it?

MILLER: The battle of Zutphen, in the Lowlands against the Spanish. One of those freak accidenta shot, a ball went into his thigh and he got an incurable infection. I was working primarily on Renaissance literature, but I also was reading and studying American literature with Fred Dupee. I don't know if you know that name.

Q: I've heard the name.

MILLER: Yes, he was a visiting professor from Columbia. Fred Dupee, became a close friend and was a very important influence. He was a great New York critic. He was one of the key writers on the Partisan Review. He had been, after graduating from Yale, a Communist in the early '30s along with many of the Partisan Review people who later in 1936 turned against the Communists particularly after the purges. After the purges of 1936 they all went the other wastaunch anti-communists. Dupee was a wonderfully sophisticated New York intellectual who was brought up in Joliet, Illinois. Dupee was a great friend of Mary McCarthy's, so through him I met many of the poets and writers that I admired: Robert Lowell, plus Mary McCarthy, and Louise Bogan, Philip Roth, Saul Bellow and Gore Vidal. So the literary life and scholarly life at Harvard was something that was appealing. There were other great scholars like Rosamund Tuve, who was a Spencerian, from Connecticut College, a great scholar. Douglas Bush was my thesis advisor, and Bill Alfred was also a thesis advisor. He was a very good poet as well as one of the best scholars of Irish literature. Harvard was rich in contemporary poetry from Yeats and Eliot to Lowell and David Ferry.

Q: The deeper you get into literature it would seem the farther you'd be getting away from this other side of the fact that you were on hold for the Foreign Service. Were you being able to sup at any of the international experience at Harvard?

MILLER: Oh, yes, of course, because the deeper you get into a serious literature the more you understand that it's about the key events of the time, and by extension and example, of anytime. Whether it's Homer, or whether its Auden, or Robert Lowelthey are talking about the big eventpolitics, ethics and how life should be led, what kind of government there should be, what's right and what's wrong. Actually it's the deep study of literature that drew me back into public life.

Q: Did you go on to get your PhD?

MILLER: I didn't finish. I finished the oral exams, which I passed, and I was three quarters through the thesis on Sidney's Arcadia which is a big, huge text, and a detailed analysis of the text, of The Arcadia. Then I was about to take an ongoing step, to teach at Columbia while doing course work and working on the Arcadia thesis I'd been teaching at Harvard as a teaching assistant in order to pay for the costs of tuition to be able to support my wife. Suzanne had to work as well, and I had to teach in order for us both to get through. The struggle was a great pleasure and a great privilege. We worked very hard and had a great time together. It was a very good way, I think to begin a marriage.

So I was going on to Columbia. I had been offered a job at Columbia. They asked me to come as an instructor in Renaissance literature. A career in teaching was laid out, it would seem. Then the Foreign Service called to say, come now or forget it. So the thesis on Sydney's Arcadia was set aside.

Q: That would be 1959.

MILLER: So I thought about it, and after discussion with friends and so on, I said, "Well, I'll get the Foreign Service out of my system. I probably won't like it, as George Kennan said, but I'll never know and I'll regret not having tested it if I don't do it." So I decided to enter the Foreign Service in the spring, late spring of '59. My incoming class, my A-100 group was a group of great guys. Who is still around? Allen Holmes, Nick Platt, Brandon Grove, Dick Moose. It was a terrific group. We lived in Alexandria, many of us. We were very close.

You know very well, you are asked to put down where you want to serve, and I said, "GTI."

Q: Which was that?

MILLER: Greece, Turkey, and Iran. It was the Greek part that I was interested in from The Arcadia and all that past conditioning. It also reflected a desire to travel in Greece as well. So by luck of the draw I went to Isfahan.

Q: In your class were there any women, minorities, or anything like that?

MILLER: Yes, there were two women. They both went into consular work. There were no minorities.

Q: It was still pretty much the cast of the Foreign Service of the old time, many white males.

MILLER: Yes, and a lot of legacies so to speak, like Allen Holmes and Homer Byington III.

Q: Homer Byington. At one point in my career, I was consul general in Naples, and that was practically his place. That was a province of Homer Byington. I think three generations were born there.

MILLER: That's a wonderful history. Yes, Homer was a nice fellow and very able.

Q: It's a little hard to say, but at that time, how would you describe the attitude of people entering the Foreign Service? Sense of mission, give it a try, a job, a what?

MILLER: Sense of mission, almost without exception. Almost nonI can't think of any, reallat this stage, looking back on it, were there because it was one job among many that were possible. No, they wanted to serve country. It was a sense of duty, for all of us, and there was a great esprit as a consequence. The Foreign Service itself, even the dreariest necessary subjects that were conveyed to us - and all of the hardships were also underlined, for example, that you have to go wherever you are assigned. You won't like many of your assignments. That's part of the discipline. Of course that's not the reality, but that's what everyone was encouraged to believe.

The mentoring from senior diplomats was very good, maybe it was partially because we had legacies on that group, but we had very solid, real ambassadors as well, who worked with us to show us how the Department worked. Even the A-100 projects were fun. I can recall the policy paper I had to write was on Jomo Kenyatta and the Kikuyu. You had to take an advocate position, and I took the Jomo Kenyatta Kenya rebellion, which was fun to do. I learned a great deal from the Kenya case.

Q: But at the time was pretty controversial.

MILLER: It was pretty controversial.

Q: This was the middle of Aroubu, wasn't it, the freedom movement? It was very brutal.

MILLER: That's right. Yes, the killing, the religious-tribal terrorism of the time. Al Qaeda are amateurs in comparison. That was the beginnings of an awareness of the world of violence that has never stopped.

Q: Well, this might be a good place to stop, I think. Cause I'd like to stop with the time. OK, well, we're going to pick this up in 1959 when you were off to Isfahan. You were there from when to when?

MILLER: I was there from '59 to '62, and then from '62 though the end of '64 in Tehran.

Q: For a first assignment you really got a dose.

MILLER: Oh, it was wonderful.

Q: I would think so.

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Okay, today is the 3rd of March, 2003. Bill, Isfahan. What did you know about Persia or Iran before you went out there?

MILLER: I knew very little. What I did know came from my friend who I met at Oxford who was a Persian. Hossein Mahdavy is his name. He was at Christ Church, when I was at Magdalen. We became good friends through an Egyptian, Adel Serafim, who was also at Magdalen with me, and was a cousin of his wife-to-be. A complicated marriagChristian and Persian Muslim, but it's something that has lasted. The wife-to-be, Noveen, is a very good friend, a beautiful Copt French woman, and the cousins, the Seraphims were Copts, too. My Magdalen friend is professor at MIT and the other is a very successful financier in Houston now. And with their many other cousinyou can imagine what the network of Middle Eastern connections is. So I knew a little bit about Iran from him, and we had seen and met Iranianthat is Suzanne, my wife and I, had seen young rich Iranians in Geneva where they were called "oil wells" by the Smith girls. Suzanne, my wife, was in her junior year abroad there at the University of Geneva. These were interesting times being in Europe under any circumstances, but as students from the United States it was eye opening to say the least.

I knew a little bit about Persia from English literaturMilton, the references to Persia in his poetry, a little bit from Greek plays, and Greek history. One could say I knew virtually nothing, except the phenomenon of Mossadeq, as reported to us by the New York Times and Time magazine, and the very fascinating complexity presented by two very different Presidents and administrationthat is Truman who looked on Mossadeq as an interesting fellow, but he didn't see anything wrong with him, certainly not enough to support an overthrow, then Eisenhower seeing Mossadeq as a problem for his great wartime ally, the British. I knew a little bit about that and the oil controversy from the papers and discussions at the time, but nothing at firsthand. So in training and preparation for going to Iran, I asked for Persian language, and they said, "You won't need it." So I was assigned to German language, which I already knew, for three months, until we went out to Isfahan. We traveled to Iran in the old way, we took a month getting out there, stopping in the major cities of the Middle East on the way. It was a wonderful introduction as a gradual?

Q: This dating again when you went out was '59, is it?

MILLER: Yes, '59, in the fall of '59. So we stopped, of course, first in London, Paris, Rome, and then Athens, Cairo, Beirut, Istanbul, Baghdad.

Q: Were you getting any rumblings when you went to Beirut about our going in there the year before?

MILLER: Yes, I had friends who were teaching at AUB like Malcolm Kerr.

Q: American University Beirut.

MILLER: Yes, and so we talked about the changes taking place throughout the Middle East, and change was very evidenbut it became increasingly evident that the tensions, in many ways, and the changes taking place in the Middle East, certainly in Cairo, where the military presence of the new regime was evident, (this was the time of Nasser). Although Nasser's Arab nationalism didn't in any way impinge on the romantic character of Cairo and environs. We had a wonderful time staying in ancient Cairo hotels such as the since destroyed Semiramas, with its twenty-five foot ceilings and the floor to ceiling windows, from which we would watch the kites flying overhead, and to hear the wonderful sounds and smell the exotic smells of Cairo.

Q: Kites being the birds.

MILLER: Yes, great hawk-like predators, a raptor. Yes, not the other kinds of kites that fly over Tiananmen Square or even Washington.

Each of these stops was further evidence of change, and of a kind I that I knew I had to understand in some way, and that I didn't understand at that point, the military character of these new regimes, the alienation from the British or French colonial backgrounds of the immediate past. Suzanne and I had a wonderful time on the trip to Iran, it was just the best of Foreign Service notions coming to reality by way of not only traveling, but the freedom to explore and learn and experience. So we arrived in Tehran ?

Q: Just one other thing. In Baghdad, was Qassem in?

MILLER: Yes, Qassem.

Q: Were there any aftermaths from just a year before when?

MILLER: No, only that we found it was the most guarded place we encountered. There were more military in evidence and Baghdad was a less prepossessing city than any of the others. In this atmosphere of military coup and militarl won't say occupatiomilitary governance, it was a less than open atmosphere, although it's a very interesting city, and birthplace of many of the world's great cultures and of course has wonderful museums. At that time of year it is very pleasant.

We arrived in Tehran late at night, at about midnight or so, and lo and behold no one's there from the Embassy to meet us. We had no real grip of the language, no money, barely knowing the address of the embassy, just orders to report with a note saying, "You'll be met at the airport," but there was no one there. Our plight was overheard by a British business man, I think an MI5 person, named Michael Collins. He very kindly took us in his car and lent us some money, and we got to the embassy, the embassy apartments, and all was well. So we were there at temporary apartments for a few days and we met the ambassador and the members of the Embassy staff.

Q: Who was that?

MILLER: Ambassador Edward Wailes. He was a very nice man. The political counselor was Harry Schwartz.

We then went down by plane, Iran Air, to Isfahan. This was a one hour flight, over deserts and rugged mountains; a very dramatic flight. The airport at that time was set in between two very high mountain peaks, so it was a dangerous and interesting approach. The skies being clear as they normally are, one could see the beauties of the Zayandeh river valley coming down from the snow covered Zagros mountains, snaking through the piedmont, so to speak, and into the desert plain, and here's this green oasis that extends all the way from the mountains to the great desert, and shiny domes, but not of gold, it's the wonderful green and blue and yellow tiles of Isfahan. The arrival in Isfahan was very different than Tehran. Frank Crawford, who was then consul. We were met by the vice consul who I was replacing, John Exum.

We went into a temporary apartment in a hotel quite near the consulate which was right at the heart of the old city, of the 16th century city, next to the Bridge of 33 Arches, Si-o-Seh Pol, as it's called. At the entrance to the bridge there's a square that had a statue of the shah. It's called Mojasemeh, which means "Statues Square." The hotel, conveniently, was called the Isfahan. It was run by an Armenian with a very un-Armenian name, John McDowell, who took very good care of us in those early days. We later found an apartment right on the Mojasemeh Square in a second floor apartment over a bicycle store that was owned by a Bakhtiari Khan, Yahya Khan Bakhtiar, who was one of the Bakhtiari tribal leaders, unfortunately, an opium addict, but a very charming fellow. His apartment was available as he was going off to tribal lands. He very kindly agreed to let us rent the apartment.

It was most exotic apartment fully furnished in the Persian style, gloriously decorated with Persian artifacts, and in his taste of dark velvets, tribal carpets, and Persian prints. It was a wonderful place to be because all of the noises and sounds, of ordinary life were therthe radios, the shouts of the workers below and all of the traffic going roundabout the square and across the bridge of 33 arches. The consulate was only one building awajust a few yards away.

Q: Let me stop.

[END TAPE]

Q: This is tape two side one of William G Miller.

MILLER: The building was onlthe consulate was only one block away, and it faced the Mojasemeh, and bordered on the north by a small stream which was dry part of the year, but was part of the irrigation system, they are called mahdis in Isfahan and the mahdis are part of some comic events later. This was a feature of Isfahan, that it had canals, so to speak, for irrigation. From the Zayandeh Rud River, the main stream that comes down from the Zagros Mountains. The word Zayandehrud means "the living river," which it literally is, it gives life to that whole part of Iran.

So the consulate was on one side and the bicycle shop was under us and next to us on the other was the home of an Armenian, doctor/antiquarian named Doctor Caro Minassian, who was one of the few good physicians of Isfahan. He was a leader of the Armenian community, and an extremely learned man. We became very good friends. He introduced us to the world of archaeology, antiquities and learning in Isfahan. He cared for us medically on occasion when we were in need of help. He and his wife were very, very good friends. He gave us an introduction to the art and literature and history of Isfahan from the 16th century to the present day. He himself was living example of a descendent of those Armenians who came in the time of Shah Abbas and prospered in this Persian landscape.

He also kept various animals in his garden next to ours, including, as I recall, two enormous land tortoises. They were the size of coffee tables. They were enormous. They were delight for children who would ride them. He had desert birds and so on. He was a wonderful, wonderful maa kind of Dr. Doolittle.

The consulate itself was made out of a 19th century building that had been a merchants residence. It was basically an entry hall with one or two offices on the ground floor for the Iranian staff of which we had three, not including the guards. The senior Persian assistant was Baquer Dehesh, a courtly, very handsome well educated well respected citizen of Isfahan. Mr. Dehesh, whose polite manners exemplified the best of Iranian culture was educated in Tehran at Alborz College under the legendary Dr. Jordan. Alborz College, a Presbyterian missionary college which educated many of Iran's leaders during the 20s, 30s, 40s, and fifties. Mr. Dehesh was well known to all the key officials, bazaari, clerics and tribal leaders of Isfahan and it was through Mr. Dehesh that I met all the key leaders of Isfahan and was able to learn about many of the particular ways of Isfahan. He and his wife made our entry into Isfahani life an easy transition. There was also Khalil Ghazagh, who a was jack-of-all-trades administrative assistanhe translated, he was the receptionist, he typed unclassified material. He was an access to places and people that we needed. Then there was a man named Sayed Soroosh, who was a university professor, but was the assistant to the USIA, USIS person. He, of course, knew the university people, and many of the learned of Isfahan.

Then there was a third Persian named Abol Hassan Sepenta, a brilliant poet and filmmaker who worked for the Americans because he needed money. He was also a newspaper man, he was the editor of a one man Isfahan newspaper Spenta. He became a very good friend right to the end, right to his death. He really knew the country and loved its history and was a patriot in the full sense of the word. He was a part of Persian history, certainly Persian cultural history, and was very sensitive to current political movements and attitudes. Being a poet himself, he was closely in touch with the fellow dissident poets, the poets of the left, who tended to write what they called the "new poetry" that is, they created new forms of poetry, writing not in the ghazals and the formal structures of the past, but free verse, so to speak. The subject matter was very direct and contemporary, a kind of realism at work. Through Sepenta I met the poets and antiquarians and historians, politicians, and musicians, and those in the theater of which there was a very interesting kind in Isfahan, as well as many of the religious people. I met most of the leading mullahs (Islamic clerics) in Isfahan, of all kinds, ranging from the most conservative to the various Sufi sects.

In fact, one of the very first official occasions I attended in Isfahan at the suggestion of Sepenta was a funeral in the mosque which was down the street from the consulate on the Chaharbagh, the main, ceremonial street of Isfahan. The Chabar Bagh (four gardens) was built in the time of the Safavids, in the 16th century. It has water courses down the middle of a broad avenue, with eight rows of chenar, which is a kind of plane tree, ancient plane trees including some that were planted in the time of the Safavids, a very beautiful avenue. The funeral was for a poet who had just died. He was a reformist poet. I can recall it very well because I had no idea what to expect. It turned out to be a most courteous moving event at which I was given a place of honor, served a cup of coffee, bitter coffee, and a cigarette. The mullahs were reciting suras (chapters) from the Koran, Sufi poetry, and declaiming about the life of the deceased poet. It was an auspicious beginning I thought, this very first official act I did in Isfahan. The word got around Isfahan that I had gone to the mosque. Sepenta knew what he was doing in suggesting going to events like this funeral. It was clearly the right kind of introduction, the right first step.

Q: I'd like to step back. Where in 1959 did Isfahan fit into the Iranian body politic, and what was going on in Iran at that time?

MILLER: Well, Isfahan is in the middle of this very large country, Iran. Tehran is up in the north, eight hours by car. It's about 500 miles, one hour by plane. It's the second city in size in Irait was then, and it is now. It was the capital from the 16th century until the 19th century, and anyone with any sense would still put the capital there, in the center of the country rather than Tehran. It has sufficient water and the climate is excellent, ideal, but for political reasons the Qajars, the successor dynasty to the Safavids, established their capital in Tehran, to the north.

At that time, Iran was organized into ten ostans as they were called in Persian, ten states. Each state was governed by a governor called an Ostandar, and each subsection of states, several counties or the equivalent would be under the governance of a Farmandar who reported to the Ostandar. Then there was a mayor, Shahrdar in the case of Isfahan, who was elected. This was from the time of the Constitution in 1905. The mayors were elected. This was an understanding in the 1905 group and really, from that time on, that the people, or the major interest groups of the regions, had to be given some authority. This was about as much electoral power as they would permit in local elections. So mayors were elected, even though the shah played a very significant role in selecting those who would be allowed to run for the position. If necessary, he'd step in to assure or prevenjust as the mullahs are doing now in some of the similar political situations.

Isfahan was a very powerful placit was still a tribal centethat is, of the Bakhtiar and Qashqai, who to some extent, had their influence in that region and in the country. It was the largest industrial area at the time. The industry was mostly in textile factories: weaving, cotton and silk and wool goods, as well as the old style of manual manufacturinthat is what we would call handicrafts, but they called essentials, the things of everyday life actually made in the bazaars. So the bazaar was still the economic center of manufacture, finance, politics, economy.

Q: The Bazaaris are a distinct political group in a way?

MILLER: Well they were the urban elite. They were the businessmen, those who had money and economic power. The bazaar was the center of all Iranian cities, and it still is. The Bazaar contained within itself, the heart of religion of religious belief. Many of the older mosques originally endowed by the bazaari were in the bazaar. The bazaar was a way of lifrestaurants, baths, as well as shops, and places of manufacture, schools, seminaries, and residences. It was the physical and cultural core of the old cities of Iran, as it was for much of the Middle East. Cairo has somewhat similar structures, at least from Islamic times, and even from before Islamic times. Isfahan, being an old city, one of the oldest in Iran; it is an old city that goes back to about the 5th century before the birth of Christ. Isfahan was the largest city in the Middle East anmuch larger than London and probably any other city in the world at the time of Shah Abbas around 1600. So it has visible accretive remains from the earliest times, from pre-Christian times right to the present. The sense of a nation and a people with a very long history is something you see every day, any Isfahani knows this. He sees it in the buildings he lives in, and works in, and walks by. Isfahani neighborhoods are defined by the establisheestablished over millennia - economy, and even Isfahani ethnic backgrounds, were defined thousands of years ago. Its Jewish center, for example, has been there from pre-Christian times. The Armenians come late into the 16th century; they are there from Safavid times. There are regions of Isfahan that are even now called Arab and Turkmen and Afghan dating from the invasions of centuries past. Understandably Isfahan is very complex architecturally, and even linguistically. Within the city there are distinct dialects of language based on the great movements of people caused by the invasions of past centuries.

Q: When was the overthrow of Mossadeq?

MILLER: 1953.

Q: Was the shah really in power, particularly from the Isfahan ?

MILLER: The Shah was never accepted by the Iranian peoples as a whole as the rightful leader. The shah was always seen as illegitimate, as imposed by the West, certainly from the time I got there. The Iranians believed that he had been imposed by the British and by us, particularly the British. The line of agreement that Iranian nationalists used when I arrived in 1959 was that we Americans were manipulated by the hidden hand of the British. It was explained to me by Iranians who had witnessed the events in great detail how the overthrow took place. The role of Kermit Roosevelt, and Ambassador Henderson, and Shahban the Brainless were all related by my new Isfahani friends who had lived through all of the coups and had created a mythology, as well as a documented history and a body of poetry of the event. The story of the 1953 coup was a favorite subject matter for declamations. They saw to it that I was carefully educated in what they regarded as Persian realities. Indeed I was educated, because I was given full documentation, newspapers of the time, and met the personalities who had been in prison, tortured. The American spies at the time were all identified. I was actually asked, "Did I know so and so and so ..."

It turned out that the governor, called in Persian, Ostandar, of Isfahan, a man named General Abbas Farzanagan, had been the "bag man" for the coup, a fact that he was pretty proud of. Farzanagan told me in detail his direct role in all of these events. We became very good friends. I was very interested in him. He was very pro-American, obviously, and very close to the Shah, but incredibly corrupt, as I learned in watching him at work as governor. So the gap between the governors of the shah and the shah's rule and the people of Isfahan, where I was living, was evident almost from the beginning. There was little respect for the shah among the Isfahani people.

Q: Was it the shah himself rather than his father?

MILLER: The father was looked on with more respect, because he was a relatively independent, self-made man. He was very tough soldier. He did his own thing. He resisted cooption by foreign powers till the end, and of course was deposed because of his recalcitrance, although he was a brutal dictator and ignorant in the minds of many of the nationalists, and in their view not fit to be a great king. Although they did accord him respect for the reforms he carried out such as building railroads, and roads, airports, and the beginnings of a new system of justice even though it was abused by him, used by him, for control rather than justice. The path of change instituted by Reza Shah was seen to have possibilities by the nationalists. For example, the new school system of course, and universities, were seen as a plus. The beginnings of modern economy created by the use of oil revenues from the oil fields in the south all took place under the shah's father.

Shah Mohammed Reza, the son, was seen as weak, as a puppet of the Americans and the British, particularly the British, and not worthy, and certainly by his own example he did not do noble things. The nationalists who were the remnants and successors to Mossadeq were the strongest most popular and respected political groups in Iran.

Q: How was Mossadeq viewed?

MILLER: As the greatest of the Iranian leaders of the early 20th century, because he came from a noble background and devoted his life to Iran and its people. He was a Qajar, a prince, from a distinguished princely family. He was well educated in Iran and in the West as a lawyer, was considered by all as a patriot, was a nationalist who resisted British and Russian, and Reza Shah, went to prison for it. Mossadeq was a land owner, who treated his villagers humanely, a reformer, and a democrat. He believed in democratic institutions, constitutionality, and legal reform. He understood the nature and history of Iranian civilization. So he was thought by Iranians to be a great man, unfairly and unwisely removed by foreign influence. It was a big mistake, in my view, for the U.S. and Britain to have undertaken the 1953 coup.

His group was called the National Front, Hesba Melli. It was a coalition of interest groups and proto-political parties that reflected the whole spectrum of Iranian society from the religious right to the Marxist, on the left, but it was put together with a Persian perspective. The National Front Party was the biggest political group in Isfahan. There were Communist elements within the party, but they were a minority. The communist party, the Tudeh, were well organized and well under the influence of Moscow because their leaders had been educated in Moscow and their funding came from Moscow. Their social causes had resonancthe urban poor, the exploitation of the masses were real issues. They had some influence in the labor unions in the textile mills of Isfahan where conditions were far from ideal. The Tudeh had no appeal in the villages, which waat that point 70% of the population who lived in the 50,000 villages. The communists were an urban phenomenon.

So I was familiar with all these groups, the Communists, the Tudeh party, and certainly the National Front people.

Q: Tudeh was the Communists?

MILLER: The Communists, yes. I also knew the SAVAK (National Organization for Intelligence and Security) people who were hunting them down, arresting them and killing them.

Q: How efficienand appreciated is really the wrong worwas the SAVAK, or present at that time in Isfahan?

MILLER: It was a very big presence, partially because SAVAK at that point was led by a Bakhtiari General. Timor Bakhtiar was head of SAVAK, and he came from Isfahan or in the mountains near Isfahan. He was a Bakhtiari. Yes, General Timor Bakhtiar was head of SAVAK and he was considered a rival for the Shah for power because he was a player and could easily have deposed the Shah, given certain events and the attitude of the Americans and the British. The Americans and the British kept very close touch with SAVAK since they were the main training group for the secret police and supplied their equipment. We had a CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) officer in Isfahan.

Q: Well, now let's talk about the consulate, not consulate-general ?

MILLER: There were five consulates.

Q: ? in Isfahan, at that time, because our reporting out of Iran has been very, has been criticized, that sometimes were too much this way or that way, you know. When you arrived what was sort of the attitude and what was the task of the consulate?

MILLER: The consulate was really a kind of the consul was a pro-consul, in many ways, because there was a huge economic and military assistance effort, Point Four and ARMISH-MAAG effort underway.

Q: Begun in the Truman administration.

MILLER: Yes, it was. Point Four was the forerunner to USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development). The Point Four Plan, of course was, developed in the time of Truman, for assistance to Greece, Turkey, and IraEgypt, as an emergency foreign policy and security tool. That took the form of technical assistance, largely in agriculture, health, and water projects, airports, infrastructure, and there were quite a few aid technicians who gave, in many cases, extremely effective help, particularly the doctors in the universities and hospitals. The development assistance of Point Four was extremely helpful to Iran.

Then we also had a very large ARMISH-MAAG (US Army Mission Military Assistance Advisory Group) contingent. ARMISH-MAAG was the military, the military security assistance. It was under the command of a general who wanted to assist a military academy in Isfahan, particularly giving access to artillery and tanks. We had a large military training component, a feature that lasted until the revolution in 1979. At the end, in 1979 they had air force training in Isfahan, and of course Bell Helicopters was building helicopters in Isfahan, and communications factories.

Then there were training and technical programs in all of the structurethe police, the gendarmerie, doctors' education. So the consulate was in formal charge of all of this. As vice-consul I was in charge of all of this when Frank Crawford was on leave.

Q: There were just two of you?

MILLER: There were two Foreign Service officers.

Q: And the CIA.

MILLER: The CIA station chief, the USIS officer, later Bill Meader and the Point Four head, Harvey Coverley and John Hollligsworth, our administrative assistant and code clerk.

Q: Did the CIA officeperform consular functions too?

MILLER: Reluctantly. He was a good man. We went on many field trips together. He was helpful. I learned much from him about CIA, and the mentality of those engaged in covert activities.

Q: How about just the mundanbut Iranian students were the bane of most consuls existence in Europe and elsewhere cause they were all over the place looking for visas. Did you have that?

MILLER: I had to issue visas. It was my first post, I expected to issue visas. I issued about 50 a year.

Q: That's not many.

MILLER: No, and I even issued four passports, two of which I mangled in the seal embossing machine. We had a malfunctioning hand crank machine. I couldn't get several of the passports out of the machine. It was a rather comic scene.

Q: So then mainly your work was ?

MILLER: I was the political officer, I was the economic officer, I was the coordinator of our mission and I was the deputy chief of mission, and I helped in communications. I did everything. I encrypted, decrypted, acted as a courier as way of getting to Tehran and so on. There wasn't any consular function I didn't do. I buried the dead. I picked up pieces of Americans who crashed themselves into the top of mountains, put dead bodies in embalming fluid and then put them in caskets. I got American travelers out of jail. I went to the ports to handle shipping.

Q: How did people get in jail there?

MILLER: The normal ways, traffic accidents, or theft ?

Q: Was drugs a problem at that point?

MILLER: No, not noticeably. You have to remember this was really and still is a very remote part of the world. The only people who came through were the most adventurous and of course, there were those who were often traveling on 50 cents a day of their own and ten dollars of someone else's money a day. Some travelers proved to be burdens because they expected to be put up in your house or your apartment. Most travelers to Isfahan tended to be wonderful people like Agatha Christie, otherwise known as Mrs. Mallowan and her archaeologist husband. There were people like Anne K. Hamilton, the quiet Persian scholar who was a British Political officer during the war. Also Lawrence Lockhart, the art historian and historian of the Safavid period; Donald Wilber, and Cuyler Young and his archaeologist son, T. Cuyler Young, Jr. came.

Q: He was an archeologist.

MILLER: Yes. Another extraordinary person was Wilfred Thesiger, a great explorer, and of course all the archeologists in the region like Ezatollah Negahban, many of whom are now gone, but some of them are still alive and working, like David Stronach, who was head of the British Institute and is now at Berkley in California.

Q: With these connections you were developing, in the first place the language. I imagine this was a hot house for getting into Farsi and Persian.

MILLER: Yes. Well, immediately upon arriving I had a tutor, several tutors. Since there were very few people in Isfahan who spoke English or any other foreign language, you had to learn Persian. It was a wonderful obligation and necessity. The atmosphere in Isfahan was such that the rhythm of life and the language fit it. It was a good place to begin to learn a language as subtle as Persian. The pace of life allowed me the luxury of having tutors during the day in the office. I rarely sat for a whole day at the desk. The paper work was minimal since we were a consulate in a very remote area. The traffic of consular work wasn't, even in the embassies, anywhere near the scale we have now. It was expected that my job was to learn about Iran, so I was on the streets of Isfahan every day. Two weeks of every month I was on the road in other parts of Iran. Over the five years that I was in Iran I visited every part of Iran. I've been to every city, most towns, and there is no region that I haven't visited, and almost every archeological site, every mosque. I met every major religious leaders, every political leader throughout the country. So I knew the country backwards and forwards.

Q: Were there any restrictions or no-nos? For example, you said the governor was incredibly corrupt, though he was a nice man. Was this a matter of reporting all the time?

MILLER: How did I know that?

Q: How did you know that and also were you reporting that?

MILLER: Oh yes, I was reporting the issues as I understood them. Yes, I reported on corruption and popular discontent with the Shah's regime from the outset. To do so wasn't a problem for political officers in the field. It did get to be a problem for me in Tehran. I'll tell you about that later.

Q: I am trying to pick up now because our work in Iran later on, particularly in the 70's, was renowned for restrictions put on our officers about reporting. What about then?

MILLER: No restrictions. The only curbs on one's writing were technical considerations of formal style, punctuation, and normal editing.

Q: They were done mainly through dispatches?

MILLER: The major reporting form was the "dispatch", and "official informal" letters. The major security categories for reporting were "limited official use" or "unclassified", because we didn't want to go through the very onerous, time-consuming task of encryptiousing one time pads. Any messages that required one-time pads really had to be a sensitive issue. Everything else was understood to be normal discourse in Isfahan: such matters as so-and-so is corrupt, that the SAVAK killed so-and-swere reported in unclassified form. The only thing that might have been put in classified form would be a comment on the event that was being reported, for example. Security regulations required that our classified material had to be sent by courier, hand-carried. Getting classified material to Tehran was not a problem, but every encryption certainly was.

Q: What about your contact and all with the mullahs at that time. How did this come about? Were the mullahs sort owere they open to a young kid from the American devils or something, coming around and talking or not?

MILLER: Well, after all the mullahs were and still are, by and large, and certainly in the cities, among the most educated. They're the brothers and cousins of people who were leading politicians and businessmen. The mullahs were supported by the others in society in the same way we support our pastors and priests here in the United States.

Q: So this was not really a class apart.

MILLER: No, the mullahs were an integrated part of everyday life. It is a mistake, to look on mullahs even in contemporary Iran as a class that is somehow alienated. What's wrong or different for the clergy to be doing in contemporary Iran as compared to the traditional Iran that I knew is that the clergy are now doing functions that they normally don't do. The clergy are running the government, but the clergy come from the same families whose secular members ran the Shah's government. They are relatives of the politicians who were in power at the time of the shah.

Q: How did you wife find life there?

MILLER: Suzanne found it completely open. Perhaps because we were young and naï¿½ve, we felt no isolation or alienation. The people we lived among were interested in us. We had our first son born in Isfahan, in a simple but well run hospital there. She had a normal birth with a mid-wife. It was the Christian hospital run by the Christian Church. The hospital was made of mumud brick, and it was very primitive in its appointments, but had extremely able doctors and nurses. No, Suzanne had a wonderful time. There was no restriction on dress, but she was careful about what she wore. She would wheel a baby carriage, with our son, Will, down the main streets. Isfahani women would stop her and chat about the baby and the normal events of ordinary life.

Q: Great opener isn't it ?

MILLER: Oh yes. We would go on picnics in the mountains, find a deserted place and almost by magic tribesman would come down from the hills and surround us, inching up closer and closer with when we were having a picnic, and if we had enough food, we'd share it with them and they'd squat and look at our baby and ask questions like, "how did we get so far away from America?" "What is America like?" they were always courteous and respectful and genuinely curious about us.

Q: With our military mission there, did that cause problems? Sometimes you take young American soldiers, and they've got spare time, and sometimes it goes bad.

MILLER: A little bit. They usually went up to Tehran or out of the country for a change and for recreation. The social life that went on was open enough. The Iranian military was there too. The American advisors were a tiny part of the much larger Iranian military force of several divisions. The Iranian military as a whole were seen as somewhat parasitical on the society, as were the police, because being poorly paid, they did put pressure on the ordinary people and extract bribes. The military weren't always of the finest type, but they functioned in Isfahan in a situation of normality, I'd say. You asked the question about mullahl was very interested in them because they knew a lot about their country, were generally well educated and well read and the best were well informed about events in the world. And they were political leaders. They were political in the sense that they were aware, remembered the recent past, and were related to people who were political. They had admirable moral attitudes, and some were highly civilized. It wasn't difficult to get to know the clergy. If you were interested in them, they were interested in you. If you treated them with respect, they treated you with respect.

Q: What about the land owners? Had the White Revolution started at that point?

MILLER: No, the White Revolution took place later when I went to Tehran. So-called land reform was the biggest part of the White Revolution. This big issue in the World Bank at that time was assisting land reform program. Land reform in the early1960s meant land distribution. It didn't mean necessarily improving the agriculture, it meant democratizing by parceling out equal plots to the peasants in the minds of Western, or at least foreign, economists.

Change in the patterns of land ownership had already begun in Iran as early as the '20s, because owning villages and peasants was no longer a benefit. Land ownership for thousands of years in Iran was seen as a prestige, power, and it was clearly in 1960, ceasing to be that. The big land-owning families, the so-called "1000 Families" of Iran, who typically would own 10, 20, 50, or even 100 villages, were selling their villages and going into manufacturing or investment. There was a very famous family called the Farman-Farmians in Tehran descended from the Qajar princes. In the generation I knew. there were 36 children from one father and four mothers. 32 of them were PhD's. The Farman-Farmians were a huge land-owning family, but at that time in 1962, they reduced their holdings to just two villages where they had homes they used for vacations and hunting.

Q: When they sold their villages, would it go to somebody else?

MILLER: Yes, the villages were sold in the bazaar, and rich merchants who were rising and wanted villages as prestige bought them. The process of change was slow.

The decision to sell or keep a village would depend on the quality of the village, whether it was profitable, very often there was prestige to own a village particularly in the marginal areas. Agriculture itself as an economic force was changing. Certainly, the methods of agriculture were changing. Typically water was the limiting and governing principle or, in the areas of rainfall, predictable rainfall, where wheat could be grown without fear of drought, or rice would be grown in the north, where there was plentiful rainfall for ice and for crops like tea, or fruit orchards. Water was a key determinant. If you bought a village you'd have to know how much water came with the village. Water would define how many people could work and how much land could be planted. For thousands of years in Iran, the measurement of work was by how much land could be plowed by a man and an ox in a day. Land divisions, so-called, were based on that man-ox scale of measurement. With mechanization, in the twentieth century, the nature of plowing and land division and irrigation was changing. Land reform did not significantly affect overall output, really, but it was driving people off the land. The traditional agriculture was a form of intensive farming; so-called land reform, actually drove half of the village workers into the cities unnecessarily, unnecessarily because they were living quite a reasonable life in the villages. If better education and health were provided to the villages you would have had a much better situation.

Q: What with the clearances_____?

MILLER: Yes it is. It was something like that, not intended with that in mind. This class of people driven to the cities were called Khoshnashin. They were the so-called "landless." They were the workers in villages, they were the ones who didn't have land tenure by family inheritance because they had ploughed the same plots for hundreds of years, but were otherwise involved in harvesting and planting and did other jobs in the village. It changed the nature of villages, so-called land reform. Land reform as conceived in the 1960's was an inappropriate idea imposed by Western land reform theorists who tried to apply methods used elsewhere on a very complicated traditional land system.

This is how Mossadeq come back into the picture. Mossadeq was deeply interested in land reform. He was a big landowner, and understood well the complications. He said, "First step for reform of Iranian agriculture was to make a national cadastral survey. It was necessary to determine what kind of land Iran has, then determine how can it best be farmed, how many workers would be able to usefully work on it. What about village schools, and social infrastructure once provided by landlords." If the land is to use machinery what would be the optimum kinds of tractors, combines, etc. Mossadeq asked, "What have you got in the villages before you change them?" The Shah's White Revolution, was led by Minister of Agriculture, Arsenjani, who was the real architect but didn't know a damn thing about agriculture. He was a city, urban type, a journalist actually, who was drafted by the Shah to be Minister of Agriculture. Arsenjani bought the World Bank theory which had little to do with the agricultural and social and political realities of Iran.

The landowners over the last several hundred years represented a significant part of the ruling elite. In the last 50 years of the twentieth century, ownership of land meant far less, and in the last 10 years before the revolution land owners had very little direct influence. It was those who had factories and had invested in bankand those who were making modern mechanical thingcars and the machines of the new world.

Q: Was the feeling on the American side and the diplomatic service that Mossadeq was a bad guy and were we looking for another uprising and overthrow of the shah? Were we looking for revolutionary elements, even the Tudeh?

MILLER: We were helping the Shah to suppress the Tudehs. We were trying to root them out. All opposition to the Shah was suspect, even democratic nationalists. This was our policy towards Iran from the time of the overthrow of Mossadeq in 1953. It was certainly a major policy concern in the Eisenhower period. In the Kennedy periowhen I was in Iran, the question of crushing the opposition was open. The idea that a democratic nationalist opposition was positive and should be supported was left open. After I left, starting with Nixon, our policy changed back to total support for the shah at all costs. In the period from Kennedy through Johnson, we placed high value on building democratic government and institutions, supporting democratic government with all the confusion of ignorance of the regional realities and history, and our inabilities in many ways, but the issue of governance was open and the American government was listening to nationalist expression, cooperatively at least, in Iran, Turkey, even Egypt and other places. We had in fact, a sort of schizophrenic policy. On the one hand we were supporting SAVAK, the secret police, to keep the shah in power, and supporting brutal police tactics, supporting undemocratic brutality; on the other hand we were urging Iranian judges to follow a democratic system of rule of law and to hold free elections. Election would be held by the shah. They were rigged. They weren't free, and to our credit, we condemned them. The Shah would hold elections again. They still weren't free. The shah was under tremendous pressure from us to allow the national democrats to have a role in government for about four years, during the time I was there.

President Kennedy, Attorney Bobby Kennedy his NSC (National Security Council), and his State Department regional bureau, NEA, all were in support of the nationalists, perhaps because the Iranian nationalists were American-educated and a known quantity. They were thought to be the best elements within Iranian society and they came directly to us for help. They said, "We believe in you. You should believe in us." There was a policy battle between the supporters of the Shah's absolute rule and those who wanted Iran to have a constitutional democratic monarchy. The battle for policy went on until a decision was made in the time of Prime Minister Ali Amini, on the question of an IMF (International Monetary Fund) debt repayment. It was an amount of debt something like $20 million, which, if we had given him a delay on debt payment, Amini would have survived. The decision was made not to support Amini's request, but rather to support the shah, so the shah became the "linchpin of stability" at that point. That marked the end of independent, democratic parties. The shah, from that point on, put in place a shah chosen one-party system. There were elections for the representatives of one party. The nationalists democrats were prevented from that point on by the shah from holding office.

Q: When was this?

MILLER: 1963, '64.

Q: So while you were still there. I think probably this is a pretty good time to stop.

MILLER: Well, we haven't gotten very far.

Q: Well, we're moving, it's all right. We'll pick this up really when you went to Tehran, and we'll pick that up in 1961?

MILLER: Sixty-two.

Q: There might be some more ?

MILLER: There's a lot.

Q: Do you want to put down, here, some of the other things, here, so we won't forget that you'd like to cover them?

MILLER: The importance of field trips. The value of mentoring by senior ambassadors. The great utility of well trained, able locals. The work of the diplomat in such places as Isfahan.

Q: And also, I didn't really go into how we viewed and what was the Tudeh party at the time.

MILLER: Yes, and other countries' influences like that of the Soviets and the British.

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Q: Today is April the 25th 2003. Bill, let's talk a little bit abouyou said you wanted to talk about, particularly the work of a consulate and all, about the value of field trips.

MILLER: There is some present day relevance to the pro-consuls that are in place in Afghanistan, or are being put in place in Iraq. Isfahan was not a primitive place. It was a highly cultured city with a thousand-year history or more and a population that knew that history and behaved in customary ways that were reflective of a highly civilized society. What I mean by that is that the daily courtesies of life were highly stylized. Greetings were expected and formalized, whether on the street or in arranged or formal meetingpassing by on the street with strangers, comment on the weather. The discussion of everyday events was carefully considered through formulaic language, which, when fully understood, wasn't simply a matter of rote, but could subtly convey very accurate and direct feelings.

Q: Could you give sort of an example of this?

MILLER: Yes, a very popular thoroughfare in Isfahan was called the Chaharbagh, the Place of Four Gardens. That's what the word means. It was then and still is, as I saw when I returned a year or so ago, a street several miles in length in which there are four rows of plane trees, sycamores to us, London planes, to the British, some of which are hundreds of years old. It's a place where people promenade, really. In Persian it's called gardesh mikonan, "we will take a walk," and people go in one direction or the other and when they pass each other they nod heads and they have a salutation of at minimum, "Al-salaam Alaikum, to your health," comment would than follow on the weather, politics, the health of family and friends and perhaps more. These are the patterns of daily ordinary walks. Then there were conversations in the market if you're buying fruit or vegetables. At the other end of the scale of commerce, in antique or rug stores, for example, there is a formal language, and patter that reflects not only the occupation of the day and the feelings towards individuals or even countries.

This is a way of saying that Iranian society is very complicated. The language is very precise and learned. There is a lot of room for discussion, not only banter, but deep discussion within formulas. So for diplomats the use of language is ideal because you are already working within mental frameworkrules of the game.

Q: Did you have a problem beginning to pick up the nuances of this?

MILLER: No, and here is the importance of local staff who, in this case, were like Oriental secretaries in the British sense. Our local staff were people of great standing in the city, in this case, Isfahan, because of their family and educational background and learning. They saw their jobs as being a host for the city; to the Americans in a way, and as teachers to the Americans. So every step, particularly in the early stages, everything was explained, what these encounters meant, what the meaning and intentions of the linguistic back and forth was, what the depth of the bow or the rising or falling if you are sitting on the ground, and hand to the heart and the stroking of beardin the case of the religious who were always bearded meant. Those clues to behavior were very important for me.

Mr. Dehesh, Baquer Dehesh, was the principle senior assistant in the consulate, along with another person named Abdol Hossein Sepenta, who was a poet and a filmmaker, and a journalisl spent a lot of time both of with them. They took me to see their circles of close friends as well as those in official circles. In the official circles were the governor of the ostan, Ostandar, the mayor, the Shahdar, the various heads of ministries in the governor's and the mayor's office, then the leading clerics, university professors, teachers in the schools, artists. A list of the hierarchy of important people, was drawn up. All consulates and embassies have a list of key personalities and their biographiecontact lists they are now called. In the case of Isfahan and Tehran, the personalities were divided into the appropriate classes of society, not in the Marxist way, but in the Persian way which was in the form of a list of those who were the worthies, who were the land-owners, who were the factory owners, who were the intellectuals, artists, athletes, actors, etc. The initial analysis of society was carefully done and reflected not our perception of society but our local staff's perception of their own social structure.

Q: A worthy being whom?

MILLER: A "worthy" would be, so named for one of several reasons. A worthy would reflect power, that is, be a representative of the shah's regime, the appointed governor, in the case of Isfahan and the elected mayor, the head of the gendarmerie, or the head of the secret police. Then there were the families of the existing dynasty, that's the Pahlavis, and then the Qajars, who were much more numerous, from the previous dynasty, and in the case of Isfahan the Safavids from the time of shah Abbas, that great Persian dynasty. There were even some Afshars, the dynasty from Shiraz, and there were some families of the Afghan conquerors of the 18th century, and so on, and there were Jewish worthies, Christians. There were also the leaders of, the various modern oil dynasties, or the present political system, the religious structure, the intellectual structure. Then in Isfahan, because it was always an artisan city, the artists, the most honored miniaturists, tile makers, and in the time I was there, the sculptors and the oil painters or water colorists. All of the artistfrom metal work to textiles to bookbindinthese were all very important.

Q: There were no strictures within the Shiite religion about portraying human people, the humans?

MILLER: Only in the mosques.

Q: Only in the mosques, but you know in the Wahabi and all this, there is none of that?

MILLER: No, in fact, in a number of the great mosques, even the shah mosque, now called the Imam mosque, there were representations of animals and humans in some of the back areas of the mosque. Usually there is a distinction between the mosque and outside, but outside it was rampant, figures and animals.

Q: I may have asked this before, but how strong was the writ of the shah at this time? How much were local authorities doing what local authorities do, and how much was it deferring to the shah?

MILLER: The hierarchy of power was at the head was the shah, the shah made the claim, and of course, his entourage and many throughout the country believed, that Iran was the shah, that he owned the country, but in the vibrant urban life of cities like Isfahan and Shiraz and Tabriz this dominance was contested by those of great wealth and long held social position. They thought they also had a piece of the country to which they had claim. The shah needed them as well to stay in power. That vitiated absolute power to some extent. The clergy were always split on the question of loyalty to the shah as the "Render unto Caesar..." was a reality and the spiritual life didn't belong to the shah, he had to belong to the spiritual life as a kind of defender, or as more accurate, in his case, persecutor of the faith.

There was a well known hierarchal list of power of so called "1,000 Families" who were the great land owners of Iran. Many on the list were from the previous timeQajars, Safavids or the great bazaar merchants, Isfahan of course having the most extensive and complicated bazaar. These bazaar families were extraordinarily important. They were the financial support necessary for the regime. They were also the support for the clerical establishment through charitable contributions on the vaqf, the inheritance, and they were political powers in their own right. Of course, commercial activity was crucial to the society as a whole.

Those were the worthies. Isfahan was a wonderful place for anyone interested in learning about the complexities and richness of Iran, particularly one from the United States. A diplomat at that time was welcome. I learned about Iranian society in ways that were much superior to the method imposed upon embedded journalists, for example, now.

Q: When you got outsidtalk about consulate trips, too. When you got outside going into your area, which is quite an extensive one, how did you feel about what you were picking from this?

MILLER: It was a huge consulate district. It extended to the Afghan border on the east, included the religious city of Qom in the north, it went to the Iraqi border on the west, the Persian Gulf to the south, and everything in between. It was a vast piece of territory, with huge variations of kinds of life.

Typically, I would spend at least a week or two every month on the road. The trips were primarily by jeep, because the cities and the settlements and villages were great distances between each other. The distances between settlements were due to the largely desert character of the plateau. Villages existed where there was water. The roads were very difficult; at best they were corrugated dirt roads. Travel anywhere meant adventure.

So I would have our great driver, Khachik, and one of the Oriental secretaries would often go along. A good example would be a trip to Yazd, which is to the east of Isfahan and over a range of mountains to the edge of the desert, Dasht-e Lut. The trip to Yazd would take about five or six hours. Yazd, itself had an extensive bazaar, several important mosques, seminaries. It had a full government structure. It had a governor, a mayor and an apparatus that was similar to Isfahan but smaller, and of a different ethnic composition. These trips would be prepared in advance, notice was sent from Isfahan's governor that an American diplomatic official was coming, and the governor requested "would you meet, and prepare all necessary meetings." There would be meetings with the worthies of the city. First, in that case, there was the meeting with the governor and then the mayor, and other city officials. We had "Point Four" an aid mission there, so it was necessary to visit the Point 4 projects. Then I'd go to each of the main mosques and meet the chief clerics, the mullahs. In each of these places there would be at minimum, tea, and very often dinner, lunch and dinner. We'd stay in a guest house, usually in the compound of the richest worthy in town. They would lay out the carpet, literally. The guest house usually contained a courtyard, a house with a big room with carpets, and padded mats, which we slept on, and servants would bring food and water. There would be a shower. Jeep trips through the mountains and deserts on very dusty roads found us covered in dust from head to toe. Showers were a blessing. A bath in a hammaa clean bath house, was even better. Then we'd have dinner at the host's house and with his guests.

We'd spend several days in a city like Yazd, carrying out formal visits to the formal governmental and social structures of the city. Then we'd go touring. I was and still am an insatiable amateur archeologist, so every mound that we'd see from the road, I would ask that we'd stop so I could gather shards and check the shards against the examples showed in the various manuals that I had brought along. In the case of Yazd, we went up into the mountains to the west of Yazd, and visited the Zoroastrians who lived in villages outside of Yazd, the surviving indigenous Zoroastrian community that goes back over thousands of years. We visited the religious centethe fire templwe were invited to a Zoroastrian religious service which was quite an honor. The religious precepts were explained, and the life of the village was described. They even took us to the Towers of Silence.

Q: Where they put the bodies.

MILLER: The Towers of Silence are the stone structures where they exposed the dead bodies of the Zoroastrians faithful to the elements and the carrion birds. There were also tribal groups nearby, so we paid a visit to the tribal leaders. The Yazd trip was one typical trip. Another kind of which I made several would be to go all the way to the Persian Gulf. This was a three week trip through Shiraz and through Qashqai lands and further in Arab tribal country. In this first case, the purpose was t meet with the leaders of the Qashqai. The Qashqai were one of the two most important tribes in Iran. The Bakhtiari who lived in the Zagros Mountains north of Shiraz up to Khorramabad was the other main tribal group.

Q: When you say tribes, were these, would you call them, I meathese werone of the terms I use is Arabs or Persians? Were there any Arabs per se?

MILLER: Only near the Shat-al-Arab River near Khorramshahr were there Arab tribes, and along the Persian Gulf there werArab tribal groups which were called Bandari (along the shore), which werpart of a separate Persian Gulf culture. The Persian Gulf was very different than mainland Iraq or Iran. They were inhabited by different kinds of people. There were obviously also mixtures of Arabs, Indians and Pakistanis who plied the coastal waters of the region.

Q: The dhow trade and all that.

MILLER: There were at that time dhow shipyards. They were still making wooden dhows by hand.

Q: I used to see them when I would go to Qatar in the late '50s.

MILLER: Exactly. One trip, I tooa very long difficult one along the Persian Gulf started in Bandar-e Abbas, and then we went on running along the coast in a jeep. It was very difficult, very difficult. We went all the way to Chahbahar in one direction (to the east) and to Bushire, to the west. There were still pearl fisheries, working with great heaps of oyster shells in evidence. There were wonderful crafts evident in the buildings of the Gulf towns, the ornamented wooden doors that were carved out of teak. They brought the teak from India and further east. There was a very different feeling in the Persian Gulf from the rest of Iran. The Gulf was really the Ali Baba kind of world. Do you remember the huge pots in the stories about Ali Baba? There they were, these huge pots, filled with water in the basements. The Gulf people used to go into the water pots to cool off, when it was an unbearably hot day.

On several of those trips I went out to the islands by dhow. There are dozens of islands that lie off the coast, and several of them were then used as fortresses and prisons including prisons for political prisoners and there were also mines, for iron oxide and various salts. The mountainous islands were made up of spectacular colorred, yellow, pink, great veins, of different colored rock. The volcanic and violent nature of the area's geology was very evident. We'd get out there by dhow. We'd hire a dhow and sail and shove off into the very blue waters of the Gulf sailing before the wind under the characteristic rig of a lateen sail. It was really a great adventure. I can remember a very hot day when we sailed out to Hormoz Island. Hormoz was used as a prison for political prisoners. It had been an important Portuguese port, and a commercial center, in the 17th century, of the Portuguese Empire. The Portuguese fort was still thera very handsome ruin, a lovely, spectacular place. The sea around Hormoz was alive with fish. I remember going swimming right off the shore by the fort. It was very hot and it was wonderful to be able to go swimming. There were oyster beds right underfoot. So I picked the oysters, and even though they were forbidden for the Muslim pious, I found them delicious.

Q: While you were on these things was there a different viedid you have a feeling that the further you got away from the centers like Isfahan and all, these communities were running by their own writ and the shah waand higher government was less important?

MILLER: Oh yes, very definitely, but the network still was always evident even if distant. The sense of Iran as a nation was something that you began to understand, how the country fitted together even though the vast distances and isolation, and the autonomies were very evident. A good example of this is, again, in the tribel went on one occasion, on a tribal migration with the Bakhtiari. I had friends in Isfahan who were living there as exiled tribal chiefs, Bakhtiari chiefs. They were not allowed to be with the tribes, because ...

Q: The Bakhtiari were located where?

MILLER: In the Zagros Mountains from south of Kermanshah all the way to Shiraz, and then the Qashqai lands begin in the Shiraz area and go south to Firuzabad. The Bakhtiari were divided into various clans that were loyal to different tribal chiefs. The main clans were called Haft Lang and the Chahar Lang, that's "seven" and "four." The clans would wear a typical canvas woven tunic above their shalvar (wide, broad trousers), shirts that button up to their necks and who wore a distinctive domed hat, black hat made of goat hair. They were stripes on the tunics: four stripes for the Chahar Lang and seven stripes for the Haft Lang. The two main clans got along reasonably well except for occasional disputes along the migration routes and where the sheep would graze on to disputed grasslands and domestic conflicts would emerge.

The migration trip was hosted by a Haft Lang family whose lands extended from the north near Khorramabad across the Zagros Mountains down to Masjed-e Soleyman in the flat lands near Iraq, which is where the oil fields were in Khuzestan. This migration was a three week trip on horseback. It was a marvelous, absolutely marvelous experience. The host was a Kalantar, a tribal leader of several families. A Kalantar is a second level retainer to the Khan who is the leader of the tribe. There were about eight families who were traveling with their flocks of sheep along with the Kalantars group. The migration follows at the pace of the sheep. The families travel only as far as the sheep could go in a day. Then they'd stop and eat and set up their black tents, cook dinner and would remain for a few days during which they would go hunting, engage in story-telling, and feasting, of course until the sheep were ready to move again to new pastures. We followed that pattern of travel over three weeks. Up and down mountains, swimming across rivers with the sheep, back up the mountain and down again.

Q: What you are doing, you are talking about probably a wiser, certainly more indulgent, Foreign Service then we have today, where they can allow yoessentially it was invaluable as far as making you aware of the world which you were dealing with.

MILLER: I was learning about an important part of Iran and I hope I was also making friends. As far as establishing a relationship with people of another country, this is a very pleasant way to do it. It's a great privilege to be invited to live for a time with the tribes, particularly if they have invited you to come as their guests. We were welcome. It was an ideal time for us, as Americans. Americans were then believed to the real friends of Iran and its independence despite the 1953 coup. For the Iranians, Americans were thought to be relatively innocent, even naï¿½ve, to the Iranians, the British were "the hidden hand". The British were always suspect, although much respected for their power The Russians were long perceived as an enemy not to be trusted from the earlier times of Russian expansion in the early 19th century. The Soviets were certainly believed to be an enemy. The U.S. was 10,000 miles away so we were believed to have no direct territorial interests even though we had overthrown Mossadeq, their beloved, popular leader. The Iranians tended to blame that action on the British having duped us because we were naive and the British, of course, were always thought to be highly intelligent and conservatively devious.

Q: In all this, both in Isfahan and going out, how would you describe the power of the mullahs because we are comparing this to today where apparently the mullahs have seized control of most elements of government. How did you find it at that time?

MILLER: The mullahs were, at that time, an integral part of society. They had a normal role, not unlike the role of religious people in our own country. Most Iranian families had relatives who were clerics. It wasn't the first profession. It was not the last, but religion was always seen as a matter of personal faith that should be removed from political society, let's put it that way. The mullahs were always thought to have at least some learning, even in the villages. They were until recently the teachers of the children, particularly in the villages. They taught in the maktabs (schools) up to the third grade. That's why so many Iranian in the remotest places could read and write, because of the mullahs who lived there. Of the 50,000 villages I'd say at least 2/3 had mullahs in 1960.

Q: We didn't see them as a potential threat for us or anything like that?

MILLER: Some did, yes. I had a colleague who was fascinated by the mullahs. He made following mullah activity his main work. That was what he was really interested in. He came to this interest from the time of the assassination of Prime Minister Razmara by the Fedayeen in the 1950s, the mullahs who were violent, who were the assassins, who were the vengeful "jihadists" as we would now call them, were the most irrational and potentially dangerous. In the time I was in Iran I, met some of the Fedayeen remnants.

Q: What does Fedayeen mean?

MILLER: It means "warriors of God."

Q: "Warriors of God," is that it?

MILLER: Yes, or Fedayeen. They believe themselves to be the soldiers of the faith. They were of course a minority among the clergy but they were fanatically convinced of their convictions. Extremism of the kind used by Fedayeen was always a fringe element of the religious community and a very small part of the religious structure. I made a point of meeting every cleric that I could simply because they were an essential part of society and I was interested in them. Many of the religious leaders became friends. I would see them in normal circumstances, and it was perfectly acceptable for us to be friends.

Q: If I recall, going back to my Foreign Service history, I think we lost at least one consular officer in Iran, by a mob, who made the wrong kind of gesturnot necessarily a rude gesture, but some how got a mob incited.

MILLER: Yes, we had one officer who was murdered by a mob. The Russian emissary was torn apart by a mob in the early 19th century because he was rumored to have defiled a sacred place. It was long before the Bolsheviks. If Russians had listened to their Oriental secretaries they wouldn't have gotten into such a dangerous fatal situation.

Q: Keep from making the wrong kind of gestures at the wrong time.

MILLER: Most clerics were and are perfectly normal people. In Isfahan, which has hundreds of mosques, I, because of my interest in Iranian architecture, went to every one. I photographed them all and described them.

Q: You didn't have any problem going in or anything like that, because

MILLER: No, I was always welcome in the mosques and holy shrines, but I was always very careful to have a clerical host. This was made clear to me by my Persian mentors that I was coming into another man's house. I was told, "He will welcome you as your guest, but he has to welcome you." Visits to the holy places were easily arranged.

Q: I think back to my time slightly before this, '58 to '60, in eastern province of Saudi Arabia where the Wahabis, you just steered clear of the religious side because these were not friendly people.

MILLER: Field trips were also a way of getting to know and work with other parts of our government. I would takl took a number of trips with spooks.

Q: You might explain, for the non-initiate, what spook is.

MILLER: An employee of CIA, usually a case officer. A characteristic of embassies and consulates symptomatic of the structure of our foreign affairs in the 60's, was the extensive CIA case officer presence within embassies and diplomatic establishments. It wathis is a reflective, after the fact thought that such a presence was a mistake, because most of the case officers were doing things that political officers of the Foreign Service should normally dthat is, make contacts and friends. The CIA approach was to buy informants and information from among their contacts, which I thought was a huge unnecessary mistake since Iran was an open society. If information was needed, it was only necessary to ask.

Q: It's ephemeral, anyway.

MILLER: Very ephemeral. It's only there as long you are tolerated. There were a number of occasions where I had friends who were being pursued by case officers in order to put them on the payroll of the case officer. It was proprietary distinction made which I thought was unseemly and unnecessary.

Q: Well, I would imagine that at a certain point just to get a feel for this, within a bureaucracy, that if you took a case officer with you, you'd be reluctant to bring them up against one of your friends or a good contact because you're afraithey could poison the well.

MILLER: As it happened, no. That was certainly always a possibility, but the Iranians knew who the spooks were. There was never any question in their mind and they saw the United States government as a wholwhether you were a diplomat or a spook, it was the United States. It was only after that was understood that they made a distinction about individuals as friends or assets, and these distinctions about individual Americans were, in the end, the most important.

Q: What about thwe're showing an awful lot of concern, I gather, about the Tudeh Party, being the Iranian Communist Party. How about your time in Isfahan? Did this ?

MILLER: I knew all the Tudeh leaders that weren't in prison. The shah and SAVAK, the secret police, trained by CIA and the Israelis, and connected to other security organizations, had the Communist movemenmovements, which were several, more or less under control. Yet, there were respected politicians who were either present Tudeh, or lapsed Tudeh. In Iran there was debate at the highest intellectual levels on the burning questions of social justice. They were asking, "What's the best way to organize our society?" Even in Isfahan there was extensive intellectual discussion about the strands or variants of communism. There were the Chinese strands, Indian strands, there was the Soviet version, and then there was an indigenous Iranian strand that came out of Gilan, near the Caspian, where there was an uprising of Communists. The Communists tended to be in the factories there, the new spinning mills and mechanical fabrication places and where there were modern assembly lines. The new factories had networks that could be organized in trade union kinds of social-political structures. Factory based communist cells were most evident in Isfahan where there were thirty-two spinning factories.

The cell structure of militant subversives was the main target of the secret police. The trade unions were difficult to deal with because they were transparent and acceptable to the public. Trade unions were expressing their sense of social value legitimately. For the worker, Trade Unions were a form of organization that brought them better wages and working conditions. I knew the trade union leaders, many of whom were of tribal origin. They were tribal leaders who could no longer lead tribes so they were leading unions. They were people who understood the social problems of the workers many of whom were tribesmen. This was so particularly with oil workers who were recruited from the tribal regions where the oil fields were. As part of the intellectual firmament about the organization of society, and among the intellectuals, the socialist approach had a certain appeal for the Iranian intellectuals. The main issue about the needed organizations of Iranian society was democracy versus the thousands of years of royal rule by military force. How to bring democracy to Iran was the core of the debate. How could the change to democracy be done? Mossadeq, of course, was the hero, because he came out of traditional society, who was definitely a bona fide nationalist who highly valued Iranian language, culture, and had great respect for traditional Iranian social life, and religions. He had championed a view of society in which the lowest in society had a place, and was not simply a possession owned by someone else.

Mossadeq and his followers expressed the democratic beliefs in formal terms, in their party organizations that later came into play, as the National Front. They also expressed their feelings in poetry, which was the most effective means for Iranians of communication. It was amazing to me, a society in which poetry was the most important way you could express political views as well as emotions.

Q: Of course in a way, not quitthe Russians have some of this.

MILLER: The Russian Intelligentsia. Not to the extent of the Persians. As much as I loved the intellectual life I led in Moscow and in Ukraine, they are primitive in some ways in comparison to the Iranians, certainly if you value the subtly of their mind. The Iranian intellectuals do not have the ferocity of mind which the Russians have in larger measure than anyone else, but for precision and subtlety of thought, the Persians surpass all others.

Q: Were you seeing anything that, I think, I suspect, became a major phenomenon later, but the time you were in Isfahan, of the Iranian students who went to the United States and came back?

MILLER: Oh yes, there were many. The first Iranian I met, I think I mentioned earlier, was one of these. Hossein Mahdavy and I met at Oxford. We were together for five years in Iran. Then we met again at Harvard, not long later in graduate school. Many of the Iranians of my generation who were well educated were like Hossein. My closest friends in Iran were people of similar background to that of Hossein.

Q: How did they fit in in the early 60's?

MILLER: It was normal, not unusual. The western educated intellectuals fit in to the Iran of the 1960they were the heart. Even the shah's entourage was the same. The "1,000 Families" sent all of their talented children to universities in the West. The Bazaari class and their extended families and the leading religious people sent their children to the West. Everyone who was affluent and able went abroad. It was normal, it was like the great tour of Europe that the English took in the 18th and 19th century. It was a finishing of their education. It enabled them to understand how they fit into world civilization.

Q: Well, then maybe we should move on to the time you went to Tehran. You were in Tehran from when to when?

MILLER: 1962 until '65.

Q: When you went up to Tehran, what job did you have?

MILLER: Isfahan was my first post in the service. Then I was assigned to go back to Greek training in Washington. However, the ambassador in Tehran, Julius Holmes, asked that I stay to be his assistant. So I went up as a political officer and as ambassador's aide.

Q: Was Julius Holmes there the entire time you were there?

MILLER: No, Wailes was there when I first arrived in 1959.

Q: Would Julius Holmes, who is one of the names that one thinks of being one of the major figures in that great timhow did you find him? What was his method of operation as a person?

MILLER: This is a very typical foreign service staff. One of the people in my class, A-100, was Allen Holmes. Julius Holmes was his father. I met Julius Holmes on a number of occasions when we were in A-100 course. JuliuAmbassador Holmes and his wife Henrietta had us to dinner a number of times to their home in Washington. Allen and I were good friends and still are. Ambassador Holmes had come to Isfahan a number of times and I had helped him with his official trips. He had read my dispatches and liked them. He thought I could be useful. I was very happy to stay. Suzanne and I were very delighted to stay. We were given huge latitude by Ambassador Holmes. My beat, so to speak, was the opposition, which meant my friends, really. I was allowed to continue to travel, even in my new post in Tehran, to keep that pattern up, and given all kinds of freedoms. For example, I found, a house near the embassy that I was allowed to rent. It was a lovely house with a big compound two blocks from the embassy right in the middle of Tehran. This 19th century compound had a water storage pool called a hozh, which we made into a swimming pool. It also had a lovely orchard which included persimmon trees with abundant delicious fruit that ripened at Halloween. We used to carve the persimmons into pumpkin faces, jack-o'-lanterns.

Q: How did your wife find the difference between Isfahan and Tehran?

MILLER: We just continued our life that we had had there. Our first child was born in Isfahan, Will was born in the Christian Mission hospital there. She had many, many friends who were also the wives of my friends. She was never isolated in the sense of being a foreigner. She had no difficulty taking Will in a carriage down the Chaharbagh. The Iranian women would look in and say normal things. She fitted in very well. In fact, we have a Persian friend from those days visiting with us now.

Q: Did you find working at an embassy, that the attitude or something was different than working at a consulate?

MILLER: The scale of things in the embassy was much bigger. I had a wonderful political counselor, a fellow named Harry Schwartz, who was a great help to me, a good friend and mentor. Did you know him?

Q: No

MILLER: Harry Schwartz was a Princeton graduate. He married a Spanish woman of great distinction, a lovely woman with lovely with red hair, who was from Jerez. Her name was Maria Gonzales of the Gonzales sherry family. He was a saturnine, grouchy, wonderful person who had very high standards of reporting. He detested the DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission), they were constantly in battle.

Q: Who was the DCM?

MILLER: Stuart W. Rockwell. They were very different in personality.

Q: Stuart Rockwell was very urbane. He's a Europeanist, I would say.

MILLER: Yes, and a little aloof, but very able.

Q: That's what I mean when I say Europeanist.

MILLER: The political section, consisted of officermost of whom were Persian language officers. They were interested in the country. Everyone had a lot of work to do. There was a huge AID mission, a huge MAAG (Military Assistance Advisory Group), there was an enormous CIA station with a spectacularly flamboyant station chief, Gratian Yatsevich, who wore a monocle and carried a sword cane. He was the closest most congenial American friend of the shah. He would often be invited to be with the shah, much to Julius Holmes's anger. Julius Holmes said, "Look, I'm number one in this place." The shah had to resort to subterfuge to meet with Yatsevich.

Q: There were several countries that had the reputation in the Foreign Service of being CIA counties. Iran was one. South Korean was another.

MILLER: But Holmes being the consummate bureaucratic warrior that he was, he knew this game. He made it very clear to Yatsevich that he was in charge, that he had the authority, and that if Yatsevich crossed the line that had been drawn by Holmes, he was out. Holmes could deliver on his word. Holmes was a real pro of diplomatic life. He had had so many professional experiences that were appropriate, and relevant to the problems we faced in Iran and he had always wanted to go to Iran as ambassador. His appointment had been delayed in this because of the war. After the war there were inquiries in Congress about his shipping interests in the post-war period. As one of his assignments, he had been chief of protocol, among other things, so everything was in the old style and was done right. As ambassador's aide I was tutored not only by him but by Mrs. Holmes, who made sure I understood how to set a table, that I put the right people next to each other, and to be sure guests were well cared for. It didn't hurt to have to do these things. And, of course, there were many funny encounters along the way.

Holmes liked to travel, but more comfortably than I was used to. He had a DC-3. So he would fly all over the country. His children visited him, all of whom were interesting. Allen came, and his sister, Elsie, who was an archeologist. These trips were their first to Iran, and since we were all good friends we traveled throughout Iran together. So it was a very happy situation. The residence was still being furnished and landscaped. They allowed me to help them with getting trees planted. We planted several thousand trees in the compound. We got them out from the Ministry of Agriculture, through the aid program. As it turned out these trees had grown to such a height and density of cover that they would have prevented helicopters from coming in if that was attempted after the seizure of the embassy and the taking of hostages in 1979.

Q: Wasn't therthe Iranians coming from an arid based country, trees are very important in the culture.

MILLER: Sacred! If a mayor planted trees, he was said to be a good mayor.

Q: Isn't there a Persian proverb, "Your life is successful if you have a son, plant a tree and write a book."

MILLER: If there wasn't such a proverb they would have created it. It was certainly apt. They did plant all the time. The water courses were all lined with trees and gave pleasure and beauty in a very arid landscape.

Q: Did you sense yourself, or within the embassy, any disquiet about the huge American presence there, or the aid, the military, the CIA and all this?

MILLER: Yes, there certainly was unease about that. It also created a great sense of generosity on our side, we were at the height of our generosity, that is, the amounts of aid and the benign character of it, I would say, even though it was complicated by the support of the suppressive organizations like the secret police, and the support of the shah without temperance, and the bringing Earl Warren to speak on the rule of law to a group of judges and lawyers that was doing the opposite.

Q: Earl Warren being at that time ?

MILLER: The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. You can imagine the resonance of that kind of ...

Q: Was is Sharia law or was it shah law in Iran?

MILLER: In Iran, it was shah's law. The Iranian legal system was a mixture of Zoroastrian principles with Islamic and European additions. At that time, 1962, the entire legal system under Reza Shah had been codified into a European structure of law, although the code incorporated family law principles from the Sharia. There were exceptions such as the movement in the direction of equal rights for women. It was an evolving legal system, and the Justice Ministry, judges were going on exchanges in Europe and the United States, and bringing back ideas that were changing the nature of Iranian justice. Many of the law makers, for example, from the National Front were educated in the West, and helped pass laws that were more democratic in character. So the legal system was alive, formally a mixture of Zoroastrian, Islamic and Western law, and evolving, but it was clearly shah-dominated and not a rule of law.

Q: What about, say in foreign policl know from the Saudi perspective when I was in Bahrain we covered the crucial state as well as all the Gulf states except Kuwait. There was real concern about the shawell, the Persians are moving in. They didn't like the name Persian they much preferred it to be called Arabian Gulf. Was this an expansionisfrom the Tehran point of view how did we do?

MILLER: The only issues that were faintly expansionisof course the Iranians didn't regard them as expansionist, really, but they had no doubt about who owned the disputed islands lesser tombs and larger tombs, which are only dots in the Gulf. They basically scoffed the notion that the Persian Gulf could be referred to the Arabian Gulf.

Q: In Iran, in Bahrain, there was a feeling that this is very typically Middle Eastern, that there was a plot to infiltrate all sorts of Iranian workers so that eventually they would take over the island of Bahrain.

MILLER: Well, certainly the oil workers throughout the Gulf were and are heavily populated by Iranians. They knew how to do it, but no, there certainly there wasn't a plot that I was aware of. It was just normal historical pressures of peoples in an area where boundaries come together.

Q: As you were part of the political section, was there any tension between the political section and the CIA station there on reporting, and all that?

MILLER: Yes, constantly. This was a normal feature of the time in all significant embassies. CIA had large stations, many of their officers were buried in the political sections, and the distinction between assets and contacts wawhen it became an issue, would be decided by the ambassador. I had many contacts that they wanted to have as assets, and there were occasions when I went to Julius Holmes and said, "You know, this absolutely crazy. They don't need to do this." He always supported me.

Q: Wasn't there, just in the bureaucratic sensthere was pressure on the CIA officers to sign up as many assets, whether it made any real sense or not. I mean, they wanted to show that they were ?

MILLER: No, I don't think so, not in Iran, because, on the whole, they were very good. The CIA had superb people that I have kept in touch with over the years from that time, who I still see now, such as George Cave.

Q: I just know the name.

MILLER: He was their number one Iranian expert, and probably still is, even in retirement. He was very sensible, spoke excellent Persian and in fact was a Muslim. Yatsevich did the police jobs himself. He worked with the shah to the extent Julius Holmes permitted it, and worked closely with the chief of the secret police, Timur Bakhtiar, later Pakrahvan. Yatsevich had a circle of friends at the shah's court. He was the designated person to do that. He liked being at court anyway.

In reflection, I look on Julius Holmes as a super-ambassador, almost a viceroy. In this circumstance, and time he had that kind of power and influence, because both Washington, and the shah understood that, was a viable style and Kennedy made clear that Holmes had his personal support. Holmes knew Johnson, too, pretty well and the shah and his entourage understood that reality.

Q: Were there any, while you were there, any visits, by president, the vice president, or?

MILLER: Kennedy didn't come. Of course, he died in '63. No, he didn't come, but Bobby did, and Justice Douglas, and a lot of the people from the NSBill Polk, I don't know if you know that name.

Q: Well, I know the name, but ?

MILLER: Bob Komer, with DOD (Department of Defense). So the key players in Washington came frequently, and Johnson came, and I was one of the control officers for Johnson's visit.

Q: First, how did Bobby Kennedy visit and then we'll talk about the Johnson visit.

MILLER: Well, he wanted to go to visit the tribes. He went to the tribes. He had a message from the shah, but his interest was Justice Douglas-driven. Douglas had great admiration for the Bakhtiari when he visited. Bobby Kennedy was a hero to many Iranian democratic nationalistparticularly whose who studied in America.

Q: How about Johnson, when he came?

MILLER: Johnson was spectacular. He came when he was vice president, after visiting Pakistan where he was given a white camel, something he mentioned several times with some irony, but he was definitely liked. He came with an entouragLady Bird, Lynda Bird, a masseur Liz Carpenter and Bess Heel. It was a big visit, a full plane load.

Anyway, he arrivel remember that Harry Schwarz went to Istanbul to accompany Johnson and his party. He didn't want any mistakes made. Every minute was scripted, but Johnson did violence to any script. Johnson didn't like the air conditioning in the palace so new air conditioners were put into the marble palace where he was staying, and holes were drilled into ancient walls. He wanted to go out and see the night life. His masseur had to be closer, in a nearby room to work on him, I guess. Johnson was rather grumpy at first.

And then he said, "Let's go outside of the city. I want to see the country." So we tumbled into a convoy owe were running along the desert at high speed and then Johnson sees an excavation, one of a series of donut shaped holes in the desert. He asked, "What are they?"

I tell him, "These are the qanats, where the ancient water system flows underground, sometimes 20 to 30 miles from the mountains. They first dig down and clear a way a sloping channel through the earth. The channel is lined with clay cylinders, baked clay cylinders, that reinforced the long, hand-dug tunnels that are about the height of a man. This is an ancient agricultural practice." He was very interested in this. It seemed to him like West Texas, this arid desert countrysidthis reminded him of his home. He said, "Let's get out and see this." So we get out of the cars and come up to a QanatMoqani, a worker cranking a windlass coming up with a bucket full of loose earth and rocks from fifty feel below.

Johnson said, "Is someone down there?" I said, "Yes there is someone digging a water channel down there fifty feel below." "Tell him the vice president of the United States brings his greetings." "Brings his greetings!" I say, "He maybe is a little intimidated by this awesome presence." The peasant at the windlass blinks somewhat incomprehensively and then sends down the message from the vice president. Silence. "Tell him again!" the vice president said. Still more silence, then after a long pause a distant voice said uncertainly, "Long live the shah!" Johnson laughed heartily at the answer as we all did.

So he was that way. Impulsive, forceful, demanding. He was very interested in Iran and in an intelligent way. He asked about Iran's politics and whether the shah was loved by the people, did he have the people's supporthe key political questions. Could the shah control the opposition?

Q: When these questions came, how did you talk about the opposition at that time?

MILLER: Well, I was clear in expressing my views to Johnson about the political situation. I thought the shah was losing his absolute control. I thought he had lost his chance for legitimache never had gained legitimacy after '53. He was ruling by force, not by popular will. I thought that the best people in the country were the Nationalist Democrats, the followers of Mossadeq, and that there was no way that the shah could sustain his absolutism. That was my view. That was an argument in Washington as well at the time, and the policy assumption was that the shah was the linchpin of stability. He said, "How can this be, in the face of popular opposition and no reliable popular support?" Johnson took it all in, asking intelligent questions at every point.

The Shah had the levers of power, and therefore we should deal with him our Washington policy makers said. The economic transformation of Iran, which the plan organization was producing and there was no doubt Iran was being transformed. Iran's economy was growing at a fantastic rate of growth and infrastructure was being put in place, paid for by the oil revenues. The economy was progressing mightily. The main policy view was that economic transformation would lead eventually to political transformation.

Q: This was the take-off period?

MILLER: Yes, the take-off period, written about by Johnson's NSC advisor, former MIT professor, Walt Rostow. Iran had reached the stage of take off already, and in due course it would evolve, Rostow and others said. The contrary theorwell, there were two opposing theories. One was, because of a ruling military, it will always be a royal-military kingdom as it had been for thousands of years. The second opposing view was the theory that I held, which was that the shah would be removed if he didn't evolve with the democrats. They were the future.

I told Johnson that. I gave him the spectrum, and when he asked where I stood, I said I thought that we should support the democrats.

Q: It shows an aspect of Johnson that often gets misplaced. He gets forgotten, and that ione talks about his demands on all these trips, but here is a man that is asking the right questions, wasn't he?

MILLER: Yes, but one thing about him that I know, that I haven't seen later, over the years, that I know from his Senate colleagues, and friends of many years who worked for Johnson, was that it was hard to be certain that he'd be in a listening mode. One friend who worked for Johnson said to me, he would listen to you so that he would be able to dominate you, and you will do what he says. Johnson already knows. He doesn't need to hear anything else." In this case, I think Johnson was listening. I suppose the reason was that his key staff had told him that I was worth listening to, that I knew more than a little about Iran.

Q: During the time you were there in '63 to?

MILLER: You mean in Tehran? '62 to '65.

Q: Were there any major developments?

MILLER: Oh yes, many.

Q: Okay, well let's talk about some.

MILLER: The most important evenno, there were two importaneven pivotal -events. Ali Amini was the Prime Minister. He was a clever, extremely able experienced politician of Qajar origins.

Q: Qajar being?

MILLER: The previous dynasty that ruled Iran from the late 18th century until the takeover by Reza Shah in 1921. Amini was very courtly and popular. He had been an ambassador in the United States, had dealt with the oil nationalization issues, was extremely bright, very funny, appealing to many, but he had been in so many battles that he was distrusted by everyone to some degree. But he was astute and thought that the young nationalists were the future, that we should move in that direction. The shah, of course, distrusted them and him. The shah made that clear to Julius Holmes, and the American government, that this issue was an indication of whether the U.S. supported the shah or Amini. The Shah told Ambassador Holmes that Amini had to go.

The outcome of the control issue turned on a loan. This loan referred to 20 million dollars to finance a roll over of debt to the IMF, for a loan to handle a difficult time in a transition budgetary process. We didn't support Amini's request for a rollover loan, so he fell. From that point on, the shah was absolute ruler. He would from that point on dictate all matters in the Parliament, the budget. He ran the government, he chose the ministers, he prescribed the elections, he made the election lists. Iran became an absolute monarchy, and abandoned any thoughts of evolution towards a constitutional monarchy, and it was a conscious decision on our government's part. It was a battle that the policy makers in NSC and Defense Department lost, and of course the people that held my point of view lost in Tehran. That was one issue. The other was?

Q: Before we leave that, those supporting the refusal of the loan and the American government, where were they coming from? What was the feel?

MILLER: Well, they were known as "Shahparast". It was a term that was used for "shah-lovers." The issue of support for the shah was partially resolved, by extremely successful Iranian diplomacy, that is, they had ambassadors in Washington who threw the biggest, elegant, lavish parties. They were civilized, charming and able, well-connected in Washington circles and worked the newspapers, the CIA, and the lobbyists very effectively. They worked hard and well. The shah, himself and his wife Farah was very attractive too, many at that time. In Washington they did the job of persuasion very well.

The policy approached that were future oriented were viewed as too risky, too speculative, and I suppose, the philosophy of a bird-in-the-hand is better than two in the bush governed. The Shah seemed to have all of the trappings of power. He commanded a modern military, he was buying new equipment, he would develop the military using our technical assistance and the secret police, and he had the army so he ?

Q: Coming from the world's major exponent of democracy, was there any sort of misgiving about supporting an absolute monarch?

MILLER: That was the debate, of course, at the time. For me, it was a major disappointment. It seemed to me that our policy was not only a loser for the long term, and certainly violated our own principles, and certainly violated the view of George Kennan, that our strongest diplomatic weapon is to live as democrats abroad, as we do at home, that we shouldn't have a schizophrenia of purpose abroad. Iran's policy was a supreme example of that mistake. It was a bitter experience for me to see this decision made. I was very disappointed in a number of my colleagues who understood, but didn't want to take the risk by speaking out. Holmes, I think, was one of them, really. He talked to me a number of times about this when I brought it up with him. He said to me, "I don't see the Shah losing now. Not in my time."

Q: He was right.

MILLER: However, he could have been right the other way, as well, depending on the decision. To Holmes credit, he always heard me out and always insisted that my views be known and reported. Ambassador Holmes supported me when I got into direct difficulties with the shah. I saw the Shah, the queen and chief courtiers on many occasions. I had a lot of contacts and friends in the court including some of the sons of the Shah's sister. We often played tennis together. One of them was a particularly odious type, for example, he used to sell antiquities from the recent archaeological finds on the market, rather than putting them into museums, a practice many Iranian friends found offensive.

It came to the shah's attention that I was spending a lot of time with his opponents. So he told Julius Holmes this, and Julius Holmes said, "Don't worry. We need to know what is happening with the people who oppose you. It's good that we know and, in fact, we will, of course, tell you what I understand was happening. Don't worry. He's a young officer. He'll be all right."

Q: You mentioned, you say there were two major things that happened.

MILLER: The other major event was Khomeini, the emergence of Khomeini.

Q: Let me stop.

[END SIDE]

MILLER: There were discussions at that time about reforms, some of which were put into the five points of the White Revolutioland reform, emancipation, more rights for women, and a number of other reforms that all were actually from the program of the opposition National Front. In Qom, religious people were upset about land reform, about immodesty of women, and changes in the law of inheritance. Land reform affected the Waqf, the giving of bequests of land to the religious establishments. The reforms were contrary to the normal laws of inheritance. The National Front was opposed to land reform because they believed that land distribution should be based on cadastral surveys; on first determining what were viable pieces of land, and how could you create land holdings large enough for individuals to survive under the new circumstances. That was the Mossadeq point of view.

In Qom a number of the clerics made speeches against one recent law that had been forced through the majlis by the shah, which the United States wanted, which was the so-called Status of Forces Agreement. The nationalists generally opposed this law because it was understood to be a "concession", an abridgement of Iranian sovereignty, and the religious people took this sensitive nationalist issue up as a cause along with the others. The shah, after hearing that sermons had been given in the mosques and Qom, sent down paratroopers, and killed, brutally, a number of the mullahs in the mosques, in one instance bashing their brains out against the walls of the mosques. The paratrooper attack was an atrocity. So a jihad (holy war) was declared. There was a march from Qom of the religious, dressed in white shrouds. They really were profoundly affected on a deeply felt jihad. No one expected this. The nationalists had no idea that this issue would create such a huge popular uprising. Tens of thousands, came from Qom, hundreds of thousands gathered when they came into Tehran, and in the end many hundreds of thousands rioted.

The shah sent the troops into battle, in American tanks of course, and killed about six thousand people, six thousand on their approach to Tehran and then the battle in Tehran itself. I was in the midst of some of these battles, observing, and I was almost killed in one case, around the university.

Q: What happened?

MILLER: Well, the Shah's troops were machine-gunning at the people in the streets.

Q: Was there much opposition?

MILLER: Yes, everyone.

Q: Well, I mean opposition in that these were armed people shooting at soldiers or was this pretty much ?

MILLER: No, they were unarmed. They had no weapons. They were being shot down. They were just pressing forward in their frenzied lunatic way. Bullets were firing everywhere, and the mob came very close to where I was standing and there were bullets firing very close to me. So Khomeini emerges for the first time. I reported this, at this time, about this unknown clerical leader. Khomeini was taken prisoner and sentenced into exile. The importance of the uprising was that in the absence of anything else, that is the nationalist opposition, the religious people had this force to bring the populace into the streets. This astounded the nationalists, astounded the shah. We were somewhat shocked by it at first and then it slipped out of our political consciousness as other events took precedence, as they exiled people and cleaned out, they thought, the religious opposition. I can remember at the time, my good friend Hussein Mahdavy telling me that this was a new force, that we all have to take account of it.

Q: What aboul realize this wasn't your beat, but you must have been talking to other people about the army. It's not that easy to get an army to shoot defenseless people, particularly religious people. Was the army a different breed of calf thawas it ?

MILLER: I think the uprising was so sudden and so violent that it seemed to the military that criminal elements were in the street. I know that the scale of the disorder was terrifying. It was premature to connect the uprising with solely the religious leaders of the country. There were divided views about everything, and religious leaders were way down on the list of significant opposition to the Shah. Religious leaders were not at the top of the agenda; they were near the last. The clergy was the last structural organization in the political system. There were many viable secular structures in between. First were the democratic nationalists than there were Communists, after the Communists the religious structures were of least importance, at that time, 1963.

Q: And of course, putting the mob into Tehran really was going right at the jungle of the Bazaari ?

MILLER: Yes, loyalties.

Q: They were going to rip up the shops.

MILLER: No, no. The mob wasn't going to destroy the bazaar; after all many were from the bazaar. They were after the shah. The bazaars, they would never touch them, because that's where they come from. The bazaar and the religious people were and are almost an identity.

Q: When you were talking to thhow long were you there after this ?

MILLER: This event? '63? Two more years.

Q: Was this something that wathat came to dominate the thought of the opposition?

MILLER: They thought this was a phenomenon that they had never believed could happeit happened. They began to take account of it. They had religious people involved in their nationalist politics - they always had religious people among their ranks. This was religious extremism that arose as a result of an extremist action on the part of the shah. That was the new equation, that nationalist drew up at the time. At the time, the National Front couldn't do anything about it. They didn't take charge of it. They had to step aside. The uprising was understood as a signal that in the absence of institutions in-between, the religious structure would be there unless they too were destroyed. The shah's thinking was he could take care of the religious unrest. He would wipe them out. What stands in the way, is the growing international and internal power of human rights, which if applied, would limit the ability of the Shah to exterminate the group. The transparency of the society, the growth of a free press and more open comment, education, travel, the desire to have the respect of the West, a longing to be regarded as a positive world force in the circles of international power, particularly at the enthronement of the monarchy, the celebration of 3000 years of monarchy in Persepolis in 1974.

Q: Did that happen while you were there? When was that?

MILLER: No. That was afterwards.

Q: Did you find while you were therdid you find sort owere you up against the Washington establishment? With the government becoming the hand-maiden of the shah?

MILLER: Yes, that was at the core of the policy and the intellectual debate. On the desk, at the Middle East bureawere real policy pros, and they understood what was happening. Kay Bracken was the desk officer, John Bowling and John Stutesman were in the NEA Bureau as were David Newsome and Richard Parker. I'd say the issue of the shah versus democratic opposition was a permissible debate within the Department. In the Kennedy years, and into Johnson, the NSC was more important than State covering Iran, but not elsewhere, because of the quality of the Arabists and their domination of the policy debate. Iran policy was an issue in the White House. It was also an issue in Congress. Iran policy was a big issue in the lobbying community. The Iran lobbies had a very powerful impact in Washington. After the Israelis, I suppose, the Iranians at that time were the most active, and spent the most, and got the most out of it. Policy debates about Iran among the academics, was very lively. Certainly the opposition point of view was very strongly held in universities where the students were almost without exception part of the democratic nationalist opposition.

Q: And demonstrating from time to time.

MILLER: Repeatedly, as the end came near. The Iranian students were of course engaged in their own politics.

Q: Who were some of the dominant figures in this Iranian connection in the NSC?

MILLER: At that time?

Q: Yes.

MILLER: There was Walt Rostow and the superb Middle East scholar, Bill Polk, who were the most important, and Bob Komer in the Defense Department, called by his allies, a very brilliant bureaucrat but called by his enemies "the Hammer."

Q: Or, "the Blowtorch." Polk, is he still around, or is he ?

MILLER: Polk is in retirement in south of France at Mougins. He has a lovely house there. Suzanne and I have visited him there a number of times. He is still writing articles and books about the Middle East.

Q: About this time you ?

MILLER: There were other people, in the universities that were importanCuyler Young at Princeton. People like Herman Eilts, and Richard Parker. Nikki Keddie was very good on Iran.

Q: Did you get any feeling for NEA (Bureau for Near Eastern Affairs)? Were they, as so often happened, so enmeshed in the Israeli cause, one way or another that this wayou were sort of a sideline?

MILLER: No, at that point Iran was a major issue. It was also White House issue. Therefore, it was a major policy issue for the whole government. It was also a Hill issue, therefore it was a major policy issue of national importance. The shah, of course, had good relations at that point with Israel. The Israelis had an agricultural mission of sizable proportions. They were also giving technical assistance and training to the SAVAK secret police, on communications, techniques, and sharing intelligence on the Arabs, and on the Soviets. The Soviet factor was important at that time.

Q: Was the Soviet factor important in that it was always a concern that it might extend its influence, and so you had to ?

MILLER: There were several reasons. Yes, one was the possibility that the Soviets would extend its influence agaian influence that receded after the 1953 coup and the removal of, in our minds, of Communist political structures from Iran. The Soviet factor was the reason for the need for bases, listening posts for watching missile launches up along the northern boarder, particularly at sites close to Turkmenistan, on both sides of the Caspian, east and west and even south. These bases were very important to us from the point of view of watching Soviet missile activities.

The strategic missile, nuclear aspect of our Soviet policy was very important at that time. I should mention that. There was a bill passed in the Parliament in 1964 which forbade the placement of foreign missiles on Iranian soil which our government did not like. I remember going to see the shah with Julius Holmes on this question. It was a very sensitive discussion, but it was a practical matter. From a strategic point of view, we didn't need the emplacement of missiles in Iran, particularly after Cuba. The removal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey made very clear that we were now in the age of long range missiles, ICBMs, submarines, and bombers even though coverage of the Soviet Union from Iran could be done, with shorter range missiles. That was one aspect. The Soviet question was always a major concern for American policy. The shah used this American policy imperative very successfully to his advantage.

Q: What about the issue of corruption during the time you were there?

MILLER: That was always an issue. It was always an issue, but it was understood in Washington as a normal feature of governments in that part of the world and not treated with more than mild regret, as long as it didn't interfere with major U.S. business interests or government policy, which it didn't.

Q: Did you feel that the shah, particularly the shah's family and the court, was getting greedier and greedier?

MILLER: Yes, the family was. I did considerable reporting on that, and others in the embassy did as well. Corruption and greed and the odiousness of the royal family and the court were frequently reported subjects. Corruption didn't seem to matter as long as the shah supported us. I suppose by comparison to the other states in the region, Turkey, Iraq and the Gulf states, Iran did look like the most stable state in the region. It is still the most stable state in the region even if we are not friends at the present.

Q: Were there any opponents or proponents of the shah's regime in Congress that particularly stand out?

MILLER: Yes, one of the great proponents was Richard Helms. Helms was a very strong supporter of the shah and he influenced many key congressmen and senators about Iran.

Q: He was the head of CIA at that time.

MILLER: Helms, the head of CIA, was a school mate, actually, of the shah's in Switzerland as a boy, at Le Rosey. They went to the same school. They had grown up in a similar world and had a shared view of Europe. They shared the same anti-Soviet perspective and had some sense of solidarity that came from that shared understanding. The CIA welcomed the operational convenience that the shah offered. A lot of the influence Iran had in Congress came from that arrangement. Iran had a very positive image that was conveyed to them by the top CIA officials. Of course, Kim Roosevelt had carried out the coup which was then viewed as a great success of policy. Congress had many who believed in the utility of the covert actions of that time. Senators like Stuart Symington and John Stennis, and Richard Russell were great supporters of the shah.

Q: He was from Kentucky was it?

MILLER: No, Stuart Symington was from Missouri. He was a Truman democrat and was once head of Emerson Electric in St. Louis, and was the Secretary of the Air Force. Symington was one of the key people in Congress on defense and foreign policy matters. Senator Fulbright was an anomaly. He listened to the Iranian students and believed they were right. The majority in Congress, however, saw the shah as an ally in the Cold War. The Cold War was the test of loyalty to the United States. The Iranians had good relations with India and Pakistan, and relatively speaking, fell on the right side of the Cold War equation. Increasingly, as the Iranian students demonstrations had their presence felt, there was some change in attitude in Congress, the dominant view was determined by the Cold War equation. The nationalist aspirations and the democratic movements were secondary to that first concern, right up to the end, right up until the revolution, which took place in 1979, well before the period of perestroika between 1985 and 199the Gorbachev erand before the formal end of the Cold War.

Q: I'm looking at the time and this is probably a good place to stop. Should we move on to what happened when you left Iran? You left there in '65. Just to put at the end, where did you go?

MILLER: The first assignment that I had in Washington was in INR (Bureau of Intelligence and Research), to write a political dynamics paper on Iran. That was a six-month project. Then I was assigned to the Peace Corps. That was the time when the State Department was encouraging assignments for junior officers in other agencies. I was head of Middle East programs for the Peace Corps for six months or so. That was followed by assignment to the Secretary of State's staff as a line officer.

Q: Okay. We'll pick this up in '65. We'll talk about the INR and the Peace Corps and then go on.

MILLER: To Dean Rusk's staff.

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Q: Today is the 25th of November 2003. Bill did you go to INR first and then Peace Corps?

MILLER: No it was Peace Corps first.

Q: All right, well let's talk about the Peace Corps. What were you up to?

MILLER: Assignments were being made from the Department of State to other agencies, in order to give familiarity to junior Foreign Service officers to some other parts of the government that were involved in foreign affairs. The Peace Corps being a favorite of the Kennedy administration, it was very vigorous and had considerable funding and political support within the White House and in Congress. It was well funded, and as an idea for creative foreign policy, had great currencthat is, the idealistic youth of working with counterparts in countries less fortunate would build lasting bonds through mutual efforts of improving the lot of those countries.

When I was in Iran, the Peace Corps had put in place a very large program. It was a good one. It worked in the villages, on education, health and water supply. The Peace Corps had a very big group that worked on teaching in the villages. Literacy corps activity, by the Iranians and other village work by the Peace Corps made it possible to extend education to villages where it was not possible before. It should be noted that in almost all villages of Iran no matter how remote, there was a mullah. He would teach at the village schoocalled maktabfor three grades. They taught the Koran, the great Persian poets, and used whatever literary materials were available. The idea of village education was something that was built into the Iranian system. What the modern world brought, with the shah's so-called literacy corps and programs like the American Peace Corps, accompanying that, which were much smaller in number of course compared to the tens of thousands of teaching mullahs, was a new dimension. The literacy corps and the Peace Corps teachers extended and modernized, meaning secularized, what had been a traditional form of basic literacy that had a strong religious content. As I think about it now, the roots of religious life throughout the country really was reflected in the role of the mullah in the village. The mullah performed marriages. He taught. He buried the dead. The mullahs were a key part of the social structure of villages and cities that had existed for a very long time. I suppose if one did careful research you could go back before Islam and you would have found that Zoroastrian priests carried out these necessary social functions.

Q: Under the shah's regime, were they able to tap a resource to bring about further education of having young, educated Iranians going out to the people, sort of like Narodniki? I mean, of that type?

MILLER: Well, that was the way the literacy corps performed. That was characteristic of the most successful programs. The literacy corps was a program whereby young Iranian university graduates, and high school graduates, went out to the villages and taught. In other words, those who were going into education as a profession in the Ministry of Educatiothat was the sole employer of teachers, and a handful of very few private schoolthey went out into the villages as part of their training. Just as our doctors here under the medical student support programs the Congress has mandated, are given free education for medical training, then the doctors were obligated to serve for several years in public health. So the Iranian student teachers went out to the villages as secular, modernizing missionaries.

Most of the teachers were urban, from the big cities. They had never really experienced or seen real life in the villages. They became socialized when they saw, at first hand, realities of Iran. Many of the literacy corps became revolutionaries later. They saw the needs of the country first hand. It was part of the process of what we could call, Iran's democratization. The country was meeting itself on its own terms and seeing what its needs were and responding. The literacy corps, the medical corps, those infrastructure kinds of approaches that were in the so-called White Revolution but were also planned for in the Plan Organization objectives of the time of what was needed for Iran to become a modern state. One could see some of the roots of revolution, the revolution of '79, in the experience those people who went to the villages in the 60's.

Q: Back to your time. You were with the Peace Corps from when to when?

MILLER: It was after I came back so I would say it was six months really. 1965.

Q: Sixty-five. What were you doing?

MILLER: I was in charge of Middle East Programs in the Peace Corps down the street from here at the Wilson Center. What that job involved was being like a bureau chief in the State Department for the Peace Corps, handling the reporting in and out and visiting the programs in the field and seeing to the budgets and working on personnel assignments.

Q: What were our programs in the Middle East?

MILLER: They were varied, but they were largely in education. Teaching of English was the main program. It was very hard to train people to a level high enough so that they could teach in the language of the country, although there was a commendable emphasis on language training. The Peace Corps was very good for our youth, extremely important. In the case in Iran, they did have six months of Persian language training. Many Peace Corps volunteers later went into the State Department. There were, also, a group of doctors sent throughout the Middle East; there were architects sent to some places like Morocco. There were even small business programs. Jimmy Carter's mother, for example, was a retired business person and went out as a Peace Corps volunteer.

Generally, Peace Corps volunteers were working in the villages in some useful way, whether it was trying to deal with cleaning up polluted water, bringing needed medical supplies, or adequate toilets and basic sanitation. Most important, I'd say our best result from our Peace Corps experience was the knowledge that it brought, to young Americans, of the outside world. That was the greatest impact. It had as much impact on us, as the Peace Corps had on other nations.

Q: You did this for only about six months, and then what?

MILLER: Then I came back to State. The INR assignment was before the Peace Corps. Then I came back to State, and went to SS (Secretary of State) as a line officer for the Middle East and South Asia.

Q: Well, you were in INR for how long, then?

MILLER: It was a year.

Q: What were you dealing with in INR?

MILLER: Tom Hughes, who was then the head of INR, asked me to do a political, dynamic study of Iran. That was a form of art at that time, which, as the name implies, is an analysis of how politics works in Iran. Who's who? How do they behave? What are their views, what's their attitude to the United States, what are the long term prospects? The Political Dynamics paper was a useful summary of what Iranian politics was. Certainly the paper made use of what I knew, making use of what I was engaged in, for five years in Iran. This was a marvelous Tom Hughes invention.

The length of the paper was about 75 to 80 pages. The Political Dynamics paper followed a fairly sensible format. It wal've reread this document recently, was a useful comprehensive way of looking at politics in Iran. There was the day-to-day coverage of intelligence concerning Iran, the Middle East, and conferences, the interagency contacts that one has and in Washington. The Political Dynamics paper was a way for a junior officer coming into the Washington policymaking world, and INR, at that time, to do something useful. INR was a good place for a junior officer to be because of Hughes. Tom Hughes was very well wired to the White Houseven the Johnson White House, certainly with the Kennedy White HousINR product was used, valued, and there were very good people in INR at the time. One could expect phone calls from the White House. The NSC staff called frequently. The major people who were interested in foreign affairs would call about Iran. It was a place regarded at that time as a useful resource. I found it extremely good posting, and there were very few bureaucratic restrictions. INR put the highest value on intellectual rigor. INR product was used which is not always the case.

Q: How did you finINR, at that time, in your field, Iran, worked with the CIA? Did they have different views, the same views, or problems?

MILLER: I don't think there was very much difference between the interrelationships that one has now, in that period. The reason is that in the field in Iran itself, even in the consulate like Isfahan, when you have a spook there, and of course, a very large station in Tehran, you have to work together. We knew each other well. It was a carefully integrated disciplined embassy. This is partially due to Julius Holmes's discipline. Many of the CIA people I knew then I still see from time to time now. I value them very highly. One of the interesting things that I learned at that point was what they could do better than we could do as State diplomats, and what we could do that they couldn't.

Q: What were those?

MILLER: Well, they could buy people. They could place agents, recruit agents in the world that we would not frequent normally, that is, the underworld. They were dealing very often with traitors. They were dealing with criminals because they had information and were in position not only to know, but to do. Of course, the legacy of the overthrow of 1953, in the Iran case, was very strong, and they had a very close liaison with the local intelligence service, which diplomats probably would not have. I would say that where the difficulties arose was in the normal world of diplomacy. Officials, who should be working with the diplomats, were often curried by the spooks. They shouldn't have done that.

Q: There was pressure to get agents. Every scalp that you got you credit, I think.

MILLER: There is a very interesting case in point that comes to mind now. In Isfahan there were several leaders of the National Front, which was the democratic descendant of the Mossadeq National Front. Western educated, highly educated, under any standards, well-to-do, bourgeois democrats. Two of the leaders in Isfahan were good friends of ours. The reasons were our first two children were born in Iran. Our Iranian friends had children at the same time. We'd play tennis together. We liked each other, saw a lot of each other.

The National Front was a target of the agency. They wanted to know about it. The National Front avoided any Communist ties. I had a clash on this matter because these were my friends and the spooks were saying get out of the way. I said, "No, not at all. That's not your turf." That's one issue I took to Julius Holmes, and he sorted that one out. These kinds of problems arose on occasion in Tehran too. We had those kinds of disputes. It is very important, it seems to me, for Foreign Service people, even if you are junior and have no power or rank, to make it clear what you think the legitimate grounds are, and to understand what they are, to begin with. Then you can have a good working relationship with CIA on the basis of what people could do best.

In the interagency arrangements, at the highest levels, it is like many other things. If you are part of the group that goes to the same dinners and parties, it's useful in the long run. I happen to have known Richard Helms because he was a Williams man. I've known him since I was at Williams.

Q: What class was he?

MILLER: 1935.

Q: 15 years before my time.

MILLER: Yes, and because of that, he would invite us to dinners and dancing parties, for example, at the Chevy Chase Country Club and the Women's Sulgrave Club. He was part of the circle of Washington people often invited to the White House. The reason I mention this is that the social relationships, the friendships you make in the field, if they are also a part of what you do in Washington, give you greater depth, dimension and influence. INR, which is seen by many now as a dead end for the career, was certainly not regarded as that, perhaps because its OSS beginnings were still part of the aura of policy making in Washington. The first INR Directors had influence because they were part of the policy making cadres that carried on after World War II the analysts from INR, as a consequence were very influential, even the long-term civil servants, many of whom came directly to the State Department from OSS. The Soviet analysts and the Middle East experts, were highly valued. They really had a superb group of experienced, brilliant analysts, even though their filing systems were often of the shoebox variety.

Q: I can remember I was in INR, I think in '67, and I had the heart of Africa, and I had just taken it and there was a reported coup against Haile Selassie. I had to go down to the basement of the State Department and borrow a flashlight to look in a bunch of, literally, shoeboxes to find the papers.

MILLER: People like Hal Sonnenfeldt and Baraz were writing excellent analyses of the Soviet Union. There were some really astonishing intellects of the kind that reflect the closest parallels, in the outside world, to the world of Smiley and his colleagues in the great Le Carrï¿½ spy novels.

Q: A spy that came in from the Cold War ?

MILLER: Yes, and the woman in charge of shoebox memory that Smiley went to, saying "What do you know of Karla ...?"

Q: Were we seeinat that time you were looking at Iran, did you see this is well, 15 years before the overthrow of the shah, but did you see a stable, destabled, troubling situation there, when you were looking at this?

MILLER: No, I said there's a coming revolution, and I even titled some dispatches, "The Coming Revolution." An Iranian friend of mine, who I still am very close to, Hossein Mahdavy, who I had met at Oxford when I was a student, wrote an article for Foreign Affairs, which I helped get into Foreign Affairs, called "The Coming Revolution in Iran." He laid out the difficulties of democratic groups under the shah and the pressure that difficulty was creating in society, and laid out with remarkable accuracy what eventually happened.

My view, based on my direct experience in Iran was that the shah was imposed, that he was not popular, that the vast majority of Iranians wanted more openness, and a share of governance. The Shah would be removed if he didn't respond to the people.

Q: Did you run across in this as you werat your level, but right above you, was there an almost entrenched Iranian club that felt the shah would go on forever?

MILLER: Yes, there was. There was the shah's "linchpin of the stability group." That was the phrase that was used in Iran policy documents. Their argument was, this is a traditional monarchical society and had been for thousands of years. This is the way it has been and the majority of the Iranian people are used to it. The democratic idea is a western idea. It wouldn't work in Iran. Further, we have good relations with this shah. He does what we want. We put him there. He's our man.

That was the policy when I arrived. That was the policy through the Kennedy administration, through the Johnson administration, although it was contested all the way through in the White House, not in State, not in the CIA. Yes, in the Pentagon there were some individuals who pushed a reopening up such as Bob Komer.

[END TAPE]

Q: This is tape four, side one with Bill Miller.

MILLER: "The blowtorch", Bob Komer, who was very close to Lyndon Johnson, and of course was deeply involved in Vietnam policy, he and Bill Polk, in the White House, who was a good friend of the Kennedys, were raising questions of political stability constantly, based on the Iranian student demonstrations that were increasing in number and size even to the extent of picketing the White House and Congress. The issue was, can the shah withstand unpopularity? Were there alternatives to the shah? So the issues were raised. Komer and Polk, came out, I can vividly remember on one occasion, to Iran on a U.S. military aircraft and annoyed the hell out of Ambassador Holmes because they were very preemptory and imperial in their manners and demanded to see the Shah and all the key figures in the government. They were very short on courtesies.

So they went throughout Iran, saw everyone they could, and wrote a report saying that the shah was unpopular, and was holding on to an increasingly weakening power base. But in the end, despite this awareness of unpopularity, on all of the critical points, the decision was made to support the shah in the face of the opposition, even democratic opposition. The crucial point, that tipped the balance as I mentioned earlier, was a decision covering roll-over funding for Prime Minister Ali Amini, an IMF rescheduling of debt payment. But the real issue was support for the shah or Parliamentary governments. Yes, there was a dispute in Washington, but the majority view was that the shah's regime was well-financed, he had the military, and would prevail. The contrary view was that he didn't have the military, except at the top. The younger ones were trained in the United States, just like the students. They would take hold of different viewand we knew their views, because we knew them in the field.

Q: We're sort of jumping back and forth, but you went to the line of the Secretary owhen did you go there?

MILLER: It was immediately after the Peace Corpthat was in 1966.

Q: And you were doing that for how long?

MILLER: About a year or so.

Q: So sort of '66, '67. What sort of things were you doing there?

MILLER: The "Line" at that point was organized to give substantive and administrative support to the secretary. The Executive Secretary, at that time, was Ben Read, a fine man, very astute, very well connected to the White House. Read was a lawyer and had come to the State Department from the Hill. He was Senator Joe Clark's legislative assistant and like Senator Clark, was from Philadelphia.

The organization of the Executive Secretariat was fairly straightforward. It was organized into bureaus, a line officer for each bureau or two bureaus, as in my case. I had Middle East and Southeast Asia. There were several people working on Southeast Asia. Our duties were to read all of the incoming material in those areas, all of it, the complete coverage on a daily basis, all press, and all the outgoing cables. We had to edit the outgoing for the Secretary's signature. So anything that would go to the secretary or the undersecretary would go through SS for clearance. What "clearance" meant was vetting all written material.

Q: I would think that, given the time you were doing this, that you would have been swamped by the "era of reframing" thing. The '67 war came around at that time.

MILLER: Of course, yes, there were a lot of things going oVietnam, the '67 War, the extreme pressures from the Soviet Union on Europe. Then '68 comes along with the Prague uprising in Czechoslovakia. So yes, it was a heady time, very active. Dean Rusk, who was the Secretary of State, was a very vigorous, active secretary, with very decided views and great experience. His views on Vietnam, of course, were very doctrinaire, and, I would say, very contrary to the views of most of his associates, certainly to those of George Ball his deputy and I'd say the junior officers as a whole, even in the pertinent bureaus. But we were loyal to him, and he treated his staff very, very well. We all had great respect and admiration for Dean Rusk despite our belief that he was dead wrong on Vietnam.

Q: Did you find yourseldid you end up on trips at all?

MILLER: Yes, I went to Vietnam, and the Middle East, for a number of long trips with the secretary. My function was to give staff supporat the minimum, physically carrying the bags, at the maximum, writing the speeches that the secretary was giving at the various places we were visiting, and handling the same duties in an airplane or in a hotel or the headquarters that we were doing in the Department.

Q: How diyou were with your colleagues, and I realize that you were both loyal to the secretary and also, you didn't have much time for anything but to do your job, but what was, sort of, your feeling and the feeling of others when you had a chance to talk to each other about Vietnam at that time?

MILLER: We had a lot of time to talk, and to be exposed to it, because the working conditions of SS then, and I'm sure something like it now, was a poop deck on a man-o-war. Little stalls, crammed close to each other, a lot of noise, and constant pressure of work.

Q: Was the question of authority here at all?

MILLER: Yes. SS was a very lively cockpit of ideas, and we had the best information, available because we'd get the full materials and evidence prepared for the briefings for the secretary every night. Each night he would look at the reports of the bombing runs, of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, how many dead, how many bombs dropped, how many airplanes, etc. We would see all of this informatiothe same data going to the Secretary. We knew exactly what the secretary was getting, and had a hand in preparing the material he was using, so we knew the official reality. This document and reality, was reinforced by seeing the war on the ground during trips to Saigon and elsewhere, in Asia. We knew the views of our own highest officials like Ball and Bundy, and Hubert Humphrey and so many people; McNamara, of course, and the others who were going out to Vietnam repeatedly. So, we knew the reality, and the reality was far from what our leaders hoped it would be.

Q: Was there the equivalent to almost a dissent channel, or was there anything of that nature?

MILLER: Oh, yes. There was a lot of dissent channeled. There was easy and direct access to, in the case of Vietnam, to be able to talk to George Ball about Vietnam. I talked often to Ben Read about the contradictions between evidence and policy. I had good conversations with both Bill Bundy and Mac Bundy. There was an internal debate. There was no constraint about thinking or talking privately about Vietnam policy. There was, however, the expectation of support for those who were carrying out policy. I did so until it became, in my case, intolerable, and I left, but that was after I had gone from SS to another assignment. President Johnson created by Executive Order a coordinating committee under George Ball. Lyndon Johnson fully supported the SIG (Senior Interagency Group) idea that all foreign policy issues at the deputy secretary level to be cleared and coordinated by State. It was the last time the State Department was in charge of foreign policy.

Now, the case, of course, is that all the foreign policy and defense committees are chaired by the White House, and that's been the case since Kissinger, but under Dean Rusk and, particularly, George Ball, the under secretaries committee handled all the foreign policy except for those things that were being directly and personally addressed by President Johnson himself or by Secretary Dean Rusk.

Q: What were you doing with this committee?

MILLER: I was the staff. The executive secretary, Harry Schwartz, had been my political counselor in Tehran. I thought he was a terrific guy, a wonderful, curmudgeonly character, very smart. He had served in several White Houses as the State Department representative on the NSC, so he knew the NSC structure, all of the NSC lower had history. He was a highly sophisticated, very complicated, man married to a lovely Spanish woman from Jersey. Marishe had red hair, an English background. They were a nice familwe were very good friends. Harry Schwartz gave me free rein in Tehran, actually. He said, "Go for it, you more than anybody else, keep going." When the SIG was created, he asked me to come as his assistant, special assistant. That was the staff, Harry Schwartz and me.

Q: You were doing this from what, '67 to ?

MILLER: Sixty-seven, I worked flat out for about six months and then I resigned. Part of the reason for my resignation was that the SIG in the end failed, because the secretary didn't support it when asked to by George Ball.

Q: Was thDean Rusthe basic issue was Vietnam, wasn't it?

MILLER: Yes.

Q: And Dean Rusk was bound and determined to put everything into Vietnam.

MILLER: He ignored the rest, yes, basically.

Q: Did you find that the undersecretarwere you sort of there as the note-taker and all? Were they trying to take it at a different tack? George Ball was well-known for being in opposition, loyal opposition, but how about the others?

MILLER: This was the fundamental turf issue affecting all foreign policy. The turf battle that was fought over Vietnam affected all of the other aspects of foreign policy. This interagency grouit was called the SIG, (Senior Interdepartmental Group, S-I-G). The turf battle on all other foreign policy issues than Vietnam was allowed to go on without structural discipline. The Pentagon would handle everything it thought was their concern. Obviously, many issues were of interest to at least two or more departments or agencies. There was a constant battle going on on Vietnam, and the secretary was too busy to support Ball. Although the SIG was a fully empowered by Johnson, the burden of Vietnam prevented it from being a coordinating body. The SIG did not change the landscape.

I had been becoming increasingly despondent and pessimistic about the direction of Vietnam. In the last trip that I took to Vietnam, with the secretary, that included a number of people from outside of the department, including several senators, one of whom was Senator John Sherman Cooper ?

Q: The Kentucky senator.

MILLER: Yes. Senator Cooper asked me to consider joining his staff to work on Vietnam, and I thought about this and decided that, in all conscience, I couldn't go on within the State Department, being so close to Vietnam policy itself. Even though, I had no policy role, I thought that I really had to do what I could to help to bring the war to an end.

So I resigned, very regretfully, because I loved the Foreign Service, and I had a wonderful, wonderful career to that point, and I had every reason to believe my career would prosper. Although I could see that each rising appointment would have less and less adventure and direct experience of the kind I had in Iran and on the "line" in Sless tangibility, it would become more and more bureaucratic, and that the odds of having such hands on assignments as I had had would be small, just in the nature of things. I was very torn, but I decided that working on the Hill, with a fine person like Senator John Cooper, on bringing the Vietnam war to an end was what I should do. So I resigned and went to the Hill. The very first day at work in the Senate, May 15, 1967, I wrote a speech on the necessity of stopping the bombing of Vietnam, which was delivered that afternoon. It was a very satisfactory beginning.

Q: You were with Cooper, Senator Cooper, from '67 ?

MILLER: Yes, May 15th, 1967 tuntil he retired, in '72.

Q: Tell me a bit abouhe was involved in foreign affairs, also, in East Germany and albut what about ?

MILLER: He was the ambassador to India.

Q: Ambassador to India, yes, but what about John Sherman Cooper at that time. Where was he, what was his background? What party was he in?

MILLER: John Sherman Cooper was a Republican from Somerset, the county seat of Pulaski County, which is in southern central Kentucky. Cooper's family had been there since the frontier days. Cooper was a handsome, tall, courtly gentle soul who, in spite of being a Republican in a Democratic state, won handily because of his appealing charm and experience. He started as a student at Center College, where he was a great football player, in those days. He went from there to Yale as a football player. Then to Harvard Law School, and became a county judge. The position of county judges in those days in Kentucky was a first step to a political career.

Then World War II came, and he went into the army, even though he was overage, at 45. He was given the rank of captain and went to Germany and fought there until the end of the war. After the war Cooper was one of the governors, military governors for occupied Germany. Cooper worked closely with General Lucius Clay and James Conant in the immediate administration of Germany, after the war. He came back to Kentucky and was a prime candidate for election to office. Cooper was elected to the Senate in a by-election when Barkley left.

Q: Alben Barkley was the?

MILLER: He became the vice president for Truman, and so Cooper was the senator from that election. He was then defeated. Cooper was a close friend of Dean Acheson and Cooper then worked with Acheson at the UN and at NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). President Eisenhower then appointed Cooper ambassador to India. Cooper then ran for election again at the end of his term in India, where he served with great distinction, and was a great friend of Prime Minister Nehru.

Q: Nehru.

MILLER: Nehru, a great Prime Minister, the Indian that caused us so much trouble because their non-aligned position. Cooper also got along well with the Foreign Minister, Krishna Menon.

Q: Krishna Menon. Many of the Foreign Service consider him to be the black menace.

MILLER: Well, Cooper got along with him very well perhaps because Cooper's manner was such that his genuine interest in getting to know and understand difficult characters, like Menon and Nehru. Cooper was a big figure in the Senate from that time, although he was unusual in Democratic Kentucky as a Republican, and unusual as a Republican in the Senate, because he behaved more like a Democrat than a Republican.

Q: Also an internationalist.

MILLER: He was an internationalist and totally independent. No one could tell him what to do, claiming party discipline. If anyone attempted to, he would probably vote the other way or simply turn on his heel and walk away.

Q: How did you find the staff when you entered in '67?

MILLER: Of the Senate?

Q: Both of Coopeand then, was he on the Foreign Relations ?

MILLER: Yes, that was the whole point of my going to work as his foreign policy assistant, that he was on the Foreign Relations Committee and I was his staff person for foreign policy and defense. He was very interested in arms control as well.

The staff was wonderful. The Senator's staff director's name was Bailey Guard, a Kentuckian who handled agriculture and interior matters. Bailey Guard was a great friend and we remained good friends until he died a few years ago. He was a lovely human being. Cooper had a very happy staff. There were young students from Kentucky there as interns. Recent college graduates would come as secretaries for several years. They were bright and cheery and happy. He had a wonderful staff totally devoted to him. It was a very small office because Senator Cooper was very austere in his behavior. He had a fierce guardian secretary, Martha, who was extraordinarily protectiveven possessive. The great art was to get through her or around her, but that was easily done. In the end, as we knew each other better, trust between us developed and Martha and I became very good friendthe Senate was a very good place to work, staffs of the senators worked very closely with the staffs of their senate offices and their committees. The Senate was a wonderful place to work. Each senator was accorded full sovereignty and dignity and rights. The senators saw themselves as independent, but as equals as well. Senator's staffs were accorded the same rights, respect and dignity in due measure of course. All 100 senators had the access to all of the parts of the institution as did their staffs. Everything was open. There was no place except one in the Senate that I couldn't go with ease - no badges, no x-raying madness. There was only one place which was out of bounds, which was the "Baths", the Senate swimming pool. That was reserved for senators. If you were not a senator, you couldn't even approach it.

For me, the Senate was a great learning experience about my own country. I really saw America in all its variety. The people came fro all over the country, with their petitions, they came with their grievances, they came with their hopes, and every senate office was open to our people. Cooper, particularly, loved to see his constituents. I remember one occasion where a group of Catholic nuns came from LouisvillCooper was a Presbyteriahe said, "I love nuns. They're so pure," and he would take them into his office and take enormous pleasure in just listening to them and sort of beam. Of course, his schedule would go out the window with them. That was when I learned, that the most important skill for a democratic leader is to listen to your people, hear their concerns and don't worry about scheduling.

On substance: the substantive work of the Senate was organized around the legislative schedule put together by agreement of the leaders both Democratic and Republican. When I came to the Senate in 1967, the leaders were Mike Mansfield and Hugh Scott. Mansfield and Scott decided what would be taken up on the floor and what would be coming up, the bills. Cooper expected me to learn everything in my area of foreign policy and defense issues, and more, everything. I wrote speeches, I did the research, I prepared the hearings. I sat on the floor of the Senate when speeches I had written were given by Senator Cooper, sitting on an appropriately smaller chair next to Senator Cooper as he gave his speeches. It was like being in a special club. I spent as much time as possible on the floor of the Senate with my more knowledgeable colleagues. I was welcome in the cloak rooms of both parties. In time, I came to know all 100 senators and their staff. We were all very close. It was a way of life that was full and enriching at that stage, perhaps because the issues were so compelling and pervasive, not only Vietnam, which was really about the power of making of wathe question of who makes war? For many of us, that became the overriding conceptual and intellectual issue. At that time, what we called framework legislation was very much the most important legislative work to be done. We were contending with issues such as the efficacy of the Constitution's war-making provision. If it is not adequate or too vague, for present conditions, how do you write legislation that doesn't violate or abridge the constitution, but strengthens it? The Gulf of Tonkin issue, the whole problem of executive orders, of secret commands given by the executive were part of the agenda. Can the executive take the country to war without Congressional approval? All of these things were behind the legislative drive of the best of the senators. Cooper was one of them, so was Mansfield, and Fulbright, certainly, after his conversion, post-Gulf of Tonkin, when he realized he had been lied to. George Aiken, Phil Harthe Senate was a great panoply of very thoughtful, senators who saw each other as colleagues and even as brothers in a sense doing vitally important legislative tasks.

Framework legislation was the first priority, and the always numerous necessary day-to-day legislation was given its due place. There were other "framework" issues beyond Vietnam. One of the most important had to do with nuclear weapons, and this is where I really began my work on nuclear weaponry. The core issue then was, the ABM ?

Q: The anti-ballistic missiles debate?

MILLER: Yes. The complicated AMB-ICBoffensive weaponNPT debate arises in 1967, shortly after I come to the Senate. In 1967, a group of scientists who had built our nuclear weaponry at Los Alamos and at other laboratories, in the early days under Robert Oppenheimer, some of whom were presidential science advisors, were also the leading physicists teaching at our major universities and laboratories. They believed that the ABM if deployed would cause the escalation into a dangerous, uncontrollable arms race. That was the danger they worried about. This group of nuclear physicists were concerned that a technological plateau had been reached on both sides of the Iron curtain. That it was time to stop and negotiate a halt and a downward trend. The weapons scientists in both the U.S. and the Soviet Union had come to this conclusion through their mutual contacts and discussions with each othein the Soviet Union and the United States. Andrei Sakharov, Evgeniy Velikhov, for example, on the Soviet side, with Hans Bethe, W.K.H. Panofsky and Sid Drell, and Dick Garwin, Jack Ruina, Jerry Wiesner and many others on the U.S. side. The discussions were mainly about the levels of their respective technologies. Both sides agreed that a technological plateau or equilibrium had been reached. It was agreed that a joint effort should be made to stop. They were the first of the scientists to engage in informal, professional dialogue, on this paramount issue affecting the security of the U.S. and the Soviet Unioand indeed the fate of the entire earth. These first rank scientists in both the U.S. and the Soviet Union had conceived and made the nuclear arsenals of both sides. They jointly decided that they had to go public, and take this overriding issue affecting the control of nuclear weapons to the government and the people. The most distinguished American physicists began to speak in detail about their concerns, about the nuclear danger, decided it was necessary to come up to the Hill. One of the first Senators they saw was Cooper. They reviewed the history of the development of nuclear weapons and their fear that the nuclear arms race was spinning out of control. I recall how a scientist of great brilliance and integrity convinced him, I was there at the discussions with Dr. Panofsky, Wolfgang KH Panofsky, a little Hobbit of a man, a wonderful character. He has since become a good friend. He was so lucid and so accurate, so well-informed and so compelling that Cooper said, "You're right. We have to stop it." Cooper was convinced, that the nuclear danger was the greatest threat we faced. It is a mark of the Senate of this time of how and why Cooper became the leader of the effort in the Senate to halt the nuclear arms race. He simply said, "It's the survival of mankind that is at stake," and believed it. Senator Cooper became the focal point for the education of the Senate on nuclear matters because his colleagues respected his open conviction on this issue. It is important to understand that Senator Cooper, a Republican, was given the role of leadership on this issue of controlling the nuclear danger by decisions of the "Senate Greybeards", namely, the Democratic majority leader, Mike Mansfield, Phil Hart, Stuart Symington, Bill Fulbright, George Aiken and Jack Javits. This is an example of how the Senate worked by consensus at this tima kind of natural selection. My job, under his direction, was to organize the education of the Senate by our nation's top scientists. So all these former Presidential science advisors, and this cadre of Nobel prize winners, took enormous amounts of time away from their universities and laboratories, came to the Hill over a period of four yearand tutored all the key senators and their key staff on the realities and history of the arms race and the details of nuclear weaponry. This tutoring, this teaching, gave a substantial group of senators the confidence they needed to take on such a serious national debate. In the end, the Senators knew more than the president and his key advisors about the issue and this fact shaped the outcome.

Q: Did you find you were getting opposition from what you might call the "nuclear club," or "clique" or whatever it is in the Pentagon?

MILLER: Not completely. It's very interesting why. A similar debate was going on inside the government, too, in the Pentagon, and the State Department. In the State Department, the arms control and disarmament agency had just been created. They focused on the issues of stopping underground testing and fallout from testing. There was a debate, certainly within the government. It was quieter than in the Senate, but even Secretary of Defense McNamara, at that time, had his doubts. In fact, McNamara came to the view that only a limited ABM system was required, and it was clearly a fallback. McNamara couldn't say no to ABM development because he didn't have the political strength to oppose the hawks, to oppose the military on this issue, but he wanted to. He limited the deployment to such an extent, that the system was irrelevant, and would collapse because of its obvious inadequacy, which is, in fact, what happened.

Key senators like Fulbright, Cooper, Mansfield, and Symington, Fulbright and Javits and others would meet with McNamara over dinner at Senator Cooper's Georgetown house on 29th and N, for example, and talk about the ABM issue and the possibilities for arms control and would discourse often with the scientific community's leading scientists. The scientists were asked, frequently, to come to the Senate and give testimony, letters were written back and forth, and there were many visits to test sites. The ABM issue was the focus of a fundamental, very intensely intellectual, political and philosophical and tangible set of problems. The Senators made the effort to go to the laboratories, they went to the weapon sites, they went to the SALT talkGerry Smith, the head of the SALT Delegation and the Director of ACDA, was a close friend of Cooper's and encouraged his visits to the SALT talks.

Q: The head of the ?

MILLER: George Smith was the lead U.S. negotiator at the SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) negotiations were held in Helsinki and Vienna. I went to those negotiations in both Helsinki and Vienna with Senator Cooper. We all knew each other well, were very good friends, and the positive sympathies, emotions and intellectual openness allowed for open, detailed and candid discussions. Paul Nitze was among the negotiators at the SALT talks. He was the DOD "hardliner" who balanced the dove, Gerry Smith and the State Department representatives. ABM and SALT were taking place in the context of the Cold War. The "Soviet Threat" was a major factor in the debate. Could the U.S. rely on any agreements made with the Soviets?

This process of the ABM debate resulted in the education of the Senate, the House, the public. This education was enhanced through the work of journalists as well as scientists. The main newspapers recognized that the "policy revolt" on the part of the leading American scientists, who maintained that the nuclear danger "Was a public issue, and we have to bring it to the public." with the help of the press and media did, and they won. They said, "It's time to get serious and halt the arms race." The ABM treaty debate extending over four years was personally very stimulating. I learned a lot. We all knew it was important. I believe I was able to make a contribution. The work I did then is still relevant this day, because I'm working on a similar issue with Iranian and American scientists concerning ways to strengthen the NPT regime.

Q: I think, Bill, this is probably a good place to stop, now. We'll pick this up next time. You talked about your time during '67 to '72, when you were on the staff of Cooper. You've talked about your involvement in the Vietnam debate, and also in the nuclear arms situation. We haven't talked about how Cooper dealt with the Nixon White House in its first year.

MILLER: There's a lot to talk about.

Q: There will be other things to talk about.

MILLER: Kissinger, Nixon ?

Q: Kissingeand the difference between the Johnson administration and the take over early in the first term.

MILLER: There's a lot of interesting history that Cooper was in the middle of.

Q: Let's do that, then.

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Today is the 12th of December, 2003. Bill, well, we've got a couple of things to begin with. You were with Cooper during the transition between Johnson and Nixon. How did thafrom the viewpoint of Cooper and his stafhow did that go?

MILLER: Senator John Sherman Cooper was an independent Republicathe way he described himself was, "I'm from Kentucky, and my family made our choice in the Civil War to side with Lincoln and the Union, and my family has been Republican ever since." He knew Nixon quite well. Mrs. CoopeLorrainwho was very social, used to entertain the Nixons in her house, although it was very hard to find a guest list that would be compatible. She was very anxioushe more than Johto keep good relations with the White House. Senator Cooper's anti-Vietnam stance caused the White House great distress, in the Johnson period as well as Nixon. They attributeboth the Johnson and Nixon White Houses attributed a lot of the difficulty to me, I was seen as a bad influence on the senator. Of course, that was the worst thing you could possibly suggest to Cooper, because he was so fiercely independent. He made up his own mind. I carefully respected his right of judgment. We were very close. I liked him as a person. I was very grateful for his confidence in my professional knowledge and this genuine kindness to me. The war was something he had made his mind up about in Vietnam itself, when he saw at first hand how the war was being prosecuted and the effect it was having on the country, both countries, Vietnam and the United States. Cooper was deeply affected by World War II. He had seen a great deal of bloodshed and destruction. He saw war as the failure of civilization.

The White House put a lot of effort into trying to get him back, in support of the Administration position on Vietnam. They worked usually through Congressional relations, and, of course, the efforts to persuade were was to no avail. The reason they were not able to sway Cooper was not only his steadfast judgment based on his direct experience in Vietnam, and his deep study of the matter, but also because his closest colleagues in the Senate were very united on these questions. The colleagues who were of greatest importance to Cooper were Aiken and Mansfield and later, Javits, Percy, Fulbright, Symington and of course, that group represented the majority consensus view of the Senate. The Senate is one of the most tightly-bonded group of human beings you can imagine, and it certainly was even more tightly bonded in those years of intense debate and the prevailing belief that the Senate had a very crucial play in the republic, in the fate of the republic. Senate solidarity was very strong.

We used to have discussions at the dinner table, at dinners at the Coopers, with the political elite of Washington, and the journalistic elite, where everyone spoke openly about Nixon. Mrs. Cooper got very upset about this openness, and she called me one day and said, "Come have lunch with me," and I said, "Of course, yes." We had lunch and she asked, "Why do you dislike Nixon so much? He is our president, after all." So I gave her my reasons Nixon's duplicitthis lunch took place, this particular discussion about Nixon took place at a Watergate restaurant. I said to Lorraine, "He did those things he is accused of. You know that. And he's going to be impeached." She said, "Impeached? Never, never. This iyou're politically immature, you just don't know the politics of this town," says she. We were very good friends. We were very fond of each other, so we could talk very directly. But she made it clear that I was in the doghouse, so to speak. Then, later after, the impeachment, Lorraine very graciously said that I was, unfortunately, correct, and that the whole administration was going down the tubes.

It was very hard for the White House, any White House, to deal with Cooper, because he was so respected, so courtly, he was so polite and distinguished in his manner that they couldn't attack him personally. The only way they could approach him was to be polite and reasonable. And, of course, the reasons, the evidence, didn't hold up on their side. McNamara was a frequent dinner companion, in the Johnson time, McNamara was there at the Coopers often. He was a good friend of theirs, and became a good friend of mine. He still is to this day. It was a way for him to hear what people thought without being attacked personally. The Coopers were kind to him. He was under tremendous stress, Vietnam affected his familhis children were opposed to the war and angry with him. His wife was opposed to the war and angry with him, so we all understood that McNamara was under tremendous personal strain. The issues he had to contend with also included arms control, on which he moved a long way from being a builder of more and bigger weapons to the very different considered belief that they were a scourge and should be limited and if possible eliminated. In arms control, he was one of the major reasons the limitation of ABM and SALT took place. These realities were achieved because he understood the technological argument that we had reached a plateau of nuclear weaponry. His support of a limited system for the ABM coverage of some of the cities in the United States was the minimum you could get away with in the Pentagon, and the maximum you could get away with politically. That's, of course, where it came out - a two-site system was authorized, but never built.

What Cooper would do, at every stage in these matters of importance to the White House, was to always tell them what he was going to do.

Q: When you say tell thewho was ?

MILLER: White House. He'd tell the president. On the big issues, he'd go see the president. He was always on that basis with the President. Of course, we met also with the cabinet officers, but if it was a big issue like an anti-war amendment or ABM, he'd go and see the president and say, "This is what I am going to do, and these are my reasons. Send your people to me, if you want, but this is my position." He would do this long in advance. I have to say, he was one of the most endurable people I have ever met. He would come to a position, and it would be almost impossible to get him to make a change on anything but new, convincing solid evidence. He could never be swayed by anything except sound evidence.

Q: How did you find, on issues like this, how did he use you and, looking at it, where did you fit in?

MILLER: Well, it was almost like family, because the Senate offices were small, much smaller than they are now. Everyone was physically close together, so we could see each other all day long. Anything to do with the Foreign Relations or Armed Services committees or when there was relevant debate on the floor I would often sit in the floor of the Senate chamber on a chair next to him, which was then the common practice for senior staff. We'd be in the cloakroom together. We'd often have lunch together with other senators and staff, and in committee we were always together.

Ours was a very intense personal relationship. He relied on me for accurate information about the issues, briefings from the best most knowledgeable people. I wrote the draft speeches he used to address the Senate. This speech writing process was a very interesting experience, because Senator Cooper was intensely proud of his own judgment, he would ponder, even fight every word. Every speech was an agony for him and for me, because he wouldn't let go of a draft until he had been over every word and challenged everything, changed metaphors, until he was satisfied that the words conveyed the exact sense of what he was thinking. So the speechwriting would take great effort and time. If it was a major speech, on Vietnam or ABM for example, a speech might take an entire week, through many nights, and the poor secretaries would be worn out with the constant redrafting and redrafting.

Q: Of course, this is before the period of the word processor, so you had to ...

MILLER: We both wrote in longhand. I still write in longhand, and it was, yes, at that time high technology was still typewriters. But in the end I loved the difficult process, because I really valued someone who took every word as a responsibility. I learned a lot, because he had a much simpler style than I have. He had a kind of rhetoric aimed at simple people which I never had. Of course, I had other qualities of writing which he didn't have and he understood that. We were a good team.

Q: Well, did you see any sort of things spring from his Kentucky roots and all that would come out?

MILLER: Oh, yes, his sense of responsibility to the people who elected him. He read every letter that came in. On Vietnam, at the end, there were huge piles of letters on the floor of his officliterally thousands of letters about the war. He was very dear to my heart, because I'm somewhat messy too, but he was messier than I. He would have piles of letters on the floor of his office, two big onepro and con. He'd go through them and say, "Oh, that's from so-and-so from Somerset County. I've got to answer his letter to "Trudy" (one of his favorite secretaries), he called out and dictated an answer on the spot. So coming to understand what the popular will was among his electorate was very important. When the Vietnam War began, the popular will in Kentucky was for the war. So he would answer them and say, "I was in the war, and I know what death is. I've just been to Vietnam." He'd go out and persuade them. "This is not our war," and he convinced them. Even if he didn't, they'd say, "John, I trust you even though I oppose you. I know you really think this. You're not doing it for political purposes. It's in your heart." and it was.

Q: Did you find the influence of a senator on Fulbright and the Lowenstein and Moose that was going out to the area, was this at all much of a factor?

MILLER: Not for Senator Cooper. Moose and Lowenstein and Pincus, were great Senate staff. They're good friends. They were good friends then, they're good friends now. Fulbright and Cooper were colleagues. There were some things they didn't like about each other, so it was like planets in an orbit. They were different personalitielike different planetout there in the orbits circling around the sun. Some were like Saturn and others were like Venus. But that group of senators, it was impossible to lean on. They came with their decided judgments on the big issue, and what was remarkable was that there was such durable consensus, because they had come to their views individually, not because they were giving favors for other favors given.

Q: Well, did you feel personallwere you on sort of the White House's enemies list almost, or were you beyond their concern?

MILLER: Well, they knew I was a major obstacle. They knew that. The White House is not a monolith. On Kissinger's staff, for example, at the beginning, Moose and Lake were Kissinger's chief aides, and they were my friends. I knew Kissinger reasonably well. Kissinger used to call me up, about Iran and ABM. This was because of our Harvard connection. He was a colleague of Bill Polk and others, so he knew of me first through them. And Mort Halperin was Kissinger's chief of staff when Kissinger first went to the NSC. Mort Halperin devised the National Security Decision Memorandum Number One (NSDM-1), which completely paralyzed the bureaucracy. Do you remember that?

Q: This was the one where they sent out and said, "Give us reports on everything."

MILLER: That's right, The memo asked every part of the bureaucracy to lay out the issueall of them in order of priority. What needs to be done and what should we particularly do about all of the great problems. After two weeks nothing. And after six months, there was still nothing. Halperin knew that that would be the result, and Kissinger, of course, followed that advice when he took over, of having paralyzed the bureaucracy and setting his own course in the resulting policy vacuum.

Anyway, many of Kissinger's staff were good friends. They were my contemporaries. I would say that most of the NSC staff and the State Department were anti-Vietnam. Most of the staffs were also anti-ABM. These were very, very highly, talented people. I won't say they were disloyal, at all, but those were their personal views. We had very close relations and talked openly about the main policy issues. After all, we were key participants in the debate. I was wiretapped, that I knew, but not directly. I was at the other end of conversations with people who were ordered to be wiretapped, such as Moose and Lake and Halperin and many of the others who were on Kissinger's staff.

It was hardly necessary to wiretap, because the White House leaders knew the positions of everyone. These views were on the surface. There was nothing clandestine about it, but the atmosphere was very intense. It was a 24-hour-a-day kind of life of the mind, memos, telephone calls all the time. The integration of the press in these matters was also very important, because the journalists were on the front lines in all of these issues, in Vietnam, certainly.

People who had been on the front lines and in the jungle, the battlefields had come back to Washington, and there was such a back and forth of intelligent discourse, nothing like the careful feeding of "embedding". Reporters in Vietnam were free to go where ever they wished and they went. The Washington policy debate was a very large intellectual landscape, a large unmanageable political landscape, which had very few barriers between them and the White House, the State Department, between the legislature and the journalists. They were all on the same battleground. It was in the best sense, public debate, which included citizen groups and NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) and other nations, too, their embassies and high level visitors.

Q: Were there any points of contact within the State Department that you found particularly useful or fruitful for your work?

MILLER: For the subject of arms control, all of ACDA (Arms Control and Disarmament Agency). The ACDA was very powerful at that point. They had recently been empowered by Hubert Humphrey and the many congressional supporters of the creation of this very special agency. So, in the beginning, the main figures associated with ACDS, Gerry Smith, Paul Warnke and Ron Spiers, Tom Pickering, Phil Farley. There was a whole group of ACDA people who were my neighbors in Hollin Hills who used to go into the Department or up to the Hill together in car pools.

Q: Were there any sort of favoritI don't mean personally favorebut in confidence correspondents whom Senator Cooper really used or listened to more than any of them?

MILLER: Well, he knew all of the leading press reporters and columnists. Many came to dinner at his home in Georgetown.

Q: The Washington Star.

MILLER: And certainly bureau chief and chief reporters of the Washington bureau of the New York Times, but the editors in New York, too, and all of the key correspondents. But Cooper saw mainly those that covered the Hill in those years. There was John Finney of the New York Times, the editors of both the Post and the Times, which included the group that had been in the CIA and then went into journalism. There were columnists like the Alsop brothers and Marquis Childs and Mary McGrory. All of the columnists, and the key correspondents who had served in Moscow and Vietnam. All were at the dinner tables. The journalists were very much a part of the Washington social scene.

Q: I'm told today that the social set is much less, because there's much more scurrying back to your home state or district or something, so that there really isn't the conviviality that existed at that period of time.

MILLER: Yes, that's the case, but I think the so-called Washington social set of that time with its variety of journalists, legislators, diplomats, CIA, scientists and intellectuals existed because they all had shared 40 or 50 years of experience together in battle, literally, in war, in many cases were in the same university before that, and were in different ways all professionals. They made up a group something like what the Russians would call the intelligentsia. There was a bonding that went way beyond contemporary politics. Politics was the last bonding. There were many other earlier bonding experiences, and that included people in the Foreign Service, like Chip Bohlen, Averill Harriman and David Bruce.

The senior Foreign Service officers, those people who had gone back and forth from Washington and overseas over decades, were all part of it, a natural part of the Washington social set. And, to the extent that phenomenon has grown less evident, I think is regrettable. It's part of the job, I think, and the people who were good at this social life really were performing their professional duties, and it was understood to be so.

The interaction between the legislature and the executive branch, between the bureaucrats and the lawyers and journalists, it was all seen to be a duty to know each other, in addition to legislators going out to their constituencies, and coming back from their constituencies, really being a part of Washington life. Washington, after all, was and is, capital of the world. In that sense, people like Cooper and Akin and Mansfield and Fulbright, they all played their part and in doing so spoke for their constituencies.

I saw Cooper at work in Kentucky, and he was just like the people who elected him, and they knew it, that he was one of them. That's why they elected him.

Q: Well, did you sort of sitting from your vantage point see the role of staff people, including yourself, being very much as a staff? Because sometimes I understand, particularly at a later period, it seems like sometimes the staff almost dominates policy in certain sorts of ...

MILLER: Well, you get accused of that. There were a number of articles written about me and my role. I was called the 101st senator, things like that. But there's a great distinction between the Senator who votes and anyone else. That's the big difference, that's the responsibility. But many of the staff were extraordinarily gifted and qualified, many later became congressmen and senators. They were devoted public servants who were an essential reason for the excellence of the Senate, such as Secretary of the Senate, Frank Valeo, and the chiefs of staff of foreign relations and appropriations Mike Mansfield's Legislative Director Charlie Ferris. These were people, whose qualities could easily have made them senators themselves. They had chosen to serve as staff because the compelling issues were on the table. But arrogance of power, of course, was always a danger. Cutting people down to size was done with great ease, if necessary.

Q: How did the whole Watergate thing hit Senator Cooper and all?

MILLER: That's an interesting story. You can start the story from the break-in and the criminality of the White House approval of the break-in by Liddy and the Plumbers, the cover-up within the White House. Elliot Richardson was the key person that from within the Nixon government stood in the way of the cover-up. His refusal to submit to Nixon's demands led to the Saturday Night Massacre and the beginning of the progress towards impeachment. Richardson brought in Archie Cox and defended him. Elliot Richardson was very close to Senator Cooper, Senator Mathias, Mike Mansfield, George Aiken and a large number of other people on the Hill. Mathias and Richardson were classmates, they were in the war together, they were friends; and their staff, in the case of Elliot Richardson, Mathias and Cooper were also friends. The key staff person for Richardson was Jonathan Moore, he was later an ambassador at the UN. He's still active at the UN. Jonathan Moore was Elliot Richardson's chief aide in the Pentagon, in the State Department, and at Justice. He was a major player in foreign policy, during the same period that I was most active. His wife and family are close to mine, we saw each other often and were neighbors.

When Nixon ordered Richardson to fire Archie Cox, and he refused, Richardson then threatens to resign. Moore calls me at home. Elliot Richardson calls Senator Cooper, Elliot Richardson calls Mathias, Mathias calls Cooper, they all go to Mansfield. Akin is called, so is Margaret Chase Smith; they all come together almost instantly on this matter. And Elliot says, "What should I do?" They say, "You're doing the right thing. This is a serious matter. They've got to clean it up. If they don't, he's got to go." That is part of the background of the Saturday Night Massacre, as it was called that I lived through.

Q: This is when Elliot and his supporting group were dismissed by Nixon.

MILLER: Yes, and the one who so resigned Dick Thornburgh from Pennsylvania, later he was attorney general. He's a friend. Anyway, he was advised to stay, but he resigned as well. In the end Robert Bork took over as attorney general. That was the beginning of the end, for Nixon. Nixon's attempt to stop or control the investigation of Watergate was the main factor in the consensus that impeachment was necessary.

The Saturday Night Massacre and how the Senate Leadership reacted recalls how the Senate handled the Pentagon papers.

Q: You did not mention the Pentagon papers.

MILLER: This was another case in point of the value of constant interaction between legislature and the Pentagon. The chief author of the Pentagon paperLes Gelb, who was put in charge, and many of the other authors of the Pentagon Papers including Daniel Ellsberg were all discussing the content of the report with their colleagues throughout Washington. So what was going on at the Pentagon was already known to everyone.

After all of the studies known as the Pentagon Papers were put together, nothing to the satisfaction of one of the authors, Daniel Ellsberg was taking place, or at least rapidly enough, so Ellsberg started to bring copies of the Pentagon papers to various parts of official Washington, including The New York Times.

Q: You're talking about Daniel Ellsberg.

MILLER: Yes, Daniel Ellsberg. He came up to the Hill, and he gave copies to various legislators in the House and the Senate. He gave a copy to Mathias. Mathias immediately went to Cooper, and it was decided to go immediately to Mansfield. Mansfield took the copy, they all read it first and then they put it in the safe of the majority leader. Then Mansfield called up the White House, "I have a copy of the Pentagon papers, and I have read them. I want you to know that." So that's the way the Pentagon Papers came to the Senate.

Q: Well, by this period, I mean, the White House had pretty well lots its credibility, would you say? I mean, as the Watergate thing, the Saturday Night Massacre, the Pentagon papers and all, I mean, this was ...

MILLER: Yes.

Q: You're seeing ...

MILLER: The balance between the three branches was under attack by Nixon. This was the main issue of governance. The constitutional balance had to be restored, the presidency, the executive branch, the legislature and the courts had to have equal strength and checks on each other's authority in appropriate ways. The balance in foreign affairs, defense and secret activities had tilted way over to a predominance by the Executive. This is the reason for war powers debate, and the War Powers Act, the struggle about treaty making, about who makes war, the efforts to limit the scope of executive orders, and deep inquiries into what actions require Senate ratification, the extent to which the legislature, the courts and the public should have access to information, including every aspect of intelligence. All of this ferment is from the same tapestry, the Gulf of Tonkin being the beginning, the first big lie that really bothered and shook the foundations of acceptable consensus between the White House and the legislature. The Vietnam issue, and the logic and physics of nuclear weapons, and the misuse of power and intelligence in Watergate all are part of the constitutional debate of the time.

Q: How is the role of Henry Kissinger seen as this whole thing developed?

MILLER: Well, Kissinger was always understood to be and is still seen as a brilliant person. He was never trusted, certainly not by Nixowho trusted no one. The White House, Nixon, and his chief lieutenants and would listen to his theories and presentations very carefully, and with great pleasure and admiration, but also with great skepticism. It went beyond the White House, the relationship with Fulbright was typical. It was a constant battle between them. Fulbright had several opponents in the intellectual battle about Vietnam policy. Melvin Laird was one opponent, the various Pentagon leaders, as well. Kissinger was another.

So the hearing process in the Senate, particularly the Foreign Relations Committee, became very important, as debate and as exposure to the great gravity of the claims being made and the shortcomings of these claims were being shown.

Q: Well, it came a little before, but how about the opening to China? Was this seen as, from Senator Cooper's point of view ...

MILLER: Oh, yes. I think he saw, almost everyone saw, it as the right thing to do. You have to recall that for three years before Nixon went to China, that the political strength of the so-called Committee of a Million was being evaluated, and the White House had been told long in advance that their dominant influence on China policy was no longer there.

Q: Committee for a Million being what?

MILLER: This was the Chiang Kai-shek lobby, which blocked all rapprochement approaches to mainland China. They were sort of like the AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) is now on Middle East matters, the Chinese AIPAC; the China lobby blocked anything, and for decades they had the votes at least 2/3 of the Senate. But several years before Nixon went to China, Nixon was told they had at best 30 votes in the Senate. Kissinger and Nixon went to China only after he had the absolute certainty that he had the necessary legislative support. There was careful legislative preparations and the work of the US-China Relations Committee, an NGO composed of the top scholars on China whose members came up to the Hill and over several years did the much needed education about the reality in China. Considerable travel to mainland China by legislators and staff took place as well long before Nixon went to China.

The actual going there was the surprise, but the fact that it was being thought about was known for at least a year.

Q: What about AIPAC, you mentioned the pro-Israeli lobby and all. Where did Cooper fit into the Israeli element?

MILLER: Well, one of his closest friends in the Senate was Jack Javits, and also Abe Ribicoff was a good friend. Cooper had been in Europe during the war and saw at first hand concentration camps. He understood. But Cooper was always of the view that the decisions on the Middle East after World War II were a tragedy, that the Palestinians had been given a bad deal from the outset, and that it would come back to haunt all who had played a role.

Q: Was there any concern as the Watergate ...

MILLER: Cooper told AIPAC his view and they respected his candid talk. AIPAC also knew Cooper was not vulnerable in Kentucky on the Arab-Israeli issue. As it happened, my neighbor in Hollin Hills was the director of AIPAC, Sy Kenan. He would bring up Cooper's independence with me very carefully as we pruned our azaleas and hollies. I worked very closely with several AIPAC directors. They were all good friends: Tom Dine, Morie Amitay, Ken Wallock. Peter Lakeland, Javits' foreign policy key aide, was and is a close lifelong friend. Given my views on the Middle East, it helped to have them as friends. We would discushe would say, "Senator Cooper is not onboard, so to speak." And I would say, "You know why. You know his position and how he came to it." And they would say, "Yes. We'd like him on the list."

Q: Well, was there any concern that as the Watergate crisis heated up, that Nixon might try some dramatic foreign affairs venture to get the country behind him?

MILLER: The senators knew Nixon very well. He had been a senator and a colleague for some time. They'd lived with him for much of their lives, but they were ready to deal with him. They were ready. They thought they knew his scope. I don't think people were ever very proud of him, but they treated him with great caution and watched very carefully. It was extraordinary, how tense the situation was. I remember when Nixon came to the Senate floor and senators and staff were invited to meet him, there were a number who refused to meet him and shake his hand.

Q: Well, at the resignation of Nixon, what happened? The Ford pardon and all of that, how was that?

MILLER: There was a split on whether a full catharsis had been reached. A correct appropriate political conclusiomany felt the Ford pardon was a mistake, but I think in general they felt that Ford had poured oil on troubled waters and at great personal political cost. They understood that the pardon would cost him the election, because there was a great bitterness among many of the country, particularly those who had been targets. But most senators liked Gerald Ford, and liked some of his people who had been House functionaries for quite a while. I had extensive meetings with Jack Marsh, he had been Secretary of the Army, under Ford. He was an able decent man.

Ford had a very good staff for legislative purposes. Ford was the right person at that very divisive point. The Ford presidency was seen as an excellent transition back to normal politics.

Q: Well, now, from your career, what happened after Ford is in, and how long did you stay with the Senate?

MILLER: The Ford period was very important busy time for me, because at that point Cooper retires and I go as Chief of Staff of the Senate Select Committee. This is the period of an important effort to get rid of Emergency Powers and War Powers. 2,300 statutes had been passed since 1790, that gave the president extraordinary powers in time of war or so-called national emergency. Among the emergency powers which the President could exercise without legislative approval was the power to freeze currency, seize all communications, declare military zones, and put people in concentration camps.

Q: Well, would you explain? This was an act that set up a temporary committee?

MILLER: This was an ad hoc committee that was set up by the House and the Senate, a joint select committee. Select committees have an equal number from each party and ours had co-chairman. The Select Committee has a limited life, as a committee; it has a requirement to complete work within that specified period.

At first there were two separate committees: one in the House, one in the Senate. The House Committee was disbanded after some internal difficulties while the Senate Select Committee continued its work. For three years, we worked closely with the executive branch and the Supreme Court on the legal status of declarations of war, declarations of emergency and the powers that were delegated from the legislature to the president as a result of declarations. It was a huge research project, that I directed. Frank Church and Charles Mac Mathias were the co-chairman. Our staff had 20 lawyers, mostly seniors in several law schools who took time off from their law studies to work for a semester at the Committee. We all spent most of our time in the Library of Congress. The first task was a so-called "hand search" of all statutes, that is, going through all laws passed by the Congress from number one to the present time.

This search of all statutes in the Statutes at Large was necessary because there had never been a catalog made by the government of emergency powers or the special powers of the president, much less executive orders. So, after a year, we had gained a thorough understanding of the task. Our research revealed that there were over 2,300 statutes that delegated from the congress to the president emergency powers. They included 120 secret statutes, which bestowed upon the president extraordinary powers. The committee decided to undertake a "dead wood" operation to eliminate all unneeded or egregious statutes by repeal. We went to every department and agency, "Look over these 2,300 statutes. What do you need, why do you need it?" By agreement with the White House, all the relevant departments and agencies, and with the concurrence of all standing committees with jurisdiction in both houses of congress, we repealed all but a few. The National Emergencies Act, which prescribes the procedure that the president has to follow when he declares a national emergency was passed by both houses and signed into law on September 14, 1976. The president must first state the reasons for the declaration of an emergency, specify in particular the statutory powers he wished to put into force; the declaration and the powers triggered are limited in time. If more time is needed, it can be extended by vote of both houses of congress.

After the several years of Emergency Powers and War Powers, I took up the issues of secret activities and intelligence.

Q: Well, going back to the emergency acts.

MILLER: Yes, I should talk about President Ford, because Ford was very much involved in the successful outcome of the Emergency Powers Act and he was a great help, a tremendous help.

Q: Had Nixon been playing around in this sort of mass of almost unknown authority?

MILLER: Yes he had. Nixon had used money from unaccountable slush funds that were triggered by the declaration of a state of emergency; rather huge amounts of monethree billion dollars, for example - that were tucked away in Commerce, as well.

Q: Because nobody knew about that, did they?

MILLER: Almost no one knew about it. These funds were not accountable.

Q: So this is cleaning up all the bits and pieces of it?

MILLER: Right, and what was interesting about the state of knowledge about emergency powers was that the only place in the government that had a partial catalog was the Air Force, which had put some Air Force defense related statutes on a computer program. The Supreme Court, for example, had never had a complete knowledge of national emergencies law. They were shocked, deeply shocked when we brought the realities of the state of the law in this area to their attention. They were also very helpful to our work. Several justices worked closely with us on the research. The Supreme Court was very grateful to receive the results of our research.

Q: Well, I mean, I can see in your office, all of a sudden with these bright young lawyers coming in, "Guess what I just found."

MILLER: Yes, every day it was like that, and it was very exciting, because it was a benign legislative inquirit was not controversial or partisan in any way. There was some controversy of course on whether to keep a particular statute on the books or not, but most of those involved were of the view that, "We better found out what the hell we have done since the beginning of the republic and then set it right."

Q: Did you find a lot of Civil War stuff tucked away?

MILLER: Yes, but most of the secret statutes concerned the annexation of Florida. But there are other surprising secret statutes. The whole idea of a secret statute is a contradiction for an open democratic governmenbut we had them.

Q: But, unfortunately, we didn't give Florida back to the Spanish.

MILLER: Some, say they're taking it back. The Special Select Committee on Emergency Powers and War Powers was good fun. It was wonderful for me, working, for example, with the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court, the chief justice, all of the clerks, of course, but many of the justices and the retired justices were very intelligent and very helpful. Justice Tom Clark was still active, and somehow he had extraordinary knowledge of this problem. His awareness went back to the time of the Youngstown steel case in 1948. So this committee's work was a way for me to really learn about the workings of the Court, and all of the departments and agencies of the Executive Branch couldn't have been more helpful. The legal community and the academic community, legal community, were all tremendously helpful to us. It was one of the most interesting things I've ever done. It was also one of the most difficult.

That led to, the Intelligence Committee because of Church and Mathias ...

Q: This is Senator Church of ...

MILLER: Idaho. Frank Church, who had been a partner of John Sherman Cooper on the Cooper-Church end the war amendments. Senator Church had led the cause to stop the invasion of Cambodia. He was a decent, wonderful man, very interesting to work with. He had a great wife, Bethine, who was daughter of the former governor of Idaho. Bethine was, in many ways a better politician than Frank Church, but they were a very good team. The Senate inquiry into intelligence has its origins in the "family jewels" report called for by CIA Director, Bill Colby. The "family jewels" was the list of improprieties, abuses and allegations done by CIA officials over the years. It was an internal compendium of self criticism. Sy Hersh's articles in the New York Times about abuses by the intelligence agencies that affected the rights of American citizens were based on the "Family Jewels" report to Colby. The family jewels was a collection of allegations and evidence reported by members of the intelligence agencies themselves of illegalities or improprieties. They were collected by the inspector general of the CIA in a report to Colby. A copy had somehow gotten out to the press and Sy Hersh. The report included charges of activities by CIA agents against legal activities of innocent Americans. Among the charges were that CIA had made assassination attempts against foreign leaders. It was clear from the public and press reaction that there needed to be an investigation to clear up the situation. Majority leader Mike Mansfield decided there had to be a separate Senate inquiry into the issues raised by the charges of inequalities and improprieties raised by the Colby Report. Mike Mansfield asked me to be staff director even before he had chosen the senators who would be members and before he had chosen a chairman. This was a highly politically charged issue, as you might expect, and the issue of who should be chairman was an extremely difficult one.

The chairman Mike Mansfield first had in mind was supposed to be Phil Hart of Michigan, who was much beloved for his objectivity, fairness and gentle nature, and for the Republicans, Barry Goldwater was to be the co-chairman. Phil Hart in fact had been diagnosed with serious cancer, so he couldn't do it, though he stayed on the committee. Senator Frank Church wanted to be chairman. Mansfield said to him, "If you do this, your chance for the presidency is much diminished." He said, "I understand, I want to be chairman." This was an extraordinarily, extremely difficult decision for Mansfield, because he had to put together a committee fully reflecting the spectrum of political views in the Senate. He and Hugh Scott knew they had to choose a committee that could work together on very delicate, even explosive issues, so they carefully chose every member from left to right taking account of the major relevant standing committees, seniority, youth, experience and expertise. It was a true consensus committee. The co-chairmen church and Goldwater certainly was a liberal-conservative balance. As it turned out, on most matters they worked well together.

Q: Let me stop here.

[END TAPE]

Q: This is tape five, side one, with Bill Miller.

MILLER: The "family jewels" had been the primary impetus that led to the decision to create an investigative committee, and some of the charges that came out in repeated, multiple forms, was assassination of foreign leaders, and among other things, the lesser violence, the reading of the mail of Americans, the illegal unwarranted wiretaps, the intercept of telephone calls, so on and so forth, as well as covert actions that were undertaken contrary to declared foreign policy objectives. It was a whole mï¿½lange of secret, in some cases secret high technology, often violent and illegal activities that had been engaged in since the end of the Second World War and it all needed to be looked at.

The Ford White House moved first and appointed the Rockefeller Commission to look into the issue of assassinations. The Ford White House thought that that would answer the question, and it would lessen the necessity to have any extensive congressional inquiries into such secretive areas as intelligence. At first, Ford, particularly, and many senior committee chairmen in the establishment of Congress, both House and the Senate, and the senior executive branch, felt that intelligence was too delicate to withstand rigorous investigation by the legislature.

The Rockefeller Commission, a Presidentially appointed commission, it was believed by Ford would probe the issue carefully, protect national security secrets, do the right thing and lance the boil. The Rockefeller Commission was a failure. It was seen as a whitewash in the view of almost everyone involved. As a result, both the House and Senate established Select Committees, separate committees. The Senate had had the recent successful experience of setting up a bipartisan committee on emergency powers, so the Senate set up a similar bipartisan committee. I think it was to have an equal number. The chairman would be from the majority party, but there would be a co-chairman, and no meetings or votes could be held without the co-chairman in agreement. All staff had to be approved by the full committee. The rules of the Senate required that the creation of a new Select Committee had to go through the gauntlet of review by all the other relevant committees. The resulting approval was extraordinary: Armed Services, Appropriations, Foreign Relations and Rules, all reluctantly gave up tremendous power, under pressure because the majority leader insisted a Select Committee investigating intelligence had to be created. Mansfield made the difference.

He said to his leading committee chairmen, "You haven't done your jobs, but it's not your fault. The system of oversight hasn't worked. We've got to do it right. You will have membership on the committee." This was the art of constructing a consensus, and it's much to the credit of Mike Mansfield. He was perhaps the only one who could have done this. Mansfield and the Senate leadership chose left wing, right wing, age, youth, intelligence background, no background, every possible point of view and faction. The result was a mirror of the body. The rules that set up the committee also provided that any member of the Senate had a right to know anything produced by the investigation. For example, a Senator could come to the committee and say, "I want to know if my file that's in the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation)," and the committee would say, "Here's your file," but these are the rules under which you can have access to your file. The rules provided for clearances, security, and the process for disclosure of secret information. The mandate and regulations for the committee were drawn up not only by the Senate, but also with advice of the executive branch, with particular attention to the security need to protect intelligence sources and personnel.

The most difficult issue was the extent of access to information that would be permitted. There was a huge fight on the question, which was decided by referring to precedents, meaning in particular an earlier power contained in the Atomic Energy Act of 1945 in which the Atomic Energy Committee had in 1945 inserted the following phrase all departments and agencies had the obligation, "to keep the committee fully and currently informed of all matters pertaining to the jurisdiction of the committee." The language was clear: all information had to be given to the committee. There was no information in the intelligence world that could be denied to the committee. Whatever the president got, the committee would get. There were to be no exceptions. That was the most difficult issue. It was contested repeatedly, but in the end, the committee prevailed.

Q: I mean, the one place where it really would hurt would be the divulging of sources of information who were at risk, like Penkovsky and others ...

MILLER: Who were alive.

Q: Yes, so how was that treated, because this was a big committee?

MILLER: Well, it was treated very carefully. For example, the clearances of all the staff. The committee in the end decided on all staff appointments, but the security clearances were made by the FBI and the intelligence agencies. The intelligence agencies, on their part, were very astute, probably to the credit of Bill Colby and Dick Helms, is my understanding, and the people who were assigned the task of dealing with us. And, in particular Admiral Bobby Inman said, "The best answer here is to educate the Senators and their staff on why it's necessary." So the intelligence agencies undertook a huge security education program. I, for example, I was the only staff person that had access to the information in every single classified compartment, every compartment in existence at that time. At every stage, they would first say, "These are the risks, now here is the information."

Storage of classified material and its protection was done well. The people I had who were in charge of security were experienced and from the intelligence agencies. Security of material was a very rigorous affair. There were no instances of leaks. Two people were dismissed from the staff, one for losing his briefcase in a phone booth. The briefcase was given to the FBI. There was no security damage. The other was an unauthorized discussion with a journalist about the deliberations of the committeno security information was given but it was an unauthorized meeting and he was dismissed.

Maintaining security was extremely difficult, extremely difficult. The discipline required was extraordinary for any place, but particularly for the Hill. We had the requirement of getting space within the Senate building, so they gave us the auditorium of the new senate office building. The auditorium was converted into offices and working space for staff. There was only one entrance, security guards constantly checked all activities. There were frequent sweeps, hearings were held only in secure hearing rooms, such as the Atomic Energy Committee hearing rooms in the Capitol. The staff numbered about 150, half of whom were lawyers, mostly litigators, who were pursuing the cases involving the assassinations of foreign leaders.

The other half were people from the intelligence agencies, State, and from the universities. We had several ambassadors, for example, Bill Trueheart and panels of advisers on particular issues, of course. We had a number of excellent historians and a good group of recent graduates from the best graduate schools. The historians did our most successful research projects. We had about 55 separate investigations going on simultaneously, and hearings three days a week, for a year and a half. We produced 12 volumes of unclassified material and 10 times that of classified reports, and in the end we produced a final report with recommendations for action which stands up pretty well.

Q: Well, first place, where did the FBI fit into this?

MILLER: Well, they were considered an intelligence agency, a domestic intelligence agency. They were the ones who keep watch on Americans. The FBI are the ones who wiretapped Americans.

Q: Well, was J. Edgar Hoover still around?

MILLER: No, it was Gray at that point.

Q: They had deadly ...

MILLER: The Hoover people were still there at the top and in charge.

Q: That Hoover's great power was that he had his own sort of personal files ...

MILLER: On many politicians, which he did.

Q: Were you able to get to those and sort of clean that out?

MILLER: Oh, yes, that was one of the first interests, as you might expect. As senators, they wanted to know what the FBI had on themselves, so they went to the FBI saying, "We want to see our files," which the FBI had to provide. I'll never forget one of the meetings, when the House Committee went with us as well. This took place when the House still had a committee. They went down in flames after they leaked classified information to Dan Shore and to the Village Voice and the House voted to disband the committee.

The group that went to the FBI included Frank Church, Barry Goldwater, Mac Mathias, and Dee Huddleston from the senators, and among the House members, there was Pike, who was the chairman, and Bella Abzug. I recall the moments the members got into the file room where the files of each of the visiting members were indicated on colored sheets sticking up from the file drawers so that they can go see their file, pull it out and read the contents.

So, Bella Abzug, was wearing her usual big hat ...

Q: She had a big, polka-dot hat. She always had it, too.

MILLER: She ran to the file cabinet, pulled it out and started to put the contents in her big leather bag. The FBI agent leapt to the file, and then there was this wrestling match between Bella Abzug and the FBI agent. It was a wonderful moment. So Bella Abzug's colleagues calmed her down and they all sat at a table. She was outraged, of course, because they had a huge telephone file containing Bella's many phone conversations and all her speeches, and all the newspaper clippings and a host of accusations. Anything to do with X person was thergarbage, thoughtful letters, lunatic letters that said that Bella Abzug is unpatriotic, etc. Barry Goldwater said, "I don't want to see my file. I'm not looking at it. I know I haven't done anything wrong. I have confidence in the FBI."

Q: Well, were these files essentially cleaned up, or did you have access to them?

MILLER: No, the committee established that they had a right of access to them. They never knew was whether there was more in unseen file cabinets. The claim was that was that the senators had been shown all there was. This was always the deepest problem. Was there more? What hasn't been shown? How do you know?

Q: Yes.

MILLER: Well, gradually, all of the impediments to access to the information we sought were removed and we believe we were able to do serious research and inquiry based on plausibly complete information. The committee, both staff and senators, decide to divide the work into two parts: first, those who are interested in pursuing abuse, investigate assassinations and overthrows, of leaders like Allende.

Q: Allende.

MILLER: Allende, Lumumba, all of the classic cases. The station chiefs from Chile, Congo and those in charge of such activities were brought in for questioning, and of course when Castro and Kennedy appeared in the records, the issues became charged politically and I'd say that was the most delicate part of the investigation, because they were so charged politically.

Q: And you also had Senator Edward Kennedy around, too.

MILLER: No, he wasn't on the committee, but he certainly was interested. Many senators were, of course, interested in Kennedy's girlfriends and the connection with the Mob, Sam Giancana and his girlfriend and the White House trysts and all of that. You can imagine how charged that was, and somehow we kept it contained. Barry Goldwater had a very important role, and Howard Baker, in knowing about it but not using it politically. And Goldwater's approach to all of this, his philosophical view wal won't say philosophy, I'd say his opinion and his dogmatism was that, "All presidents did these things. It was necessary for the security of the United States, and that's enough. That was it. They're all the same. We have to respect the president, and that's it."

The others had some immediate partisan interests. Others were just interested personally in some voyeuristic peering, you might say, but most were very disciplined among all of these matters. But seeing the underworld was really something, but extremely dangerous, too. It was dangerous to the underworld people. When our group of underworld figures came to testify, they put large paper bags on their heads. The paper bags with cut-out eye holes were so comic. There was cartoon I remember, I guess it was a Washington Post Herblock cartoon, that shows the committee sitting at the table and in comes a man with a paper bag over his head and all of the senators are pictured as rushing to duck under the table. As it happened, three of the witnesses that came for testimony were disposed of later by the Mob.

Q: Oh.

MILLER: Yes, it was dangerous for them. After their testimony, several met violent deaths. One mobster was found in pieces stuffed into a barrel floating in Miami Bay. Sam Giancana was one of these gangsters.

Q: Who?

MILLER: Sam Giancana, a mobster from Chicago who attempted one of the assassinations of Castro. I recall his testimony before the committee when he was asked about his attempted assassination. The chairman asked, "So why did you do these things? Did you get paid by the CIA?" Giancana replies, "No." The chairman the asked, "Well, why did you do it?" Giancana, pulled himself up with a look of offended dignity and said in clipped tones, "It was my patriotic duty."

Q: Did you, looking at the various assassination, coup attempts, destabilizing this, were you also looking at thias somebody looking at this thing, were these things really effective, or really advancing the cause?

MILLER: Well, I said the committee divided itself into two parts. One was investigative, the hunting ground of litigators and trial lawyers who were looking to say "guilty," or "not guilty." My colleague, Fritz Schwartz, who was a superb litigator, a good friend, handled many of the hearings on those subjects. The majority of senators and I wanted to deal with the constitutional issues concerning the authority for secret activities, the substance of intelligence activities, the evaluation of its quality and what should be done with the intelligence agencies in the future. We researched and evaluated all intelligence activity in the United States from the time of the Revolutionary War, but with a particular emphasis since the formation of the CIA, 1945 up to 1975, and governmental activities that were normal categories of intelligence collection, counterintelligence, analysis, and technical means. We were able to carry out a rigorous top to bottom the survey of intelligence broadly construed, that would be of service to the president and the United States, the congress and in the end as a benefit to our people and our country.

So, the approaches were legality, utility, needs, what is needed to do a good job? Who does the best job? Is the organization properly structured to do a good job? Should it be revamped, recreated, reinvented? That was the main work of the committee. We came out with conclusion that the best political reporting came from the State Department; that much of the clandestine activity was destructive; and that a good part of the highly touted clandestinely gathered intelligence material was not in fact of great value; that the National Technical Means were the best sources of information on nuclear questions; that there had been a huge misstep in developing paramilitary capability at the expense of traditional humint intelligence.

Q: Would this be Bay of Pigs-type things, or Vietnam/Bay of Pigs?

MILLER: All of the coups had heavy paramilitary aspects. There may have been utility during the Vietnam and Cuba episodes, but that the fact that these large paramilitary structures lingered long after their original missions distorted later missions of particularly the CIA and the military intelligence agencies. This is where Edward Wilson comes from, with his pearl handled pistols that world of paramilitary soldiers of fortune, the one who was just pardoned.

Q: This is a CIA ...

MILLER: In the eyes of the CIA, he was an out of control cowboy, of the worst sort, and he was a freelancea soldier of fortune. I was surprised that they came up with that conclusion, but I'm sure it was wrong.

Q: You mean pardoning him?

MILLER: Yes, but I think that has to do with the attitude of the White House, this particular White House.

Q: Well, were you getting sort of from the other side saying, from the intelligence people, "You're cutting our hands off, we're not going to be able to do our work?"

MILLER: No, no. This was the amazing part of it, that the many intelligence officers assigned to work with us, during the investigation which was a quite extensive number, from each agency, supervised by the directors of the CIA over a period of time, and by the White House, and the successive presidents. The investigation went on for six years. It went into the terms of the Carter administration, and successive secretaries of state and directors of the FBI, including Bill Webster. They were all extremely helpful, and, I think believed they had been given a chance to work out the best solution in the fairest way.

I was awarded a medal, by the CIA which was a surprise.

Q: What was that?

MILLER: Oh, it was an intelligence medal of gratitude for service.

Q: Did you get the feelinthe director of the CIA was Colby, wasn't it at the time?

MILLER: At the time, at the beginning in 1975.

Q: That there was almost a relief as far as get the act cleaned up or not?

MILLER: Yes, very definitely. And one human element that was fascinating to me was the difference between Colby and Helms. I already knew Helms very well, he was a Williams man, we knew each other later; I came to know Colby well. They had a very different understanding of the legal boundaries for their work. Colby was a lawyer, and he said, "Our first loyalty is to the Constitution. The rules have changed, we have to change with the rules. Under the Constitution, the legislature has a right to do that."

Helms was what we called a "kings man", he believed in the inherent right of the president to have such an arm as secret intelligence agencies independent of legislative checks. There were proponents on both sides of the issue within the agency. On the whole, the CIA did its duty. In any area, CIA thought was extremely fragile they fought tooth and nail to limit giving up full information, but in the end they always were guided by the rules.

Q: Well, did you see sort of a divide, almost a war divide? I mean, in the OSS (Office of Strategic Services), these were people during World War II, sort of who were making up the rules as they went, and anything went, really.

MILLER: Well, this was interesting, because as part of the final report we did a history of the intelligence agencies. It was a very good volume done by a very able historian named, Anne Karalekas. It covered the origins of modern intelligence from OSS to 1975. We interviewed all of the key players who were still alive, from OSS times through all the directors who were still alive, all of the deputy directors, all of the main consultants and the heads of intelligence collection, and covert action, all throughout the period. The historical perspective, we gained, I think, was unique and the agency gained considerable benefit because they were doing a similar history at the same time. They were forced by our investigation to do it from a perspective that they themselves would not normally have chosen.

The constituency for intelligence in the legislature, was a net plus for the intelligence agencies. They had to undergo a rugged budget review every year, and for the first two years quarterly reviews throughout the year. CIA actually got more funds, in the end, as a result of the committee findings and recommendations, and more substantial legitimate support. The people who did my budget analysis, that is, the analysis of expenditures throughout the history of the CIA, were former comptrollers of the CIA. They couldn't have been better informed, in that respect.

The work on the Intelligence Committee was extremely interesting for me, and an important period of my life. I learned a lot and made friends in the intelligence world that I value to this day.

Q: Looking at this overall, particularly, and we're talking about in these sorts of interviews dealing with international affairs, how important is intelligence to the pursuit of relations with other countries?

MILLER: Well, that was a key question for our inquiry, of course. There was no fixed pattern. George Kennan was one of those we interviewed extensively, and, as you know, he was in charge of covert action for the government for the first two years after the war. Covert action policy decisions were then made in the State Department. George Kennan ran the French and Italian elections covert actions.

Q: The 1948 Italian election, the famous or infamous, who could spend the most money, the Soviet Union or the United States?

MILLER: The Communist Party, having robbed the French and Italian banks of all the gold holdings, so the West pumped in more money. Kennan's view was that there was utility for particular covert actions like this one in Italy and France. He believed that covert actions could be used in particular circumstances, and that covert intelligence efforts should then be organized upon the basis of immediate real need, that the capabilities to do so should be in place, if not, covert action should not be used. He was speaking mostly about the covert action structures, not analysis and collection. Kennan believed each covert action's structures should be disbanded after use. In his view, covert action structures were too dangerous to leave in place.

His sense of the quality of intelligence waand this was a general view, because the technical material was very good and not obtainable in any other way. The human intelligence was only rarely useful, and that was my sense of things, too, having gone through almost all of it. For example, the Penkovsky papers, much celebrated, had very little utility in the end.

Q: He was a Soviet general who was at the Kremlin.

MILLER: Who turned over tactical battle details, but on examination, while it was highly classified secret material, no doubt, and it did tell details of deployments, the knowledge gained didn't make any difference. It certainly wasn't worth lives, and that this was one of the problems of such forms of espionage. The Penkovsky case was daring and exciting, but courage and utility are not the same thing.

Q: Well, was there any look at the practice, which, I don't know, may still continue, and that is of the stations in our various embassies almost seem to get credit for recruiting people, which means putting people of foreign nationality, particularly in positions of importance, on the CIA payroll, which can, one, be counterproductive, as found out, and, two, often if they do this, then these people are declared off-limits to the State Department, who would be their normal contacts?

MILLER: That was and is a constant issue. Most informed judgments about this, come from the best of the Foreign Service and the intelligence community, as well. This is a matter for the ambassador to decide, to govern. If the ambassador is strong enough and wise enough, experienced enough, he decides. Ambassadorial control in the field was where the committee came out at the end of the investigation. The conclusion was confirmed in a presidential order that said the ambassador is in charge of all operations in his country, including intelligence and military, the only exception being the activities of the CINCS in theatre operations.

Q: That's the overall military commander in the area, where you're talking about troops in the field.

MILLER: Talking about divisions in the field, armies. But anything within his country of jurisdiction, the ambassador had to know about, and has primary responsibility for. When I went to Ukraine as ambassador, that was the case. The agency declared everything it was doing to me and I set the rules of what CIA personnel could do. The basic rule was they could do nothing without telling me first and had an obligation to keep me fully and currently informed.

Q: Well, I mean, sometimes you want to croswhere do you go for advice and all. I was interviewing Phyllis Oakley, and she was the head of the Intelligence and Research Bureau, which was State Department's intelligence thing, and she was excluded from briefing Secretary Albright. They'd say, "Well, Secretary Albright has already been briefed by a CIA person." This is where you start running intbut that's a judgment call on the part of the secretary of state.

MILLER: It's a mistake that she wasn't included.

Q: Yes, it was a serious problem, but it shows how this is an ongoing battle all the time.

MILLER: I'll tell you, before I went to Ukraine, of the briefings that I had. Of course, the directors have to be directed, the chief of operations and down the chain to country. My station chief was someone I knew from the Iran times. We worked very well together, and his successors were just as good, just as helpful. So I think the experience that I had in this case, maybe it is a little different than for most ambassadors, gave me the ability to handle this particular question in the field. I knew quite a bit about the intelligence world from the experience I had, particularly in Iran, but also the great experience of the intelligence committee from 1975-1981.

Q: This whole investigation was taking place when?

MILLER: Between 1975 - 1976.

Q: Was Iran looked at? I mean, you must have.

MILLER: Yes, yes.

Q: Because this is the place where sort of the State Department was frozen out and the CIA had close ties to the SAVAK, and, oh, he's a flag understood. I mean, it was not a good situation.

MILLER: We looked at all of the instances of covert action. We had about a dozen hotspots at the time, in 1975, and we looked at them all in depth as case studies. We did very thorough case studies, and in depth.

Q: What about Iran? Was this sending up warning signals to us about the relationship between the CIA and the Iranian ...

MILLER: No, the pattern was consistent. It was the same noise that was coming out of Iran from the embassies and the analysts here. There was an opposition, they said, but it's weak, the shah has them under control. There are always faults, but the Shah is still the linchpin of stability and he still does what we want. He's providing us access to listening sites in the north. We think he can ride out any storm. That was the consistent analysis and the view in 1976.

There often were sub-themes voiced that he was pressuring, even destroying the opposition, democratic opposition, and that he could be overthrown at any time, which was my view. So, the analyses, I think, were useful. The case studies were done working closely with the agencies, using as a common basis a rigorous review of all available historical material. The agency's history section, which was first class, worked with our historians.

Q: Well, did you feel at the conclusion of this, had the stables been cleaned out, pretty much?

MILLER: No. What was clear was the rules had changed, and the rules were understood, but that the culture was such that it wouldn't change, and that it was a culture that required constant oversight. Perhaps the culture was necessary in order to engage in this work, which on the clandestine side certainly involves corruption of the other side, and which in turn has a corrosive effect on those who carry it out. That was a constant finding, that the cost for covert operators is very heavy, destructive of their own psyche and behavior. The record bears that out, right to the present day.

So it was an arrangement in a sense, the price of secret intelligent activities necessary for the state was that the legislature and courts, as appropriate, or the executive branch, had to be fully informed of everything that was done and take responsibility for it, for better or for worse.

Q: Well, as we speak today, there must be a tremendous burdewe're talking about the height of the war against terrorism, which is there. I mean, here is where it's not state-to-state relations, but you've got to penetrate extraterritorial, or whatever you want to call it, organizations which are out to do you grave harm. And you almost have to resort to any method possible to penetrate these.

MILLER: Yes, but all the methods are known, and they all can be fitted within a legal framework, and, in the end, I don't see, from what I understand, of Al Qaeda and the other terrorist groups, that the phenomenon is anything new. There's nothing different between the 17th of November Greek crowd and Al Qaeda, as far as being criminals and willing to use violent and dangerous means.

Q: The 17th of November being a series of assassinations ...

MILLER: Starting with Welch.

Q: ... against Americans and Brits and others in the Athens area, in Greece.

MILLER: They were a right-wing terrorist group, and had some association with the so-called colonels' coup. They saw any accommodation with the left, in their view, as something that had to be destroyed. I think this phenomenon that we're living through what we call "terrorism" requires specialized police work, a specialized form of international police work. So far we're applying the wrong instruments by invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and the occupation of those turbulent countries. The 101st Airborne or Delta group or Seals are not the right instrument.

Q: Okay, well, Bill, I think this is probably a good place to stop, and we'll pick this up the next time. After you'd completed this intelligence investigation, what did you do?

MILLER: After the completion of the inquiry we set up an oversight committee and I was asked to put together the oversight process and hire the staff.

Q: All right, well, we'll pick thiit'd be 1975?

MILLER: Seventy-six.

Q: Seventy-six. We'll pick it up then.

Miller: Great.

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Q: Today is the 19th of December, 2003. Bill, 1976. What were you up to?

MILLER: We were completing the report, the final report, on the investigation into the intelligence activities of the United States. This was a twelve-volume public document and about 50 volumes of classified material. It was a comprehensive look into everything the United States had done in the world of secrecy, with the purpose of defining, in 1976, what the proper role of secret government was in a democratic society, and how secrecy could be governed by our constitutional processeprocesses that were established several centuries before, and that the United States never had to contend with the kinds of issues we were facing in 1976.

The outcome, intellectually, was the conclusion that secrecy was a necessary part of democratic governments in the 20th century, and that there was no way that could be avoided. However, in a democratic society such as ours, it was necessary that secrets, no matter how sensitive, could not be left to one man, that is, the president. Secrecy required the participation of all three branches, in their appropriate ways. It was an assertion that authoritarianism should not be permitted in a democratic society, and that secrecy held by one branch, that is, the president, would lend considerable power to the possibility of authoritarianism. So after a year and a half of very turbulent, difficult investigations and tremendous struggle between the brancheparticularly with the intelligence agencies, and most difficult, with the president's officthe formulation, which, I think, pertains even now, under the great stresses of the war on terrorism, is that no decision affecting the security of the United States should be left to one person. The president should not be given that responsibility, that such decisions had to be a shared responsibility despite the obvious difficultiesharing knowledge, even dangerous knowledge, with the legislature and the courts. I was very pleased to see the decision of the New York federal court, which ruled that it is unconstitutional to hold American citizens prisoner without recourse to available protections in the court.

Q: It really hearkens back to the internment of the Americans of Japanese ancestry, too.

MILLER: Of course, that was a case that I worked with Senator Inouye on. Inouye was the first Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Inouye, many of whose relatives and friends were in prison while he was off fighting the second World War in Italy, losing an arl understood his feelings very deeply. I was delighted by the recent comments of Nina Totenberg on this constitutional case, I think her analysis was absolutely first rate, and such a tribute to the professional quality of NPR (National Public Radio) reporting.

Q: National Public Radio, yes.

MILLER: NPR is a tremendous asset. Well, in 1976, aside from the constitutional understanding about the nature of secrecy and constitutional governmennamely, that it had to be shared among the three branches in an appropriate wathe outcome that affected me directly was the creation of the permanent oversight committee. I was asked to help put together a permanent oversight committee in the Senate, that would address the issues of oversight of intelligence activities, and to head the staff of the committee. That involved drawing up the charter and the committee rules, hiring the staff and beginning the process of regular and routine contacts with the intelligence agencies, preparation of budgets for approval, and the monitoring of all of their activities on a periodic basis. The formulas that we worked out were: first, to have a nonpartisan stafI'm sorry to say that's no longer the casthat all decisions should be made by both parties on a nonpartisan basis to the extent that was possible. There should be a unitary staff, and the highest levels of knowledge and promptness should be the reasons for hiring staff.

The establishment of a permanent standing committee for the oversight of intelligence went quite well, because there was a spirit in the Senate at this point that this was a very good idea, that the investigations had come out far better than anyone had hoped, and that the intelligence agencies and the president were fully cooperative about the enterprise. So the procedures were set up for the sharing of information, the review of programs, and the analyses of budget and regular oversight activities, including visits to field sites and review of extensive operations, whether successes or failures.

As an organizational matter, this was a very big job. There was a lot of money involved, tens of billions of dollars in the budget.

Q: Where would the money go?

MILLER: Well, the figures are generally classified.

Q: I'm talking about on the Senate side. What would be the expenses?

MILLER: The expenses for the committee? I was talking about the expenses for the nation's intelligence activities. The expenses for the committees were, I'd say, regular not extraordinary, like any committee, mainly the costs of staff and office expenses.

Q: You were talking about the oversight of the?

MILLER: No, I was talking about the expenditure of the United States government for purposes of intelligence, and there the amounts were enormous, and the role of the senators was very important, because here's a Senate committemost of whose work is in secret, so the public never sees it. This is a committee that has no benefits for a politician. On the other hand it's a committee that's regarded with great respect because it's a significant form of power. Senators know what's going on to the extent that intelligence can provide that. It's a bonding of an even smaller group than the 100 senators, who work under very high pressure and disciplined circumstancefar higher presence than anything else they do. So it was forming an organization with a new way of conducting government business.

Q: Who were the minority and majority Senate leaders in this, for starters?

MILLER: The initiathe first chairman was Dan Inouye.

Q: From Hawaii.

MILLER: From Hawaii, and for the minority, Barry Goldwater from Arizona, Howard Baker of Tennessee and John Tower of Texas. They were chosen by their respective conferences, so the parties chose, in fact, the leaders. This is a very important point, that the leadership of the parties took it very seriously and appointed the best people they could possibly ?

Q: I would think in the natural political proceswas this a committee to which senators would aspire or were they picked because someone said, "You really should do this type thing."

MILLER: Well, I can discuss the differences between both committees, the investigative committee and the oversight committee. In the investigative committee, senators were fighting with one another to get on the committee because many of them saw political advantage to being in a high profile, investigative committee. I would say, almost without exception, they found intelligence committee work extraordinarily interesting and highly desirable as a kind of professional upgrading of their work, in a sense, and it was something they could use in their other more public worlit had a multiplier effect, and it was, for most of them, extremely interesting, so they enjoyed it, and it was also a way of working outside of public scrutiny, for the most part.

Q: How long were you running this committee?

MILLER: A year and a half on the investigative committee and then from '76 on I stayed with the oversight committee until 1981, when the Reagan election took place and I thought I had had enough. It was a very high pressure and very demanding time and I needed a change in 1981, so I decided to leave at that point and go to the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy as associate dean and adjunct professor of international politics.

Q: Back to the committehow did you finwhen Carter came in, he really had sort of come in with more of a populist approach, didn't he? How did this affect you all?

MILLER: Carter was extremely helpful in a direct personal way. He had a sense of intelligence needs; he had been a submarine commander, and he had that kind of disciplined approach to information that really made it possible for a submarine to survive and do its work. Carter's people were very accessible, and on this issue of intelligence they were open. So Carter, personally, was extremely helpful. He was interested, he endorsed the idea of shared information, he instructed his cabinet officers to cooperate fully, and he kept himself informed about it. I went with Senator Inouye, I suppose we had about seven or eight meetings with Carter, the oversight committee, in working out the final arrangements. On this set of issues the heads of the intelligence agencies were extremely important, they were satisfied with the equilibrium that had been achieved, and they did what they had to do to make it work.

Q: How did you fintaking two olet's start with the FBI. I would think, since the Hoover legacy of collecting political dirt and all thawas that around any more? Were you able to get to that?

MILLER: Yes, I think there wawith people like Webster, William Webster, and the idea that there would be a term limitation on the director of the FBI, a long term, ten years, but still not a lifetime. It was very important, that the FBI should be apolitical it should not be used by presidents to get dirt on their political enemies. Mind you, there was a recent background of several presidents who were very aggressive in the use of this kind of knowledge.

Webster made a big difference. All of the post-Hoover directors were very sensitive to what had happened to Hoover in his later years, so under Webster on the question of constitutional protections for Americans, the FBI was really on-board and very disciplined. The difficulties between the FBI and the CIA, the territory of where domestic intelligence work and foreign intelligence work met, and what the boundaries were, was very difficult then and, of course, far more difficult now, with the loosening of boundaries because of the new terrorism. The classic issue was in New York, at the UN, where the FBI and CIA stumbled over one another, both trampling on the State Department.

Q: Did you finwas the FBI, was there a problem with the FBI sharing its information of who are the bad guys they have identified in the United States? They were the State Department, there were the pro-visa (ph) officers, that sort of thing.

MILLER: Because of institutional loyalties, information sharing was always difficult. Part of the difficulty was technological, of coursthe storage systems for information were different through all the agencies, and the "concessions", you might say, were jealously protected and it was very hard to get easy access to files in the one agency with the other.

The most able people, of course, were those who had long experience, and they knew where everything was, and they knew the people who had the shoeboxes, and, they knew the issues. That will never changexperience will be the most important element.

Q: Did you feel ththe Soviet Union agents, were they sniffing around all the time? Was this a concern?

MILLER: Yes. There was a very high level of activity by the Soviet embassy in Washington, the very able ambassador, Dobrynin, who was courted by our secretaries of state and as Dean of the Diplomatic Corps had been there a long time, twenty-three years, he knew key personalities and he was a great help. I would say the activity of the Soviet embassa very large embasshelped modify Soviet policy towards the United States, that the Soviet-American hands, the American desk contingent, which came from Moscow, was a softening element at the end of the Cold War. They became extremely helpful.

To a far lesser degree, the American group in Moscow, I would say, up until the end, was kept under relative constraint, far greater constraint there in Moscow than with the Soviets here. The American diplomats had more of a hard line attitude about the Soviets than the Soviets had about the Americans. Watching them, I think, from everything I could tell, and I know they were watched fairly closely, they were given more and more access, and they took more and more advantage of access. From my point of view, I thought it modified the Soviet diplomats' behavior, so it was a plus to loosen things. The kind of Dr. Strangelove, Soviet ambassador clicking his Minox camera at the big board, was, of course, an attitude of the past.

Q: How about relations with the CIA? Carter put his own staff on the CIA and there was quite a bit of turmoil there, wasn't there?

MILLER: Yes. The biggest change was weeding out the paramilitary component and getting control of covert action. The design of covert action, the approval proceswhich had to include Congreschanged the nature of the game. But the behavior of the Soviet Union also was modified, and the major targets were changing, too, so the once perceived necessity for covert actions was lessening, and the nature of what was needed to be known was also changing and so too the means of doing these things were changing.

The great success of satellite imagery and the collection of anything that was electronically conveyetelephones, telegraph, messages of that kintook on the highest priority and the biggest amounts of money expended on that sectosatellite coverage had the highest yield for military intelligence. So-called HUMINT was under far greater control.

Q: That's H-U-M-I-N-T, which means human intelligence, which means spies, people you bought to give information.

MILLER: What was interesting, I'd say, about post-1975 presidents, in all presidents since that time up to Bush, is they understood, fully, not only the vocabulary of intelligence but they had a sense of its limitations. It wasn't a gee-whiz, whiz-bang kind of game, they had some sense of its value and limitations.

Q: Part of that, of course, came from John F. Kennedy, when he was ?

MILLER: Deceived and misled.

Q: On the Bay of Pigs. He learned never, never to complete trust those bastards again in the CIA and the Pentagon, the assurances that he got.

MILLER: Yes, and the whole Bay of Pigs exercise that we've seen from the post-mortems showed his wisdom in looking at his own Cabinet, and in different ways depending on the importance of the issue and the pressures on a particular secretary of a department. That was extremely illuminating and what it shows, in part, is that the airing, pf a dangerous crisis even in the Cabinet room, with a large group, a group large enough and competent enough to raise contrary views is extremely helpful.

Q: We're going through a period right now, in December 2003, particularly the conflict in Iraq, where there is concern that maybe one power, being particularly the Pentagon, under Rumsfeld, is dominating and overwriting a lot of contrary views, particularly those of Secretary of State Colin Powell, and others. The full story isn't out there, but it is developing right now.

MILLER: Yes. The intellectual capacities of a president is a defining factor. The willingness to sit down and hear a variety of arguments and study them varies from president to president, as we have seen. This only underlines the wisdom of not allowing any president to have sole access to anything that touches on great power. There have to be checks and balances in place even in time of war.

Q: How did you findid you havduring the time you were there, did you have any problems with senators or the staff, letting stuff leak out or somehol mean, Washington is a place that thrives on leaks and information. These are the people sitting on this.

MILLER: Well, I'd say there's an almost algebraic formula. The greater the controversy, the more likely it is to leak. A good case in point is the A-Team and B-Team issue, you may recall that ?

Q: The what?

MILLER: A-Team, B-Team. This was an evaluation method which the CIA used, not unique to CIA, when the usual standard analysis was subjected to yet another analysis by a hand-picked review board. That's the B-Team, the A-Team being the agency itself. Here the issue was the quality of intelligence on the Soviet Union, its intentions, particularly in nuclear weaponry and deployments. The agency, over the years, had submitted its appreciation of Soviet power, nuclear power, and as you might expect there was a controversy about whether it was rigorous enough or whether it was too hard line. The NIEs on ?

Q: National Intelligence Estimates ?

MILLER: On Soviet power were always contested. Mind you, NIEs were an inter-agency productthat is, State Department had to give its views as did Defense and so on. As you might expect, all of the agencies werwell, they were almost never in agreement. The exact conclusions were never congruent, but they were almost always roughly in the same ball park, generally. NIEs were an attempt to give a sense of what the various agencies thought the final judgment was made by the CIA Director. All of the footnoting would be in the NIthat is, the State Department's dissenting view, or DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency) or the National Reconnaissance Organization, or whatever.

The B-Team came in, and this was a hard right group. The B-Team was tilted in its makeup, why an attempt was not made to find a catholic, broad-gauge body of opinion perplexed many who were concerned with the problem of how to improve the quality of intelligence. It was all tilted to the hard-line right, and they castigated the NIEs as being soft on the Soviets and dangerously soft. The committee had to look into the A-Team, B-Team controversy because of the extensive even better discussion of the matter in the press. We came out with the judgment that I've just recounted to you, that the agency had done its job, it was properly footnoted, the director's views were laid out, his views were not necessarily accepted, but any reader of the NIE could see, and by and large it was the best we could do, with obvious room for improvements. We also said that the B-Team was tilted to the right and was making judgments that could not be supported.

The committee was attacked by the right for this view, and there was a controversy within the committee. Non-substantive emotion about the Soviet Union obviously arose. It was difficult, but because the overwhelming majority of the committee supported the diligent staff work, that had been done. It was bruising because it was a politically charged issue.

Q: Speaking of national intelligence, I've been interviewing, over a period of time, somebody who was involvethe assistant secretary for European affairs, one named Roz Ridgeway. She's quite dismissive of the National Intelligence Estimate by saying, "This is a series of compromises."

MILLER: I would dispute that. Of course, having been forceas one of my tasks I read all of the estimates on the Soviet Union from day one twell, certainly through 198and carefully. I think they're very good, very helpful, particularly if you are involved in the process. If you were working on having to know what the status of forces was, between, particularly, nuclear forces, there's nothing better. If you really studied the material and read the reports carefully, all the foot-noting, it's a form of ara necessary form of art, you would learn knew quite a bit. They were very high value. But having said that, it also implies a base of knowledge of the part of all the readers. So you could not take a document like this in the abstract, suddenly, a man from Mars reads this and knows the full story, without having lived through the making of these documents and really knew how to read them. If footnotes were suppressed, it would be a different story. They were not, the footnotes were there. If the directors conclusion did not meet particular policy preferences, there was a problem of accepting the NIE as valuable by many occasional readers.

Q: In a way, this is also the problem. Here you are, the experyou, and others of your ilk know what these things are, who's saying what, and how to read it, and yet a policymaker is up there having to make rather instantaneous judgments, with no time to get enmeshed in all this.

MILLER: Then you get to the question of what is necessary for policymakers to know when they presume to head a government as complicated as ours, in a world so dangerous as the one we live in. Can we afford to have people lead us who have not been schooled, at least in part, in these matters? And I would say we are taking a huge risk if we elect people as our president who can't do these things. It really is a huge risk. The fallback is to have staff, including your vice-president and secretaries, who do know, and who can bring you up to speed. The president would have to have the personal characteristics of allowing himself to be tutored by his subordinates.

Jimmy Carter had that. Of the presidents I've observed, at first hand, in these kinds of situationJohnson, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush, ClintoCarteBusJerry Ford was too busy with other things, but he allowed his subordinates to do what was necessary; he was there too short a time to really judge. Certainly ClintoClinton just ate it up. He had this enormous, voracious appetite for knowledge of all kinds, as we know.

Q: Looking at two thingone, it was on your watch when the whole Iranian revolution happened. How good werlooking at it now, how do you feel we were doing, intelligence-wise, with that?

MILLER: The most important information about Iran was on the surface. It was always on the surface. It was not an intelligence issue, it was a societal judgment, or should have beeit was a judgment about the nature of Iranian society and how rapidly it was moving. I would say it was policy directions that were crucial to our leaders. The judgments about Iranian society were not dependent on correct intelligence, they were not dependent othe kind of intelligence provided by the CIA and the military intelligence agencies, or the FBI or cooperation with other intelligence agencies. The necessary information and analysis was coming from State, from journalists, from academics, from business. Iran was at that time an open society. Iran was not closed. It was wide open, there was a huge American presence; it was easy to have a full awareness of what was happening. It was the psychological problem of denial about what was happening, you might say, and an unmovable comfort with past arrangements that needed to be changed. The public warning signals were very strong. They began in the most dramatic way, in 1976, when the shah had the spectacular Persepolis celebration of the 3,000 years of monarchy in Iran, where he crowned himself, and the great excesses of his regime were seen by all of the world who came to this great mega-party in Persepolis. They could see the poverty and wealth, the dramatic excess.

Of course, the Iranian students who were here, in the United States 50,000 a year, made it very clear by their constant demonstrations against the shah where they thought Iran should gand these students were the hope of the future. I would say many of the most diligent scholars, and academics of contemporary Iran spoke of the dangers. When Helms went out, in the Nixon period ?

Q: He was the director of the CIA, or had been.

MILLER: Yes, and he was sent out to Iran in exile, so to speak. This was in '75, in that period. It was very clear that things were rumbling, and within the embassy there was a dispute. The decisions really came down to, in the Jimmy Carter period, when the unpopularity of the shah was extremely pronounced and growing, and the issue was, what's happening? "Is there an alternative to the Shah?" And the answer was, he's extremely unpopular. The judgment question was, do we stick with him or do we support an alternativwhat is the alternative? The debate in the Carter administration was between Brzezinski and Vancthe NSC vs. State.

Vance was of the view that the shah was finished and we should support the nationalist democrats, as weak as they were. Brzezinski was of the vieas was Kissinger and the establishmenthat the shah had served us well, and we should stick with him. So it was that issue until the very end. A year before the end, when George Ball was brought in to have an independent review. He made a review, and he said, "Support the nationalist democrats," but it was too late.

Q: Did you have any personal involvement, being an Iranian hand?

MILLER: I did, all the way through.

Q: In what way?

MILLER: Kissinger asked for views, as did Brzezinski, and I knew them both, and their key staff. George Ball asked for my views and advice all the way through his inquiry. The Iranianparticularly the democrats, but also including the shah's peopll saw them all constantly, as I had done through the years. I conveyed their respective opinions and views back and forth. I think there was a very full awareness of what was going on. The Iran debate turned on the judgment about whether the shah could make it. There was a profound misunderstanding of how deep the discontent was, within Iranian society. The sub-corollary to this, and it is an important one, is how deeply the American experience had affected Iran.

Q: Let me stop here.

[END TAPE]

Q: This is tape six, side one, with Bill Miller. Yes.

MILLER: How deeply the American experience had affected the elite of Iran. American values were the issue for Iranians in large measure, both positive and negative. The negative view of American values resonated very deeply within traditional Iranian society. The clerics, those who were offended by the casual informality, what they saw as indulgent promiscuity and an assault on traditional values, you might say, the traditional Iranians had a sort of fundamentalist, somewhat similar to some American fundamentalist, kind of revulsion. The positive values of democratic governance, of freedom of expression, which the shah unwisely crushed, had only theoretical resonance. That's something about Iran that still remains to be understood by our leaders, namely, how profound the American effect has been in the Middle East, not to mention just Iran.

Q: No, it gets replayed again and again, what we do in Palestine, but also our culture. We're going through sort of a cultural revolution of our own right now, and it's a little bit anything goes and all of this, and other people looking at this and not with these ...

MILLER: Cultural understanding is a very loose term, but it is an important part of the work of Foreign Service, of diplomacy, even now. It has always been, but understanding these great social movements that are in turmoil now, that affect our interests so directly in ways they did not in the past, because they were so far away, so remote, and now no place is remote, given the technology that exists in weaponry and communications. The Foreign Service mission is even greater: the understanding of cultures and where they're headed and who is leading those cultures and where they come from, what their thinking is. This makes the Foreign Service mission, it seems to me, of far greater in importance now than it ever was, say, through the Cold War, where there was an imposed distance, there was a barrier of a kind that was hard to breach.

But now, that gap has disappeared forever. That's one aspect of my own understanding about Iran. The importance of knowing why Hezbollah, who Hezbollah, and do you really know what Hezbollah is? What are you going to do about Hezbollah bands of popular movements as opposed to small lunatic bands of terrorist killers?

Q: Hezbollah being? You might explain who Hezbollah is.

MILLER: Hezbollah is one of the main groups on our terrorist list. They are Shia, a Shia group that's based in Lebanon, heavily supported by Syria, logistically, and financially in the past by Iran in the effort against the Israelis in the Middle East conflict. In recent years, since Israel withdrew from Lebanon, southern Lebanon, the militant side of Hezbollah has diminished. Their cadres of killers remain, but Hezbollah is a main political party in Lebanon, perhaps the largest, representing the Shias of Lebanon. Their leaders are well known to the leaders of the Middle Eastern countries, including Iran. They're the same age as the American-trained, educated heads of ministries in Iran now, and they had many common causes that we should know about. The Iranians have made clear to me, for example, and to others, that they would be willing to bring Hezbollah leaders together with serious Americans for discussion, and it seems to me this is the kind of thing that Foreign Service people should do, as ordinary bread and butter activities.

Q: The other thing, looking at it again, during the time when you were dealing with the oversight, to the layman, not a Soviet hand, I look upon the tremendous amount of effort we put into finding out what makes the Soviet Union tick and all this, beyond the military, I mean, the Kremlinology, the politics and all this. But, somehow, we didn't seem to get it right. I mean, when the Soviet Union collapsed, as you mentioned before, our embassy was almost a drag on the process.

MILLER: I think that illustrates the necessity for flexibility in our instruments. What I mean by that is that embassy officers, let's say the core officers who are singled out early in their career because they seem to have a gift for understanding movements and have the abilities to deal with leadership, and who are assigned in the area in order to deepen their knowledge and range of contact, ought to have the ability to go in and out, and to deal with groups that are outside of the formal structures.

What I mean by that is to give Foreign Service officers the broadest possible range of contacts, a greater chance to travel, to be involved in the societies, particularly the intellectual groups. For the Soviet Union that put such a high value on intelligentsia, we should target the Russian intelligence in order to understand what's going on there now that the Soviet Union is gone.

I would say that a number of the Foreign Service officers were very sensitive to the changes as they were taking place in the Soviet Union. They reported very well as they were taking place, but they were not prophetic, with the exceptions of people like George Kennan, who saw it instantly. When Gorbachev came in, he said, "This man is different," and that judgment came out of his deep knowledge of the place and its people and even the regime. There were others in other foreign services, colleagues of Kennan who understood that, and certainly in the academic world, the debate about the significance of Gorbachev was something that began immediately.

Q: Well, one of the other things was almost a structural thing. I mean, at the time that you were looking over our intelligence activities, did you see, were we reporting on this Soviet Union really has major difficulties and they're falling farther and farther behind, sort of information gathering and the knowledge business and all.

MILLER: You mean the idea of the Soviet Union as a failed society? Yes, but among the tools that are available to the Foreign Service, I'll narrow it to that. One is access to all the other groups that were involved in the Soviet Union, the academics, the journalists, the nuclear scientists, the NGO world, their advisers. This is where I would say there's a real need, a constant need, in the Foreign Service to bring in the outside world, as advisers, colleagues and to take the Washington life far more seriously than they do.

The assignment in Washington, it's my impression, was for many a real drag and still is, they couldn't wait to get back out to the field. Valuable Department assignments can be given, but there's also the opportunity to make generational contacts on the Hill. That's an obvious work they have to do throughout their career, to take advantage of expert knowledge of other groups. Presently, a low value is placed on that. There's a lot of busywork, but there's not enough study and contemplation and taking advantage of what the rest of our society knows about the people elsewhere in the world we re interested in. I would think from Bureau Directors on down in the Middle East Bureau, they should be meeting at least once a week with the academics and journalists about what is going on in the region.

Q: Well, I'm afraid, as you put it, busywork absorbs our people far too much.

MILLER: I think that's a matter of leadership, and that's one aspect of Foreign Service life, as you well know, that you have to steel yourself against the numbing effect of the grind, and as you rise in rank, you have to create space rather than getting constricted. And I think all too often it has the constricting effect rather than the expanding effect, but that may have to do with personalities.

Q: Well, then, moving on in, what, '81?

MILLER: Yes.

Q: You moved to Fletcher, but did you get any feel for a change when the Reagan administration came onboard, I mean, before you left?

MILLER: Yes. With Reagan's presidency, there was a profound change in attitude towards all aspects of life. Domestically, the agenda changed, and the whole idea of national security changed. National security became a patriotic value, even if unexamined. It was unpatriotic to question or even examine the given idea of national security, that the tilt was now in that direction, whereas in the immediate post-Vietnam period, the issue of national security was constantly examined: What is it? Don't sell me bill of goods. What is it? How am I secure? What price am I paying for my security? They were asking these kinds of questions everywhere in Congress, in universities, in the press, in the churches. With Reagan, the questions were not asked, rather than acceptance there was optimism: "Don't ask questions about national security. I'm telling you it's national security. Trust me. It's sunshine, and we have to get over the syndrome of examining ourselves. We have to value these American ideals again." That was a change in mentality by the very people whose views on these matters were questioned, so they came back in, they're saying, "You question our values? We're here again, we're back in power now. Our values are now dominant."

I daresay that's been the pattern since Vietnam, back and forth, back and forth on this issue of whether our values can be examined and still be a patriot. That's the issue now.

Q: At the time, I'm talking about really just before you left the committee staff, was there concern about Reagan, who was coming in from pretty far right on the political spectrum, that this is going to change what you all were doing?

MILLER: Yes, there was a concern, of course, but there was also a belief that the statutory base could not be reversed, which proved to be largely correct, that the threshold of required awareness had been raised irrevocably. The key to the issues that we were contending with depended on informed awareness, and while that might vary a few degrees in one direction or another, the threshold had been raised sufficiently to never go back to the past where the president could say, "I know this, nobody else should know it, trust me."

Q: During the Reagan administration, you had the Ollie North, Iran-Contra, which was proof of this, that, in a way, by the time you were with this oversight committee, also hadn't sort of almost a generational changl mean, the World War II operative OSS types and all had left? I mean, a new, more intellectual apparatchik had appeared in our intelligence.

MILLER: Yes, I think that's the case. The first two generations of intelligence operatives, as well as Foreign Service officers, as well as legislators, had passed from the scene. This was the beginning of a post-Vietnam generation. And, for Reagan and Reagan's people, confronted with the dramatic change in the Soviet Union, you were having a thorough, radical change, where the threat disappears, and a very valuable political tool, the threat is lost. The Reagan period is so interesting, Reagan himself, but even the neocons who came with him were faced with this conceptual problem of how to deal with a disappeared threat. Of course, they found more threats.

I've asked myself the question repeatedly, "If a different president had been in place on 9/11, wouldn't the response have been different?" He could have defined it as requiring a police action to deal with a small group of deranged lunatic fanatics rather than suggesting a world conspiracy, and I think that's still at issue. In 1981 what was driving me to go to Fletcher was fatigue, more than anything else.

Q: Well, you were at Fletcher from when to when?

MILLER: From 1981 until 1986, when I responded to George Kennan's judgment about Gorbachev and took over the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations, and then later the International Foundation. But my time at Fletcher was wonderful. My friend, Ted Eliot, was the dean. Ted Eliot was a colleague of mine in Iran. He was economic officer at what was one of my first posts, and we were very good friends. Our families were close. He was later ambassador in Afghanistan, and a very fine person. He asked me to come to Fletcher as one of his associate deans and as Adjunct Professor of International Politics. I was happy to do that to recharge, really.

Q: Well, I think the training of diplomats, across the board, is very important. If somebody says, "I want to be a diplomat," I'm talking about almost of any country, particularly of America, what did Fletcher do and didn't do, do you feel, to prepare them to be a diplomat?

MILLER: Well, I think you're asking a radical on this. I think the best Foreign Service officers should come from the best universities, places where their minds can be stretched the most. The study of diplomacy is less important than the study of any subject to its maximum, to develop the mind, the analytic capacity to understand new situations, new ideas, new concepts.

The British Foreign Service, for example, looked for people who were from the best universities and did well in the Classics. Greek and Latin was more desirable than modern history, on the arrogant assumption, perhaps, that if you were educated you knew modern history anyway. You went to university to study things that you couldn't pick up in the normal course of things. Of course, that's a fiction, too.

I think that the best preparation is deep study in any subject, certainly as an undergraduate. Fletcher's great value, and at other places like Fletcher, of which there are six, perhaps, in our country, like SAIS (School of Advanced International Studies), Maxwell, Chicago, a handful, MA programs, is the mix with students from other countries. In the case of Fletcher, they trained diplomats from a number of newly emerging countries, Pakistan being one, and so on and so forth, and those long-term contacts are very important, I think. China, from 1980 on, sent their young diplomats there. I had in one of my classes several Chinese, and they became very good friends. One of my students, who wrote an excellent paper on Taiwan, which I still have, is ambassador in Egypt now, and he was prior DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission) here in Washington.

That's the value of Fletcher, and, of course, Fletcher provides training in quantitative economics and some of the tools of analysis. But none of the tools of analysis were of such a nature that they couldn't be obtained in the Foreign Service itself.

Q: I'm wondering, what was your view during the '80s of political science as performed in American academic institutions?

MILLER: I was deeply immersed in several of the major institutions in the Boston areMIT, HarvarI was a fellow at both places, as well as at Fletcher, in arms control, in foreign policy generally, and then the discussions expanded to other universities. So I had a fairly good feel for academic thinking at that time. Quantification, put it in numbers, bar graphs, trends that were measurable was a first priority. It was a hard approach, in a way, hard meaning politics wasn't a number, politics was soft, so it was misleading in that sense, but the numbers approach was helpful. As far as political science writing goes, the academic conceptual discussions were rather barren, I would say, given the issues of tremendous change taking place in the Soviet Union and other parts of the world.

The most valuable academic writing was in the direction of history, what actually happened, who the players were and what they were thinking, what they stood for, who supported them. Political science as a science I've never believed in. As a way of thinking, looking carefully at political systems, and comparing institutions of governments and their histories is extremely valuable and important. But the theoretical constructs out beyond the historical framework I don't think were very interesting to me.

Q: Well, I come from more or less the same background as you, of Fred Schumann and all this sort of stuff, and we learnepolitical science in our era was how governments work, which is very good. But I've talked to people who later on have gone back to universities as part of their training and all, and almost completely there's no relevance for their work in what the political scientists are doing. I mean, there doesn't seem to be any connect there.

MILLER: Yes, well, that's the consequence of quantification, I'd say, is that you get more and more abstract as you get closer to the numbers rather than trying to understand the humans that produced the material for the numbers.

Q: Well, how did Fletcher deal with this? I mean, basically, Fletcher is a place to train people to go out and do things in international relations, isn't it, as opposed to being an institution that's going out to teach more teachers of teachers and that sort of thing?

MILLER: Well, I'd say at least in the time I was there, it was successful in what it was doing. It put a high value on area study and disciplines of international law, international economics, institutionally defined, that is, the activities of the major international financial and economic institutions. Yes, I'd say it stressed the practical. But I think the best that one could say about Fletcher and places like it are the collegial beginnings for students that take place there, internationally and among your own countrymen. That's the greatest value.

A lot of very able people went to Fletcher. My friend Tom Pickering and a whole host of people who were there, were they any better for going there? Maybe. But is it absolutely necessary as a step? No.

Q: No, but it does open the mind up. In a way, there's a certain self-selection process, isn't there?

MILLER: Yes.

Q: You look at this, you look at Tom Pickering and you look at, say, Winston Lord and others, these are people who moved on. Steve Lowe I think was there.

MILLER: Yes, he was. Yes.

Q: So there's a selection process that people don't really know is happening, but it is happening.

MILLER: Well, it's the selection process and who is selected that's the subject I want to focus on. That's good, and it's a deepening of the mind in subjects that they might not have otherwise had. But I would say, for Americans, isolated as we are on our continent, we need to go to other places, other cultures. I was very blessed to have gone to England at the end of the empire and Europe at the end of the terrible world war, and to be allowed to see those places at a very impressionable age, and to meet my contemporaries who had that experience. Of course, Fletcher is a way of doing some of that without leaving the country.

Q: Many of our people found it a broadening experience and a good experience, slightly different, who attended the war colleges.

MILLER: Absolutely.

Q: Particularly now that so many of our people who come in have not had military experience, and who both pass on their knowledge but also understand the military is of great value.

MILLER: Yes, I would subscribe to that. I have given many talks at the war colleges, and I can see that interaction. I think it's very important to the military to have the exposure to our diplomats and people who are doing non-military things. But our exposure to the military is throughout the career. I mean, my first post, I had the military at a MAAG mission in Iran.

Q: I mean, most of us have lived with the military. Looking at it, again, going back to your time at Fletcher, did you have any contact with schools of diplomacy elsewhere? I know this June the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna is having its 250th anniversary, but how about other schools?

MILLER: Oh, yes, we went to all of them, because there's a network and the faculty has gone through each other's schools, taught at each other's schools, and the diplomats who become professors either long term or short term move around a bit. There's a community of interest and exposure, and that's helpful.

Q: Was there a different approach, a European approach or individual approach or not?

MILLER: Of the places I've seen in Europe, there is a difference. Yes, there is a difference. The Europeans were like their universities. There was far less attention and more individual freedom. Students were left to their own devices. The American schools were much better, much better. The academies of actual diplomacy that I've seen in Moscow and Kyiv, and I saw a little bit of how the British trained their people at the end, before going A-100 equivalent, or A-100, like ...

Q: Anyone that would be in our basic officer corps.

MILLER: With one exception is that for most of the Europeans, you had to get into the training school to get into the service, with the exception of England, where Oxford and Cambridge or London were required to get in. Certainly in recent years, way beyond Oxford and Cambridge and London.

The specialized education in foreign affairs and of the kind we have at Fletcher, is useful. One can do advanced work at traditional universities, as well, with equal effect, I would say, with the exception of the interaction with pros in your line of work. But what was happening at Fletcher at that time was that fewer people were going into the Foreign Service, and more and more were going into business, international finance and business, seeing that path as more lucrative, certainly, but also as more interesting in their minds, because of a disillusionment with, in some cases with policies, but more often a disillusionment with bureaucratic life. I don't think that pattern and its dilemmas have changed.

Q: I don't think so either, no. How about the nongovernmental organizations, excluding the financthe other one is not very lucrative.

MILLER: Well, NGO life is very different, it seems to me. It's advocacy, for the most part, most dramatically evident in the foreign field, in human rights activity. The Human Rights activists have a special mentality, deeper at work using that compelling moral sense that some people have. And they're willing to devote their lives to these kinds of causes. There is a kind of life work that's very important. It certainly was in the Cold War period, in the time of international tyrannies of the kind we've lived through.

But NGO life, which I know quite well, having spent a number of years doing it, about 10 years very intensively, is a form of commitment, very closely related to the major issues, if it's effective. NGOs are a characteristic of democratic societies. That's very important, fueled as they are by the remarkable phenomenon of foundations, philanthropic foundations. NGOs absolutely require free money that is not attached to governments, but given because of the merits of a particular view or a proposition. NGOs give a kind of focus that is not available to governments themselves. NGOs become an adjunct and impetus to policymaking. They are a remarkable part of democratic governance in a way that is peculiarly American.

Q: Well, what we're doing here, right now, the two of us talking. I'm essentially representing a nongovernmental organization, which I started this [oral history] program on my own.

MILLER: Bravo for you. It's great.

Q: I mean, the point is, within our society, you can do this.

MILLER: Yes.

Q: You can say, "I've got a good idea, and I'm really dedicated to do this. Hey, fellows, help me out." If you have luck and find other people likeminded, you can put something together.

MILLER: No, it's wonderful, and we're so lucky to live in this remarkable country that makes such things possible, which underlines the itinerant point of my life, which, I suppose, is that foreign affairs in American democratic society is enhanced by all of these variants that allow knowledge and conviction to have expression. And the contrary is that you can stifle, in the absence of these qualities, extremely important ways of doing things. If you do stifle them, you move in the direction of authoritarianism, particularly in large societies of our dimension.

Q: And when one looks at authoritarian societies, they don't look that great, quite frankly, as far as they don't have the self corrections and all that the democratic ones do, I think.

MILLER: No.

Q: Well, Bill, I think this is probably a good place to stop, and we'll pick this up the next time, when you left Fletcher. And you left Fletcher when, in '86?

MILLER: Eighty-six.

Q: Eighty-six.

MILLER: After 1986 I would occasionally come to Fletcher as a consultant. In 1986 I went to the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations as its President.

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Q: Okay, today is the 30th of December, 2003. Bill, you were working with?

MILLER: The American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations.

Q: And you were doing that from when to when?

MILLER: I was President from 1986 until 1992, when I knew I was going to Ukraine as ambassador.

Q: Okay. That's an interesting thing. For one thing, the committee had twell, it didn't have to change its name, did it?

MILLER: It did change its name, and as with many other organizations, university programs that had to do with the Soviet Union, they had to find some new way of describing what had been the largest country in the world. The American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations Board had a great debate on whether they should include all the countries of the former Soviet Union, or just some, or one. And George Kennan said, "The big one is Russia. It should become the American Committee on U.S.-Russian Relations. And that's what happened, even though the rubric was broad enough to include the relations that Russia had with other former states of the Soviet Union.

The State Department, you'll recall, had great trouble figuring out what it was going to be called and where it would be placed, whether it would be a power unto itself or subsumed under Europe.

Q: Something like that, divvying up at the State Department, probably took as much diplomacy as the Congress of Vienna or something like that, more power plays than one can imagine.

MILLER: Well, those were real stakes for bureaucrats.

Q: Well, anyway, back in '86, when you went there, how did you see at that time the purpose of this committee?

MILLER: I had gone to the Soviet Union on a trip in 1982 with Lugar and Biden.

Q: These are two senators.

MILLER: From the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Bill Cohen, who was then a member of the House. This was a marvelous exploratory trip in which we met a lot of the new leadership coming into power. In Moscow itself, we really had a good look at the ongoing Kremlin politics. It was a very interesting trip. I can recall going to Zagorsk, the city where the Russian Orthodox Church had its permitted seminary. It was one of the two or three places that monks were allowed to be trained.

Of course, it was still a museum, technically, under the Soviet Union. The law on religion had been relaxed enough to allow people who were believers to practice their religion, including continuing advanced religious education. There was still no proselytizing permitted, although it did go on. But in Zagorsk, we had this extraordinary set of conversations with the future leaders of the Orthodox Church of the independent Russia.

It was a deeply moving experience, because it was very clear that religion, that the great enemy of the Soviet state ideologically was not only being permitted, but it was flourishing, and this was certainly an indication of change. That was the beginning of, I'd say, my interest in getting involved in the changing Soviet Union.

Q: Well, how did you get onto this trip?

MILLER: Well, each of the senators I knew quite well from the earlier days, when I was staff director of the Intelligence Committees. All of the senators served on the committees and they were good friends, Senator Lugar was s student at Oxford when I was there. We have known each other well since then. I had testified on the Hill I'd say once or twice a year on two subjects, intelligence matters and Iran. It's interesting to me, looking back now, Iran was a constant subject for me, and I was able to contribute certainly on the question of what was happening in Iran, throughout my adult life, from the time I first went to Iran.

But I'd say in 1986 is when this interest in the Soviet Union became a focus, when I was asked by the board of the American Committee, whose chair was George Kennan, if I'd become the director and the president of the organization. This was a small 501(c)(3) organization, that is, a nonprofit organization, an NGO, whose purpose was to bridge the gap between the official world and the private world on matters pertaining to U.S.- Soviet relations. It was composed of people who had had and still had contact with the Soviet Union in diplomacy, science, education, journalism, business, the arts.

George Kennan, who I had known first in the '50s, felt deeply that fundamental change was taking place in the Soviet Union and that the American Committee could play a very important, present role in the new circumstances. The American Committee had been one of three major organizations that had been bridged between the two countries. Pugwash (a group of scientists) and The Dartmouth Conference were the other two. They were conveyors of opinions and positions of the governments of both sides, as well as that of universities and nongovernmental groups. These three NGOs were examples of track-two diplomacy, and they played a very important part. The American Committee was not a big membership organization. It was always intended to have an active board which would undertake to go to the Soviet Union and were able to have interaction with both our government and their government.

The board was very attractive to me because of their varied experience. George Kennan convinced me that my lack of knowledge of the Soviet Union at the present time was not a drawback, but possibly an advantage, and that what was needed was intense activity in the Soviet Union to describe what was happening and to learn from that immediate experience.

Q: You got into this in '86. What was the attitude? This was sort of still the early Gorbachev period, wasn't it?

MILLER: Just the beginning of Gorbachev.

Q: Was there the feeling that things reallboth the generational thing, but was this going to be a different Soviet Union?

MILLER: Yes. Most of the board thought that it was going to be a very different Soviet Union, and that reform and involvement in the world community in a less hostile way was the direction that the Soviet Union was going under Gorbachev. The reasoning for that was that Yuri Andropov had begun the process with a set of reforms that were aimed at temporarily picking up of the pieces of the fundamental reforms begun from Khrushchev after the long, deadening regime of Brezhnev, particular the end of Brezhnev's life, when he was a vegetable.

Andropov's previous job as head of the KGB was to know what was happening inside the country, looking out for subversive activity, as well as knowing what was happening throughout the world. A lot of the interesting people that emerged from the Andropov period were experts on the United States. I'd say Arbatov's institute, George Arbatov himself, Fyodor Burlatsky, who was the editor of Iturnaya Gazeta, the leading Soviet literary magazine and one of the Soviet's leading intellectuals, Posner, the Kremlin spokesman with a Western sounding voice, who came from Brooklyn were typical of the Andropov political intellectual cadre. The awareness of having to engage with the United States in a more civilized way was evident in Andropov's attempts to soften the hostile rhetoric. Andropov died after a year and then came the deading leadership of a Siberian, Anatoly Chernenko, the octogenarian, who lasted two years before his death. The Politburo and the Central Committee decided it was necessary to bring in a younger generation after the experience of the last years of Brezhnev and the two successors when the Soviet Union seemed increasingly adrift.

Q: You're talking about Andropov.

MILLER: After Andropov, and Chernenko. The battle in the Central Committee and within the Politburo for leadership was between the major factions. Gorbachev had been promoted by the reformers who had been brought along by Andropov, and the hard-line faction, you might say, the more orthodox group, the rogues whose views were more in the direction of Marxist-Leninist ideological positions. The leading contender of that group, Romanov of Leningrad, who fortunately for Gorbachev and for us was a drunkard and had collected many enemies along the way. Gorbachev had risen from relatively modest circumstances and had found far fewer enemies along the way to the top, was seen as a very amiable, bright and pleasant personality, even among that group. Because of Molotov's vote, he was chosen.

With that history, Kennan and the other American Committee on U.S.-soviet Relations thought there was going to be a very different way of looking at things in the Soviet Union, and that it was time to press for much closer relations, particularly in the light of the aftermath of Vietnam and in the face of a deep sense of nuclear danger. We've forgotten now how intense that fearful thought was, and how strong the belief was of the necessity to bring the nuclear arms race to a halt. I decided to take the offered position of President. The members of the board, being as prominent and committed as they were, were able to get substantial support from the major foundations for the committee's future expanded activities.

Q: Who were some of the major figures on the board?

MILLER: From the business world there was Donald Kendall of Pepsi. He was symptomatic of the trade between the United States and the Soviet Union that had existed in the past, of the exchange of Stolichnaya Vodka for Pepsi and Fanta soft drinks, and as it turned out, shipping, and many other things that produced money. On the fringe was Armand Hammer of that uncertainty, but that's oil development and a long history of working very closely with the Soviet Union as some have suggested as a fellow traveler, even an agent, as his full biographic history has unfolded. Father Ted Hesburgh, who was president of Notre Dame at the time, and Jerry Wiesner, who was president of MIT, Bob McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, people of that character.

Q: Well, in bureau, when you got there, did you see, was there sort of the same division as in the Politburo, the ones who saw the Soviet Union as being sort of cast in concrete and the other ones saying, "This is a real seismic change that's happening."

MILLER: No, what was interesting about this board was that they had all traveled to the Soviet Union and they had been on the ground, so to speak, and they thought there was a change. Where they differed was where the change would end up, but that a process of change was underway, we all agreed.

Q: Sort of in the climate of opinion, there's two major factormore, but one would be on the Hill and have people who basically made their careers anti-Communists, and the State Department expertise, which had always seen the Soviet Union as being a bastion and not a loose structure.

MILLER: That's true, but the arms control issue was a focus for that debate, and the majority, substantial majority, a treaty majority, that is, two thirds, was for exploring the possibility of rapprochement, of a real opening. I think one reason I was asked to become President of the American Committee, is because of my long experience on the Hill, for being very involved in arms control issues, and intelligence. And I certainly knew the Soviet estimates and the bureaucracies. That mix, knowing the department, having served as a Foreign Service officer, knowing the Hill, having been there for 15 years in major staff positions and knowing the Washington bureaucracy, and, as a result of many interactions with USA-Canada, I knew Arbatov from the time he first came to Washington. Arbatov came to Senator Cooper's office in his first visit to the Hill in 1967. USA-Canada became the official interface with the American Committee. They made the arrangements for visas and access in the first instance. That access expanded to the Academy of Sciences, generally, and then in the later Gorbachev period from 1988 on, when we were bringing young Gorbachev reformists to the United States, we had direct access to the reform political movements such as the Inter-regional group and to the dissidents like Andrei Sakharov and Sergei Kovalev directly.

The State Department, the Embassy in Moscow for a long time had been a bastion, a fortress, contained by the Soviet security apparatus. It was a very difficult place to work, although not impossible, but all Embassy officials were constrained in their movements at a minimum. It was easier for nongovernmental groups to see individuals in the other sectors of society beyond the diplomatic realm. NGOs were a very valuable source of information, obviously, for our government. At the end of the Gorbachev period, the embassies were relatively free from official constraints, but not completely. Access that was available to the track two world was completely opeeven to the inner recesses of the Kremlin, to every political party, including the die-hard Communists, every corner of the military-industrial complex, the Academy of Sciences, and all the dissident groups.

Q: Was this a gradual process? When you took over in '86, this was not the case, was it?

MILLER: No. It happened very quickly. What Kennan thought would happen happened, and the opening up happened very quickly. It happened so quickly, in fact, that the idea of setting up an office in Moscow seemed a very good idea. It seemed to be possible to create an operating foundation, which in my view would be a natural progression from the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations. The operating foundation would be intended to be a viable way of actively and usefully pushing ideas and stimulating initiatives back and forth. Such a foundation could assist the dynamic, positive movements that were taking place in Soviet society as a whole, beyond the government. This was an extraordinary possibility, because until 1986, only Soviet government initiatives were possible. There was nothing else, no other way.

A new foundation was created along these lines by the joint initiative of MacArthur Foundation, Carnegie, Rockefeller and Ford and Alton Jones Foundations. They created a foundation that expanded the American Committee Board and added Nobel Prize winners and also included members from several other countries, as far-flung as Brazil. The new foundation board included the West Germans and East Germans, some Swedes and Africans. The idea was to connect the intelligentsia of the Western world that had worked with the Soviet intelligentsia, particularly the Gorbachevians into one Board. Such a foundation was created; and I was asked to be the president of the American part of the foundation.

Q: This is the one in Moscow?

MILLER: Moscow and Washington. It was formally called the International Foundation For the Survival and Development of Humanity. That long name, that large concept, was insisted upon by Andrei Sakharov, who was a founding board member and whose return to Moscow after exile in Gorky was partially a result of pressure from the International Foundation Board. We asked Gorbachev to release him, and that we wanted to make him a board member. Gorbachev agreed to that. He was released, and the founding meeting of the foundation, in 1998, took place after a conference, a very Soviet-like conference on world environmental problems and what should be done about it. It was one of these super-extravaganzas where there would be lectures on the nuclear danger and poetry readings by Yevgeny Yevtushenko discussed in his velvet suit reading from his poetry and gala presentations of folk dancing and ballet pas de deux, of course, and opera arias. Everything at these stupendous affairs, was spectacular, as the Russians would say.

Shortly after the conference, Gorbachev convened a meeting in the Kremlin with the newly formed foundation board and the just-returned Sakharov. It was decided that there would be a foundation, that Gorbachev would support it and he would meet with them several times a year on the subject of arms control, the environment and better political and economic relations between the Soviet Union and the United States and the west, and economic development. The name for the foundation that Sakharov insisted upon was really the correct one.

Q: Well, it gave you a fairly broad hunting license.

MILLER: Yes, and the importance of this group was very clear to me from the meeting between Sakharov and Gorbachev, which I may have described to you.

Q: No, you haven't.

MILLER: Gorbachev and Sakharov had not met each other since Sakharov and Elena Bonner's return from exile in Gorky. Gorbachev had telephoned Sakharov in Gorky and said, "You're free to come back," and Sakharov came back. Our board meeting took place in an elegant, very elegant room in the inner recesses of the Kremlin. It is called the malachite room. Indeed, the whole room was made out of malachite, the green mineral from the Urals that is so characteristic of Russian taste. It was one of the favorite inner meeting rooms of Kremlin leaders and the Czars before the Soviets.

The perestroika group of Gorbachev was there, which included the great historian Dmitri Likhachev, a Leningrad academician, from St. Petersburg, really. He's a historian of ancient Russia who had been exiled early in the '20s to the north to the Solovetsky monastery because of his anti-Soviet interest in Russian history and religion. He had survived that, and was now the tutor to Raisa Gorbachev teaching her about the history of early Russia.

Q: This is Gorbachev's wife.

MILLER: Yes. He was a highly respected figure, a moral force, even in the Soviet times, someone who never accepted the Soviet ideology, but was so highly respected that he was allowed to work on early Russian history and religion as an academician. And there was Alexander Yakovlev, Gorbachev's major speechwriter. There was Tatiana Zaslavskaya, who was the great sociologist from Novosibirsk, who did the crucially important societal analysis for Andropov, that said the Soviet man had developed to such a level that it was no longer possible to rule him in the ways of Stalinist times. It was now (this was written in 1979) necessary to have demokratizia (democratization), perestroika (reconstruction), and glasnost (openness). This was because she maintained, the education, the increase in economic well being, the mobility of the Soviet citizen to see the world, was such that the Soviet man could understand what was happening to him, and in the world as a whole. As a consequence a change of the Soviet system that Stalin had created had to take place. It was no longer possible to control information. Information had to be extended through education and with accurate reporting. Gorbachev also read this report and used it as a basis for his reforms.

And there were a number of scientists, very important ones, Eugeniy Velikhov, who was the vice president of the Academy of Science, a nuclear scientist, and head of the arms control group in the Soviet Union. Roald Sagdeev, who is now here in the United States, was head of the Soviet space program, and a number of others including the Bulgarian mathematician, Blagovest Sendov who later was prime minister of Independent Bulgaria.

When Gorbachev was introduced to Sakharov and Sakharov shook his hand almost like a bullfighter. There was no "Thank you very much for bringing me back from exile," he just said, "How do you do?" Sakharov was polite, certainly not deferential. It was mano a mano (hand to hand). I had been talking to Sakharov at that moment when Gorbachev came forward to Sakharov. I could see the power of this electric situation where they both knew they had a role to play in the future and, indeed, they did. The meeting that followed, this is even more extraordinary.

We were placed around the oval table in the Malachite room, and an introduction was given by Dr. Jerry Wiesner about the purposes of the foundation, the whole objectives were to improve relations between East and West, ideas for nuclear arms control and an improved environment, all of these very compelling issues could only be solved by international cooperation. This organization, the International Foundation could do much to promote this, by meeting with the leaders of the major countries involved, and with major public and NGO international organizations. Then Gorbachev gave a review of his program of perestroika and where he wanted to take the country. He went through a very familiar reviefamiliar to the group there, using a rhetoric of great promise and optimism. He spoke for about 40 minutes, then stopped, and said, "I would like to hear your opinion," and went around the group of about 15 or so of us.

The very first person, because of his age, on his left was academician Dmitri Likhachev, and Likhachev said, "This is very encouraging, Mr. Secretary. We hope that these changes come about that you're advocating. We all advocate this. But I have to tell you that even in your regime, under perestroika, there is great injustice in the Soviet Union, still. There are people imprisoned unjustly even now."

The next person to speak was Sakharov. Sakharov was holding his head in his left hand and his head was tilted toward Gorbachev. This was a characteristic pose of his. Sakharov wouldn't say a word for what seemed a very long time, an eternity. It was only a few seconds, obviously, but then he spoke and said, "Yes, Dmitri Likhachev is right. There is great injustice in the Soviet Union, still, and you have promised to do much about it, and here are 200 cases of people unjustly imprisoned." He stood up and put the filed dossiers right in front of Gorbachev, right in front of his place at the table.

Gorbachev looked at this pile of dossiers and handed the file to Yakovlev, who seated was next to him, and said, "I will look into these." He said in response, "Unfortunately, the law lags behind the reality of society," Gorbachev said. As a footnote, 198 of the 200 cases came out positively. That is, they released 198 of the 200 persons in the files Sakharov gave to him. So this was the beginning of the work of the foundation. We went around the table turning to other subjects like the prospects for reductions in nuclear arms.

I focus on Likhachev and Sakharov, because I found them the most appealing of the group, although all of the perestroika group were extraordinary. I and the others of the International Foundation saw them frequently and worked closely with them, and I think it had a very profound influence. Likhachev was such an extraordinary decent, appealing human being. He acted as a host of the foundation, when all of the members of the foundation went to St. Petersburg. Leningrad was becoming St. Petersburg at that point. It was called Petersburg at that point. The "Saint" was added towards the end of Gorbachev's career.

Q: Where Petrograd and ...

MILLER: But you could see the symbol of change on the buses and taxis. They put Petersburg on their public vehicles. It was not quite St. Petersburg. Anyway, we met in the Academy of Sciences in Petersburg/Leningrad and in the places of the academy, scientific institutes, where the nuclear scientists congregated, as well as academics from other disciplines.

Sakharov, who I had admired since I first read his 1968 essay, Progress, Co-existence and Intellectual Freedom, which really changed the world of my thinking on the possibilities of rapprochement with the Soviet Union. In 1968 when a remarkable edition of the New York Times printed the entire essay. Some time later; Sakharov signed a copy of this great essay for me, which I treasure greatly. This is one of the most important documents leading to the end of the Cold War. The essay is the Russian intelligentsias' appreciation of the state the world at the end of the Soviet empire.

Q: How did you finl hate to use the terbut the interface of I'll call it the Russian intellectual community, which has always beethere has been a great stream of this community and it appeals to the Russian soul or something, but with the apparatchiks, the Gorbachevs and all who had risen?

MILLER: Gorbachev was different. Earlier, in the Leninist period in Khrushchev's time, Brezhnev, these were revolutionaries, and later the nomenklatura. These were the people who were fighting the Whites, who were passing out the tracts and killing their opponents and sending them to the gulag (forced labor camp). Gorbachev is from the next generation. He was a younger man, in his 50s. His father had fought in what the Soviets called the Great Patriotic War. Gorbachev's family were declared enemies of the people in 1936. This is an extraordinary background for a party first secretary. He was a different kind than the first two generations of Soviets.

All of the perestroika group were different from the earlier Soviet leaders. In a reuse, it was the third generation challenging and fighting against the second generation. The second generation were still revolutionaries. The third generation had not been revolutionaries. They were sons of revolutionaries or they were sons of people who were knowledgeable about the revolution. So there was a generational distinction. Gorbachev didn't fight in the war, he was too young. His father did.

Sakharov was older. He was not a veteran of the wars, but he was certainly a veteran of the scientific effort in the war as the inventor of the H-Bomb. He was a very young scientist at that point. But Gorbachev himself was a giant of the world of the mind. Gorbachev has a very interesting intellect, not of the world of the intelligentsia, in the Russian sense, but he could have been a member of the intelligentsia were he born in the fourth generation. But for a Soviet leader, he certainly had more education than his predecessors, coming up from the roots. He was trained in the law, he had studied comparative law, and had a good mind, was interested intellectually in a broad variety of subjects and had respect for other intellects.

Q: Well, now, your group, committee, in this, what was the role of your group? Did you set up these conferences?

MILLER: Yes, we did. We worked with Gorbachev's people, closely, to prepare these meetings. We prepared for board meetings by going into the Kremlin to work out the agenda. We discussed when Gorbachev would be available and when it would be convenient to have meetings and they wanted to be the host. The Kremlin was the host. In some ways, this was a strange groucan you imagine Father Hesburgh and Robert McNamara and Metropolitan Pitirim meeting together in the Kremlin? The president of Greenpeace, David McTaggart, was there, and a number of the world's leading environmental scientists. It was an extraordinary, absolutely extraordinary, time. Gorbachev's relationship with Sakharov was instrumental in this, because he looked on Sakharov as a moral weathervane for his own activities. He took Sakharov very seriously, wanted the approval and acceptance of Sakharov. Sakharov, being the rigorous person he was, would only give credit when he thought it was merited, and he was very quick to criticize Gorbachev openly when he was on the wrong path in Sakharov's mind.

Right after this meeting, the Interregional Group was formed. The Interregional Group was the major political force created during perestroika outside of the Communist Party structure. Many who were in the International Group were Communists who had burned their cards, or had left the party, formally or informally. They formed a new party made up of a group of political leaders from the various parts of the Soviet Union; Ukraine and the Baltics, the 'stans, agreeing in large measure on principles of perestroika, glasnost and democratization. So they picked up Gorbachev's slogans, and they became the slogans for the Interregional Group, which was really a party of reform democrats. This group included Yeltsin. Yeltsin was mayor of Moscow at the time and a curious protï¿½gï¿½ of Sakharov's. Yeltsin admired Sakharov enormously. They had nothing in common whatsoever, except the respect that Yeltsin gave to Sakharov. Sakharov admired Yeltsin's straightforward intention to destroy the Communist Party, which absolutely troubled Gorbachev.

The Interregional Group was composed of the younger Komsomol (young Communists) people, people who would have been Soviet politicians in the old order, but were now the leaders to the successors to the Soviet state. They knew they could become the dominant force in the last two Supreme Soviets of the Soviet Union, the legislatures of the Soviet Union. This new party, the interregional group, was the great impetus leading to the end of the Soviet Union. They were the great support for Gorbachev's program of reform and ironically reform led to the end of the entity that Gorbachev led and believed in.

Q: Let me just stop here.

[END TAPE]

Q: This is tape seven, side one with Bill Miller. As you were watching this, were you seeing a change between the beginning of the split of the Soviet Union, the different ethnic groupwere they sort of coming into their own now?

MILLER: Certainly there was an expression of the difference, but at that time there was really no sense of breaking away. The idea that the Soviet Union could be reformed as Gorbachev was suggesting was still a viable possibility. In fact, reform of the Soviet Union was even the program of Sakharov and people in the inter-regional group advocated. They then thought that liberalization of the Soviet regime was possible, and this was reflected best in the effort to write a new constitution for the Soviet Union. The constitution-writing was a huge effort undertaken for about three years, 1988 to 1990. In 1990, the idea of splitting up the Soviet Union had gained powerful support, but not until then.

Sakharov wrote a draft of the constitution, which I was involved in. A marvelous person, Ed Kline, who was a great friend of the Sakharovs from the human rights community here in the United States. Ed Kline was a major supporter of human rights and was a principal channel for dissidents coming to the United States. He was the founder of the Chalidze Press, which printed much of the samizdat literature.

Q: That was the underground publishing phenomenon ?

MILLER: Yes, the reports of the human rights committee in the Soviet Union which were printed in the United States and in Geneva, Chalidze was the founder, along with Sakharov, of the human rights committee in the early 1970s.

There was one incident that highlights one of the weaknesses and the vulnerability of Gorbachev, in these turbulent years before the end of the Soviet Union. The KGB (Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti) suppression of demonstrations took place in Vilnius, Lithuania, in '89, February. The Board of the International Foundation had a meeting in the Kremlin, at the same time that the Vilnius demonstration was taking place outside the Vilnius Parliament, where some deputies were beginning to express the desire to be independent, and most were demanding to have political representation other than the communist party.

The KGB was sent into action and brutally suppressed the Lithuanians. A number of people were killed. This happened just before we were to meet, so when we gathered togetheSakharoand the other Soviet Board members said, "What are you doing?" They said this to Gorbachev's face, in the Kremlin. "How could you permit this? Why did this happen?" Gorbachev said almost apologetically, "I didn't know about it! As soon as I found out I stopped it." They looked at him in disbelief, and then Gorbachev went off into a long monologue in which he saiand I remember this very clearl"I feel as though I were in a boat, adrift in the sea, and I can't see the shore. I don't know where this boat is going, but I know I will reach the shore." Everyone took note of this psychological state and offered advice about the dangers of the use of force and the necessity of restraint in the use of violence.

It had a profound effect, because this was not the only incident of repressive brutality in Gorbachev's regimthe suppressions in Tbilisi and Baku and the war in Nagorno-Karabakh all reflected the contradictions in perestroika.

Q: When you get into Georgian politiclooking at the Soviet Union, you were in the Kremlin. There's the KGB, there's the old line apparatchiks and alhere you are, messing around wityou're breaking their rice bowl, to a certain extent. I can't imagine them sort of rolling over and letting this happen.

MILLER: You mean allowing access to them in that way?

Q: I mean, tin a way, you are interfering, because here you are acting as a gray eminence or an open eminence on Gorbachev and the ruling party.

MILLER: Yes, it was remarkable. That's all you can say. It normally would not have happened. I'll go further. The kinds of things that I was able to do, I mean, I wasn't alone but I was one of the few. I helped write the rules of the Supreme Soviet, and I did that by bringing Congressional manuals for all of our legislative practice. The manuals were used and adapted for the Russian condition.

Q: It's probably about four inches thick.

MILLER: The rules of procedure, basically, Jefferson's rules, I gave the manuals to the person we had brought here to the United States as a young legislator, Konstantin Lubenchenko, who became speaker of the Parliamenof the last Supreme Soviet. He used the manuals, and he gave them to another deputy, Eugeniy Velikhov, vice president of the Academy of Sciences, who was also on the board of the foundation. Velikhov held the manual up before all the deputies in the Supreme Soviet and up before the Parliament and said, "These are our new rules." So, yes, I was a party to that kind of interference.

Some time later, I interviewed all of the justices that were appointed to the new Soviet constitutional court. I brought a number of Justices here to Washington to meet with our Justices from our Supreme Court. I saw the Ministers of Justice frequently, along with lawyers and judges I brought from the United States, from the American Bar Association. After Russia and the Soviet Union split, the first Minister of Justice of Russia, Nikolai Federov, was one of the people I brought here. He wanted help in the form of legal technical assistance. I provided it for him. He was a very close friend, and still is. He's now president of Chuvashia, one of the Tatar republics on the Volga River.

Wile discussing possible nuclear arms limitation proposals, I went to a number of secret nuclear installations and was shown their weaponry. Everything was open, and the same was true of the church and every corner of the Academy, every corner of the Supreme Soviet, the Moscow Duma, every corner of any ministry, including ministry of defense.

The battle for the survival of the Soviet Union was personified in the rivalry between Gorbachev and Yeltsin. I was there, in the Kremlin, in the Great Hall, when Gorbachev came back from the coup attempt in August. Yeltsin received him on the stage with such visible great contempt, at the swearing-in of Yeltsin as president of Russia. I was present at the trial of the Communist party, which was held in the former offices of the Central Committee, which was then being transformed into the offices of the constitutional court. And I was present at committee meetings of the Supreme Soviet on human rights and arms control. A number of my American and European colleagues testified at those committee meetings.

Q: Did you finwhat was your impression of our embassy, but also of our White House. This was Reagaup to '89 was the president. Were you seeing ?

MILLER: Matlock's a good friend.

Q: Was there a good response, were events getting past?

MILLER: Jim Collins was an example of our very best officers. He was well aware of what was going on. Collins had the knowledge, respect and empathy for the post. Jim Collins, for example, was DCM and I would see him frequently. I saw the ambassador, of course, and they welcomed the information and were glad to meet with us. I think Moscow of the time was such an expanded world. They hathose in the embasshad an enormous amount of work to do because their traditional mandates and possibilities had suddenly expanded so remarkably. They could barely keep up with the pace of traditional reporting. Then there was this revolutionary systemic change that was going on, which they could not handle. They could observe, they could read all the papers, the mushrooming numbers of suddenly independent papers, and they could formally have many more meetings with Soviet officials, but they were still under constraint of diplomatic practice. The political situation had gone way beyond formal discourse, and except for a few junior officers of the embassy who did circulate with their now revolutionary counterparts, their contemporaries, I would say that the embassy had a full plate that was much fuller than it had ever had during the previous 70 years. The appreciation of other parts of the new societgetting involved in other parts of the rapidly changing Soviet/Russian societwas a new but crucially important job.

Q: What abouwhat was the role of nongovernmental committees and alcommittees or other manifestations, of, say, the British and the French? Were they in there?

MILLER: NGOs came in to Moscow in abundance starting after the last Central Committee Congress, in 1988, during which Gorbachev gave his landmark speech admitting "there were white spots in history" and that "it was possible to have different views than that of the party", - an admission and permission that began the end of the party. Groups started coming in from the West, of every conceivable nature. Russian religious groups were openly proselytizing, missionaries were coming from Salt Lake, Jehovah's Witnesses, the missionaries of all sorts. Every conceivable nongovernmental interest group started to arrive, and they multiplied almost like a plague of locusts. Their Russian hosts began to resist when the numbers grew so large as to be unmanageable.

Q: I would think there would be a problem ohere you were, a serious organization with deep roots within both systems, and then all of these other ones coming in, who would both be jealous of you or going off on their own tacl would think that they would be swamping the Soviet/Russian system.

MILLER: The multiplication of nongovernmental organizations roughly paralleled the multiplication of indigenous nongovernmental organizations in Russia, and throughout the former Soviet Union; it was messy and contradictory and difficult, but all of it was a part of the turbulence going on at the time. I don't think the burgeoning of either NGOs from the West affected the major thrust or useful work of the American committee or the International Foundation. Our board members, testified on the Hill, they would see the Secretary of State, as we all did. When we were back in the United States, there were a lot of meetings to hold and reporting to dthere were a lot of interesting writing of reports and analyses. I wrote "a letter from Moscow" for the American Committee journal, a dozen or so articles which describe events in Moscow between 1988-1992.

The reforms in Moscow were encouraging our major American institutionaformal institutionastructures to get involved in assisting those who were leading the systemic changes. They reached to our executive branch, the legislature and the courts, because a long needed systemic governmental change was underway in the Soviet Union, indeed it was a systemic collapse. There was an openness and desire to have help from our three branches of government, not to mention counterpart academic institutions, and scientific institutions. The International Foundation was doing a lot of joint work with the American Academy of Sciences, with the Academies in Moscow, St. Petersburg and elsewhere in Russia. We helped them make their arrangements, initially, with the American Bar Association, law schools, with universities, and museums. So much was going on that it's hard for me to recall it all.

Q: How much we were all doing ?

MILLER: We were very fortunate to have an apartment right across the river from the White House, the Parliament, just beyond the Kutuzov Bridge, the Ukraine hotel was a street away. We lived in a pleasant sunny apartment in a rundown Khrushchev era apartment house, Suzanne and I lived there very happily during those exciting years.

For us, it was total immersion and constant activity, taking part in this momentous change with the most marvelous people, ranging from Gorbachev and Yeltsin to the oppressed gulagis and the Human Rights Group. These human rights people who were able to survive are so remarkable. They are our good friends to this day. I can recall at first we were afraid to meet anyone in their apartment because it would be bugged and it was a risk for them to have Americans in their home. We'd have to go outside and walk and sit on park bencheit was at first, dangerous for our friends to talk to us. After 1988, there were absolutely no inhibitions whatsoever. While sitting in kitchen apartments, we'd point to the ceiling and say, "did you hear that" and go on.

Q: You'd sort of shrug.

MILLER: And just denounce the latest ?

Q: I imagine, from what I know, what I've read about Soviet society, you must have been deluged by conversation in the evening around the kitchen table.

MILLER: Oh, yes, we were enveloped in ideas and talk day and night. It was such a social revolutionary change. The changes brought about by perestroika were the highest form of socialism, you might say, because it was so social that you would go everywhere, concerts, then to people's houses, move from one house to another, and go off to the dacha (cottage) and never stop talking or stop developing new ideas and projects.

Q: By the time you got there, had things reached a pass? I'm told, a little earlier on, by people who served in Poland, who said that they were convinced there must be maybe four dedicated Marxists in the whole country. Had the Sovietreally the Russians we're talking abouhad they pretty well shucked Marx's ideology or was this still a major theme?

MILLER: It was still a major belief. Marxism was still deeply held. The Gorbachevian proposition was that Marxism could be reformed, that the era of change was necessary because of the failure of Stalin and his regime's brutality. The 1968 Czech Prague uprising had a profound effect on Gorbachev. The idea that it was necessary for socialism to have a human face was then widely believed. It is still a strong element of belief in Russia, and as I found, in Ukraine. He believed in reformed Marxist solutions, he believes in it to this day. It's still a strong school of thought in all of the former Soviet statealthough it is a minority view, whereas it was once the only permitted view. The hardliners, who were in charge of the security organizations, were the holdouts, but in the perestroika time, they were the ideological minority, although they were in charge of the security ministries. The August coup of 1991 was their last attempt to maintain control.

And that was the question, whether the ideological change, the "new thinking" so called would prevail, or whether the hard-liners would allow the change to take place. What was interesting, again, was the Zaslavskaya thesis about the change in the Soviet man was correct. She said that the change in socialist society permeated everythinthe military, the intelligence agenciethere was a generational change. The Soviet man was now close to the socialist goaeducation being the big key. She did not think there would be violence. She was right, and the futile comic coup attempt, by the pathetic coup group, was a clear sign the change was irreversible. The Stalinist hard-liners didn't have the conviction that a militant group in charge of the power and security ministries in the past would have had.

The children of the Bolshevik Revolution had a different idea. The failure of Gorbachev to handle the expectations and demands of the intellectuals, the inability to control or at least steer the new freedom that had been acquired by the younger generation, was the main reason, I think, for the end of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev couldn't accommodate or adapt fully enough to the consequences of this new freedom. The nature of the new idea of governance and freedom was explained in the draft Sakharov constitution. This was a remarkable document, intellectually, and it provided a conceptual structure. The Sakharov constitution described, in 1989, exactly where the Soviet Union was, and where it needed to go to hang together. It had to loosen up in order to stay together. Gorbachev resisted that loosening up. He wanted to hold the Soviet Union together in the old arrangement, in the old Brezhnev concepts basically. He wasn't a big enough mind, although we owe so much to Gorbachev for the capacity of intellect and compassion that he had.

I should say something about journalists. The American journalists, and British journalists, and all the journalists, from all over the world, including the Russians themselveall contributed to an explosion of analytic writing brought by the new openness. TV also was suddenly free, and television programming was absolutely remarkable for its brilliance and innovation. There were the man on the street interviews, speaking his mind in a very delightful; there were entertaining interview programs of profoundly stimulating, exciting character, and wonderful films. The perestroika films are among the most important of the 20th century, brilliant, funny, ironic and extremely entertaining films that I hope, will be revived, over and over again because they were and are of such extraordinary quality. This was a hell of a time to be in Moscow as a Foreign Service officer, as an NGO president, as I was, as a journalist, as a tourist. It was an extraordinary moment and a great expression of the best in the human spirit.

Q: You've talked about all these things, but one thing you haven't mentioned during this time, and that's often been pointed from the United States, as being the real cause of things breaking down, and that's essentially the Soviet economy.

MILLER: That has no fundamental bearing. I think that's a desire on the part of some of our leaders to think that they were responsible for the end of the Soviet Union. The end of the Soviet Union was Soviet, from within. It had little or nothing to do with us. The awareness of the futility of the arms race was something that the Soviets and the United States both came to, the awareness of the enormous cost was something that they felt more deeply than we did. But they would have borne any burden, any cost, to use Kennedy's phrases, if their security was at stake, and they had proved that, as in the past, throughout 75 years if necessary, and they would do it again. They'd do it again now if their integrity or sovereignty as a nation were affected. I put no credence in the neoconservative trumpeting that we caused the collapse of the Soviet Union at all. I think it was an ultimate form of vanity on the part of our hard-line neoconservative leaders to think that they did it. They didn't do it. Like Sampson, the Soviets brought down their own house.

Q: What about the opening up of communicatiothe ease of communications? The internet hadn't yet appeared on the scene but the ?

MILLER: Computers were just coming in. In fact, computers were one of the remaining delicate issues. John Scully, who was then chairman of Apple Computers, was on our International Foundation board. He brought in, personally, the first Macintoshes into Russia and gave them to Gorbachev technically against our sanctions, actually. They were little Macs and the ability to have any effect on security, of course, was of course nil.

Q: Did you feel at all the heavy hand of our security people?

MILLER: No. The forces of change had gone way beyond those inhibitions. In an earlier time security concerns would have, but this was such a flood of openness that sanctions of this kind made no sense and were swept aside.

Q: Did you get any reflection, while you were there, of the relationship between Gorbachev and Reagan?

MILLER: Oh, yes. We followed that quite closely. As was the case with other leaders from the West, like Thatcher and the Germans and the French, we had a good direct feel for that in Moscow, and Gorbachev liked this kind of direct contact. He found it stimulating and interesting and informative and useful in dealing with his problems internally. Gorbachev became a conduiand he knew he was the channethe world had come to the Soviet Union, because he had gone out and reached out to the world. He became the arbiter of estimates on what the world might do for the Soviet Union. He said, "They're not going to do anything to us. They can only help us." This is a perspective which goes right in the face of the strategies of spending the Soviet Union into collapse, or using the threat of nuclear annihilation.

Q: Did the Chinese factor in durintalk about the time you were with the committee?

MILLER: We had a Chinese member on the Board of the International Foundation, from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, who was a devoted Chinese communist. She had been educated at Berkeley as well as a nuclear physicisa civilized well educated woman, a lovely woman. The Chinese factor was in the background, and of course, in the future. For the Chinese, their view was that China was watching what would happen to Soviet Socialism. I know this because a few years later I went to China, was invited to China to meet with the Chinese Soviet-watchers in Beijing on these questions at a Dartmouth conference meeting. We had a wonderful conference in 1992. The Chinese included survivors of the Mao Zedong reforms. Their stories about Mao Zedong were absolutely marvelous, a parallel to the excesses of Stalin. As Marxists they saw the Soviet experience as a part of their own historical path.

The Chinese factor was always a part of Soviet/Russian foreign policy concerns. The Chinese, clearly feared the effect of the changes in the Soviet system on their system, but they concluded, and this was in 1992, the last time I was there, they concluded it wouldn't affect them. The Russians would go one way, had gone one way, and they would not be deterred in their ideological direction. They had their own strengths, their own path, the Chinese believed.

Q: How about Arbatov of U.S.-Canada Institute? I would think that you were poaching on their ground.

MILLER: Oh, no, no. We were close colleagues and friends. Our presence and activity gave them great power and access, it gave them even greater power to their own new changed government. They were partially KGB, but being analytic and academics who said, "We taught American studies at Moscow University as well as being in the Institute," Arbatov's expertise became extremely valuable, even more valuable than it had been originally. The USA-Canada Institute still exists, but it has suffered the decline that all the Soviet institutions have, including the Academy of Sciences itself. They have to find new sources of funding and their place in society is much different even though it is still a privileged group. They're one of among many others. New universities, and the reformed old universities are transforming the education system. For example, the privileged place of institutes as opposed to university faculties is a great issue of contention now. I'm sure it will result in further diminishing of the institutes from first place toward the direction of university education.

Q: Did the CIA, KGB recruiters and all that sort of get mixed up in this whole thing?

MILLER: No, because KGB was disintegrating so fast, changing itself, into institutions under more direct public civilian control. CIA was very interested. Of course, our American board members would tell them whatever they wanted to know. Beyond the analytic side, CIA's covert work, was not relevant at this point.

Q: Things were moving too fast?

MILLER: Moving much too fast.

Q: You could almost pick the wrong guy.

MILLER: No, I'd say our CIA analysts were terrific/ Those who had the most work to do, the bean-counters, the nuclear types, were in heaven at this stage, because of everything they used to see from 200 miles above, they could now see firsthand and even touch.

Q: What was happening on the nuclear side during this period?

MILLER: The fundamental necessary decisions had been made by Gorbachev and by the Soviets, that there would be a strategic weapons halt; there would be an agreed nuclear plateau of technology. Gorbachev was convinced that there was not going to be a nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union, that these nuclear weapons should be reduced to the lowest possible levels. Gorbachev himself proposed zero. The argument became not how large a force you could have, but how small a force you could have. There were many proposals abut minimum nuclear force levels. For example, I wrote a proposal in 1987 which showed how 2,000 warheads was the number that would give you at least double insurance, even triple insurance, to be able to hit all targets believed strategic. That is where we are, now. It was a matter of planning. The Russian military are now at that level, too. They're retargeting, of course, to other placeChina.

Q: How about as students and professors and all, was there an explosion in Soviet students going oul'm thinking of American, but of others coming in?

MILLER: Yes. The encouragement of high school students from the Soviet Union coming to the United States was called the Bradley Program, which is named for Senator Bill Bradley. His arrangement called for large numbers of high school students coming to the United States. The original proposal was for 50,000. It has never reached that level, but greater numbers of Soviets came to the United States than had ever come before, at any period in their history. Exchanges of professors reached high levels, and the normal channels of academic exchange burgeoned so the IREX (International Research and Exchanges Board) wasn't sufficient.

Q: IREX meaning ?

MILLER: This is the NGO that for many years handled student exchange from abroad. IREX was the main channel of student and academic exchange with the Soviet Union. IREX was funded by the academic institutions in the United States and the major foundations as a logistical clearing house for getting visas and handling travel and housing. So a number of new organizations supplemented what IREX had been doing all throughout the Soviet period.

Q: Did you get any feel for how the United States was taughour history, our institutions, our society and culture and alwas being taught within the Soviet Union at that time?

MILLER: Yes, of course, until Gorbachev, the United States was seen as a bourgeois, failing capitalist society. But it all changed when the Soviets themselves traveled to the United States. It was what was learned directly while traveling in the United States that caused a change in textbooks and overall perceptions of the United States. I'll never forget the remarks of a fellow named Yuri Travkin, who was head of the transportation workers union, and a deputy in the Supreme Soviet. When he went out to the West for the first time, he came back and gave a speech in the Supreme Soviet, saying "I've been deceived my all of my life. The scales have dropped from my eyes. The West is not what they told us! It's utterly different. We have been living a great sham. We have to reform." So I'm deeply convinced that we should bring Russians here to see the reality.

Q: You were there during thwhen was the coup attempt against Gorbachev, when Yeltsin came into his own?

MILLER: That's 1990.

Q: So you were there at that time.

MILLER: Yes, I was.

Q: Was, at the time, was there concern that the coup people might bring it off?

MILLER: Yes, of course, but there was also the suspicion that Gorbachev was part of the coup. That's a thought that persists to this day, that Gorbachev was trying, in some way, to get rid of Yeltsin, that Yeltsin was such a threat to Gorbachev that this coup may have been a clumsy effort to get rid of Yeltsin. Yeltsin was warned by the KGB in Moscow and he escapehe was about to be captured. When I was ambassador in Ukraine I stayed at Foros there, where Gorbachev had been seized by KGB.

Q: This is down in the Crimea.

MILLER: In the Crimea, yes, in the CrimeForos is in the southwest coast of the Crimea. It is a beautiful place, and with a magnificent dacha. The director of Foros told me details during my stay there in 1996, of the days of the coup. He was there at the time of the coup. He said that during the coup, Gorbachev always had full communications with Moscow, he was very well-treated. The director believed that Gorbachev was really free to leave, but did not do so until Yeltsin sent Sergei Shakhrai down with a plane to bring him back after the coup effort collapsed. The Director of Foros believed that Gorbachev was part of the coup. I know that Yeltsin's people believed that.

Q: At the time, I mean, before and all, how were you observing your committee and you yourself the rise of Yeltsin or the appearance of Yeltsin?

MILLER: Well, we saw that very directly. I saw it really directly because we were in close contact with Yeltsin's key aides who we had brought to the United States on exchange visits. Some of Yeltsin's closest aides were among the young leaders that were chosen to go to the United States under our auspices, and they were very important. They included some of Yeltsin's chief advisors. Yeltsin's staff were those who decided the Soviet Union was an empty shell and going with Russia. Russia, they believed, was where their future lay. Most of the young people chosen by Gorbachev's perestroika cadre went with Russia when they saw the end coming. Fortunately, our contacts with Yeltsin and his chief aides were extremely good.

After Sakharov's death in 1989, Yeltsin, who admired Sakharov greatly, was very solicitous of Yelena Bonner.

Q: His wife.

MILLER: His wife. She was a good friend, and still is a good friend of mine. We worked together on a number of matters of human rights issues and continue to do so. I am presently on the board of the Sakharov Foundation. Yelena Bonner is the chairman.

Our contacts with the Yeltsin group, in early years of the Russian Republic were very close, particularly in the new Parliament, the new courts, the constitutional court, the Supreme Court, legal education, and in many parts of the new Russian society.

Q: At one point, when the rivalry between Yeltsin and Gorbachev was becoming more and more apparent, there were attempts to downplay Yeltsin. We put our money on Gorbachev, so Yeltsin was sort of portrayed as a drunken clown, sometimes.

MILLER: Well, he was, sometimes hopelessly drunk, but he was also the leader of Russia.

Q: But during sort of the period when he was not quite there and all, did you sense within our own government a concern or an attempt to put all their money onto Gorbachev and not onto Yeltsin?

MILLER: Yes, I think they would have preferred Gorbachev, as he was more coherent and predictable, they liked Gorbachev more. Clinton was fascinated by Yeltsin. It seems he couldn't get enough of this phenomenal man. And, of course, Gorbachev was gone as a leader when Clinton came to power, so they didn't have a chance to share that direct chemistry of power that Clinton understands almost better than anyone else I've ever seen.

Q: What about during the Bush administration and Baker and all. From your observation, how did you find that chemistry?

MILLER: Baker was very helpful. Baker, when he was secretary of state, came to an American Committee dinner to honor George Kennan. Baker's daughter worked for me at the committee as my assistant. He was very knowledgeable and Baker's interest in Russian matters goes back to a time when he was a child. He told me this anecdote: in Houston his tennis coach was a Russian immigrant. He first became interested in Russia from the stories his tennis coach told him. Baker is a very bright man, and he was very helpful to us at the time. His handling of the fast changing situation was skillful.

Q: What was the viewpoint from the Moscow side that you were seeing of the fall and all, the Berlin wall in '89?

MILLER: The fall of the Berlin Wall cannot be understood by itself. The impact of the 1968 Prague uprising on Gorbachev, the power of the human rights movement and the example of people liked Andrei Sakharov, and Havel, the Solidarity Movement under Lech Walesa all contributed to the eventual fall of the Berlin Wall. But most important was Gorbachev's decision that people of each nation will make their own decision about the government they want to have. Self determination is a view that he came to in 1968 in the Prague uprising. Some of his close friends were Czechs. Gorbachev had deep sympathy for Dubcek, and some admiration for Vaclav Havel. Some excellent histories have been written about the fall of the Berlin Wall, including film documentaries that show that the key decision was Gorbachev's. I would say further, that an important influence upon Gorbachev was that of Sakharov who said to Gorbachev, "The republics should make their own choices."

At the same time, Yeltsin was saying, "Russia has got enough to do to sort itself out," Russia meaning greater Russia, and he said further that these people in the East, "they're not a threat, the West is not a threat. We don't need to have a German dependencit's too much. We have enough of our own to do."

Q: What about the Baltic republics? It seems that Gorbachev sort of had a hope to keep them within thwhich sounds about as far out as you can come, because they never really were a part of it?

MILLER: If Russification had continued for another generation or so, the three Baltic city-states would have been Russified. The current ethnic situation in Lithuania gives some idea of what the policy of Russification was intended to achieve.

I think Gorbachev's view was that the Soviet Union was still a good idea, and with reform everybody would be happy, there wouldn't be repression and everyone could prosper. Yeltsin's view was somewhat different. His view was we'll probably be together at some later point, but not now, we've got enough to do separately, Yeltsin wasn't very worried about the future, his concerns were getting from one day to the next.

Q: Looking at it as a practical point of view, some sort of economic union, close union, probably makes more sense.

MILLER: A good friend of mine is an Estonian. Igor Grazin was in the Supreme Soviet, the last two Supreme Soviets. He experienced the Prague uprisinhe was there. Grazin is a distinguished lawyer, international lawyer. When I first met him Grazin lived with his wife and son in a remarkable commune, you might say, of Soviet legislators who were elected from the regions outside of Moscow. Many of the deputies lived together, dangerous, in a modern apartment complex in a suburb called Krylatsky in the outskirts of Moscow, a lovely part of Moscow. Krylatsky is in an area of parks. We used to go cross-country skiing there in the winter. Grazin lived out there with all these Supreme Soviet deputies and their families. Their children went to school together. The deputies often ate meals together and the political issues of the Supreme Soviet were carried on into the night in Krylatsky. A substantial number of the Interregional group lived in Krylatsky.

Igor Grazin became a major figure in the last Soviet legislature. Grazin is a pure Estonian, but he believes, even though he is a capitalist, that the survival of the Soviet Union would have been a better result. He later went to Notre Dame as a professor and taught these heretical ideas. As an Estonian politician he's against entering the EU (European Union) because he believes it would be prejudicial to the best interests of the Baltic states.

Q: Okay. Well, Bill, it's probably a good place to stop. And we might pick this up, unless there's something else you want to mention during this time. I'm sure there was so much going on that I hope you'll be able to take a look and add. But we might pick this up in, what, '92 or '93, when you left?

MILLER: I think '91 is probably a good time. Ninety-one is the end of the Soviet Union.

Q: Well, why don't we talk about '91 and the end of the Soviet Union and continue from there.

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Okay, today is the 5th of July, 2004. Bill, back to 1991. As you watched this, can you tell the events that unfolded, all of a sudden the dissolution of the Soviet empire?

MILLER: Yes. Sakharov had died in 1989 and the moral compass and the intellectual basis for a continued Soviet Union was lost at that point. The possibilities of working out a new democratic rationale for the Soviet Union was lost with the death of Sakharov. Sakharov was the only one who could have crafted a new viable confederation, a looser democratic arrangement of states within the territorial framework of the former Soviet Union.

Q: Why would Sakharov? He was a nuclear physicist and all of that. When you think about all these nationalists running around from the Ukraine and from the 'stans and all of that, and particularly when you think about the Baltic states, Sakharov may have been an important figure, but ...

MILLER: Well, the debate at that time centered on the issues of whether it was possible to have a confederation on new principles, principles of democracy, human rights, decent civic and civil behavior. I would say up until the time of his death, certainly, the debate was running in favor of a loose confederation. I say this because the issue of constitutions, the war of laws, as it was then called, were in structural terms that focused on this issue in 1989 and 1990. And the place in which this crucial structural battle was being waged was the Supreme Soviet, the last two Supreme Soviets of the Soviet Union, which were extraordinary in their character because of the quality of the people who had been elected to serve there. They were the best from all of the regions of the former Soviet Union, from Russia, Ukraine and the other republics and regions. They were heavily peopled by the intelligentsia, of course, most of whom were democrats. It was the most distinguished group of Russian figures and Soviet figures that had ever been assembled in a Supreme Soviet.

Q: What caused this? You had had these guys with the steel teeth and these apparatchiks who had controlled everything. How did they get bypassed?

MILLER: We've already forgotten how powerful the reform movement was. It was a brief period of two years when this remarkable group of Russians were looking at the possibilities of a great new future. After all, the Soviet Union was a country that was founded on dreams, dreams that were almost never realized, of course. These dreams and hopes perhaps were never intended by the Stalinists and the leaders of the Communist Party to be anything ore than temporary illusions. But in those years, there were dreams and hopes that seemed to have meaning and possibility. People were coming to Moscow from all over the Warsaw Pact region. I can remember very well Dubcek coming to Moscow, meeting with the Sakharovs, and I recall their discussions about what the new order could be for the Soviet Union.

The whole idea of self determination, which was implicit, didn't exclude being sovereign, but within a changed Soviet Unioa democratic Soviet Union. It was a very real hopthat is, the possibility of a democratic Soviet Union. The chance for a democratic Soviet Union is challenged by the drive to create an independent Russia. Yeltsin, as you remember, championed the independence movement of Russia. His motivations I would say were primarily personal. Yeltsin wanted to break the power of Gorbachev, his sworn enemy. I don't think it was the highest of motives. At the same time, many members of the Supreme Soviet were also elected to the Russian Parliament, so they served, for a time, in the legislature in both places. In the opinion of most political observers of the time, the very best, the most talented were those who decided to stay with the Soviet Union. I thought so too. They said our highest duty is with the Soviet Union. We can't serve two masters and it doesn't make any sense.

It was very clear at the time, that the quality of the people in Supreme Soviet, the last Supreme Soviet, was far higher than those who made up the new Russian Parliament. I knew many of the legislators who served in both, and I would say the very best stayed, mistakenly, as it turned out, in the Supreme Soviet.

That crucial period in Moscow was extraordinarily hopeful from the point of view of the possibilities of constructing a new Europe, a new world after the failed experiment of the Communist Party. Russia lost its direction when it lost Sakharov. I can't emphasize how important he was. He was able to lead and have effect on people like Havel in Prague, or Lech Walesa in Poland.

Q: In Poland?

MILLER: Yes, yes, and within the Soviet states. I would say once the Sakharov's moral and intellectual leadership was gone and there was a divided struggle for power between Yeltsin and Gorbachev, the impetus for self determination, independent states, gained sway, and that was really the end. The coup attempt was very symptomatic. The coup was the last gasp, a last-ditch effort by a military coup, by those who wanted t keep the Soviet Union together.

Q: How did your organization and you see, first place, developments prior to the coup? Was this euphoric, more or less, or were you doing anything, passing on information?

MILLER: We were just as active after the coup as before in working in the parliaments of both of these structures, and in the new ministries of Russia, particularly the Ministry of Justice, while at the same time the existing Soviet structures were in place. There was a kind of joint responsibility of many of those who were Russian and those from outside who were really helping both places, because it was all seen at that time as useful. But, certainly, there was an overall sense of waiting, waiting for the decision. There was a peculiar sense of stasis even in the midst of dynamic change. Many efforts were made to bridge the gap between Gorbachev and Yeltsin in the last year, but after the August failed coup Yeltsin had the upper hand and he used his advantage to destroy Gorbachev's power.

Gorbachev knew that a coup was being considered and he may have been complicit, even if he was not directly involved in the actual carrying out of the attempted takeover. The Politburo had fractured, obviously, with the creation of Russia earlier in the year, and all that were left in the Soviet leadership structure were second-raters, but they were certainly controllable by Gorbachev, even in the diminished circumstances. I think the coup, which Shevardnadze warned about very clearlhe said, "They're coming." was not a surprise to Gorbachev.

Q: He resigned.

MILLER: Shevardnadze resigned over the issue after he warned about the possibility. I think Gorbachev knew. There was a lot of evidence pointing to that, and had the coup been successful in removing Yeltsin from the scene, Gorbachev would have acted in a very forceful way in moving in the direction of a loose federation.

Q: Were you getting rumors of coups and all? I mean, was this something that was sort of in the air in Moscow?

MILLER: Yes, yes, it was certainly in the air. The talk about possible coups were everywhere. One forgets how porous and open everything was in Moscow. There were no secrets, because these were issues that the public had to determine and not just the Politburo members.

Q: Was there concern at the time, or was there a movement afoot, to bring back the equivalent of Stalinism? In other words, the iron fist was going to take over again?

MILLER: No, no, the most extreme headline elements, those who advocated force to the greatest degree, were reflected in Yegor Ligachev, who was head of the security forces, the KGB. Ligachev had already ideologically, as he expressed in the previous party congresses of the previous several years, moved in the direction of rule of larule of law, rigorously applied, and national security, put it that way.

The security forces were deeply involved in this debate. General Yazov, for example, the chief of staff, who I had met on a number of occasions assisted me to undertake a trip that to Nagorno-Karabakh. Yazov was instrumental in providing logistical support for a group from the Sakharov Human Rights Committee and the International Foundation to go to Nagorno-Karabakh and to Azerbaijan to look into the condition of prisoners from both sides.

Q: This is the Armenian ...

MILLER: Armenian-Azerbaijanian conflict.

Q: ... problem, which had predated the independence of these countries.

MILLER: That's right, the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict had been, in part, fomented by the disintegrating situation of the Soviet Union. Yazov was very loquacious, extremely decorous and polite to our group, particularly to Yelena Bonner, which astonished me, because she was not decorous or polite to him in any way. This was an extraordinary business meeting in the Ministry of Defense, but Yazov's discussions of the future of the Soviet Union and the dire straights that the country was in. The conversation was very direct and to the point. This was a group of people Yazov was not accustomed to having discussions with, a delegation of foreigners and human rights activists. It also included some important people in the new Russia who were emerging, as well as the leader of the last Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union.

The leadership group at the end of the Soviet Union and the beginnings of Russia was so broad and so reflective of the south as a whole that it succeeded in breaking down all the old preconceptions. I'm stressing the importance of this time because of the, I won't say amorphous, but the very malleable moment that it was. Moscow and Russia could have gone in any number of directions.

Q: Did the intellectuals sort of grab hold of this?

MILLER: Yes.

Q: How did they fit into this?

MILLER: Well, they talked a lot, of course. They talked, and talked, often brilliantly. When they wrote, there was a resulting great explosion of newspapers, great exposure of new ideas in new forms of television commentary. There was also an enormous amount of tract writing, of handbills, these handbills and essays that were widely distributed in the parliaments.

Q: Almost an offshoot from the old Samizdat, isn't it?

MILLER: With a public kind of Samizdat. That sounds contradictory. There was so much to read that people were exhausted by the end of the day from reading about what allegedly was happening and what it all meant, even though the readers were part of what was happening and many readers were writing these very same things they were reading about. It was an extraordinary time, and it was extraordinary to be in the middle of it. The reason I was able to be in the middle of it was certainly the support of people like Sakharov and his group, I also had an instinct, an empathy for what was going on.

My Russian and Soviet colleagues looked on Americans like me and my fellow board members on the International Foundation as part of what they were undergoing, and not as the cause. They didn't look on the United States as a potential occupier, as a threat. They saw the United States as a source of a model for future governance and as a help for their new construction of a decent society.

Q: Our history of federal government and all was considered kind of a model.

MILLER: Well, it was the historical model that was foremost in their minds.

Q: Your group, was there a state of mind for you all? The committee was called what?

MILLER: Well, during the early years of perestroika, the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations, was the focal point for our activities, but the institutional focus at that point was the International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity. This was the group, you recall, that Gorbachev took under his wing, you might say, as a sounding board for the major ideas that were underway.

Q: Could you characterize, was there a state of mind either of wanting to keep the whole sort of Soviet Union somehow together, or at least mostly together, maybe with the Baltics being somewhere to one side, that this would be best rather than to see it splintering?

MILLER: Yes. I would say the state of mind of most official Americans was that it would be better to keep the Soviet Union together. That was the official view.

Q: I was a Yugoslav hand at one point and I know my colleagues very much ...

MILLER: Were of that view.

Q: Were of that view.

MILLER: And that was the presidential view.

Q: But I was wondering, how abouyou were outside, you really weren't a Soviet hand, you weren't part of this mindset. How did you all feel, or you?

MILLER: I was deeply influenced by the people who were in the midst of the ferment. I was reflecting here, thinking about how influenced I was by their thinking and actions. As I indicated a few minutes ago, I thought the very best of the legislators in Moscow were those who wanted to keep the Soviet Union together, and who saw some merit in the Gorbachevian idea that a reformed Soviet Union was possible, and that they, being decent democrats, could carry it out. For them, a reformed democratic Soviet Union was far preferable to the model that was being proposed by Yeltsin and Yeltsin's people, who they looked on as self seeking opportunists. It was very much the view of the intelligentsia at the time, that most of the Yeltsin people, were second rate. I think that was the view of the embassy, too at that moment.

Q: I'm asking about various groups. What about the students? Were the students and faculty engaged in this sort of thing?

MILLER: Yes, they were. The faculties, certainly, the most distinguished among the faculties, were in the parliaments. The composition of those last several parliaments was absolutely remarkable, and a really good history of the time would focus, on these figures who were in the last Supreme Soviets of the Soviet Union and the first two parliaments of the independent states.

Q: Well, with this set, from your perspective, what happened?

MILLER: Gorbachev was cut to pieces by Yeltsin, particularly after Shevardnadze's departure. He lost his majority in the ruling group, the Soviet ruling group, and what was left was the Gorbachevian rump. The coup plotters group was reflective of the greatly diminished quality. It just wasn't any good. He had lost the leadership role and he didn't convert the disintegration of the Politburo and the Central Committee into a majority group in the legislature, which was where the leadership was. Political leadership had gone from the party to the legislature. This was the great change in the Soviet structure of the last several years of perestroika.

Q: But the party was where you thought the cream of the crop was.

MILLER: It wasn't the party.

Q: I mean, it was the Supreme Soviet.

MILLER: It was the Supreme Soviet. The Party, the Communist Partthe Party of Power - had disintegrated. The party, as an instrument of power, had disintegrated. The party as a reflection of intellectual allegiances remained, but it was now in splinters, it no longer was the identity to the state. The party was the state up until 1989. After the collapse of the single party in the last congress of the party in 1988, it was no longer the main structural instrument of governance. It wasn't the state any longer, so the state was somewhere out there, but the legislature was from where legitimate leadership and policy direction would come.

Here, again, I go back to the huge mistake that Gorbachev made, which was not to run for president and to receive legitimacy by being elected by the people. Sakharov and others pled with him, "Run, get the new legitimacy necessary." He refused to do it, and some people think because he was afraid he might lose. It is the view of almost all that he wouldn't have lost, he would have won by 80 or 90 percent.

Q: It would have been between him and Yeltsin. Was that it?

MILLER: Yes, but he would have won easily.

Q: At that time, did Yeltsin have the following, or was he considered still ...

MILLER: No.

Q: He was considered quite an erratic character, wasn't he?

MILLER: Yes. But Yeltsin's popularity came from the reform work that he did as mayor of Moscow and the support that he had from the Interregional Group. The Interregional Group was the place where political opinion and popular support was molded at that time. It was a very short period of a year or so. Gorbachev's refusal to acquire this legitimacy by election as president marked the end of his leadership, in the view of many. I subscribe to that. He just couldn't put it together. He didn't understand that for his leadership required the full electoral support of the group that was running the country in the legislatures and not just party leadership. It just had never happened in the 1970s or 1980s when the Party and the State were an identity. Gorbachev couldn't grasp the full extent of the loss of power by the Parteven though he was the catalyst for that loss of singular powers by declaring that pluralism was permitted..

Q: Well, we're talking about a time before the dissolution of the Soviet system, which now today I'd say that Gorbachev has a strong group of people who can't stand him, because they feel he's responsible for the end. But prior to that, it hadn't happened and he wasn't tarred with that particular brush.

MILLER: No. No, because Gorbachev still had the remnants of the power in his grasp, and he had great putative power. He could have, in the minds of many, put it together again. But the coup of August 21st was ...

Q: In '91.

MILLER: Ninety-one, yewas the last desperate effort to hold it together. The coup was a crude device carried out by primitives and incompetents, as we saw. It ended disastrously, in such humiliation for Gorbachev. I witnessed the public humiliation when he came back from Foros in Crimea. I was in the Great Hall in the Kremlin, in the assembly, and it was horrible.

Q: What happened?

MILLER: Well, it was the coronation, really, of Yeltsin, and a symbolic transfer of power. Yeltsin treated him very much in a way of a Roman emperor treating a king that had been defeated by the legions. It was symbolic, it was powerfully conveyed, on television and throughout the world. Psychologically the death blow was administered. One could see it, and everyone was affected. That was the decisive moment, when Gorbachev came back. After that, independence declared first by Russia in June and by Ukraine in August, was ratified Christmas day of 1991.

So I was a witness to these events. I'm sure some of the officers in the embassy were witnesses, but perhaps not in the same way. I'm certain that the collapse of the Soviet Union was an action brought about by the people of the Soviet Union; it was not significantly affected by outside forces.

Q: Well, during this time, even prior to the coup, were the Baltic states seen as something different than sort of the west of the Soviet empire? I mean, they didn't really quite fit, or am I saying something that really isn't true?

MILLER: They were insignificant in the larger picture.

Q: Insignificant, except in a small something leaves, such as Formosa leaving China. This can ...

MILLER: Yes, that's right, less significant is more accurate. The long standing desire of the Baltics to be independent was understood. The ability of the Soviet system to keep them inside was also understood, that they had the ability to do that. Whether they would permit them to go their own way really depended on everything else. This issue is something that I know about from the legislators from the three states, city-states that were in the last Supreme Soviets, who I knew really well.

The leaders in the Baltic states faced the same dilemma as those from Russia and the core republics of the Soviet Union in the last Supreme Soviets as to whether there could be a reformed Soviet Union. The Baltic leaders could see the possibility of ethnic or even national separate or autonomous identity within a reformed democratic Soviet Union. That was the debate, and it was still in 1990 a live issue. What had to go was the Stalinist experience and all the excesses of the previous 70 years.

Yeltsin had the clearest view, the simplest view, in a way, the primitive view, which was Russia by itself was big enough, and the problems of Russia were enough to focus on. The other republics, states, and regions could go and we'll bring them back later.

Q: Well, was anybody taking a look at, which is the last thing that politicians would do, really, but looking at the economic system? The Soviet Union had put great resources inta couple years later, I was in Kyrgyzstan and seeing big helicopter factories that were no longer operative. But it was not a well-put-together economic system, but it was an economic system, and all of a sudden you start going your own way, you've got tremendous dislocations.

MILLER: Yes, that was very clear.

[END TAPE]

Q: This is tape eight, side one, with Bill Miller.

MILLER: One of the features of the Soviet Union, as you've alluded, was its diversified economic structure. For example, there were the assembly plants in Kazakhstan for helicopters using parts made in Magnetogorsk or in Odessa and they'd be transported over and assembled in a remote part of Kazakhstan. This was not the most cost effective way of developing an economy. Certainly, the intention was to pull the vast areas of the Soviet Union together by having economic activity throughout, and that they would therefore, be interdependent and, therefore, dependent on the Soviet structure. The Gosplanners (Soviet central planners) believed that Russia had all of the internal resources needed to build anything needed by a modern state, which indeed it did, and that the Soviet Union was large enough to have an indigenous circle of production that would be self sustaining.

The idea of profitability, of course, wasn't a major concern. Certainly, the Soviet planners had a kind of market in mind. Their market was largely contained within the Soviet space, and what they were working out in their own minds was how to provide adequate goods to all of the population. And they really didn't see any need for external markets. It was a closed system. But it was also a substantial part of the world. They reasoned that a closed system could work, and believed that to the end. I talked, indeed, about this to one of the last of the Gosplan heads. He was a prime minister of the Republic of Ukraine before independence, briefly, Masol, a very intelligent, well-trained Soviet economist. He made a very plausible case for the viability of the Soviet system within the Soviet Union. And in my view it was a conceivably plausible case. It denied the need for any foreign market, except for prestige purposes. To this day, I'm sure, he is of that view.

Russia and all of its independent states found themselves with this inherited economic base that had been interdependent in the past. Much of the politics and foreign policy of the last dozen years from 1991 on is an attempt to form a viable CIS, a community of independent states, which is a reformation in an economic sense of the former Soviet Union, in order to take advantage of the existing base.

Actually, the industrial base that had been created in Soviet times in large measure is now obsolete. The industries, as we have found, are now rust belt, and a lot of them environmentally dangerous and should be dismantled or rebuilt. The new age of service industry and information technology has changed almost everything. In Russia, they're going back to the most primitive of economic steps, which is creating capital by the sale of resources. That's the present base of the Russian economy, oil and gas and metals.

Q: Well, tell me, in all this, and we're talking up to December of '91, where did something that was logically much more, but at that time, where did Ukraine fit in? Because it always struck me, looking at this as athat if Ukrainl have a hard time not saying the Ukraine, but one learns after a while to call it Ukrainmoves out, that means Russia is no longer a particular threat to anybody. Because this is sort of the bread basket that goit's a huge state.

MILLER: That's the Brzezinski thesis, and of course that's only partially true. Russia alone, with thousands of nuclear weapons, is still a great threat.

Q: But that's destruction.

MILLER: Right, Russia still has large population resources as well as vast natural resources. By itself it is a great nation and, in the future, if they pull themselves together, will be even without Ukraine. But Brzezinski and Kissinger agreed that with Ukraine, it's an empire. It is an arguable point of view that has to be contended with.

I knew most of the individuals in the Ukrainian delegation in the Supreme Soviet in Moscow, but I didn't know them or look on them as Ukrainian nationalists, and I don't think they looked on themselves initially as Ukrainian nationalists, except for a few from the western part of Ukraine. Their view was, like that of most of the Interregional Group; reform the Soviet Union. Once confidence in Gorbachev's leadership declined and the Yeltsin approach took hold, the Ukrainian delegation went in the direction of independence for Ukraine.

A good part of the Soviet leadership was Ukrainian. Forty percent of the military general staff were Ukrainian. Forty percent is a good number to use in the political leadership, too, because at times it was as high as 40 percent Ukrainian, looking at the Khrushchev and Brezhnev tenures.

Q: Brezhnev is also?

MILLER: A Ukrainian, Dnepropetrovsk. So the way Ukraine was perceived by many, including myself, was as part of Russia. As one of my very good Russian friends once said about the newly independent Ukraine, "It was inconceivable that there could be a Russia without Ukraine and Crimea and southern Ukraine, where Tchaikovsky and so many of my relatives, used to spend summers. This was a part of Russian life. Pushkin went there, and Chekhov, all of our great Russians were part Ukrainian. It was inconceivable that Ukraine and Russia should be separated."

Q: Well, was there a movement in the United States? Going back, often ï¿½migrï¿½s have a different thrust. There are statues in Washington, DC of ...

MILLER: Taras Shevchenko,

Q: I used to kind of look at it and wonder, "What the hell is all this?" There are statues to Ukrainian heroes, and obviously there was a Ukrainian separatist movement getting good support, probably from the CIA or somebody like that.

MILLER: It was part of the Captive Nations anti communist, anti Soviet Union movement. It was headed here in Washington by Professor Lev Dobriansky. Paula, the Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs is his daughter.

Q: Was this an American movement more than a Ukrainian movement, would you say?

MILLER: No, I think it was an ï¿½migrï¿½ movement. The ï¿½migrï¿½s from the captive nations were often led by intellectuals, they believed very fiercely that their ethnic groups had been persecuted and that they had been forced out of their homeland. They always wanted to return one day. The Ukrainian ï¿½migrï¿½s who were most active in the Captive Nations Movement were from western Ukraine, but not entirely. It was an intellectual movement. They had influence in Congress, certainly in the context of the Cold War, it was a useful policy instrument, and it was used as such. I don't think it was ever seen as an alternative to the Soviet Union. While it was always a hope, I don't think anyone in the policy world foresaw the collapse of the Soviet Union. Some parts of our government used the ï¿½migrï¿½ movements as a way of undermining the Soviet Union. Attempts were made, as you know, in the '20s and '30s that were dismal failures, and there were rollback operations in 1950 which were also disastrous failures. I personally learned a lot about Ukrainian history from the individual experiences of the ï¿½migrï¿½ groups here, after I was nominated.

Q: I'd like to go back prior to that, the story, you're back in Moscow. What about the 'stans. I know, my one experience with Kyrgyzstan, which had obviously gotten more from the Soviet Union than they'd given to the Soviet Union, and there must have been others that really were very reluctant to get involved in the splitting up. Was this happening?

MILLER: It was happening, but my knowledge and understanding of the "stans" was through human rights groups. There were many human rights issues to be concerned about. The nuclear scientists, who were friends and associates of Sakharov and his group, were of the opinion that the nuclear testing sites which were in Kazakhstan were environmentally dangerous and were of great concern worldwide, but particularly to the people Kazakhstan. I had met a number of intellectuals and poets from Kazakhstan that were in the last Supreme Soviet. They were making the case for the removal of the dangerous nuclear weapons and nuclear waste and a halt to the repression and intolerance of native peoples. This kind of concern was evident in all of the ethnic and national groups throughout the Soviet Union, so there was nothing distinctive about that.

I learned much about Tajikistan, because, of course, I speak Persian. Tajik and Persian are very similar. I found them a rather dramatic people. Their leaders included filmmakers and other intellectuals and scientists who were very active in Moscow and made the case for the plight of the Tajiks and brought attention to their quarrels with Uzbeks. The driving issues seemed to be over tribal control rather than ideological, in many respects.

While I was generally aware of what was going on throughout the Soviet Union, because of my knowledge of what was going in the parliament and in the circles of intellectuals, my real focus was the ferment in Moscow.

Q: Gorbachev is cavalierly dismissed by Yeltsin. How did Yeltsin work with your group, or did he? Was he dismissive of youl'm using the collective yoefforts?

MILLER: No, no, because of Sakharov, he was very accessible. We had meetings with him a number of times. Like Gorbachev, he was interested in what was a common agenda and valuable and wanted to participate. Yeltsin's manner was very much more Soviet than Gorbachev. It was clear that Yeltsin was the first secretary and you had meetings with him because he allowed it to happen. He followed a prepared agenda and after he discussed it. said, "Yes, we'll do that." He was constructive and helpful, but I won't say he was engaged in the process as Gorbachev was.

Yeltsin was helpful and accessible because he respected Sakharov and a number of the people who worked with Sakharov, who we had brought to the United States, who were in key positions, for example, his minister of justice, and his chief of staff, who were both good friends of mine.

Q: But with the death of Gorbachev in '89 and moving up through '91, did that change that relationship? I mean, your group and Yeltsin?

MILLER: The nature of the issues, certainly the major issues, the political issues, changed completely. The end of the Soviet Union had been decided. I'll give you one example of the interim period. We brought over a delegation from the United States that was led by Muskie.

Q: That was Edmund Muskie?

MILLER: Yes. It was a distinguished group of people, sponsored by both the American Committee and the International Foundation. We had a session with Yeltsin. The main issue was Russia or the Soviet Uniowhich was the better outcome? Muskie forcefully maintained that the Soviet Union should be kept together. As Muskie was saying this to Yeltsin, Yeltsin in no uncertain terms shouted, "It's not going to happen." The Soviet Union is not going to exist any longer. It's now Russia. And Muskie answered, insisting that for the good of the world the Soviet Union must stay together. Of course, then, my Russian friends, Yeltsin's chief aides, who were there were shaking their heads, saying, "Don't you Americans understand it's already happened?"

Q: Did you find yourself seeing that the Soviet Union was over while the embassy didn't? I mean, was there a time when things like Muskie receivel mean, really, you were beginning to see things from a different viewpoint.

MILLER: I think the American embassy was seeing the reality that the Soviet Union was over pretty well. They had a large well-staffed embassy with a good political section. The political section was split in their views about the future direction of the Soviet Union or Russia. Many of the ambassadors from throughout the world assigned to Moscow were aware of all of the turmoil going on. Indeed, it was difficult to avoid living the life of most Muscovites. If they reported, as I know they did, on just what they themselves were doing, it was a pretty good parallel picture of what was going on in the minds and daily lives of many Russians.

The radical changes happening to Russia were affecting the working method of the embassies. The American embassy, indeed, almost all embassies and its methods and its utility as an instrument of foreign policy had to change, because the country had changed so rapidly from the police state and a situation where the embassy was isolated and forced into as small and tight a box as possible. During perestroika the embassy was being asked to help put together a new state.

How do you report all these tumultuous events in some effective way that can help policymakers? That became the task. I don't know the full answers. The Moscow Embassy was challenged, they were confronted with the great change of no longer being a reporting outpost; rather they were in the middle of consequential change and an actor in it. The Embassy had to open up and it was very difficult to do because it had been structured in another way for a very different set or circumstances. A lot of the officers of that time, the junior officers in the political section in Moscow and on the desk in Washington, throughout the think tanks, a lot of them left the Department after that time. But for me, Dick Miles and Jim Collins were people I saw frequently, and, of course, the ambassador.

All of the embassies of the West had to transform themselves. It was impressive and encouraging to see how ambassadors became street people. That's what was needed. You had to be on the street, to know what was going on. This was no longer a cocktail circuit or exchange of information among colleagues. The ambassadors went into the parliaments and were doing what the journalists were doing. Of course, this was the period of extraordinarily good journalism, American journalism, with David Remnick, Rick Smith and Bill Keller, Robert Kaiser and Phil Taubman. There were at least a dozen great writers among the press corps.

The political reporting from the Embassy at the time, was just as good, if not better. Very few outside the Department of State would know that. "What do you tell Washington? How do you tell Washington something that they can't read in the newspaper? How do you reshape this very important outpost, which is now not an outpost, not a bastion, either, but rather a center of the West in the heart of the East, undergoing change? How do you make it useful?"

I'd say that so many other instruments and means and influences were at play now. The businessmen were in large numbers, the American businessmen, the groups like ours, the journalists, many of the civil society organizations, religious groups. Moscow was a wide-open place. Diplomats had to adapt to these new circumstances almost instantly, and if they didn't adapt, they weren't useful.

Q: Well, did you find what I think would be quite natural, a certain unhappiness on the part of many Russians/Soviets about all these do-gooders who were coming from the West telling them how to run their business and all that. I think there would be too many Westerners running around full of advice.

MILLER: At the end, certainly. At the end, certainly. But in the heat of battle, the Russians just picked and chose. They picked who they wanted, used who they thought were helpful, talked to those they found reason to do so for pleasure or solace or utility, depending on motivation.

Q: Well, there were two revolutions going on, I would think. One would be on the political side, who does what to whom and who is in charge? But the other one is there is an economic system which is in a way far more important to the person in the street, of how do they make their living? What was happening sort of on the economic side?

MILLER: Well, you use the right term, person on the street. Many ordinary citizens went in the street personally, as individuals, and sold personal belongings because they had to in order to survive. A basic sufficiency economy quickly developed. The sufficiency economy was just that.

Q: By sufficiency economy, at the bare level.

MILLER: Subsistence, being able to live on despite the collapse of an economic system, with the collapse of monethat is, the ruble, or the Soviet rubland having no significant exports or imports, how did they survive? Well, the people who had to went on the street and they sold their less-needed belongings for food, for vegetables, which were brought in from the plots around Moscow or the other cities, and somehow they managed to survive. They developed an economy based on their needs, not a bad beginning for a new society. It was humiliating for many. At almost every metro stop, there'd be several hundred babushkas holding up a sausage or a pair of shoes, some treasured book or piece of clothing. It was a barter economy. "You can buy from me what you need or think you need, and I'll buy from you. We'll exchange our belongings."

It was also a process of democratization, and certainly an equalization. At that level no one prospered; at that level, everyone survived. This is the time when state stores, the produkti, the place where staples, vegetables, ovashi (vegetables) and frukti (fruit) were sold, had nothing on their shelves. Everything was in the street, so the state instrument disappeared and the replacement was the people's instrument, and it wasn't bad. For all of the direct face-to-face humiliation for many people, well-dressed academicians who were selling their goods to get basic food and vegetables to survive, it was a leveling process. Every family that could went out to country places and planted potatoes and cabbages and other basics in order to get through the hard winter.

So that was the beginning of the new economy. It was first a subsistence economy, and it was a very strong start to a new sound economy, I would say, because the Russians and the Ukrainians, (because it was still going on in Ukraine when I went to Kyiv in 1993 as ambassador), were proud of being able to do this. They survived by their own efforts, and no one stopped them. They had to do it. They despised the state whose failure had forced them to do it, but the people did it. It was self reliance of an important kind.

Then, shortly thereafter the shadow economy arose out of the dark corners of economic life. The shadow economy in the first stages was mostly luxury goodit was alcohol and cigarettes and luxury underwear, things of that sort. The shadow economy was also the beginning of economic criminalitthe kiosk culture, the mafia arrangements, none of this was taxed, of course.

Q: You left before they sort of gave up the big enterprises and those each were taken over by many of these, call them robber barons?

MILLER: Yes, I left Moscow, but, of course, I went immediately thereafter to Ukraine as ambassador, where that process ...

Q: We'll pick this up then, but there must have been certain elements of the populous, and I would think it would fall hardest on the intellectuals and all, but inability to live within thiit's hard for a professor to get out and peddle books and all.

MILLER: Yes, well, this is what is attractive about Russia at this time of difficulty to many, certainly to me, is that these are people who made it through these terrible things that occurred to almost every generation. You think of 1917 and then of the purges in the '30s, then of the Second World War, not to mention the civil wars throughout the Soviet Union, but how they survived and made their way and somehow maintained a civilized approach to life. You have to admire their toughness and fortitude and human greatness of character.

The intellectuals were the people that I knew best, and many are still my friends. Their sons were selling bananas on the corner and supporting the family. They were earning more or less what they earned under the Soviet system, which under the present conditions was very little, and they had no perks anymore, but they had their apartments. They were surviving. They had no money for research or their activities. Yet everyone was involved in building the new state, what it was becoming. Many former top Soviets and bureaucrats and academics were active politically, but even if they weren't, they were affected by the politics of change.

Yes, I would say the change fell hardest on those who had fixed, assured positions, or niches, in the old Soviet society, even the best academicians, people in the institutes, even the opera, ballet, state-supported institutions, hospitals, schools. It fell hardest on those parts of the Soviet system which were part of the basic national infrastructure and would be necessary social infrastructure under any system, including the most advanced capitalist system. The fact that all of these structures, the universities, schools, hospitals, the arts, somehow survived is partially due to the great character of these people, their unusual strength in conditions of the greatest adversity.

Q: Well, was there concern on your part and all about the Soviet military? Because looking at it, being familiar with the American military system, you had far too great an officer corps. What the hell do you do with that?

MILLER: Well, that was a daunting question they had to deal with. What was done was to do nothing. They just left the military in place. They didn't disband them, they just maintained them, and they kept the draft, of course. The draft was the greatest threat to the military, because there was no need and the hazing and mistreatment, traditional mistreatment, became an issue for the mothers, and they were a powerful political group at that time. The few uses that the military were ordered to do were terribly unpopular.

The military command, having been a part of the political structure in the Politburo and Central Committee, suddenly found themselves largely outside. They were dispossessed and had to find a place in the new political structure because of the collapse of the Party. And this is where the reformed secret police become terribly important. To some extent there was a reformation in the secret police. Putin was one example of what that reformation means. That is, they're still the most powerful group remaining from the Soviet Union, because of their coherent, informed (relatively) discipline. The primary motivations are still to hold the state together, and to protect the state from enemies. They are still an elite group, and still are able to generate enough fear for them to have an effect. Maintaining a large military obviously began to be clearly unneeded with the end of the Cold War. The issue of the relative size of the Russian military has been largely resolved. They'll maintain a million-plus army including reserves for the foreseeable future. They've reached an equilibrium on that issue.

Political allegiance? The military commanders are not going to go anywhere else, to another state, and the Russian leadership from the beginning still had Soviet attitudes about the military. Yeltsin, who was a lapsed Soviet, was still a Soviet in character. Putin is certainly exhibits Soviet characteristics. The security forces understand that they still command respect from the new leadership, even though their role in the political system is much reduced.

Q: Well, I would imagine that the coup against Gorbachev would have discredited the top military leadership ...

MILLER: It did.

Q: ... as a power to all of a sudden call up the battalions and start marching or something.

MILLER: Well, it did. It discredited those who went with the coup, but the military forces stood in place and largely resisted following General Yazov. I mean, the secret police, part of the KGB, told Yeltsin you have a way, with our help.

Q: Well, also, some of the troops did not fire, really sided with Yeltsin.

MILLER: They sided with the people. People were stuffing flowers down the gun barrels. These were 18-year-old kids and their parents who were in front of the gun barrels and tanks.

Q: It was during this short time of ...

MILLER: This is very interesting, because the heads of battalions that were guarding Moscow at the time, this I recall, these guards who headed the major tank divisions, were well known to the legislators. The legislators and Yeltsin's group got to them. The overwhelming view that Yeltsin had a right to govern was maintained and the experiment of an independent Russia was preferred, in the absence of a coherent Soviet Union on the part of Gorbachev. He hadn't presented a coherent alternative vision.

Q: It never resolved his dilemma of being a Soviet man in this new ...

MILLER: Yes, right. And, again, I return to Sakharov. Sakharov could have given Gorbachev the formulation. It's was tragic for Gorbachev.

Q: What did you do personally during the three or four days when Yeltsin was besieged, when the coup was going on?

MILLER: Well, I was receiving reports from the parliament. You remember they were besieged, and the "White House" was communicating by telephone, almost minute to minute to strategic places all over the world not to mention Moscow. I have messages tucked away, files of those, mostly from Sergei Kovalev, who was Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Human Rights Committee. He and his office kept us informed minute by minute of what was happening inside the besieged White House.

Q: By the way, I'm not sure where she fits in, or if she does, but Susan Eisenhower, was she involved with your group or not?

MILLER: Yes, she was.

Q: Could you talk a little about her, because it's interesting that we have Susan Eisenhower over there, and eventually we ended up with Khrushchev's son in the United States. It got kind of mixed up.

MILLER: Well, yes. Susan, was also a board member, with the name of a very distinguished American family, was a great help. She was very interested in what was happening, learned much and was a positive force. She fell in love with a fellow International Foundation board member, Roald Sagdeev, the head of the Soviet space program. They carried on a romance in the middle of all of this and got married. He came with her back to the United States. He's here at the University of Maryland at this point. She was a good reporter to her circles of friends about what was going on. She's a good friend of mine, very good friend.

Q: Well, I'm just thinking, I think we might then wait until next session, but you left at the end of '91 and what happened then?

MILLER: Yes.

Q: We'll keep moving.

[END SIDE]

Q: Bill, 1991. What happened?

MILLER: President Bush likes to use the phrase "the world has changed since 9/11," but I think, in 1991, the world changed in ways that are much more profound than 9/1certainly more constructive. 9/11 is tactical. The end of the East-West confrontation, the end of the Soviet empire is strategic in the deepest and broadest sense. 1991 was the last chance that those who had the Soviet dream could have changed things internally enough to continue, and they failed. Gorbachev failed. The whole structure that had been built up over 70 years imploded, because the populations of all of the republicthe main one, of course, being Russia itselhad understood that the Soviet ideology and dream of a Communist society and Socialist principles had failed.

Certainly the leadership of the coup attempts proved the point, that the Communist Party represented inept, substandard leadership and that it had no capability, even negative capability, of undertaking the changes that were necessary, as expressed by the overwhelming majority of the country. Gorbachev rode this enormous tide of change as chairman of the Party, but the tide was too much for the ship he was aboard and attempting to steer. To continue the metaphor, the ship Gorbachev was attempting to steethe Soviet Party structure was no longer where real power was.

Some of the most interesting indicators of this shift of power, I think, include the last several Supreme Soviets of the Soviet Union, where you have the membership, extraordinarily capable people that went far beyond the old Party of Power, the Communist Party nomenklatura. The majority leadership was now with the leaders of the nationalities, of literature, of the arts and scienceother disciplines far beyond traditional Soviet politics. It was a very catholic, extraordinary legislature.

Q: You were talking about the changes after '91.

MILLER: I was speaking about the quality of the last legislatures of the Soviet Union. We were talking about the legislatures, the quality of those who made up the legislature of the last two Supreme Soviets. I was arguing that the true leadership of Russia and those entities that made up the Soviet Union was no longer in the Party of Power.

A very good case in point is how the regions reactethat is, the republics. There is an Estonian named Igor Grazin, who was one of the key members of the Estonian delegation to the Supreme Soviet, the last two. He was half-Estonian, half Russian, a personification of the Sovietization of the Baltic States. Grazin is an extraordinary international lawyer, he was first in his class in several universities and law school, including Moscow and ended up here, in the United States as a professor at Notre Dame. He went back to Estonia as a legislator of an independent republic. His position was similar to that of many Ukrainians and certainly those of the Warsaw state members from Eastern Europe, that the Gorbachevian approach of regional autonomy was the right one. That was their view, and that was the view of the Bush administration. However, Gorbachev had to go further beyond rhetoric in order to make it work, and that was to give increasing autonomy to the new elements that were in the political equation. It wasn't simply independence for nationalist tribes, but it was an inclusion of intellectuals, of artists, of all of these people who had been kept out, and they were now part of the equation, and they, in fact, were what were in the last two Supreme Soviets. That was the new Soviet Union. The reality was there.

The leadership of the Soviet state structurthe bureaucracy, the apparatucould not adjust to that new reality. They resisted the internal changes that were necessary to conform to the new realities. The outcome of the clash between the new reality and the old structure was that the new reality, being much larger and more able, won the day.

The last several years of perestroika is an extraordinarily interesting period that, I think, needs to be understood by those who are interested in the new Russia. It is necessary to know the condition of the former Soviet Union at that crossover point, and the issues that were at play. It is important to know what the perestroika group represented and what independence of the nationalities or the republics meant, what the ideological changes were, how they might have been otherwise, had the Soviet state kept together. So 1991 was an extraordinarily heady, yeasty, bubbling, kind of turbulent period. It was a real search for an optimum solution in which there were society-wide struggles over the fundamental law, many particular subsidiary laws, structures of government, including state and local governments, cultural institutions and city governments. The intensity of the society-wide participation in the creation of the new state was remarkable and inspiring, to me as an American.

Q: You were in Moscow still?

MILLER: Yes, I was, a good deal of the time, up until 1993. In that period while I was living there, and I was very closely involved with the key players in the drama, from Gorbachev and Yeltsin to the leaders in the Supreme Soviet and Moscow city government and even the clergy.

Q: It always struck me that one of the major problems with the SovietI mean, this is obviouwas the economic controls. Were things happening there?

MILLER: Yes. Survival was very much at stake for individuals. "How can we live? How do we eat?" And because state storeall stores were state storeas the state broke down, weren't supplying fundamental goods. So the shadow market, the underground markets, that had always existed in the time of collective farms, where the surpluses that were grown on homegrown in the home plots were brought by peasants and the farm workers to the city and sold in the open markets and at the entrances to metro stops, became the staples. The state stores had supplies but the shelves were so bare they vanished.

Q: They withered away.

MILLER: They withered away. The state had withered away in the Marxist sense, and what was left was a hand-to-mouth individualistic economy. That was the moment of the real free-market economy, because it was person to person and the most permitted form was barter, in order to survive. People from the villages and the collective farms would bring produce and they would get shoes and clothing, and those who were in severe difficulty would be selling off their shoes and clothing in order to eat. Everyone had to survive, everyone, and that was a way of investiture in the new state. They were on the street, bartering, outside the metro stations in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

People at the higher levels of Soviet life even at the higher levels of the bureaucracy were forced to do this like everyone else. It was a kind of democratization. They said, "We've got to do something about this, we can'how can we live like this?" which is the name of a very good perestroika film, by the way. We Cannot Live Like This was the title of the film, and it had great resonance among the people of the time. In fact this is a sidebabut the perestroika films, as they were known then, of which there are aboul think I saw 30 or 40 of them. Remarkable in quality, they remind me of the Iranian films that are being produced now. They were just so full of the immediate sense of what the people were undergoing, their sense of reality. It was wonderfully portrayed, usually with ironic humor, the Soviets at that point, and the new Russians-to-be didn't have a stomach for the tough stuff. The Cold Summer of 1953 was as much as they could bear. They needed some humor in their existence, and they got it, of course. By the time Burnt By the Sun appeared in 1994 a film about the Purges that won the best foreign film Academy award and the Cannes award, popular taste could no longer stomach such critiques of Soviet life. It was a great day for the arts, a great time for the arts, particularly performing arts. It was remarkable, it stimulated quality in not only the performance of classical music and theater, but new music, including rock and popular music. Vysotsky, who was the great singer of protest in Soviet times, sang in an argot of prison slang. There were five or six very popular folk singers, sort of Joan Baez guitar style but in the end Russian. I have a large collection of Melodya recordings. I love the music from this time. It was remarkable, all of it.

They had rock bands that had names like Black Coffee and Time Machine and all manner of bizarre groups that were extraordinarily good. Many of them were sort of take-offs on the Beatles. The closest to the Beatles was a group called Quartet Sekret, the Secret Quartet, from St. Petersburg. They were very funny, and somehow joyously light hearted, very good musicians. They were very popular during the perestroika period.

So it was a time of great possibility, openness and humanity. It was the fact that the dissidents of the timnot initially refuseniks, but dissidents, like Sakharov, the respect and position that was given to him and his group, whereas in the past they were reviled and put in the gulag. It was a remarkable transformation of character, national character, of free individual expression and a wonderful atmosphere to live in.

Q: How did you find the KGB apparatus type, and I assume there wasn't a DeJournis (ph) or whoever, the people who are kind of the block fuehrer or whatever it is, the whole apparatus. How was that responding?

MILLER: Well, the KGB as a repressive force had disintegrated, and they were under very severe restraint and the units of the KGB that were known for their brutality, and used force, were kept to insure the new idea of law and order. The bugging of telephones, no one cared. No one was afraid. They would point the ceiling they'd start cursing at the ceiling, and then go on, without any fear, because many of them who in the past were the listeners or informers were part of the new group. Getting rid of these symbols of soviet expression, pulling down the Dzerzhinsky statue, and putting up a memorial to the gulagis instead and right next door to the entrance to lyubyanka was a sign of how changed things were. They pulled down the idols of the past and put them in Tretyakov Park knowing that the statues in the future would be important museum pieces. They didn't destroy them, they just put them aside.

It was a remarkable, remarkable time of possibility, and the result, was a peaceful process that was bloodless, for the most part. The transition to the integration into the world economy and international structures has been extraordinarily difficult because there was such a difference between the world that the Soviets had constructed over 70 years and what had been happening in the rest of the world, particularly in the West. The integration into radically different systems has proven to be difficult, and unfortunately brutal, criminal, inequitable, and largely unsuccessful. But as a huge national system, as a continental system, Russia is taking its place as one of the G-8, simply because of the size, not yet because of performance, but rather because of the abundance of resources and its obvious economic potential. They can't be ignored, even with all of their deficiencies. They're there. "Here we are, what are you going to do with us?"

So in those years, I was in Moscow and I was fortunate to be allowed to be a part of their group, particularly by those who were working on the structure of the new law, new systems of government and international issues. I was welcomed.

Q: Who were some of the key players on the Bush side and on the Soviet side?

MILLER: The key players in the Yeltsin group, the new Russia; in St. Petersburg it was Sobchak, and Putin was one of his lesser lieutenants. In Moscow, first it was Yeltsin as mayor and he brought along his apparatus from Sverdlovsk and they became the heads of the Moscow city council and the police force; these were people we worked with. In the Supreme Soviet itself the speaker after following Khasbulatov from Chechnya, was Konstantin Lubenchenko, who was one of those first departees we brought to the United States on a visit to our Congress. There was Andrei Sebentsov, who was chairman of the Constitutional Drafting Committee and the Committee on Laws, that is, the vetting of legal writing. Nikolai Fyodorov, from Chuvash, was the first Minister of Justice of Russia. People like Igor Grazin, an Estonian, and Yuri Scherbak, from Ukraine, Andrei Sakharov, who was a very close friend and his group, Sergei Kovalev, and there were a whole group of lawyers who had been those who had defended the dissidents in the hard times and had gone to the Parliament as legislators, they were a very key group in the beginning. Many of them became judges in the constitutional court and the Supreme Court, the key figures in legal education. These were people like Galina Starovoitova, from St. Petersburg, who was murdered some years ago, who was a human rights activist, and who was one of the first to bring attention to what was happening in Nagorno Karabakh, and in Chechnya.

Then there were the orthodox priests, and the clerical hierarchy, metropolitan Pitirim in Moscow, who was on the board of the International Foundation, and Kyril, who is a possible successor, it is believed, to Patriarch of all Russia, Alexei.

Q: How did you see the church responding, because it has always been a creature of the state, or at least that's the common perception.

MILLER: Not for the babushka. The clergy was coopted by the KGB, or at least some of it. The hierarchy made what they regarded as unavoidable accommodations in order to survive. I went to Zagorsk a number of times.

Q: Zagorsk being the?

MILLER: Zagorsk is where the main seminary for the Orthodox Church I located, the monastery of the trinity. The monastery which dates from the fourteenth century. One of the fortified monastery towns that made up the "Golden Ring", was officially a museum in the Soviet time, but it was, in fact, a center for the deeply religious, as long as they were in conformity with the state, which included, in many cases, active cooperation with the security force, with KGB. In Soviet times coopted by the KGB didn't exclude the possibility of faith. That was a remarkable reality that I found. The liturgy wasn't affected, and for the Orthodox, as I've come to understand them, the liturgy is unchanging and was unchanged. So if liturgy wasn't interfered with, the Soviets hadn't gotten to the core of faith. The rest of it is human failing, but the purity of the received church remained, is what the clergy maintains.

Q: You know, all the churches, including the Catholics, were going through profound changes and the Orthodox had fallen to the straight line.

MILLER: More or less. In all of the apparatus of the Orthodox churciconography, certainly text and ceremony there is no change. In the babushka world, everyone has a grandmother, the ritual, the unchanging ritual, sustained them.

Q: You might explain what the babushka is.

MILLER: Grandmothers. They were and are the keepers of memory, even in Soviet times. They're the ones who see to the proper baptisms, the marriages, the burials in the church. They are the ones who tell the stories of the ancestors, including fairy tales of the past, and they went to the churches all through the Soviet period. They were not a threat to the state and they were somehow able to preserve the lineage of faith.

The babushka phenomenon was strong enough, so that when controls were lifted, all of society, the grandfathers and mothers and fathers and children all went to church. Partially, I think, because it was and is an institution of great beauty. I won't say entertainment, but entertainment was part of it. The music had not been suppressed completely and the choral singing was of such high quality that the churches were filleabsolutely filleall the time.

Q: Where did thethere has to be a factory that produces these Russians basses. Where do you get that deep, rumbling ?

MILLER: I think it's a mixture of caviar, sausage and vodka.

Q: It's just remarkable and wonderful.

MILLER: I was very interested in Russian choral music, so I went to every church that had a good choir and went to every concert that I could. That was one of the joys of being in Moscow. It was such an open, expansive time that I never felt any fear, I must say, during the time I lived in Moscow, anywhere in Moscow. Everyone was on the street.

Q: What about crime, though?

MILLER: There were crimes of deprivation, but people helped each other out, so it was less evident. The crimes of ththe economic crimes that were the large thefts, the breaking in of automobiles and shops and so on, comes later, when people became unequal in their wealth, but at this stage everyone was poor, and everyone was sharing, to an extent, certainly within the families.

Q: What about the Soviet military? It always struck me that they had, right from almost the beginning, a really flawed system. They're picking on the recruits and the brutal treatment of recruits and the other, too many officers and not enough professional sergeants and that sort of thing.

MILLER: That had always been the case, but there were protests, particularly by the mothers, when the actual need for an imperial military had ceased. The decline of the huge continental army, particularly after the failure of Afghanistan, the mothers' union had representation in the legislature, were big supporters of Yeltsin who leaned on the military to clean it up, or at least begin an attempt to clean it up. But of course the hazing traditions were centuries old in character, very difficult to eradicate and to eliminate in the officer corps and start again, which they haven't done. So there is a withering away of the old Soviet military, I would say, but it is going slowly. Conscription remains a great thorn in the side of Russian society, as it is in many societies.

Q: Were you concerned, being well in place before these developments, and already being an old hand in Moscol would have thought that every do-gooder or academic in the United States who had any pretensions of knowing what to dand Europeans, the equivalent in academics and think-tankers and all would be flooding in there, a lot of them with a lot of cockamamie ideas and I mean, I think they'd almost sort of clog the arteries.

MILLER: Yes, that was happening. There were many thousands in Russia from the West of that character. Some were helpful, many were not, and most were of no consequence one way or the other, but they were part of the environment of change taking place.

On the whole, I think the presence of Western groups was a plus because it brought the outside world into Russia itself. Yes, the phenomenon of Seventh Day Adventists and Mormon missionaries and Chicago school economic evangelists were examples of the kinds of strange and wonderful things from the West appeared then in Russia. Many groups had some attraction to those Russians in great distress, particularly if they brought real help and money along with them. It was part of the equation.

But the Russians were also traveling to the West. They were traveling out into the world, and seeing things for themselves, sometimes on official business, or as guests of the West, and NGO organizations. These journeys to the West had a very powerful impact on the thinking of the leadership elite. It was a very important plus, I'd say, was the availability of exchanges. On the official level, certainly, like the kind that the Bill Bradley amendment and the programs the Library of Congress, Jim Billington sponsored and promoted.

Q: Billington being the Librarian of Congress.

MILLER: Yes, Senator Bradley's program of education of high school students, at the high school level in the United States. These were very important, they helped shape the first generation of new Russian leaders. I regret that it hasn't been continued at the levels of the past, because I know such travel and learning opportunities have a profound effect through many generations if we had kept that up, bringing them here to understand what we are. These exchanges enable us to go there to Russia, as well, to understand what they were becoming. Tragically, we have cut the resources for those enormously effective positive programs. I think we've missed an opportunity.

Q: Well, then, when did you leave Moscow?

MILLER: I left Moscow when the U.S. presidential election took place.

Q: This would be the election of '92.

MILLER: Ninety-two, yes.

Q: This would be the advent of Bill Clinton.

MILLER: Yes. I was in the Clinton foreign policy group, and after the election it was clear that I would be a part of the Clinton administration.

Q: How did that develop? How does onBill Clinton was coming out of Arkansas, and although he had been involved in other groups, I mean, still, he was a small state's governor and not exposed to foreign policy as far as having to really deal with it. How did this work out?

MILLER: Bill Clinton is obviously a very skillful politician. It was, perhaps the luck of the political game that some individuals didn't run who might have won had they run. Bradley, for instance. So Clinton won, and after he won he put together teams for the transition, the transition being the period between the election and inauguration. It is during the transition that the new President decides what needs to be changed in the way of policies and people. Clinton began choosing the people he wanted to fill the several thousand slots (actually about 3,200 slots) at the policy level that are regarded as presidential appointments. It is during the transition that the shaping of the new government takes place.

Clinton was very interested in foreign policy, he directed the policy goals and chose the new foreign policy team himself, along with the new Vice President, Al Gore, as well. Clinton's closest advisors included people who were part of his Oxford experience. Strobe Talbott, for example. The networking that is normal in Washington came into play. In my case, I'd known Strobe all during the period of perestroika and before, and for both of us that was part of our experience, he being a Russian-Soviet-scholar and journalist and I because of my work in the Soviet Union. We both shared an Oxford experience and we had many mutual friends in the Clinton group. Tony Lake, who was appointed National Security Advisor, was my first student at Harvard, when I was a tutor in History and Lit. The head of personnel and recruitment was Brian Atwood, who was later head of AID, and he was on the Hill with me. He was with Tom Eagleton when I was working for John Sherman Cooper, Frank Church and Mac Mathias, so we were colleagues. Leon Fuerth was Gore's long time foreign policy assistant, and was also on the Hill. Dick Moose came into the Foreign Service about the same time and he was a friend here at home for many, many years and still is a friend.

There are many elements that contribute to the makeup of a political team such as neighbors, schools, experience. That's how the transition teams were put together and the transition involved writing papers, speeches, laying out agendas for the work of the incoming government. I was a part of that process. It was very clear that they wanted, in my case, to send me to the former Soviet Union, either to Moscow or Kyiv. Tom Pickering, my good friend, went to Moscow. I went to Kyiv.

Q: While you were working on this transition and all this, whaStrobe Talbott was sort of the major force in looking at the former Soviet Union, was he, sort of? What was the feeling? What could we do there?

MILLER: Well, he and Clinton, both believed that the new Russia could become a positive force for stability. Conversely, if it didn't receive assistance and some direction, particularly to continue the control and reduction of nuclear weapons, that it could be a force for instability. The believed that it was a crucial, highest priority to deal with the former Soviet Union. They created, structurally, in the government, a separate State Department bureau. Bureaucratically, you know how hard that is. They carved out of EUR the former Soviet Union. To staff this new bureau, Strobe and President Clinton chose all of the key players. Many were from the Foreign Service ranks but not all, and they wanted the new bureau to have direction, from the President through Strobe.

Clinton's vision was that he could work with the new leadership, with Yeltsin and his group because they were part of the dynamics that had changed, that ended the Soviet Union.

Q: Were you gettinwhen they processed (ph) these early days, with people either in the State Department or within your transmission group or something, who were uncomfortable with Yeltsin?

MILLER: Yes, from the outset there were people who were sentimental about the Gorbachevian approach and would have preferred that, but that wasn't an option. The Gorbachev option was closed off by Gorbachev himself and the leadership actions of the Soviet coup group.

[END TAPE]

Q: This is tape nine, side one with Bill Miller. You were saying with Yeltsin ?

MILLER: Yes, Yeltsin's group was able enough, open enough and had worked with our official people and some of our NGOs throughout the perestroika period, so the Clinton administration was able to deal with them directly immediately. There was a belief that the United States and the West could have considerable influence, which was the case. Some of it unfortunately wasn't of the highest quality, but, on the whole, certainly on the issues of arms control and nuclear arms control, the dangers, that side of equation, were taken care of quite well. The understanding of the difficulties of the economic transition no one did very well; neither the Russians or the new republics or the United States or the West. We missed in profoundly disturbing ways the importance of working through the economic transition more skillfully.

Q: Just to go back to this hard transition. Was there much change vis-ï¿½-vis dealing with the former Soviet Union between the Bush One administration and Clinton?

MILLER: No, I really don't think so. The difference between, say, Jack Matlock and Tom Pickering and how they behaved in Moscol don't think you could tell the policy difference at all. Both Tom and Jack are good friends to this day, and I think Jack had as good an understanding as any of the Clinton people. His advice was given and welcomed by Clinton and Strobe. No, I think the establishment of Soviet hands, State Department spooks and academics were on the whole coherent from one administration to another, and of course Congress, being as conservative as it is, as an organizatiothat is, the key Congressmen and senators stay there for such a long time, they are the reason for policy continuity, even if an administration lasts only four or eight years. They're there for 25 years. They're far more the policy balancing force even than the bureaucracy.

So the path of dealing with the new Russia, the former Soviet Union, did not require taking a radically different new direction.

Q: Did you find, as you were working on this, was Warren Christopher much of a player, or was it pretty much, from your perspective, dealing with the former Soviet Union was a Strobe Talbott thing?

MILLER: It was a direct, personal Clinton interest. Clinton was the policy maker. Clinton shared the views of Strobe, who, of course, had a far more detailed knowledge of the Soviets and the new Russians.

Q: It was Clinton?

MILLER: Clinton was unusual, certainly compared to Bush. He wanted to make policy and to run policy. He liked doing the job of policy direction and, being as smart as he is, learned what he didn't know. He always wanted to be involved. He spent a lot of time going to Moscoback and forth, back and forthe loved it. Strobe did, and Warren Christopher did, too, but Warren deferred to Strobe. His personality is such that he allowed a subordinate to take over the portfolio, but Christopher had a deep interest in it. His views were not dissimilar, sand they all had plenty to do.

Q: In a way, he was sort of the president's lawyer in foreign affairs.

MILLER: Christopher was the president's lawyer. As long as he was there, in the administration, the ethical standards were very high.

Q: At the time, you were saying that everybodalmost everybody involved in all sides werdidn't get the economic side right. Was that the ?

MILLER: Yes.

Q: What was ?

MILLER: The conflict of interest, I'd say, was the acute question, and, from the outset, the Russians and all of the former Soviet states did not make clear the difference between personal activity and governmental activity. I've come to the conclusion, that one reason for this, is that there was only the state in the Soviet system. Soviet leaders were the state, so whatever they did was correct. They found it very difficult to make a separation between public and private. The conflict of interest standards that we have, which says, basically, that if you're in government service you cannot benefit from your government service personally while you are in office. After that the standard for conflict of interest gets murky; because of the people who go in and out of government service and who trade on their previous experience - the lobbyists for example. We've even put a firewall on that kind of influence by saying, that for two years for peoplambassadors can't take any position, for example, and I think that's true of generals and so on, that for two years, the use of privileged access and information, the lobbying phenomenon is prohibited. It's not enough of a firewall, but it's a boundary that has had some benign effect.

We believed that, that you shouldn't make money because of your government work while in government. The Russians made no such separation.

Q: Did you have the feeling that you were dealing with a country that had never had anything but essentially the state running things, I mean, really running things?

MILLER: Yes, absolutely. For me, as I never understood how we failed to understand how these huge new nations were going into moneyed economies, dealing with other economies that had money when they did not have any distributed capital. They had to convert their assets, their land, factories, enterprises, their gold, diamonds, metals, wood into cash. The methods of doing thabarter, monetization of some kinwere extremely difficult for them to undertake in any equitable way. We had nothing very useful to tell them, or really any valid advice, that they could accept. The leaders didn't accept conflict of interest restrictions because the leaders knew they had to acquire wealth in order to stay in power. They understood that power requirement right away: that money was power and that the only place they could get money was to take the state assets. So the old Soviet, now Russian leaders, took the state assets and made money for themselves and their friends. That's why they're now in power. That's why they're millionaires, billionaires. They made capital directly from state assets. Some of the most prominent stole from the state to stay in power.

That, of course, started in the time of Gorbachev, when the new economy was beginning. Led by Gorbachev and the perestroika groups, private economy was accepted by the Communist state. Under Soviet law and ideology a private sector was prohibited. The laws explicitly said you can't have private enterprise or hold capital. To make profits was criminal. However, there were loopholes and the overriding precept - the Gorbachev dictum was, "Whatever is not prohibited is permitted." So he and the now Capitalist Soviet leaders drove trucks through those loopholes, and the courts were instructed and the law enforcement was instructed to allow the trucks to drive through these loopholes.

For some reason, our overall philosophy was, "Well, that's the Wild West, the Wild East, it'll be a very quick transition and it will all trickle down." The remnants of trickle-down economic notions, the romanticism of the Gilded Era, in the sense that, of course, the robber barons would become philanthropists as ours did. The path that was taken was a huge mistake. What we in the West should have advocated, along with them, as some of them did, was to work out, carefully, methods for equitable distribution of state assets. They should have required full value for the sale of State assets. They should have used the sale of assets for revolving funds for infrastructure needs. The Marshall Plan approach, basically, would have been a sound basis for developing the means for a democratic economic system rather that the oligarchic system they actually developed. They didn't do that. They're still not doing it.

Q: Were other players, as you were watching this from Washington, in the Clinton administration, were other countries involved? Germany, Britain, France, Japan, and so on?

MILLER: Yes, they were all involved, but none to the extent that we were. We had such a huge preponderance of power, both military and economithe EU hadn't taken hold yet, it was beginninso the European influences were still from separate nations, rather than the EU, as a European entity, although it was beginning to have coherence. We were the leader, so they were following our power-lead, and the influence that was in the international bankWorld Bank, IMF, EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), and the other development banks, were all following our lead. We were ignorant, grossly so, about what to do, which was understandable in retrospect, perhaps.

Q: As I recall, we were making loans, investments, what have you, of rather sizeable amounts, weren't we? Were you part of that process?

MILLER: In the case of Ukraine, yes. It was the third largest recipient of foreign assistance, from us, just from the United States, and from the banks, the international banks of comparable levels. What was missing was a sense, on the one hand, from the Ukrainians, what kind of economy they wanted to have, what proportiothings are moving.

Q: Bill, you were talking about the Ukraine. I think maybe this would be a good place to stop, with the transition. But we haven't talked about, sort of, your specific role in the transition.

MILLER: The transition team and all of that? How that works?

Q: Then we'll go on to what you did after the transition worked its way out, and I haven't asked you about how the transition team, in your particular aspect, fit with the State Department and CIA and all, were there any problems, and that sort of thing. So we'll pick it up then.

MILLER: Yes, all right.

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Q: Today is the twelfth of March, 2004. Bill, just to reprise a biwho composed the transition team to the State Department?

MILLER: Well, the key players in the State Department transition team, I would say, were Tony Lake, Richard Moose, Leon Fuerth, Warren Christopher, and Brian Atwood. These were all significant figures in previous administrations. They had held high positions in foreign affairs. The transition team of Clinton, just as other president's transition teams, was also composed of people who were involved in the campaign, so they were really political operatives. A number were office-seekers who had a place in the transition which they carved for themselves, in many cases, because of money given or services rendered during a campaign not because of experience or skills or ability in foreign affairs. Then there were the bureaucratic professionals, who were expected to continue to hold key positions in the new administration. The transition team I just described were in charge of putting together the policy papers for the new president and the new administration, and to draw up lists of personnel who would be appointed by the president to key positions.

It was very free-forone could not say it was an orderly process. It was governed by the collegiality and comfortable familiarity of many of the individuals involved. There is, in this sense, a continuity in our political system, even in foreign affairs and defense. The people who go into policy work tend to do it for a lifetime, even if there are interruptions because of change of party and changes of direction in individual professions. So this was not a group of people without experience. They were extremely experienced, and were able to draw on an enormous reservoir of experienced people. The non-governmental world is characterized by the think tanks, which are, in some respects, holding places for people who would like to be running things in government and have done so in the past. It was the place of lawyers, who were involved in legal work on international matters, or they were doing legal work in campaigns. The Council on Foreign Relations in New York and Washington is another holding place, as are the faculties and institutes in the major universities. If you had to give numbers, there were several thousand people who were milling about in the transition, most, of course, were on the fringes hoping to break into the inner circles.

The transition had two major categories. First, personnethat is, who was going to be appointed to what position, and how they were to be vetted. The second was, what is the policy going to be, and the articulation of that in position papers, many of which were expansions of major themes that were delivered in speeches during the campaigns. Despite occasional heated rhetoric, the area of foreign affairs is on the whole, very conservative. The differences between Democrats and Republicans are not very great. In the end, there was not a great difference in overall policy. The Bush II administration is different - hard-line, unilateralists, who believe in the active the use of military power and military measures to achieve regime change. This is a radical departure from the past. But up until Dubya's time, I would say, the difference between Democratic and Republican on the major questions was not great. There were different personalities, of course, and different styles of personal leadership, but the post Cold War agenda was the same basically, for both Republicans and Democrats.

So from the outset, I was involved in the writing of policy papers. There wasn't much that needed to be written during the Clinton administration because their emphasis was to stay on message. Staying on message is the modern approach in presidential elections for both parties, not very many messages, carefully honed to acceptable generality, with the further emphasis of, "It is the economy stupid?" So foreign affairs were all the more conservative because there was no interest in creating unnecessary domestic political waves that could be attacked. Within the consensuses, these international consensuses that the end of the Cold War brought about a sense of assured security and peace, an unusual feeling of euphoria, of possibility, that things were going well. The sense of danger that pervaded the Cold War was gone. So the major foreign policy issues were, "How are we going to manage the United Statethat is, how is the United States going to manage the opportunities that the end of the Soviet Union had presented, how were the issues of globalization going to be advanced. The United States' economy was booming, the high-tech revolution was reflected in the great economic bubble of that time, where so many dotcoms were created to take advantage of the new opportunities in the new world of information technology.

Trade and economic policy became very important. The two pillars of economic and political policy were to be support for institutional democratic governance and free market. In some cases, free market was first and democratic government was second. Arms control was no longer the overriding danger except in countries like Ukraine where getting rid of the existing nuclear weapons stocks, was a priority. The great fear of the Cold War, that these weapons might be used, was gone. The remaining fear was that the weapons lying around in unguarded stockpiles might get stolen by an irresponsible group; so the elimination of stockpiles was still a priority in arms control. There were briefing books put together, as they had been from the beginning of the campaign, which covered every issue. They were similar to the briefing books that the secretary of state has when he goes up to testify before the Foreign Relations Committees in the House or Senate. Every issue was reduced to short essay, a one-pager and talking points; the points tend to be eloquent or arresting, or that's the attempt. It's not a very profound process, it's a summary of thinking up to that point. There's a value in that.

The selection process really was in the hands of those who had won the election. They wanted to put people in place who they knew, valued, and trusted, in positions of responsibility. That was done rather quickly. The first set chosen, of course, were the Cabinet officers, and the key positions were in the State Department, and in Defense. Far less so in the CIA or the intelligence agencies; there were no real changes sought or carried out. The critical positions were who was going to be secretary of state, who was going to be national security advisor, and who was going to handle particular areas of the world. On the defense side, Aspin ?

Q: Les Aspin ?

MILLER: Les Aspin, Congressman Aspin, who had been chairman of the House Arms Services was the one who was going to be secretary of defense, and he was chosen because of his service to the Democratic Party and the Clinton campaign, long work on defense matters, deep knowledge, and able staff. The second, the deputy, of course, was Perry, Bill Perry, a distinguished nuclear weapons scientist and technologist, and they brought along people who could manage the Defense Department that came out of previous administrations. They were either from previous administrations or linear descendants of the kinds of officials that were in previous administrations. It was very evident for Clinton that there would be a strong defense policy, that there would be an emphasis on arms control and arms salethe control of arms saleas well as strategic weapons, and that the budget would be triangulated between the big spenders and the minimalists. That it would be an equilibrium approaca search for greater efficiencies, but we would have the forces that the majority, as understood by the policy consensus, from left to right, believed optimum. The Clinton Defense policy was a good example of so-called triangulation of the amounts, even the breadth and depth of defense policies.

NATO expansioor what to do with NATwas the major defense issue for the West. First, whether NATO should exist at all in the absence of the Warsaw Pact. I start with defense because that's the big money hog, and the appointments to DOD [Department of Defense] helped shape all the other appointments in the foreign affairs area. Warren Christopher was chosen, because of his previous experience in State as deputy secretary. He was also chosen because of his work during the campaign as the head lawyer, and the moral arbiter of government employees' behavior. He's the one who set the standard for ethical behavior. He's the one who insisted, among others, on the so-called nanny lathat is, requiring Social Security benefits to household help. There were a number of instances where Cabinet nominations fell by the wayside on that. But the president had his ideas of who he wanted, and he knew and liked Strobe Talbott. Clinton was always interested in Russia and Europe, particularly in the outcome of the Soviet Union. He was comfortable with Talbott's views and he wanted to be sure that Strobe could run those matters. He liked, initially, Tony Lake because of his previous experience.

Madeleine Albright, for example, going to the UN, was there as one of those who had worked with and for major Democratic figures in the past. Strobe was there being the friend from Oxford days, of the president's. Albert Gore, his vice-president, had many people who had worked with him, like Leon Fuerth, in the Senate. The Senate network was very important. Leon Fuerth was a very good friend of mine, for example. I helped him get a job on the Hill in the first instancl was one of the very first to go to the Hill in the Vietnam period, resigning from the State Department over Vietnam. A number of others came to the Hill, for a variety of reasons, including Vietnam. Some came to the Hill simply to have a new direction.

Dick Moose, who was head of State Department administration in previous administrations, was back in that job. Brian Atwood, who had been a Senate aide when I was in the Senate, was headed for AID, and he was in charge of personnel appointments. He did the systematic work of reviewing resumes and evaluating qualities, and rankings. I was very much involved, as you know, in Soviet matters during the period of perestroika, as head of the International Foundation, the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations, and was being considered for either Moscow or Ukraine. Ukraine became a very serious problem because of its nuclear arsenal, I was asked to consider going to Ukraine, and this suggestion was made rather early, starting, I'd say, in December or January after the election in November, because of the real concern about the disposition of this third largest nuclear arsenal in the world. I said, "I'm more informed about what is now Russia," what had become Russia, but Ukraine sounded like a very interesting and important challenge.

By January, they had made their minds up about who was going to the major embassies, and the major positions in the departments had been chosen. Most positions went down about three or four layers. There weren't all that many of the 3,200 so-called "plums" for executive appointment. There are really not that many, given the enormous size of our government. The network of people who had been involved in the campaign, had worked in the legislature with these people, had been involved in one way or another in their lives over several decades, number three or four times that. The network of people who could have a chance to be given a position number about 20,000 people who could appointed. Far less than that, a few thousand, and you reduce that by a quarter and you have the key ones. In the case of State, the secretary and the major assistant sec down to assistant secretary, the key embassies, and everything else, filters out over time. So I was told very early that I would be appointed ambassador and I began the lengthy arduous process of filling out the security clearances and the financial statements. The full process takes at least several months. The actual vetting of the forms, particularly the financial statements, were done by the lawyers in Clinton's White House. They were from Clinton's Arkansas group. Even though it was a routine matter it took considerable time. The Senate, of course, had its processes of review, hearings and confirmation.

By June all the security and background vetting had been done and preparations were made for the Senate hearings and the formalities of swearing in.

Q: Did you have any problem on the hearings?

MILLER: No, the hearings were a delight. Most of these hearings for confirmation, in fact, all of them, except for secretary were for sets of two or three or four people. My group included Dick Holbrooke, ambassador to EU, Stuart Eisenstadt, Robert Hunter to NATO, Dick Gardner who went to Rome.

There were four of them. Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware, who was chairman, who I'd known and worked for for many years, was extremely supportive, and the Virginia senators, of course, as is the custom, I resided in Virginia, and the Rhode Islanders because we lived during the summers in Little Compton, Rhode Islanthey were all supportive. The questioning was serious about Ukraine. Senator Biden and the rest of the committee questioned carefully and were very anxious to help. It was a very positive experience for me. No one really had any questions that were not thoughtful and serious.

Q: I'd like to go back to when you got on the team. One is struck by this last changeover from the last administration, from the end of the Clinton administration to the beginning of Bush Two. One has the feeling that anything the Clinton people did was almost poison, and here was a group that came in very suspicious and wanted to stop everything and take a long hard look, and much of it was not just normal policy but a genuine feeling that Clinton and his cohorts were on the wrong track. When you came in on this transition team, what was the feeling toward the Bush One administration?

MILLER: Well, I think towards the president, George Bush, there was no animosity. I think the Gulf War was an issue. The differences between the administrationthere wasn't enough difference on the Gulf War, the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq was enough of a reason to have majority support. The question of whether more could have been done before the war, before the invasion, the whole question of ambiguous signalthese were issues. I don't think there was that much difference. It was in degree, on spending and tone, really. George Bush the elder came from the establishment. He was always, throughout his political life, well within the boundaries of the debate, from the earliest time he was never erratic or extremist. So it wasn't a rejectionist situation at all.

Q: Was there any or much communication between James Baker, the secretary of state, with Warren Christopher, the incoming secretary of state, during this transition period?

MILLER: The Republicans and Democrats knew each other quite well, and they had discussed matters, housekeeping matters, but they didn't need to have deep conversations, they weren't unloading some batch of dark secrets that had to be attended to. It was, I'd say, pro-forma. Very clearly they're not close friends. They were not close friends, but they were colleagues. If anything, since they were both lawyers, they knew of each other from the legal world. In the world of foreign policy certainly from the time of, say, 1980, and the great changes that began in the Soviet Uniothey were on the same page, and seeing many of the same people. No, there wasn't a radical difference. It was an easy transition in the sense that whatever needed to be imparted was, and not much needed to be imparted.

Q: The reason I asked this, yesterday, as I mentioned before, I was interviewing Roz Ridgeway. During the time between the end of the Reagan administration and the beginning of Bush One administration, George Schultz, Roz was sayinand she was assistant secretary for European affairshe said she knew James Baker did not have any contact with George Schultz during that time. It was enough so that people got the feeling thal mean, this was the same administration, but it was, let's say, a distant relationship.

MILLER: That's often the case, but that doesn't mean they're not aware of each other's doings or activities. The calling in of your predecessors is not normal in our practice, except in "wise man" exercises where you bring in several preceding generations of leadership in order to give public, visible legitimacy to what you're doing, and hope that you gain popular support for a tough decision, something that requires consensus. Well, that certainly hasn't happened in the present administration.

Q: You took ovecatch me up on this, I still belong to the old school and I keep talking about the Ukraine rather than Ukraine, which I'm sure is an annoyance for people who are Ukrainians or serve there, now. Anywawhen you went to Ukrainin the first place you were there from when to when?

MILLER: I served as ambassador from the early fall of '93 into '98.

Q: What were our primary concerns when you went out there?

MILLER: The primary concern was the disposition of the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world. ICBMs (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles) aimed at the United States in sufficient number with the capability and invulnerability to destroy the United States many times over. The control of those weapons was very much an issue. Who owned them? Did the new Ukraine own them, did Moscow own them? The Ukrainian government said they had the right, as a successor state, to all objects on their territory, and they persisted in this, as was their right under any understanding of the rights of successor states. However, at the beginning of independence, the missile silo fields, the deployment made by the 43rd Rocket Army, were under the control of Russian commanders, even though the Ukrainians asserted their right, very quickly. We did not know, but it was the case, as I found out, that the Ukrainization of the 43rd Rocket Army was one of their first priorities, and this process of takeover went very rapidly to take over control. The 43rd Rocket Army was commanded by a general named Mikhtiuk who was an ethnic Ukrainian, became a Ukrainian general in the newly formed army. He became the commander of the 43rd Rocket Army of Ukraine, and even though the officers ?

[END SIDE]

Q: Yes.

MILLER: Even though the officers in the chain of command of the 43rd Rocket Army in the silos believed that they were under Moscow control, and indeed sets of codes and orders for the use of these weapons did come out of Moscow, nonetheless the Ukrainians were able to short-circuit cut off Moscow control. They were able to cut off Moscow links, since they designed them in the first place and had constructed the communications links. The Ukrainian 43rd Rocket army took them over.

From a strategic point of view, the stability of these weapons was very much in doubt. The feeling in Washington before I went out was that Ukraine was still very unstable, very fragile, and might not survive as a state. The weapons had to be either under Russian control or eliminated. It became clear that the new Ukrainian government would never give them to the Russians. Secondly, it wasn't clear in our minds that the Ukrainian government wanted to eliminate them. The worst-case analysis was that they didn't want to eliminate them and that they were under the control of a new, untested, unstable military leadership of Ukrainians.

My task, as expressed by our leaders, was to persuade Ukraine to eliminate its nuclear arsenal. Strobe's view was he had this uncertainty about the stability of Ukraine, as did the president and everyone else concerned with the issue. The most active people in the government in the Clinton administration from the outset were from the Defense Department. It was Secretary of Defense Aspin and from the beginning Deputy Secretary of Defense Bill Perry and Assistant Secretary Ashton Carter who were hard at work on this arms control issue.

In the NSC (National Security Council), Tony Lake and Rose Gottemoeller, who later went to the Department of Energy, but she was handling the Ukrainian nuclear question for the NSC. And Nicholas Burns, who was later the ambassador Greece, and then the ambassador to NATO and who is now Deputy Secretary of State was the staff man on Ukraine at that point. So the concern was nuclear weapons. The other was the viability of the state, what was the make up of the new Ukraine? Could we work with it? Was Ukrainian policy going to be coherent? So there were big question marks to all of the key issues. Frankly, we didn't know the answers to these questions.

Q: What about the Crimean peninsula or Black Sea Fleet, though, had that been solved by this point?

MILLER: No, no, these were all live issues. The Black Sea Fleet, the disposition of the Black Sea Fleet, a substantial naval force based in Sevastopol, Odessa, a few other ports consisted of missile cruisers, destroyers, naval aviation, submarines, aircraft carriers carrying nuclear bombs, and fixed radars of tremendous power. The full apparatus of the Cold War was in place on the Black Sea and particularly in Crimea. The formula for division of the former Soviet fleet between Russia and Ukraine was under very contentious negotiations, as was the question of the continued Russian military presence in Sevastopol and other bases. At the time, the majority of the Russian-speaking population in Crimea wanted to be a part of Russia rather than Ukraine. There was an uncertainty about the outcome of the tensions in Crimea, and this was seen as a potential conflict of great seriousness and danger.

My instructions were, number one, get an agreement to eliminate the nuclear weapons on Ukrainian territory, number two, figure out what these people are, who they are, who we can deal with and how we can help, if it's going to be a stable place, to become a stable government.

A delegation of leaders from Ukraine had come to Washington right after independence for discussions with the Diaspora, the Congressional caucus and the new administration, probably in that order. It included some of the leaders of Rukh, which was the Ukrainian nationalist independence movement, who were pro-Western, but most suspicious of our tendencies, in their minds, to be pro-Moscow.

The Diaspora, for example, was highly suspicious of Strobe Talbott because of his long interest in Moscow and Russia. The Diaspora didn't know what to think about me, but they knew I had been living and working in Moscow, so they had to find out whether I could be trusted, so to speak. The Diaspora groups did that, a lot of this vetting, in their own interests, but also in the interests of the new state of Ukraine, for which creation they had labored so mightily for 11 years. I was asked to speak and meet at all the major Diaspora groups, in order to pass inspection, so to speak.

They had initial doubts because of my long work in the Soviet Union and in Moscow, but decided that I was acceptable to them, that the Clinton administrations declaratory policy in so far as it was articulated was that the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union would be assisted in their efforts to maintain their sovereignty. This was Brzezinski's view, which had a very significant effect. He was the most articulate senior former official on Ukraine. And, to some extent, Henry Kissinger, was of influence. On the other side of the ledger, former President George Bush had been the author of what was called the "Chicken Kyiv" speech, in which he said, in Kyiv, just before independence, formal independence, that Ukraine should work with Gorbachev keeping the Soviet Union together. This speech was given after Ukraine had already declared its independence in August and was about to formally disband the Soviet Union on Christmas day.

In August, a delegation of members of parliament from the key parties came to Washington from Kyiv, and asked to meet with me. They discussed nuclear weapons with me, what their intentions were, what their aspirations were, what they thought their rights were. They were seeking my views. I spent most of the time listening, first, because they were very insistent about talking and making their strongly held views clear. In turn, I made our position very clear, which was we are for a strong, prosperous, sovereign, independent, democratic Ukraine. We think it's in the best interests of the Ukrainians and it's the best chance for the former Soviet Union republic, particularly Russia, to not become an empire again of the kind it was in the past. I said that I intended to work as closely as possible with the Ukrainian government when I went to Kyiv we would work with them. And that all I asked of them was the ability to talk things out directly with them and to learn what was on their minds, what they thought their priorities were. There was no reluctance on their part to agree to do that.

We started off on, I think, a very sound foundation. That visit from the delegation from the Rada, the parliament, which took place in August, just before I left for Ukraine, was very helpful, to me, because it gave me the grounds to discuss what I thought needed to be done here in Washington in the way of framing policies, and to frame what I would intend to do. This is a very important matter. Ukraine was a new state still in formation. Roman Popadiuk who was our first ambassador under Bush, was there only for six months. The Ukrainian government was not in shape to put itself together without assistance and what Ukrainians called "moral support." Our government didn't yet have the power after the election, certainly, to do anything official.

We were starting from scratch, really, as a matter of policy. So, I was shaping policy as much as anyone because no one knew what to do. No one had any baseline to work there, and there was no bureaucracy on these matters, because you're starting tabula rasa (blank slate).

Q: Now, did Strobe Talbott have any strong feelings on this?

MILLER: He had very strong feelings on the nuclear question. He was correctly skeptical about the viability of many of the new states, and was definitely not sure about where Ukraine would go, whether it would survive, although he expressed the view that it could. The policy was, from the outset, at least as long as I was involved was called two track. We would assist both Russia and Ukraine to develop as democratic, free market nations and hope that they would be integrated into the West, particularly Ukraine.

Q: I would think that, looking at it purely in self interest, that to keep Ukraine out of too close of embrace or being part of Russia would be of great advantage to us, because it essentially would mean that, without Ukraine there and it's 40 million people and it's land mass, it just means that Russia is not going to be the powerhouse that it was before.

MILLER: Well, that was the rubric that was laid down and accepted by many political analysts. This rubric was formulated and laid down by Brzezinski. This was his thesis, and it was held by others, but the great question about it was, was thiand would it be viable? Would the differences between Ukrainian-speaking portions, the West and the East, divided by the Dnipro, split the nation? Would the Crimea revolt? Would the Russians balk on agreements to division of assets such as the Black Sea Fleet? These were all unknowns, great doubts, and we didn't know the new players particularly from Ukraine.

No one in the Clinton Administration knew the players in Ukraine's new government, and those few that they had met, they didn't like. They thought they were equivocators. They believed they couldn't be trusted to hold their word, which really meant they didn't agree with them, and they were stubborn and difficult and awkward and unpracticed, which is quite understandable. Kravchuk, the president, was a second or third-rank nomenklatura (Communist bureaucracy).

Q: Who was that?

MILLER: He was the president of Ukraine.

Q: But his name?

MILLER: Leonid Kravchuk, the first president, a Communist, I would say held economic views that could be described as Gorbachevian, was definitely a Ukrainian nationalist, but a supporter of independent Ukraine because he saw no other way. The Soviet army would no longer work to keep the Soviet Union whole, he was convinced, but his future and the future of the party structure, of which he was a part, now had to lead and dominate a newly independent Ukraine. The question of whether it would ever be back in union with Russia was too far down the road. For Kravchuk and others it was an immediate question of how the party of power would stay in power. Kravchuk concluded that Ukraine led by him and his allies could only stay in power if Ukraine was an independent, sovereign state. That evolving notion of a "Party of Power" is something that still is very difficult for our policymakers to comprehend, namely: that in Russia now and in Ukraine now in 1993, the party of power is composed of the same people who would be in power if the Soviet Union had never split.

Dealing with those lingering legacies of the party of power, of the Soviet man, of the Soviet bureaucrat, the Soviet-trained teacher, professor, scientist, military man, KGB, every field that you could think obankers, entrepreneuris still the major problem. It won't cease to be a problem until there's a passage of generations who deal with it and understand that it has to change and move on to something else.

High level meetings with Kravchuk and his aides were difficult, and the meetings that they had at the diplomatic level with the new foreign ministry were even more so. The foreign minister, Anatoly Zlenko, Borys Tarasyuk, Gennady Udovenko, and the NSC advisor, Anton Buteiko, these were the key players Americans had to deal with. They were intensely nationalistic, uncertain about U.S. motivations, not as experienced or as at ease with Americans as their Moscow counterparts, and they felt those differences.

This was a psychological problem from the outset of rather large proportions. The opening discussions about the disposition of nuclear weapons were unsatisfactory. The premises concerning the rights of successor states were not agreed to. The Ukrainian position was, "They're ours," and our position was, "No, they're not," which was a mistake. I think we should have been, at a minimum, agnostic, to say, "They're on your territory, we're worried about the succession. Yes, they're there. What about that? Are we going to get rid of them or not?" But we were preemptory, we spoke to the Ukrainians in a manner of diktat (order). "You will get rid of those weapons."

Of course, Moscow shared that view. The Ukrainians felt Washington and Moscow were ganging up against Kyiv, the new state. That impasse was created, in my view, because of the initial approach and style taken. I decided, and perhaps it's my temperament, to listen with courtesy and take no positions until I had heard them out.

Immediately after my arrival in Kyiv, I followed up on the earlier meetings I had held with the legislators and the messengers from the Ukrainian government in August in Washington. I met everyone I could, from Communists to ultra-nationalists, and asked them all what they really thought.

I had to do this very quickly, because there was great worry and anxiety in Washington. There was also great concern about the hostile approach of the United States towards Ukraine. Very soon after I had arrived, presented credentials, had a very long meeting with President Kravchuk in Marinskiy Palace, where we went over the basic issues and listed what we hoped to accomplish together. Kravchuk said his government and the Rada had come to a policy decision in Kyiv, which was that Ukraine would, in accord with their previous declarations, even before independence, become a non-nuclear state. They would agree to eliminate all weapons on their territory, provided security assurances were given that we would support Ukraine in the event of military, political, or economic pressure, and there would be economic assistance for their dismantlement and elimination, and that we would support Ukraine politically and economically through its initial difficulties.

The main questions in Ukrainian minds was could the Americans be trusted to support Ukraine fully. There were reservations both Kravchuk and the parliament made clear. The parliamentarians and the president's government clearly reflected the spectrum of views, including a substantial majority view, that believed that the Americans couldn't be trusted to carry out their word, and that Ukraine should retain its nuclear weapons as a hedge, as a deterrent, not to be used, because the Ukrainian elite was very clear on the strategic utility of the use of nuclear weaponry, but as a bargaining chip, to assure their independence. So my task was to say, "You can count on us, we're with you." And after saying that to convince Kravchuk and the leaders of the Rada that the United States would stand with them particularly comforting threats from Russia.

I reported immediately to Washington the resolution of the Rada on nuclear weapons, which had these reservations, and I commented that I thought this was the basis of a good agreement. The reaction from Washington was not what I expected, rather it was along the lines of, "Go back and tell them there can be no conditions except elimination." And I said, "No, this is a good agreement. Come and see for yourself." Secretary Christopher, Talbott and a big DOD delegation came within a week and we began the march on the path to agreement. It was signed in Moscow the following January 14.

Q: I mean, hadn't we expressed our view that what the Ukrainians were asking or demanding, that's what we were planning to do anyway, wasn't it? To support the dismantling of these weapons?

MILLER: The attitude in Washington was that Ukraine led by Kravchuk would back out or weasel out of an agreement as they had before. Kravchuk and the Ukrainians wanted to be treated with dignity and respect. In the Ukrainian mind, this was a noble act. I think it was a noble act.

Q: Sure it is. I mean, you're giving up your most powerfuit's hard.

MILLER: this conscious action of elimination of their nuclear arsenal was a fundamental foundation for a new state in a new world order, a foundation of peace. It was a sacrifice and a very noble action that should be commended. I think the skeptical, hard edged businesslike atmosphere of arms control negotiations, as a method, or style, can prevent agreement, as was the case, initially, with Ukraine. Worst-case analysis, being sure that every loophole that the other side might use are covered, assuming that your own position is Simon Pure and virtuous and your opposite number is duplicitous, the sensitivity of a new nation, their need for dignities, their delicate new sense of honor, diplomatic inexperience and awkwardness all had to be taken into account.

I could see this as I became more and more aware and sensitive to the nature and expression of Ukrainian behavior. I could see it, for example, in Moscow, where the treatment of Kravchuk by Yeltsin. Yeltsin, looked on Kravchuk as a "little Russian", and he treated him that way. We treated Yeltsin as head of the largest power next to the United States; Kravchuk was not treated as an equal, but as an unavoidable participant. Even though President Clinton's behavior was very genial to both Yeltsin and Kravchuk, not only congenial, but he was genial. Clinton wanted everyone to have good feeling about the historic agreement. But the Russian demeanor and the traditional arms control approach used during the final hours of the negotiations was difficult, there was unnecessary hostility aroused by battles over how much weight to give adjectives. There words were terribly important at the time, but, in the long run, were not terribly important.

Q: Well, did you sensl interviewed our first ambassador to Slovenia, and he said that he found that he was up against the Yugoslav hands, Eagleburger and others. A lot of people have served in Yugoslavia a lot of their career, myself included, but they kind of resented the fact that Slovenia had broken away and was part of the process because of the upset in Yugoslavia. And, somehow, being the first state to do it and being the ambassador to that country from the United States, he picked up some of the odium and all. He had a problem getting through, you might say, the Yugoslav-influenced bureaucracy.

We had Soviet hands who spent their entire career on this, and did you find yourself up against a bit of this? I mean, obviously, the people saying Russia is the number one and who are these Ukrainian upstarts all of that?

MILLER: Yes, definitely. This was a concern the Ukrainians had felt very deeply, that the American position, because it was the indisputable great power and Russia, even diminished, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, was perceived and treated by us as a great power, and that Ukraine was not a great power. So the assertion that Ukraine would be treated fairly and justly was something that had to be proved. The Ukrainians had deep doubts that we would treat Ukraine fairly and with dignity. Ukrainian leaders believed that long service in the Soviet Union, in Moscow, by our foreign policy experts was operating against Ukraine. So what we did to counter this sense of insecurity was - Strobe and Jim Collins and others made this work - the White House, NCSC advisor Tony Lake and most importantly, the president - was that every visit that was made to Moscow, there would also be a stop in Kyiv. The President or other high officials would either start in Kyiv or end up in Kyiv. So, every official that went to the former Soviet Union, and there were almost weekly cabinet officer visits, was in that framework of this two track policy. It was what I recommended. It was what Strobe and the president believed in, and we carried it out, and it was very effective.

Q: I would think so.

MILLER: It was pragmatic evidence of our intent.

Q: Do we have any problems with Belarus or Moldova or the 'stans, or anything like Georgia?

MILLER: Yes, there were problems of that character, the character you described. Yes, and the difficulty is you can't be everywhere enough of the time, and the decision was, Ukraine was the big one. But in the case of Belarus, the independence movement of democratic nationalists was very weak; it collapsed very quickly. It was very difficult for our ambassadors there to do anything.

Q: I mean, was that a problem for you, that things were not going well there?

MILLER: No, no, it wasn't a problem in the dealings I had on policy matters with Ukraine, not at all. The contrast between what was happening in Belarus as compared to Ukraine was so great that Ukraine seemed like a model of progress in comparison. They came to stay with me a number of times, just to get out of the place. They were having an awful time. They were being badly treated by what eventually became the Lukashenko dictatorship, and even the ambassador's residence was held hostage. They had to bear up under all sorts of petty, horrible things. It was a nasty, nasty situation, but it was very clear from early on that the dominant party of power in Belarus wanted to remain with Russia. The size of the opposition was much smaller than the groups who wanted to be a part of Russia.

Q: Well, now, in the Ukraine, to follow through on the missile problem, were you getting an equivocation when you said, "Okay, I'm willing to do this, but they need financial help and that sort of thing?"

MILLER: No, the initial rejection or doubt from Washington concerned whether Kravchuk and the Ukrainian leadership could be believed or not, and I said, "This is a good, acceptable deal," and they were skeptical in Washington. They had to come out and see it for themselves on the ground. And even then, when they came, they were dealing with this difficulty of negotiations with people like Kravchuk and Buteyko and Tarasyuk, who were very suspicious, resentful, defensive, protective, thin skinned, very close to their dignities and we, as representatives of a confident nation, are impatient, and as leaders of a great power we sometimes behave arrogantly, and with little or no magnanimity. Clinton was a personal exception. Clinton was magnificent all the time, because he understood this feeling of uncertainty on the part of the Ukrainians and was decisive in very important moments by saying and conveying the feeling that, "I'm with you, I'm with you," they got the point.

Clinton further conveyed his own sense of how to approach and talk to the Ukrainians, to his key aides, his advisers and his cabinet officers. He said that that's the approach he wanted. This was the way he saw it, and they responded accordingly. So, from the point of view of presidential help, for me, I couldn't be more grateful than I am for Clinton's substantive help. He was terrific in substance, and particularly the handling of psychological attitude. He knew what was needed. He was absolutely brilliant. I marveled at how good he was at this important quality of empathy.

Q: Well, were the Russians trying to screw this up by having their officers sitting on these missiles or not?

MILLER: I think they were trying to hold on to the control of the missiles. But the Ukrainians had moved so decisively, first to surround, to ring all of the missile silos with their own troops. They guarded every silo with Ukrainians who had sworn allegiance to the new Ukraine, and were serving under Ukrainian generals; speaking in the Ukrainians language; it was a constructive coup, really, with the Soviet 43rd Rocket Army commander taking the oath as an Ukrainian; so the apparatus, the line of military command, from top to bottom became Ukrainian.

Q: Well, then, were the people we sent out there to supervise this, did you have to make sure that they were aware of sensitivities and all?

MILLER: Sure, but those who were sent to Ukraine were good. I have to say that the help from the Pentagon, what became CTR (Cooperative Threat Reduction) that's threat reduction prograthe Nunn-Lugar, were thoughtful, constructive, and were real pros. They had taken advantage of all the work that had been done over decades. They were extremely responsible and careful. I made sure that they didn't go anywhere into the missile fields until they had briefed me first about what they were going to do, and how, and with whom. The DOD, CTR delegations always were required when they came to Ukraine for their two weeks or month consultations, to brief me in full before and after their missions, with authorizing documents and reports. I also went to all the nuclear weapons sites. For example, I was the first American to go inside the Soviet rocket factory, the former Soviet rocket factory in Dnepropetrovsk and Pavlograd.

Q: That's in Ukraine.

MILLER: Yes, in Ukraine, where the SS-18s were manufactured. I was shown the SS-18s on the assemble line. Several other rockets were under construction as well. I went to every nuclear weapons facility of major importance and to all of the dismantlement facilities of significance. I helped blow up the first SS-18 ICBM silo, the first command-control silo, initiated the first dismantlement facility for rockets. In this process, I was helped by the secretary of defense, Bill Perry, who was terrific, caring, not only interested in it, he was knowledgeable about every aspect, and his staff, being of course the entire arms control community, was delighted with this success of elimination.

So they were a great help. Many of the DOD delegations had among their members people I'd worked with for 20 years on arms control issues. One of my main activities in the Senate was arms control. I came to the job in Ukraine with probably more experience than anyone in the State Department, on the political issues concerning SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) as well as the key technical details, certainly on the legislative side of arms control agreements. I knew by having been involved directly in the whole SALT process, backwards and forwards, and I had the good fortune to have been tutored by our best nuclear scientists during the '60s and '70s. They were and remain good friends. We are working together now on the NPT issue with Iranian counterparts.

So it was one of those rare occasions where my experience and qualifications fit the Ukrainian situation perfectly. The new Ukrainian legislature, for example, welcomed my 15 years experience as a Senate staffer in senior positions. Knowing the structure of the American legislature as I did, I could see what might help the new Ukrainian Rada. I was able to help them get assistance from the Library of Congress. I was able to encourage congressmen and former congressmen and staff to come work with them, as well as judges and key bureaucrats. My experience in Ukraine is an argument for the utility of Foreign Service officers working in the other branches of government at least for a time. I would say, fellowships such as the American Political Science Association fellowships for Foreign Service Officers is one of the most useful programs. Foreign Service Officers should be given more experience on the Hill and a chance to observe the judiciary, to see our entire government, local government, state government at work. This kind of experience would be a very useful part of a Foreign Service Officer's training or experience. Because when you get into a senior position, as I did as ambassador in Ukraine, this experience can usefully come into play.

Q: What about the territorial problem, including the Black Sea Fleet?

MILLER: Well, the Russians in Moscow from the outset of the new Russian state in 1991 had declared their "near abroad" policy, which meant, "Our natural sphere of influence includes Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltics, all the 'stans, the Caucasus, historic, imperial Russia, the Soviet Union. This is our near abroad, and this is where we have a right to be." From the outset, when they enunciated it, the new independent Ukraine understood that message and saw this policy by Russia as a threat to their sovereignty. They expected, correctly, to see interference in their internal affairs, political and economic pressures brought to bear.

The most difficult immediate strains between Moscow and Kyiv were in Crimea, the majority of Crimean political parties were pro-Russian, particularly the Communist Party. At the moment of independence, Crimea, had voted for union with Ukraine. It was very evident that after several years, that the Russian population in Crimea was restive, that they didn't like the new Ukraine, partially because of the extreme economic distress, but also because the cutoff from the normal amenities of Moscow. That was evident in the resorts and the natural flow of goods and services, even the winemakers, makers of champagne, wonderful Ukrainian champagne such as Novy Svet, had lost their markets. Even though money in the old days wasn't the issue, production levels were; now it was money that mattered.

A Moscow inspired independence movement arose and grew and an independent Republic of Crimea was declared. The strangest adventures I had in the Ukraine, were my encounters with the newly declared Republic of Crimea.

Q: This is tape 10, side one of Bill Miller.

MILLER: Soon after I arrived in Ukraine, I traveled to Crimea. Travel to Crimea had been out of bounds, initially. It was very sensitive. I was the first high level foreign diplomat to go to Crimea. I had to get approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, and the Russian government of Sevastopol and the governors of various regions of ostensibly independent Ukraine, but were in fact areas that were still run and governed by Russians, from Moscow.

A coalition of pro-Russian parties, composed the majority in the parliament of Crimea. This majority declared Crimea a republic, an independent republic. Moscow didn't formally recognize the new republics but they didn't declare them breakaways either. I traveled to the region of the independent Republic of Crimea as the United States Ambassador to Ukraine. I went first to Sevastopol, which was in fact being governed and really run by the Russian commander of the Black Sea Fleet. The commander of the Black Sea Fleet was very suspicious of the purpose of my visit. He had been a submariner, a nuclear submariner, who had commanded strategic nuclear submarines that patrolled off the east coast of the United States, fully armed. For many years, Admiral Eduard Baltin had been a leading officer of the nuclear fleet of the north. He had also served in the Pacific. He was a major naval officer in the Soviet armed forces and now the commander of the Black Sea Fleet. The Black Sea Fleet was an uncomfortable joint command of the combined Russian and Ukrainian navies stationed in the Black Sea.

So I asked to see him. He generously gave me several days of his time and we reviewed the fleet, together with the Ukrainian commander, who was given the back of the hand by Admiral Baltin. I had separate meetings with the commander of the Ukrainian and Russian navies, respectively. They never really got together. There was always an expressed distance of rank and importance as if from on high to the Ukrainian commander. This sense of disparity was reflected in the numbers of active vessels based in Sevastopol. There were only a couple of Ukrainian ships that were manned by the Ukrainian Navy. All the rest, many of which were, in fact, rusting hulks, were Russians. Admiral Eduard Baltin, known as the "Black Admiral", was a very, very interesting, charismatic character. We had extraordinary talks about many subjects ranging from strategic issues, arms control, the future of Russia and Ukraine and considerable discussion about sea faring novels ranging from Moby Dick to Tom Clancy's Hunt for Red October. All of this talk was stimulated by an enormous amount of wine and vodka and cognac, several huge meals. We toured several of his capital ships. He was most concerned about the issue of whether the new Ukraine would survive? His interest was political. He asked me very directly, "How do you see Ukraine." I assured just as directly, "I see it as an independent republic, and I see Crimea part of Ukraine." And he said, "No, Sevastopol is Russian. It can never be otherwise. It is a part of Russian history. Many of our heroes are buried here. Most people who live in Sevastopol are Russians. Look at the battlefield."

I said, "I understand the treaty with the Russians, but I'm here to say that the policy of our government is that we support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. This is part of Ukraine. I fully understand the history of Crimea and I know it is deeply tied to Russian and Soviet history. But the Soviet Union is dissolved. Russia and Ukraine are legitimate successor states with separate sovereign territories. Ukraine and Russia share a common noble history and have every reason to live at peace with each other. But I'm here to pay my respects to you as commander of the Unified Black Sea Fleet." I said, "How do you see Ukraine?" He said, "I see Ukraine coming back to Russia. I look on it like Canada, the way you see Canada."

I said, "Canada is a separate sovereign nation." He said, "No, they're dependent on you." So we had many discussions along those lines. Near the end of our talks I said, "Would you come to the United States for a visit and talk to our new naval people perhaps at the Naval War College at New port near my home in Rhode Island? They'd be very interested in your experiences as a submarine commander." He said he would like to. He had seen my country from outside the coastal territorial boundaries. I asked Baltin, "Three miles or six or twelve miles?" He answered, "just outside the legal boundary."

Q: Through a periscope.

MILLER: Yes. I saw him a number of times later. As I learned later, Baltin reported to Moscow that I was a formidable person, probably CIA. He concluded that the Americans are pursuing a very active policy that has to be countered. Baltin testified in the Russian Duma on the situation in the Black Sea. My visit to Sevastopol was discussed in the Duma, in the parliament. I saw him several times thereafter. We went to the same dacha on the Black Sea on occasion. It was the place where Gorky lived. The main buildings were constructed in the 19th century. The main house, beautiful house where Gorky lived was surrounded by gorgeous gardens. Teselli, as the place was called, was located next to Gorbachev's dacha at Foros. I have gone back for a few days at a time, as often as I could. Despite our official differences, I liked Admiral Baltin. He was a very interesting, and obviously an extremely able person.

Q: Well, tell me, I come from sort of a naval background. I lived in Annapolis, and seeing what I consider really beautiful ships that the Soviets had put together, particularly in Vladivostok and also Murmansk, sitting there kind of rotting. I would think the Black Sea Fleet, caught between the Ukraine and Russia, who's going to maintain them?

MILLER: Nobody had the money to maintain them.

Q: It was a wasting asset, but obviously one that had deep ...

MILLER: Deep historic ...

Q: People had deep feelings about them.

MILLER: Oh, yes, Crimea, the Black Sea Fleet, Sevastopol, the places where many distinguished Russians had lived like Chekhov, and where the Yalta treaty was signed, all raised very emotional issues of patriotism, of honor, of history.

Q: Peter the Great had gone to great lengths to build a fleet in that area.

MILLER: In the 19th century, certainly, in the time of the Crimean War, capturing it first from the Tatars who had lived there since the 13th century. Yes, it was poignant to see the rusting hulks. Most of those hulks have since been scrapped, and scrapping became a major profitable industry, scrapping the very same ships that had been built in Nikolaev, just up the Dneipro River from Crimeaircraft carriers, marvelous cruisers, the Kresta class.

Q: Those cruisers were something.

MILLER: Yes, lovely ships, and their frigates were also superb. The two navies were working out their strategic and coastal interests for their future navies. Ukrainians, for economic reasons, primarily, but also based on their own strategic analysis, decided all they needed was a coast guard and maybe one or two oceangoing frigates, maybe a Kresta class equivalent capital ship and that was it. These ships would be supported by helicopters, a coast guard to work in the Black Sea, and near the coastline. The existing Black Sea Fleet had enough ships, usable ships, for both navies and they selected them from the former fleet of the Soviet Union.

So, the negotiations, which took five or six years, were focused on obtaining those ships which were useful out of the large fleet for the new Ukrainian navy. This new navy would be well within their allowed percentage of 20 percent. They would use the other unneeded ships within their agreed percentage as barter payments for gas and oil to the Russians, and that was to be the basis of the negotiations.

On the issue of bases for the Russians, the Ukrainians simply said, "Your presence here is awkward. We'll let you stay even 50 years, but you're here as renters, and we will negotiate the rent. It's our territory. There are historic reasons why you're staying. We don't like it, but we can't get you out."

Q: A bit like Guantanamo Bay.

MILLER: It is. Guantanamo is a very good analogy for Sevastopol. As difficult as the basing issue in Sevastopol was, it was less difficult than the larger one I referred to earlier: The Independent Republic of Crimea. Yuri Meshkov, was elected president, by referendum of the independent republic. Ukraine did not accord any legitimacy to the referendum or to the newly declared republic. With the approval of the Ukrainian government, I went to meet with President Meshkov in Simferopol, the capital of Crimea. I was the first official American to visit Crimea under the independent circumstances, and certainly the first official to meet with Meshkov. It was an astonishing, if bizarre first meeting. He had an armed guard that surrounded him wherever he went of eight paratroopers dressed in combat fatigues, field boots and armed with loaded Kalashnikovs.

We met in his office, sat opposite each other in the middle of a very long table. Meshkov was flanked by his Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. He was very nervous. He read from a prepared statement asking for the support of the United States for the independent republic from Ukraine. I answered his formal greeting with courtesy, I hope, and a very direct opening that said, "I'm the ambassador to the sovereign state of Ukraine, and I'm very pleased to be in Crimea, which is a very beautiful, historic part of Ukraine." Despite this opening difference, Meshkov was very welcoming and he was trying to explain how all this came about. We talked about many things, where he was from. He had some Crimean roots, but his closest ties were mostly Russia. His cabinet included some Russians economists that I knew in Moscow. The prime minister, so-called, Suvorov was his name, was one of the "new economists" in Moscow in the perestroika period. Some of the other economists were people I had run into while in Moscow.

The Meshkov government was putting together a cabinet to run a country that obviously didn't have funds. They were supported to some degree even publicly from Moscow through the party Meshkov led. It was a very tenuous situation, because in Simferopol, which is the capital of Crimea, there was also a governor of Crimea approved by Ukraine, who I also called on, as well as the Ukrainian police chief, and the commander of the Ukrainian armed forces based in Crimea, the Ukrainian forces. Meshkov survived for about a year during which time I visited him several times. It was always interesting to meet with him in this state of suspended animation. Meshkov somehow thought that the United States would recognize his Republic of Independent Crimea as a sovereign state and that he would receive aid and assistance.

When Meshkov asked about U.S. assistance, I said, "Yes, we were very interested in assisting development projects in Crimea, such as water projects for the city of Yalta and Sevastopol. Mr. Meshkov and Mr. Suvorov, we'd be happy to do that as a part of our assistance to Ukraine," and we would work through the government in Kiev. But in the face of all of this, he was very stoic, and very courteous in many ways. I still have a bottle of Massandra wine that he presented to me at one of our meetings, that was corked in the year of my birth. I'm waiting for the right occasion to open that bottle of Massandra wine.

So I saw him from time to time and we maintained a reasonably civilized relationship. At the same time that I met with Meshkov and the Ukrainian governor, I also met with the Tatars. The Tatars had been demonstrating in front of the Crimean Parliament building on the question of representation in the parliament as well as implementation of the right of return of Tatars from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Q: These were expelled under Stalin.

MILLER: Right, and about 450,000 had been forcibly deported to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Those that had survived and were able to return were led by two Tatars who I knew from meetings in the United States. They had come to the United States to participate in several human rights conferences when I was President of the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations. Mustafa Dzhemilev, who was the leader of the Tatars, and Rifat Chubarov, both of whom are now deputies in the Ukrainian parliament. They are still the leaders of the Tatars in Crimea.

We met again in Kiev. I called on them in turn in Crimea. They showed me their parliament, Mejles, and we toured the many Tatar historic sites together and met with the other Tatar leaders. We had wonderful meals at Tatar restaurants. We had the chance to review many things. It was the first of many meetings that I had in Simferopol with the Tatar community. Every time I go to Crimea, I call on, in particular, Mustafa Dzhemilev, who is a great hero of the human rights movement.

The Tatars asked for help from the United States in support of their ethnic rights and I was happy to give that. The Tatars were asking for their rights guaranteed by the Ukrainian constitution, the UN Charter and other international conventions that Ukraine was a party to. To the credit of both Kravchuk and Kuchma, they supported the right of Tatar return and giving to the Tatars full rights as citizens, even though they were very sensitive to the fact that the Russian-speaking people who had come and settled in Ukraine after the Second World War, particularly in Crimea had taken over their lands and their homes. Most of the population of Crimea had been wiped out, the Russians by the Nazis, deported in the case of ethnic minorities, or majorities, in the case of the Tatars, but also Bulgarians, Greeks, Germans, all of the Black Sea ethnic groups.

Q: And Germans, too.

MILLER: Germans, and some Jews, a small number of Jews. Germans, certainly who had been settled there by Catherine; and the merchants and fishermen among the Greeks, Bulgars and Romanians. But the resettlement of Crimea after the war were forced migrations to Crimea of three major groupings: one from Bryansk, one from the northern part of Ukraine, and the third group was from Voronezh. It was a massive post World War II settlement, so the present Russian majority were the result of post 1945 immigration. They were new-comers, relatively, and had not been there for hundreds of years as had the Tatars.

From the beginning of independent Ukraine in 1991, those three issues: Black Sea Fleet; Russian presence, the Independent Republic of Crimea, and the Tatar minority question, were on the hot burner. All three issues went to the UN. The United States supported Ukraine's sovereignty in the question of Crimea. We supported the minority rights of the Tatars, in accord with the Ukrainian constitution and laws, and we supported the Ukrainian position on the division of the Black Sea Fleet on an agreed basis, and a limited term of rental for Russian basing in Crimea.

Those were tests of our support for Ukraine. We met those tests. When the Ukraine asked for support, we gave it, and vigorously, and in the form that they needed. The particular form was full support for their territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Q: Did you get involved at all in the probleis it Moldova?

MILLER: Transdneistr is the issue. Yes, I did.

Q: You've got half that thing with sort of a Russian subgroup.

MILLER: It was a Russian enclave maintained by a military division. It was a garrison of Russian troops. But the garrison never left. A maverick general stayed behind at the time of independence and they set up kind of a renegade state. Transdneistr is such a curious entity: borders that have Moldovans on the Ukrainian sidethnic Moldovans. And then there are Ukrainians living just behind Russian settlements, so the Russians are in between, sort of a military buffer between. There are no real problems between Moldova and Ukraine. The problem that everyone has is with the remnants of a Soviet division, the remains of the pre 1991 Soviet garrison.

Q: Just demographics will take over?

MILLER: Yes. The military capacity of the division is diminishing and the Soviet generation will pass. Some of the same issues also pertain on the Romanian boarder with Ukraine. In the so-called Bukovina region there are issues of whether Ukrainian is to be spoken in Romanian border towns, or Romanian to be spoken in Ukrainian border towns, and whether they can visit each others icons and many small persistent nagging problems that need to be settled by careful, tolerant agreement.

Actually, I helped in the settlement of the major border dispute between Romania and Ukraine, a longstanding one, which had to do with the so-called "Snake Island", which is in the mouth of the Danube. This island marks the boundary between Ukraine and Romania. The boundary was fixed by so-called "Stalin - Ribbentrop Agreement", which the successor independent Romanians did not accept as valid, because it gave them less territory than they believed they were entitled. The mouth of the Danube has shifted with the formation of the delta.

Snake Island is used as a demarcation point. The Snake Island region also has oil, and that's a big part of the dispute. So, the issues of agreeing upon boundary demarcation, accepting the Stalin-von Ribbentrop agreement were problems that historically Ukrainians and Romanians could agree upon. Our ambassador in Bucharest asked if I would join him in a mediation effort. I invited my colleague Ambassador to come to Kyiv. He came to Kyiv for the first negotiations. We then met at the Foreign Ministry with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the National Security Advisor, and the Ambassador from Romania to Kyiv came as well. We then met with the Romanian ambassador in Kyiv and identified the outstanding issues and worked our way through them: "This should be agreed on now, and these are the remaining difficulties," they should be left for settlement, when and if they come up. So in the first meeting we put together the framework of an agreement.

After a few weeks, I went to Bucharest and went through the same pattern of meetings with the Prime Minister, the National Security Adviser, and the respective ambassadors and I delivered the Ukrainian position, just as my counterpart had delivered the Romanian position in Kyiv. I said, "Doesn't this look like an agreement, don't we have the agreement?" They said, "Yes, it's the basis of an agreement." "Well, then we agree." The formal agreement was signed some months later. So this was a wonderful bit of third party mediation diplomacy; we had Washington permission to make the attempt and they said, "Fine, do it." In this case, our good offices worked. Anton Buteyko, the ambassador of Ukraine in Romania I worked closely with on that negotiation is now the deputy foreign minister in Kyiv. We saw each other frequently when he was National security Adviser under Kravchuk and when he was Ambassador of Ukraine in Washington.

Q: Well, I think this probably is a good place to stop, and next time, we're talking about your time in Ukraine, and we've talked about the major thing about the dismantling of the nuclear weapons, the problem dealing with the Black Sea Fleet and Crimea, and also Snake Island and Moldova. I'd like to ask a bit about Odessa, because this is sort of a major port, and how this fit in. I'm sure there are other elements that we want to talk about. Do you want to mention any here?

MILLER: I'll talk about Odessa and its mayor, his conflict with the governor of Odessa, oblast, the symphony orchestra, the musicians of Odessa, the port.

Q: All right, and there may be other issues we can talk about during the long time that you were there.

MILLER: Yes, I would like to talk about the issue of corruption and the new economy. It was very important.

Q: How about the Jewish element. Was that an issue at all?

MILLER: Yes, but it had a very satisfactory resolution.

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Q: Okay, today is the 18th of March, 2003. Bill, let's talk about Odessa.

MILLER: Odessa was, as you know, a city that was created in the time of Catherine on very ancient indigenous roots, Odessian and certainly to some extent Greek and Roman, Pontic Black Sea culture, which is different than the river cultures of the major rivers. Odessa is Russian speaking. It once had a very large Jewish population, as well as sizeable Greek and Bulgar and Romanian enclaves. Odessa is a vibrant maritime city seated on a high prospect overlooking a big harbor and the Black Sea. It is almost a Mediterranean setting. From the outset, the time of Vorontsov, the founding governor, the city put a high value on culture, music, and the arts. One of the charming characteristics of Odessa is the remaining architecture of the early 19th century, in a very handsome classical style, beautifully situated on the heights overlooking the harbor, and its docks which are several hundred feet below, down the staircase that figures in the Eisenstein film, The battleship Potemkin.

When I first traveled to Odessa, it was still in great disrepair, crumbling, but I suspect it had been crumbling since the beginning of the 19th century, given the site of the city, whose geologic underpinnings are porous limestone. So the foundations of many buildings that had collapsed were being restored and new foundations built.

Typical of this problem was the Opera House, a very beautiful turn-of-the-century opera house, Garnier style, with magnificent acoustics, but the opera's foundations were collapsing into the porous limestone underneath. Great efforts are being made, and I think successfully, to shore it up. Music is everywhere, in the cafes and hotels, and they had many festivals that testify to this love of music. I'm sure it's partially the climate, but mostly it's the genius of the population, which is inherently musical and still a great source of composition and performance. Odessa produces a great many musicians for the classical orchestras of Europe and the United States, even now, in its depressed state.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the creation of an independent Ukraine the great question was how would Odessa fit into the new Ukraine, being a peculiarly Russian city, a summer Russian city, where in the 19th century and through the Soviet period, many Russians came from the nortMoscow, Leningrad, the other cities of the north, to spend vacations along the Black Sea and to promenade in Odessa, a favorite Russian city with many historic Russian overtones. The adaptation was remarkably easy, partially because Odessa was left to make the necessary changes in its own way. The language issue really didn't cause any difficulties, and they just simply continued to speak Odessa Russian, and live the normal life of Odessa.

The university of Odessa, or rather the several universities of Odessa, including a technical university and one that was more typical of universities with all of the sciences, soft and hard, attracted good people. Their faculties were good and they despite difficulties have continued. The city being the major port on the Black Sea, with a beautiful harbor with magnificent facilities, began to attract trade from the outside, from the countries across the Black Sea, Turkey, and through the straits of the Mediterranean and from the United States. Shipping was increasing rapidly, particularly from the West.

Q: Was this basically a port for Russia?

MILLER: Yes, it was the major southern port for the Russians. It was a tanker offloading place, a major freight handling port, and there was considerable military activity there, airbases and elements of the Black Sea Fleet. But the real contemporary issue was how was Odessa going to fit into the new economy of Ukraine? Odessa was largely left to solve this problem on its own. Odessa port, and Odessa city, are very different than the surrounding region. There is a long-standing conflict between the oblast and the city government, right up to the top. The quarrel between the mayor and the governor began from the outset of independence.

The mayor, Hurewitz was popularly elected. The governor was selected by the government in Kiev. The issue of political power concentrated in Kyiv as opposed to local governance chosen by election was evident from the beginning. Both the governor Bodelan and mayor Hurewitz were corrupt. They both benefited from their positions, doling out favors and receiving favors in return. But the mayor had more to give in the city itself, and his popularity increased, because he was rather astute. He could easily have been a mayor in New York. In fact, many New Yorkers of Odessan descent, you might say, would visit, and favorable trade ties were made. I knew the mayor very well, as well as the governor. They visited me in Kiev and I would visit them, in town and they would relate their difficulties, particularly with each other.

There is a very interesting American phenomenon in Odessa. The Odessa Symphony Orchestra, which is probably the second-best, if not the best, orchestra in the Ukraine, was led by an American conductor from Princeton, Hobart Earle. Hobart is a superb musician who was in Vienna as a protï¿½gï¿½ of conductors there and was asked to go to Odessa as a guest conductor. He went and fell in love with the city. He was so charmed by the city that he married a very talented, beautiful Ukrainian Russian woman from Odessa named Aida, who was a violinist, a lovely woman. They had a child, Pavel. Hobart Earle is a great musician, and an excellent conductor. He revived this orchestra from its near ruinous state. When Earle took over there were not enough instruments for the members of the orchestra to play. So he found instruments from all over the world, particularly from Vienna and the United States, and rather quickly put the Odessa Symphony Orchestra on a sound footing, and they're doing quite well.

The Odessa Orchestra survived financially by making recordings, and supplementing salaries with the income from recordings. Most second-tier orchestras are not able to finance their concerts from private contributionat least not yet. The Odessa Orchestra with Hobart Earle's direction has been accorded all the legal status and protection that the new Ukraine can provide; it has been awarded a national orchestra status, given pensions by the state for the musicians, and the benefits of social protections. The orchestra has traveled quite a bit throughout Ukraine and Russia and Western Europe. Their recordings are really of first rate quality specializing on Russian and Ukrainian music, and some American music as well. I performed there in a minor way, as the speaker in Aaron Copeland's "Lincoln Portrait". I performed in the Kyiv Opera House with the same orchestra, and in a number of other cities. It was quite a wonderful experience for me.

Hobart Earle and Aida are good friends of ours. When they came to Kiev on occasion and they would sometimes stay with us, and my wife, Suzanne and I would visit them in Odessa. Odessa had made the transition from a Soviet way of life to the life of an independent, cultured, non-ideological city. In Odessa, the Soviet manner and style of the past has been rejected, but nothing systematic has really replaced it. Certainly, ideas are floating around about what might be the best way, but the real structured thinking concerns survival, survival along the Black Sea, how to enjoy the life that those who live in Odessa have been given, and they're tending towards, not unexpectedly, preserving the best of their society, reviving the cultural life of the past and trying to provide, as best as they can, for everyone. It's more evidently socialist than almost any other city in Ukraine.

Odessa had, for example, in the Soviet period, a very extensive athletic program, as many Russian cities did, rising up to Olympic standards, where children would be selected at the age of five to be athletes, would attend special schools where sports were emphasized. The very best would go onto Olympic training camps at the age of 20. The exceptional, the gifted students, would receive all of their education in special schools, and this was true not just in athletics. It was also the case with mathematics, music, dance and the arts. Those with talent flourished in Odessa. There are still colonies of athletes, artists, painters, sculptors, musicians, and they're still organized in "collectives". Even if they're not now formally Soviet collectives, they look on their activity in a collective way, even in the symphony orchestra. It's a union now, but it really is a collective of the 500 or so people that make performances possiblmusicians, all of the workers, electricians, stage hands, ticket sellers, ushers, and the cleaners.

Athletics are still organized in the form of collectives. Collectives are found in universities, museums, even in the port, certainly among the dockworkers and those who go to sea on ships and manage the coastal protections of lighthouses and buoys. The basic organization for professional work is still the "collective". Thoughtful Odessa leaders say, "Thank God for that, that there's still some structure," and what's missing from the Soviet system is coercion through the use of force. They're working with each other as best they can. The worst result of the absence of the coercive use of State force is oligarchy, but the best result is collectives that are self-governing. On the negative side, oligarchy is the most dramatic and most destructive expression of all of these transitions from the Soviet way of life.

There is a very interesting example of self governing collectives found in the center of the city along one of the main streets of Odessa where there's a children's hospital which is run by the former coach of the Olympic gymnastics team of the Soviet Union. It happened that this fellow's daughter developed a terrible debilitating disease as a teenager, and her career in athletics, gymnastics, and her bright future, was cut short. This sad, tragic event affected this coach so powerfully that he decided that he would devote his life to working with children, affected as his daughter was with multiple sclerosis. So he created the Odessa children's hospital, specializing in the rehabilitation of youthful victims of these diseases. He achieved a very successful, a very decent rehabilitation rate by any standard. His work with children was highly regarded in Odessa as a great act of civic virtue.

Outside of this building, on the corner of the building, about six stories above the ground, there's a large bronze angel suspended as if in flight. The wings are spread and flank both sides of the corner. The wings are outstretched and protrude beyond the building in seeming flight. It is a very handsome, extraordinary almost religious sculpture, about 12 feet in height and 12 or 15 feet in extension.

Q: Let me just flip.

[END SIDE]

Q: We were talking about the angel on the side of the hospital.

MILLER: The artist who made the flying angel is one of Ukraine's best sculptors. His name is Mikhail Riva, who did the fountains that we gave to the embassy residence as our gift for the time of our service in Ukraine. He also did the fountains and other magnificent public sculptures in Odessa. This flying angel is thought to have iconic power by many Odessa inhabitants because of a dramatic event that occurred at the time of the unveiling of the sculpture. A big crowd was gathered at the dedication on the ground below, at the corner of the building, where the entrances were. All the worthies of Odessa were there: the mayor and beneficiaries and contributors were all below. This building had just been restored, and just opened as a hospital and rehabilitation center for children. It was not yet complete, as the workers on the roof had not finished their work. At the moment of dedication a big chunk of the roof peeled off and plunged toward the crown below - miraculously the outstretched wings of the angel blocked the falling masonry, saving the lives of those below. The angel was accorded magical power and it was understood by many to be a miracle, of course. The sculpture of the angel is a very beautiful thing, and perhaps it is miraculous. It certainly was in that instance.

The coach, the director of the rehabilitation center, is a major political figure in the city and so he receives contributions from the government in Kiev and from Ukrainian charitable institutions such as they now arthe wife of Kuchma, Ludmilla, and his daughter Elena, who work with children, have given their supporand the hospital is well-financed. The hospital works because of its direct lineage, in many ways, with the past. It was an easy transition from what was done in the Soviet Union as charitable or as a worthy work - what was worthy, even in Soviet times, is worthy now. Even the artists, who, perhaps in Soviet times, were doing portraits of Lenin and Stalin and other Soviet worthies are now doing paintings of angels and democratic leaders. They are able to survive because they are painting and sculpting works, monuments, that are not all that different from those done in Soviet times.

This is a way of saying that the institutions in Odessa that were a part of the normal social infrastructure in Soviet times, in modern times, in the contemporary times, are also understood to be useful, and necessary. Where there were existing usable institutions from the past, the transition was much easier. One could go right down the line. Museums, for example. Museums were run by the Soviet state. Usually, in large cities, the cities had the task of administration of services, but the money, such as it existed in Soviet times, came from the top, and the major social institutions received, then as now, contributions that have in present times diminished. The same pattern is true of schools, universities, hospitals. Even though services are now much diminished, the belief that the State should provide for the social infrastructure persists.

Privatization first appears in what we call the service industry, labor and raw materials. Odessa's economy is based on its port and its exports of raw materials. There's a great amount of manual work - labor involved in the handling of cargo, and the goods and services. This is where crime and corruption occurs.

Among the university political scientists and social philosophers in Odessa, and Kiev and all the other university citiea big issues is, "what is the value of labor?" In the Soviet mentality, the Soviet philosophical and doctrinal thinking, labor was the highest value. It was given value according to an established hierarchy of work. It was accordethis is the most mobile work, this is the most mediocre. People were paid, benefits were expended, according to the work that one did. For example, among the ordinary working people, not the political class, the most highly paid were the drivers of children's school buses and workers who labored in dangerous conditions like coal miners. They were at the top of the pay scale because they had the most responsibility of providing for the perceived social good and were paid accordingly.

The new theory of labor is free-form, it's whatever you can get if you're a worker or as little as you can pay if you're an owner. It was and is a scramble. There were and are many aspects of it which were and are illegal, such as the recording of amounts given, for tax purposes, the benefits that are supposed to be paid for which are not, or are, depending on the will of the owner, the nature of bookkeeping done and rigor and quality of inspection by state authorities. The rules that determine the value of work are very much at issue, and Odessa is a wonderful place to see all of this because it's smaller, than Kyiv, about half the size. The major kinds of work in the port are very compressed, into a visible small space. There are many people in Odessa who knew the old system and are now running the new system and were willing and interested in talking about it, because it's very much a part of their success and failure, on the one hand, and very much in their thinking as leaders of the country. This issue of the value of work cuts across the board in every field, and it's something that we, in the West, certainly most diplomats don't usually think about. I would say that it is necessary to have an understanding of this kind of question, if you wanted to have an empathetic insight into what motivates of leaders in countries like Ukraine and Russia. It's very, very necessary to share what is inside the minds of Ukrainian leaders to begin to understand why they're doing, in some cases, terrible things, in some cases laudatory, generous acts.

Q: I think one of the things that's always bothered Americans who have gone to the Soviet Union was how poorly doctors were paid compared to the United States. I mean, health care people ?

MILLER: Yes, that's a very interesting case in point, because, as you know, the majority of physicians in Ukraine are women. The women doctors do most of the general health care and especially take care of women and children. The high end of medicine is in research. The top physicians, in fact, were very well paid, because they were on the cutting edge of medical research and technology. They were the doctors in the best hospitals that took care of the leadership. They were academicians. So you would find many physicians who were professors in the university or in the Academy of Sciences, as scientists, when they happened to be physicians. The top of the scale among what doctors were paid and their benefits and their way of lifhouses and apartments that they would be givewere rewards. And the same one might say, even among professions like coal miners, when you were director of the coal mine, even though you had started as a pick and axe man at the age of 17, if you were a director you were accorded considerable honor and benefit. You were rewarded for your lifetime of work, and this was the philosophical congruence with Socialist theory of labor when it was justly applied. One can say that in the major categories probably it was for the most part justly applied. Where it fell apart, of course, is in the Soviet times, was at the top, the political class, the sort of bureaucrats, the parasites, as the Soviet theoreticians called those who didn't work. They became parasites themselves, the ones who invented the notion of just reward for hard work of benefit to society as a whole.

So there is a very deep, psychological struggle taking place among the Ukrainians, intellectual leaders, not just thoughtful leaders in Odessa. I found it throughout Ukraine in almost every field of work. You mentioned medicine, and I certainly saw it there among the doctors, in their great agony about whether they should open private clinics. The reason they opened the private clinics is because they were fed up with the bureaucrats, not with the mission that they had devoted their lives to. They blamed the bureaucrats for the collapse of the supply system, for necessary medicines and spare parts for the machines in the hospitalhaving enough materials and medicines to run a decent hospital. The drive to privatization is as much a response to a now inadequate state structure, as it is a drive to do their own thing. The collective mentality, the service to the group ideis still very strong in Ukraine, much stronger than it is here in the United States, even if the Soviet failure is very clear in their minds. Despite the failure of the Soviet leadership, the Socialist ideal still is very strong.

Q: Did Ukrainianwere their thoughts and their development in the post-Soviet period paralleling what was happening, say, in Russia? It was sort of a post-Soviet development rather than by different countries.

MILLER: What was a post-Soviet development?

Q: In other words, rethinking and the value of things and continuing the Socialist ?

MILLER: Yes, it is post-Soviet throughout the former Soviet Union, definitely, because up until the independence, the formal independence, December 25th, 1991, and the breakup of the Soviet Union, the end of the Soviet Union, the social infrastructure systems worked, more or less. They worked best in Ukraine, compared to other parts of the Soviet Union, for a number of reasons: Ukraine had more resources, it was always a favored republic, and special attention was given because of its critical, strategic importance, within the Soviet Union. A sizeable proportion of the Soviet leadership was Ukrainian reflective of Ukraine's importance within the Politburo and the Central Committee. Ukraine's importance was seen in the amount of effort that was made to repair the damage of the second World War, which was greatest in Ukraine, more than any other part of the Soviet Union. Ukraine lost more lives then any other republic, on the fronts in Ukraine. I was very aware of the post-Soviet political and philosophical change taking place. You could witness it in the former institute of philosophy which taught Marxist, Leninist, Soviet philosophy. In Kiev, the Institute of Philosophy is still the main place where bright students go to study philosophy, but they are now confronted with the reality of the end of the Soviet Union and the necessity to deal with the emergence of a new economic system, the requirement of building intellectual structures and structures for daily life, and practical morality.

So what's grown up alongside of this turmoil between Orthodox and radical new thinking about the value of work, labor, contributions to society, what the social structure should be, is the new new phenomenon of business, its management, reflected in a great, flowering efflorescence of new western style business schools and management institutes. Management for businessmen, being a really Western idea, is different, very different. Its ideas about efficiencies and looking at the bottom line mentalities and end results. Social purposes of work done in business are not a major part of the new management thinking. You're a manager, your task is to run an entity, trying to get a particular kind of work done in a profitable way. How a business contributes to social well being or the stability of the state, are secondary questions. So where is it that a comprehensive look at the new Ukrainian society was taking place? Not many places. Legitimate profit; social obligations of employers to workers; just taxation; what pensions should be paid to workers by the state and by the employer; what benefits are the responsibilities of the state as opposed to the individual; what is a just minimum wage; what is the composition of the new class system since the classless society is no more. These are the issues that are now a part of the political agenda as well. Some economists have criticized the Yushchenko-Tymoshenko government for populist-socialist programs and being anti-free market. Not at althese issues are the heart of the political agenda. For the now poverty stricken academicians, the academicians who were at the top of the intellectual class and rewarded for being the best, and it's the writers and poets, who were, when they were at the top of the socialist list of knowns, they were in the writer's union. The best painters, were "honored artists". The best dancers, the prima donnas. The best pole vaulter, the best skaters were all rewarded for excellence.

New universities, like Kyiv-Mohyla, are looking at those profound problems that confront the new Ukraine. Ukrainian universities have to teach their students how to encompass this new world and link the new world with the old world and with the history of Ukraine back to its founding and even into prehistory, and a develop a convincing coherent world view. It happens that the first two presidents Kravchuk and Kuchma and most of the leaders of Ukraine, up to now, were in the Soviet nomenclatura, and they were dealing, even as leaders of a new Ukraine, as independent Ukrainians, with a world still shaped by the Soviet system, understood with a Soviet mentality, governed still by Soviet hierarchical values. It is only now, as a result of the past presidential election and in this next election, where you'll have leaders capable of going beyond that. Yuschenko is very similar to Nicola Saakashvili in Georgia. They're good friends, as it turns out. They share Ukrainian education in Kiev and revolutions.

I'm putting a lot stress on these issues of values because it isn't the normal way of looking at Ukraine. I think it's necessary to understand this part of it, that it's an unremovable part of the brain. The struggle over values explains a lot of what has taken place and is taking place, and it might explain some of the mysteries that confront us when we look at a country with many failed expectations like Ukraine.

Q: As American ambassador, how did this all translate into your work and what you were doing vis-ï¿½-vis Washington and also Ukraine?

MILLER: When you spend every day and every night with the leaders and people of Ukraine, and once you get beyond the stage of formal relationships, "I'm delivering you a message, you're delivering me a message," and "This is my biography, this is your biography," then you have to have something to talk about, and what I have just described about the struggle over values of work, the morality of profit, social responsibility, is what they talk about. I find it interesting, because it tells me at least as much about my own society, and it becomes referential. You can position your own examined thinking against those of others. It's a very serious, conceptual, intellectual matter.

I spent a lot of time with a wonderful person who is a distinguished psychologist, and human rights leader; his name is Simon Gluzman, who was sentenced to the gulag for protesting the use of psychological pressure and mind-altering drugs on political prisoners, and for charging that the Soviet regime was approving of the misuse of medical practice and using a form of torture in violation of human rights. For his principled stand, Gluzman was sent to the gulag for seven years. He survived. Gluzman is now taking care of the last thousand or so surviving Soviet era political prisoners who suffered this psychological abuse. Gluzman's office is in an insane asylum attached to a beautiful monastery, St. Cyril's. Gluzman is what is called a national psychologist, that is, he looks at national psyche as a way of describing national character and characteristics. He points out that the mentality of Ukrainian leaders up to the present time is still Soviet. Gluzman asks and answers the questions: what is a Soviet person? What is the Soviet mentality, and whether the crossover point from Soviet mentality to something else really has been reached. Even Viktor Yuschenko's origins, Gluzman points out, are in the Soviet period, and his thinking was shaped in that formative period of his life. Gluzman believes that it is still a major influence on Yuschenko, and that Ukraine will not see the real change in the idea of freedom, of independence, of individuality, on the part of its leaders for at least another generation.

Ukrainians are doing considerable thinking about national identity, including psychological characteristics. National identity goes way beyond language, obviouslit has to do with concepts of freedom, liberty, individuality, the value of work. I started with that conceptual issuthe value of work - I go back to it because there's no difference between the modern period or the Soviet period: the expectation in both the past and the present is that people would work, they would have to work, that every individual had to work. It was part of life. So if you spend eight hours a day, nine hours a day, working, you should know what work is for, what its value is, and how it fits into the overall patterns of life.

Q: Of course there's this thing of the old Soviets, the saying that came out of the Soviet system, "You pretend to pay us and we pretend to work." There's an awful lot of inefficiency and absenteeism, and everybody knows. .

MILLER: That aphorism was a humorous description of the corruption of the system, but most people worked. Most people who were on the farms, for example, even the collective farms, were from peasant stock, they were conditioned through the centuries to be farmers, and they worked. Most were proud of their work because they not only survived the horrors of collectivization and the mass murder of the Kulaks, and prospered by their work, but they also had the belief that the surpluses, beyond what they needed, fed the state. There was a somewhat similar pattern with the coal miners. The ideals were there. The corruption which in the end destroyed the system is focused in false production figures, in swindling the workers, taking benefits that the worker, who actually worked should have had. The slogan, "We pretend to work and they pretend to pay us," is of course, a comic expression of a systemic corruption, but the fact that the slogan describes a corruption and that the people as a whole understand that it is a corruption means that there is a value that they hold as valid. There were instances and places, many places, where people did their work in accord with their ideals and they did it very well, and they were understood to have done it well and were seen as heroes as a result.

Q: Well, as you're looking from your vantage poinand you pronounce it "Keyv"?

MILLER: Yes, that's more or less the way they pronounce it.

Q: We've always said "Ki-ev."

MILLER: That's the Russian pronunciation and spelling. The official spelling is Kyiv.

Q: Were you seeinwere they developing, or was there a difference between a Ukrainian and a Russian? I mean, was this all an examination of the post-Soviet man?

MILLER: Oh, I'd say, in a larger sense, yes, it was a scrutiny of the post-Soviet man, but the lesser issue, to be sure a secondary category, is what's the difference between a Russian and Ukrainian? Is there a difference? Certainly there is a difference, and it has to do with where you live, and how long you've lived there and what the family histories have been through centuries, religion, the nature of work, the climate, the kind of house you live in, certainly what you can expect in the daily weather, even the clothes you wear. For many, many centuries, there was always a distinction made, particularly, by Russians, about Ukrainians. They're the "little brothers" a condescending description, meaning persons who are unwashed behind the ears and provincial and country bumpkin-like and not as intelligent or as accomplished as Muscovites.

Q: Sounds like the northern Italians talking about people from the Mezzo General (ph).

MILLER: Yes, there are a lot of regional distinctions which are found for example in Gogol's 19th century writing. There are many jokes about Ukrainians, just the way jokes are made in every country about, usually, the difference between urban and rural. What's changed, of course, now is that all of Europe and the world as a whole is changing. The world is becoming an urban culture. Ukraine is becoming an urban culture even though almost half the people still live on lanthat is, in villages. It's rapidly becoming urban culture in the way that even dramatic improvements in the most agricultural countries of Europe have become urban cultures. That's because of dramatic improvements in transportation and communications. The distance, in every way, between a city apartment and a thatched cottage, is very small and continues to shrink.

Q: Talk about Odessa. Do people in Odessa look upon the people in Kyiv as being those barbarians up there, we're the cultured folk, or something of that nature?

MILLER: Yes, they do. Well, it's a little more than thaKyiv is where the Ukrainian government is. They speak Ukrainian, we speak Russian. We're Black Sea, and even almost Mediterranean. We have a proud imperial paseven if it is over a thousand years less than Kyvian Rus.

The Soviet time for Odessa was not a happy one, because of the exodus of the Jews and the terrible costs of the war in Ukraine. Yes, they see differences with the center but I think it's more that phenomenon of being a major city that's not the capital.

Q: Like New York and Washington.

MILLER: Yes.

Q: What abousomething I'vcorrect me if I'm wrong, but I've heard references made to "Give New York the Odessa mafia," and all. I mean, Odessa and Marseilles have some what the same odor as far as a sea-port criminality, gangs and all. Is this ?

MILLER: Oh, yes, very definitely. It's an On the Waterfront atmosphere. There's a lot of that feeling, and the messy corrupt politics go into city hall aw well as the governors. It's a major seaport, and, as in New York, as in Boston as in Seattle, Hong Kong or any major port, the world of the waterfront is, in part, shaped by those who work on the docks and live off the trade and profits made.

Q: We're talking about the movie ?

MILLER: On the Waterfront.

Q: Yes, excellent movie.

MILLER: Yes, and I'm sure there were some Odessa elements in it. The waterfront of Odessa is a rough place and that means there are gangland killings or the breaking of the agreements among the criminals and the payoffs for protectioit's all there.

Q: Did you get involved at all with the New YorOdessa connection? You know, criminal enforcement?

MILLER: Yes, I got involved because our embassy, had an FBI office. The FBI office was established when I was there. Louis Freeh, came out to Kyiv and we signed an agreement establishing the terms of an FBI office in Ukraine.

Q: He was the head of the FBI at the time?

MILLER: Yes, FBI Director Freeh asked for my help. Among other things, he wanted to really understand whether it was possible to deal with Ukrainian law enforcement officials about the international aspects of the criminality that appeared to come from the Ukraine. He asked if it would be better for an FBI officer to come in on occasion from Germany or some other country. I said, "No, I think it would be better to work directly with the law enforcement people in the Ukraine. In addition, there would be a positive training aspect that the FBI could give Ukrainian law enforcement agencies. It would help them measure their own performance." I had very good FBI attachï¿½s. I had two when I was there. They were both of Ukrainian ethnic background. Both spoke Ukrainian and Russian, and they had both had worked at very high levels in the criminal division of the FBI in Washington as well as in New York in very similar venues. So the international utility of setting up FBI liaison with Ukraine on criminal activity was right on the mark. It was a perfect use of an FBI attachï¿½, because it gave them real work that affected our interests and Ukrainian interests in positive ways.

Q: Was there cooperatioin other words, were the resources of the FBI also made available, in certain cases, for the Ukrainians?

MILLER: Yes. It was an aspect of our aid program. It was a sensible legal assistance program. It took the form of document exchange, computer integration, joint communications, integration into Interpol, the international tracking of criminals, and relations with other national police forces, particularly in Western Europe. It was a very busy program and Louis Freeh himself took a great personal interest in it, because he had been both a prosecutor and a judge, and so he knew all the sides of the law enforcement. Of course, he had dealt with "On the Waterfront" types and mafia, in New York and, of course, Ukraine had its mafia, waterfront, and gangs.

Some of the criminals in New York and other cities in the United States were of Ukrainian and Russian origin. This ethnic legacy started from the end of the 19th century - family-ties, you might say.

Q: What about overall, while you were there, corruption? How did this pladid this have any concern of ours?

MILLER: Certainly from the outset the word "corruption" was in our policy rhetoric. We were against it, of course. However, the reality was we were very permissive in our thinking and practice on corruption that seemed to be attendant to the so-called free-market processes. This is at the top, and these were the things that high officials, top level bureaucrats, would not only see but possibly be able to do something abouthat is, the initial transactions of evolving state assets into private assets. We, in Russia, in Ukraine and throughout the former Soviet Union, I think, did not pay enough close attention to the fairness of the process of translating state assets into private assets. The phenomenon that developed in these countries, Ukraine and Russia foremost, the rise of the oligarchs, was the consequence. The process of auctions and vouchers, shares in a nonexistent markewhich were virtually worthless in the beginning but obviously had legal value as far as title to ownership goes and great potential valuwas badly handled. The ordinary citizen had no benefit whatsoever from these processes of selling off state assets and those few with fast footwork received all the benefit. Many of them, an astonishingly high number, gained their wealth in criminal ways.

Q: Did we let it go or could we have ?

MILLER: Could we have interfered? Yes, I think so, but privatization was also a legal and philosophical struggle. Free market means for many that governments don't interfere.

Q: But we've also got all sorts of things built in to our system of corrupt practices and?

MILLER: We do, after the fact.

Q: Human rights, you know. I mean, we're passing judgment all the time.

MILLER: Well, the hypocrisy of it was not lost, and this is how the shady, corrupt characters around Kuchma flourished, because they were given a relatively free ride, partially because some said this process was similar to the ways wealth was accumulated in the 19th century in the United States.

Q: Robber baron types.

MILLER: That's certainly the term that was used, but as with other benefits of history we knew what a robber baron was. We knew that what most robber barons did was, in our system, illegal, in our system of our morality, it was immoral. It was certainly unjust, but we didn't put as much rigor into this area as we did into, say, the disposal of nuclear weapons. I understand why, because there was a strong belief in our own country that government shouldn't interfere with political economic processes, that any sort of interference would have adverse effectbetter to let it take it's own course and correct itself in the future was the thinking of some.

Q: In a way this is, I think, part of the thing is all this is developed (ph). You go through this period and eventually it will shake out.

MILLER: Yes, but there are many points along the way where the Ukrainianeven some of the Ukrainians who became oligarchs and thieveasked the question, they said, "Why are you encouraging us to do this?"

Q: Did you have a problem, yourself, in seeing where we could have done something or at least could have made comment or somethinI'm not quite sure what we could do and couldn't do, but how did this affect you?

MILLER: Well, it affected me because I was very skeptical about the so-called free market because I'd seen the beginnings of this so-called free market in Russia when I was living there. I didn't think the economists who were coming out and preaching free market doctrine knew what the hell they were talking about. They certainly didn't know anything about the country in which they were making these declarations. They often referred to the Chilean example or the Polish miracle, but none of these things events in other countries applied to Russia or Ukraine. The regulatory balance that we have developed was not pushed. The push was for disposal of state assets, privatization, as rapidly as possible. For example, the biggest opportunity for money is in energy and the sale and control of state assets of energy production, whether it's in the extractive industries or transportation or energy generation and distribution. The notion of a public utilitI never heard the word come out of the mouths of our itinerant free market economists. I never heard the idea of rate regulation advocated.

Q: This is tape 11, side one, with Bill Miller. Yes.

MILLER: I never heard the words rate regulations, or any really serious discussion in depth between our economists and Ukrainian economists and leaders of what, given the nature of resources and needs in Ukraine, should be the balance between the public sector and private sector. Nor did our economists take seriously the argument of many Ukrainians, particularly the Socialists like Olexander Moroz, that there should be a set of state assets that remained national property until such time that they were fully valued. When and if such assets were put up for sale, they would be sold in a fully transparent competitive open-transaction. Such assets were conceived of by Moroz and others as a strategic reserve, you might say. There was considerable discussions about models. The Ukrainians themselves talked about these models, particularly the Swedish, as ideal. The American model was beyond their reach. The German model was seen as complicated by the political necessity to integrate the East into the West of Germany and the tremendous costs involved in that. The new Ukrainian thinkers, economists and thoughtful political leaders were searching for a workable pattern to follow as they made a transition from a Soviet state to a new modern Ukraine.

So the question of how the value of the state, a former Soviet state, would be translated into a capitalist value was never approached as a whole. I think this failure to do so has had very serious consequences, because discussions on economy with Ukrainian leaders were almost always limited to the immediate, the questions of the size loans, terms of loan payments, adherence to certain restrictions or requirements, and never, "What is all this for?" All of the Ukrainian leaders had to deal with the daily struggle to keep the nation afloat. The constant refrains were, "How are we going to make the payments to the IMF or the World Bank or the various creditors we have on our backs?" The available economic craft and ingenuity had to deal with those areas of short term concern rather than long term economic vision.

In part, it was an international reaction to Soviet state planning, which was an anathema to most people, but the failure to find a new economic-political economic vision for Ukraine proved to be a terrible lack on the Ukrainians' part. It is also a failure, I think, on the part of the international financial institutions and on our part as well. We were very good at providing solutions to allow for debt roll-overs, and bailouts, but social consequences or long range planning simply was missing beyond exhortations to reach a free market by price liberalization, letting the currency float free and deregulation and privatization.

Q: Did the universities play any role in this? Were there people writing and thinking about this, or in newspapers, commenting on "where are we going?" and all?

MILLER: I would say very little was being seriously done in the universities. Newspapers and journals commentary was focused on the daily struggles, of survival and dealing with the budgetary crisis of the day. For families the issue focused on, "How are we going to put food on the table tomorrow?" and here's where the questions of corruption come in. "Should I take this kind of a job, should I take this kind of a payment to an official to get something else? If I do this, what happens?" So all of the rules and orderly expectations of the past were thrown into a cocked hat, and everything became "What do I do now?"

The necessary actions were very pragmatic, very immediate; the broader issue of social national purpose of the new politics, of the new economy was very much in the background. This was a failure of leadership, clearly. This was a failure on the part of the Ukrainian leadership, certainly, and, I also would say Western leadership as well.

Q: Well, now, when you speak of "we didn't," you're really referring to the West, aren't you.

MILLER: Yes.

Q: I mean, not just the United States, but ...

MILLER: We were the biggest donors, but all of the Europeans and Japanese were involved because of their membership in the international institutions, IMF, World Bank and regional banks.

Q: Well, now, what were we doing about promoting American investment in Ukraine, and our concern about good commercial law that is the cornerstone of having investment?

MILLER: Scale matters. If investment is really large, you can have an effect. But foreign direct investment in Ukraine was and remains very small. The American foreign direct investment was miniscule, given the problem, and the impact on a favorable attitude of cooperation from the Ukrainian government was correspondingly small. So, if a trade dispute arose and there were usually a dozen or so pressing trade disputes of various kinds, such as licensing for radio stations, for example, disputed ownership of a pharmaceutical company, changes of board of directors manipulation, normal trade disputes you would expect anywhere, there was so little overall investment that the ability to get justice, so to speak, was minimal. And it took an inordinate amount of both Ukrainian and American official time to deal with these questions.

Had there been sizeable American investment, it would have been very easy to settle disputes, in my view. But the initial climate in which there was a clamoring to invest disappeared very quickly, and the general message on Wall Street was, "You'd be a fool to invest in Ukraine. You can't rely on protection either from the United States, or certainly not from Ukraine for any legitimate dispute.

It really is a matter of scale. The few big multinational companies that invested in Ukraine did all right. The little ones were subject to influences and pressures that were greater than any defense that they could bring to bear.

Q: Well, now, when you were there, what was the role of the Soviet embassy? Were they trying to ...

MILLER: Russian.

Q: I mean the Russian embassy. What were your relations, and was the feeling at that time that they were trying to bring Ukraine back into the fold?

MILLER: Yes, I made it a point to spend considerable time with the Russian ambassador, the two ambassadors that were there when I was in Kyiv. The first was a man named Shmolyakov, who was a Ukrainian by birth. We became good friends. His wife was very pleasant, and he and his family were courteous and welcome. We did a lot of things together. He was very sympathetic to Ukraine. He was in an interesting position. The "near abroad" policy of Russia that Ukraine should be a part of Russia was certainly something he believed in, but the intensity of his Ukrainian nationalist feeling any sympathy perhaps was even stronger.

Our physical presence, in the form of many frequent visits by our leaders from President Clinton and Vice President Gore on dowmembers of Congress, prominent figures from the private world, overwhelmed anything that the Russians were doing. This personal effort by our national leadership made a huge difference, and we had a tremendous influence as a result. Initially, the Ukrainian government was completely in congruence with us on arms control, and sort of our discussions were very helpful to each other, and we did a lot together.

Yuri Dubinin was sent from Moscow to attempt to lessen American influence. There was great concern in Moscow that the Americans were too influential in Kyiv, that I was too influential, and that this massive personal presence of Americans should be countered. Yuri Dubinin, had been ambassador here in Washington during the Gorbachev perestroika era. Dubinin was a very polished diplomat, five or 10 years younger than Anatoly Dobrynin who had served for 23 years in Washington during the Cold War. Dubinin had also served in Madrid and Paris. He was very intelligent, adroit and adaptable. We were good friends in Washington. I had done many exchanges of officials and prominent citizens from our respective countries, things with his help when I was president of the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations, and when he was involved in bringing cultural groups and prominent Soviet officials to the United States. I recall our working together successfully to get the Donetsk Ballet troupe into the United States for performances in Baltimore and Washington in the face of very complicated visa and financial problems. The visit of the Donetsk Ballet was a great initial success.

During the time Dubinin was ambassador in Washington, Andrei Sakharov, in 1988, came on his first trip to the United States after being released from exile in Gorky by Gorbachev. Sakharov and his wife, Elena Bonner came for lectures at the Academy of Sciences, dinner at Ted Kennedy's house and visits to the Hill. There were human rights protests outside the Soviet Embassy. As I was one of the hosts for his visit to the United States, Dubinin asked for my help in getting Sakharov to come for a meeting at the Soviet Embassy. Dubinin was sympathetic to most human rights issues, and I helped him a little bit with this awkward problem of a human rights demonstration held outside his embassy to the extent that I was able to persuade the blockade to be lifted so that the Sakharov delegation was allowed to enter the Embassy. Dubinin and I worked together to make Sakharov's trip to Washington as much a success as possible, even though there were demonstrations in front of the embassy at Sakharov Plaza. In the end, Sakharov agreed to go to the embassy, and in doing so greeted the demonstrators, agreed with their grievances and went into the embassy which was giving a reception in his honor, a wonderful complication.

A few years later, I met Dubinin in Moscow when he was serving in the foreign ministry and I was working as President of the International Foundation. In 1995, Dubinin was assigned to Kyiv. As soon as he arrived, I, of course, had a dinner for him, a private dinner, and we fully discussed our separate purposes and came to a clear understanding of what our mutual purposes were. Having Dubinin sent to Kyiv was helpful, to me. Because of our personal friendship, I may have blunted what he might have done if someone else were ambassador. Because we were friends, and he never used any of the harsh language that Soviet ambassadors tend to use, and he would never do anything affecting our official relations without telling me first, if it might have an impact on our personal relationship. I think this is proof of how valuable it is to know people well as human beings, even those who hold opposing views over the years. If you have a decent human relationship, you can get far more done.

For me, the Russian factor was manageable. I went to Moscow on occasion, to see friends, and many of them were the authors and proponents of the near abroad policy in the Russian policy world. I think that kind of involvement, as with Ambassador Dubinin, softened what they might have been able to do otherwise. It certainly gave me an understanding of what they had in mind, what their long-term interests were. They haven't changed. They believe Ukraine should be a part of Russia. As good friends as they are on a personal plane, they very much regretted my role in Ukraine and told me so.

Q: During the time you were there, did membership in NATO, or other countries' membership in NATO, was this at all a factor?

MILLER: Yes, the NATO issue is very important. The initial thinking of most Ukrainian politicians, between 1991995 was that the Warsaw Pact was finished, let's get rid of that. OSCE is the right framework for a new European security organization. It puts everyone on the same starting point, with decent values, agreed human rights, none of the formal legacy of the horrible past, elimination of a fear of military invasion or intervention. The OSCE option was rejected by the West. How to recast NATO for the post Cold War world became our introspection as a political and policy matter in Washington and throughout the West. Should NATO disband or should we expand? This was the debate from '93 to '95. Before the decision to expand NATO to the East was made, as an interim measure, Partnership for Peace, a Clinton invention, a Bill Perry invention, was created to provide an active means of working together with states from the former Warsaw Pact.

Q: The secretary of defense.

MILLER: Yes, Partnership for Peace made eminent sense, and worked very well, because it allowed each country to do its own thing, at its own pace, without putting a great strain on their capabilities. They could come in to a viable security arrangement right away, which Partnership for Peace was, without the requirements of NATO membership that were imposed on the Western European nations. But the idea of a new security partnership was the focus of serious security discussions, "What is the meaning of partnership?" And this idea of partnership was running concomitant to "What is NATO?" NATO was no longer forces assembled for a massive war of armies on the north German plain, because there are no forces on the other side. If NATO is dissolved, what are we going to do with 20 tank divisions of main battle tanks, and 20 infantry divisions, what about U.S. basing in Germany? Where should forces be deployed, for what purposes and what kinds of forces? So there was a huge debate in Brussels, particularly, and in all the capitals of the West. Of course the bureaucracy of Brussels wanted to continue NATO. It was their life's work. They weren't sure that Russia would remain a weak power and that it wouldn't become once again a power with imperial ambitions and become once again a threat to the West and world peace.

"The keep NATO and expand it" point of view triumphed in 1995. "We will keep the core because we can't trust the Russians, and we'll expand, certainly, to include Poland and Czechia. We'll bring the border right up to the old Soviet Union. We'll absorb Warsaw Pact." So that was the '95 decision.

The formal new structure for European security was defined by the reaction of NATO, the EU, and OSCE to Yugoslavia's disintegration. Even though Yugoslavia was certainly an all-European issue, the decision about activities to deal with Yugoslavia were made in Brussels, Paris, London, Washington and other Western European capitals. The views of Moscow, Ukraine, and all the other former Warsaw Pact states, were not taken into account. It was very clear that NATO was to be the military basis for post Cold War European security, and that NATO would extend to the east as conditions would permit, but that the core would remain such that the United States would be the dominant military power and the decisions would be made in the same way that they were made in the time of the Cold War.

On the issue of Yugoslavia, Ukraine was left outside of the debate in Brussels, since Ukraine was not a full partner. They were active members of Partnership for Peace and they had very good representation in that forum. Boris Tarasyuk went to Brussels and fought the fight, but he was always seen as an outsider, not in the in-group, and noisy and irritating because he kept bringing up the issue. He had the portfolio as ambassador to Belgium and to NATO. I can remember very well, having gone to Brussels several times, and to Germany to discuss this with Richard Holbrooke who was ambassador in Bonn. Holbrooke was a major player, as was Bob Hunter, our NATO ambassador in Brussels. They both came to Kyiv for meetings with me and appropriate Ukrainian officials. Of course, Bill Perry and Strobe Talbott were involved. Where did Ukraine fit in all of this? The answer was that Ukraine was an important entity formally outside of NATO that strategically should be inside of NATO but nonetheless was outside, largely because NATO had to deal with another strategic nation, even more important, Russia. What kind of a "partner" was Russia? The adjectives used to describe what kind of partner Russia and Ukraine were the substantive surface of a huge policy fight.

How many strategic partners can you have and still be strategic? How many "partners" have a "special relationship" and have it still be special? How many countries can be special? The wordsmiths went from "special" to "unique". The hunt for appropriate adjectives, I found, was a bit pathetic and demeaning. The hunt was really an evasion.

Q: Well, was there any thought in thinking about the Russian menace to keeping NATO together, I've always felt that one of the prime things to NATO was particularly keeping the French and Germans under the same tent.

MILLER: That was an old issue. That became old stuff.

Q: It may be old stuff, but old stuff becomes quite new stuff. I would think that within the European context, they would be in a way happy to sort of keep almost the armed forces under control, so that they didn't start looking over each other's shoulders and saying, "Gee, they're getting a little bigger than me and all."

MILLER: Well, the French question, from de Gaulle on was the French were not participants in NATO, even though they were members in NATO, an irony. The whole issue of whether there should be a European force, without the Americans, this is another aspect of the debate, but it's out here. The main actions in security took place in the core NATO context, led by the United States, the Yugoslavian action group determined by us. How these other countriefor example, Ukraine had views about how to handle the Yugoslavs, because they had extensive dealings with them in Soviet times. They knew each other as fellow slaves. Ukraine and the Yugoslavs had extensive trade with each other, down the Danube. This was a rocky time for Ukrainian-American relations, because Ukrainian views were not taken into account. The discussions didn't involve them, and Ukraine didn't like the actions that were taken.

Q: One, were they coming to you and saying, "Make us a player," or were you going to Washington and saying, "Make them a player?"

MILLER: Well, much of this happened after I left, but yes, they would come to me and say, "This is contrary to our efforts to become a part of NATO and Europe. It doesn't help." The most significant effect of the Yugoslav action was that it isolated Kuchma, who wanted to continue the policy of non-alignment, of straddling, of appearing to be going Westward gradually, but maintaining good relations with Russia, doing nothing that would damage the good relations with Russia. Kuchma had accepted the idea of moving steadily in the direction of the West taking formal steps as they were ready. Ukrainian leaders loved Partnership for Peace, because it was a form of inclusion that allowed Ukraine to proceed with confidence at its own pace.

We lost interest in the Partnership for Peace, because we were preoccupied with Yugoslavia and the attempted NATO actions. Brussels then made the decision to expand and set the standards of membership at the level of Polish and Czech political maturity. That was the early standard in the NATO that was now seen as correct. At this point, we lessened and almost stopped the highest-level contacts between the United States and the Ukraine. We really cut them off. President Clinton, once he got into his impeachment difficulties, during his last year in office, was occupied defending himself. Clinton, sadly, dropped out of his pattern of actionism and it hurt terribly.

At the same time, as this break in high level contacts, there was also a breaking away from Western models, and restrictions. This break between Kuchma and the United States was very much in the interest of the oligarchs who were gaining political control. Ukraine was near the head of the list to enter NATO in 1991; it certainly would have been put on the list in 1996 if they had pressed publicly for it, and if we had pushed them to push. But we convinced ourselves that Partnership for Peace was the right way to get Ukraine into NATO. It was working very well from a military point of view, the integration process was proceeding very effectively, the pressures on the Ukrainians weren't so great that it created anxiety and the United States could handle the training burden. And then Partnership for Peace was all but set aside.

We didn't stay the course, so to speak, on an agreed process that was working very well. I don't think we were sensitive to the Ukrainians' constant necessity to look over its shoulder to Moscow enough to get through that mine field. As it happens, first Yeltsin and then Putin later moved closer to NATO than Ukraine, and Russia became directly influential in NATO affairs in Brussels, because Russia had to be included. Russia was the political threat problem, and insofar as they wanted to be part of the solution, they'd have to be involved. They were and are in an ideal position to deal with NATO. Ukraine is not a threat and does not have a similar kind of influence.

Q: Well, I think this probably is a good place to stop. Have we talked about your impression of Kuchma at all?

MILLER: No, the next time, I think.

Q: Why don't we talk about him? And, also, were you there during the impeachment of Clinton and all?

MILLER: No, I was back here in Washington.

Q: Well, let's talk about your leaving and then the sort of things you've been doing since then, because you've been involved in foreign affairs very much.

MILLER: Yes, let's do that.

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Q: Okay, today is the 25th of March, 2004. Kuchma?

MILLER: Yes, Kuchma is a very good person to focus upon because he represents the essence of the Ukrainian party of power, he is the inheritor from the Soviet system, the top of the nomenclatura of the Soviet system, even in the new world of an independent Ukraine. And he's an interesting figure in his own right as a Soviet man. He came from a village northeast of Kyiv, in the historic Cossack area. His mother, when I first met him, still lived there in the village of his birth. The village which I visited is a Ukrainian and Russian ethnic mix.

Kuchma comes from a village and rises in the ranks of the party as an engineer. He goes to Dnepropetrovsk, the university there, and gets a degree, goes into the Dnepropetrovsk complex of missile factories, particularly Pavlograd, which was the number one missile factory of the Soviet Union and the largest missile-producing factory in the world, manufacturing 250 ICBMs a year. Kuchma ran the missile making plant as commissar. He wasn't the leading engineer, he was its party leader. He was the political leader of the complex of Pavlograd. The collective, so to speak, was under his command.

Kuchma is an excellent example of how valued in the Soviet system the organization of work, high-tech work, the achievement of goals in the Soviet manner was. His rise in rank was in strict accord to contributions to the party. Kuchma is a perfect example of the Soviet system. When Ukraine became independent, the membership of the first parliament and the structure of the first government was very similar to what was going on in Ukraine in the Soviet period at the end. So in the first election after independence, a popular election, Kuchma is elected to the first parliament as one of the natural leaders. Kuchma is chosen prime minister after the ranking Soviet economist, who had been in the Gosplan in Moscow, Masol, is voted out.

The first government, and most of the first parliament, are from the Party of Power of the Soviet system, even though all of them, with very few exceptions, are Ukrainian nationalists. Those who are democrats in the parliament are in the minority. The democrats did not achieve a popular electoral majority until 2002, when the parliamentary elections produced a majority that was in support of democrats.

Q: When you say democrats and nationalists, do you differentiate between the two?

MILLER: Well, the nationalists are those who support the idea of Ukrainian territorial integrity, sovereignty and identity. Ukrainian nationalist include hard-line Communists as well as liberal constitutionalists and those who believe in the rule of law in the Western sense. There are Ukrainian nationalists who are ultras and hold a kind of monarchist view. What they all shared, all Ukrainian nationalists, with very few exceptions, what they all shared in 1991, '92, and '93 was the goal of independence from Moscow. Also, they supported the idea of non violence. Of course, they all said they wanted a peaceful life and positive change from the old system, even though Soviet Ukraine for the most part had achieved a stability after all of the terrible wars, world wars, civil wars, famines, and the gulag. Ukraine was settling into a kind of Soviet prosperity when the change and collapse of the Soviet Union took place in 1991.

A substantial minority, of the Soviet government in Moscow was composed of Ukrainians particularly from the Khrushchev period on. About 40 percent of the top leadership were Ukrainian. This was also true in the military leadership. A substantial minority in the security forces of KGB, the economists, every part of Soviet life had a substantial Ukrainian component, that is, people of Ukrainian origin. So they were part and parcel of the Soviet system that existed at the end of the '80s, beginning of the '90s. Kuchma was an example par excellence of the Soviet system: village boy, young pioneer, Komsomol, engineer, working for the nation, for the Soviet Union, succeeding and climbing step by step to the top of the heap in the military-industrial complex. So he was respected, a man of proven talent, not outspoken, not dynamic, but he was someone the Ukrainian people thought who would have the needed experience and stability.

Kuchma was prime minister for a relatively short time, but then resigned under the pressure of economic crisis. The collapse of the Soviet economic system had terrible effect on all Ukrainians. The collapse, which included hyper-inflation of over 10,000 percent, reduced the wellbeing of Soviet citizens, within a year or two, to 40 percent of the level that they were living under at the end of the Soviet Union. This trough, this collapse, lasted for several years. The economy began to climb upward after 1998, but has not yet approached the levels of 1991.

Kuchma was one of the Ukrainian leaders that were known to the public as a whole, known to be Ukrainian, also known to be a top of the heap Soviet leader, and as a result, he was seen as a natural leader in the transition democratically elected parliament. He was also termed one of the "Red directors", this class of people who managed the major industries and factories of Ukraine. "Red directors" was a term used throughout the Soviet Union, describing the managers of the military-industrial complex. They were a very powerful group. They organized themselves into a lobby, something like the National Association of Manufacturers here, the NAM. They called themselves the Association of Entrepreneurs. By using a bourgeois word like "entrepreneur", they softened the Soviet image the "Red directors" had. The "Red directors", were, in fact, in the process of taking over ownership of the Soviet plants for themselves. The "Red directors" were the new group of leaders of the new economy. It is in that role that I first med Kuchma, as the president of the Association of Entrepreneurin his very elaborate office on Kreshatik, the main street of Kyiv. I was impressed with his very bright staff of former Komsomol leaders, including Dmitro Tabachnyk who became his chief of staff, and a number of others who also were his key staff aides when Kuchma became president.

The Association of Entrepreneurs was an outgrowth of Soviet economic leaders who in the new Ukraine, post Soviet Ukraine, was advancing the interests of the red directors. This group of red directors became the most powerful Ukrainian political group, both behind the scenes and of record from 1991 through, I'd say, about 1997, when the oligarchs took over the leadership. Some oligarchs were former red directors, but the new era, capitalist oligarchs as a whole are characterized by having far more experience and use of, the new economy and banks. The oligarchs created new networks of banks and other economic institutions, to support the acquisition of further assets. The oligarchs' objective was personal wealth accumulation. The oligarchs concentrated to great effect, accumulating money by acquiring state assets and using that first level of acquisition as leverage to make even more money.

Q: Was that money going anywhere else, or to Swiss bank accounts?

MILLER: Yes, it was going wherever money would produce the most return. They were bright, and informed themselves about where to go to the place where they would get the most money, particularly for themselves.

Q: So this was not a matter of reinvestment.

MILLER: It was not reinvestment, it was self aggrandizement.

[END SIDE]

Q: You were saying it was interesting ?

MILLER: How ready the red directors were when they became oligarchs, to shed the Soviet legacy of support for workers. They shed the burden of infrastructure support for workerthe hospitals, the kindergartens, the schools, the cultural centers, social infrastructure, the part of the typical Soviet industrial complex, which included the building and maintenance of apartment houses, playgrounds, movie theaters, clinics. The work place took care of its workers from birth to death, including burials. The Soviet place of work provided that kind of all-inclusive security. With a new "free market" system they shed those obligations and became bottom line efficient and left the workers adrift. These features of economic transition, accounts for some of the discontent on the part of most Ukrainians.

Let's return to Kuchma. Kuchma, as the president of the red directors Association of Entrepreneurs, used that as platform for his political base. It was his political base. In 1994, he ran for president against Kravchuk, Leonid Kravchuk, the first president who had been a second-level nomenclatura. Kuchma had been higher in Soviet rank and higher in the esteem of the populace than Kravchuk, and this Soviet qualitative difference had an effect on the outcome of the elections. Also, Kravchuk was a decided and overt Ukrainian language nationalist, whereas Kuchma was Russian-speaking, although a nominal, reluctant nationalist. The demography of Ukraine is such that the greatest proportion of the population is in the east, and Kuchma, coming from Dnipropetrovs'k, one of the major cities of the east, the Russian-speaking east, was able to command their support. Even so, Kravchuk would have won reelection, if he had not been ambivalent. Until a few months before the elections, he was saying, "I will run, I won't run," and when he finally decided to run it was too late. The key votes had already been decided upon, and Kravchuk lost.

So Kuchma, as presidenthis is when I really got to know him, because he understood, from the outset, that his most important foreign relationship was with Americans and the United States. His ties with Moscow were well-established and those ties would not be difficult to maintain, but he had to make a stable, workable arrangement with the United States in order to succeed as president. He understood that right away. So we spent a lot of time together, in part because it was his desire to make clear that he wanted to have good relations with the United States, and correspondingly, we made it very clear that we wanted to have good relations with him.

Q: Well, what was in it for him to have theswhy was it so important for him to have good relations with the United States?

MILLER: Having made the decision to eliminate nuclear weaponand Kuchma was a positive force in the making of that decision, because his judgment from a technical point of view was that it made no sense for Ukraine to keep its nuclear arsenal, that the expense and the strategic utility brought Ukraine no benefit, making a deal with the United States for eliminating the nuclear arsenal, in return for supporeconomic, political and what Ukrainians call moral supporwas the most important objective. He was very important, even decisive, in the Ukrainian national decision to eliminate nuclear weapons. My discussions with him about this, before he was president, when Kravchuk was still president and they were still negotiating with us, and among themselves, centered on the terms of the deal they would put forward on nuclear weapons. It was very clear that the quid pro quo for giving up nuclear weapons was sustained support, economic and political, for the foreseeable future. He understood what had to be done to get that, which was to have close contact with us.

This desire on Kuchma's part was made easy because the United States government policy was to foster close contact with him and to develop the closest possible relationship with his government. It was the policy of President Clinton and Vice President Gore, and all of the relevant Cabinet ministers, and Secretaries. They all put in the time and effort to make it work. So the basis of my constant contact with Kuchma was on two levels. The first was that he wanted to discuss, in detail, the nature of this new relationship, and secondly, he had to deal with the constant visits to Kyiv and Ukraine by high-ranking Americans, from the president on down, and his trips to the United States with his government, to Washington and the United States. So it was a time of sustained intense activity at the highest level.

I saw quite a bit of him in an official way, in his offices in Bankova, which is the name of the street near the president's office. I got to know him well and Ludmilla, his wife, and his daughter, OlenI played tennis with his daughter. I saw him in his dachas in Crimea. We saw a lot of each other. I had a good sense of what kind of life he was leading, and what his thinking was. His intellect was such that he was excellent at managing day-to-day crises. He could handle the details of the immediate politics of balancing one faction with another, and the economic issues of the moment. He also demonstrated that he had no vision for the future. I think his sense of dutand he did have a sense of dutwas one that was thrust upon him. His role was not one that he would have preferred. I think clearly he preferred the Soviet system, but he understood very clearly that the Soviet era was over, that there was no retur"no way back," as he would say with a deep sigh. "There is no way back. We have to accept our fate and go forward."

For him, it was a nostalgic, deeply nostalgic moment, whenever he discussed or approached basically anything that was high-tech. During our one official visit to the United States to meet President Clinton, we together went down to Cape Canaveral to witness a shuttle launch. The shuttle crew included a Ukrainian astronaut, so we went through the rocket facilities at Cape Canaveral, as we had earlier in Greenbelt, Maryland, at NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration). It was very evident that he knew every technical aspect. He even seemed to drink it in. He and Volodymyr Horbulin, then national security advisor, and long-time friend, his chief assistanhe was also from the rocket factory at Pavlograd, whenever we'd go by one of our big rockets they'd look it over very carefully, pat the rocket here and there and then stand back and say, "We do it differently. In fact, ours have more thrust and are much simpler" (this was true) "And of course, much cheaper and we can get more payload." Then there'd be a deep sigh. I heard him say, "Oh?I'll never be able to return to that. I'm stuck with the job of being president of this new independent country where my heart is really in building rockets." The incident revealed a very human side to Kuchma - "my occupation gone..." in the manner of Othello. That was about as deeply reflective as he could get.

Q: I'm kind of getting the atmosphere of this time, I mean, looking at it from a non-knowledgeable point of view, as just a Foreign Service officer, I always felt that the Ukrainas long as the Ukraine was independent and truly independent, this basically stopped Russia from getting too powerful or messing around or being ugly. But I was wondering how, say, the Ukrainiandid they see that getting close to us kept the Russian bear out of their backyard or did they use Russia to extract stuff from us? What was their outlook on this, and was our outlook as I described it?

MILLER: Yes, as you described it, the fear of Ukraine becoming a part of the Russian bear again was certainly part of our thinking. I think, in my own view, now, that that was an error. Certainly it was the danger from the past, it was not a realistic danger of the present. The issues of governance are very different, very different; and the idea of a primitive Slavic nation being a threat to the rest of the world, of marching across the north German plain and so on is a fearful notion of the past no longer relevant. The issues are so very different now, even though our strategic thinking is still premised on those past fears.

What are the real issues? I could see them emerging in Kuchma's thinking, in his behavior and his expressed thought when his thoughts were turned into actions. The issue really was how can a country of great accomplishment, given the Soviet framework of the recent pashow far Ukraine had come in the last century with all of the horrohow they could keep going in a way that would bring adequate prosperity and a decent life to the people. When independence fell into their laps, and there was a necessity to enter into a new political economic and social system that had very little regard for the well-being of the people? The theoretical nature of the new free market economy, theoretically laid out, was to get the most reward for investment, and that reward may or may not include the well-being of people. The idea of shaping an economy for a national social purpose is contrary to pure capitalism, which is benefit for the individual, whether it's a corporate entity, or one person. The notion of benefits for a group, the state, the city or the town was not the first requirement, was not the bottom line. Such social consequences may be a charitable deduction later, but it's not the main purpose of a free market economy.

I think this conceptual problem of who should benefit from work weighs heavily in the minds of a few thoughtful individuals. In the past, the soviet past, esteem or merit was seen by themselves and the people they served was measured by the degree to which these managers were working for the people. As it has turned out, almost none of them were working for the people. They're a pretty rotten lot, from the point of view of what they once held to be the highest ideals.

Kuchma was in the middle of this crisis of belief, and because he has always been a person of the system, not a creator of the system, it's very hard for him to lead. He could manage simply go day-to-day in the circumstances that surrounded him. He was adrift in the sea beyond this daily perspective. Kuchma was not able to chart any course except that necessary to keep the ship afloat. His surroundings, his colleagues, his friends, the people who clung to him and enveloped him, and insulated him from everyone else, they, the inside group, benefited. The circle that surrounded him made sure, that Kuchma benefited, and that what they gave Kuchma in the way of benefits trapped him. The circle of power was self-reinforcing. There were one or two exceptions, and they, in the end, were driven out of the circle. I'd say the key exception, who would constantly try to bring Kuchma back to the realities that he had to deal with, was Horbulin, and even he, his closest friend from the earliest days in Dnipropetrovs'k, as students, was driven out, because he was pointing out the depth of the corruption of the circle and Kuchma himself.

I could see the corruption taking place, and I talked about it with Kuchma. The ways in which I could talk about this very difficult subject had to do with solemn agreements, contracts, that were misused or set aside because of the greed of the inner group. I pointed out that the corruption had become a matter of public comment and deep revulsion, among the public. There was great distaste about how much the inner circle was stealing. We discussed how this corruption could be stopped. I used the metaphor during the last two years I was there with him, about drawing a line in the sand and saying to the people of his country and to the corrupt circle, "We have to stop this corruption. Whatever was stolen before that is in the past, but we'll move forward in a different way." I emphasized that Kuchma needed, Ukraine needed, to make the distinction between the struggles and illegal activities of the early transition and go on now in a clean way. "Clean" meaning, in Ukrainian terms, what was acceptable political and economic behavior. He understood the nature of the discussion. He was too weak in character to take such a bold step, and, I think Kuchma believed that he could somehow ride it out. I'm afraid that, by 1997, he was so trapped by the enormity of the corruption that he couldn't get out.

In many ways I was sorry to see this disintegration because Kuchma's inability to get out from this circle of thieves, politely expressed, accompanied his increasing drunkenness. He was almost like Yeltsin in that respect, and became increasingly more difficult. Further, our high level involvement dropped off. President Clinton became involved with his own problems so he was not able to continue his positive influence on Kuchma's behavior. Gore and the other senior cabinet members also were involved in holding the Clinton administration together. So Kuchma was left to his own fate.

As a human being, Kuchma was far from the most admirable among the Ukrainians, but he was an interesting person and he always accorded me great respect, and, of course, access. We did a lot of good things together, I would say, when he was very clear on a formal basis that both nations were intensely interested and involved, and when he understood that it was necessary, for his interests, to keep the dialogue and relationship going with the Americans. He was one of those people, who, I think, needs to have constant engagement, that is, I had to meet him constantly to keep progress on agreed goals going. What I have just described is evidence that an ambassador has great value, simply as a human presence, if he can keep the discussions going on the goals that both sides agree are important. There's no substitute for it. The difficulty my successors had with Kuchma is that that access to him was severely constrained. Why? I would say that first, it was due to his physical and moral disintegration and change of character and behavior, second, his circle of advisors succeeded in building barriers to keep him isolated, and third, it is also partially due to our change of policy. President Bush is not personally interested in the work of engagemenin fact, some in his policy group believe that engagement is somehow not a worthy tool of governance. So there's a great drawback for an ambassador if engagement at the highest levels is not an option. A good part of the agenda is negativthat is, what discussion there is, is largely dealing with mutual problems and complaints. The ambassador has to go with an array of demarches about some abuse or horror or dispute, which doesn't make for ameliorating friendships. As professionals, Kuchma and I got along quite well. It helps if you can call up the president and say, "I'd like to see you," and be able to do it.

Kuchma's biggest failing, I'd say, was that he did not prepare for his successor. I don't think he had any idea of what kind of successor would best benefit Ukraine. He was really judging who best from among the inner group should succeed him, many of whom were toadies and miscreants of one kind or another.

Q: You make it sound ?

MILLER: It's very Shakespearean.

Q: Very Shakespearean. Something I don't think we talked aboucould you talk about the influence the publithe reaction to Chernobyl, when you were therand physical, too?

MILLER: ChernobyUkraine and Chernobyl were seen as part of the same problem. They were an identity, and when I first went out, in fact, many of my friends said, "Oh, you're going to Chernobyl. You're going to be radiated."

Q: "You'll glow when you come home."

MILLER: "You'll glow, and your life will be shortened by decades." Kyiv was thought to be a place to be avoided by Foreign Service people because of the extraordinary hardships and dangers. The hardships were the lack of decent housing, commissaries, or locally available food. There was the danger of radiation from Chernobyl. There was no fuel; it was cold, and politically it was the great unknown. So the people who volunteered, so to speak, who wanted to go to Kyiv, tended to be Diaspora Americans, and those who knew the Soviet Union and knew what a beautiful city Kyiv was, and those who had a sense of adventure, who saw the Foreign Service as adventure and a chance to do something new and creative, which an assignment to Ukraine was.

So the Chernobyl effect was in the end a positive weeding out process for us. I had the best, the most courageous and innovative staff as a result. Chernobyl was certainly constantly in the minds of Ukrainians because a good portion of the Ukrainian population was irradiated by the nuclear cloud, and a very substantial proportion of the population was involved in the evacuation of all of the people from the villages from around Chernobyl, to a radius of 50 miles out from the reactor explosive site. All of the nation was involved in taking in the refuges of Chernobyl, and they had to build housing for the displaced and hospitals for the cancer victims. It was a great burden on the country. In fact, one of the largest continuing budget items was Chernobyl, payments to the victims and costs for hospitals and remedial requirements which will stretch out for several generations.

Chernobyl was very much a part of the mindset when I arrived in 1993. The fear of eating contaminated food was such that we were all given dosimeters, Geiger counters, to test our food that was bought in the markets and to wave it at your furniture and the air, you were breathing the ambient radioactive circumstances. These ever present dangers became a sort of morbid joke and after a while, once you were there, the whole sense of danger dissipated. But for Ukrainians, Chernobyl is a constant reminder of technology gone awry. Chernobyl is one of the major reasons, I believe, that the Ukrainians felt deeply about the necessity to eliminate nuclear weapons. It was a major factor in their mentality. For them, help from others in dealing with this problem was a test of friendship and this was a very important diplomatic lesson for me. They asked for help, we said we would give the requested help. This request for help was made to the West, generally, and the United States in particular. We had several pledge conferences to raise the funds necessary. I can remember one held at the Waldorf in New York in 1995, it was a spin-off from an official visit of Ukrainians to Washington. Vice President Al Gore was chairman of this meeting, and the EU nations and Japan and a number of others and the United States, of course, pledged money for repair of the Chernobyl sarcophagus, the tomb that had been put around the blown-up reactor. We pledged ourselves to meet the need. Thus far, we haven't yet met our pledge. This failure to honor such a solemn commitment has damaged the Ukrainian view of the integrity of our work.

The Ukrainians' sense of abandonment and fear of being cut adrift was reinforced by this failure. It is a reminder to me, as a diplomat and sometime policymaker, that when you make these kinds of commitments you've got live up to them. We said we would do the job. To Gore's credit, to the Clinton administration's credit, they worked mightily to try and meet that, but they didn't fully. It underlines the necessity of transition groups to convey the understanding necessary to make clear obligations that a new administration has to honor past commitments. You can't destroy treaties because you find them inconvenient. You pick up the burdens that you inherit, as odious or difficult as they may be. Chernobyl is one of those things that has not been satisfactorily met in the minds of the Ukrainians. So I would say any ambassador that goes out to Kyiv, any Assistant Secretary for European affairs, any national security council advisor should be made fully aware of the Chernobyl burden that stems from 1986. Every Ukrainian has a memory of it, every Ukrainian has had a relative somehow affected, either directly by radiation or death, so it's a constant in their mentality. I understood that it was very important for me to go to Chernobyl, and I went frequently. So I shared their understanding of these things and they had, of course, ceremonial days the way the Japanese do at Hiroshima about Chernobyl. It is very important for an ambassador and embassy staff to participate in solemn ceremonies like commemoration of Chernobyl, the famine, or the slaughter of Babyn Yar or the sacrifice in the war against the Nazis.

Those are not things that are taught in area studies generally.

Q: You left there when?

MILLER: Ninety-eight.

Q: What have you been doing since?

MILLER: I haven't stopped my interest in Ukraine, largely because of what I've been doing at the Woodrow Wilson International Center, first as a policy fellow and now as a senior fellow. When I went to the Wilson Center it was for a year, to work on a book on the Ukraine, which I'm still working on. I hope to finish this year. The Wilson Center is a base for me to go back to Ukraine and to continue to work with my friends and groups that I felt were worthy. I have institutional connections which are natural, I suppose. Suzanne and I had a great interest in the opera house, the ballet, and music, and we've continued that by going to a fair number of performances to see our friends who are still dancing, singing, conducting, playing. We've supported them in various ways by helping them come here. In addition to our continuing interest in the opera house, I'm on the board of the Kyiv Mohyla university foundation. Kyiv Mohyla is a modern liberal arts university, post-Soviet, even though its origins were in the 17th century. Kyiv Mohyla brings me in direct contact with the teaching of the youth and the Ukrainian youth themselves. I'm also on the board of an archaeological museum dig at Chersonesus in Crimea, an archeological site, Greek-Byzantine-Roman-Russian and prehistoric. It's a great archeological site in a beautiful part of the world. There's a lot that brings me back to the Ukraine.

The person who is now running for president, and I hope will be president, Viktor Yuschenko, is a close friend from my earliest days in Ukraine. So all the democratic groups were people that I knew very well and liked and I do what I can to help them.

Q: You say the democratic groups, I mean, these are basically groups that are trying to break away from this court ?

MILLER: From the party of power, from the Soviet times. Yes. They are people that we would describe as proponents of a rule of law, a democratic system in which the majority rules, but there is protection of the minorities, and equitable justice, something close to Western democracy.

Q: I was talking to somebody who was just therit was Keith Smith or somebodbut he was saying the Russians are reeling the Ukrainians back in. I don't know what he means by this, but ?

MILLER: He means, probably, the economic cooption that many of the oligarchs are engaged in combination with or under the direction of oligarchs in Moscow, in Russia. The big banks in Moscow have been funding many of the acquisitions of state assets of Ukraine. This is part of the near abroad policy of Russia to do that. That's probably what Keith was referring to. Most of the economy is not bad, most of the economy is the villages, farms, markets, bakeries, restaurants and small shops of daily life, the work of daily life, which is becoming more and more a matter of individual initiative. The great distinction between oligarchy, which is basically monopolistic acquisition of money and assets as opposed to individual effort, is an important one. That's the heart of the struggle for the direction of economic policy.

Q: You've also been involved in Iranian affairs, too, haven't you?

MILLER: Yes, Iranian affairs are taking more and more of my time. Iran was my first Foreign Service post. It was an interest after that five-year period of serving in Iran where I was deeply involved in Iran intellectually and politicallan involvement that has not ceased, but has only deepened. Iran continues to be an avocation and interest. I was going as ambassador to Iran in 1979, when the hostages were taken. I have told that story earlier. Right after leaving Ukraine I was asked to go visit Iran by my Iranian diplomatic colleague in Kyiv, Behzad Mazrui, the Iranian ambassador there, who was an Isfahani. Despite official hostility, we became good friends. As it turned out he later returned to Iran and became one of the ministers in the Khatami cabinet. He was one of those who paved the road for a peaceful way of looking at the new Iran after the revolution and war.

I've been able to return to Iran for several long trips. I'm going in the middle of April for two or three weeks and I may go again in May. I've been going on the theory that Iran will, once again, be a close friend of the United States, that it will get through this very difficult period of clerical rule. I am of the opinion that Iran is well on the road to a form of democratic governance, based on the will of the population that is well-educated and has already been through over 100 years of political revolution, and that has experienced the end of monarchy after 2,500 years of monarchy, and the end of totalitarian military rule. Unfortunately, Iran now is under a form of clerical rule which is simply a new form of rule by families, the 1,000 Families. When I went to Iran first it was really a form of oligarchy. There were 1,000 Families that ran the country under the Shah. They owned all the villages and factories and all of the instruments of economy and had tremendous influence in the government as a result.

The shah was on top of all of this, he was the head of the families.

Q: This is tape 12, side one, with Bill Miller. Yes.

MILLER: The shah was head of the family system of rule. The 1000 families were really extensions of the court of the king, whether they were Qajar or the earlier Safavids. The Pahlavis, have been replaced by clerical families, the "turbans", as they're somewhat disrespectfully called. But the system of influence and governance is the same. The significant change and it is a new change, and this is what I saw when I went back after the period of revolution and war, was that most Iranians now felt that they were now the owners of the country, because they had overthrown the monarchy and influence of the West, the Western powers. They had fought a 10-year war with the Iraqis, and had maintained their territorial integrity. It was, finally, their country.

There is now almost 100 percent literacy for the young generations. The revolutionaries and their children know what they want. They have seen the outside world. Many of the revolutionary leaders were educated in the United States and Western Europe. The revolutionaries believe in electoral politics, that is, they want leaders who are chosen by democratic election. They clearly have respect for rules, yet they chafe under the religious extreme rules. A rule of law, a modern equilibrium of law, is still under formulative process that has been underway for over a century.

So Iran is still a very interesting place for me. I continue to have great fascination with the art of the country from the earliest times, whether it's prehistoric or in the Achaemenid period or Parthians or Sassanids or the present period. I'm very interested in the archeology, having gone to all of the major sites and dug in many of them. I have many friends there, I like the food and music and the way of life. The climate is superb. Everything's up over a mile high or more. It's a glorious climate, although the pollution of meagcities like Tehran is tragic.

So I have maintained an interest in Iran since I first served there as a junior officer. I'm involved now in many of the key Iran issues in track two diplomacy, since we don't have any normal diplomacy and are refusing the offers to have it from the Iranians. Track II consists of discussion with Iranian officials and prominent Iranian citizens about what rapprochement would mean and require. I've been involved in Track II discussions as a member of meetings sponsored by the United Nations Association in Sweden, New York and Vienna, to Search for Common Ground, in Sweden, Austria and in Iran and here. The agendas are understood and what the solutions might be; rapprochement could move very quickly.

I had a prospect on the issue of Iran's intention of pursuing the construction of a nuclear fuel cycle within the limits of the NPT. There is profound disagreement between Iran and the United States and the EU on Iran's interpretation of its rights under the NPT. The United States and Iran do not have direct negotiations. As it happens, the key negotiators for the Iranians are from the last generation of American-trained physicists and diplomats, that is, they received graduate training here, and in some cases as undergraduates as well. These diplomats are people that we can talk to and I do talk to them very easily and directly. For example, the ambassador to the UN from Iran in New York, Javad Zarif, has lived for over half his life in America. His high school, college and graduate school education was in the United States. He is a good friend. Amir Mahallati, who is the son of an ayatollah, is now succeeding his father as a chief cleric in Shiraz. He was a key negotiator at the UN bringing the Iran-Iraq War to an end. The ambassador in Paris, the ambassadors in Vienna and Bern, several people now in Tehran that are working together on the issues of concluding an agreement on nonproliferation. I have no right or authority to negotiate, and I'm not negotiating. But we are discussing the issues, I know what the details and framework of sound agreement would be, and I've conveyed that to our government. What I've been doing in an informal way is informing each side of each other's views and laying out as fully as possible, conceivable outcomes.

I'm able to do that because I know the players and I know the issues. I know the arms control problems, because I've been working on those matters for 40 years, and I've been fully educated in the science and technology by our best scientists when I was working on the Hill in the 1960s and 1970s on the same kinds of questions. I've been to SALT. I know the ABM issue backwards and forwards. I was one of the key staff persons on the ABM Treaty and the SALT Treaty.

Perhaps it is an accident that what I have done in the past is pertinent and useful now. But I think it is more than serendipity that I know Iran, having kept at it because of personal interest over the years. I think Foreign Service people tend to do that, once they get deeply involved, they never let go. It's perhaps a natural result, but it also is an argument for examining carefully the nature of our Foreign Service training. It seems to me that one should train diplomats to have as deep and extensive an experience as possible. The nature of our foreign affairs, of course, has changed in my lifetime. It certainly changed in George Kennan's lifetime. I'm going to his 100th anniversary dinner tonight at the Wilson Center.

The issues have changed, the nature of the instruments used by our president and our government, broadly construed, Congress's role has changed as well. Every embassy now has 20 or 30 entities under its general direction bumbling away, causing mischief or making a contribution, depending on the quality of direction. The more experience an ambassador has of the fullness of our overseas life, the more effective he's going to be. It is not enough to go to A-100, it is not enough just to pass the exams.

The examination threshold is very important. It's a democratizing instrument, number one. Number two, it's an intellectual threshold which is very important, and it might be a psychological screening of talent. Do you have enough personal qualities to stand up to the stresses and difficulties? Entrance into the Foreign Service at the bottom is very important, but it's only the beginning, and serving at an embassy is only the beginning. I think it's desirable to have assignments on the Hill, maybe also at other agencies, perhaps in the academic world or in business to have some real sense of the fullness of American life?

Any notion that serving as an FSO from the bottom faithfully, dutifully, will certainly result in becoming ambassador as a matter of course, is a false hope. The career path is arbitrary and serendipitous, orderly rise in rank and reward is simply not there. The largest embassies, the most comfortable ones, certainly those with residences like big hotels, Paris, London and Madrid, are given as political rewards for contributions to the winning presidential party. That's a corruption of our system, but at its best, the president rewards people who are experienced and competent and will do a good job, and not just because they're close friends of the president.

What's left to the career can be the dregs, assignments to the most difficult and unrewarding and unimportant places. So a Foreign Service career, I think, has to be more comprehensive, and the leadership of our Foreign Service establishment should, and in many cases do take this into account. My close friend, Tom Pickering, who is the best example of success within the career, still benefited by the nature of the draw. In addition to his great talent, his arms control assignments and UN connection is what propelled him. If he hadn't done that, he'd be long since retired and doing something else.

So I would say Foreign Service leadership, of which we have very little, should take account of this kind of phenomena, and it's my hope that people like Tom, and I think he already has to some extent, through his own example, make the point about the desirability of this continuing professional education. I feel very strongly about it, not only because I'm an example of it, a beneficiary. I was able to do what I wanted, and believes I was able to do, to put it that way. I followed my convictions and my intellectual belief, and I was able to do what I thought was most important and useful. I was able to do that even as a junior officer in Iran, where I came to the conclusion the shah was rotten and that he was holding back what most of his countrymen wanted and that we were on the wrong track at that stage in our support for the Shah and our refusal to push for democratic reforms.

My ambassador, Julius Holmes, protected me, even when the shah protested my activities, by saying, "Easy on the young officer, he will learn and get over it. You know him and like him." The Shah accepted Holmes' advice. I was able to leave the Foreign Service as a matter of conscience, on Vietnam, knowing that the reason I was leaving, for policy differences on Vietnam, I could express myself usefully by working on the Hill. It was a God-given opportunity, because I learned not only how my government works, but in a much fuller sense, I was working at the forefront of the major foreign policy issues. In those years, that's where the heat of the policy battle was, on the Hill, the issues of who has responsibility for war and peace, what our policy should be on weapons of mass destruction, in particular arms control measures, on assistance, on the end of the Cold War. I would say that the work I was doing on the Hill was an absolutely invaluable interplay with traditional diplomacy. It also underlined for me the reality, that so much of what we call foreign affairs is done that way. Policy is not solely the province of the State Department. It's on the Hill, it's in think tanks, it's in universities, in the NGOs, and to some extent in business.

After leaving the Hill, where I had worked on many major issues, certainly on the issues of war and peace, intelligence, arms control, I went to Fletcher as a teacher, as an administrator, as a dean. I was able to express the ideas I had learned with incoming groups of Foreign Service officers, not just of our country, but of other countries. Then, at the end of the of the Soviet Union, working with Gorbachev's perestroika group, I was able to be in this remarkable period of intellectual engagement, in the formation of a new world, so to speak, as a head of a foundation in Moscow, in the heart of the Kremlin, with many of our most distinguished leaders, and many of theirs. That education that came from that experience perhaps was the most profound. People like Sakharov on the one hand and our great nuclear physicists on the other, Panofsky, Drell, Garwin, Bethe, Kistiakowsky, Doty, Ruina, McNamara, Jerry Wiesneit was an extraordinary group.

That was all part of my education, so when I went back to the Foreign Service as an ambassador, I was ready, really prepared to work. I knew, certainly, how to run organizations, because I had led several different kinds of organizations, and had, of course, experienced embassy life earlier on and all through the career. I had been involved in policymaking at the highest levelWhite House, on the Hill, as well as in the departments and other governments, and worked on all the major issues. But what enabled all that to happen was the Foreign Service career itself, beginning with my A-100 group and the notion of the world of foreign affairs that we shared and grew up with.

I look back on the nature of training for a foreign service career, and I would say that insofar as the Foreign Service encourages growth, particularly intellectual growth and experience, it is a wonderful career; insofar as it's porous, that is, you can go in and out, I think it's healththe best of the American system. It's the envy of the world in many ways, the whole idea of being able to leave and come back into the foreign service, even though it certainly is the opposite of a formal career system that's been established. However, that, in my view is the real system. The career system as usually described in entrance brochures is not the reality. It's only a partial reality.

Q: Well, it's interested how many Foreign Service officers crop up in things like Jerry Bremer in Iraq, but just by their experiences and intellectual ability do keep popping up in various places.

MILLER: Oh, sure. But if you make an analysis of the career assignments, obviously some assignments are much better than others. If you go to SS, the Staff of the Secretary of State, as a junior officer, that is a platform for advancement in the diplomatic-political world, if that's what you're interested in. You have a better chance.

Q: The secretariat, yes.

MILLER: You have a better chance than if you do not.

Q: Oh, absolutely, also to be an aide, of a principal.

MILLER: Absolutely. So the official rhetoric about the career doesn't admit to those things openly, although that's the reality.

Q: Well, I hope what we've done here, it may take the government decades, but the people, they can analyze careers from what we've accumulated and people's experiences, and maybe translate this into passing knowledge onto the next generation of American diplomats.

MILLER: Well, I think so. I think what you're doing is very important, because it encourages reflection on just the questions we spoke of in the last few minutes. But I can see a great value coming out of the more focused views of people who could presently improve the career system, like my friend Tom Pickering. I put a lot of weight on him because he has done the most in the way of his formal career, and he still has a role to play, I think, in suggesting ways things could be done.

I'll give you one example. When he was undersecretary, he sent out an ukase that said, "When you've received a demarche from Washington, you can change it as you think best to get the message across." He knew exactly what he was doing, because after a demarche would come out written by the desk officer and would be cleared up the line, and would be cast in terms of the most offensive kind of...

Q: Absolutely. There's a little bit of posturinnot a little bit, a hell of a lot of posturing on the part of the system, the bureaucrats in Washington want to show they're tough. It goes out to the field, it's not going to fly, or it's going to be offensive. It's not going to work.

MILLER: So Tom sent this message, this ukase, which said, basically, "I know what it's like to be ambassador, so you reformulate it in a way that makes the message deliverable, and if you don't think you should send it, tell us. We'll try again." That's very practical, that's very useful. It's the kind of knowledge and professional craft that has to be used to make our system work well. I would like to end by making a few more points about the value of a career that extends over several decades. I am involved now on a very delicate, extremely important project for an NGO, Search For Common Ground, which is in essence, a dialogue between US physicists and their Iranian counterparts on the subject of the peaceful issues of nuclear technology and the limits of the NPT.

This project is useful because there are, at present, no official relations between the United States and Iran. This is the perfect fit of Track II NGOs whose purpose is to keep dialogue going to present different approaches when these are all deadlocks or stalemates and to act as informed go between when the parties refuse or are unable to talk.

In the present impasse between Iran and the United States a number of foreign diplomats have been very helpful such as Timotheus (Tim) Guldimann, who was Swiss ambassador to Tehran and Jan Eliason the Swedish President of the United Nations Geneva Assembly, who was ambassador to the United States until this summer. Jan had been involved with Iran when he was serving as a member of the Swedish delegation to the United Nations during the period of the Iran-Iraq War and had gone to Tehran to help negotiate an end to the conflict. He has maintained an interest in Iran since that time. Jan and I have seen each other since he served in Washington as a junior officer in the Swedish Embassy and I was a staff aide on the Hill during the Vietnam issues of the 1960s. We are working together on Iran now.

Tim Guldimann is my European counterpart on the Search for Common Ground Iran project. He has been working with the EU diplomats he has knows over the years and at the IAEA to develop dialogue on the technical issues of IAEA enforcement of NPT limits on the pursuit of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Tim and I share experiences in Iran, Nagorno-Karabakh and in Russia. We have become good friends through our common interests. We are able to draw on our networks of colleagues and friends developed over the years in advancing this very difficult project on Iran's nuclear problems.

Tom Pickering is a part of this effort as is Bill Luers and many others. A lifetime in various battles with first rate professionals makes it possible to take on even the most intractable issues like the present impasse with Iran over its nuclear program.

Q: Well, Bill, I want to thank you very much. Thank you very much. This has been fascinating.

MILLER: Thank you, I've enjoyed it, and it's not the least meeting you, getting to know you through this.

Q: You've had a fascinating career.

End of interview