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

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Q: Let me start with the usual questions that we raise at the beginning of every interview. Please tell us something about your background and education emphasizing those factors that led to join the Foreign Service.

SCHAFFER: I grew up in New York City - Manhattan. My mother was Swedish. She was determined to pass on something of her Swedish heritage to all of her children. For example, when we were very young, she spoke Swedish to all of us. We corresponded regularly with our Swedish relatives; I visited there for the first time when I was nine years old.

When I was fourteen, my mother sent me to school in France. It was not part of a set program, but rather something my mother and a friend of hers cooked up with the headmistress of our New York school, who then arranged for our French school program at a convent school run by the same order of nuns that was responsible for the management of the New York school. I went to together with a classmate. We spent the first two months in France, living with a French family. Then I entered the convent school - the Sacred Heart school in Grenoble.

After that year, I returned to New York having mastered French. I did return for more education there when I was a junior in college. Then I spent a year in Paris - not a set program, but one that I had worked out with Bryn Mawr College, where I was studying and "The Institute d'Etudes Politiques" known as Sciences-Po. That Institute had a program for foreign students. It was during this experience than I began to think seriously about a career in the Foreign Service. My closest French friend also was leaning toward a diplomatic career.

I had a great time living in Paris. I loved it. I lived like a French student. It was an entirely different experience from visiting Sweden. In Sweden, I was visiting family. Since I could speak Swedish, I had no trouble fitting in. In each of my experiences in Europe, I think that I blended into the local scene rather than the "Ugly American" or a representative of my country. I was conspicuous in the sense that, particularly during my year in the French high school, I was different from my classmates. I doubt that they had ever seen an American before. I remember one girl who was a rabid Elvis Presley fan. She was very unhappy that I was not also a fan. It came as a big surprise because she could not imagine a American not being an Elvis fan. She would grab at my pencil and pen cases during class which showed their American origins. She would then exclaim: "Elvis' country!!" I took a certain amount of teasing; the French culture tends to be much rougher on people than the American one. There is no taboo against embarrassing a person in front of other people. In my case, what separated me from my school mates was my nationality, so that was the subject of some teasing. I ended up doing quite well in school; that only attracted more teasing. However, I still have good friends from those days.

I returned to Bryn Mawr to finish my senior year. I majored in modern European history and minored in French. During that time, I took the Foreign Service exam. As I said, my motivations were a) my mother's international orientation and b) my own rewarding experiences living abroad. I am embarrassed to say that I did not have the vaguest notion about what a Foreign Service Officer did for a living. I had met Culver Gleysteen when he was the Political Counselor in Paris. His brother lived near my grandfather's house where we used to spend summers. The Gleysteen boys were sailing buddies of my brothers and sister. Culver would occasionally take me to lunch on Sundays and it is there that I learned a little about what he did. But that was my sole contact with the Foreign Service. I did, I think, have a general idea what an embassy does and what foreign policy was, but I certainly had no concept what officers - senior ones particularly - did in the policy development and implementation processes. Since the American Foreign Service is so highly compartmentalized- "the cone system" - it made knowledge about it even harder to come by.

In December 1965, I took the written exam and fortunately passed it. That was a full day's test. My oral was in April, 1966; it took about one hour and a half. Some ground rules for the Foreign Service were explained to me - erroneously it turned out. For example, I was told that a married woman could not serve in the FS. Not true as I learned later. I did speak to one Foreign Service officer who came to Bryn Mawr on a recruiting trip. He struck me as unbearably stuffy at the time, but didn't discourage me.

It was the oral exam that brought the subject of married women and the FS to my attention. The examining panel consisted of three men, all of whom had served as ambassadors. The chairman was Outerbridge Horsey II. It was three of them and one of me, in some government building in Washington furnished with standard grey furniture. In my case, they started out by asking questions about myself; I assume they did that with every candidate. Then came questions about subjects that I could logically be expected to know something about. The last half hour was just a free-for-all. During the first part of the examination, the chairman commented that he assumed that I understood that if I were to get married, that would be the end of my career in the FS. By this time, I had an answer to that comment. I told the panel that I understood that ground rule. I must say that I was greatly irritated by the question, not because I was surprised by it - I had anticipated some questions regarding my gender - but because each of other two examiners found it necessary to ask the same question separately - in turn - even though I had given the textbook answer.

After the examination was completed, I was asked to sit outside the examining room while the panel considered my candidacy. Then they called me back to the room and informed that I had passed the oral exam, but they did call to my attention to the catastrophic scores on American history in the written exam; they felt that I had not done much better during the orals. They hoped that I would work on his deficiency. After that session, I was taken to be fingerprinted, which was the first step in security clearance process.

By the end of October 1966, I was in the Foreign Service. The first step for the newcomers was the A-100 course at FSI - an eight week course with the last two being devoted to the consular function. It was an unremarkable course; I think others have had the same reaction. Parts of the course were useful, although much of it was devoted to socializing. In those days, there were no simulation exercises nor did anyone explain to the newcomers what the Department expected them to do in a working day. Those matters are covered in the present A-100 course - at least they were when I was the Director of FSI.

We visited other departments and had speakers from those and other departments. The visits were not always a howling success. The Commerce Department was a near disaster. We are now speaking of an era in the middle of the Vietnam war. Most of us had just come from university campuses. We were not at the left-fringe of American politics - if we had been, I doubt that we would have applied to the Foreign Service-but we also had no previous government experience. The Commerce official who addressed us was very boring; he was asked by a skeptical questioner why the U.S. should be encouraging American investment overseas when the off-shore industries would undoubtedly compete with potential American exports. The question was not really answered. Two other students asked roughly the same question. In his last answer on this subject, he misquoted Tennyson - "ours is not to reason why" - which had a very negative impact on us.

Unfortunately, our next appointment was at 8 a.m. the next morning in the Pentagon. We sat in an auditorium facing a colonel who explained to us that he was wearing a "purple" uniform because he served in a "joint" job. I think there were two people in the class who had served in the military. The rest of us thought the "purple" uniform comment absurd. Then the colonel began to explain to us why we were in Vietnam; he showed us a viewgraph which listed six reasons. By the end of that day, we were all throwing paper airplanes. The presentation was much too pat.

I had over fifty classmates - ten of whom were USIA officers. It was not a particularly close group. I was the youngest - just twenty-one. In those days, there was an age limitation; no one over 31 could take the written exam. At the other end of the scale, you had to be twenty-one or a junior in college. There were only a few over thirty; most were in the 24-26 range having worked for a couple of years or had taken postgraduate studies. We had one African-American and one Hispanic in the class. The class had about ten women. In fact, two of my colleagues were fellow Bryn Mawrtrys - one in my class and one from two years ahead of me. I have maintained regular contacts with some of my colleagues through all these years. I organized a class reunion on the 30th anniversary of our graduation. I was still in the Service at the time; there were only seven of us who had remained in the Service - and I retired six months later. As far as I can remember, none of my fellow students became ambassadors. At least one should have been, but he was done in by political opposition to our China policy. Both of us had served as deputy assistant secretaries.

In those days, an officer was not assigned to a "cone" - area of functional specialization - on entry.

As I said, the A-100 course lasted for two months. Then my first overseas assignment was Tel Aviv. I would guess that 75% of my class aspired to become political officers - including me. I should note that we were not asked for our assignment preferences nor were we aware of any vacancies. Each student had an interview with representatives of the Office of Personnel. During this meeting, we were encouraged to express our preferences. I could not be very precise because, as I said, did not know where the vacancies would be available.

The assignment policy at the time was to insure that those who had entered the Foreign Service without qualifying language grades would be assigned to posts where they might improve their language skills and thereby be graduated from language probation. I could not participate in this remedial program because I had met the requirements for French, Swedish and German - in addition to Italian and Norwegian where my skills were not as good as the first three, but met the minimum standards. I had learned German through a combination of self-study, a summer in Germany after my year in France and a course at Bryn Mawr on Goethe. At this time, I spoke tourist Italian, although I could communicate fairly well; I learned Italian from just traveling through that country with a phrase book. Of course, it helped that I spoke fluent French and had taken Latin for five years.

I had known that I had a good facility for languages. My mother encouraged the study of foreign languages, which is one of the reasons why she spoke Swedish to us. I knew that the languages that I studied had come relatively easy. Besides, I liked learning new languages.

So, with my French, Swedish and German, I was sent to Tel Aviv, which was considered an English language post. After six weeks of the A-100 course, we - spouses included - all trooped into the auditorium in the old FSI building. There we were addressed by the head of the Junior Officers' Program. He solemnly read out each of the assignments. That was always a shock, both to those who received their assignments gleefully and those who had hoped for different post.

Q: So in early 1967, you went to Tel Aviv.

SCHAFFER: That is right. I had never been in Israel before. Walworth Barbour was the ambassador. The DCM was Bill Dale, who was there for the eighteen months of my tour. He was replaced by Owen Zurhellen in the summer of 1968. At the time, the Embassy was much smaller than it is today. There were three or four officers in the Political Section; three in the Economic Section; four officers in USIS. I would guess that it was a medium sized Embassy.

I was assigned to the administrative section, as the first part of my rotational assignments. My boss was Jack Curry, the Counselor for Administration. After that I had four more assignments - five - including a few months in USIS - during a two year tour. I did not really have a good mentor in Tel Aviv. There were a couple of people who were helpful, but no one took me under his wing and tried to teach me about the Foreign Service. If your immediate boss or the DCM don't do that, then the Junior Officer is pretty much left to his or her devices. I must say that there were more senior colleagues who from time to time tried to be of assistance. But is was not a consistent, sustained effort. I did pick up something of the Foreign Service lore through conversations with my colleagues.

There was one officer who made an impact on me. That was the Counselor for Economic Affairs - Richard Breithut; he was married to a Swede. That gave me the opportunity to exercise my Swedish. I was invited to their house on a number of occasions - usually dinner. In all of my years in the FS, the Breithut dinners were the only occasions where I was subjected to a separation of the sexes after dinner. It was Mrs. Breithut's practice to take the ladies off to her bedroom where we would sit on her bed and use the bathroom. She explained to me that she was just following the practices of her last post - Karachi. So I learned that lore; I didn't like it one bit.

I was not the only junior officer in the embassy. At various times, there were five others in all, but no more than three at any one time. All except one - John Will - rotated. Gib Lanpher, John Peterson and the others did rotate. In that group, I was the only woman. There were two women consular officers.

When I returned from Tel Aviv, I was assigned to the political "cone."

As I said, administration was my first rotational assignment. I must say that the administrative staff did not know what to do with me. So I was assigned as a kind of supernumerary to the General Services Section to watch what GS was doing. That assignment could have been very boring, but the Six Day War started about four months after I reported to the GS Section. All of a sudden, all personnel were needed badly. I became involved in implementation of the Embassy's evacuation.

The second rotational assignment, which started soon after the War ended, was to the Economic Section. Although I eventually became a member of the economic "cone", at this point I had managed to escape, during my college years, without taking any economic courses. So my assignment was an interesting one. My job was essentially to take care of any loose ends. We had a bi-weekly report which I was asked to edit, as well as being a contributor. Then, for example, I did the report on minerals; for that, I visited the phosphate mines in the Negev and the copper mines in Elat. That was fun, and was made even more interesting because at the time of the visit, border hostilities broke out just south of the Dead Sea. Preparations were under way as I was driving back to Tel Aviv in my very small Fiat. I was able to monitor all of the heavy army equipment which was in the other lane, headed for the border. In fact, I think I was the only one in the Embassy who was aware of the border skirmishes. The Attachï¿½ had heard rumors that something might happen; after the fighting had begun he was told to call me, which he did - although obviously reluctantly.

When I first got to Tel Aviv, the major subject was unemployment. Israel was in somewhat of a recession. There was great concern about emigration - I think that persons leaving Israel outnumbered new immigrants. The national leadership viewed this trend with great concern particularly since they had been very active in trying to convince Jews living in the U.S. and the USSR to immigrate to Israel. After the 1967 War, I believe that the economy grew again and I don't remember the discussion of unemployment to be that high on the political agenda. The focus shifted to questions about the economic relationships between Israel and the Occupied Territories; there were few answers, if any. This was before Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza came to work in Israel. In the last few years, Israel had enjoyed a booming economy; it was not that while I was there.

Next came a few months in USIS. It was run by Jay Gildner, who was one of the most outstanding USIA officers. He was probably the most relentlessly organized boss I have ever had. He was very methodical; he took my rotation seriously, in part because he thought he could use another hand and in part because he wanted me to fully understand all facets of the USIS operation. I spent three months doing press work - the Press Attachï¿½ was gone for much of that time, putting me in charge of the press operation. One of our main tasks was to place in the Israeli papers certain policy statements emanating from high officials in Washington. We also distributed the "Wireless File" which provided material on what other papers were saying. Most of what we distributed of course was related to the Middle East.

We were, of course, in the middle of the Vietnam War; that generated much interest among the war correspondents to whom we would send materials on the U.S. positions. I must say that Vietnam was not high on the Israeli agenda; they were so preoccupied with their own problems that they didn't talk about other ones very much. I had been in Tel Aviv for perhaps a little more than a year when we had a visit from veterans of Embassy Saigon. The DCM, in what proved to be a major miscalculation, asked the two to talk to the Embassy staff to offset a rising tide of anti-Vietnam feelings - incorrect views in his mind. There was a lot of skepticism about our policy and about our explanation of the situation - e.g. body counts, strategic hamlets - among the staff. He thought that if these veterans who had just left the trenches could talk to us, a lot of the staff's sentiment could be reversed. It turned out that the last experience these diplomats had was the Tet offensive. They were very candid; they were devastating in their comments on the South Vietnamese. They agreed that the Tet offensive had caught us by surprise. Theirs was a point of view not often heard in Israel. So Bill Dale's efforts to engender greater support for our Vietnam policy was seriously undermined by the eyewitnesses comments.

I then worked in the cultural affairs section. I enjoyed that stint in USIS both because I had an opportunity to do some interesting work and because Gildner saw to it that I knew all of the activities in which he was involved. He was a trainer and I learned a lot from him. I should note that a junior officer rotating through USIS was then not the norm, but Gildner was delighted to have a junior officer and devoted some of his time to my training.

I also rotated to the Political Section. There I did mostly press reporting as well as biographical work - standard junior officer chores. But I was fortunate because my assignment lasted during the summer when at least one officer was on his or her way to the next assignment or on home leave. So I was able to expand my experience to almost all facets of political work. In general, I think this assignment was probably the most fun. Of course, it helped that by this time I had been in the Embassy for over a year which gave me a good feel for what I and everybody else was supposed to be doing. I had learned Hebrew quite well which was quite useful.

As I said, much of my time as devoted to reading and reporting on the Israel press. I thought that it was a good press - independent, feisty, representing many different points of view. The articles were pretty well written. Each publication had a single "party line", but since that was well known, you could distinguish fact from fiction. That was particularly true in the Hebrew language press; the main English language newspaper was The Jerusalem Post. It was unlikely that any Israeli newspaper would express a real radical point of view on Israel-Arab relations.

There were two people on the Israeli political scene who were different from all the others. One was Aie Nathan, who was regarded as a nut-case. He was the fellow who flew his private plane to Egypt to try to arrange a meeting between Nasser and Rabin, who at the time, was the chief of staff. The other was Shulamit Aloni, who was newspaper editor and a parliamentarian. She was viewed as a maverick.

My last assignment in Tel Aviv was to the Consular Section. I thought that I had made the appropriate arrangements which would have left me in the Political Section. I had convinced the Political Counselor - Heywood Stackhouse - to assign a small portfolio to me for my remaining four months in Tel Aviv. But one day, I was asked to see the DCM; he asked me what I wanted to do in the next four months and I told him that I would like to stay in the Political Section. He smiled and said that he had other plans. He thought that I should have some experience in the Consular Section. He was kind enough to ask whether I preferred visa work or American citizen services. I told him that I thought I might have a slight preference for the latter. He said that I had given him the right answer and then he assigned me to American citizens service section.

My assignment made it possible to get Kim Pendelton to take another assignment as part of his training program - he had not been part of the rotational program. I enjoyed those four months in the Consular section. I viewed the time spent there as being quite worthwhile. First of all, this was the first section I had worked in Tel Aviv which gave me a consistent job that was mine - and no one else's. American citizens services were my portfolio. The job had been there for ever and I was the next occupant - no make work. I had to supervise some people; I had a workload that had to be completed. Secondly, I found that consular work can be rewarding because at the end of the day, an officer can tangibly measure his or hers accomplishments - you have issued a passport, you have issued a visa, you have refused a visa, you have found a lawyer for an American in jail, you have counted the cash and on the other hand, you know what you have not done. The experience in a consular section, which is largely operational, is good experience; it requires the officer to make decisions which he or she then have to convey to people who might not be too happy to hear it.

I also learned something about supervision. That was training in a perverse kind of way. I was working for a boss - the head of the American citizens service section - who I found immensely personally very likeable, but who would occasionally lose his cool. I might note that the Consul General, Cliff English, did not like women officers even though (or because) he had two women officers on his permanent staff. He was always snippy about his female officers; his predilections were well known in the Embassy, and many advised me not to go to the Consular Section. So he was not pleased by my assignment, but my immediate boss protected me from the CG; I kept out of his way. But he was the exception in the Embassy. Otherwise, I was never discriminated against because of my gender.

Embassies in many places become protective of the country in which they serve. That is a little different from "localitis" which is usually policy oriented. I am referring here to the tendency to mirror some of the social habits and prejudices of the host country. It has been said, that people assigned to Bonn, find themselves in an Embassy that is intensely rank conscious reflecting the mores of German society. On the other hand, Israeli society is very casual; people drop by without formal invitations. It has a long tradition of women in many different occupations, including leadership positions. I found the same attitude prevalent among my colleagues, unlike that found by my embassies' colleagues who served in the Arab world - especially when women officers were still few and far between. In those embassies, I was told that the American male officers were made very nervous by this new trend of women officers.

I did much traveling, both within Israel and in neighboring countries. Before the Six Day War, everyone was interested in visiting the old city of Jerusalem which was governed by Jordan. Such a visit inevitably led to travels through the West Bank and often into Jordan as well. I toured Jerusalem on several occasions, usually by myself. To cross into the Jordanian-held side of Jerusalem in those days, you needed a piece of paper saying that you were Christian. The local clergy was pretty loose about this certification. In my case, there was no need to fudge because I am a Christian, but it was not as simple in other cases. The process was to get the certification from some clergyman, who might or might not care about the exact truth. Then you submitted the certification to the Consul General in Jerusalem, about two weeks before the start of the intended trip. Both the Israeli and Jordanian authorities had to approve; then you were issued a permit for what was called a "double crossing" which allowed you to cross the Mandelbaum Gate and return through it. I managed to see the old city twice before the War broke out - once with other people and once by myself.

The trip through the Mandelbaum Gate was something surrealistic. The check point was staffed by many Israeli policemen who recorded the traveler's information, and the same happened when you got to the other side with the Jordanian police. If you were assigned to the CG and had Jerusalem plates on your car, you could drive through the Gate; otherwise you had to walk a long stretch of a road that was walled off on both sides. When you reached the Jordanian side, you were in another world. I remember that this was one part of the world where I felt distinctly foreign. The atmosphere was very different from the one that existed in Israel. There, having acquired some language competence, I was able to communicate in Hebrew with the Israelis, even if perhaps at a fundamental level at the beginning. But I didn't speak any Arabic; so almost all I heard in Jordan was a foreign language that I didn't understand at all. Even written numbers were different.

As I said, I visited the West Bank, but never went into what is now Jordan. Once, while on leave, I visited Cyprus, Greece and Lebanon.

As I said, I had never been to Israel before I was assigned there. The first thing I noticed was its intensity. People immediately want to know how you feel about Israel - they are kind of "in your face" when they ask that question. If you seemed unsympathetic or even ambivalent, the Israelis would try to convince the visitor to become more pro-Israel. I didn't realize the depth of that feeling until I went to Greece on leave - after about eighteen months in Israel. I was never approached by a Greek to inquire - much less insist - about I felt about Greece. The difference was most striking.

I met a lot of Israelis. It was very easy to do so. They accepted me immediately without reservations. My closest friends were Sephardic Jews with ties to Asmara, Yemen and Israel. Two people in that family worked in the Embassy. One had a daughter of grade school age that bound us together because my younger brother was about her age. In the other case, it was woman about my age with whom I still correspond. In that family, there was also a brother who at time was managing a five-star hotel in Tanzania. He would return to Israel periodically for R&R. He was a kind of "high roller" - a great guy, very engaging and charming. I also became socially acquainted with an official of the Ministry of Commerce. He had been designated as the liaison officer from a trade show in which we participated when I was in the Economic Section. He had originally emigrated from Rumania. There were others as well.

The social life was quite active. The Embassy's leadership made sure that we were invited to some functions. Most of the Embassy functions did try to have an equal number of women and men, which I think was unnecessary in Israel. By the time I got to Pakistan in 1974, that pattern had long been given up, at least by Americans - perhaps as the result of the many "no shows" which one experienced there at parties; many of those "no shows" were women. So in Pakistan, the balance between men and women was not an issue. Of course, the U.S. practice in Israel was likely to be an advantage for me, because a single woman was more likely to be needed "to balance the table." Israel was an easy place for the social life because the prevailing mode of entertainment, especially among the younger crowd, was coffee and dessert. That enabled us to invite people to our residences without having to cook a whole meal, and the Israelis would do the same thing. It was all very casual; seating arrangements were never considered. So all of the challenges that bedevil younger officers in the more protocol-minded countries were irrelevant in Israel.

I became quite close to my Hebrew teacher and her family. She was employed by the Embassy. I had been doing some work with the FSI tapes before leaving the U.S. - to fill in for two weeks when they didn't know what to do with me. So they sent me to the language lab where I started to learn Hebrew. I was handed a tape and told to go to work. Then I signed up for a local class for new immigrants in Tel Aviv - although I wasn't the first diplomat to do so - because the Embassy's program was not yet ready to start a new class. I spent some time in that class. By the time the Embassy started a new course, I was well beyond Hebrew for beginners. I was able to talk the Embassy into letting me have a paper class - i.e. the press attachï¿½ and I were allegedly in that class, although I don't think that he and I were ever in the same room at the same time. By the end of my two years, my rating in Hebrew was 4/4.

The country didn't seem particularly impoverished. People may have been less prosperous than they were in the U.S. There were relatively few washing machines; there were no dishwasher. Living quarters tended to be a lot smaller than they were in the U.S. Most people lived in the cities, usually in apartments as I did. I had a two bedroom apartment leased by the Embassy.

The Ashkenazi-Sephardic tension were already manifest in the mid-1960s. You were always aware that the population was split, although at the time the Ashkenazi were the majority-by small percentage with the Sephardics catching up quickly since their growth rate was much higher. The issue would be discussed - with some embarrassment and usually only in private. In the Embassy, we had employees from both groups. I remember my Hebrew teacher telling me that the way people looked down on the Sephardics was a disgrace. She was a Sabra as was her husband - that is people born in Israel. They had an easier time relating to both groups. But there were many fissions in Israel's society based on national origins - very stereotyped. Comedians would mimic the Germans as "yekim" - very picky and very literal minded. They would also make fun of the Yemenis by exaggerating their Hebrew accents. The Sabras were supposed to be brash, the Yemenis a little stupid, etc. Almost all nationalities were put down. The press didn't pursue that line; I guess it had decided that it was in bad taste.

At this time, there was a political party called MAPAI - an acronym. This later became the nucleus for the Labor Party. This party had dominated every government that Israel ever had. The formation of the Labor Party, which required the merging of the MAPAI with some smaller groups, took place while I was in Israel. I think the consensus was that this new Party would run the government as far as the eye could see, although it might not necessarily have absolute majority in the Knesset. It was also the general view that the Labor Party would need the help of some religious parties - especially with the National Religious Party - the largest religious party, and the most center of all religious parties. Labor would play the broker role. The extra votes that Labor needed to get its programs enacted came from the National Religious Party. This situation resulted in the passage of a lot of religious legislation, which the Labor Party and the MAPAI before it, would probably have preferred not to be enacted. But that was the price of coalition and support. So I had an interesting lesson in coalition politics.

The National Unity government was in fact in power during most of my tour. It was an interesting experiment in government. It was not an entirely comfortable coalition; there were a lot of big egos, all of whom took certain positions which had to be accommodated in the passage of the legislation. For example, the party to which Dayan belonged - which eventually merged with Labor although it had a different approach to some of the issues - was from the beginning strongly opposed to the return of any of the conquered territories. Prime Minster Eshkol and then Golda Meir, who became PM two days after I left, succeeded in keeping the coalition together and in drafting statements that were mostly consistent with UN resolutions and were close to our positions. The coalition fell apart in 1970 when the government's position on withdrawal was too clear for the tastes of Begin, Dayan, Ben-Gurion etc. They walked out of the coalition. There were obviously some hard feelings between Eshkol and Meir and Dayan. The latter was a very creative politician, although he certainly was a hard liner. The general view was that of all of the Cabinet members, Dayan and Alon - the Labor Minister - who had personal experience with Arabs, saw them as people rather than abstractions or stereotypes. Dayan had the reputation of having relatively good relationships with those Arabs with whom he met. He also had a reputation of being a wild man when it came to military operations.

There were ferocious debates on some political issues - which party was better, what social policies should be enacted, what is the most effective method of encouraging immigration. Surprisingly there was very little debate on what I considered the most important issues. No one questioned the government's need to use any means it chose to defend Israel's security. No one really questioned, at least not from the left, the government's characterization of its security requirements. There were occasional challenges from the right. So the debates within Israel and within the Knesset left out entirely a discussion of one of the most fundamental policies of all governments. That has changed; in the days preceding the agreement with Egypt of 1979 and then after that agreement was reached, there appeared to be a mood change as it appeared possible to have a peace agreement in exchange for some accommodation. But during my tour, these issues were not debated; there was a consensus, even though the discussion of the issues would mostly be framed as arguments because the Israeli enjoy lively debates. But the consensus on national security was broad and deep - and very emotional.

As I mentioned I traveled as often as I could, trying to cover Israel as much as possible. I visited some Kibbutzim. At the time the Kibbutz movement was probably much stronger than it is today. But each Kibbutz was beginning to develop its own approach. For example, there were some which gave more time for the children to be with their parents and less time in the children's dorms. Some had communal eating facilities; others did not. I thought that the Kibbutz movement was an interesting experiment. I was fascinated by the social impact on children brought up in a Kibbutz - Bettelheim was just starting to write about this subject. Some of my Israeli friends had some interesting reactions to the movement.

As I recall, about 7% of the population lived on Kibbutzim and 25% of the military officer corps came from there. One plausible theory for this imbalance was that the young men were so accustomed to collective living that the military did not require them to change their life styles as much as city folks had to. They were also imbued with the national ethic, as were most Israelis. The Kibbutzim people were used to less privacy than the city dwellers. This was a period before the shelling from Lebanon fell on some Kibbutzim. Syria however did send some missiles occasionally, especially on those settlements in the shadow of the Golan Heights - which after the 1967 war were occupied by Israel. I did visit Kibbutz Dan, which was right at the corner of the Syrian-Lebanese-Israeli border. This was a settlement that took fire in recent years, but in my time it had been a safe place. After the War, I drove through a number of Kibbutzim on the Golan Heights.

Let me say a few words about 1967 War. When I went to Israel, all I had was the general knowledge that the Arabs and Israel were at odds and that the state of Israel had never been recognized by its neighbors. I had taken FSI's two week area course, which was a pretty good rudimentary introduction to the Arab-Israeli issues. That was supplemented by some reading, but in general, my knowledge of Israel and its neighbors was fairly basic. I had no thought of a war breaking out; neither did anyone else to whom I spoke.

Before any serious hostilities broke out, I remember talking to the Political Counselor at a social occasion. I asked him whether he thought that Israel had any territorial ambitions on any surrounding areas - like the West Bank and the old city of Jerusalem. He said that he didn't think so; he felt that if the Israelis ever occupied those areas it would be by force of circumstances. I remember that analysis well, because it was so correct.

The first sign of the trouble that culminated in the 1967 war was an aerial dog-fight between Syrian and Israeli planes which occurred in early April, 1967. The Israelis shot down a number of Syrian MiGs. That was a serious incident in part because it was such a departure from the normal pattern of infrequent border skirmishes. The dog-fight increased tensions thereby leading to a flurry of diplomatic activities designed to block an escalation. I was generally familiar with those diplomatic efforts by reading the general file maintained in the Embassy's communication center that was available to all American officers; in fact, we were encouraged to read it. Since I was not terribly busy, I read it assiduously. Of course, the file did not include any sensitive traffic, but since I had become friends with a few members of the Political Section; they filled me on details that were not in the reading file. So I had a pretty good sense of what was going on and what the Ambassador and the Political Section were doing in that crisis atmosphere.

The Ambassador did hold a weekly staff meeting which was attended by all American officers. It was primarily an opportunity for the section chiefs to brief the Ambassador; he rarely told us what he was up to. So the utility of the weekly meeting was limited, even though all attendees could talk if they wished - very few ever did. It was a very brief show-and-tell.

There followed a number of further incidents. I still remember a couple of fiery speeches by President Nasser of Egypt. He said that he was asking the UN observers, who had been monitoring the Israel-Egypt borders and in Gaza, to leave. He also said that he was closing the Straits of Tiran - the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba and therefore the Israeli port of Elat. The Israelis had for many years stated that the closing of the Strait would be a causus belli. So, more and more analysts came to the conclusion that war was very likely.

The UN observers did depart. The Straits were closed. The Israelis started a general mobilization. That became obvious to us because many of our Israeli employees were called up for army service. In early June, 1967, a government of national unity was formed with Moshe Dayan - the leader of the opposition - joining the government. This new government was a clear signal that war was possible - if not imminent. I remember going to visit some Israeli friends and helping them put masking tape on their windows, to prevent them from shattering in case of air raids.

I believe that dependents were beginning to be evacuated at about this time. It was first a voluntary evacuation even though the dogma in those days was that there was no such thing as a "voluntary" evacuation. But throughout the Middle East, there were "voluntary" evacuations. The Department authorized any family that wished to leave for a safe area. A lot of families took advantage of the authorization; I spent a lot of time at the airport putting the families on planes. In fact, I was sometimes at the TWA counter doing flight documentation - it was a much more casual era of airport security.

The national unity government was formed on June 2 - three days before the war broke out. The second of June was a Friday. Over that week-end we were blessed by a visit by James Tate, Mayor of Philadelphia. We knew he was coming, but he apparently had not been reading the tea leaves very well. In any case, I was assigned to help the control officer - Mark Lissfelt - in the care and feeding of the Mayor. Before landing in Israel, Tate had requested that photographs be taken of him and the Prime Minister and of him and the Mayor of Tel Aviv. Of course, the PM was in cabinet meetings for much of the day and night; he had much more important matters to worry about than the visit of an American Mayor. The Mayor of Tel Aviv was in the hospital at the time with a very serious heart condition - he was dying. So Tate didn't get his photo opportunities; on Monday, he came to the Embassy to seek assistance for some more impossible requests. He then heard the air raid sirens that signaled the start of the Six Day War. I had also heard the sirens earlier. I knew that the Israelis had been testing the siren system for sometime; I thought that this was just more testing. I went out to my balcony, after finishing my breakfast. Although the traffic on the street was quite light, I didn't see any other signs of an impending air raid. I noticed that a military jeep, driven by a person in uniform, stopped across the street from my apartment. Out of it jumped two kids who then quickly headed for their school. I interpreted that as a positive sign. So I drove to the Embassy just in time to hear the sirens starting again. Mayor Tate was wondering around the Embassy, obviously displeased and unhappy with our inability to get him his photo ops. I was told that it was my job to get him down to the Embassy basement because that was what we were supposed to do when the sirens went off. Tate was most unhappy about that development.

Later, Tate asked his control officer to see whether the U.S. Air Force might fly a plane to Israel to rescue him. Of course, the Air Force had better things to do. Tate then retreated to his hotel; apparently, he found that basement more inviting than ours. In a crisis of this sort, the Economic Section does not have a lot to do. So the Economic Counselor - a big, dignified officer - had been assigned as the super control officer to take care of Tate. He spent a lot of time trying to cool him off.

When actual shooting began, I was probably running on adrenaline; I was excited and curious - much more than scared. As it happened, we had one more evacuation scheduled for the afternoon. There weren't many dependants left, but the airlines had stopped their flights to Lod International airport. (None of the staff was ever given an opportunity to leave; that would have been contrary to tradition.) An American Air Force plane was at an airport facility undergoing maintenance. The U.S. Air Force was eager to get the plane out of the war zone. So it made seats available to civilians if they could get to the airport by six p.m. There were twelve dependents left. As it happened, the ones that wanted to go were enough to fill the seats allotted to us by the Air Force., leaving one empty seat. In the meantime, we had received a cable from our UN Mission informing us that Arthur Goldberg's niece - he was then our Ambassador to the UN - was in Israel. He asked us to check to see how she was doing. We managed to find her and put her in the last seat available. The plane left without any problems that night.

Of course evacuations have changed considerably in the last fifteen years. At that time, we made no effort to include private American citizens. The evacuation was strictly for U.S. government employees and their dependents. In fact, the evacuation plan, which I helped revise just before war broke out, stipulated that official Americans would come first followed by AID contractors and then everyone else. Today, we would not be allowed to operate in that manner - all American citizens must be treated the same. We did issue a record number of passports to Americans living in Israel - people who had let their passports expire. We did take the names of people who wanted to leave on the next available flights so that we could notify them when commercial flights began again. Those flights did in fact start two or three days later, despite the war. But by this time, a large number of the Americans had changed their minds; it looked like that Israel would win the war handily and therefore they were no longer interested in leaving.

I was certainly caught up in the excitement that some wars generate. I was frightened only once and that was when I was at the airport watching the Air Force plane taking off. I didn't think that being at a military airport was exactly the safest place to be.

We returned to the Embassy, not knowing that the Egyptian Air Force had been essentially eliminated from combat. I spent the night in the Embassy, sleeping on a mattress along with many other staff members. This was in part for security reasons and in part because of the workload. Most of us had not blacked out the lights on our cars and therefore could not go home anyway. The distances were too great for walking. So, many of us slept on mattresses on the floor of the Embassy.

The Israelis were filled with great anxiety about the War. I was first struck by the starkness of the response. For example, when one walked the streets of Tel Aviv, there were no young men; only children and older people. There was practically no vehicular traffic because cars had been requisitioned. Eventually, a few did reappear, mud caked because they had been used in the desert and therefore had been camouflaged. I discussed the War with many of my Israeli friends. As I mentioned earlier the family I knew best was Sephardic. They were very anxious and bitter about the Arabs, who they thought didn't care how many people they would kill. For that family, Israel was the only place to be. So I think that the sense of being beleaguered was the most memorable one.

At the end of the War, there was an incredible euphoria. People drove through the street with tops down, honking, waiving, singing, shouting. I remember well the annual Festival of Song which was held in Tel Aviv. That year, one of the songs that was entered was called "Jerusalem the Golden." which had just been written. It was performed by Shuli Nathan, a singer with a gorgeous voice. It didn't win the competition, but came in a close second. But it was the song that everyone remembered from the festival.

After the Israelis had taken the old city of Jerusalem, which happened on Tuesday or Wednesday (June 6 or 7), the song writer wrote an additional stanza about the Israelis' return. It became even more popular. Young men, who were being discharged from the army were singing it - actually shouting it. The song had captured the imagination and inner-most feelings of the Israeli people. The opportunity to return freely to the old city with all of its holy places resonated deeply; it was a huge emotional experience. Besides the euphoria of victory, which highlighted Israel's strength and fortitude in the face of considerably larger enemy forces, there was a sense that now Israel could show the world how humanely it would deal with this new situation. In the first few days, there was considerable skepticism that the map of the area had in fact been changed. Many thought that once a peace agreement was signed, much if not all of the conquered territory would be returned to the powers which controlled it before the War. By the end of the summer, this skepticism had disappeared as it became obvious that the new boundaries would be maintained, at least for the foreseeable future.

I had another interesting experience during the War. There were about 1300 American citizens living on the West Bank. The week after the end of hostilities, I was asked to go to Jerusalem to help the officers of the Consulate General respond to families in the U.S. who were anxious to know how their relatives were. I was supposed to man the office while the regular staff went out into the field to find these Americans. It was an exciting time because it was the beginning of Israel's occupation of Jerusalem. Our Consulate people knew a lot of Arabs who had lived in old Jerusalem; they were seriously distressed by the new turn of events. They had watched a major exodus of Arabs from old Jerusalem as the Israelis moved in; most of them moved to the east bank of the Jordan River.

The activities of the CG staff was very much in the old Foreign Service tradition. They looked up and down the West Bank, looking for any piece of information which would allow them to find these American citizens. The staff did know a lot of them; in other cases, they knew in what town they had been living. So they went from town to town looking for these Americans. We worked long hours during and after the War.

In Jerusalem, we were living dormitory style. The staff was ordered to leave their housing and congregate in the American School for Oriental Research, which was close to the office. This was done partly for security reasons and partly to minimize the problems of travel in the city - there were check points and the documentation required to move around by car changed daily. So we stayed in the neighborhood. A Consulate General officer's wife organized the kitchen that fed us most meals. In fact, this practical need created an atmosphere of camaraderie. We sometimes made our facilities available to American journalists who were coming through.

As I am sure has been documented in other oral histories, the relationships between the Embassy and the Jerusalem Consulate General were tender - as they always had been and remained so for many years. The CG in Jerusalem was an independent post; it did not and does not report to our Ambassador in Tel Aviv. Although the tensions were noticeable, it did not stop the CG from asking for help from the Embassy.

I stayed in Jerusalem for two weeks. I had acquired some knowledge of consular work from my TDY in Jerusalem. It was rather basic; I didn't issue any passports or visas. I did a lot of registrations. Much of my time in the CG was devoted to answering the phones and taking messages.

The War had some positive impact on my personal relationships, particularly with those people whose house I visited to help put tapes on the windows. That was a kind of bonding experience. As for the reaction to the U.S. in the streets, that was harder to judge. In the middle of the War, the Israelis fired on and sank one of our Liberty ships. After the War, the French, who had been Israel's most reliable arms supplier, turned against it. So we became the putative major supplier, which became a subject for extensive discussion for the U.S.-Israel relationship.

On the way back to Tel Aviv , I was asked to give a ride in my car to a young - eighteen old-Arab-American women with two small children. Her husband was in the U.S.; he sent tickets for the family and I put them on the plane. She was terrified. She had a special pass which got her from the former Arab lands to the Tel Aviv airport. This was the first time she had been in Israel and she didn't know what to make of that.

I might just comment briefly on the tensions existing in Israeli society. The split between various religious communities was already apparent in the mid-1960s. There were some members of the religious right that would not accept the State of Israel. There was an ultra-orthodox neighborhood - Mea Shearim - right next to the Mandelbaum Gate. That became a problem for those who wanted to cross the Gate on Saturdays. These religious ultra-conservatives would stone cars driving through their neighborhood on the Sabbath, forcing people to take circuitous routes. This brought home to me the difficulties of maintaining a close-knit society, that included both ultra-orthodox and very liberal people. I also remember that there was a rabbi in Brooklyn who had gotten Congressional approval mandating certain grants to some of Israel's ultra orthodox schools in Jerusalem. At one point during my tour, I was asked to escort a Member of Congress, Silvio Conte (Democrat, Massachusetts), to Jerusalem; the Brooklyn rabbi was there as well. We visited the school supported by the American tax-payers. Before leaving for Jerusalem, the Ambassador called me into his office to tell me that he didn't want the Congressman or the rabbi to make any new commitments because the Israeli government objected strenuously to these schools. I was supposed to make sure that the delegation did not say more than normal pleasantries. I was half successful; I kept the Congressman away from some of the schools.

We had lots of CODELs. I was the control officer for one and a half visits. My first "client" was Joshua Eilberg from Philadelphia along with his wife. I arranged a few meetings for them and took them sightseeing to some of the standard tourist spots. That visit went quite smoothly. I learned from Eilberg that Mayor Tate was airing his experiences in Israel and was becoming a folk hero. That took me by surprise because I didn't remember much heroism in Mayor Tate.

I also met Senator Javits (Republican, New York) who was my senator. But someone with the prestige that Javits had was essentially escorted by the Ambassador.

CODELs are and have been in recent years a major work-load for our Embassy in Israel. This was not the case when I was there. We had visits, but not as frequently and as large as today. The big challenge for the Embassy was trying to keep track of the Members of Congress who had come to Israel at the invitation of the Government of Israel. Sometimes, these people would not even inform the Embassy that they were coming. In general, my experiences with CODELs in Israel were positive. I also felt that it was an opportunity to observe American politics as it was played on foreign soil.

I regret that I didn't get to know any Israeli Arabs terribly well. I had one young woman who worked for me in the Consular Section. She spoke about the War in very guarded terms - she was pretty careful.

After two years, I was fascinated by Israel. I had rather conflicting feelings. I had a lot of affection for many of the Israelis that I met as well as the country. However, I also believed that the post-War policies were leading Israel down a path which would prevent any peace from coming to fruition. That was a tragic policy choice. There was no doubt in my mind that Israel would survive as an independent nation, but at some costs. I think that view was shared by others in the Embassy.

Before ending the discussion of this tour, I should mention one fascinating experience. There was in Tel Aviv a social/political club which was one of the left-of-center parties. I had been at the club on a couple of occasions as part of my USIS portfolio - at the suggestion of one of the Israeli employees who suggested that this was an interesting and different group. After one of these meetings, I was asked to come and present the American view on some aspect of U.S. foreign policy. In addition, they said they would appreciate it if I could do in Hebrew. I swallowed hard and agreed. I got through it all right; I kept it relatively short. I remember agonizing whether I should write in proper Hebrew script or in Latin letters - it would have been quite slow had I written it in an unfamiliar alphabet, so I used the Latinized version. But I got through that presentation and even enjoyed it.

The following week, this club called and told me that Abba Eban was coming to speak and invited me to join them on that occasion. Eban was the Foreign Minister at the time; of course I would go - third secretaries don't spend a lot of time with Foreign Ministers. He gave a talk as he usually did, in grammatically and literally elegant Hebrew with a British/South African accent which was very noticeable. Eban went through what people called his "Oxford Hebrew" routine and then asked for questions. Suddenly, he emerged as an entirely different person then - relaxed, witty and charming. There was a degree of informality in his answers that was completely at odds with his reputation. By the end of the evening, he had a skeptical audience eating out of his hands. It was an interesting view of one of Israel's leading personalities as well as a lesson in Israeli politics. I met Eban after the end of the evening. We were introduced and someone mentioned that I had given a speech in Hebrew to the club a few days earlier. He beamed. Some one in the audience commented that Eban had left the meeting as a "human being." - a person who had earned the respect of his audience.

In retrospect, I think that the idea of rotational assignments for junior officers is a good one. I learned a lot - especially in view of the time and place. I was in Israel at a time when a lot of things were changing. I had a front row seat on a lot of action. But the program was not particularly well run. I did learn something about how a diplomat tries to interpret events on the ground to his or her own government.

I was very positive about the Foreign Service after my two years in Israel. I had had a fascinating tour. It was clear that I was interested in pursuing the Foreign Service as a career. I found the large majority of my colleagues to be stimulating and personable. I had received one promotion while in Tel Aviv and one as I arrived in Washington from my Israeli tour.

Q: Your next assignment, in 1969, was to INR. How did that come about?

SCHAFFER: I am not sure, because when I was told the whole story later, it made me quite uncomfortable. I believe that the director of the Near East and South Asia was dissatisfied with his "expert" on Israel - a civil servant who had been working on Israel for about fifteen years. The director decided he wanted to hire someone else so as to get her out of the way. He asked various people and came to the conclusion that I could help him. I had wondered since reporting for duty why I was regarded as the Israeli analyst when another woman had the title. Not knowing the background, I was also not prepared for her snarls. It was a very cumbersome set up. We would often work on the same issue until she decided that the job was not fun any more and asked for a transfer. Then I was the sole Israel analyst.

The Director of INR was Tom Hughes. My immediate boss was Phil Stoddard who later transferred the National Intelligence Council. The office director was Granville S. "Red" Austin.

I wrote a number of analytical papers on both Israel and the Palestinians. Specifically, I remember writing on Israel's attitude toward the United States, on Israeli attitudes towards peace and territorial concessions, the future prospects for the Palestinian movement after the major upheaval of 1970 - when the Jordanians cracked down on the Palestinians because they were a threat to the Jordanian government. I also did a lot of work on the shelling across the Suez Canal that took place in 1970. This activity led to the cease fire and stand-down agreement between Israel and Egypt.

I used all sources for my analysis, but material from sensitive sources was key to writing about the cease fire. The source that gave me greatest pause was the FBI's reports on people it had been watching in the U.S. That seemed to be in accord with the prevailing practices of the time, but indicated a lack of understanding of Middle East politics - I believed that this FBI activity was dangerous and inimical to our policies. For example there were individuals who for one reason or another had attracted the FBI's interest. Most were Arabs. The commentary that was written on these people seemed to me to reflect a very poor understanding by the FBI agent of the Middle East. The files included a lot of material that could have been deleted if one understood Arab practices; some of the information was misinterpreted, leading the agent to the wrong conclusions.

I had a good relationship with the CIA analysts, even though there was certain amount of organizational rivalry. I worked closely with the desk and the NEA Bureau. We did work closely with the desk; for example, the paper on Israeli attitude towards the U.S. was done at their request. The key to being a successful analyst is the ability to sell one's expertise. There is no point in sending an analyst to INR to learn; he or she must have considerable knowledge of a specific country and the area. Unless you have some degree of recognized expertise, you have little to offer to the desk or other policy making officers.

I had decided, early in my career, that I wanted to have an opportunity to study economics. I thought that when I concluded my tour in INR it would be an appropriate time to study the subject. I should note that I managed to obtain a BA without having gotten even close to an economics course. In retrospect, that was a mistake. I decided that it was time for me to understand the subject esoterics, and concluded that the only way to do this was through formal instruction. Had my personal life taken a different course, I might have become an Arab specialist, but my marriage led us to a different part of the world.

It turned out that even with an assignment to training, I did not have to join the economic "cone." In those days, the system gave the officer a choice. Midway through my economic training, I got married. My husband, Howard Schaffer, had spent most of his career in the political "cone"; I thought that with both of us in the same "cone" that would complicate the development of our careers - particularly mine. My only obligation after training was to serve two tours in a position reserved for an economic officer. After my first tour, I found the work quite interesting. That led me to request that my "cone" be changed to economic.

INR was a great place for me at that stage of my career. I had a lot of flexibility in choosing to pursue matters of interest. We had pretty much a free hand in choosing the topics to be analyzed, although occasionally we would be commissioned by the regional bureau to work on something it was particularly interested in. So if I had a reasonable rationale to explore an issue, I would be allowed to do so. The deadlines were more relaxed than they were in a regional or functional bureau. At the time, I thought I had a pretty good idea of how the bureaucracy operated. Since then, I have come to realize that it was a microscopic view, but at the time, I thought I knew what made the bureaucracy tick. All in all, I enjoyed my INR tour, partly because I had very good bosses and colleagues. Phil Stoddard was a wonderful boss. I liked the people in INR with whom I worked; in general, they were bright and knew what they were doing.

The Foreign Service and Civil Service officers in my office worked closely together. I have already mentioned the fate of my predecessor; that obviously made for some difficult moments. She later went to another assignment and I think she left with a reasonably cordial relationship with me. There was a group in the office - about four FSOs and a couple of CSs - who would go off to lunch together. One of the Civil Service officer was a fanatical cook, who would prepare elaborate meals or order elaborate picnics and would on ceremonial occasions cobble together very complicated and delicious lunches. So we all knew that if Al Vaccaro was in charge, we would be well taken care - good food and wine.

Another member of the group was Nat Howell, who eventually became our Ambassador in Kuwait. Nat was the Egyptian analyst; he was a big man who had a Ph.D. in Middle Eastern studies. He was quite flamboyant and extroverted, as he remains today. When I first reported to INR , there was not enough space to accommodate another desk. The office rearranged the file cabinets in order to make room for me; these cabinets formed two walls; in between a desk was jammed in along with a telephone. On my first day in this cubbyhole some paper planes with Egyptian markings flew over the cabinets. I took the planes, crossed out the Egyptian markings and replaced them with the Stare of David and threw them back. That was the beginning of a great friendship with Howell. One of the tasks was to prepare once a week a short analysis of the columns written by Mohammed Hassanein Heikal for the Egyptian state-run paper Al Ahram. The column was viewed as a reflection of Nasser's views. The editorial was sent to us by FBIS, after being translated into English. In those days, those reports came by teletype in multiple copies for wider contribution. So Nat would get a long, long piece of paper, the ink from which always came off on his hands. So as soon as he would finish his analysis of the FBIS report, he would crumple up the teletyped report, put some scotch tape around it and would walk out to where our long-suffering secretaries sat busily engaged to typing our reports - in those days, officers was not thought capable of doing so or it was believed that they should had more important things to do. Nat would yell "Heikal ball!" and throw the crumpled paper to any of us who had rushed out for this weekly ritual. This moment was relief for a very hard-working group which was more than busy most of the time.

I did have a feeling of satisfaction with my work. I felt that a lot of my material was used by the policy developers as background and context. The work we did in assessing the 1970 cease-fire and stand-down agreement was of direct operational utility. That was exciting; we knew that our material was going to the Secretary of State because the person who was to deliver our memo stood over us, breathing down our necks as we tried to piece together an intelligent memo. At one time, I was asked to brief the Director of Policy Planning [S/P] on the cease fire. I took my map with its overlays to explain what the situation was and had been.

By the end of my tour, I reached the conclusion that INR was a useful organization if it were staffed by people who knew their subject matter. I think it was also useful to have a mixture of civil service and foreign service personnel, although I recognize that this mixture presents a staffing problem because in the Foreign Service, if there is a shortage of experts, the desk is likely to get the best, after leaving INR with second or third best. The action bureaus will not seek assistance from anyone else unless they feel that it can make a contribution to their responsibilities.

While in INR I became interested in public speaking. I was sent to different parts of the country as part of the Department's "Community Meetings" program managed by the Public Affairs Bureau (PA). PA would cull over the many invitations received for a Departmental speaker to find sufficient resources to send a team of Departmental officers to one part of the U.S. to speak on different subjects. Each of the team members would discuss one set of issues pertaining.

My first experience with this effort came when PA came looking for someone to speak on Israel - I think the site was Chicago. I said that I would be glad to do that, even though I had not done much public speaking before. Other community meetings around the country - e.g., Vermont, Mississippi - were part of a panel. Usually included was a Vietnam expert, a Middle East expert and a Latin America or Africa expert. I covered the whole Middle East - Arab and Israel.

I found those speaking tours mostly fun, although at times quite exhausting. I had a fascinating view of the U.S.; I learned a lot about my country. On that score, the most interesting trip was to Mississippi. Our team consisted of Maryann Parsons, who was the escort officer; an African-American officer who spoke on East Asia; Datus Proper, an expert on Latin America, and myself. We started in West Memphis, Ark, and then headed south to Mississippi. We went to all different kinds of places. One day, I was sent to Blue Mountain College - an all girls school in the hills of Northeast Mississippi. I'm sure I was selected to go to Blue Mountain because they wanted a woman speaker. It turned out to be somewhat of a culture shock. In my undergraduate days at Bryn Mawr, we had dressed in blue jeans and sloppy sweaters and bare-footed. At Blue Mountain, I was met by a group of girls wearing Peter Pan collars, nice neat Shetland sweaters and circle pins, not to mention the stockings that all were wearing - something that I would not have done in college even under duress.

My visit's start was not auspicious. I tripped getting out of the car, falling on my knees, ruining my stockings and leaving my knee somewhat the worse for the wear. But we got over that. After having recovered from that beginning, I faced an assembly of practically the whole student body. I gave my Middle East "from the flood to the Six Day War" overview. I found that after having done a number of these presentations I could give a ten minute, a twenty minute and even a thirty minute presentation, depending on when the chairman wanted the session completed. You also learn what jokes are successful, what the key points are wanted by an audience.

I had three set talks, all of which I used at Blue Mountain. And then, after lunch, I was asked to speak to a fourth group. I talked about the organization and functions of the State Department; that just illustrates how desperate I was. I hoped that my presentation would not put the students to sleep. Just as I was entering the class room, a white haired lady came up to me in the corridor and in her best Southern accent told me that she was delighted that I would speak to her class. She told me that the class was about the role of God in the world, and she thought that what I had to say would be important to her students. Needless to say, that gave me a jolt. In few seconds I had to worry about how God and the State Department fit together. The story had a happy ending; I survived and the students did not fall asleep.

I also recall a visit we made to Rust College-a historically black college funded soon after the Civil War. It had a brand new library, thanks to the U.S. Government. It also had a dedicated staff who were inspiring in their devotion to their students. Most of the staff was black; there were just a few whites. The students - mostly men - were really very earnest and serious; they tried to absorb as much as they could. Unfortunately, they were unprepared to discuss foreign policy and I was quite depressed by that situation. The contrast between the shining new library and a Southern rural education was striking. The students were also very poor, and the College was run on a shoestring. It was quite obvious that foreign policy did not rank very high on the College's goals. The students tried very, very hard to understand us, and we in turn tried our best to leave them with something to think and learn about. We spent all day at Rust, which was unusual because normally we would make our presentation to one class or two and then move on to the next campus.

That evening, we had dinner with a white faculty member at a diner in town. There were some blacks with us; that was probably why the waitress threw our silverware on the counter. We asked the professor whether such behavior was customary; he said that the town was now used to mixed groups, but didn't really like it. I am sure that he had taken some of his students to this diner and was well aware of what the reaction of the waitress would be.

The final stop on this tour was in Jackson, Mississippi. I was programmed to appear on a morning television talk show, hosted by a woman with gravity-defying blond hair. It was the week before Thanksgiving, so that the segment of the show preceding me was devoted to defrosting of turkeys and the dangers of doing it the wrong way. Then she began to talk about me and the Foreign Service; she wondered how a nice girl like me ever got into the Foreign Service. Then she asked what Foreign Service officers did. Her standard reply to my explanations was always: "How exciting!" or "That sounds very interesting!" She seemed particularly to be interested in the consular function. As the time allotted for the interview drew toward a close, the host said that she had always been confused by Middle East issues and asked me to explain them. At that moment, I saw the camera man flash two fingers-meaning that I had two minutes to cover all Middle East issues. I took a deep breath and in two minutes covered the Middle East from the great flood to the Six Day War. I ended just in time for the host to sign off with "Well... I'm just overwhelmed!"

I admit that particularly for the first few appearances, I was nervous. I anticipated questions from people who knew more about the subject than I did, but that never happened.

While in INR I worked on the Palestinian issue. My assignment on this subject was two fold. First, I had to keep track of the players who worked in the many Palestinian organizations. One of my papers that received considerable acclaim was a just a list of these various groups with a short description of each. At the time, not much attention in Washington was being paid to the Palestinians; it had heard of the PLO and later the Fatah, and eventually the PFLP when it started to highjack planes. But the whole picture was essentially unknown and did not attract very much attention - as it does now.

My second task was to analyze the Palestinians' prospects. This was added to my portfolio, which was primarily Israel, when they began to be noticed. Both in the regional bureau and in INR, Palestinian and Israeli issues are handled by the same office. I felt that after the 1970 crisis in Jordan, the Palestinians really began to be noticed; they were a factor in the Middle East which was not likely to disappear. On that score, I was both right and wrong. In the short term, the Jordanian crackdown in 1970 really reduced Palestinian power and influence, particularly since the activist leadership was pressured to leave Jordan for other countries. In the longer run, I was right because the Palestinians certainly became very important players in the Middle East.

I had met some Palestinians when I visited Lebanon; not many in Israel while I served there. The Lebanese Palestinians had been residents there for some time; this was before the major immigration from Jordan and other countries. I was also sent by INR to attend a convention of Arab-American university graduates. A number of prominent Arab-Americans spoke. There I met a number of people who gave me some insights into Palestinian views and perceptions.

I served in INR at the height of the American disillusionment with the war in Vietnam. There was considerable political ferment in the U.S. I was very much involved with the Open Forum, which at the time consisted primarily of junior officers. We had been told that Secretary of State Dean Rusk would be interested in discussing any subject with us except Vietnam. He was not interested in what we thought of that situation. William Rogers followed Rusk; he was not much of a presence in the Department. On the other hand, his deputy, Elliot Richardson, was a great influence on the Department. I remember that one time he met with the junior officers' club to encourage us to think unconventionally. He used the analogy of a skier who must lean forward to get ahead of the potential problems rather than sitting back on his haunches reacting after the problems were encountered. That gave us the sense that at least the Deputy Secretary was more receptive to our views; he appeared to welcome our input to a much grater extent than the Secretary.

I might just for historical purposes talk a little bit about the Open Forum. It was officially known as the Secretary's Open Forum, having been started in the 1960s. It was intended as a vehicle for more junior members of the staff to hear and express views on interesting policy issues. It provided an opportunity for staff to think unconventionally - beyond long standing frames of reference. The chairman of the Open Forum during my participation was David Bilchik who served in the Foreign Service for many years thereafter and is now a consultant to a think tank in Washington. Today, the chairman is someone designated as chairman who is part of the Policy Planning staff. People would write papers, sometimes to dissent from established policy and sometimes to look at an issue from an off-beat angle. These papers would be discussed; sometimes we would ask experts on an issue to come to talk to us with their perspectives. I am not sure that it was a good device for bringing unorthodox views to the Department's leadership; I don't remember our inputs having much influence. But the group was very interesting; it was mostly junior officers although some more senior ones participated as well. Today, the Open Forum has changed character; it is now mainly an opportunity for the interested staff to hear the views from outsiders, even if those views do not conform with administration policy. That is a useful function, but the Open Forum is much more passive today than it was when I was a member.

Although I was concentrating on the Middle East, no one in the Department or in the country at large could avoid being concerned with the war in Vietnam. There were "true believers"; I was troubled by the American intervention and by "the slippery road" that I thought would not enhance our role as one of the world's leaders. The beginning of my doubts came when I was still in Bryn Mawr, although I was not an activist, unlike some of my classmates. My first "wake up" call really came when the two diplomats on their way home from Saigon were invited to address the staff of our Embassy in Tel Aviv - which I described earlier. That really reinforced my view that Vietnam was a losing proposition and that we should cut our losses at the earliest opportunity. Thereafter, I had more and more qualms about US policy. I don't believe that my doubts ever led me to question whether I had done the right thing in joining the Foreign Service or continuing in it. But then I never faced by the prospect of being assigned to Vietnam; that might have required more serious evaluation. In any case, even if I had resigned it would have had zero effect on policy; in the first place I was a junior officer and in the second, my area of expertise was far removed from Vietnam.

At one point - probably in the Spring of 1970 when we invaded Cambodia and resorted to secret bombings - a group of junior officers got together and drafted a petition for the Secretary asking him to meet with a group of junior officers who were concerned with events in South East Asia. It was a classified petition - an unusual procedure in itself. There were about 200 signatories, including me. I think that the fact that it was classified was a good illustration of the Foreign Service culture. The petition was duly sent forward; somehow it came to the attention of President Nixon. He was furious. He was told that all FSOs served at the pleasure of the President. He immediately ordered that we all be fired.

He was dissuaded from this course, but an instruction was sent to the Department demanding that every signatory be called in by his or her assistant secretary for "counseling" - i.e. a sharp dressing-down. Since there were about twenty INR staffers who had signed this petition, we filled a small briefing room in the Director's suite. George Denney, who was the acting Director at the time, called us all in, but obviously was very uncomfortable in carrying out the directive. He told us of the President's intense displeasure and the Secretary's discomfort with our action. Denney asked that we refrain in the future from publicly voicing our displeasure with administration policies. This affair did hit the press, but it was not a Page 1 item.

In May 1970, there were several marches on Washington. I was involved with them in two different ways. On May Day, I came home from work, only to discover that my car had been "liberated" from its normal place and parked in front of a fire hydrant. It had a parking violation ticket - I later learned that it had in fact acquired three tickets. Some one had removed a wire in the engine so that I could not start the motor. Subsequently, I learned that a group of demonstrators had picked up the car and had carried it to the space where it would impede traffic. There were several cars that had suffered the same fate. In my case, in order to open the street again to traffic, the police had parked my car in front of the hydrant. It took me about a year to persuade the District officials to wipe out the tickets.

The next day, there was a large meeting on the Ellipse behind the White House. My brother, who at the time was a Harvard undergraduate, had come to Washington with friends in an overloaded Volkswagen. They all slept on my living room floor. Then they went to demonstrate and I joined them. It was bizarre; I had a pass for parking in the Department's basement. I drove my Volkswagen to the Department, parked it in the garage and took the elevator to the C Street entrance - wearing blue jeans and a tattered T-shirt. I walked past all of the flags that fly in the main entrance; a guard gave me a baleful and disgusted look. He had seen a steady, if not massive, parade of blue jean and bandana-wearing staff members who were leaving the Department to join the demonstration. It was a memorable moment.

Q: In 1971, you moved the Bureau for Economic Affairs (E). In that same year, you were married. As I recall, during your oral examination, you were told that if you married, you would have to resign from the Foreign Service.

SCHAFFER: Correct, although even then it was erroneous information. In any case, the regulations had changed in approximately 1970 to allow "tandem" couples - i.e. both husband and wife - to continue their Foreign Service careers. Furthermore, the allowance structure which had penalized working couples were changed. The rules were changed to allow both husband and wife to work in the same post overseas, provided that one did not work for the other and were not in the same Embassy section. Perhaps most significantly, the regulations were changed to allow a spouse to accompany the working partner on leave without pay for one tour, without jeopardizing his or her career. The phrase "one tour" was never defined and has been flexibly administered. These new regulations were in effect when I got married.

Even though I was not directly involved in the re-write of the regulations, I very much supported the changes. If recall correctly, I think AFSA was involved in pushing for the changes. And I was an active member of AFSA through the junior officers' club. I did follow the progress of the changes closely. A friend of mine, Kathy Shirley, was the test case - or one of them. She and her husband went on to become ambassadors; they are now retired in Stonington, Connecticut. As I said, I followed these potential changes very closely.

Interestingly enough, I did not at this time - or even before - have any sense of gender discrimination, although the old regulations did make it difficult for women who wished to carry on as Foreign Service officers after marriage. Fortunately that situation was changed, as I have described earlier. The debate about the new regulations did raise my consciousness about gender discrimination. Some of the attitudes that I had shrugged off earlier in my career came to seem more significant. I basically felt - and still do to some extent - that the key problem that women faced in the Foreign Service was not the system or the rules, but the institutional culture which had prevailed for most of the careers of our older colleagues. They had a hard time adjusting to the "new" woman. In some overseas posts; the problem is compounded by the local culture which also views a woman's role in narrow terms. My first encounter with that attitude probably started with my assignment to Pakistan which I will discuss later.

My assignment to the Economic Bureau was in the "Development Finance" Office. The office director was Richard Benedick; his boss was Sidney Weintraub, a deputy assistant secretary. In our office, there were about six officers and two secretaries. I should mention that prior to my transfer from INR, I had taken an economics course at FSI. An officer had to pledge to serve two tours in an economic position if he or she wanted that FSI training. So it was almost automatic that after the course, an officer would immediately be assigned to an economic position. That gave everyone an opportunity to see how much of the course had sunk in and how much an officer could put his or her knowledge to work in a real situation. That was a very good idea.

Initially, I had been looking at possible jobs both overseas and in the Department, but my marriage in October 1971 changed that. The bidding process at the time had not become as elaborate as it is now. It was much harder to find out what vacancies were looming. The assignment process had not yet become overly bureaucratic.

Howie Schaffer and I had a short engagement, although we had been going out together for a long time. We became engaged after I started the FSI economics course. The Monday after we announced our engagement, I received a call from Personnel asking me if I would be interested in a job in Stockholm. Under other circumstances, I would have packed that night and left for Sweden before the orders were even written. In fact, I was probably the only person in the Foreign Service who was qualified since it was an economic job which required Swedish fluency. I turned it down because of my situation and asked for a Departmental assignment so that I could stay with my new husband.

As I started to look for a Washington assignment, I was approached by Miss Frances Wilson, who at the time was the Executive Director of the Economic Bureau. She had been given the names of all of the people in the economic class. Wilson, as all FSOs will remember, was a legend in her time - and long after. She got a report on each of the students, looked at their backgrounds and finally decided which officers she wished to have assigned to her bureau. My name was on her list.

I had never met Benedick or Weintraub, my future bosses. I was asked to go to talk to Sid Weintraub. After the interview, he offered me the job; I accepted it because it sounded interesting. Then Benedick called and asked me to come to see him. I started the conversation by saying that I was looking forward to working for him in an interesting job. He cleared his throat and noted that he had not yet approved my selection. That was my first experience with the Weintraub/Benedick relationship. Benedick was a very bright guy, but complicated. I think he felt that Weintraub did not give him his proper due. Sid was a straight shooter; what you saw was what you got. He is still that way today; I work with him at CSIS now. He was also a very much a "hands on" manager.

Dick Benedick was a rather straight-laced fellow. He had risen very quickly in the Foreign Service. He knew the international development institutions well. He demanded that the work be done in an orderly fashion. His staff considered him to be somewhat up-tight, especially on the subject of women. He always wanted to know what had been said if any of his staff members had spoken with Sid. That was a real problem for us because when a deputy assistant secretary calls you to come to his or her office, if the office director is absent, an officer can't refuse just because the director is not available. This was a constant source of frustration for Dick and for us, but it was one of the facts of life with which we had to cope.

The most interesting story from these years was how the office, and more broadly the Foreign Service, dealt with married women. When I reported for duty in January 1972, I was the second woman officer in an office with three male officers. I was newly married, and my female colleague, Joyce Bednarski, got married to Foreign Service colleague Ron Rabens about a year later. Joyce requested an early transfer in order to go overseas with Ron. Her successor, Melinda Kimble, also got married fairly soon after joining the officand also requested an early transfer to join her husband, an AID officer. I became pregnant about a year after joining the office. Melinda was replaced by another woman, Kay Stocker. Meanwhile, one of the departing male officers had been replaced by another woman, Genta Hawkins (later Holmes).

For Dick Benedick, we represented a series of culture chocks. Two marriages and one baby among his women officers, plus the marriage and departure of his secretary, brought to mind all the stereotypes of flighty women professionals, and his frustration showed. It was amplified by a bad mismatch of styles between him and most of the women officers involved. Joyce was outspoken and earthy; Melinda and Kay were strong feminists; Genta was drop-dead gorgeous and not inclined to play second fiddle to anyone. All were first-rate professionals who went on to extremely successful careers. To his credit, Dick showed the flexibility we all hoped for in dealing with our unexpected assignment complications, but I think he felt like cannon fodder on the front lines of societal change.

His feelings were not altogether justified, however. During the year and a half that I worked in this office, two or three male officers also left his office because of "needs of the service," giving him two to six weeks' notice of their departures. The women who had left for family reasons all gave substantially more lead timthree to seven months.

These were the pioneering days for tandem couples in the Foreign Service. In some ways, joint assignments were easier to work out than they later became, because they were treated as necessary and, for the most part, permissible exceptions to the normal assignment process, which in turn had not yet developed the complex bid-driven process that came in some years later. But the attitudes of the Department's personnel managers were a very mixed bag.

I fared best in my quest for a next assignment, largely thanks to the help of Frances Wilson. I was more than a little nervous when I went to ask her support for my request to leave the office six months before the end of my stipulated tour to spend a year in Department-funded graduate training in economics at Georgetown. Frances' hard-boiled determination to make officers finish their tours in the bureau was famous all over the Department. Frances heard me out, punctuating my story with the "mm-hmms" for which she was famous. When I finished, she said, "well, all righbut there's one thing I want." Quaking, I replied "thanks so mucand what is that?" "A picture of the baby," said Frances.

Joyce, on the other hand, had considerable difficulty persuading personnel to look for an appropriate assignment for her at Ron's post, and when the Department reassigned him from Brussels to a small African post, her joint assignment luck ran out. And Melinda, having heard from a succession of women that personnel was unsympathetic to joint assignments, worked out an assignment to her husband's post (Tunis) first, and waited until that was in the bag to tell personnel of her marriage.

The Office of Development Finance was responsible for the Department's work on international financial institutions. Our principal focus was on the development banks - e.g. World Bank and its various subsidiaries, the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the African Development Bank which was just in is nascent stage. We were also responsible for State Department's relations with the Export-Import Bank as well as representing the Department on debt repayment issues - that latter function was later transferred to the Office of Monetary Affairs.

I began by specializing on the Asian Development Bank. As staff turn-overs occurred and portfolios were shuffled, I also became the World Bank expert. I became a strong proponent of the World Bank; I thought that it performed professionally and thoroughly in vetting project proposals. It worked well with the borrowers. The World Bank was at the time trying to establish some markers which would allow it to judge the efficacy of its contribution to a country's development on a longer term perspective. It produced a couple of studies during my tour attempting to find some meaningful framework for their evaluation efforts. I believe that the World Bank staff did one country study - Colombia - and one sectoral study - perhaps on electric power generation. All of these studies were done internally by the World Bank staff, which then ,as now, was large.

I found the Colombia study particularly interesting. The staff concluded that the projects seemed to be effective if measured against the goals established for each project. It was less clear that the totality of the Bank's efforts made a major contribution to Colombia's economic development. I think this was an early harbinger of the Bank's interest in becoming increasingly involved in the development of a country's human resources - rather than things. The U.S. Government had schizophrenic attitude toward this new approach.

It was during this period when the U.S. began to fall behind in its mandatory contributions to these organizations. I think 1971 was the first year in which we hadn't paid all of our assessments. This unfortunate development became standard, bringing us to the present when we owe large sums to several international organizations.

The Asian Development Bank was much more conservative. It was a much smaller organization than the World Bank; consequently, it had far less aggregate impact on the countries in the Asian region. This Bank was also exceedingly reluctant to give advice to any of its member nations on economic policy. In fact, it was following the Japanese model which avoided like the plague anything which even remotely touched on political issues. Since the early 1970s, the Bank has become a greater factor in resource transfers in the region; it also has taken a more vigorous attitude to providing advice on economic issues, although it does so reticently.

In general, I felt that all of these development institutions were useful. I also agreed with the U.S. policy to provide much of our assistance to other countries through these international institutions. Both bilateral and multilateral assistance was useful; some things could be done through one and some through the other. I found that the U.S. did not get much, if any, credit from a recipient country if the resources came through a multilateral organization. But to the extent that US interests are served by the recipient moving to a free market economy, thereby hopefully accelerating its economic development, it was the international institutions which could be more influential than the U.S. alone. Advice from an international institution is more acceptable to many countries than American sermons or actions.

These international institutions were primarily in the business of improving the standard of living in the poor countries. That was a very useful goal. I became intrigued by the inter-play of development of physical assets and of people in the development process. In some of my subsequent assignments, I had a chance to revisit some of these issues; my views became firmer as I gained more experience and I will discuss those at the appropriate place.

Both the World Bank and IMF's advice has become more of a political lighting rod in the recent decade. When I was working with those issues, the Bank and Fund were not very controversial institutions. Since then, we and others have forced these institutions to restructure and emphasize different goals. That has many recipients in the developing countries concerned because they do not want to be seen as a toady of international institutions. The IMF particularly is no longer seen as a neutral party, but as promoter of a particular agenda.

I found that knowledge of economics was crucial for my job. A large part of my workload was reading endless project reports from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Each project had an extensive economic analysis by the World Bank staff; we had to understand that; occasionally, we challenged some of the Bank's conclusion. We then would have to come to a decision about each project - was it any good? did it raise policy issues for the U.S.? did it meet our criteria of economic soundness? Those were our daily functions; for the long term, we had to push continually with the Banks' staffs the four issues that I mentioned earlier. The lead agency in U.S. relations with the international was Treasury, much to our discomfort, but we made sure that we were players in this process to protect our foreign policy. In order to have any effect, we had to be engaged in the economics of the project or loan proposals.

There is a vignette that I remember from this period. At one stage, IDA (International Development Agency) - the "soft" loan part of the World Bank - was seeking to replenish its funds. I was the State representative at the replenishment meeting which was being held in London. The U.S. delegation was led by a Treasury official. This meeting was essentially about what countries would contribute and how much; the final decisions on those issues of course had to be made by higher authorities. We also had conversations about the World Bank's policies.

The British government provided us with lovely quarters. They looked out over a park which was quite close to Buckingham Palace. Before the first meeting, we filled our cups with coffee and then headed for the conference table. The discussion was to start at 10:00 a.m. On the appointed hour, the host - the chairman of the British delegation - opened the meeting with the few, well chosen remarks. He pointed out that the assembled group had some objectives to meet and he would start the ball rolling by articulating the British government's position. Unfortunately, he said, his government had come to the conclusion that it would have to reduce its contributions to IDA. At precisely that moment, we heard a brass band playing nearby - I believe it was a lively tune from "HMS Pinafore." The band was practicing for its role in the changing of the guards at Buckingham Palace. The British chairman looked out of the window and looked at us; then he said, In his best British accent: "We do try to provide appropriate entertainment." That sent the delegates into roar of laughter, which was badly needed in light of the British government's discouraging position.

My experience in the Economic Bureau gave me an opportunity to learn a lot about international organizations. At various times, I was tempted to join one. The work was interesting; the staffs seemed to be attractive, but I was much devoted to pursue my Foreign Service career. I have always found bilateral relations much easier to deal with and ultimately, much more central to US foreign policy. I don't believe that the Foreign Service pays adequate attention to the development of the skills which would enable an officer to navigate in a multi-lateral setting; they are different from those required in a bilateral situation. I believe that international problems which will be of great consequence to the U.S. in the next generation will have to be solved multilaterally. That is particularly true on environmental issues. My views have changed because there has been a major change in the world's agenda. We may have been short-sighted - 25-30 years ago - in not recognizing the ever increasing importance of such universal issues like the environment. In some ways, I don't think we have reached the stage required by these new developments, although I think the U.S. government institutions are showing progress in moving into this new direction. I am certainly convinced that the prevention of any further degradation of the environment is a must, if we are to preserve and improve the lives of the billions of people all around the world. These issues can not be dealt with only bilaterally. Having said that, I should note that often the best way to move multilateral issues is to discuss them first on a bilateral basis. So I believe the use of both processes is mandatory for such global issues like environmental degradation.

Just as U.S. policy to China was being transformed we became involved in an interesting corner of China policy. The issue, which started in 1971, was the representation of China in the international financial institutions. Nixon had visited the PRC and it had been given the China seat in the UN. Taiwan still represented China in the international financial institutions. Taiwan had stopped borrowing from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank some years earlier. This was done to lower Taiwan's international profile. But it clung tenaciously to the China seats in these institutions. The U.S. made a policy decision to support Taiwan in keeping these seats. The issue really heated up, discussed first at the ADB meeting in April and the World Bank meeting in September. As you can imagine, this was an issue that raised a lot of passions. Dick Benedict made himself the "China Representative" desk officer. He and many of us put together demarches addressed to countries which we hoped would be sympathetic to our position. Some we delivered in the foreign capitals, some to the boards of directors. Our efforts were successful in 1972, but it was obviously only a holding operation which eventually came to naught, with the PRC taking the "China seat" in the World Bank, ADB and the IMF. That was an interesting experience.

Q: In 1973, you were assigned to Georgetown. What did you do there?

SCHAFFER: I was in graduate school, studying economics. It took some negotiations to have the Department choose one of the Washington-based institutions for such education; it thought that there were better schools out of town. I could not have attended graduate school anywhere else. Eventually we put together a program at Georgetown which was acceptable to the FSI economics faculty.

It was a wonderful year. I had been in the Foreign Service for seven years. I needed a break from the steady diet of paperwork. The graduate work gave me an opportunity to broaden my horizons both through the class-work and the opportunity to read some wide ranging books and journals on economics. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I learned a lot. It was very useful to me in my subsequent assignments. I felt that one of reasons I absorbed much of information was because I was a little older than the average student. I knew what I wanted to get out of this one year - certainly I had a better idea than I had at Bryn Mawr. I found that this was true for my Georgetown classmates. The courses I took were split about 50/50 between younger students who had just their undergraduate degrees and more mature students, most of whom were part-timers. I noticed that the older students got their work in on time almost always. When the class was asked to make a choice between a 24-hour open book exam and a regular examination in a class room, all of the older students voted for the latter proposition because they didn't want to lose 24 hours of their lives.

Q: In 1974, you and Howie were assigned to Islamabad. How did that assignment come about?

SCHAFFER: As a matter of fact, that is an interesting story. Howie was ending his fourth year in the personnel assignments office responsible for NEA jobs. He had hoped to be assigned to one of three DCM positions. He did not get one of those, but he had decided that he had to leave administration and get back into a serious substantive job. Ambassador Henry Byroade, our Ambassador-designate to Pakistan, interviewed Howie for the Political Counselor job and selected him on the spot. He knew that I wanted the deputy position in the Economic Section - when it would be available in the summer of 1975. I think he was initially concerned that Howie and I might spend time together at the office; he talked to me and in the end decided that we were serious about our work and would contribute to the work of the Embassy.

A word about "tandem" assignments. At that time, as now, there is always the problem of identifying appropriate assignments for the two officers - at the same post. In my case, I was willing to take a year's LWOP. This choice turned out even better than originally expected because I became pregnant before leaving for Islamabad. So the timing worked very much in my favor. We left for Pakistan in May, and my second son was born the following January. I might say that in the early 1970s, many posts' leadership needed to be "persuaded" to accept "tandem" assignments, which were at that time still relatively new. Sometimes, of course, posts might reject a nomination because it was a woman officer - "not suitable for the culture." That prejudice spilled over into some "tandem" assignments, although I think in most cases, the issues were separable. In our case we were the first "tandem" assignment to Pakistan; Byroade had some reservations but finally agreed. I was not the first woman married officer in Pakistan; Sharon Erkamp Ahmad preceded me by several years, but she kept her marriage to a Pakistani a secret until after she finished her tour; then she resigned from the Foreign Service. Eventually, she returned.

So Howie's assignment was fixed very early in 1974. Everything seemed to be in order and working smoothly. Before we could take off for Pakistan, the Department's personnel assignment policies went through a major shift. The Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, had just attended a meeting in Mexico City, I believe; he was shocked by the regional specialization that the FSOs that he met had, which, as far as he was concerned, gave them unacceptable tunnel vision. So when he returned, he decreed that FSOs had to take periodic tours outside the region in which they had specialized. This was the start of the "Global Outlook Program" (better known as GLOP.)

The Office of Personnel changed its policies and procedures. If you had more than X years in a particular region, your next assignment would have to be in another geographic area. The first indication of this change came when the deputy assistant secretaries in NEA swapped jobs with their EUR counterparts. Bruce Laingen went to EUR where eventually he became responsible for some old NEA territory - Greece, Turkey and Cyprus. Spike Dubs came to NEA to cover the South Asia issues.

This general reorientation raised the question of Howie's assignment. Howie was a South Asia specialist; he spoke Hindi, had been in India for six years, had worked on South Asian issues for almost all of his career - except the last four years doing personnel work. He argued that a political officer making personnel assignments was an out-of-career assignment and therefore he should be excused from GLOP. The Director General - Nat Davis - had different views because he wanted to show the Secretary how well his new policy was being implemented. He therefore canceled the assignment.

As you can well imagine, Howie was fit to be tied; it was very late in the assignment cycle which meant that the most desirable vacancies had already been filled. Furthermore, he was a senior political officer. At his level, most, if not all, embassies wanted someone who was familiar with the country - or at least, the region - and preferably someone who could speak the local language. In addition, of course, the DG's decision put in jeopardy my assignment, which although not formally approved, nevertheless seemed to fit our needs as well as those of the post.

Howie made a pitch for two jobs that were available in Brazil. But that didn't fly because the regional bureau wanted someone with Latin American experience - regardless of the Secretary's dictum. At that point, we approached the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA). I noted that tandem assignments were very difficult to obtain; so it seemed to me that such assignments could not be broken unless and until comparable assignments for both officers were found. AFSA had a meeting with the DG; that was enough pressure to make the DG reverse his course and then we were finally blessed to go to Pakistan. So it all worked out well!

As I said, the year's LWOP was a very good solution for me and the post had no objections. During the first year, I had opportunities to be brought up to speed by my predecessor but I tried to stay out of his way as much as possible.

I took Urdu language lessons at the Embassy, supplemented by the fact that my elder son was learning to talk at the time, so we learned kids' Urdu together. I traveled throughout the country and learned much about Pakistan.

Our living conditions were marvelous. We had a great big house - air conditioned most of the time. The household staff numbered seven, who were wonderful. This was my first experience with managing a household staff; that was an adjustment. I had the usual anxieties about having a nanny taking care of my sons - the usual advance fears that she would snatch my children away. Before arriving at post, we had hired a woman who had been engaged by the Byroades to look after their ten year old daughter - until they could get a visa for the Burmese nanny who had been with the child since her birth. So when the visa came through, Miriam was suddenly unemployed. We got a cable in Washington from Mrs. Byroade telling us that she would have kept the Pakistani nanny had it not been for the Burmese woman; she asked whether we might be interested in giving her a try-out. We agreed and Miriam became our first hire in Pakistan. She in fact came to the airport to meet us and wanted to hold the baby instantly, which left me feeling awful and in great suspense. In the final analysis, Miriam stayed with us for three years and was wonderful.

Our social life was quite active. We went out often during the week as well as hosting some functions at our home. I think I got used to this life pretty quickly. I had a cook who could read English and who was willing to use my recipes in addition to those that he had inherited from previous employers. I started, and continued throughout my career, the practice of supervising the kitchen pretty closely without doing any of the cooking.

I might just describe my life as an officer on LWOP. I spent a lot of time with my new baby and eventually the second as well; my boys were only 18 months apart. I spent a lot of time on the thesis and on learning the language. I spent very little time in the customary Foreign Service spouse activities. I was once asked to join some ladies for a bridge game and I declined. At the end of my first year, I decided that I had made a terrible mistake. In fact, I should have accepted that invitation, but I had been so afraid of being type-cast as a dependent spouse that at least at the beginning I shunned most the activities which might have fit the stereotype. So I remained aloof from what in retrospect would have been fine companionship.

In 1975, I went to work in the Embassy Economic Section as the deputy. There were three officers in the Section. The Counselor was Bruce Amstutz; the other officer was Gordan Powers. My job was primarily to develop macroeconomic analysis of the Pakistani economy; secondarily, I also worked with American investors - both actual and potential. Gordan did most of the commercial and trade policy work. The workload was divided so that each officer in the Section had both economic and commercial responsibilities. During the mid-1970s the Department was being heavily criticized for its lack of assistance to and understanding of the American business community. It was said, and I think correctly to some extent, that the Foreign Service treated commercial work as second class. So it was very good discipline for each economic officer to have contact with the business community instead of focusing entirely on the prospects of the economy or the progress being made in the construction of a steel mill. Each of the two dimensions of our responsibilities reinforced the other by reminding us of the inter-connection between the two - one quite academic and the other quite practical. Working in two areas assured that both aspects got enough attention and that neither was considered as better than the other.

I found that my graduate work was enormously useful. I think that without my graduate work, I could probably been able to do an adequate job, but the tools I learned in school gave me an opportunity to work far more professionally; I had also learned in school what publications might be useful for my analysis. Secondly, my academic experience improved my credibility in my liaison role with the AID Mission. It also gave rise to a friendly rivalry because for the preceding three years, AID's chief economist had written the macroeconomic analyses of the Pakistani budget and of the balance-of-payment situation. My predecessors had just cleared those papers. But when I started to work, I decided that I would re-conquer that turf. Since I wrote faster than the AID official, I produced the first draft which he consented to review. It was the normal bureaucratic turf fight.

As the liaison with the AID Mission, I was invited to attend its weekly staff meeting. I reviewed the projects which they were recommending to see whether they had any policy implications. I had a pretty good relationship with the AID Mission - Joe Wheeler, the Director and his deputy and other members of the Mission. Joe had been in Pakistan for eight years and knew the territory well. He married an American woman who had lived in Pakistan for twenty-five years. So the Wheelers had absorbed a considerable amount of local lore. Furthermore, Joe came from Concord, MA and was very much a loyal son of that city. Every year, on Patriots' Day, he hosted a dinner to which he invited some of the most senior Pakistani officials - Cabinet ministers and government secretaries (the number twos in a Cabinet Department) - with whom he dealt in the course of a normal day. One year, he invited us and I witnessed Joe's efforts to help the Pakistanis understand the importance of our revolution, New England and American history in general. He was a marvelous piece of Americana. I learned an enormous amount from Joe about both AID and Pakistan.

Joe was an unabashed resource-transfer proponent. During my time in Pakistan, AID was in the throes of a budget pinch - more perhaps than usual, although in retrospect, these were golden years for AID. Joe was intensively frustrated by the strictures that the budget people placed on him. The Pakistan program was very large - one of the largest in the world. But when Joe would recommend the approval of a $10 million project, the response would say that it was a great idea, but that the Mission should consider doing a $100,000 project. Once Joe said to the AID staff that he wanted to draw attention to their program. He said that Washington's attention could not be bought; $100,000 obviously would not do the trick.

My experience in Pakistan helped me to form some views of AID programs - mostly positive, with some negatives. I had a very high regard for the professionals in the Mission. AID officers are program - or project - managers; their efforts were directed to change. Embassy reporting officers are observers and recorders of events. In some cases, of course, the economic officer can recommend a change in policy, but that is not his or her primary function. It is rare that they are involved in change at the grass roots level. AID officers are a gold mine of information, but are not natural reporters. The only way the U.S. Government, as a whole, can become acquainted with this gold mine is for an embassy liaison officer to report, after having had an oral briefing from the AID officer. AID does not have a writing culture; officers view reports as bureaucratic nonsense that takes time away from important activities. What is rewarded in the AID system is operational effectiveness; well written reports do not make much of a dent. There were some officials who were both effective and could write well, but that was just a plus. It was the effective management of a project that brought an AID officer to the attention of the system.

I remember Dick Brown - one of AID's stellar performers - he is now our Mission Director in Egypt - telling me, after we had collaborated on some work, that he thought that we Foreign Service officers wrote so well. I don't know that we turned out a masterpiece of English prose, but it was just a reflection of differences between embassy and AID officers.

On the positive side, AID was dealing with real issues - e.g. population control, agricultural development, price relationships. We did not have any major programs in either the transportation or public health fields - unless it impacted on population program. In those days, in Pakistan, there was a major "inundation" program - providing ample supplies for population control. The U.S. Government had decided to provide resources to test the thesis that the family planning problem in the underdeveloped world was a supply (birth control tools) problem, in the main. This was a thesis that the Population Bureau in AID - Dick Ravenholt in charge - pushed very hard. The opposite view was that it was essentially a demand problem - i.e. people had to want to limit family size before they would do so. So we poured money into an "inundation" program, making lots of supplies available throughout the country at very low cost. Ultimately, the program was not successful, although opinions were still divided about the best approach to family planning. There were those who believe that attention should be paid to why people chose to have larger families; they felt vindicated by our experiences in Pakistan. The inundation people felt that the Pakistan test was not good enough because the management structure was deficient. My own conclusion was that if the management structure in Pakistan was not good enough, there would never be a fair test of the two hypotheses. If any program or project has to be perfectly managed, it is not worthwhile investing in it; perfection is not attainable. The biggest negative was the enormous paperwork burden in AID.

I met many Pakistani officials. There was a group of economists - mostly from Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economic Affairs with whom I would discuss the macroeconomics of the country. The latter ministry was the government's representative on issues dealing with assistance programs. I usually did not deal at the secretary's level; my contacts were a couple of rungs below that at the joint secretary level, which is roughly comparable to our deputy assistant secretary. There was Siraj Yusuf Khan, the keeper of the balance-of-payment statistics. He was a first rate professional as were almost all of my contacts in the ministries. Some had foreign education, especially at the graduate level; all spoke English well. Some had experience working in the international financial institutions although the more common pattern was that a bureaucrat would rise in the ranks and then go to an international financial institution and make lots of money. They would stay at that institutions until retirement age and then would be considered as distinguished elder statesmen.

There was a rather colorful chief economist, Moeen Baqai, in the Ministry of Economics Affairs. He was a very creative professional who concentrated on macroeconomic issues as they related to economic development; he was not a "number' cruncher." Another economist, Jawaid Azfar, was in the Ministry of Finance, was also an excellent professional. He had some international experience. I just mentioned two very good professionals with whom I dealt, although I was impressed by all of the economist I met as well as most of the people I met through my husband's work - the politicians, the Foreign Office personnel, etc.

In those days, Islamabad was still a totally artificial city; it had no other function except to be the capital. That has changed over a period of years. The population during my tour was about 88,000 - it is now more than twice that size. Most if not all of the population were either bureaucrats or diplomats or politicians. In all of my time in Islamabad, only one person told me that she had come from Islamabad. In fact, she had come from Karachi, but she liked Islamabad so much that she used to go around telling people that she was from Islamabad originally to see what their reactions might be. Now, it is an entirely different city; there are actually some retirees there.

The politicians did not set up a second home in Islamabad. Even when Parliament was in session, one would find more politicians in Lahore than in Islamabad. They would attend Parliament for a few days and then retreat as quickly as they could to Lahore or their home territories.

I must say that we in the mid-1970s had a far more optimistic view of Pakistan's economic situation than we have today. I am now referring to a period following the break up of the country. The part formerly known as West Pakistan, was functioning on its own and by most accounts the Pakistanis probably doing better than they had been while East and West Pakistan were one country. Certainly, politically they were doing better even though the mid-1970s was a complicated period. Bhutto was the Prime Minister thanks to his party having won the 1970 election in West Pakistan. That election, which occurred before the break-up of the country, was ultimately responsible for his accession to power. His Pakistan People's Party had nationalized the banks and some other businesses when it first assumed power. The Party had run on the slogan: "Bread, clothing and housing."

Bhutto's style of government was very much in the Napoleonic tradition. He liked to appeal directly to the people. He traveled frequently around Pakistan, holding rallies and making speeches. He had no patience for institutions such as Parliament. He was very hard on anyone in his party who was suspected of disloyalty - which was anything less than 100% committed to him.

It was a time of relatively optimistic assessment of Pakistan's economic future, particularly since it wasn't doing so badly in the mid-1970s. They had had a couple of years of decent GDP growth, although they were followed by a couple of years of unimpressive growth. But this pattern gave some hopes for the future. Investments were coming in at a measured pace, but they were being made. They were staying ahead of population growth, which was over 3%, so that it absorbed almost all of the GDP growth. It was clear that population control programs were a failure giving rise to considerable concern - more than now.

We encouraged American investors to look at opportunities in Pakistan. We thought that if the right investment were made, then it had a pretty good chance of succeeding. I mentioned earlier the fertilizer program; Americans had two plants working in Pakistan. There were also some American investments in other industries and in consumer goods production, although they didn't prove to be too profitable. There was a tobacco project. There was some agricultural processing: e.g. a corn oil plant which was funded by a program of loans from the PL480 local currency fund to American investors. .

Time did not hang heavy on my hands. In addition to my job in the Embassy, I had two children and a household to manage. In fact, it was relatively easy because the household staff did all the laundry, cooking and cleaning. I made up the menu, but the staff did everything else. We lived about seven minutes from the Embassy, giving me an opportunity to eat lunch at home most of the days. That gave me an opportunity to talk to the children, who also had lunch at home. We avoided receptions like the plague. We tried very hard to be at home between the end of work and about 7:30 p.m. when the kids went to bed. That was their family time. We also avoided social engagements on Sundays. I soon discovered avoiding receptions was not much of a loss. Most of them were very large gatherings which inhibited any kind of meaningful conversation.

I should note that our tour - especially Howie's - did not end well. Bhutto decided to proceed with an election which had already been scheduled for several months hence. I remember vividly the early-1977 meeting with our British counterparts during which we compared notes. Everyone agreed that the election would be a "non-event" because Bhutto would be the overwhelming winner. But Bhutto decided to hold a very open election, which meant that the government would not harass the opposition, who also would have access to the media. This new freedom resulted in a surprisingly strong showing for the opposition during the campaign. Bhutto was criticized severely for not having delivered on his economic promises - which had been wildly optimistic - and for treating his opponents - alleged and real - in a manner that repulsed many voters. This treatment included the murder of the father of one of Bhutto's estranged political associates, who was shot while driving in Lahore. At the time, the story was that the bullet was intended for the son, but that in any case, Bhutto had hired the assassin. There was no follow-up and the assassin went free.

Parliamentary elections took place in spring, 1977. Not surprisingly, the Embassy's reporting officers came to be viewed by the Pakistan government with some suspicion. Howie and Jon Gibney, our political officer in Lahore, were subjects of complaints to Ambassador Byroade from Bhutto himself. The Ambassador said that he had defended his staff vigorously. Bhutto apparently had concluded that the U.S. was trying to destabilize his government. If he only had been properly briefed, he would have known that Byroade would have been tempted to hold a rally in his support, if he could have.

There were considerable tensions and nervousness before the election. The polls were showing a very close race with the opposition spurting slightly ahead once the votes were beginning to come in. Then the counting stopped unexpectedly, and by the end of the evening, lo and behold, the government was winning by incredible margins, including in neighborhoods where the government's candidate had hardly ever appeared. Opinions were - and to some extent - still are on whether Bhutto stole the election; there was no question that there were many "unusual" activities.

I remember visiting a Pakistani friend who had a child in nursery school with my oldest son. I think this visit occurred on a holiday right after the election. When I went to her house, she was in the garden among many relatives; everyone was dressed casually - an unusual situation in those days. Every time a new Pakistani guest would arrive, many of the family members would go off in a corner with the newcomer. It was quite clear that they were talking about the election and that they were seriously troubled by the turn of events.

The local and provincial elections, which took place three days later, had the same results as the national one. This further increased tensions which became wide-spread political protests. Partial martial law was declared in many cities - not including Islamabad which was an island of unreality, nor Rawalpindi. Byroade's tour was coming to an end; he was due to leave in the middle of April, but his departure was delayed because the roads to the Karachi airport were unusable as result of the protests. Finally, the Ambassador was airborne; a week later Bhutto gave a speech in Parliament lambasting Americans. Up to the penultimate paragraph, the speech was filled with thinly veiled references, but in the final paragraph, Bhutto said that he could now tell the American Embassy that the "party was not over."

I was watching television and when Bhutto made that comment, I quickly ran for a notebook because I recognized that Bhutto's words would have to be reported to Washington that night. Toward the end of the speech, Howie came in, dripping wet from his squash game.

The Bhutto reference was to a telephone conversation that had taken place a couple of weeks earlier between the Consul General in Karachi and us. He had called our house at about midnight and said: "The party is over." He was referring to a social occasion that had just ended; it included all the leading journalists of Karachi. The Consul General had waited for the party to break up so that he could talk to the journalists about what was going on. When he called us, he was reporting elliptically on his findings. He said something along the line that "the goods may be exported in our direction." Howie interpreted that as an indication that Bhutto might be trying to leave the country. So, after thanking the GC for his information, Howie called the DCM to tell him that Karachi had just reported that "the party is over." That was a literal statement but misunderstood by the Pakistani secret service which was monitoring our phones. It has become a footnote in Pakistani history.

This episode changed my view on wiretapping because had the CG been more plainly spoken, none of the consequences of his phone call would have ensued. If he had just said that there was a rumor that Bhutto was leaving Pakistan, it would have been far less quotable. Once the story became known to the Pakistani intelligence community, it was almost certain to follow that US representation generally and Howie specifically would be in some kind of trouble. Two days after that conversation, we received a cable from Washington informing us that the Political Counselor position in New Delhi had been vacant for a month, and that the Department was proceeding to assign Howie to it unless he had some very serious and compelling reasons to the contrary. I had always thought that the two episodes were a happy coincidence, until one day I found out that Denis Kux, then the India country director had come to the conclusion that Howie had to be reassigned - the sooner the better.

That Bhutto speech was a watershed for my relations with the Pakistanis. The Department's cable transferring Howie arrived in the early part of May; Howie was on the plane to Delhi five days later. He had come to the same conclusion as Kux; the quicker departure the better - before the Pakistanis had word of his reassignment, allowing them to kick Howie out, putting his career potentially in some jeopardy. So Howie and I flew to Delhi, but I came back three days later. During that week, people whom we had known well for three years, avoided us. The DCM had a "farewell" party for Howie; the only Pakistani who showed up was a junior official from the American desk of the Foreign Ministry. It was very clear that all Pakistanis had been instructed to boycott the party.

We had to pass through Lahore to catch the Delhi flight. A friend of twenty years standing refused to see us. When I returned to Islamabad, the "deep freeze" was still on for all Americans. Bhutto was blaming the U.S. for his troubles. One day, when I came home for lunch, I noticed an old car, which I did not recognize, parked outside the house. When that car was there an hour later, I called our security officer to report this event. The car did belong to the Pakistani security services and I was told that I should stay in the house. In addition, the press became rather nasty. I remember that on one Saturday a column written by H.K. Burki appeared in the Pakistan Times. It included several snide remarks about Howie's departure; he also went on to mention that there was a rumor that Howie was actually the head CIA man in Pakistan. He went on to notice that my previous overseas posting had been to Israel; that I "claimed" to be working for the American Department of State. This was the first time that someone had taken notice of one of my previous assignments; I had never tried to hide the fact, but didn't make it a major subject for discussion either. So my tour in Israel was known to a number of Pakistanis who never seemed to let that interfere with our relationships.

On the day that the article appeared, I went to the Embassy to check the cable traffic. The DCM asked me whether I wanted to join Howie right away. There was nothing I would have liked better, but I was the only officer in the Economic Section at the time and furthermore, I was not going to be driven out of town by H.K. Burki. After that article, I changed my practices and appeared at every national day party to which I had been invited. Many people approached me to ask whether I was still "in circulation." I assured them that I was.

I was uneasy when I noticed the Pakistani security services sitting outside our house - mentioned earlier. But it only happened once; I think they had some inhibitions about harassing American officials. I remained in Islamabad for two more months - until mid-July. Howie visited us twice during this period. The second time was on the Fourth of July week-end. Art Hummel had arrived as the new Ambassador in late June. He was very eager to have Prime Minister Bhutto attend our national day reception and put the recent unpleasantries behind us. Hummel made his wishes known. Bhutto at this time was in the midst of intense negotiations which, if they failed, would mean the end of his stewardship. But on July 3, Hummel got a call from the Foreign Ministry telling him that the PM most likely would show up the following day for our national day. The Ambassador waited and waited for the confirmation call; finally at 11:30 p.m. he did get a call and drove down to Rawalpindi to the PM's office. He had a meeting which Art thought had gone quite well - the PM confirmed that he would attend the Fourth of July party. So Hummel came back and drafted a reporting cable to Washington.

On the Fourth, I took Howie to the Embassy to meet Hummel, who was most courteous. He showed us his reporting cable written earlier that morning, which in addition to summarizing his conversation with the PM noted that things had gotten off to a pretty good start, which would be useful for future developments. Hummel decided that he didn't want to call a communicator to the Embassy; the cable could wait for the following day.

We had already been invited to the Forth of July party, which was to take place around noon. Howie was asked to take his old job as "VIP spotter." In Pakistan, there was a custom that VIPs - particularly the PM - who came to a reception would sit in an anteroom and the more important guests would be brought to him or her. Howie and Arnie Raphel had undertaken to be the VIP spotters for this Fourth of July reception. The PM came; General Zia, the Army Chief of Staff, and the President came - he was a non-entity because that was his job. The toasts which were exchanged could have been given at any national day - full of banalities. During the reception, Raphel approached General Zia to ask him whether he wanted to visit the PM. Zia said that he did not think that was necessary. Then Arnie asked whether he could call on Zia later in the day; the General said that he would be sort of busy that day. [Arnold Raphel had already become quite close to General Zia during this tour as a political officer in Pakistan. He returned to Pakistan as Ambassador during the last part of Zia's long presidency. It is no small irony that both men were killed together in a still unexplained plane crash in July, 1988.]

After the end of the reception, Howie packed up and was heading back to Delhi. At Lahore, during a long layover, he met an opposition leader, Jennifer Musa, an Irish woman who had married some one from Baluchistan and had been very much involved in opposition politics. She just happened to be at the airport and they met. After their conversation, Howie boarded his plane to Delhi. The next morning, when we woke up, we were told that General Zia had moved against Bhutto during the night - that must have been the reason he would not see Raphel. Bhutto was taken into "protective custody." This event tells you something about Islamabad because no one knew anything until the actual deed took place.

As long as we are discussing the Bhutto family, let me mention Benazir. In the mid-1970s she was a student at Oxford. She had just graduated from Harvard where she was a year behind my brother, Frank Currie; they lived in the same house. They were good friends and kept in touch for a long time after graduation. When Benazir visited Washington after becoming Prime Minister, she invited Frank to a reception that she hosted. I saw her only once or twice in Pakistan - she was there very little - mostly for summer vacations. When I did see her, she was very friendly. We talked a little bit about Frank and about Harvard. She was very careful about following Pakistani Muslim practices while in country - she was dressed properly, although in those days she did not cover her head. She was certainly lively.

No one at the time expected that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto would be executed; therefore Benazir was not seen as a future PM. Both of her brothers were still alive. The youngest was a senior in the American School in Islamabad when we first arrived. To his family's consternation, Harvard would not accept him - his grades were not good enough; besides that, he had earned the reputation at school as a slacker. His two sisters and the other brother had gone to Harvard, making the plight of the youngest child that much more difficult.

Benazir was always considered to be the apple of her father's eye. She was probably the brightest of all of the children; she got by on her brilliance, rather than her student diligence.

Once Bhutto was executed, his older son had to leave Pakistan during the Zia tenure. He became involved with a radical political group. In the early 1980s, it became apparent that Benazir was the likely heir to the Bhutto mantle. She was in and out of exile or house arrest. If one has read her book and/or talked to her - whether she was in or out of power - one can see how strongly she felt about continuing her father's mission. She said that she had learned politics at her father's knee. In reality, however, she had learned politics from her father's legend. Most of the time he was in office, she was not in the country. She did work with him at the UN - Harvard gave her time off to do that. So she saw how her father operated internationally, but she could not have observed his domestic politics very much - at least at close range. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto practiced a unique style of politics in Pakistan; it had to be seen at close hand to be understood. He did not use a gentle approach. I think because of her absences from Pakistan, Benazir developed an idealistic view of her father which was not necessarily based on hard facts.

Q: In 1977, you moved with Delhi for reasons already described. Was there any curiosity in Delhi about your transfer?

SCHAFFER: There was a noticeable absence of inquiries on what happened in Pakistan, both from our colleagues and our Indian contacts. That was helpful.

As soon as I had arrived, I reported for duty to the Science Advisor's office. The Ambassador was Bob Goheen, former President of Princeton University. He had been educated in India because his parents had been missionaries there. His daughter had been a classmate of mine during high school and college.

The first DCM I worked for was David Schneider; he was followed by Arch Blood. My immediate boss was Tom Varevalobich. Tom was a rocket scientist; he had worked on the space program at a jet propulsion laboratory. He was the Counselor for Scientific Affairs, but reported to the Economic Counselor. He was eminently qualified for the position because he had spent two years at Indian Institute of Technology at Kamper at a time when the U.S. assistance was being provided that institution. A number of the donors selected a technological institute to support and the U.S. chose the Institute of Technology at Kamper. At the time I arrived, he was very friendly with Dhawan who was the head of the Indian space program; that friendship may indeed have first developed in graduate school.

I said that the Science Office was part of the Economic Section. It had been part of the Political Section, which had responsibility for following nuclear development in India. The change was made to accommodate the Schaffers, so that I would not be working even indirectly for Howie. I think that in either organizational structure, the supervision of the Science Counselor was very relaxed; neither the Political or Economic Counselors gave very close supervision to the Science Counselor. Certainly the Economic Counselor did not spend much time on scientific affairs.

The whole Embassy was somewhat different from organizational structures with which I was familiar. For example, technically I was working for the Department of Health and Human Services (HEW). My position had been filled by that Department as far back as anyone can recollect; my salary was paid by HEW. Tom's position on the other hand was part of the State Department's complement, but in the Delhi structure, I reported to him.

A lot of my responsibilities were related to projects in the scientific-technological area which had been originally funded by excess rupees generated by our PL-480 program - which had been a huge resource. There were different local currency accounts; one of those was designated for funding of cooperative research between India and the U.S. India was not the only country which funded many projects through PL-480, but most of the innovative uses for the local currencies stemmed from India. Much of the research was done by the Indian health agencies. Most of my contacts were with the health bureaucracy.

The Indian bureaucratic system was and is cumbersome. That is true pretty much across the board. The project approval process is very long; they have a clearance process that makes ours look efficient. In the case of health research, there was special concern about the acceptability of the project to the Indian population. On several occasions, senior scientists supported a proposal whole-heartedly, but they had to clear it with the Ministry of Finance, the Foreign Office, the assistance agency and in some cases, the Home Ministry. They had try to convince these bureaucrats not to object. So to get a new project approved tended to take a long time.

Actually, the most interesting example of this process was a project not in the health field. NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) - a part of the Department of Commerce - had a major project titled MONEX (Monsoon Experiment.) This was part of the first world-wide weather experiment - global atmospheric research program (GARP). The NOAA people wanted to come to India during the monsoon season to conduct a number of experiments. They wanted to base an aircraft in Delhi which could take atmospheric soundings, to assign a TDYer to supervise the project, and to measure ocean temperatures - although that part of the experiment did not require Indian participation since NOAA had its own ships well outside the territorial limits. The Embassy was requested to make the necessary arrangements. This involved us with a whole new part of the bureaucracy - the Meteorological Office. That Department was fully supportive; they saw the benefits that might accrue to India from the American project. They hoped that the findings might improve their predictive capabilities. But the proposal included a number of unusual requests. We, as Americans are wont to do, proceeded in typical legal fashion. The State Department and NOAA were anxious to have a "Memorandum of Understanding" which would spell out the terms under which the project would operate. One of the more complicated requests related to the special aircraft, but technically, when it took off to take soundings, it was leaving India and when finished its experiments would have to re-enter India. That required at least multiple entry visas; preferably visa requirements might have been waived as well as a customs waiver for the aircraft, which was loaded with scientific equipment. The problem that we had anticipated - access for Indian scientists to the data collected by NOAA - was taken care of very early and never did raise its head. But there were many other agencies that had to put their fingers in the pie. Someone drafted the memorandum; as I recall it, it was very long, filled with "whereas's". This had to be reviewed by the government's legal staff, especially the legal advisor to the Minister for External Affairs. The difference in time between Washington and Delhi was useful in this case. When I got to the office in the morning, I could expect a cable proposing some language changes. I would take those to the legal division, who would in turn give me their proposed changes. I would send those to Washington who would review them while I slept - although I did have a couple of phone calls at unusual hours.

On one day - an Indian holiday - we got a zinger. There was a clause that seemed to be quite innocuous; it turned out to be quite the opposite. It was a liability clause and included a reference to applicability of U.S. law to this project. I took it to the Ministry, where the Legal Advisor happened to be in his office despite the holiday - despite the fact that I was recovering from amoebas. The Legal Advisor read the proposed language and said he could not agree unless he had a memorandum from the Department's Legal Advisor spelling out what the pertinent section of U.S. law might be. He ended the conversation by asking that I query Washington to see whether that clause was really necessary - in light of his threat to require additional information and a prolonged review period. Fortunately, our lawyers agreed to delete that clause.

Unlike my predecessor, who was a PhD scientist from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), my only science background was the inevitable course taken to fulfill the science requirement in college. I did not find my lack of background to be a major impediment. I was quite forthright about my lack of knowledge; people seemed to accept that I was a Foreign Service Officer who could provide good liaison between the two scientific groups - Indian and American. Furthermore, by the end of my tour, I had become quite familiar with some issues - including some that were important to our cooperative program and also of personal interest to me. For example, I became quite familiar with malaria and its eradication and contraceptive research. I think I achieved a level of familiarity with those programs which gave me considerable credibility. I could summarize accurately the status of research on those subjects, as well as others. I knew the issues involved, although I did not pretend to be scientifically qualified.

An interesting story about my not having a Ph.D. has to do with an American colleague. During an inspection of Embassy Delhi, one of the inspectors was Felix Bloch - before he became well known. I first met Felix at a "meet the Inspectors" party - probably at the DCM's or the Administrative Counselor's house. Felix was assigned to review the work of the Science Office, including an interview with me, since I was technically in an out-of-State assignment. I introduced myself to Felix. His immediate response was that he heard about me and some of the comments had been negative.

That was an inauspicious start. I decided to seek an early appointment with Felix. I got one and at the appointed time, I went to the office Bloch was using. The conversation had only begun when I reminded him of his comments at the party. I asked what the problem was. He told me that his information had come to him from his wife, who worked at the National Science Foundation - or similar organization. She had told him that there was unhappiness in the NSF because I had been up front about my lack of a Ph.D. I told Felix that it was all true; I didn't have a Ph.D. and saw no reasons to hide the fact. Furthermore, I thought it important for my contacts to understand my background, especially since I was in contact with scientists that were on the cutting edge. I could provide good administrative and liaison services; that seemed enough for my contacts. I thought it was important not to misrepresent myself.

Felix's comment was that some quarters in Washington felt that I should have been more discreet. In light of his subsequent history, that was an interesting suggestion. [Felix Bloch was accused of espionage in 1989. The case never went to trial.]

Our office made connections between Indian and American scientists, tried to shepherd projects through the Indian approval process, and tracked them and followed their reporting requirements once they wee approved. We also supported visiting American scientists, when they came to explore the possibility of finding an Indian partner or to consult with their counterpart.

We also were the action office for the Indo-US Subcommission on Science and Technology. That commission met a couple of times during my Delhi tour. Its main function was to provide policy guidance to the various joint research efforts. As it so often happens, the policy guidance was broad enough to encompass almost all proposals.

I kept contact with senior officials in the Indian Health Ministry and the ministry that received the American assistance funds, as well as the leading researchers in the Indian Council for Medical Research and the All-Indian Institute for Medical Sciences. I traveled around the country, visiting many of the leading health institutions. Tom worried about other research activities, particularly those in the space program. If we had visitors who might have needed escorting or more assistance that my staff and in usually provided, we did provide that, even if some of the work could be have been done by travel agencies.

The vast majority of people I was dealing with wanted projects to succeed. They were all senior level officials. That was an interesting feature of my unusual role in the Embassy. The Indian Foreign Office was very particular about what the rank of visitors might be. Relatively junior officers like me would never be received by senior officials of that Ministry. Its rule was the Joint Secretaries - the rough equivalent of deputy assistant secretaries in our system - would only receive people at the Counselor or higher level. In my case, I had no reason to work with the Foreign Ministry, but I had routine access to Secretaries - the rough equivalent of our Under Secretaries - of the Ministries which were of interest to me. They didn't care that I was only a First Secretary.

A couple of years ago, when my son was at Columbia University, he had a graduate assistant in one of his economic courses. That was an Indian who was the son of the Secretary of the Health Ministry when I was in Delhi. The assistant asked my son whether he was related to Teresita Schaffer; he said his father remembered her from her work of twenty-five years earlier. That was very rewarding.

Where we were helpful was not in the commentary we might have had on scientific issues - American or Indian scientists obviously had a better background for that. We were most useful in finding ways to engage the Indian bureaucracy. That is a science in itself, although no advanced degrees are granted to experts in this field. There is a system - a very elaborate system with some aspects of chaos - which I finally learned. It was our responsibility to be able to follow a paper trail and know who would have to "sign off" on proposals. We knew which officials were friendly and which were difficult; what each senior official was interested in; what sensitivities might exist on Indian-American scientific cooperation. During this time, it was not uncommon to have sudden eruptions of controversy over certain scientific endeavors. For example, in the 1960s and early 1970s, there had a couple of projects that became passionately controversial. It was alleged that we were giving yellow fever to some mosquitoes and then releasing those carriers on certain parts of India. That was a pure canard, but it was typical of the controversies that might arise at any time from some innocent project. It should be noted that these disturbances were always generated by political forces that were trying to blacken the U.S.' reputation.

I was somewhat lucky in that during my tour, not many new controversies arose. I had inherited some old "chestnuts" that became active. There is one interesting one which did came up during my tour which concerned some work being done on monkeys. Manufacturing polio vaccine required rhesus monkeys, which could be found only in India and Nepal. So a supply of monkeys was needed by the National Institute of Health. The International Primate Protection League, an American organization, which was strongly opposed to the use of primates for research purposes, took up the cudgels on this issue. It got in touch with like-minded spirits in India and Nepal. This group created a sufficiently vocal outcry that the Nepalese Government banned the export of these monkeys. The Indians also considered restrictions. NIH of course became alarmed and sent a senior official - Dr. Ben Blood (whose son subsequently joined the Foreign Service) - to Delhi. He reached a somewhat vague understanding with the Indians which left many questions unanswered. The issue had extraordinary resonance in India. Not only was the issue ripe for those who wanted to smear US-Indo scientific relations, but more importantly monkeys represent spiritual and ritual values dear to Hindu hearts. In one tradition, one of the important deities appears as a monkey, in one of its manifestations. So monkeys appear in a classic epic which are so central to the Hindu religion. Monkeys had a level of Indian respect that was not accorded to other animals.

This monkey issue had been around for many years before my arrival - ever since the polio vaccine was developed. So although the issue had been around for many years, it all of a sudden became a hot potato.

I came away from that assignment with a mixed feeling about the science programs. I felt that some useful research was done; there were undoubtedly some marginal projects in part because the U.S. agencies did not view available rupees as a scarce resource. It was a complicated process, because some of the rupees were actually appropriated by the U.S. Congress. Some of the projects required a dollar appropriation which, however, were spent in rupees. Dollar appropriations were hard to come by; the rupee appropriations were viewed quite differently by executive agencies and the Congress.

Some of the collaborative projects were quite fascinating. For example, we had some pharmacological research on traditional herbs; there was study - I think at Benares Hindu University - which attempted to use Western measuring techniques to assess the effectiveness of non-Western - e.g., yoga - therapeutic methods to cure stress-related diseases. The Indians were trying to measure results in ways which would make their findings significant to Western scientists.

We were often subjected to criticism that we carried out research in India which could not have taken place in the U.S. I don't believe that during my time that was done at all. The Indians were very sensitive on this score. If I remember correctly, this accusation was made against one program which dealt with the prevention of cataracts. Cataracts are a frequent occurrence in India, with its very bright sunny days and the lack of adequate medical attention for many people. It was - and is - not unusual to have "eye camps" where people with cataracts came to have them removed. One of our projects called for the shipment of these removed cataracts to the U.S. for research. There were many questions concerning "why Indians and not Americans?" I was satisfied that the accusations had no merit. The removal of the cataracts was of benefit to the Indian patients and did not represent an imperialistic attitude. The main reason why the project was established in India was because so many Indians had cataract problems. I was not aware of any pressure having been applied to Indians to undertake unnecessary surgery; it would have been foolish to do so in light of the vast need for such surgery.

In essence, I had no problems with any of the projects we were undertaking. With the rare exception of some "boondoggles", I thought the projects with which I was familiar were worthwhile and designed to increase human knowledge. NIH sponsored research was based on protocols which demanded that the experiments in India use the same standards as if they were conducted in NIH. I am not sure that had always been the case, but it certainly was during my tour. As you can well imagine, the Indian government was very careful, given its population sensitivities about being treated as "guinea pigs." So it gladly accepted the NIH protocols.

I might just mention President Carter's visit in 1978. It was 47 hours, 45 minutes long! The Carters were programmed for every minute of that time. The program for a presidential visit indicates what is to be done in 3-5 minute increments. Every second is accounted for. I was in charge of Mrs. Carter's program. The stated reason I was given this assignment was her interest in social welfare issues; we had the best Embassy contacts with that community. I was also the only female member of the country team, which I think may have been the real reason for my selection.

My whole experience with a trip by a First Lady was fascinating. First came the pre-visit planning. I had never been involved in a presidential visit and the planning was an eye-opener. One member of the White House's advance team represented Mrs. Carter. The advance team was quite nice. I talked to one colleague who had been through the Nixon visit to Poland; he thought that the contrast between the two White House staffs could not have been greater. The Carter people could say "Please" and "Thank you" which apparently were foreign words to the Nixon crowd.

The Carters originally planned to come in November 1977, but sometime in October, the White House asked for a postponement and scheduled the visit for New Year's Day. We first had a pre-advance team, then an advance team and then the visit itself. The Embassy was asked to submit a schedule for the President, for the First Lady and for the Carters together. We did and proposed a number of events. The events that we did propose for Mrs. Carter were approved and were built in her final schedule.

I particularly remember two events. One was a luncheon to be hosted by Mrs. Goheen. I wanted to include in the guest list people with considerable substance in Mrs. Carter's fields of interest, who all happened to be women. We also suggested to the advance team that Mrs. Carter visit a community center in Delhi which had a lot of interesting programs for young people. After we sent these suggestions to Washington, we didn't hear for week after week, despite our periodic reminders. Silence!

Entirely unrelated to the Carter visit we hosted Mary King, the Director of the Peace Corps. We had been told that she was a close friend Rosalynn Carter. I was the escort officer for Ms. King primarily because she wanted to see what was being done by the Indians in the health field. So I took the opportunity to discuss our problem with Ms. King. After a meeting, in the Embassy car that we were using, I told her the state of play and how much we needed help to move Mrs. Carter's program forward. I told her that we had not heard anything from Washington in months and wondered whether we had taken the right approach. I asked Ms. King whether our selection of possible events might be of interest to Mrs. Carter. I got a funny look from her. She said that Mrs. Carter would like our suggestions, but her staff would hate them. I then asked what could be done to bring this matter to a close. Ms. King volunteered to see what she could do about it.

Eventually, again after a prolonged period, the White House permitted us to proceed with the planning of the visit including the events that we had proposed. So we put together the guest list for the luncheon. It was an A-level list. For example, we had Ela Bhatt, who was internationally famous for having organized rag-pickers into a union in Bombay. There was one woman who had been one of Gandhi's collaborators; she was also a very interesting newspaper columnist. So all of the guests had serious credentials in one field or another.

Just before Mrs. Carter landed, the Prime Minister asked to have his daughter invited to the luncheon. We agreed. A few days earlier, I had heard from the traveling party that it wished press representatives - one Indian and one American - to be included. I suggested the Los Angeles Times correspondent - Sharon Rosenhouse, who was Delhi based - and Rami Chhabra, who was a prominent female columnist for a number of the Indian papers. Her main topics were social issues, which I thought that Mrs. Carter would be interested in. There followed a lot of communications between us and the White House; finally we were instructed to invite The New York Times correspondent - Bill Borders - and a representative of the India wire services. He turned out to be one of the "mousiest" guys I have ever met.

So at the table, there sixteen high powered women; the journalists, both men, got each end of the table. In the course of preparing this luncheon, I was told that I could not be included at the table, but that I could listen in on the conversation which was to take place after lunch. The purpose for inviting the reporters of course was to get good press coverage. Bill Borders, who was very congenial and a good reporter and who has risen in The New York Times ladder, told me ahead of time that he had never covered a lady's luncheon. I assured him that the women were experts in their fields and could answer any substantive questions that he might have. He called me in the evening after the luncheon - he was a "pool" reporter for the luncheon who had to post for public view his story. His only question was how one spelled "pomegranate" - the juice of which had been served at the luncheon. So his story went into great depth about the yellow roses and silver elephants that he found on the table, spectacular saris and pomegranate juice. I thought that was outrageous!! I really resented the superficiality of the report since I had worked so hard to make the luncheon as substantive as possible; I thought that people would view the whole event as having backfired.

The same thing happened at another event - a press interview which Mrs. Carter's staff asked to be set up. They would screen the reporters who wished to attend. They selected five Indian journalists - all very reputable. In briefing these journalists, the staff pointed out that Mrs. Carter was not a "Women's Page" type. She was a "person of substance" prepared to discuss foreign policy as well as domestic issues. Unfortunately, that stimulated these journalists to ask questions about Latin American and the Middle East. She gave non-answers - quite properly, I think. She realized that for her to express an opinion on these issues would have made headlines around the world, which would not have been very helpful to her husband and his administration. Toward the end of the interview, someone raised a question about care for the elderly. Then she expressed her views - some of which were quite interesting. Those insights were very quotable - interesting and "substantive." But unfortunately, that discussion only lasted for about five minutes and was overshadowed by the other topics. I thought Mrs. Carter's staff had missed a golden opportunity not only to "show case" Mrs. Carter, but also to have on the record her views on issues which were of great interest to the Indian audience.

Despite my comments about the Carter visit, I must say that I did not encounter in my tour many prejudices about women in foreign affairs. Of course, there are always individuals who for one reason or another have a closed mind on this question - they think women's minds are made of mush. There were some men I called on who were somewhat surprised by the visit of a woman FS officer. After the initial shock, they seemed to be able to figure out what to do with me. But in general, I did not notice much prejudice. In some respect, that reflects the nature of my contacts. Many were Indian women who were involved in interesting things. As a general statement, I would say that women professionals have to learn to compensate for some of these prejudices. I think it was somewhat easier for me to work in India than in Pakistan, partly because the Indians were accustomed to woman leadership - i.e. Mrs. Gandhi - but also because, in general, urban sophisticated Indian society is open-minded on this issue.

All in all, the Carters' visit was useful. The impact was rather mixed. The visit became almost instantly a "cause" because of an unfortunate incident. A photo op was set up for the President and his principal advisors after they had finished their meeting with the Indian Prime Minister and his Cabinet. Unfortunately, the microphone sitting in front of Carter had not been turned off. So his confidential discussions with a member of his staff could be overheard by a audience. He said that he thought that "a very cold, firm letter should be sent to them." That quote was blared in the press the next day, which was not at all helpful to the President's purposes.

In other respects, the visit was a memorable and colorful event. Good Presidential visits can capture the imagination of the indigenous population. I should mention here another aspect of the visit which I found very interesting. There was at least one slip between the principals and the staff. We had been urging the staff to program the President to visit a village. Vajpayee tried to dissuade the President, but in light of Carter's own background and his mother's service in India, we thought such a visit was a natural. The White House staff was very opposed; they were afraid that that the village would be nothing but dust and dirt. Goheen, as a precaution, asked the Embassy staff to identify a number of villages that might be appropriate for a Presidential visit. The Agricultural Attachï¿½ was deeply involved; I think he had a village in mind before the question was even raised. Soon after the Carters landed, the President went for a walk in the gardens of the Prime Minister's residence. The Prime Minister was said to have told Mr. Carter that he just had to see a typical Indian village. Carter readily agreed. So the village visit became part of the program. At 5:30 a.m. the next morning, the advance team, which included my husband, went to a village near Delhi. They prepared the way for the visit. On the following morning, President Carter and his entourage showed up in this village. The White House could not have imagined the photo ops that this visit generated; the village was very colorful. The Carters were greeted like royalty; they had a red mark put on their foreheads; they were draped with garlands and bright red shawls. The mist was still rising over the village making for a very wonderful romantic background. The Carters got the grand tour of the village, which had been selected because it was not too much of a show-case, but nevertheless was interesting. The most interesting feature of this village was a bio-gas processor, which provided the village with a steady source of fuel. The good news was that, because the visit was not planned very much in advance, there was no attempt made to change the nature of the village. All the Indian government had time to do was to level off a field at the edge of the village for a parking area. Presidential attention to this village - or any other - pays considerable dividends in that it captures the imagination of both Indian and American publics.

Carter also gave a speech at the Ram Lila grounds, which is one of the premier public assembly places in Delhi. A huge crowd gathered there; I think I can fairly say, that with the exception of the open mike incident, the visit had a positive impact on US-India relations. Carter developed a personal bond with the Indian leaders which is always the hope on these trips. Unfortunately, the basic policy issue remained unresolved - for a number of years after the visit.

As I said, my assignment as Mrs. Carter's "sherpa" provided me an opportunity to see the Ambassador frequently. I would brief on the status of our planning and he would make some very helpful suggestions. He wanted to make sure that the visit would go well. I also had meetings with Mrs. Goheen, who was the hostess at the lunch I described earlier. She was not involved in reviewing Mrs. Carter's every step, but she was always available if we needed her. Both Goheens are wonderful people - very approachable, low key. So the Embassy staff never had any problems knocking on their doors for advice and ideas.

I always thought that during my tour, Bob Goheen's finest hour - within the American community - was when he was confronted by a suicide by a young Marine Guard. That event was deeply unsettling to the Embassy community and especially the other Marines. Allegedly, this Marine took the ultimate step because he had an altercation with his girl friend while he was standing watch; he then called another Marine to cover his post then went outside the Embassy and shot himself. We had a memorial service in the Embassy, presided by Goheen. Since the dead man was military, there was a certain amount of spit and polish to the ceremony, including the first row filled by the Marines and an empty chair. Goheen was the son of missionaries; he himself was a classics scholar who was also a professor and then President of Princeton University. He was somewhat shy, but on the occasion of the memorial service, he spoke with tremendous dignity, using quotations from Greek and other classical sources, which created an atmosphere of respect and humanity. He also wrote a personal note to the parents of the Marine. The Ambassador was not a politician - slapping backs and kissing babies - but someone who rose to the occasion when the community needed to mend quickly.

I have been asked from time to time what special challenges a Foreign Service Officer meets when he or she is married to a Foreign Service Officer. In our case, this was not a problem. Both Howie and I had professional jobs which satisfied us. Mine, as I have mentioned earlier, was a little unusual for an FSO, but it was very educational because it got me involved in areas that a normal assignment would never have touched. That was fun. Indian household help was plentiful and competent. We lived ten minutes from the Embassy allowing me to go home for lunch to see the kids who were still quite young. We had a wonderful Indian nursing school within walking distance from the house. Howie had been in India for six years during an earlier period - before we were married. That made it much easier to establish relations since many of our contacts had known Howie from his previous tour.

Of course, my workload was quite heavy, not only with my Embassy job, but also as the hostess of the Schaffer household and mother of two young boys. It was a very busy schedule. The kids were sent to an Indian nursery school, which used primarily English as the instruction language. There was a class for Hindi, which my oldest son attended and learned to read children's books - as well as the English texts. One of the most memorable recollections I had is their appearance in the school's Ramayana play. The school enrolled kids between the ages of 2 ï¿½ and six. Ramayana is one of the great Indian epics. Every year the school put on this dramatic production. It was pantomime; the kids did not speak, but there was an oral narrative provided by a faculty member. It was a spectacular presentation. My younger boy, who at the time was 3 ï¿½ was a town's person - like most of the younger children. He was dressed in a white "Kurta pyjama" - long embroidered shirt and slightly tight pants. My oldest son, then five, had a big part. He was Lakshman, the King's brother. He wore a series of elaborate costumes because the story is very complicated and involved. The old King dies and is succeeded by Ram who marries Sita, but then he has to go off to war, leaving his wife with his brother. The brother draws a magic circle around Sita's tent to protect her from evil spirits. Sita was of course elaborately dressed - a five year old bedecked in a yellow sari. Sita is captured by the demon Ravana and rescued by monkey King Hanuman. It was one of the most wonderful kids' dramatic performances I have ever witnessed. It was performed at the school which was housed in a building with a roof, but no wall, on the grounds of a villa near us. The classrooms were essentially little alcoves which were protected from the rain, but open to the elements otherwise. Schools closed on heavy rainy days because the courtyard would be flooded and then very muddy - one couldn't get easily to the classroom. I still have some great still shots from that play.

Delhi was and is a very busy city; there is always a lot going on. As we did in Pakistan, we frequently mixed guest lists; we would have some people who worked with Howie and some who worked with me. I think this process made for more interesting occasions since the conversation could, and did, range over a good number of subjects. As I suggested earlier, my role as hostess enabled me to establish contacts with people in such places as the Foreign Ministry who would have deigned only to see Counselors or above, but socially they would engage in conversations with me. So the tandem-couple concept worked quite well for us.

I had some relationship with AID, although not as much as I had in Pakistan. I worked mainly with the population staff. We had just resumed assistance to India, after a six year hiatus which began in 1971 as a consequence of the war. It was a very small program; we did not have a family planning program as such - to the best of my recollection - but we did have on the AID staff an officer - P. Balakrishnan - who was a real authority on family planning in general and on Indian efforts in particular. He subsequently emigrated to the U.S. and became an American citizen; I believe he now works for AID as an American officer. He was a first-rate professional whom AID managed to retain even when it had no family planning program. There was still considerable interest in Washington on reports about the Indian efforts; that gave me an opportunity to delve into the subject in some depth. I was particularly interested because I had just observed a rather tumultuous period in the Pakistani family planning program. I remember especially a trip I took with Gladys Gilbert, the American officer responsible for family planning issues in AID. We visited a training program for traditional midwives. I will never forget the one sentence which was the essence of the program. The gentleman who was running the educational part of the program explained to us in great detail all the knowledge they were trying to impart to these midwives. They were sitting in the shade of a tree; they were probably around fifty years old, but looked many years older. They were dressed in ragged saris, all hunched over with heads covered by scarves, heavy silver bangles draped around their arms, huge silver earrings; many were toothless or had many teeth missing. The educator explained how they were teaching these women such things as anatomy and physiology and the progress of pregnancy, including fetal development. At one stage, he stopped and leaned back on his chair and said something along these lines: "But you know, the one thing we really want them to remember is that before the baby is delivered, take off your bangles and wash your hands."

I found my two years in Delhi highly rewarding. I would have stayed on had we had a chance. In fact, we were expecting to stay for a third year; I would have loved it. My tour was wonderful and I had a great experience. I think my acquaintance with science programs was useful to me in subsequent assignments, especially when I was a deputy assistant secretary for South Asia and was trying to resolve the controversy surrounding a U.S. India agreement on scientific cooperation.

My experience in Delhi also made me quite skeptical of the idea that the Foreign Service can grow its own scientific specialists. This has been an issue for many years and has arisen again most recently. Conventional wisdom in some quarters is, that because science is becoming important in exponential leaps, it is important for the Foreign Service needs to have its own cadre of Foreign Service Science Officers. I accept the premise that science is the future, but draw the opposite conclusion. Even if the Department were able to recruit university graduates with degrees in one of the sciences, these officers would have trouble maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of what is going on in their field, much less in other scientific fields. Without that current knowledge, it is unlikely that the Foreign Service Officer could make much of a contribution. Raising your own scientists in the Foreign Service might well result in an officer unqualified to be either. The better model is to bring people into the Service for short tours. Tom Varevalobich may not have been best example, although he was quite knowledgeable having been a research scientist himself. But he could speak with his Indian counterparts with a credibility that no Foreign Service science officer could have engendered. Unfortunately, Tom never figured out how the Foreign Service worked. That was a major gap because that knowledge is important to anyone who wishes to make a contribution. He had to use people like myself to bridge the gap; so we had a reciprocal relationship; he explained the scientific factors involved and I helped him to understand the Department and the Foreign Service. That made us a pretty good team, all things considered.

I do think that the practice of bringing experts into the Foreign Service - for no more than five years - is probably the better option than "growing your own" or other possibilities. This program would enable the Department to be much more selective in its recruitment - i.e. find the "right" scientist for a particular position. For example, if the scientific area of interest in India was in physics, then you could recruit someone with a Ph.D. in that study. If there is an opening in Geneva concerned with the World Health Organization, then the Department might well seek someone with public health credentials. Or in Tokyo, perhaps a material scientist or an engineer might be more appropriate than a Ph.D. in chemistry. Of course, it is quite likely that the requirements of the job will vary from time to time, so that it will not always be filled by people with the same background. The short-term recruitment offers more flexibility in a fast moving subject area; bringing a scientist into the Foreign Service for a career will sooner or later turn him into a generalist thereby losing the great advantage of the flexibility necessary to follow a very active field. I have no doubt that some of the recruited scientists would turn out to be outstanding generalists with a plus based on their knowledge of a scientific area. But I suspect that those people were generalists at heart from the outset who brought that aspiration with them into the Foreign Service along with their scientific knowledge. We can always use generalists with an extra dimension. But if we need scientists, let's get them for a short tour because that is precisely what the Department needs.

Just some final thoughts about my two years in Delhi. I did learn to speak Hindi; that gave me a lot of enjoyment. The spoken language is almost identical with every-day Urdu. The language used in newscasts, for example, includes extraordinary words which makes it quite different from Urdu. I learned to read even though it was a different alphabet. I used Hindi a lot during my field trips to north India; I practically never used it with my government contacts - almost all of whom were from south India where an almost entirely different language is spoken. If there had been a useful vernacular, it would probably have been Tamil, which I did not learn.

Q: Then in 1979, you returned to Washington to become the deputy director for Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh (PAB), How did that assignment come about?

SCHAFFER: Initially, I was assigned as the deputy director of the office that handled Indian affairs. Howie has been assigned as PAB director. During the Spring of 1979, there was a shuffle in NEA with the former PAB director moved up and a new person was brought in to replace her. Then the decision was made that Howie should head up the India desk, rather than PAB. Since I couldn't work for Howie, another position had to be found for me. Howie was told that the India assignment was an offer he could not refuse. NEA had also asked the then deputy director of PAB whether he would be willing to move to the comparable position in the India office. That was all right with him; so he and I swapped jobs and I went to work in PAB. Both Howie and I were the logical candidates for any positions on the India desk or PAB. We were the right grade; we had the right "cone"; we had the desired background.

This is an excellent example of the assignment flexibility that is required to make tandem assignments workable. No one was harmed; it allowed me to continue in my chosen profession. This sort of flexibility has been lost; the assignment process today is much more regimented because it depends so heavily on the "bid" process. To undo an assignment becomes a major transaction today; even if an officer had informally been accepted for an assignment, there is no guarantee that it would necessarily happen. There are all kinds of rules about the extent of advance notification in bidding or unbidding and how the assignment panel must proceed. It is possible that today's process might have ended up with the same results as the assignment of 1979, but it would have been a much more nerve-wracking process; it could also of course have not ended as happily as it did in 1979. I am certain that for this particular set of 1979 assignments, it would have been much harder today to achieve the desired results.

I had some acquaintance with both Afghanistan and Bangladesh. We had visited the first in 1975 while stationed in Pakistan - with two small children. We drove through the Khyber Pass in a driving rain. The car stalled, but fortunately decided to try again. We crossed the border with our 1 ï¿½ year old chirping away in Urdu and the six week old having his lunch under my blouse. The Afghan guard was completely befuddled seeing only three people, but had four passports. Our efforts to explain that there really was a fourth passenger only flustered the guard. We drove to Kabul and spent a couple of days there and returned.

I had visited Bangladesh while serving in India. I went to Dhaka as the Science Attachï¿½ and Howie was with me. I was given the grand tour of the International Center for Diarrheal Diseases Research for Bangladesh (known as ICDDRB). This is the only international research effort in Bangladesh; it has done first class research in the field. It had been a cholera lab in an earlier incarnation. We also had the opportunity to go out on a river steamer; so we saw something of the country-side. We met all sorts of government people.

In fact, the PAB deputy director spent almost full time on Pakistan. I was the economic officer for that country, in addition to being an adviser on economic matters to the other desk officers. I carried the major part of the load in liaison with AID for all the PAB countries, but I think it is fair to say that I spent 95% of my time on Pakistan - in part dictated by the fact that 1979 was a year of crisis there. That was true even in my economic "hat" though we had no current program for Pakistan. We did have some projects that had been previously funded which were continuing. We still had an AID Mission in Pakistan; it takes AID a long time to close missions and program. And as I'll explain later, we spent innumerable hours worrying about the content of a new assistance package. There was also the question of rescheduling Pakistan's debt - an issue in which AID was vitally interested because some of it was debt to AID. As a practical matter, that also meant that we and AID worked very closely on economic assistance - current and prospective. Since I knew the assistance program and personalities in Pakistan quite well, I could contribute to the dialogue in a meaningful way.

To be entirely accurate, I have to note that the country directorates did not get involved in the assistance project proposals or even in the approval process. State would be involved if there were any major issues as well as approving the overall program framework and the funding level.

I worked for Robert Peck, who was the PAB country director. Jane Coon was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for South Asia. The Assistant Secretary was Hal Saunders, who was one of my professional heroes. He is an extraordinary person. He spent most of his time on Middle East issues; most of what was remaining was devoted to Iran and the hostage crisis. He did take enough time to assure himself that South Asia was properly followed. I clearly remember times that really capture the reasons for my admiration for Hal. The first time came when he was preparing to provide Congressional testimony on Pakistan. He had requested that we draft his opening statement; when that was done, he asked the drafter and others to stick around to discuss it with him. I happened to be given the task of drafting the statement. When we met in his office after 6 p.m. one evening, it was obvious that he had not had time to read the draft. When we had assembled, Hal, in his usual quite fashion, asked: "What do we really want to tell Congress?" When I heard that question, it seemed so obvious, but I also knew that very few people ever asked it. We went to work and developed some "sound bites" for him. Then we talked about some of the ancillary messages and the subtleties of the situation. Hal asked some questions, which we tried to answer. When he was satisfied, he thanked us; he asked me whether I needed to rewrite his statement. I told him that I surely did. He gave me back the draft and asked me to return it to him as soon as possible. It was a superb performance; here was an Assistant Secretary handling multiple crises, who was able to close his door and focus on Pakistan by getting down to the basic questions and at the same time, inspire his staff. We knew how busy he was; it was a rare insight into a very busy executive. He was obviously one of the most organized people I have even known.

The other example came right after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. A few newspaper reporters had asked for a briefing on the situation. Hal agreed to see them. They were requested to come to his office well after dark on a non-working day. We in PAB were exhausted after having worked a full day. Hal made his presentation, describing the situation. One of the reporters asked how many Soviet troops there were in Afghanistan. Hal patiently pointed out that we did not have an exact fix on the numbers, which he had admitted earlier. He gave the reporter a range, but pointed out that the exact number was not the key; the fact that a sovereign country had been invaded by another was the important issue. The reporter than in very snide way said: "You mean you asked us to come here at this hour on a holiday and you don't know the exact number of Soviet troops in Afghanistan?" In response, Hal very quietly asked whether the reporter didn't want to rephrase the question. The reporter then realized how preposterous his comment was. He rephrased the question and Hal responded very quietly with the range he had given before and emphasized again the key issue. He said that if the same question was asked again, he would respond to it in exactly the same words. It was the only time that I have heard Hal come close to losing his cool.

Hal's staff revered him. He was a very nice guy, gentle, always under control, who had a superb touch for human relations. As I was leaving the Bureau, he wrote me a personal note of thanks; that was both unusual and unnecessary, but he did take the time to do that.

I found the work very stimulating. I did not mind working in the large Washington bureaucracy. I was very happy to return to the field of economics - the subject in which I had received advanced training. My tour in the Science Office in Delhi was great, but I really welcomed the opportunity to return to my field of expertise. To the best of my recollection, the PAB directorate had six officers - four on desks - and 2-3 secretaries. Mike Hornblow worked on Pakistan political issues; Larry Benedict worked on Bangladesh; Ernestine Heck worked on Afghanistan and then there was one more officer in addition to Bob Peck and myself.

Our major issue with Pakistan concerned their nuclear program. That was followed by the spillover from the USSR invasion of Afghanistan. Those two problem areas had a major effect on our bilateral economic relationship. Just before I started to work in PAB, the U.S. had, for the second time, cut off assistance to Pakistan because of its efforts to develop a nuclear weapon. Pakistan has had a long history of economic challenges - particularly the balance-of-payments problem. We kept pretty close track of that problem.

Over the course of the Fall of 1978, Afghanistan had been through a succession of crises. A Communist government had already taken over; it was not a very cohesive institution because of internal tensions. In December 1979, one Communist leader was assassinated and replaced by another. A few weeks later, on Christmas Day, came the Soviet invasion. For about two weeks prior, we were receiving lost of information about Soviet military build-up along the Afghan border. I think it was clear to all that something was about to happen. We held a series of discussions in rapid succession with the Pakistani Foreign Minister - one before the invasion and two soon after. As it happened, Bob Peck was away for Christmas, leaving me in charge of PAB. At the highest level of our government, options for our response were being considered. One step that was taken was to dispatch Clark Clifford to New Delhi to brief the Indians on what was going on in Afghanistan and our thoughts about events there. Howie went along and I am sure you will find reference to that trip in his oral history. Clifford and he were the total delegation.

Before the Clifford party had a chance to take-off, Warren Christopher, then Deputy Secretary of State, made plans to go to Pakistan. But that soon became the "Brzezinski" delegation, with Christopher just a member of the delegation, and with enough members to fill a plane. So the Pakistan visit turned out to be highly visible - lots of limelight and headlines. It was on trip that an initial assistance package was offered General Zia; he rejected it calling it "peanuts" - a somewhat infelicitous phrase particularly in light of President's Carter affinity for peanuts. Despite this unauspicious beginning, in fact that trip became the starting point for U.S.-Pakistan cooperation on the Afghan issue.

Soon after the Brzezinski trip, we hosted a Pakistan delegation in Washington. That was headed by Agha Shahi, who had been the Foreign Secretary for many years. In light of his experience, he tended to operate as the Foreign Minister. He wanted to talk about US-Pakistan relations, the U.S. commitment to Pakistan and the effect that the Soviet presence in Afghanistan might have on our bilateral relations. We had an elaborate series of meetings - Secretary Vance spent a lot of time with Shahi and his delegation. I was the note-taker for the U.S. side in all of these meetings. The consultation did not result in any concrete operational results; we just promised to keep in touch. The most uncomfortable part of the discussion, in light of recent history, was about the U.S.'s commitment to Pakistan. In my view, this issue had been central to a dialogue which seemed to be at cross purposes for almost thirty years. We have had a number of alliance relationships with Pakistan, starting with the regional alliances like CENTO and SEATO. By 1979, neither organization was exactly robust. But in both cases, the U.S. view - as stated in words in a number of documents - was that we were interested in Pakistan primarily, if not exclusively, as a front line state in our fight against Soviet Communism. The Pakistani view, which probably reflected a lot of atmospherics at the time, was that the U.S. would be its supporter - no questions asked. Of course, Pakistan's perceived enemy was India. The fact that there were Soviets in Afghanistan really raised this difference of national objectives. My guess is that the Pakistanis were looking for a much more positive statement about our commitment to it than anyone was willing to give in 1979.

The second set of meetings, a few weeks later, followed roughly the same format as the first one, except that the Pakistani delegation was headed by Ambassador Yakub Khan, who was one of the most remarkable officials in the government. He is still around, even though he is getting on in years. He had been a general, and had then served as ambassador to almost every major country, including the U.S. and the USSR - which was the position he held when he was assigned to head this delegation. He is one of the most articulate, urbane and sophisticated people I have ever encountered. In 1979, the Ambassador was at the top of his game. Mike Hornblow was asked to meet Yakub Khan at the airport and then to drive him into the Department's parking lot in the basement. That was an effort to avoid as much press attention as possible. Mike had a particularly disreputable looking yellow VW at the time; it served well as a cover for the Pakistani.

After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, we made frantic efforts to restore aid to Pakistan, which had been suspended in the summer under the non proliferation bans then in place. At one point, I remember my phone ringing at 5:25 p.m. from the Secretariat; I as being asked to submit a memo by the end of the day to the Seventh Floor outlining what an assistance program to Pakistan might consist of, assuming that a $200 million appropriation was forthcoming. I called the former deputy director of our AID mission in Pakistan - he was working in Washington in AID. I suggested to him that the whole amount be spent on fertilizer. He suggested that half of the amount be devoted to roads; he told me that those funds too would be readily disbursed; that was good enough for me and I included a road construction program in my memorandum. It took us about fifteen minutes to spend $200 million - which was about the length of time it took me to type the memo. Of course, this was not real money; we had both the opposition Congress as well as Pakistani rejection of our offer.

The Pakistani visits were useful in achieving communications between the higher echelons of both countries. There was a frank exchange of views on the strategic situation, but few operational results. As I said, the Pakistanis were more concerned about India; we shared some worries about India in light of some very pro-Soviets statements about Afghanistan emanating from New Delhi. The Soviet statements on Afghanistan did nothing to allay our concerns; they certainly helped the Pakistani position.

We were not able to convince Congress to authorize the resumption of assistance. But we kept on working on different formulations on what an aid program might look like. The only possible way to get some supplement appropriations would have been for the President to make calls himself. The time was not opportune - this was April, 1980 and because the government was in the middle of one of its budgetary crises he turned down the suggestion. The bureaucratic machinery creaked along as it often does and by the time the recommendation went to the White House, the Soviets had already been in Afghanistan four months. Furthermore, there were other crises to worry about, notably the Iran hostages and the failed rescue mission, the Vance resignation, the advent of a new Secretary - Ed Muskie. The new Secretary had to face this Afghan can of worms, which would have been tough enough for a veteran, much less a newcomer.

I fully supported our attempts to restart an assistance program for Pakistan. I started with the assumption that our aid cut-off had been spectacularly ineffective in influencing the Pakistani nuclear development program. Furthermore, the internal situation had changed dramatically. For years successions of regimes had been voicing great concern about Communism - essentially to ingratiate themselves with us - by the end of the 1970s and early 1980s, Pakistan had a very good reason to worry about its security. The Soviet invasion had an unsettling effect on Pakistan's internal political problems.

I must mention another major event that had an effect on US-Pakistan relations. I refer to the attack on our Embassy in Islamabad. That certainly had an effect on our bilateral relations. It was a major catastrophe - four people were killed and many more seriously wounded - which had been totally unexpected. Islamabad was built to be riot proof. So no one expected what happened.

When the crowd began to assemble, it seemed to come primarily from the direction of the University, down the road from the embassy. There was some indication of Iranian supply of equipment to the rioters. The Ambassador and the DCM were not in the Chancery when the attack began; both were at lunches. The DCM went to the Foreign Ministry as soon as he was alerted, to demand that security protection be provided, as required by international law and practice. He was told that the whole police department was in Rawalpindi, about ten miles away, providing protection for President Zia's talk about the importance of austerity while he rode around on a bicycle. A few policemen did arrive and may have provided some assistance to people who had been eating in the Embassy Club, but it was a haphazard operation. The fire department and the military didn't show up until night-fall. The crowd finally dispersed, not under pressure from government forces, but because night was falling. By that time, it had set fire to the whole building. So the fact that our Chancery was assaulted and that Pakistani security forces did not come to meet their legal obligations until six or seven hours after the start of the disturbance, came as great shocks to us. It raised questions about the viability and competence of the Pakistani government, not to mention its attitude towards the U.S. I think there may have been some people in our government who suspected Pakistani government participation in the riot - or perhaps "benign neglect - ; but that didn't last very long. Our greater concern was not as much about involvement in the riot, but the degree of Schadenfreude that had taken place. It was at best evidence of major incompetence and at worst a sinister Pakistani plot.

Pakistani officials called and expressed their apologies. We told them in effect that we would send them the repair bill. The event certainly shook people up both here and in Pakistan; they were astonished. I think the government recognized that there were strains between our two countries; but a riot and mayhem - unthinkable, particularly in Islamabad.

The winter of 1979-80 was also the winter of the great evacuation. Our Embassy in Teheran, including some staff, was taken over by the Iranian "students" in early November. Much of our staff from there was also in Washington awaiting developments. On November 22, our Chancery in Islamabad was torched. I was actually in the Operations Center when Peter Constable, the NEA senior deputy assistant secretary, spoke to Ambassador Hummel in Islamabad. The Ambassador resisted efforts to evacuate his staff; he thought Washington was over-reacting (and I don't think Mrs. Hummel wanted to leave). Peter told him that the Secretary had issued instructions to evacuate most of the staff and the dependents and that was the way it was going to be. And that is what happened.

In the next two days, something happened in Libya putting our staff there at some risk. There were rumors that a demonstration against us might be mounted in Dhaka on the Friday after Thanksgiving. Ambassador David Schneider requested permission to keep the Embassy closed - an interesting sign of the times because a few years later an ambassador would have made that decision on his own authority. We have become so much more accustomed to crises that we now give ambassadors much more leeway that we did in the late 1970s. At that time, what was happening in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Libya were still rare occasions when all local US reactions had to be approved with Washington. I remember Hal Saunders turning very pale when he read the Secretary's instructions; he said if anyone wants to close down his or her embassy, they should go ahead. The U.S. could not stand any more assaults beyond the ones already suffered in Teheran and Islamabad.

As a result of all these incidents, sometime during the week after Thanksgiving, NEA was instructed to evacuate dependents from essentially all the post in the area, except India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka - all the non-Muslim countries. By the time we had evacuated our staffs and dependents, we had about 1000 people evacuated to the U.S. The Family Liaison Office was a very new organization; that meant that most of the work-load of supporting this large group fell to the regional bureau. We tried hard to provide good services to the evacuees and I noted that different evacuees behaved differently. The desk was very much involved with the evacuees from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Most of us had served in the area and had some feel for what it meant to have one's life disrupted - especially just before Christmas. We sent to the post a weekly newsletter to which any of the evacuees could contribute. We also sent messages from the post to loved ones in Washington.

The Pakistan evacuees organized themselves. They had pretty well agreed on a modus operandi by the time they arrived in Washington. They had a couple of people who took upon themselves to know where all of the evacuees would be; they published a newsletter which would circulate to their fellow evacuees. They tried to keep the group in contact with each other as much as possible. Evacuation is always a terrible experience, but I think the Pakistan evacuees did a marvelous job of minimizing the hardships.

On the other hand, the evacuees from the Persian Gulf states got much less support, and were less self-reliant. They came from small posts; there had been no crisis in their country of assignment. That made many of those evacuees wonder why they had been pulled out. Furthermore, the Department gave to the posts' leadership discretion to decide how many dependents must leave. In most cases, for example, the ambassador's wife was not evacuated. So the selection from several of these posts was quite arbitrary and focused on the junior staff members. Many of the evacuated staff did not accept that they had any reason to be evacuated. They tended to assign blame somewhere in Washington. They did not organize; the desks did little to support them. These evacuees became as bitter and disgruntled a group as I have ever seen. It shows what difference embassy leadership and cohesion as well as the Washington support system can make. It was a lesson to me.

The Afghan situation was a major policy focus in Washington. The U.S. decided to boycott the Moscow Olympics and made various efforts to get other countries to follow suit. There was intense interest in how the Afghan mujahideen were faring as they began to organize for resistance. It was clear that a covert program would sooner or later be mounted.

I had no reservations about our efforts to dislodge the Soviets from Afghanistan. I thought it was the right move. It could have been viewed as the "Cold War rearing its ugly head again." It might have heated up the atmosphere unless some precautionary steps were taken. I also thought that the prospect of another Soviet satellite in central Asia potentially quite destabilizing. With 20/20 hindsight, I think an evaluation of our Afghan policy is more complicated than it was in 1979/80. I think that everyone who was involved in development of our Afghan policies has some things to answer for. That country has been dragged through some very miserable times and is still suffering. But at the time, I fully supported our efforts and I am delighted that the Soviets are not in Afghanistan any longer.

I didn't spend much time on Bangladesh. We had a large assistance program there, but it seemed to be meetings its objectives. Every once in a while I assisted the desk officer on some problem or another, but those occasions were few and far between.

Q: In 1980, you moved to the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs (EB) ending up as Director of the Office of Trade. Why did move after only one year in the regional bureau?

SCHAFFER: Frances Wilson, the EB Executive Director, wanted me to move to EB. This was in a period before the "bid" system came into effect. I had gone to see her and had asked that I be kept in mind if there were any appropriate openings in her bureau. She asked me whether I would be interested in the Trade Office. I told her that I really did not know much about trade policy, but that I could learn it. She then suggested the Division Chief position of the unit that handled trade relations with developing countries. I recognized that moving so soon after entering PAB might not be viewed kindly by the personnel system, but the opportunity to be a division chief could not be passed over lightly. NEA was willing to let me go; so I transferred about a year ahead of normal rotational schedule.

I looked at EB as an opportunity. I had worked there before and felt comfortable with the subject matter, having been trained as an economic analyst, and with the people. I felt that my chances of getting a supervisory job was better in EB than in any other bureau.

There were six officers in the Division, including myself and two secretaries. All the officers were FSO's. We dealt with U.S. trade relations with developing countries. We were responsible for State's impact on relations with GATT. USTR was the lead agency on this issue. There were some unclear delineations of work because there were some issues that were handled by other divisions of the Trade Office, but in which we had a major interest. For example, food policy was handled by another division, even though it was a major component of our relations with developing countries. Then there was a series of special measures that the U.S. takes when a particular import becomes a political and economic problem for us. In our case, we were particularly interested in textiles; the lead unit in EB on this score was the Textile Division. We also had a division which handled special trade arrangements and issues - i.e. actions under Sections 201 and 203 of the Trade Act, safeguard actions, etc. We also a deep interest in some of the issues that this other division handled.

To a large extent, we were the intermediary between the Department and other agencies, most often USTR. I like to think that we were more than a postal service; we tried to find possible solutions to issues which had multiple interests, even in the Department. We had to take into account the interests of other agencies concerned with international trade. I had learned in my previous tour in EB that regional bureaus were always very reluctant to take actions which might have a negative impact on our relations with a specific country or set of countries. I used to say that there were two laws of diplomacy - I grandly called them Schaffer's Laws: a) visits by foreigners to the U.S. or US officials to other countries are always a success; b) it is always a "delicate time for our relations with X" (fill in any country's name). Schaffer's second law was certainly invoked often when it came to trade issues, as it had been in the finance field.

Within State, we had responsibility for the generalized system of trade preferences. That is the system which allows the U.S. to grant duty free entry to a specified list of products which are exported by eligible developing countries. This is almost standard practice among developed countries, although each has a slightly different wrinkle. Our way involved an annual long-drawn-out review process; I think after I left the frequency of reviews was reduced. That process was intended to decide which products should continue to enjoy the duty-free status, which had to be eliminated from the list and which might be added. We had industry and country petitions which had to be analyzed. Almost all of our formal trade policy actions was decided by inter-agency committees - a hierarchy of committees. The Trade Policy Committee was a Cabinet level group; below them was a series of committees which screened the findings of the working groups. This was not part of the NSC system.

The agencies involved were USTR - the lead agency - Treasury, Commerce, Labor and us representing State. Typically, State and Treasury supported the most free trade option available; Commerce and Labor most often supported the most restrictive import option. So USTR was the swing vote. I should note that in addition to the bureaucratic debates in the inter-agency fora, we also had to deal with our colleagues in the Department. We coordinated with the regional bureaus; in most instances, that only required a dialogue with the desk officer or the country director. Occasionally, we had to go further up the chain of command.

One of our officers spent almost full time participating in the working group on the GSP scheme. We also reviewed many other trade actions - proposed and actual - which were of interest to the U.S. In the case of GSP, the final decision was quite clear cut - either a product is added to the list or it is not. In other situations, such as various GATT actions, it was a case of whether the U.S. would try to urge some sanctions or accept the other country's complaint. GATT issues were primarily highly technical - what GATT required, what precedents there had been, etc. - which gave us an advantage as being more knowledgeable in these areas than many other countries, particularly those in the developing world. We frequently found ourselves as "the wise man" answering questions from within the Department about what was meant by the terms "panel" or "consultative group" - GATT procedural questions. The regional bureaus would try to find a way to minimize the damage to our bilateral relations if GATT found one of their countries in violation. In a couple of cases, I think we were able to be quite creative.

I became involved in negotiations on two trade agreements. The first came up soon after I reported for duty. We had some residual negotiating authority; the decision had been made that the U.S. - as represented by the American Institute in Taiwan and the Coordinating Council for North American Affairs in Washington (both theoretically being private organizations since we had no formal diplomatic relations) - would try to work a mutual tariff reduction agreement with Taiwan. I went to Taiwan, after getting inter-agency agreement to a list of offers we were authorized to table and what we wished in return. Our delegation consisted of three women, with Doral Cooper of USTR at the head of it; Anne Hughes of Commerce and I accompanied Ms. Cooper. For one of our two days of negotiations, we had a Department of Agriculture man with us. It was three women who got off the plane in Taipei; we looked something like the cat dragged in after flying for 26 hours.

We were met at the Grand Hotel, which is very lavish - red lacquer and gold gilt - by the man who later became Prime Minister in Taiwan, Vincent Siew. In 1980, he was an official in the Trade Ministry. He brought us a huge bouquet of red roses. He of course was wearing a dark pin-stripe suit, white shirt, regulation tie, polished shoes, etc. And there we were - bedraggled, weary, exhausted, and all three dressed in blue jeans for the long trans-Pacific flight. It was most incongruous.

The Taiwan negotiators played to the unusual character of the U.S. delegation. I doubt they had ever engaged an all-women delegation before. I remember that one of the items on our list for Taiwanese tariff reduction was disposable diapers. Cooper was a new mother; she had a child who was less than one year old. She took full advantage of this item. She brought pictures of her baby which she formally slid across the negotiating table. She made an impassioned speech about how mothers in all of Taiwan would be eternally grateful to the Taiwan negotiators if they could have access to these miracles called "disposable diapers." Absolutely shameless! The lead Taiwan negotiator rose to the occasion; he knew he was being taken and rose to the occasion replying with highly theatrical speeches to which Cooper responded in kind. Eventually, we got a modest tariff reduction on disposable diapers.

This being Taiwan, we were working through the "non-government" institutes that carry out U.S. relations while maintaining a "one China" concept. It was my first exposure to this ingenious system for maintaining bilateral relations without having formal and official representation. For example, we had to use regular tourist passports; we had to pay for them. We were told by one of the Department's lawyers that we could not claim reimbursement for those fees on our travel voucher, but we could include fraudulent taxi expenses to cover the cost of the passports. I might just mention that EB's legal adviser was a man named John Crook. The one who handled China issues was named Terry Fortune.

We were also told that we could not write anything on our visa application which would have stated or suggested that we were US government employees. Where the form asked for our profession, I think I wrote "economist" or some other neutral word. The purpose of the trip was shown as consultation with the American Institute in Taiwan. We were given voluminous instructions on what we could or could not say. We were instructed to avoid the word "government"; if we had to invoke that institution, we should use the word "authorities." When it came to describing the Taiwanese authorities, we were to call them "authorities on Taiwan" - not "in." So semantics became a very important part of our discussions. I think by the time our meetings ended, we had arrived at conclusions satisfactory to our side and also to the Taiwanese. We didn't have that much to offer and therefore didn't get that much back, but a reasonably balanced agreement was reached.

The second negotiation dealt with a free trade area with Israel. I was not involved in the final phase of the negotiations, which went on beyond my eventual departure from Washington. I felt that as a general proposition this idea of a free trade area was not good trade policy. I was not altogether in sympathy with Bill Brock's idea - he was the USTR at the time - that we should seek free trade areas with individual countries in the hopes that that step might then lead to freer trade in general. I thought that we would be unlikely to meet the standards established by GATT to cover "substantially all trade," leaving us with a patchwork of agreements - to be sure more liberal than had existed - which had different quirks, which would then become precedents making the world's trade regime much more complicated.

In any case, the decision had been made at the political level that we wanted to develop a free trade agreement with Israel. Having served in Tel Aviv, I was particularly interested and had an opportunity to participate pretty deeply in the process as the lead State Department representative. I went to Israel on a couple of occasions. The sticky points in the negotiations were no surprise - textiles, some agricultural products (e.g. tomato paste). In addition there were some very difficult tax issues concerning a rather opaque Israeli system of excise taxation which hit imports the hardest. It was quite difficult to get a straight answer on how the tax worked and what its aims were. As so often happens in negotiations with the Israelis, issues which we believed could have been resolved at a low level suddenly became major and had to be discussed at high levels. In the end, the negotiations were successful; they were concluded after I had left Washington.

I think my knowledge of Hebrew was helpful. I could understand the discussions on the other side of the negotiating table. Furthermore, there were a couple of members of the Israeli delegation whose English was not always adequate and I helped them out with translation. I think in any case, when you speak the language of the other party, it is always a lubricant even if the other delegation members spoke perfect English.

I became Director of the Office of International Trade in early 1982. That enabled me to cover trade policy issues not only for developing countries but general ones as well. I was able to see trade issues on a global basis. I tried very hard to stay out of the details of my previous division, but I must admit that was a challenge. Not only was I familiar with the issues, but also my previous contacts in other agencies tended to call me from time to time to encourage me to get involved in matters being handled by the Division. Fortunately, I had complete confidence in my successor - whom I had selected.

I should mention one other issue that we grappled with while in the developing countries trade Division and that concerned the Caribbean Basin. The Administration became quite interested in doing something for the Caribbean countries. Tom Enders, the then Assistant Secretary for ARA, was determined to have a free trade area with that part of the world. As we had done before, we opposed the idea on the grounds I mentioned earlier. We lost the argument and therefore had to develop an implementation program, which would meet Enders' goals while doing as little damage to our general trade policy, while also providing hopefully some meaningful benefits to the Caribbean partners. All these countries are small; that suggests that it should not have been too difficult to open the U.S. market to them. Unfortunately, all those countries were eager to become textile assembly points for the U.S. market. That of course raised considerable concern in our textile community. One of my staff members, David Moran, wrote the first draft of the agreement, putting us in a very key spot during the negotiations.

I mentioned earlier that negotiations leading to NAFTA started during my tour in EB. I was referring to our negotiations with Canada. Canada was and is our largest trading partner, but as in practically every trade situation, it is an asymmetrical relationship. Canada at the time took about 8% of our exports - higher than any other country - and we bought for about 70% of Canada's exports. So the degree of dependence on our respective exports was very uneven.

The Canada situation was one for which our free trade policy was just right. The amount of trade was large enough to justify our general trade posture and to reasonably expect that it would have a beneficial effect on that posture. We were dealing with a substantial percentage of our trade. On the other hand, both the U.S. and Canada produced many of the same products. We are both major agricultural producers. Furthermore, a substantial part of the trade between the two countries - e.g. automotive products - were already covered by sector-specific free trade agreements. There were some sensitivities on the Canadian side which presented difficulties for us. The Canadians tended to view goods and services - e.g. magazine advertisements - crossing borders as in part at least a cultural issue. We had no such view; we believed all these matters to be strictly trade issues. So progress toward a free trade zone was slow.

NAFTA itself was at this time a mere gleam in some people's eyes. Our trade relationship with Mexico was extraordinarily difficult. In light of that, the decision was made, and I think correctly, to start with Canada. So we started down this path, but the agreement was not completed until after I had left EB.

I might just note our relationship with the Department of Commerce. On a personal level, I had excellent rapport with my counterparts in that Department. Their trade policy people were in the main serious professionals and competent. But institutionally, the relationship was rather difficult. We are now talking about a period following soon after the responsibility for export promotion was shifted from State to Commerce. For example, one of my colleagues in NEA - the officer with whom I traded jobs in the Pakistan-India assignment process - was seconded to Commerce and went to Delhi as Commercial Attachï¿½ where he performed admirably. He wanted to join the Commercial Service and I thought would have done excellent service there, but for one reason or another he was turned down. This was a case where the officer was probably better suited for commercial work, rather than political or economic. He was much more interested in operations and in assisting American businessmen than he was in the more abstract trade policy issues.

While this shift of responsibilities didn't directly effect our work, there was a certain amount of residual bitterness in the Department, much of which was directed against the State leadership on the perceived grounds that it had not fought hard enough to keep that responsibility. The people who were primarily impacted were in the main overseas. I must say that there was probably a valid distinction between trade policy and trade promotion. However, I am still "old school" on this subject. I believe that if both elements of trade are taken seriously - as they should be - they will reinforce each other if done by the same organization if for no other reason than to minimize organizational frictions. By now, the Commercial Service is well established, and is well integrated with the domestic services that Commerce provides through its field offices. So it has acquired a different kind of integrated energy out of the process - to the benefit of U.S. business because it establishes essentially a "one-stop" service. The relationships among some Embassies' staff work very well to the benefit of our overall trade opportunities, while in others there are still some difficulties stemming from the divisions between State and Commerce activities and bureaucratic. In general, I think that over the years State and Commerce have established a modus vivendi. In fact what has happened is that Commerce took over the U.S. Government's efforts in large markets while abandoning the smaller ones. However, the U.S. Government could not abandon the latter markets, leaving the State officers in these posts - the largest number - to carry out the trade promotion activities that are really Commerce's responsibilities. I think the Foreign Service has come a long way in its approach to trade promotion; today, it takes that process seriously - much more than before. But I should note that I think it is still very difficult for these embassies to get adequate Washington back-stopping for their commercial activities. For example, when the Commerce Department holds regional conferences for its officers, it will invite the State officers, but will not provide the required travel funds thereby for all practical purposes leaving the State officers out of the loop. This is an improvement - marginal, but real - from the days when Commerce would not allow State officers to attend some of the meetings it held during a regional conference. I don't think that is done anymore, but I am not certain. I tried to argue with Commerce that its attitude was counter-productive, but I didn't get very far. In theory Commerce has a policy that calls on Commercial officers to take responsibility for trade promotion activities for posts near them which may not have a Commercial Attachï¿½. This worked very effectively when I was in Sri Lanka because we had a very cooperative group in India and Singapore; we managed to have ourselves adopted by them - Delhi, Madras, Bombay and Singapore. But that has not been a universal experience by any means.

During my time in the Trade Office, legislation was introduced in Congress which would have given Commerce an almost complete monopoly on trade policy, including USTR. We were horrified by this development - as was USTR - , but the White House decided to support it. That required us to find witnesses who could make a reasonable case for this very unreasonable suggestion - without saying things we thought were wrong or perhaps even false. I did not testify since I was only an Office Director and they normally are not called upon to testify in Congress. The burden of carrying the Administration's case fell to Ed Derwinski who was then Under Secretary for Security Assistance. Of course the issue had nothing to do with his normal responsibilities but since he was a former Congressman, he was "volunteered" by the Department as its principal witness. Fortunately, the Congressional bill did not pass.

On trade issues, Commerce tended to side most often with the protectionist point of view, while we tended to support liberalization. So we frequently disagreed.

I do want to mention one other substantive issue. I did get involved in the drafting of renewal legislation for the GSP scheme. Again, this was another issue in which I was involved at the begriming, but whose finalization did not come until after my departure. In the main, Doral Cooper of USTR and I sat down and worked out what changes in the existing authority we thought were required to preserve the scheme. I made a number of enemies in State because I concurred in the idea that certain countries could "graduate" from the GSP regime - e.g. Taiwan and Singapore. I thought that the GNP level in those countries were approaching those of developed countries and their trade levels and their favorable balance of payments were very large. That suggested to Cooper and me that the protection provided by GSP was no longer necessary for certain countries. My views were of course not shared by the regional bureaus.

I must say that I developed some skepticism about US trade policy. I felt that our basic problem was that in this policy area, the Congress held all the high cards. That is not new; it has been true since the beginning of the Republic - to this day. The Constitution specifically gives the Legislative Branch total jurisdiction over trade matters. The Administration has no leeway; it may do only what Congress specifically authorizes it to do. This is why "Fast Track" is so vital. In practical terms, this Constitutional mandate places the Administration in a very awkward position when it negotiates trade agreements with other countries. Only a device like "Fast Track" which provides an Administration some leeway gives an American negotiator adequate flexibility to reach some agreement. Our negotiating partners have no clue whether their concessions will be found adequate by the U.S. Congress. They have gotten wise to this American dilemma and therefore have become reluctant to negotiate trade agreements until they have some assurance that the draft agreement stands a good chance of winning Congressional approval.

Furthermore, at least in the early 1980s when I was in the trade office, that period followed a decade during which U.S. trade had doubled. In the 1980s, the percentage of imports continued at about the same level while exports fell. The politics of that situation were absolutely devastating. In the post war period, a free trade coalition had developed which included labor - which in that time viewed free trade as an avenue to increase exports - agriculture and the high tech industries - i.e. aircraft first followed by computers and telecommunications. By the early 1980s, labor began to become quite diffident about free trade, agriculture became embittered by the EC agricultural export subsidies and the high tech industries became consumed by Japanese economic policies which essentially closed that country's economy to many imports. This was the time of the great uproar over semi-conductors when we accused the Japanese of having so managed their policies that in effect they excluded American semi-conductors from their domestic market. All these events and factors had a very pronounced effect on American politics - in effect, they markedly reduced support for free trade - for some very valid reasons if one looked at specific industries which were obviously being hurt by the discrimination policies of certain other countries.

We were trying to look beyond these specific acts of discrimination to see the broader picture which might have possibilities for growth of the U.S. economy based on increased exports. There was a ministerial meeting of GATT countries in Geneva in 1982 which I attended. The US for the first time introduced - unsuccessfully, I should add - issues which eventually were taken up in the "Uruguay round" - e.g. trade in services, restriction in investments, etc. We tried very hard to stimulate a high tech initiative, but that was incoherent from the start. The services issue was a serious one because that was the one sector of the U.S. export area which was not in a trade deficit. Unfortunately, that is no longer the case. But at Geneva, we essentially made no dent. We did argue - correctly, I believe - that if other countries wanted further liberalization of the American import regime-where tariffs were already lower than in many other countries, but which still included countervailing duties and barriers to "dumping" - then they would have to open their markets to US exports. Our pitch did not meet with any acceptance in 1982, but in retrospect one can see that since that Geneva meeting, the issues were subsequently raised in the same framework that we had developed then and resolved in the "Uruguay round" on roughly the same principles that we had enunciated in Geneva.

I think it is fair to say that we did not spend most of our time at the conference debating these fine principles, but rather we were fully engaged in putting out "brush fires." For example, countervailing duties were a major issue. Anti dumping cases were discussed at great length. The so called "201"and "301"cases were examined in great depth. Section 201 of the 1974 Trade Act allowed the U.S. to levy import restrictions when an import was found to seriously damage a domestic industry. Section 301 of the same Act gives the U.S. government authority to take restrictive action when an import is found to be "unreasonable, unfair or burdensome" to US commerce. That is supposed to be a remedy for unfair trade practices.

Section 301 especially authorized the U.S. government to take actions not consistent with GATT. Since it was US policy to abide by GATT rules as much as possible - we believed in the goals of that system and were concerned by the negative actions which might be taken by others if we did not abide by those rules - we spent a lot of time on individual import commodities.

The Trade Office in general also spent a lot of time on Japan-US trade matters - beef, oranges, autos. A familiar litany which has lasted through the ages. The issue of structural impediments to trade came along later, but Geneva was the precursor for that extended US-Japan debate. The discussions with the Japanese reminded me very much of an onion: there was always another layer. Solve one issue and the next would appear.

I believed in the GATT structure. It provided a broad and easily understood system for keeping world trade reasonably open. Furthermore, it was my view that the U.S. had much more to gain from that system than it might lose. We were a strong economy with a substantial industrial and services base.

I think my comments also have indicated that I am a strong proponent of free trade, but - and this is important - the argument for free trade is made without reference to the losers. There are losers and it does not help to hide that fact. We have done a very poor job in trying to help those who have to suffer the consequences of free trade. The history of adjustment assistance to industries or communities which are negatively effected by imports is not a sterling one. It has been ineffective and filled with lots of "boondoggles." We have not found a satisfactory answer to helping those hurt by free trade. Those who argue that American wages and working conditions are suppressed - or even worse, have deteriorated - by the imports produced by cheap foreign labor are not altogether wrong. But I have serious reservations about their remedies - i.e. increase trade barriers in general - because such actions will inevitably hurt more American workers and communities than might be saved by import restrictions. I find it difficult to believe that in the larger picture we are going to be able to increase the prosperity and well-being of the American worker by artificially making ourselves a high cost producer because I don't think it takes a rocket scientist to figure out that in the long-run, the low cost producer will win the lion's share of the market.

So some way has to be found to meet the lower cost competition. I think what has happened to American wages in the last two decades is quite alarming in terms of what it has done to both workers and the American political system. That suggests to me that we have not found a way of meshing globalization with our domestic policies, which must try to assist those who are not working in the competitive industries. I am alarmed that wages for the bottom half of the population are decreasing in real terms - except perhaps in very recent times. The income disparities in the U.S. have increased enormously; the income of the upper 10% of American wage earners have increased in real terms, and the higher the income, the greater the gain in real terms. I don't have any doubt that some of this serious discrepancy can be attributed to globalization and international trade. Trade has become a significant factor in the U.S. economy of the 1990s. So, although I am philosophically a strong proponent of free trade, I have serious reservations about the U.S. government's efforts to reduce the negative impact on American industries and communities of that trade.

I might mention that my duties in the Trade Office gave me opportunities to interact with private industry, although I would have even more opportunities to do so in later assignments overseas. I was contacted by private industry, primarily agricultural interests. They were interested in assuring that the U.S. would take a strong stance on their issues during any negotiations. For example, the almond exporters were concerned by the closed Indian market; so we sent a high priced lawyer to Delhi to try to satisfy our producers. This was an interesting case because we had already placed almonds high on our trade liberalization agenda and I had told that to the almond producers' representative. But she came to see me anyway, with an associate, and a letter formally presenting their case. I could see the almond producers paying a lot of unnecessary billable hours for that visit.

The government had formal groups to consult with industry. They usually worked with the Department of Commerce. USTR also had pretty good channels to those industries' associations. These industry groups must have felt that those contacts were adequate to get their message to the councils of the government because in the main they left us alone - and we didn't really seek them out unless there was some information that we had to have. There was a Commercial Coordinator in the Department who did a certain amount of out-reach with the business community. We also tried to explain our positions in fora that were available to us, but we were not part of the day-to-day organized consultation system. On occasions, we were invited by Commerce or the USTR to participate, but this was not part of a regular routine.

I should spend a few minutes describing the EB organizational set-up. My first Assistant Secretary was Deane Hinton, who was followed by Bob Hormats and then Dick McCormack - three entirely different personalities. Hinton was irascible, crabby, demanding and a first class professional. McCormack came into the job knowing very little about economic policy, about the State Department, about the Foreign Service, about bureaucracy. He was very much a political appointee; he had worked for Senator Jesse Helms, although we had heard through the grapevine that they weren't particularly close. He was clearly a very conservative Republican.

Hormats was also a first rate professional, but entirely different from Hinton. Although only in his late 30s, Hormats had been a deputy USTR and the economic expert on the NSC staff - a "wunderkind." He was well known in much of the world. Hormats was approachable, willing to listen and argue if necessary. He sometime toyed with the staff which was occasionally quite embarrassing. For example, if you suggested that a certain approach be taken on an issue, he would agree; then you would discover that he had called some one high in the organization which you were dealing with, thereby undercutting your position before it was even taken. I am not sure that he fully appreciated the effect he was having, but then I don't think he really would have cared if he had recognized the consequences of his actions. Of course, we were never told by Hormats what he had done; we would have to find it out the hard way. His main problem was that he didn't get long very well with the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs - Myer Rashish. He undercut Rashish whenever he could. I thought he was far better and smarter than Rashish. Rashish was not a very important player; he had substantial qualifications, but they were not central to his mission in the Department.

I must say that the flow of information downward was not particularly good during the Hormats and McCormack regimes. Hinton left soon after I arrived in EB, so I couldn't pass judgment on the situation during his tour. In Hormats' case, I think most of the problem was absent mindedness. He didn't use his staff very much; I don't think he considered loyalty to his staff particularly important. But he was genial and charming and if challenged on some action - or lack thereof - he would just apologize and shrug it off. He was also devious, which obviously discourages flow of information to the staff.

McCormack was by nature very secretive. He had a habit which drove us - particularly me - crazy. He would confer with us when we wanted him to take a certain action. If we recommended that he take a certain position with another agency, he would call his counterpart in that agency and tell him that his staff had recommended a certain course. He would then ask why his staff was wrong. That didn't sit too well with us.

I mentioned earlier the tensions between Hormats and Rashish. I thought there was a role for both, but I did believe that the Department had more often than not been ill served by the Under Secretaries for Economic Affairs. Too many of the incumbents in that position were really not interested in the job, for a wide variety of reasons. For example, Bill Casey [later head of CIA] had that job at one time; he was mostly interested in the SEC and at the time he was involved in some personal legal issues and couldn't have cared very much about the Department's economic matters. Dick Cooper held that job; he was a world class economist, but he was much more interested in macroeconomic issues, such as exchange rate policy, than the broad array of issues in which we were involved. When we could get to him, we found him sympathetic and highly intelligent, but he did not give our issues continuing attention. He was not much of a manager, which is not a customary requirement for Under Secretaries, but in the case of the Economic Under Secretary, he had a lot of issues coming to his office, which required at least some time management competence.

Despite the problems that arose between the Under Secretary and the Assistant Secretary, I think there was considerable merit to having both positions. The Under Secretary should operate at a higher level than the Assistant Secretary, but I must admit that when you had an assistant secretary such as Bob Hormats, the distinction is blurred. Bob had a unique intellectual capacity along with his energy level, which made him both able and acceptable to operate at the Cabinet level. He could get phone calls returned by Cabinet and sub-cabinet officials which most other assistant secretaries could not. He had access which normally would be reserved for the Under Secretary. Furthermore, the Under Secretary was responsible not only for economic matters, but also for the work of OES [Oceans, Environment and Science]; since then, additional responsibilities have been assigned to the Under Secretary. So the job is not at all redundant with the Assistant Secretary.

Heading the Commercial Policy Division was my first major supervisory experience. In a peculiar sort of way, I was assisted by the fact that I was coming into this subject matter essentially as a novice. I was not an expert in trade policy, though I did do a lot of reading before assuming my new responsibilities. I had taken economics and trade courses, both in the Department and in graduate school. But I didn't know the bureaucratics of the trade world which was really key to an effective participation in the inter-agency debates on those issues. That forced me to rely heavily on the advice of my staff, at least in the beginning. That helped me to establish good supervisory habits. Fortunately, I had a good staff and I could rely on their judgment, which I did and that established an atmosphere of trust and openness. I would ask for their recommendations and then go from there.

This first supervisory experience was the start of my development of a management style. I had an opportunity to hone those skills in later assignments, including our tour in Bangladesh where I was the wife of the Ambassador - part of the post's management team. I certainly, during this EB tour, came to the conclusion that it was important to let people have their say, to make decisions clear and to encourage participation. One of my friends told me before I started the EB job that any idiot could manage a good staff; the challenge came in leading a weak staff. I think that was a very accurate observation.

On personnel decisions, I always consulted with Frances Wilson until her retirement which took place not too long after I started working in EB. She was a very useful advisor. She was followed by Jack Jenkins, our Executive Director through most of my EB tour. He had a very difficult row to hoe because I think the rest of the Department was eager to punish EB for the perceived sins committed by Wilson. Jack realized he couldn't possibly operate the same way as Wilson had - both because he had a different temperament and because he was not entrenched as Wilson had been. So he approached his duties in a very different style. But the one practice that did not change was EB/EX's extraordinarily large role in personnel selection - far greater than any other Executive Office in other bureaus.

When I was promoted to Office Director, I was responsible for the work of four different divisions - instead of just individual officers. I supervised the Textile Division, General Commercial Policy Division, Special Trade Arrangements Division (dealt with other forms of U.S. market restrictions) and Trade Agreements Division (which dealt with issues with developed countries). I should mention that the titles had little to do with the work of a division. In fact, after my time, the Office was split in two and the divisions were given new titles. In practice, two divisions had a geographic focus and two had a functional - textiles and special trade agreements - focus. Some have asked whether having a separate division focused entirely on textiles made sense. It made eminent sense; textile trade issues are an art form - more than automobiles or all other commodities. The largest portion of our textile trade was regulated by the "Multi-fiber Arrangement." - an international agreement with many signatories. That agreement establishes a process for the laborious negotiations for specific agreements - country by country, category by category. The Textile Division staff were constantly on the road, negotiating one issue or another. It was an art form that most of the other members of the Trade office could not fathom. It is a highly specialized business - more than any other commodity. I might just note that most of the other commodity arrangements were handled by another office - the Office of Commodities. For historical reasons, the Textile Division was never made part of the Commodities Office. The dynamics of textiles was quite different from other commodities; tin, rubber, etc were principally for stock-piling which governed the price determinations, while textiles were an issue of protectionism for a domestic industry.

At this time (1999), the "Multi-fiber" agreement is supposed to phased out in six years. That has eliminated a lot of the negotiations greatly alleviating the work-load of that division.

We had about 22 officers and approximately 10 clerical staff in the Office. That forced me to figure out ways to both work with the division chiefs and directly with members of their staffs. I believed that in a small organization such as I headed, it was important for me to maintain direct contact with individual staff members as well as working with the division chiefs. I did hold staff meetings to which only the division chiefs were invited; that innovation was not met with enthusiasm at the beginning, but I felt it was important because it was an important process in keeping me informed on the activities of my staff. My predecessor had held staff meetings, but they was not taken seriously and were as much unattended as attended.

When there was a specific issue, I would meet with the division chief and the action officer. I remember meeting on an issue related to GSP which involved my old division. I was strongly opposed to what the action officer was recommending. That officer was not a "star"; in fact he was one of the major recruitment mistakes we had made. The division chief came to me and told me that his staff officer felt very strongly about his position and asked me at least to give him a hearing. I of course agreed. So we scheduled a meeting; we must have met for about 45 minutes; the action officer presented his case and then I asked the division chief to comment. He supported his staff man. Then I explained why I strongly disagreed, even though I acknowledged the validity of some of their views. I doubt that they left the meeting entirely satisfied, but I am sure they recognized that at least they had their "day in court" and had had an opportunity to present their views fully.

We didn't have too many problems in attracting and selecting good officers for either the Division or the Office. Our major challenge was in the classification of the positions of division and deputy division chief. They had all been established at the FSO-2 (now OC) positions. They never had been, to any one's memory - held, at least initially, by any officer of that rank. He or she was at least one grade lower. For example I was promoted to that grade as I moved to EB - after my assignment had already been made. This process became known in the Service; in fact, that practice became an attractive recruitment feature for those officers at the FSO-3 level. But when we tried to get officers who were at the same rank as the position, it was almost an impossibility. I had a terrible time recruiting one FSO-2 division chief. I tried to get the position reclassified at the FSO-3 level. The EB Executive Office would have none of it. Eventually, the problem was solved because the incumbent agreed to stay and I stopped worrying about it. But as I was leaving, I told my deputy assistant secretary, Denis Lamb, that I thought that the division chiefs jobs should all be reclassified at the FSO-3 level because it would made it easier to recruit the officers we wanted. Under the system then in effect we could not find FS0-2s whom we wanted or who wanted to come to EB; our jobs were just not that attractive to officers at that grade; we could not compete with other positions in the Department at that grade. We did not have many FSO-2s who wanted to come to EB, but there were lots of very good FSO-3s who were eager to join us. Because the grade level of the position became important to the assignment process, we used to have long drawn out battles in getting the officers we wanted. Eventually, my recommendation was implemented.

Efficiency ratings were no fun. This was my first experience with large numbers of ratings - both as rating and reviewing officer. During the period these were written, it was very intensive and time-consuming. I often just stayed home to write the ratings - uninterrupted by the continual disruptions that normally take place in an office. It was my first time to write review statements to any significant degree. That was a new art form. I had already served on one selection board - before coming to EB. I had also been on the Bureau's review panel. So I had some feeling how a board member might react to efficiency ratings - I had read absolutely stultifying numbers of them. I was well aware of the standard advice given to rating officers to allow reviewers to read between the lines; cutting down on adjectives and being specific and concrete. Most of important of all, I learned that if you are rating people, if you are rating a number of people, try to make each rating unique and not have it sound as if it were produced on an assembly line.

From my experience on selection boards and on several bureau review panels, as well as those acquired as a supervisor, I have come to the conclusion that the Department's rating system is quite good in pin-pointing the top 10% and the bottom 10% of the officers. It is the rest that present real problems. I usually felt after serving on a promotion board that we had reached the right conclusions - more or less, but that there were several calls that could have gone either way. That having been said, I am not sure that I can think of a better system. At one time, the Department was experimenting with a much more quantitative system which would have required supervisors to rank order all of their subordinates - or to rank each officer against others known to the rating officer who had been in the same grade during the last decade. That would have obliged the rating officer to be much more specific and quantitative about an officer's weaknesses. Now the report is mostly descriptive and leaves great flexibility to the rating and reviewing officer.

My experience with changing the format of an efficiency rating forms is that initially, for perhaps as long as two years, there is a modest increase in candor. After that, old habits reappear and whatever benefits the change has brought dissipates. The games that people played with the old form naturally did not fit the new and it took it some time for them to gain new game skills. The Foreign Service is a profession of writers; that is what officers do for a living. That has certain consequences - one of which is a lack of complete and understandable frankness on efficiency ratings.

I might just add a plug for advanced training. I found that my knowledge of economics greatly enhanced my understanding of trade issues. I would not say that it would have been essential for every one engaged in trade matters because much of the work-load was plain bureaucratics - more than economics. An officer working on trade issues must know something about the law and something about other agencies involved in this very complicated business. That knowledge is absolutely essential, but can be learned on the job and must be learned well. An understanding of the underlying economics becomes important when the arguments about what our policy should be become more sophisticated. It is also important in understanding the potential impact on US business of any particular trade policy. Those matters arise most often when the policy dialogue involves the U.S. Treasury Department - and Treasury was involved in 75%-80% of the discussions on policy development. Commerce tended to argue its position based on the potential impact of any policy on a specific industry - not the overall economy. That is one example of what I meant by the term "bureaucratics."

I felt that for me having some good economic grounding was important. It helped establish my credibility with some of my economic colleagues from other agencies, as well as those from the regional bureaus in the Department. Our office served often as an intermediary between the regional bureaus and other agencies. It was important for us to have good sound economic analysis of an issue instead of relying entirely on "Treasury says...." or "Commerce says....." That may have been important information, but not necessarily over-riding. We had to put up our own analysis - economic and political/economic - in order to make the arguments convincing.

There were variations in how regional bureaus reacted to our views. NEA was quite receptive since I had worked there. EA and ARA had some trade expertise in their staffs including my predecessor who moved to ARA after his tour in EB. All these bureaus had strong regional affairs offices; we therefore dealt with people who had considerable knowledge about the issues. We did have our share of disagreements, but we did all share a common base. AF was at greatest disadvantage when it came to trade policy issues. By and large, however, that Bureau had the least number of trade issues. EUR was by far the hardest to deal with. First of all, when we had trade issues with a European country, they were almost invariable large in dollar terms and therefore highly political domestically. At the time, the EU integration issues were still being negotiated in GATT. They were issues that were dear and close to European hearts. So issues would rapidly escalate to a level which required the presence and attention of our USTR and the trade ministers from the EU, Canada and Japan. So all sorts of issues that might have been dealt with at staff level rose to that ministerial level. The EUR Assistant Secretary was Les Gelb; he refused to let any of his staff members reach any decisions, including clearances on US positions. No paper would leave EUR without Gelb's personal approval. The Director of EUR/ RPE, who was a very senior officer, could not take any more action on his own authority than a desk officer. That was very frustrating to all concerned. We would argue with him, but we realized that he was in a bind.

I did participate in some OECD meetings. For example, I was a delegate to the Committee for Information, Communications, and Computer policies and the working group on Trans Border Data Flows. These were the early days of concern for information flows and computers. We had a lot of discussions of privacy regimes and the differences between the U.S. and the Europeans on how these issues were handled. They tended to be much more stringent on privacy than we were. We struggled mightily over something called the "Data Declaration" but I am afraid that I don't remember much about that. We had an extensive discussion on computer crimes and telecom liberalization which was beginning to be seen as a potential issue. In fact, a lot of the present day issues were beginning to be looked at by these OECD bodies.

More difficult was learning how to deal with multilateral framework. Foreign Service officers are accustomed to working in a bilateral environment; the multi-lateral world is foreign to many of us. Tactics change when you have to deal with a set of nations, instead of only one. In a bilateral negotiation, first of all, you reach accord among the members on your side of the table. Then you face the representatives of another country; so it is basically a one-on-one relationship. In a multilateral setting, our objectives will be shared by some of the others around the table, but not by everyone. The agreement may only be partial in some cases. So there are many shadings represented around the table. Then there is the politics of which country can take the lead on one issue and not on an other. The team is not just American; on some issues it will include some other countries and on other issues it will be a different set of players. So it is a continual process of finding allies or at least acceptable compromises among a majority. For example, during one of the OECD sessions, it looked like there would be a major confrontation when the issue of a new chairman arose. A Swede had been chairman for sometime and we thought he was doing an excellent job. The French desperately wanted to have that chairmanship. We were opposed to that; in the first place, we were not likely to see eye-to-eye with the French on any of the major issues confronting the Committee and, secondly, we were not at all enamored by the French candidate. I spoke Swedish and French and German; I found that this language facility was very useful in getting some agreement. I spent a lot of time both with the French candidate as well as my French counterpart trying to separate style from substance in order to better determine why we had differences. In the end, the French withdrew their nomination and the potential battle royal was averted.

In a multilateral context, one does develop collegial relationships with members of other delegations, but we always had to bear in mind that we were trying to reach certain goals for which we needed support from a broad group while at the same time trying to debate the issues in a calm and objective manner.

The other difficult set of issues dealt with Japan. The Japan desk at the time was overwhelmingly staffed by political officers who had Japanese language training. They looked on trade disputes as a distraction from close political relations. The Foreign Service had just begun to train economic officers in Japanese. I made one visit to Japan during my tour in EB. In Tokyo, the political and economic sections were on different floors in the Embassy. As far as I could tell, each lived in its own world with rare communications between them. I thought that both unfortunate and dangerous. It was a situation entirely different from that at embassies where I served. I felt it was dangerous particularly in Japan where trade issues were so important to our political relations. We tried to develop a relationship with the Japan desk. That effort turned out to be one of my major frustrations. I had lunch with the Office Director once; I tried to discuss our mutual problems. We did agree that we would meet together with some of our staff members on a regular basis. Those sessions were canceled time and time again by the Japan Office Director. They were always too busy on other matters. That was very frustrating, particularly since we were dealing with some of most acute differences between the U.S. and Japan. I thought it would have been in everyone's interest to meet periodically to try to resolve the outstanding issues as well as trying to prevent new ones from arising. But it didn't work out that way.

Fortunately, Personnel was very responsive to our requirements and except for one case, proposed officers for placement in our Division who had a decent knowledge of economics. The exception did not work out terribly well but not because the officer was deficient in economics. The office which was probably most deficient in economics was the Textile Division - which was a funny place in any case. A tour there gives you a lot of hands-on experience in negotiations; economics is almost an impediment to well-being in that division.

I enjoyed my job as office director immensely. On occasions, there were long hours, but most of the time the work-load was bearable. The hours were certainly shorter than those I had to spend in the regional bureau. I was promoted during my tour in EB to an MC - it was just at the time that the system was changed to the new designations. I should say that I did not find that I had any problems with the bureaucracy because I was a woman. There were a lot of women working in the trade field, but there were not that many women at my rank in the Foreign Service. But I never felt any discrimination because of my sex.

The most important lesson I learned from my EB experience was how to mesh the needs of the Washington bureaucracy with the negotiations that we had to undertake with other countries. So first of all, a US negotiator must try to develop a consensus in his own government, which is a challenge because each bureaucracy has its own position supported by its constituency and by various Congressional factions. Once having achieved that consensus, the next challenge came in negotiations with other countries not only because of diverse national interests but also because the positions of some countries may have an effect on the U.S. consensus. In order to resolve the internal debate, the U.S. negotiator had to reach a finely balanced position, keeping in mind that the international negotiations might damage the U.S. consensus. In the final analysis, the successful negotiator blends the intellectual challenge with a personal relationship. If the U.S. has a negotiating group that have finally become a team, the task is very much easier. The development of a team is very much dependent on the relationship that the members engender with each other. That takes work. I also noticed that as the team concept jelled, the agency representatives began to lose some of their ardor for the firm positions they and their agencies had taken initially. This process is inevitable because the team is trying to develop a US position that will hold and from which one can negotiate. This process fascinated me; I became very interested in the development of multiple layers of consensus building, starting with the intra-State process and going on to the inter-agency negotiations and then on to the international forum. I learned how personal, policy and institutional loyalties were interwoven. I came to the conclusion that the State Department did not train its staff adequately in how to negotiate. I would have greatly benefited by such training - even if it had been for only a week. It may have been available, but certainly no one ever suggested it to me nor was I aware of any such program. Later, when I was the Director of FSI, I became acquainted with a very good course then being offered in negotiations. By the time I left FSI, we were at the point of adding a second course. We pride ourselves as being in a negotiating profession, but in fact most Foreign Service officers can go for a career without being involved in any negotiations, except inter-agency ones. Those are different from international ones; the inter-agency negotiations may require some of the same skills as international ones, but they are different. The US government's prestige is not on the line.

Q: In 1984, your husband Howie was appointed Ambassador to Bangladesh. You had to go on leave without pay. Did you have any problem with that requirement?

SCHAFFER: I really didn't. I could not help noticing that the rules on what ambassadorial spouses could do and could not do kept changing. It seemed to me that the shifts were always very strict when they applied to me, but were eased as soon as I was no longer affected. That said, I think there are valid reasons why ambassadorial spouses should be limited in what they can do in terms of regular mission employment.

Non-governmental activities were also touched upon by the regulations but the do's and don't's were much murkier. Theoretically, the burden is on the mission to register objections with reasons if any dependent of a U.S. employee seeks employment unrelated to US government work. Ordinarily, that is an ambassadorial responsibility. If the spouse in question is his or her own, the responsibility for passing on the appropriateness of employment falls on someone else. I tried to find out what the procedure was to obtain employment approval, but never got a clear answer. In my case, the question of employment only came towards the end of our tour in Bangladesh when I was approached by UNICEF to provide some editing services. I dutifully wrote a memorandum to the DCM explaining the situation, including remuneration and length of employment. I pointed out that the stipend would be a fraction of what I was making as an FSO; I ended the memo by stating that if my potential employment might create any problems for the U.S. government, I would of course decline the UNICEF offer. In fact, UNICEF was an activity that did not interfere with U.S. policy and therefore I was pretty sure that my potential employment would be approved.

At the time, we had two children - eleven and nine by the time we went to Bangladesh. They went to the American International School in Dhaka. At that time, the school only went up to the ninth grade; since then, it has expanded to include high school. Only about 25% of the students were Americans and only about 50% of those were dependents of U.S. government employees. The schools included children of missionaries, employees of international organizations and NGO's. Dhaka had and has quite a substantial international community. Today, for example, in addition to governmental and private aid organizations, there is a substantial American business community, which did not exist in the mid-1980's. Most of that business community is focusing on the natural gas fields that have been discovered in Bangladesh. In our time, and I believe still today, Dhaka was a key location for the global assistance community - sponsored both by nations and international organizations.

Let me give you thumb-nail sketch of Dhaka and Bangladesh in the mid 1980's. Dhaka was a city of 4.5-5 million people. Like other cities in Bangladesh, it had grown very rapidly which required considerable "temporary" housing - shanties. The downtown area was very crowded; it consisted of the old city, mostly down by the river, and commercial areas which were only obvious to residents. There was not much of what we might consider as a modern downtown. The Embassy building was one of the first structures in Dhaka to have an elevator; it was located in the downtown area. It was a five story structure of which the U.S. government occupied about the three top floors and the ground floor. It was a fire trap. Any child could have set it on fire and destroyed it in minutes. The consular section was on the ground floor; it had all of the charm of a basic unadorned dungeon. The building was shaped like a donut - or a chimney. It was located on a very busy downtown circle - typical of all the downtown streets. All of Bengal is crowded; Bangladesh is well known as the most crowded country in the world.

Virtually all of the American community lived in three suburban neighborhoods. Interestingly enough, I have returned to Dhaka in the 1990's, and all those neighborhoods are part of the inner city; they are not the "burbs" any longer. The city has grown out so that now it includes the suburbs of the mid-1980's. But then, these suburbs were almost exclusively residential; they were filled with substantial housing - for the foreigners and the upper Bangladeshi class. There were no buses at the time, but rickshaws - bicycle driven conveyance seating anywhere from two to six or seven - flourished. In the suburbs, one didn't see many "baby-taxis" which are essentially motor scooters with a passenger compartment. All of that has also changed now.

The buildings in the suburbs were almost never more than two stories high. We lived in Gulshan. An increasing number of embassy chanceries were located in the suburbs - most of them in converted villas. The US government began building a new chancery - Howie laid the foundation stone - which opened after our departure in a neighborhood called Baridhara, also close to the American School. The architectural plans had been developed and approved before our arrival. We were in Bangkok, on our way to Dhaka, when the second Beirut bombing took place. Howie quickly called our Embassy in Dhaka; he found out that in light of that bombing, all chancery building plans were about to be reviewed to assure that they met security requirements. He then called FBO in Washington with a request that the Dhaka Chancery plans not be held up; a new building was desperately required and further delays would only make a bad situation worse. FBO and the Security Office did insist on some changes, but the construction was not held up for long.

Our social life revolved around three groups starting with the Bangladeshi community - government and private people that needed to be cultivated - and whom I came to know fairly well. The Bengalis take their culture - literature and music - very seriously. Bangladesh has always had a lot of intellectual ferment - as has Indian Bengal. So we did see many intellectuals - from universities and some press, although that group was not particularly impressive. There was also a quite sizeable group of people who were devoting their lives to rural development.

The Bangladeshis were very friendly and cordial. They are very warm and sentimental. Americans on a personal level have had very good relations with the Bangladeshis. The state-to-state relations were somewhat strained in the early years because Kissinger was dead set against Bangladesh independence when the issue arose.

The Bangladeshis love to talk. Although I was not formally a diplomat, I could hardly change my spots; so it was a great opportunity for diplomats and other foreigners to really become acquainted with these wonderful people. There was never any dearth of sources who were ready and willing - even anxious in some cases - to give you their take on events and their commentary on "what was going on on the inside." Of course, some of that may have come from the normal backbiting one finds in all societies, but once you have taken that possibility into consideration, we never lacked a pretty good picture of what was going on. I still well remember a welcome party given us by the American Defense Attachï¿½. In attendance was a roomful of senior Bangladeshi military officers. I had been at similar parties in other countries; they usually were quite pleasant but essentially non-substantive. But in Dhaka, one after another of these officers were taking Howie off for private tï¿½te-ï¿½-tï¿½te to tell him clearly what each thought about governmental policy or military affairs - at a time when the military ran the government.

One interesting aspect of this Bangladeshi trait was that on some occasions, I would also become the target of their substantive comments. In general, the military - with some notable exceptions - was the group that was most likely to view me as the "Ambassador's wife" and therefore to discuss with me only matters of family life, such as children. There was a noticeable change in this military attitude as the wives of the generals became professionals in their own right. For example, one of the senior intelligence officers was married to pediatrician who was working for "Save the Children." She was a real live wire and it is through her that I made many friends.

Bangladesh had a large number of domestic NGO's that were active in the countryside - health, education, micro credit and family planning. On credit, the most famous was the Grameen Bank, which is world famous. It made small loans and became a model for efforts in other parts of the world. It should be noted that that Bank was by no means the only player in the micro credit program. It was not even the only impressive participant.

So we spent a considerable amount of our social life with the rural development community. In fact, I worked on a couple of AID projects writing on women and development. In the course of collecting background on this issue, I made my own circle of friends - primarily women activists and development activists in the local NGO world. Some of my contacts were new to the Embassy, although Howie's predecessors had to pay some attention to this sector of the Bangladeshi scene. Howie's immediate predecessor was Jane Coon. She may not have targeted women activists as a focus group, but she was acquainted with some members. I think that I became more involved - in part because of the AID projects and perhaps my role was therefore somewhat unusual.

The other major players in our social life was the American and diplomatic community. Then there were our children's community, which was a new group for us in an overseas context. We had a big house which was used by our children and their friends to play in and to watch television. On any given day, one would probably find eight bicycles parked in our driveway. Their owners and associated coke cans were inside. Occasionally, we would invite the parents of these children to the residence for a social occasion. We tried very hard to involve our kids in American community events. This turned out to be somewhat problematic for reasons we really had not anticipated. Both of our kids, and particularly the older one, were very sensitive to living in a "fishbowl." as the Ambassador's offspring. They did not want to be shown off. On the other hand, they were very pleased to live in a large house to which they could invite their friends. So they had some mixed feeling about their situation in Dhaka. I had to use some domestic diplomatic skills to calm any ruffled feathers that arose because of their situation.

I had no fear of walking the downtown streets by myself, although I tried to abide by the local custom and covered up as much as possible. I noted that even though I was well acquainted with South Asia from my experiences in Pakistan and India, Bangladesh is a more crowded country. The distance from which people will stand and stare at Westerners is noticeably closer than it is in other countries. I found that at the beginning that made me quite uncomfortable; people just stood and stared; that was unique I think in South Asia. Once I had to change a tire on my car in one of Dhaka's suburbs; by the time I finished, there must have been 40-50 small boys just standing and watching. Here was a foreign lady, with diplomatic license plates, changing the tire on her car. That was a sight which they most likely had never seen before.

For three months a year, the weather in Dhaka was absolutely delightful. In December, January and February, it was like Spring as we know it. March and April were very stormy - violent thunderstorms and sometimes hail storms. Then came the hot and rainy season until September and October when the heat would ease. Cyclones, which unfortunately hit Bangladesh from time to time, are not seasonal, but may occur almost at any time. When they did occur, the coast area was most affected. You could almost count on at least one headline grabber every two or three years with devastating floods. Bangladesh is a country which in normal years is one-third under water all year - that is roughly the area covered by rivers. In the monsoon season, two thirds of the country is under water - in normal years - and more than that when there is a major flood as might be caused by a cyclone. Most of the country is at sea level - or not too far above it - and very flat. Excess water has no run off opportunity; so it just spreads over the countryside. I did not have an opportunity to visit the countryside after a major flood. I did see what happens in a "normal" flood year.

I did travel quite extensively. Between June and September, one would see a lot of water covering the landscape. One reads a lot in the U.S. and other parts of the world about disastrous floods, but I have reached the conclusion that too much water is better than none or too little. A flood will undoubtedly wipe out a crop, but it will also enrich the land so that the next crop season will probably be a bountiful one.

Poverty is of course quite noticeable both in Dhaka and the countryside. The interesting aspect of Bangladesh is that once you become somewhat acclimatized, you can see a lot of hope in the rural countryside. Urban poverty is much more troubling because the city dwellers don't have a patch of ground which can be cultivated and from which some nourishment can be grown. Rural people tend their villages well. Every Bangladeshi village looks well kept; the courtyards are swept; the bazaars are filled with colorful chili peppers; there are small yards with chickens if not filled with plants. It is true that the dwellings are rather primitive - mud huts with thatched roofs - but you don't have the feeling of deprivation that you might have in an urban shanty town. Floods of course have a serious impact on these villages, but they seem to recover and return to their normal lives. No one in the rural countryside has any accumulated wealth; they live from day to day and a disaster certainly wipes out any gains that may have been made. But these are not your standards images of a rural slum where there is no hope and a steady grinding down.

The urban shanty towns are very depressing. I was not a daily visitor, but I certainly saw enough of them to be quite depressed. Some of them were not too far away from the modern parts of town. For example, the Sheraton Hotel was then and still is only a few steps away from one of the grungier shanty towns that I have ever seen. I also wandered around some pretty modest neighborhoods with Mustari Khan, who had started a family planning program, Concerned Women for Family Planning, focused exclusively on urban dwellers. She and her network of workers in these neighborhoods showed me around.

What is always startling about the shanty-towns is that they are populated by people who moved to a city in order to improve their standard of living. In a lot of cases, they are hoping against hope that they will find some kind of employment in the city that will earn them enough money to lift them and their families out of poverty. But in fact, a lot of these people end up being urban "casual laborers" standing on a curbside awaiting to be picked up for some work that day - or a couple of days - for some field work.

Bangladesh, except for a small part of the country, had no stones; without that resource it is very difficult to build any roads. So they made bricks and broke them up. One would see in different parts of the country huge piles of broken bricks upon which workers - very often women - sat with a hammer often under some kind of tattered umbrella. They would pound away breaking the bricks into smaller pieces which could be used to provide some stability as a sub-surface for a road.

Despite the depressed sights that one encountered, I had great hopes for economic development in Bangladesh. It was and is a country that has learned to do something with almost no resources. This was true even before natural gas was found. Even before that major event, I saw some hope for the future. That was largely due to the work I did for AID; that allowed me to look at some projects in depth - those that involved micro credit, education and family planning. These projects focused essentially on women and families, but somewhat outside the usual "box." I found that well run programs - those that had found ways to get beyond the cultural inhibitions against direct assistance to women - were really able to make a difference in people's lives. It was clear that since the level of subsistence was so low, any improvement would seem gigantic; nevertheless, when one woman took out a loan of $20 to buy a couple of chickens and eggs, she clearly had improved her standard of living by some important measures, even though she was a long way from having arisen above the poverty level. That woman's experience helping herself opens up possibilities in her eyes; that is enough justification for hope for the future.

I contrast my experience in Bangladesh with the experiences I had in Egypt which I visited because I was supposed to become the Egypt country director. The contrast was devastating and I was very depressed after my visit to Egypt. In Bangladesh, there were projects run on a shoe string, staffed by women with five years of schooling - which was already a watershed for them because there were not that many women who had lasted that long in school. These employees were provided training - cleverly designed - and then put to work and lo and behold, something positive actually occurred. Egypt, on the other hand, was the recipient of a rather generous aid program, but the assumption was that nothing could really be achieved unless the projects were staffed by college graduates who were rather passive and awaited proposals to be brought to them. After my conversations with Egyptians, I came away much more pessimistic about development in Egypt than in Bangladesh.

When I went to Bangladesh, I took a project from my old office with me. Dick McCormack, the then Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs, asked me to write a paper on future challenges to US trade policies.

Indirectly, this project brought me in contact with some South Asia trade experts. At one point, I was asked to go on a speaking tour in India and Pakistan to talk about trade policies. I mentioned to someone in the Bangladeshi Foreign Office that I would be doing this; he immediately invited me to speak to the incoming group of Bangladeshi Foreign Service officers. I agreed and then almost immediately came an invitation from the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce to discuss trade policies before it. That was followed by a similar presentation in Chittagong. I think it was about a year after we arrived when the U.S. government "called" a category of Bangladeshi clothing exports - that was the beginning of a process which might eventually lead to the establishment of quota negotiations. This was of interest of me because in my last assignment in Washington as Director of the Office of International Trade I was responsible for the work of the Textile Division. Like most of my predecessors, I tried to stay as far away from the Textile Division as I could because their work was very arcane and not particularly intellectually challenging. But I could not escape having at least a nodding acquaintance with the textile regime then in being. So before the Bangladeshi negotiating team left for Washington, Howie asked them to the residence. The head of the team was a person who was to become a minister in almost every cabinet since then, but who at the time, had just joined the then government having left the newspaper world. He was going to take a couple of senior civil service people with him. The three came to the residence to discuss the process and the substantive issues. At the time, once a "call" was made, the importing country had the right to restrict imports to the average of 12 of the last 14 months - I believe those were the ground rules at the time; they have been revised since. Only through negotiations could that level of imports be changed. Also at the time, many textile imports had been increasing at double digit percentage each month; a "call" was almost certain to be imposed under those circumstances. The return to the average was bound to be catastrophic to the foreign textile manufacturer; that of course was a major incentive for countries to negotiate.

In any case, this is a classic story illustrating how the Bangladeshis had historically looked upon their relationships with donor countries. Bangladeshis are utterly unembarrassed by being assistance recipients. They know they live in one of the poorest countries in the world and believe that assistance from others is a natural and expected practice, if not an obligation. So as we sat around in our study - the Minister having arrived almost forty minutes late - eating cheese cake - good cheese cake - and drinking tea, the Minister said that he had been thinking about the upcoming negotiations. He said that he was inclined to start his presentation by pointing out that Bangladesh was a very poor country with just one successful export - the one that the U.S. wanted to limit. His conclusion was under those circumstance, that the U.S. could not possibly impose import limits.

Even though my mouth was full of cheese-cake, I interjected some negative sounds. I walked the Minister through the process - awful as it was. In the textile field, the U.S. essentially forgets all of the virtues of free trade and open markets that we trumpet so often in other situations. In fact, textile negotiations are essentially a horse trading session. The textile lobby quite openly wanted - and wants - to restrict imports; it doesn't care whether the goods are manufactured in a developed country or one that is economically at the bottom of the ladder. I tried to impress on the Bangladeshi delegation that reliance on the good-heart of the U.S. would not be a successful strategy; in fact it might result on a strict limitation of imports based on the 14 months rule which would have been a disaster for Bangladesh. I suggested that they engage in negotiations hoping to achieve some more or less tolerable limit, which then they might get increased at least marginally by making their economic situation presentation. But they had to be prepared to make some accommodation to the U.S. position.

The team went to Washington and after two rounds of negotiations - I think it was two - the two countries reached some agreement. I don't remember the details, but I believe the compromise was acceptable to the Bangladeshis.

I worked on the trade policy paper for about four months and the Department kept me on the payroll while I was engaged in writing that paper. Then AID advertised for a person to write a paper about status of women in Bangladesh. I submitted a bid which I won. The contract was just about to be signed when the Inspectors arrived. When they heard about my forthcoming employment, they told me - much to my surprise - that I had to obtain formal approval from the Director General to undertake any employment. I don't know whether that was true, but when State Department inspectors speak, you tend to listen - very carefully - particularly as an ambassador's spouse. Whatever you do as a spouse is magnified and reflects on both you and your spouse. I knew that the AID project would have absolutely no bearing on Howie's activities or US policy. So I cabled Washington outlining the situation in Dhaka, suggesting that I was qualified to conduct the survey in light of my experience and that the pay was considerably below my previous earnings. I asked for authorization to proceed with the AID contract. I got a positive answer quite quickly but was asked to insure that the contract be granted so that neither the Ambassador's nor the AID Mission Director's offices would be involved in its approval nor in any subsequent review of the compliance with its terms. Those terms were included in the contract and I was able to proceed with the work.

I produced a report that AID published. It was initially intended for in-house purposes, but in fact the Mission began to distribute it rather widely in Bangladesh. Soon it became quite popular and we had many requests for copies. I suppose that my position as an ambassadorial spouse which gave me access to high level and influential Bangladeshi gave the report a scope that it might not have had if it had been written by someone else. That helped to make the report much more attractive which was no doubt of help to AID which was anxious to have the status of women in Bangladesh recognized by as many of the leaders of the country as possible.

For this project, I worked almost entirely from secondary sources because that was the contractual emphasis. AID wanted me to survey what had already been written on the subject and to fill any gaps through field work. But primarily, AID wanted a comprehensive study of what already had been said on the subject. I found a lot of material because Bangladesh had always been a popular target for assistance from a large number of donors. It had also attracted a good number of anthropologists and sociologists and students of village lives in less developed countries. I was able to find a lot of both published and unpublished material written mostly by people who had some expertise in the subject matter. I think my paper provided a rather interesting picture. On one hand, there was a lot of truth to the stereotype that many Bangladeshi women were poor, downtrodden, and discriminated against. On the other hand, there was abundant evidence of a women's network, which was kept essentially hidden from public view, but which was nevertheless an important aspects of many women's lives. For example, there was an indigenous network which both stimulated and allowed a savings program by spreading the word about techniques and methods to achieve some positive results. These savings were certainly never reflected in the national statistics.

At the time I was in Bangladesh, women's literacy rate was about 20% - according to the optimists-; most of whom came from families with means. When you face a situation like that, you have to consider the causes for such illiteracy. Part of it is of course tradition; if a woman had an illiterate mother, she most likely would end up the same way. The interesting question was what factors made the exception stick with her education until she had broken the cycle of illiteracy. I think that intelligence was certainly a major factor along with an enormous amount of drive. There were a number of girls who had both attributes, although some had never completed the five years of schooling that most experts believe necessary to maintain literacy. I remember one woman who had been recruited to work on a NGO's family planning project; I met her in a sort of artificial situation. The special assistant to the secretary for population matters was visiting the country; the Health Minister - a big impressive man, with a jovial manner - took some of us to a nearby village where a couple of project workers were asked to meet the visitors. One lady, probably in her 40s, was called upon; she was a traditional midwife who had been recruited to work on a project designed to improve baby care and family planning. She was asked if there was anything she wanted to say to the Minister; there certainly was! She launched into an angry denunciation of the support her project was receiving from the Health Ministry. My language competence was just enough so that I could catch the drift of her remarks, Hers would have been an astonishing performance in any country, but was especially unusual in Bangladesh where the cultural stereotype expected the "seen, but not heard" attitude towards women. The Minister took it pretty well; his personality allowed him to accept such criticism without undue resentment.

The cultural change had started much before my time. My observations indicate that it is continuing and that the status of women is improving slowly, but surely. But I don't have a good answer to the question: "Why in Bangladesh?" Other countries have started with the same cultural base with relatively few women improving their lot. In many of these countries, the progress, if any at all, has been glacial. Bangladesh far outperforms many other nations who started from a very low base.

Many of the characteristics of Bangladeshi society are shared by West Bengal and India. They all tend to be very crowded places in which culture and language are very much cherished. I am told that village life is very similar throughout the region. India, in some places, also enjoyed some bottom-up development as occurred in Bangladesh. Pakistan, on the other hand, is different. Development at the village level is still rare. I am not sure why that is. The Punjab would seem to be a much more fertile ground for that kind of development. It is agriculturally rich - so is Bangladesh, but in a different way. The Punjab has been the bread-basket of Pakistan for years. The Punjabi, both Pakistani and Indian, are considered as farmers without peers and the backbone of the rural middle-class. There is no comparable group in Bangladesh. But for whatever reason, the rest of society has not developed as rapidly in West Bengal as in other regions of South Asia. This may be due to a greater collective desperation in Bengal where the per capita income is so much lower than in the neighboring areas or to other factors, but the discrepancy certainly exists.

My second project for AID was primarily a follow-up to the first. I was asked to review projects in Bangladesh which were then - or had been - in operation, and which essentially focused on women in development. That required a general survey and a more specific analysis of the three or four which seemed to have especially effective. That did involve some field work. In general, I concluded that one of the keys to success was the staffing of these projects by good and dedicated women. There were a number of different approaches to that issue which had worked well. That was fundamental. Furthermore, In Bangladesh, many family planning projects had been successful both in meeting their family planning goals as well as other developmental objectives. Education was one of the most difficult areas, although in a very nascent stage, I did note a trend which now has fully blossomed; it was called then "non-formal education" - an experimental program for 8-9 year olds who had dropped out of first grade - most Bangladeshi went into first grade.

The use of TV for educational purposes had not yet taken hold since if a village had a set, it would most likely have been in the house of the richest man and not generally available to the population. Occasionally, a set was available in a public area or occasionally the rich man would make his set available at certain times to the villagers, but these were exceptions to the general rule. At the time, TV may have been useful for news dissemination but not for educational purposes.

My third project was done with UNICEF which was in need of an editor for a report on the status of children in Bangladesh, part of a worldwide series. A number of different people had been asked to contribute to this publication and I was asked to pull these disparate efforts together into a meaningful whole. It turned out to be a huge job; I only had time to complete the first stage before we were transferred; someone else completed the task.

I should mention that besides these professional projects, I had other tasks. For example, I was on the school board for most of my three years in Dhaka and I was President for two years. I organized a Little League for softball players. In a place like Dhaka, if your kids want to have a sports league as they knew it in the U.S., then one of the parents has to organize it.

Looking at the Embassy from the outside, even though perhaps through somewhat biased eyes, I thought it ran well. The staff was uneven - not surprisingly. Dhaka was a "sleeper" post; that is it had a terrible reputation in the Foreign Service, but most people enjoyed it once they got there. I thought that the Department made a real mistake in limiting tours in Dhaka to two years. It was true that Dhaka was a 25% differential post and the two year limitation applied to all posts in that category. My perception was that the AID Mission, whose staff was mostly on four year tours, had a better opportunity to become familiar with the place and had a better time. A State Department employee spent the first 6-9 months becoming acclimated and the last 6-9 months packing and preparing for the next assignment; that doesn't leave much time for serious concentrated effort. It was not a good return on its investment for the Department. Some of the staff never mentally settled in. This is particularly unfortunate in a place like Bangladesh where local culture and country travel take some adjustment and some effort to become acquainted with the country and to enjoy it. The Department's tour policy tends to channel some people's attitude toward a "TDY mode". They can spend perfectly good days at the pool or on the tennis courts, but the impermanence of the assignment tends to detract from the substance of the tour. I think it also effects people's enjoyment of their tour. So the two year tour is a perverse policy in some respect; it is intended to alleviate the concerns of staff going to hardship posts, but in fact, it may just have the opposite effect.

The morale of the Embassy staff was by and large quite good. Single women were relatively few and their social life may have been somewhat restricted. But as in most cases, the development of an active social life depended heavily on the drive of the individual, but in general, I think morale at the Embassy was quite high.

I did a considerable amount of public speaking. I found it very satisfactory. As best as I can recollect, most of my speeches and discussions revolved around economic subjects. The tour in Bangladesh was a wonderful opportunity to enhance my understanding of economic development. As I suggested before, the key to Bangladesh development was the "bottom up" approach; that is development started at the grass roots. That was a very valuable lesson. I don't think that the Bangladeshi experience is unique, but that does not mean that that experience can be transplanted or replicated elsewhere. Each situation is sui generis; adaptations must be introduced as you move a model from one country to another. It is true that in all development efforts one has to deal with people, but each population has its own culture which requires that you adapt the fundamentals to each situation.

Bangladesh is not a country where the government likes to make decisions. The easiest thing to do is to postpone a decision. That tendency is not uncommon in South Asia. A decision taken might be the wrong one and the opposition will leap on it. This tendency is particularly true in the civil service. A military overlay on a government tended to off-set this reluctance particularly in those areas close to the military's hearts. To get a "yes" or a "no" out of a South Asian government could sometimes be quite difficult.

That tendency is always a challenge to aid donors because almost always their programs are intended to bring some change in some behavior. The recipients understand that and are not always eager to agree to such changes. Our AID mission had some targets and objectives in the area of development with which I was most familiar; namely the family planning field. Bangladesh was just beginning to be a success story in this area. In about 1978, the military government had decided that it needed to get serious about family planning. By 1985 - a year after my arrival - the statistics began to show that the program was having some effect - at least at some district levels where certain programs had been active. The data showed a decrease in population growth rate or an increase in the use of contraceptives. By the time I left, the national data began to show the impact of the family planning program. It takes a long time for these programs to show an impact but eventually they certainly did in Bangladesh.

Of course, we had a very active social life. We entertained at home and went out a lot. The social life among the foreign diplomats was very active and fortunately usually there were various Bangladeshis at these functions. We had a staff at the residence of about seven, all of whom had been employed by our predecessors; they worked out quite well.

I also had close contacts with the American community - a role that many ambassadorial spouses play. When I later taught the ambassadorial seminar at FSI, we had some presentations on the relationships between an embassy and the American community. Some of the speakers referred to the three circles that an ambassador and spouse have to deal with: 1) the local people, 2) the diplomats from other countries and 3) the American community. According to them, one of these circles gets less attention that the other two. They were concerned that in most instances, it was the American community that was the step-child. In our case, I think that in Bangladesh, it was the other diplomats who got less attention. In part, this was due to the fact that we had children in school which brought me in much closer contact with the American community than might have been true otherwise. This was my first experience with having to take an active role in American community affairs. I thought it was essential for the smooth operation of that community. Ambassador Coon didn't have enough time to devote to the American community; she had her cook bake some chocolate chip cookies, and that was probably the most important single requirement for insuring that the American Women's Club performed effectively. That huge plate of cookies was essential to any function hosted by that Club and insured some measure of success. Jane Coon did start a tradition that Howie followed of having the Ambassador address the Women's Club annually; I started that tradition in Colombo. But in our previous tours, we had never devoted much time or attention to the American community. We focused on the local community; for example, we always learned the local language and mixed with our host country nationals as much as we could. Both Howie and I had jobs which required visits to the countryside - away from the capital.

In Bangladesh, we followed a similar pattern. We traveled a lot all over the country. But it was difficult to arrange such trips; it required a certain amount of mental energy to travel. Bangladesh is not a tourist-friendly country. That I think put much greater premium on the life of the American community - the school, the pool, the tennis courts, etc. So I made a point to be at the pool so I could get better acquainted with the American community; I took up tennis which I found wonderful exercise - where else could one get tennis lessons for 60 cents an hour? My efforts were useful to Howie who was able to stay up to date on the mood of the American community and what issues it was worrying about at any one time. It enabled him to work on American community problems before they became major irritants. This was a new role for me, but I enjoyed it after a while.

It is hard to say what impact, if any, having Ambassador Coon, a woman, as Howie's predecessor might have had on our lives. Certainly people had become accustomed to the fact the US could be represented by a woman. People knew that I was a Foreign Service officer on temporary leave of absence. That was another factor that led me to be fairly active in American community affairs because I did not want to leave the impression that I was "too good" to mix with my fellow Americans because I was a Foreign Service officer.

I should end this discussion by noting that I learned a lot more than I expected from my two years in Dhaka - about management, community morale, and how ambassadors can and should relate to the American community. My tour as the ambassadorial spouse was a real learning experience, which I think benefited me greatly in some of my future endeavors. I had not expected it to be such an educational experience, but I am certainly glad I had the opportunity. My view from the outside taught me what works and what one needs to be careful about if one is running a mission - personality issues - particularly as they applied to senior officers - lack of attention to details, etc.

Although according to the rules, I had no special status as the spouse of the Ambassador, in fact, I was deeply involved in the daily life of that community and looked to for leadership. I learned a lot about running meetings from my experience as President of the School Board - more than I ever did in the Department. The Board actually had to reach some decisions and it needed good leadership to bring it to that stage.

I have maintained my contacts with Bangladesh. I have used them professionally in two different post-Foreign Service roles. I have returned to Dhaka on several occasions. I went back soon after becoming Deputy Assistant Secretary for South Asia - I cut the ribbon for the new chancery. That was a pleasure! I also visited Dhaka while Ambassador to Sri Lanka; that was partly official, party personal. And then I have been back several times since. So I have a deep continuing interest in that country.

Q: Then in 1987, you were assigned to Washington as Country Director for Egyptian Affairs. As you mentioned, on the way back from Bangladesh, you stopped in Egypt. How long were you there?

SCHAFFER: I was in Egypt for a week. I got a complete briefing. The Embassy at the time was headed by Frank G. Wisner, whose deputy was Jock Covey. Wisner had then, and still has, the energy of ten men. Covey may be the most organized Foreign Service officer I have ever met. So I got complete briefings on what and how we were doing in Egypt. I learned not only about Embassy operations, but also the AID programs, including the debt rescheduling problem, the IMF program - a constant headache. I was fully briefed on internal politics and the Egypt-Israel relationship. I met some ministers in the government, but I met a lot more when I returned to Cairo a year later. I first met President Mubarak when he came to the U.S.

My immediate boss was Phil Wilcox who was succeeded by Ned Walker. My first Assistant Secretary was Dick Murphy, who at the end of the Reagan administration was succeeded by John Kelly, after a long inter-regnum. By the time Kelly took over, I was almost finished with my tour as Egyptian Country Director.

On the desk, I found that my days were quite different depending on whether Frank Wisner was in town. When he wasn't, I would usually start the day by reading the cable traffic. Then began meetings with one or more of the four officers who worked for me - in addition to the three secretaries. Much of the rest of the day was taken up by meetings and the drafting of memoranda or other papers. There was a large network of Egypt-watchers in the Department and around Washington, who were involved in U.S.-Egypt relations. To the best of my recollection, the issue that was most active was the IMF program. The Congress, particularly the House Foreign Affairs Committee, had taken a very strong interest in that issue. It did not want the U.S. government to release another portion of the cash aid program until Egypt and the IMF had reached agreement on economic policies to be followed by that country. The IMF negotiations with the Egyptian government were difficult, as might well have been expected.

When Ambassador Wisner was in town, it was a different story. I had a standing joke with my secretary was that I would go to the ladies' room at 8:15 a.m. on Monday and that would be the last visit I would make there for the rest of the week. Wisner was a one man whirlwind. I tended to accompany him on a lot of his meetings because it gave me an opportunity to meet some people that I would not have met otherwise. It was also a way of cementing relationships that were useful both to him and me when he was not in town. The only thing that diminished while Wisner was in town was the cable traffic.

The phone calls between Cairo and Washington were also reduced when Frank was in town. When he was in Cairo, he would call almost every day. If he didn't then I would hear from Jock. Every day we also exchanged views and information through a daily official-informal cable. The relationship between the desk and the Embassy was very intense. The Embassy looked on me as its agent in Washington. There were really no policy disagreements, so I was comfortable with playing the agent role. But it was always interesting to step back every once in a while and watch Wisner maneuver.

We tried to maintain contact with all the players around Washington; that required lots of meetings which took up much of the day. I had a very good relationship with AID. I became close friends with Dick Brown, who was then the AID Country Director for Egypt - and later the Mission Director in Colombo when I was there. He is now the Mission Director in Cairo. We worked together quite closely. The AID Mission in Cairo had more autonomy than any other in the world. It was in the driver's seat when it came to the development and implementation of our assistance program to Egypt. For example, it could initiate on its own authority any program or project which did not exceed $25 million. It was a very unusual situation which made the Washington role quite different from that which existed for any other program. So we had a very unusual relationship with our AID colleagues.

I must say that after my tour on the Egyptian desk, I was left with the question whether a program of that size could really be effective. It was a politically driven program in the sense that the levels of assistance to Egypt and Israel had been determined as part of the Camp David agreement and not on any economic analysis. Israel received its aid in cash within the first thirty days after the beginning of a fiscal year. To the best of my recollection, Egypt got $115 million in cash and another $200 million for a commodity import program - almost like cash. The balance - $500 million - was devoted to projects. This assistance was in recognition that for a country like Egypt, project assistance made sense. It was also a way to insure that the funds were expended in meaningful ways - hopefully. I have no problem with that view, but when the total level is determined by political considerations, certain distortions are bound to occur.

I am told that since 1989, very substantial changes have occurred in the Egyptian economy, so that my comments may no longer be applicable today. In addition to the distortions I mentioned earlier, a large aid program also means that the U.S. is a major participant in a foreign economy. As I said, our total program was $815 million plus some food aid. This was administered by an AID mission of 112 American direct hire plus some contract employees. That seemed to be a rather small staff for the large amount of money. On the other hand, that is a lot of American representatives. The US Mission in Cairo since Camp David has been very large. That creates a set of challenges, which are hard to meet because it is very hard to argue for a much smaller mission in light of the size of the assistance program. AID had, by law and regulation, a rather strict set of accountability rules which require a rather intrusive process so that the funds and related activities can be accounted for in some detail.

On military assistance, I worked closely with PM and the Pentagon. Military assistance is quite different from economic assistance because it consists primarily of equipment purchases. We had a large US Military Assistance Mission in Cairo, which processed the purchase transactions and also developed programs for the training of Egyptian military both locally and in the U.S. A military assistance program in general is usually a Washington-centered program because the level of assistance and the use of the funds are determined by State and the Pentagon. I should note that by the time the Pentagon submits its purchase program for approval, State is usually faced with a "yes" or "no" question on specific end items to be procured. While the procurement program was being developed, we might have been able to orient the program in one direction or another - e.g. armor vs. aircraft - but our input was limited and perhaps even marginal. The US and Egypt used to have very extensive politico-military consultations - and perhaps still do - annually. A huge Egyptian military delegation used come to Washington to discuss their procurement priorities and it was really through this dialogue that the use of military assistance funds were very largely determined.

I did not have any objections to the Egyptian procurements; they did not seem to present any major political problems. The basic question that policy makers had and have to address is how long the Camp David agreement obliges the U.S. to bankroll very large scale military purchases by both Egypt and Israel. I certainly was not prepared to recommend a unilateral reduction of assistance to Egypt if there were not a comparable reduction in the Israeli program. That same comment could also be made for economic assistance. I think if by some alchemy the U.S. had been able to cut the Israeli program as well as the Egyptian one, the Pentagon would have been delighted - for no other reason than it would have liked to increase some of its other military assistance programs. Israel and Egypt were using a very large percentage of the U.S. assistance programs - both economic and military - which many felt could have been used better in some other aid programs. But since the level of the Egyptian and Israeli programs were legislatively determined - and no administration likes "earmarks" - there was too little left for other programs.

The question of increasing Egyptian domestic capacity to produce some of the procured military end use items was not a hot issue at the time because there was a question of whether Egyptian manufacturing capability was adequate to make military hardware much of which was quite sophisticated. My recollection was that there was some discussion and perhaps even some action to allow Egyptians to make M-1 tanks but I don't remember any discussions beyond that.

At the time, our policy was to give strong support to the Mubarak regime in part by providing levels of assistance consistent with the Camp David understandings - although I repeat that if the Israel program had been less, then perhaps the Egypt one would also have been reduced. That would not have been a problem for any of us. Our policy also called for a vigorous economic reform program to be undertaken by the Egyptians, some of which was particularly distasteful to Mubarak. As part of that objective we urged the Egyptians to work out a standby agreement with the IMF which would have given a multilateral cover to the reforms and which incidentally would have eased our problems with providing cash assistance.

Mubarak at the time was the only Arab leader who had made peace with Israel. He was our showcase for the Middle East peace process. In quiet ways, we encouraged Mubarak to give more substance to the Egypt-Israel relations. The US was heavily involved in using its good offices in an effort to settle the one remaining border issue: the Taba resort which was right next to Elat. That issue was resolved during my tour on the desk.

We involved Egypt to a major degree in our efforts to restart the Israel-Palestinian-Jordan negotiations. Mubarak was eager to be involved in this because he was painfully aware that the part of the Camp David accords that had never been really reached was the goal of some kind of autonomy for the West Bank. Interestingly enough, there was very little controversy in Washington over this policy.

We talked about democratic development in Egypt. We didn't push it very hard; we didn't want to upset Mubarak.

The leadership of the Department was involved in Egyptian affairs from time to time. If a high level Egyptian official was due to visit Washington, he would see some of the principals and that would get them at least familiar with the issues. There was a lot of high level interest on how things were going in Egypt. Both Secretaries Shultz and Baker showed an interest in Egypt's economic prospects - development and debt carrying capacity. Shultz of course was an economist and Baker has moved to State from Treasury. In fact, soon after Baker had become Secretary of State, Mubarak paid a state visit to the U.S.; that brought Baker into the midst of all of the discussions on Egyptian issues, particularly the financial ones which were never very far from Mubarak's mind.

The only issues which tended to cause some friction among agencies were bureaucratic ones; for example, we had chronic fights with OMB on the appropriate time for release of various parts of the assistance program. In the Egypt case, both State and OMB became much more involved in this timing issue than was normal for assistance programs in general.

The issue of Egypt's relations with the IMF was a complicated one. Egypt has had a major fiscal problem for many years. It had an elaborate network of subsidies touching many aspects of Egyptian life. The subsidies started in the modern era with Nasser. The subsidized prices had not changed since those days - approximately fifteen years earlier. The world prices had, making the subsidies much more expensive to the Egyptian government. This led to huge budget deficits, even after the government applied some sort of magic to its fiscal books to make the subsidies seem smaller than they really were. They also had a chronic problem in servicing their external debt - overvalued exchange rate, sluggish exports. These are the kinds of economic challenges that IMF has met in other places and even by then it had formed a standard set of remedies - limiting domestic credit, limiting foreign borrowing, limiting budget deficits by increasing income and reducing outlays, particularly subsidies and other non-productive expenditures. The economic policy was a good one; unfortunately, as happens often, it ran right into the political goals of the regime. One couldn't tell Mubarak to ignore potential public reaction to subsidy reductions; he had tried to raise the price of bread a couple of years earlier resulting in riots in the streets. The only other subject which was bound to raise similar popular ire was conscription. So clearly IMF had a problem particularly in a country like Egypt which has a long history of providing entitlements to the population which came to be seen as the norm and untouchable. Generations of economic advisors have urged the Egyptians to charge a reasonable rate for water usage, but since the Pharaohs and the floods, Egyptians have regarded subsidized water as their God-given right - not only for drinking, but also for flooding of their lands - even if now the flood comes at the end of a water hose and is not nature made.

So removal, or even reduction, of subsidies is politically difficult in any country and particularly one that since the early 1950s at least had accustomed its public to the idea that government will take care of its needs. Egypt had for example a system, which may still exist today, that guaranteed every university graduate an eventual government job. Before the job came through, the graduate might have to do something useful like being a plumber or an electrician. Once hired by the government, however, the graduate was ensconced for life. That was the environment in which Mubarak was working. In fact, I think he actually believed in the validity of that environment, with the government as its people's care-taker. That made it even more difficult for him to accept the advice of the IMF as well as other professional economists. He was also enough of a his politician to understand that his people would rise up if their expected subsidies were reduced. As it stood, he could expect his people's appreciation for the existing subsidies which he was trying to protect.

In the Department, we felt that an IMF-like program was necessary if Egypt's economy were ever to get on a sound footing. We hoped that IMF would argue its case with enough sophistication to convince Mubarak to agree to a program with enough cushion in it so that it might be politically acceptable. That was more than could be achieved.

Mubarak came on two visits while I was on the desk - 1988 and 1989. Both visits took place in April. The first one took place in the waning days of the Reagan presidency while Shultz was still Secretary of State. The second one took place on the opening day of the baseball season in 1989. George H.W. Bush was our new President and Mubarak accompanied Bush to Baltimore to watch the American President throw out the first ball. In both cases, Mubarak's main goal was to maintain a close relationship with American presidents. Mubarak was a master at these visits; they were invariably a success. He is very personable; he speaks in a straight forward fashion, which Americans like; he had been in power for a long time and therefore knew the Washington scene very well indeed. His regular visits were intended to bolster his status in Washington, both in the Executive and Legislative branches. When he visited, Mubarak had an agenda beyond maintaining his contacts. The agenda always included the Arab-Israeli peace process; he was very concerned that the U.S. might lose interest in that process, leaving him completely unprotected in the Arab world. He also wanted to insure that US economic aid would continue to flow at the same levels since Camp David and at the same time trying to convince us that the IMF was being far too rigorous and unreasonable. Eventually, that agenda included a plea for U.S. debt rescheduling.

The desk was the substantive and to a great extent the procedural impresario for these visits. We had to pull together the briefing papers for the American principals, primarily the Secretary. We also submitted the first drafts of the scenario and comments for the Presidential meetings, including suggestions on what other Cabinet officers might say. Working together with the Egyptian Embassy in Washington and our Embassy in Cairo, we developed a proposed schedule. Invariably, a whole raft of well wishers surfaced at the other end of my phone line when the visit was announced; they were mostly people or organizations who wanted to host one event or another for Mubarak in various parts of the country. There were some people who would suggest some "dynamite" ideas for things that Mubarak might do. Most of the suggestions we fended off; some were given serious considerations. There were a lot of Americans interested in Egypt.

Our papers changed as we went from one American President to another and one Secretary to another. The changes were not major partly because we knew that the final briefing papers for the President would be rewritten by the NSC or another White House staff - ours were undoubtedly too long for Ronald Reagan and probably barely long enough for George H.W. Bush - he was a reader. Interestingly enough, the Reagan White House asked the Department for a draft of the welcoming remarks that he was expected to make when he first met Mubarak on the White House lawn. We did provide such a draft and much to our surprise, most of it was actually used. The Bush White House encouraged us to submit our proposals of themes and thoughts, which was a request that I always found much more difficult to handle than that for draft remarks; so we wound up submitting a draft speech anyway.

State visits or even less formal visits by foreign heads of state are an interesting feature of U.S. foreign policy. The major part of the workload comes before the visit as the schedule is being prepared and finalized. Once the visitor arrives and you have to be involved in his or her daily activities - as I was in the case of Mubarak - you are pulled along by this moving circus. I remember asking Roy Atherton, a former US ambassador to Egypt, on the night before Mubarak's first arrival whether he had any advice for me. He thought for a minute and then said: "When the motorcade begins to move, jump into a vehicle."

I might just mention an episode that took place during the second visit. Initially, that visit had been characterized as an "official working" one. About three weeks before Mubarak's arrival, I got a call from someone in the NSC staff - I think it was Bob Oakley - who told me that that the President had just invited Mubarak to a State dinner. Mubarak had accepted. I noted that this would change the nature of the visit from a "working" one to a "State" one. He said that in any case, that was what had happened. The next day, we met with Protocol and others to talk about the program. The Protocol representative who was chairing the meeting wanted to know how we would characterize the visit. I piped up and told the group what I had been told by Oakley. The chairlady said: "I don't think that can be right. Susan Porter Rose (a senior White House official) wouldn't approve of that at all." I repeated that the President had extended the invitation which had been accepted. That didn't seem to satisfy the Protocol representative who insisted that the visit was an "official working" visit. I suggested that perhaps events had overtaken that designation. After great discussion, it was decided that the visit would be characterized as a "modified official working" visit.

One day before the visit was to begin, I had a call from the Egyptian Ambassador who told me that President Bush had invited Mubarak to join him in Baltimore for the opening day of the baseball season and a picnic supper. He told me that Mubarak wanted to accept but would like a little more information on what was likely to happen. So I briefed the Ambassador on what an "opening day" tradition was all about and that Bush had been on the Yale baseball team and therefore had a special attachment to the game. The Ambassador was concerned about two issues: what was the proper attire for a baseball game and what would be eaten. On the first point, Mubarak was much more comfortable in jacket and tie than in a sport shirt because he like to look presidential. Eventually, we were able to assure the Ambassador that jacket and tie were perfectly acceptable. On the second issue, it was quite clear to me that the unspoken concern was whether hot dogs would be served. The Ambassador wanted to make sure that his President would not been eating anything that might even remotely be considered as containing pork. After checking around, I was able to tell the Ambassador that the picnic menu would include chicken and kosher hot dogs. The chicken would look like chicken and it could not even remotely be confused with any pork product.

I was informed that I couldn't go to the game because the U.S. delegation was restricted to deputy assistant secretary level officials. I talked to my boss, who was not a baseball fan, and convinced him to designate Bill Kirby as the NEA representative; he worked on the peace process and was a fanatical baseball fan. My reward from Bill was a Presidential autograph on a newspaper picture of the young George H.W. Bush in his first baseman's uniform from the Yale baseball team.

Just as one issue was resolved, others would pop up. A few days before Mubarak's arrival, I had a call from the Egyptian Embassy about how one would explain baseball to Mubarak, who knew little if anything about the game. I told them not to worry about it; that we would take care of this problem. I knew the game, primarily because my children were devotees. At the time, both happened to be on Spring break from school. I also had in my office a politico-military officer by the name of Jerry Feier, who was also a big baseball fan. I asked Jerry to write a briefing paper on baseball; I told him that if he needed any research done, he should call my sons who had several books on the game which would answer whatever questions that he might have. So Jerry with a little research help, produced a splendid two page paper on the history and rules of baseball. We sent it to the Egyptian Ambassador who was profoundly grateful; he learned something himself.

When Frank Wisner showed up just before Mubarak's arrival, one of his first questions was how we would deal with Mubarak's unfamiliarity with baseball. I told him that the matter had already been resolved through our briefing paper. He thought I was joking, so I had to give him a copy.

I think this description pretty much categorizes what a desk does in preparation for a visit by a foreign dignitary. The answer is "Anything that is required."

On both visits, I accompanied Mubarak to most of his meetings. It simply fulfilled "Schaffer's first law" ("visits are a success"). They gave a personal touch to US-Egyptian relations. They were action-forcing events at a time when it was important that the leadership of both countries focus on the regional situation. There may not have been major decisions coming out of the visits, but certainly there were useful exchanges and improved understandings. On the second visit, we were able to convince Mubarak to go outside the Eastern seaboard; he went to Dallas for a day. That was salutary; he had a big lunch meetings with leading Texans, mostly from the business community. He took questions from the floor; he got a flavor of the views of a different crowd from that which he usually met in Washington or New York. Later that afternoon he met with the Dallas Business round-table - twelve or fourteen business leaders. The question of investing in Egypt of course came up. He answered some of the questions; others he turned over to the cabinet officers who were with him. To me the most important aspect of the meeting was that Mubarak had an opportunity to hear the concerns of American business leaders. In the Egyptian situation, Mubarak was not likely to be exposed to these views, particularly in light of his attitude toward economics and private business. In the Mubarak government, we always had to be concerned about what information was provided the President and through what filter.

In principle, Mubarak welcomed American investment, but to make it inviting, major changes would have to be made in Egyptian economic policy and probably also in Cabinet officers. Those changes did not come very rapidly.

After I left the desk, the Egyptians sought a debt rescheduling agreement. That did become controversial in Washington. Eventually, this issue became part of a broader Gulf War perspective and was solved as part of an overall US effort.

I thought that the Egyptians essentially were mismanaging their economy. It was a heavily state oriented economy. It had moved relatively little toward market principles. Mubarak looked on economics as a necessary evil - mostly evil. It was not a subject with which he was comfortable. He had been an Air Force officer who became President when Sadat was assassinated. I think he was more comfortable with a Pharaonic view of economics, that is a Presidentially directed program. He had a great deal of respect for the politics of economic decisions. In light of that, he would do almost anything to prevent an increase in the price of bread, which was essentially a penny a loaf. Obviously, that required a major governmental subsidy, which the Egyptians could ill afford.

Egypt, in some sense, has always lived a charmed life. We were pouring in $815 million in aid every year. Egypt had some real assets - fertile land in the Nile Valley, a plethora of antiquities that make it a major tourist attraction - assuming that security can be provided. It was hard to see it collapse economically. On the other hand, I could not foresee them making substantial economic progress because I didn't see the government inclined to make those policy changes that were absolutely necessary. I may have been wrong on that perception because I think some quite substantial changes have been made, even though many of the ministers we had to deal with are still in power.

Let me just briefly return to the peace process. NEA had a separate peace process group headed as I said by Bill Kirby, who was a deputy assistant secretary without much of his own staff. He had a loose team which included Dan Kurtzer, currently our Ambassador to Egypt (1999), but then part of S/P. He had been the Deputy Director of the Egyptian Directorate. Aaron Miller, also of S/P, and Peter Eicher, my deputy, worked with Kirby. Those people tended to work separately from other parts of the Bureau. It was a bizarre management device, but which had one beneficial aspect - perhaps unintended. It did provide some level of coordination because at least with Peter on the team, I could stay up to date on what was going on. He was in a position to warn me if I was going to push some policy or action if it appeared it would run contrary to our efforts on the peace process. Of course, the peace process had the attention of the highest level of the Department; the day-to-day supervision was left to Assistant Secretary Richard Murphy. The Under secretary for Political affairs at the time was Mike Armacost, but I don't recall him being involved on a continuing basis.

We had a very close working relationship with the Israel Country Directorate. We had offices right next to each other and we consulted often. The dynamics of the relationships of the country directorates to its countries are entirely different. The Israelis are much more involved in working the Washington bureaucracy in great detail. The Egyptians are also active in this process, but not to the same extent as the Israelis.

I might just close this chapter of my career by talking about "lessons learned." There were a number of procedural ones, but the most interesting ones fell into the policy area. It is difficult to manage a lop-sided relationship which includes high levels of dependency. I learned first hand what difficulties a President-to-President direct contact creates for the working levels. It is always difficult to find out what happened in those conversations. Once you have that information, you must be careful in development of policy and its implementation not to undermine what you understood to be the President's wishes. With the advent of rapid and secure communications, there will be continuing direct contacts; I don't think the Department or any organization has yet figured out to deal with this new phenomenon adequately. In the Bush administration, which I observed on the desk for about six months, the NSC staff either monitored the telephone calls or would be briefed on it. We depended on them to pass the information along and I think they did so scrupulously. Bush was sufficiently organized that I don't think there were many, if any, calls which were not to known to the NSC staff. After we were briefed by the NSC staff, we would then inform the Ambassador.

There are many potential slips in such a process. The real danger is that when the two heads-of-state agree on something, it is not passed down the chain. Such slips can be very costly indeed. It is particularly dangerous in the case of countries that espouse the "conspiracy" theory because if there is a slip, then all sorts of charges arise for what may have been an unintentional error.

I don't think the process is a major problem. I would have had a problem with the peace process being separated from the daily work of the desks, had it not been for the fact that, by and large, my colleagues working on the peace process made extraordinary efforts to keep us informed so that we would not be working at cross-purposes. It is true that every once in a while there were activities in the peace process which either the Secretary or the Assistant Secretary decided should be kept quite privileged. These were primarily initiatives that they had in mind which they did not want to expose to a wider audience until they had launched them. Once or twice that caused some embarrassment. I am referring here to Secretary Shultz because when Jim Baker became Secretary, he started out by stating he would not become involved in the peace process until it could be proven that his involvement would most likely be productive - unlike Shultz' last few efforts. We would divine these Shultz' initiatives through hunches and tidbits of data which we then would take to Murphy to ask that we be given the full story.

I have watched this process - trying to keep knowledge of certain actions restricted to very few - in many foreign affairs spheres. I have come to the conclusion that Foreign Service officers are addicted to "being in the know." This can be a plus because it usually means that officers are fairly energetic in finding out things. If an officer is working closely with a colleague and is told something in confidence, the chances are good that those confidences will be kept. But if then an officer finds out that there was additional information which had not been passed on - either intentionally or unintentionally - he or she shows absolutely no conscience in using this new information to get more. This is not only because he or she may be peeved, but because culturally Foreign Service officers are incalculated with a drive to collect as much information as possible. I came to the conclusion that, except in the most extraordinary circumstances, if you are working with sensitive information and with Foreign Service colleagues, a supervisor is better off calling them together and leveling with them while at the same time cautioning them about the risks involved if the information goes beyond that immediate group. To keep the information from your staff runs the risk of the information reaching them without restrictions; on the other hand, sharing it makes your staff part of an "in group" with all the benefits and discipline that that implies.

Q: Then in 1989, you were appointed as deputy assistant secretary. How did that come about?

SCHAFFER: In fact, it came about in extremely awkward circumstances. The Bush administration had just begun; Dick Murphy, who had been the Assistant Secretary, retired the day after inauguration. There followed a long inter-regnum in NEA. In March or thereabouts, the rumor began to float around that John Kelly was to be the new Assistant Secretary. He had been our Ambassador to Lebanon during the Iran-Contra affair; he had returned from Beirut and was awaiting an onward assignment. Soon after the rumor began, John settled into the Assistant Secretary's office, but made sure that we understood that he was not the Assistant Secretary - not yet even having been nominated.

In April I went to the West Coast on a speaking engagement. On a Friday evening, I got a frantic call from Howie, informing me that Kelly had decided to fire all of his deputies, including Howie himself. He told me that I should call Kelly right away to make sure that I would be considered for one of the deputy positions. I swallowed hard because I knew that Kelly's action was a terrible blow to Howie even though it had been made clear that the action in no way was a reflection of the high regard that Kelly and the system had for him - as was also true of the other deputies.

I thought about Howie's suggestion and eventually did call Jock Covey, who was slated to be the principal deputy to Kelly. A couple of days later, while still on the West Coast, I got a call from John Kelly. I had considered myself as a potential candidate for one of the Near East deputy assistant secretaryships because that was the area that I was working in - i.e Egypt. To my absolute astonishment, John offered me the South Asia deputy assistant secretary position - to succeed Howie. I told him I would like to think about the offer a little more, including talking to my husband about it. Howie took the position that such an assignment would in fact be sweet revenge - one Schaffer for another. So I accepted John's offer, but as you might expect, this move raised a lot of eyebrows in Washington. There were certainly a number of people who wondered what kind of nails I ate for breakfast. It was certainly a very friendly succession. Howie had had his first ambassadorship; so we agreed that my career would now take precedence. So he did not scramble for another glamorous assignment, but rather decided that the time had come for him to begin his work on his book on Chester Bowles. At the time, the Department had a mini think-tank in FSI - which did not last too long. But Howie went to work there.

I had met John Kelly, but barely knew him. He had some familiarity with my work through his reading of the cable traffic while he was an assistant secretary-in-waiting. I obviously had some reservations about working for John, particularly in light of his action on Howie and the other deputies. But the job was very interesting both because it covered not only South Asia but the all economic issues in the Bureau, and therefore a great opportunity for me.

I have already mentioned Covey as one of my colleagues; the others were Skip Gnehm - the Persian Gulf deputy - and Dan Kurtzer became the "Peace Process" deputy. This team worked quite well. We all had been picked at the same time. Kelly tried what I thought was a good idea, but which unfortunately never worked out. He wanted to take his deputies for a week-end retreat at some pleasant and bucolic place. Spouses could come, but their expenses would be personal and not Uncle Sam's. But various spouses didn't want to incur those costs and something always arose which forced postponement after postponement. So nothing came of the idea which was unfortunate because such a week-end would have been a good opportunity to engender even closer working and personal relationships.

There were two aspects that were difficult. Kelly had a well known temper which meant that if someone messed up, the brunt of his ire would fall rather suddenly and with some vehemence. John would get over his displeasure, but this had a definite impact on the South Asia desks. Traditionally, those desks got less attention from the Assistant Secretary than did the Near East desks; John was quite good at devoting an hour per week exclusively to South Asia issues. But I found that in order to make sure that he got the briefing he needed, I would have to have a rehearsal to make sure that the messages were brief and concise so that he would not get impatient and start yelling.

The second awkward aspect had to do with Jock Covey, who is probably the most organized person I know. He is also extremely bright and a phenomenally quick study. But he does subscribe to the "control" management school. So each of the DAS', in one way or another, clashed with Jock. He considered himself as the DCM of the Bureau - i.e., second-in-command - through whom all that is headed for the assistant secretary is passed through. When our memos became stuck on his desk - even though we might already have reached agreement with John Kelly on what the memo might say - then we raised a fuss. This problem was never fully resolved. Skip Gnehm had the most trouble with this system; eventually he left to be our Ambassador to Kuwait, during the build up to the Kuwait war and the war itself. So he was not a DAS for very long. His successor, David Mack, had a style which was more in tune with the Bureau's practices and the tensions were somewhat reduced. But it was not a system with which any of us deputies was entirely comfortable.

The leadership of the Department paid attention to South Asia mainly when there was a crisis. That has been and continues to be the general practice. I think this practice is detrimental to our policies towards that area. This is particularly true for India and to a lesser extent, Pakistan. India is a large country, but it does not have a status in the world that it thinks it ought to have. So the dialogue that it should have with the major powers, especially the U.S., would be greatly enhanced by continuing attention and even contact between Cabinet level officials from both countries. Our relationships with India would be particularly improved if our secretary of State or his deputy or one of the under-secretaries were to engage in a much more consistent conversation with the Indian government on subjects other than South Asia, as we do with some other major powers. It was always difficult to engage the Department's leadership on issue related to India in the normal course of events.

During my tour as DAS, there were a couple of occasions when the leadership had to focus on South Asia - very intensely. Afghanistan, for example, was still a very hot subject for most of my tour, even though the Soviets withdrew soon after I took over the job. Our Embassy in Kabul was of course closed, but the issue of our support for the mujahideen was very much on the front burner. It was true that this issue was handled primarily by Mike Armacost, Bob Kimmitt and Arnie Kanter, the Under Secretaries for Political Affairs during my tour. Mike left for Tokyo soon after my assumption of the DAS duties; Kimmitt had a close personal relationship with President Bush and went to Bonn. So I served under three Under Secretaries, although only briefly for Mike.

Before I became DAS, when the Soviets withdrew, the U.S. expected that the communist government would fall rapidly - some one was foolish enough to predict in writing that it would be gone within "24 hours." In fact, the government stayed in power and a prolonged struggle ensued. There were negotiations with the Soviets in Geneva about what policies we both would pursue after their withdrawal. Because the Soviets were not willing to halt their military supply pipeline to Afghanistan, we decided to continue arming our friends. This was a bizarre covert operation which was discussed in considerable detail in the American media. We liked to call this policy "positive symmetry" - in contrast to "negative symmetry" in which neither side would arm its allies. So the fighting continued. In the period after the Soviet withdrawal, I think there was an expectation that the mujahideen, having fought the Soviets so well with our military hardware, could with little difficulty remove the puppet government out of power.

As time passed, we began to look at some alternatives, although we always insisted that Najibullah would have to leave, using some non-military approaches. The rebels formed what was called the "Afghan interim government," which was certainly interim, but hardly a government. It was headquartered in Peshawar, Pakistan; it consisted of representatives of seven different guerrilla-cum-political groups. We spent a great deal of time bucking up - trying at least - the Afghan "interim" government. We tried to enlist the assistance of the Pakistanis and the Saudis in the hopes that this government - or some elements thereof - could garner enough support to be recognized as the government of Afghanistan, thereby marginalizing Najibullah and his cronies.

Our goals were first of all to replace the communist government and secondly to achieve some kind of political coherence so that we could speak with some confidence about a new Afghan government. At the time, we felt that our arms supply operations supported our goals. I believed that our actions were justified, although by the time I got involved there were a lot of people, including myself, who had considerable concern about how the arms were actually being distributed; we just didn't know - we were spectators, mostly uninformed spectators at that. The control of the distribution was handled by Pakistani intelligence agencies. We wondered who it was that was actually getting our arms. The issue came to a head when the role of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who was considered at the time to be a ruthless fundamentalist leader, became a subject for discussion. He was the mujahideen leader we loved to hate. Many thought that he was the darling of the Pakistani intelligence services, even though they vigorously denied it.

Hekmatyar had begun his career twenty years earlier with contacts with the Pakistani intelligence community. Then he was considered to be a young leftist student. It seemed to me that kind of career - from left to far right - suggested an opportunist. I wasn't convinced that he was not the main recipient of our arms; I thought that if he were that was a major mistake. I will admit that there weren't many better choices because none of the mujahideen leaders seem to command a very broad base of support and loyalty. Like the society they represented, these leaders were split by ethnic and tribal groupings. So while we spoke repeatedly about the need for a government with broad support, we in fact had very little to work with.

The situation in Afghan evolved during my three year stint as the DAS in charge of the region. In the Spring of 1992, Najibullah's regime finally collapsed soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union. I should mention that a few months earlier, Secretary Baker went to Moscow right after the abortive coup that took place in Russia. At that time, he negotiated an agreement with the Russians in which both sides promised to stop military supply to their respective friends. I should mention that the process of negotiating this agreement was fascinating. We had actually been discussing Afghanistan with the Russians at least since late 1989 or early 1990. I participated in those discussions; I accompanied John Kelly to Helsinki for the first discussions in the process. Not much was accomplished then, but the meeting was a useful first step.

The theatrics were very interesting. John Kelly, in introducing his team, said that he was sure that his Russian counterpart would be interested that two members of the American delegation were related to Russian field marshals. He was referring to Michael Malinoswski and to Teresita Schaffer - my great great uncle was Finland's Marshal Gustat Mannerheim, who had started his career as a Russian officer. The Russians were very interested in this tidbit.

At the lunch following this first meeting, I sat next to one of the two Russian political counselors attached to the Russian embassy in Helsinki. Since Kelly's announcement, this Russian had checked up on who my Finnish relatives were and what they were doing. So we spent some time at lunch talking about my family. At one stage, he said that the Russians had always liked Mannerheim because they felt that he understood their country. He added that the Russians were in the process of rediscovering the Czar's foreign policy, which was based on geography. They had come to the conclusion that Mannerheim had understood that policy. This comment was followed by a long pause; then came the statement that the views he had just expressed were his personal opinion - he seemed very proud that by 1990 a Russian could have a personal opinion.

Subsequent meetings took place in New York at the UN. I remember two or three of them. Kelly headed the first American delegation; after that, John Wolf and I jockeyed for who was going to be in charge - a difficult problem since we were at equivalent rank representing two different bureaus in the Department - he IO and I NEA. Our opposite number was Brontso, who was the Russian UN permanent representative whom the Russians designated because of his earlier experience in Afghan issues.

I don't remember the details of the discussions, but I do remember that we discussed the possible ingredients of an agreement as well as the key issue of military supplies. But the talks did not find common ground. Eventually, the Afghan issue became more pressing. The Russians appointed a new ambassador to Washington, who was alleged to be close to the Kremlin. This new ambassador and Under Secretary Kimmitt began another round of discussions, covering much of the same ground as we had. But it was clear that by this time the Russians were interested in finding a solution and that agreement to stop military aid from both countries was getting closer and closer. One interesting aspect of the total process was that when the Russians left Afghanistan in 1989, it was we who were interested in a suspension of arms supplies but the Russians resisted. But by 1992, the positions had shifted and although we covered this up with a lot of verbiage, it was we who had been the more reluctant party. It was the Russians who were pushing for an arms cut-off. This was probably due to their confidence in Najibullah's staying power which was still important to them. We had become less confident that we were backing a winning horse.

Kimmitt and the Russian ambassador worked on a draft joint statement to be issued by both governments. Kimmitt kept his negotiating close to his vest. Occasionally, he would invite me and Peter Tomsen [Special Envoy to the Afghan Resistance] to his office where we were asked for our views on specific language. Sometimes, Mike Malinoswski, Kimmitt's special assistant, would ask me a question, but it was never clear to me if Mike was doing this at Kimmitt's request or on his own initiative. I remember being somewhat nervous about this process in part because I was never convinced that I had a full view of the proceedings. I was convinced that there was a separate US-Russia effort to show the world that the two powers could solve problems peacefully and Afghanistan became the show-case for this initiative.

I might just expand briefly on Peter Tomsen's role in the process. Afghanistan was a cause with a large following in Congress. The old Cold Warriors and the people interested in refugees could coalesce around the issue of Afghanistan; to them it was the cause of the decade. Some of these people on the Hill felt that the Department was not paying sufficient attention to the issue. Congress - primarily the intelligence committees - finally persuaded the administration, under threat of legislation, to appoint a succession of special high level officials on Afghanistan. Charlie Dunbar and Maurice Ealum were both based in Washington, in NEA. They would travel periodically to the region; they spent a lot of time in Congress. But I don't think they had very much impact - either in State or on the Hill. Following those came Ed McWilliams; he unlike his predecessors, worked in our Embassy in Islamabad in the late 1980s. But that did not satisfy the interested parties on the Hill; so McWilliams was instructed to continue reporting through the Embassy, but his messages did not need the approval of the Ambassador or anyone else at post. So he sort of reported to ambassador Oakley - had to by law - but it was a very loose relationship. In fact, his base was in Washington.

McWilliams was followed by Peter Tomsen. He was given the personal rank of ambassador. He was based in Washington, but spent at least one-third of his time in South Asia and the Middle East. I was accustomed to the McWilliams model. Ed is an unusual guy; he is a very energetic political reporter. He told me once that he loved insurgencies; he was fascinated by them. He decided early in his stint as the Afghan expert that our policy toward Afghanistan was wrong - not in terms what we were doing, but in terms of whom the Pakistani middlemen were backing. So he focused on that issue; he felt that our support should swing to Ahmad Shah Massoud, another guerrilla leader. He was probably right except that Massoud was a Tajik, a small minority in Afghanistan. So Ed and Bob Oakley had a very difficult relationship - as Bob did with much of the Embassy. Oakley made it clear that when Ed was about to leave he did not cherish the thought of a successor with the same charter.

That was one of the reasons that Peter Tomsen's assignment was set up differently. The other reason was that the Afghan watchers in Congress were obsessed with the idea that the special Afghan "expert" needed a higher rank. Peter had been a senior officer and therefore was certainly a logical choice to be anointed with the personal rank of Ambassador. So for this assignment, he was called "Ambassador Tomsen"; he later went out to head an embassy. Peter was also an unusual person. He is very much of a loner; he does not share information very easily. He was an excellent political reporter. He is very energetic; loved his assignments overseas; dreaded Washington tours. He dealt with his Washington colleagues as an embassy might deal with the desk officer or other Washington officials. He had an awkward bureaucratic home base in Washington; he was considered a part of the Under Secretary's office, but was physically located in NEA from which he drew his administrative support.

Peter had one staff assistant and one secretary - a very modest infrastructure. He sat across the hall from the Afghan desk officers - two of them. So when Peter was in Washington, he became the most difficult bureaucratic relationship that I had to deal with. He also had a difficult relationship with the Afghan desk. Peter did not fit into a neat organizational chart, either on paper or in his mind. He wrote papers which did not fit a recognized role as Washington has defined it from time immemorial. He would convene meetings - which I squirmed through; all ended inconclusively. I had learned, particularly from my experience as President of the Dhaka American school board, that after a certain amount of debate, the chairperson would rule that the group had reached a decision and would then make assignments to the meeting participants. Peter could never bring himself to reach that point, but at the same time resented anyone at his meetings trying to reach conclusions and define an action program. After all, these were his meetings. So we were faced with almost non-stop awkwardness in our interactions with Peter. As I said, he would spent many weeks overseas; it was clear that his relationship with the Embassy in Pakistan was just as awkward as with us. He did not fit into either Islamabad or Washington. I don't think he realized how demanding he was. He would ask for things that he probably should not have demanded - e.g. assistance from his control officer in the Embassy which was not appropriate - things he should have done himself.

He would periodically file long, long cables - of course uncleared and unapproved. Invariably his judgments and those of the Embassy would be slightly at odds; any effort to reconcile these views was always difficult. Peter spent a lot of time in Peshawar, as he was supposed to, seeing various Afghan leaders. He did the same in Baluchistan. To his great frustration, he only got into Afghanistan - Kabul - at the very end of his tenure - after Najibullah's downfall. But, as I have suggested, he never fit into a bureaucratic process with which we felt comfortable and on which he could have had some impact. While his reporting on his conversation with Afghan personalities was always fascinating and did raise some new insights, I had real problems with his judgments about a number of policy issues. I felt that he had also been captivated by Ahmad Shah Massoud and to a lesser extent by the former King of Afghanistan whom Peter met in Rome on a couple of occasions.

After my experiences with special envoys, I have come to the conclusions that such assignments do not fit the State bureaucracy very well. Some extraordinary people may be able to make it work, but they are rare. I don't like the model for another reason: it almost automatically degrades the work done through the normal chain of command. The regular organization is almost forced to spend an extraordinary amount of time trying to figure out what this new appendage is trying to do.

The current administration has used the "special" designation quite often - largely because the senior officials find it easier just to turn to one person instead of having to listen to the views of a multitude of interested bureaus and offices. But I think in fact such a "special" office or person complicates an assistant secretary's already complex assignment. In fact, that person does not and could not take over all of the work that is involved in the U.S.'s relationship with another country. So in fact, what appears to be a unifying concept to the senior officials, becomes a divider in the real world. The "special" focuses on the problem, but the desk can not ignore that problem as she or he goes about his daily routine. So at the bottom of the bureaucracy, the "special" appendage creates more work that it saves.

The one case with which I am familiar which ended up working quite well was the Kirby "peace process" operation which I described earlier when I was on the Egypt desk and we had a common deputy. This was an arrangement rife with peril except for the fact that the three of us had a clear understanding that we needed to be in very close contact in order to make it work. We were all on the same policy wavelength and our offices were all within ten feet of each other.

We were really not privy to the composition and magnitude of the U.S. arms supply program. We did have enough information to make some educated guesses which I think were reasonably accurate - at least on what kinds of weapons we were providing. Many of the decisions on this issue had been made long before I became the DAS.

I did not know where the Kimmitt negotiations on cutting off arms supplies were headed and, as I said, was somewhat nervous about the whole process.. That is not surprising since the area specialist is usually nervous about a negotiation in which she or he did not fully participate, and this one was really part of a much broader process between us and the Russians. In any event, the negotiations had not come to closure when all of a sudden the political situation changed in Moscow. As I said, Baker went to Moscow right after the aborted coup in the fall of 1991. Baker was accompanied by Bill Burns, who at the time was the deputy director of the Policy Planning staff. Bill was a young officer who had risen through the ranks very rapidly, but never let that go to his head. He found ways to keep in close touch with the experts in whose issues he was being involved. After Dennis Ross, the S/P Director, assigned the Afghan problem to Bill, he began a concentrated indoctrination course. Before leaving for Moscow, he wrote down all the telephone numbers where I might conceivably be found - in case he had to get a hold of me in a hurry. That was a clue that Baker wanted to settle the Afghan issue during his stay in Moscow. In fact, Burns did call me a couple of times, essentially to discuss some specific words or phrases. After each conversation, Burns reminded me that our discussion had never taken place. I should mention that I had given him my entire file on the draft statement that Kimmitt and the Russian ambassador had been working on. I circled some of the key words or phrases which had a history to them and which were deemed to be important to the Afghans and the Pakistanis. The Burns calls were clearly unauthorized and perhaps even in contravention of specific orders not to discuss what Baker was working on with anybody.

In the end, there was a joint statement issued in which both countries pledged that beginning with the new year - which was less than three months away - no arms would be shipped to Afghanistan. By then, I think that was a wise outcome. It seemed to me that a continuing weapons supply program was only contributing to the continuation of hostilities with no certain winner in sight. If the Russians were willing to halt their support of their clients, we should reciprocate and halt all arms shipments to Afghanistan.

There was a substantial body of opinion in the U.S. - but not in the U.S. government - that we should unilaterally halt our supply program - which included Stinger missiles - because it was not helping in attaining our political goals and it was just arming lots of people over whom no one had any real control. We had already witnessed the purchase of a Stinger missile by one of the small Gulf States - Qatar, I think - from an Iranian middleman. That sent a real shock wave through the U.S. intelligence community and the government in general, including Congress, particularly since there were widespread rumors of other Stingers being peddled in the area. It was becoming evident that we might well encounter serious problems if our supply program were to continue. We were really not privy to the composition and magnitude of the U.S. arms supply program. We did have enough information to make some educated guesses which I think were reasonably accurate - at least on what kinds of weapons we were providing. Many of the decisions on this issue had been made long before I became the DAS.

While discussions were going on at higher level about the termination of the weapons supply program, I had a number of discussions with people in the Russian embassy. One of that staff was a counselor - or first secretary - who was the expert on South Asia. He would ask to see me periodically and we would talk about the situation and its evolution. As you could well expect, our early conversations were well guarded; we became franker as time passed. The first time we had a really candid substantive exchange was in April, 1992 after the Russians had requested formal Foreign Ministry to Department of State talks on Asia. By their definition, Asia included both East and South - from the Pacific to Iran - which included Afghanistan. The Russian government sent a delegation to Washington; it spent most of its time talking to the East Asia Bureau, but it also spent an afternoon with me.

As luck would have it, while the delegation was talking to the East Asia assistant secretary, the crisis in Kabul came to a head and Najibullah was overthrown, taking refuge in the UN mission in Kabul. We had received an assessment cable from Pakistan and some news reports. I sent that material to the head of the Soviet delegation with a note that it might be of interest to him. The next day, that official opened the meeting with a comment that although he was still interested in covering all major issues in Asia, he wanted to know our assessment of the safety of the Russian embassy and its personnel in Kabul. They were obviously concerned that with the downfall of Najibullah, their staff might well be at risk. Nothing in fact happened, but I did believe that the Russians were right to be concerned. I thought that the Russians' question was particularly revealing as it came out the first moment of what was to be a wide ranging dialogue.

After the Russian chairman raised the issue, we had a very frank exchange of views. What was particularly striking was how close our two assessments of the situation in Kabul was. Both sides had essentially the same judgment on the political instability in Afghanistan then evident and likely to continue in the foreseeable future. We also agreed in the main on who the winners and losers were in Afghanistan. Obviously, the Russians knew more about the government which had just been overthrown - they had a huge presence in Kabul and we had none. We knew more about the mujahideen. We asked a lot of questions about what their diplomats in Kabul were reporting. Both sides had reached the same conclusions about the Afghan situation.

The arms cut off did not have an immediate impact on the level of fighting in Afghanistan. The three months lead time that the Russian-US agreement provided gave all sides in Afghanistan an opportunity to stock pile arms and ammunition. The lead time was absolutely necessary because the supply system had so many people involved - particularly our process - that without it we would have been immediately in violation of the agreement. The time was required to shut down the pipeline.

By the time I left, Najibullah's government had fallen; he was still alive as a refugee in the UN mission. There had been some negotiations - unsuccessful - to try to get him some safe passage to India; the mujahideen had absolutely no interest in that proposition.

Eventually, Najibullah was hung from a lamp post. In light of the instability in Afghanistan, I was very pessimistic about that country's future by the time I left the DAS job. In retrospect, I was not convinced that our 1989 decision to continue our arms supply program had been wise. Of course, that was with 20-20 hindsight; at the time, I think almost everyone agreed with it. By 1992, I wondered if we had been right in our judgments; we might have been better off just to unilaterally cut off the supplies and encourage the Russians to do the same.

Even more fundamentally, I became very pessimistic about the influence an outside power like the U.S. could bring to bear on situations like Afghanistan. I didn't feel that any of the mujahideen leaders were interested in our views much less to go along with any of our suggestions. Once the Taliban became the ruling group in Kabul - long after I had left the DAS job - this problem became very acute. We now have a bunch of rather young people, inexperienced in governing, whose concept of religion and politics leads them to the conclusion that what the rest of the world thinks is of no importance. That means that all of the traditional things that diplomats do to try to persuade the leadership of another country to change behavior or at least to bring greater coherence to its policies and to bring their actions in greater conformity with world norms did not work in Afghanistan; they had a very disparate leadership which had no interest at all in the views of anyone else. Periodically, we have tried a variety of approaches to the Taliban including alliances with people who had far better connections with the Taliban - e.g. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia which was prepared to spend vast amounts of money and had Islamic credentials. We have participated in various international groupings to discuss the Afghan problem; there was never much disagreement on what was wrong in Afghanistan, but to develop a strategy which might have some chance of success had proved very difficult. By now we have had three or four special UN envoys who were creative and resourceful, but have never been able to have any influence in Kabul.

I think it is worth noting that even after the withdrawal of the Russian troops, the fall of the Najibullah government and the cessation of arms deliveries, the U.S. maintained considerable interest in Afghanistan. One reason we did not change was because of inertia; we had been worrying for so long about that country that it was very hard to stop. Then there is the humanitarian reason: about one-third of the Afghan population had fled or had been murdered. Many were still refugees in neighboring areas, particularly in Pakistan whose future was important to us. There was also the problem of chaos in Afghanistan that might have spilled out over its borders. We don't like chaos, particularly in areas where we have a major stake such as South Asia. This is not the "domino" effect that we have worried about in other parts of the world; this potential spread of chaos was much messier and very difficult to assess. It was more like an epidemic against which no vaccine had yet been discovered.

Our main concern was the stability of Pakistan, closely followed by the danger of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism to troubled areas: Kashmir, parts of the Middle East. Today I think we can see that this danger has become fact - Kashmir for sure and other unstable areas as well. There is some evidence that these fundamentalists have shown up in Egypt and in other parts of Africa.

In addition, we were and are concerned by the narcotics trade. If you take Afghanistan and the Northwest frontier area of Pakistan, you will find the second largest opium producer in the world. In the early 1990s, there was essentially no control over the growing of opium and its distribution in that part of the world. It was essentially a booming enterprise from which various entrepreneurs made a fortune - if they didn't end up murdered or imprisoned.

These issues were in play at the beginning of the decade and are still alive and well today. I think despite that fact Afghanistan does not command as much high level attention today as it did ten years ago. I certainly don't think that Mike Armacost's and Bob Kimmitt's successors spent as much time on Afghanistan as those two did. The Secretary's opportunities to look at Afghanistan are few and far between - at least until the bombing of our facilities in Africa. My real concern about Afghanistan is that I don't see what we or anyone else can do to bring it back into the family of nations. I see the problem, but not the solution.

Let me now turn to Pakistan. I visited Islamabad at least once per year and more often twice. Oakley left Pakistan in 1991. He was replaced by Nick Platt who stayed for about a year, when he left to become president of the Asia Society. He was succeeded by John Monjo. I worked with both Oakley and Platt. The two had major differences in style. Of course, the circumstances had changed drastically when Nick took over. Oakley arrived shortly after General Zia was killed - along with our ambassador, Arnie Raphel. Bob is a very high profile person; he has a million ideas - at least 90% of which were fabulous. The others were strange or dangerous or both. Bob worked very closely with the transition government headed by Benazir Bhutto and then later with Sharif. Oakley saw a big role in Pakistan for himself personally and for the U.S. He was very much involved in trying to bring some kind of peaceful resolution to the Bhutto-Sharif rivalry. He talked to both - often quite bluntly. There was at the time a weekly newspaper which ran a satire column on its back page. That column had a couple of standard characters. There was Benazir Bhutto character, there was a Nawaz Sharif character, a military character and then what was called "Viceroy's Journal" - and that was Robert Oakley. Each of these characters would utter his or her lines in this satirical column; it was absolutely devastating. It really skewered the Pakistani characters' friends, hair styles, their English, their westernization - or lack thereof.

Nick is every bit as talented and energetic as Bob, but he was much smoother. He was much more diplomatic in his messages, both to the Pakistanis and Washington. His point is clear, but it is delivered with a velvet glove, not an iron fist. He was certainly not the target that Bob was for the local satirists. He was much less in the media than Bob had been.

My main day-to-day contacts were primarily with the DCM who was Beth Jones for most of my period as DAS and Ed Abington for the rest of the time. They would check with the desk daily and with me periodically. I had two very good country directors whom I encouraged to be the main points of contacts with our people in Islamabad. I would call if there was something special, but the normal daily contacts were carried on by the desk.

At the beginning of my tour as DAS, our Pakistani policy was essentially directed towards three goals: a) opposition to their nuclear program, which resulted with an unsuccessful effort to persuade the Pakistanis to halt it short of building a nuclear explosive device; b) intense collaboration on Afghanistan; and c) a complicated amalgam of concern for Pakistan's security and our interest in stabilizing and improving if possible the Pakistan-India relationship.

There were other issues, but those three goals predominated. I thought that we were absolutely correct in pursing all three goals. On the Afghan issue, as I have suggested, I eventually felt uncomfortable with our policy primarily because I was concerned that Pakistan intelligence services might be too influential in both governments.

Our concern for Pakistan's security was of long standing going back to the days when we both belonged to regional alliances of the 1950s aimed at the spreading of Soviet influence. Those alliances was reactivated in the 1980s when the Soviet Army penetrated Afghanistan. We had never agreed to back Pakistan in its confrontation with India, even though the Paks certainly would have liked it. At various times, in fact, the Pakistanis persuaded themselves that we were supporting them. So we, broadly speaking, had an interest in Pakistan's security; we were one of Pakistan's major arms supplier until the Pressler amendment became effective on October 1, 1990.

As a matter of fact my first Congressional testimony was to defend the U.S. government's decision to sell to Pakistan 60 F-16s - those that came to be so famous and whose sale was only settled financially in late 1998. During my tenure, our policy towards Pakistan changed when we reached the conclusion that we could not certify that it did not possess a nuclear explosive device. We cut off all assistance and any kind of support provided under the Foreign Assistance Act. That happened only after vigorous debate with the U.S. government on whether Pakistan was meeting the standards of the Pressler amendment. Since the certification was required on an annual basis, the issue was discussed at least once every year - theoretically by October 1, although we usually did not meet our deadline. The substance of the certification was based on extremely delicate intelligence information. The first certification had certainly engendered considerable thought and discussion, and the following ones, as I said, also were widely discussed. I personally supported certification because I felt that the required standards for non-certification had not been met. I was also concerned that non-certification would seriously damage US-Pakistan relations.

The immediate concern was that non-certification would be tantamount to declaring that Pakistan had a nuclear explosive device. It was a signal that I thought would bring the South Asia nuclear competition out in the open - instead of keeping it wrapped up, as it had been. I think the 1990 non-certification was tantamount to a finding that Pakistan had a nuclear explosive device. I must admit that the short term impact of non-certification on the Pakistan-India competition was less that some of us had anticipated, principally because India had come to the same conclusion several years earlier. It had then decided that in fact Pakistan had a nuclear explosive device. So although our action brought the issue into the public domain, the Indian government only saw it as justification of its own views. Publicly, it made a lot of noise, but policy wise, it made very little difference in India.

However, one has to wonder whether the nuclear tests of 1998 would have taken place if we had continued our annual assessment of Pakistan's capacity and certified that Pakistan was in conformance with the Pressler's amendment's requirements. I felt that the Pressler amendment probably bought us a few years in the development of Pakistan's nuclear explosive device.

The question of whether the Pressler amendment acted as a restraint on India is more complicated. There was a fair amount of evidence that at least one previous Indian government was ready to run a test when U.S. intelligence discovered the preparations and we were able then to talk the Indians out of proceeding - very quietly. You have to wonder whether the Indians were that determined to run another test if the Pakistani had not in effect gone public with their capabilities. As result of that unfortunate policy, the Pakistanis managed to get deeper into our dog-house. That made it easier for the Indians to take a step which they knew would result in certain sanctions. But I must admit that it is not easy, or perhaps even possible, to draw a cause and effect relationship between our decision in 1990 to the explosion of 1998. At the margin, we probably made it easier for the Indians to take their action, but I don't think it was as a direct consequence of our decision.

I think that in the final analysis our nuclear non-proliferation policy did not work in South Asia. On the other hand, I talked to Senator John Glenn right after we had decided in 1990 that we could not certify Pakistan, but before the October 1 deadline. The administration made a brief - and spectacularly unsuccessful - effort to persuade Congress to pass legislation giving the President a 6-12 month authority to waive the Pressler amendment to provide a breathing space allowing us to try to convince the Pakistanis of the error of their ways. One of the Senators we had to brief was Glenn. That fell to me. I remember him saying to me that when the non-proliferation legislation - he was in fact one of the principal authors and sponsors of that legislation - was offered and even when the NPT was first signed, he assumed that within ten years there would be 10-12 countries that had a military nuclear capacity. He thought that we had at the most ten years from 1976 to bring this matter under control; by 1990, in fact, fourteen years had passed and nuclear proliferation had not gotten out of hand. So he had reached the conclusion that in some ways his legislation and the NPT had done some good, but that the time had come for another approach. However, he said that he was not ready to support a new approach. I must say that I agreed with the Senator's analysis; I felt that the deterrent legislation - i.e. the forced imposition of draconian sanctions that would force countries to consider their nuclear policy very carefully - had in effect slowed down the development of nuclear explosive devices. In fact, a couple of countries - e.g. Argentina and Brazil - had actually rolled back their programs. They decided that they would resolve their differences in other ways.

But it must be recognized that once it imposes sanctions, the U.S. pretty much exhausts its capacity to influence the actions of the other country. Another decision has then to be made to see whether there is anything else the U.S. can do to change that other country's policies. In reality, once Pakistan had developed a nuclear explosive device - and even more this year after the test explosion - it is incumbent on the U.S. to make all efforts to modify Pakistan's policies. So if sanctions are a signal of the rupture in relationship and an effort to quarantine a country from the rest of the world, the imposition of sanctions becomes a very high risk strategy. Everything that has been written about sanctions would suggest when they work - which is not always a given - they work very, very slowly.

By the time I became a DAS, General Zia in Pakistan had been killed in a plane crash after 11 years of military dictatorship. After that Pakistan had an internationally blessed government headed by Benazir Bhutto. She had one major opposition party - the Muslim League - headed by Nawaz Sharif. The two leaders hated each other - as did their parties. So by 1990, there were two major political forces in Pakistan in addition to the bureaucracy - which is always very strong - the military - which historically had a deep involvement in politics - and an Islamic right which at the time was not considered to be much of a factor, as shown in the election of 1988 - since then it has become an increasingly important player in Pakistan - particularly outside of the electoral process - and especially in light of Pakistan's involvement with the fundamentalists in Afghanistan.

So the political dynamics in Pakistan as it relates to non-proliferation are governed by the popularity of indigenous nuclear weapons; they are perceived as the "great equalizer" with the much more populous India. It is not a subject for domestic political debate; the opposition parties regardless of which they are, will drape themselves in the Pakistani flag and demand a stronger governmental position if the majority party is seen as not being aggressive enough on this question. Generally speaking, the military will support a robust posture; the scientist/technologists community will also give an aggressive nuclear policy its support. The research efforts in Pakistan are much more shadowy than they are in India. This community is led by A. Q. Khan, a Nobel Prize winner, who is very proud of his nuclear efforts and wants the program to expand.

In this fractured political setting, there is widespread support for expanding the nuclear program. That program is not entirely the creature of the military; as I have said earlier there are many components of the Pakistani society that also give full support. There are some sophisticated commentators that weighed in against the nuclear test of last Spring, but they were a very small minority in the intelligentsia.

I should note that the Pressler amendment was passed in 1985; it was enacted because under the pre-1985 legislation the U.S. would have had no choice except to cut of assistance to Pakistan immediately. The Pressler amendment, which dealt exclusively with Pakistan, was not invoked until 1990. The Pakistanis resented being the sole target of the U.S.' displeasure, but in fact the Pressler Amendment was what enabled us to continue a major assistance program - the third largest in the world at the time - to that country for another five years. When the Pressler amendment was finally invoked, all assistance ended.

As far as military assistance was concerned, the effects of the cut-off were almost immediate. There were major end-use items - such as the F-16s - which were in the pipeline ready for delivery; they were stopped immediately. This cessation was psychologically devastating to the Pakistani military. The impact on that country's military preparedness is a little harder to judge because most of the end-use items would have added new capabilities to the Pakistani military; therefore the cut-off may not have seriously damaged the level of 1990 capabilities. There may have been some decline in the existing capabilities - e.g. no new spare parts - but it may have been only temporary. Eventually some spare parts were delivered after the lawyers examined the language of the amendment. They interpreted Pressler to allow certain deliveries as long as the U.S. government was not involved. As a policy matter, we set a pretty low threshold on what could be delivered. Nevertheless, I think it was clear that the cut-off of military assistance was a consequential act as far as the Pakistani defense establishment was concerned.

Of greater consequence to us was that under the Pressler amendment we were obliged to halt the training and education of Pakistani military personnel. We had for many years brought military personnel - mostly, if not all, officers - to the U.S. for training, as we did for many recipient countries. This program was vital in maintaining official and personal relationships with the Pakistani military; this was very useful to us because many of the officers trained in the U.S. became key officers in the military. Now we have a whole generation of Pakistani military which has not been exposed to the U.S. or the American military style. I think that is a loss; I believe that the experience in the U.S. was beneficial to both militaries. I believe that military assistance is a useful tool of U.S. policy. Unfortunately, that training program is almost non-existent today and our other military assistance programs have become so controversial that we do very little of that anymore especially in the developing world. One of the key issues in military assistance is the financial burden that the program levies on the resources of the recipient country. That problem has been debated almost since the beginning of the military assistance program. I am not sure that we did in fact burden the budget of a developing country to the extent that we slowed down its economic development. I think we need to recognize that we were not the only suppliers; a regime of restricted deliveries would have required an international accord - a goal that periodically we tried to reach without success.

On the other hand, the termination of an economic assistance program does not have an immediate impact; it may take 12-18 months before the effects are felt. Usually, loans which have already been agreed to are brought to fruition. When we terminated economic assistance to Pakistan, we - AID principally, with deep involvement of the State desk staff - had to file a close-out plan. Under AID's enabling legislation, such a plan is required to insure that the projects which were already under way would be completed. So the close out plan focuses on the disbursement of funds already committed for one project or another. So the actual flow of funds continued for at least a year and more for certain projects. Then the projects began to taper down as funds were disbursed and the goals reached. The local currency - counterpart funds - were not a major issue because we were not, by 1990, generating many additional resources and the ones in existence had been already programmed.

As I said, the flow of funds took 12-18 months to cease. The phase-out took longer than that; that is to say, we still had some residual AID presence in Pakistan for longer than that. What made the situation particularly difficult was that the world expected Pakistan to continue to service its debt, including that owed to the U.S.

India, on the other hand, has a more fractured political scene. There was one great national party - Congress - which had been steadily losing support since 1977 when it lost its first election. The then strongest opposition group - the BJP and allies, who are now the government - has a localized base, mainly in the North, and is stridently nationalistic. There are a number of regional parties and quasi-regional parties which primarily pursue local issues and personalities; their principal interests are benefits for their state. If they get involved at all in nuclear issues, they do so entirely out of opportunistic instincts. So I don't think the Indian nuclear program was as important in India as it became in Pakistan. It was an important issue for the BJP in 1998. In fact, it was the only one of the three "hot button" issues that the BJP had pushed during the election campaign that actually became part of the government's program after that party's electoral victory. The BJP has espoused promotion of nuclear development for military purposes ever since the 1960s and has acted consistently on its long held views.

But in India, the bureaucratic politics are different than they are in Pakistan. There is the regular bureaucracy, which has an important voice in the development of governmental policies, but does not have a systematic view on nuclear issues. The military has a much more distant relationship with the bureaucracy than exists in Pakistan. The Indian military tends to be somewhat "hawkish", but it has been largely left out of nuclear policy making. The Indian scientific bureaucracy on the other hand is much more influential than its counterpart in Pakistan. It consists primarily of the defense research and development organization, which is an arm of the Prime Minister's office; it actually develops the nuclear and missile programs and therefore has a major stake in insuring that a test program be allowed. The broader scientific community was generally sympathetic to the idea that India should be a leader in the science field, including the nuclear one.

In India, it was the bureaucracy that was the strongest proponent of nuclear testing and development. After May 1998, when the nuclear explosions took place, the government was very popular for its decision to proceed - at least briefly. The Indian population felt a strong sense of accomplishment; they had reached the same technological level as the West. But then, the more sober views took over. The Congress Party, the principal opposition party, began to berate the government for not managing the huge foreign criticism better. But it did not show any objection to the testing; just to the "diplomatic fall-out."

The missile testing had the same players on the pro and con sides as did the nuclear testing issue.

We had many opportunities to exchange views about South Asia with both the Indians and the Pakistanis. With both, our views differed sharply about the intentions of the other. In addition, there was a difference on the role that the U.S. should play in India-Pakistan relations. Pakistan was always trying to involve us more deeply in that relationship. Several times they urge us to convene a trilateral meeting at Camp David to discuss Kashmir. No way were we going to do that, largely because the Indians rejected any third party involvement in their relationship with other South Asian countries and particularly Pakistan - and especially on a subject like Kashmir. The Pakistan suggestion would have placed us in the role of a mediator with one party to the dispute unalterably opposed to our participation in any way, shape or form. That didn't sound like a recipe for success.

Our views on Kashmir were that we regarded that territory still a subject for dispute between India and Pakistan. Therefore we did not recognize any country's sovereignty over that territory. We recognized the existing administration in Kashmir, whether in parts administered by India or in parts administered by Pakistan. We urged the parties to settle their dispute in accordance with the principles laid out in the Simla Accords of 1972. During my tour as DAS, we began adding a new feature to our standard line. We urged the parties to take into account the desires of the Kashmiri. That new addendum was the result of a ignited insurgency in Kashmir which started in 1989 and became very active in the following two years. This new development put Kashmir much higher on all agendas after about 18 years of neglect - more or less.

This insurgency became the reason for Pakistan's insistence that we get involved in a Camp David-like effort. The Indians did not budge from their long standing policy of rejection of third party involvement in the sub-continent. The insurgency started as a home grown uprising, which was unusual in itself, since the Kashmir problems of 1947-48 and 1965 had been principally Pakistan-induced. The cumulative frustration felt by the Kashmiris with the obnoxiously sick political system fostered by the Indians and with bad State governments led that people to a major alienation from the Delhi government. These factors led to the development and growth of an under-ground separatist movement, which wanted Kashmir to distant itself from India without joining Pakistan. Eventually, this insurgency was captured by the mujahideen.

The developments in Kashmir became headline news in the U.S. when one of the rebel groups went into the kidnapping business - starting with the daughter of the Indian Interior Minister; she - and her father - were Muslim, adding a novel dimension to the saga. The Minister was responsible for the Indian police. Eventually, she was released unharmed. The Pakistanis may well have played a role in obtaining that release, even though the Indians and others felt that the insurgents were receiving aid and comfort from Pakistan. I don't know if that was true, but it certainly became true as time passed. The Kashmir situation stayed on the front burner; it became part of a broader crisis that occurred in the Spring of 1990.

The 1990 crisis was a break point in a lot of different ways. In the first place, it became the context within which whatever happened thereafter in the Pakistani nuclear program led to our non-certification. It started very much like previous India-Pakistan security flaps. It took place at the time of year when both militaries normally undertook large exercises on the plains of the Punjab and Rajasthan; so there were armored units already on the move - such units having normally been the spearheads for any hostilities between the two countries.

Quite suddenly, the Pakistanis displayed intense anxiety; they became very concerned that the Indian exercises were in fact the beginning of armed clashes. It was an interesting time because the U.S. very quickly became central to all efforts to reduce tension in the sub-continent. The Stimson Center recently hosted a meeting of a number of the participants, both Indian and Pakistani, in the events of this period. This meeting produced a very good history of the period, which pretty much matched my recollections. One of the key findings, which can be found in a publication emanating from the seminar, was that there were some major misjudgments on both sides, some of which the U.S. was able to correct. Bob Gates, then the deputy National Security Advisor to the President, visited the region at the height of the crisis. John Kelly and Richard Haass went with him. Gates had some rather stern words with both sides; his message was in effect that regardless of the merits of the argument of each side, the U.S. would not be very understanding if the tensions spilled over into hostilities.

Gates' visit and his words had the desired impact; the Pakistanis and the Indians in fact engaged in bilateral efforts intended to build "confidence" - i.e. risk reductions. They discussed ways of improving communications between the two countries to reduce the possibility of mis-understandings in the future. In fact, the new approaches were used for a while after the summer of 1990. For about two years, these understandings governed the bilateral relationships and the tensions were greatly reduced. After that, they went back to the pre-1990 relationships.

My role during this crisis was to prepare the U.S. team for this visit. We pulled together all the material that we thought would be useful. Kelly and Haass were of course very familiar with the situation and Bob Gates had also kept up with developments, if not all of the details.

I should mention Kashmir which I believe to be essentially a domestic political issue in both India and Pakistan. I don't think that either country is very much concerned with the views and wishes of the Kashmiris. There is of course some interest in Islamabad and Delhi in the feelings of the Kashmiris, but it pales in comparison to the domestic political demands. In the case of India, it believes that the Kashmir issue has long been decided. Nehru's promise to consult the Kashmiri people on their wishes has long been conveniently forgotten in Delhi. The Indian position is that there have been several elections in Kashmir which they feel fulfills Nehru's promise. Furthermore, the Indians believe - or at least take the position - that to allow Kashmir to secede from India would suggest that Muslims are not full members of Indian society - that is not an admission that any Indian government can make since the Muslims are a large element of that society and furthermore it is completely inconsistent with their views of what the Indian nation and society stands for.

The popular view on Kashmir is much stronger in northern India - areas close to Kashmir - where Hindi or closely related languages are spoken. By the time you get to Madras or Calcutta, the population still is concerned with Kashmir, but it is a long, long way away. In the inter-party debates, Kashmir is part of Mother India; it is also an issue that the opposition will raise continuously accusing the government of being far too passive about the subject. Pakistan on the other hand sees Kashmir as the unfinished partition business; it is seen as a continuing insult. When India and Pakistan were partitioned, there were two areas that had Hindu populations under Muslim rulers. In both cases, the leaders acceded to Pakistan and then withdrew their accession when their palaces were surrounded by Indian troops.

In Kashmir's case, the opposite situation governed. The Muslim population was under a Hindu ruler, who acceded to India, which will not let go. So the Pakistanis see the situation as a continuing insult - a captive Muslim population unable to determine its own fate. It makes India look bad. I should say that the official Pakistan government position is that the situation should return to 1948 when a number of UN resolutions were passed. It maintains that a plebiscite should be held in Kashmir giving that population the choice of two futures: a) be part of India or b) be part of Pakistan. I think that in fact if the Kashmir Valley was given a free vote, it would overwhelmingly support independence and not accession to either Pakistan or India. Given that situation, the Pakistanis view the Kashmir issue primarily as a domestic political issue with little regard being given to the views of the Kashmiris.

For almost eighteen years, Kashmir was not headline material. Between 1972 - the year in which the Simla Accords were signed - and 1989 - when the insurgency became news - Kashmir was out of sight and mind. During that period, even though standard positions were expressed by both countries, the politicians did not use Kashmir for campaign purposes. Since 1989, the Kashmir has been boiling and has became the subject for domestic political campaigning - in India, in Pakistan and in Kashmir. People will tell you now that the home grown insurgency in Kashmir is largely a historical event; it is now an issue of alienation with most of the fighting being carried out by Pakistan supported guerrillas - or even members of the Pakistani armed forces - or by Afghan mujahideen or at least fighters supported by Afghanistan. There are virtually daily fighting incidents in Kashmir today and the issue remains a pot-boiler.

Before closing this discussion of U.S.-Pakistan relations, I should make one comment. One should note that those relations for a long time, and particularly since 1990, have been marked by some very serious issues, anyone of which could have overwhelmed the relationship. There were times when several of these issues seemed headed for a major confrontation simultaneously. The nuclear issue did do major harm to our relationships in 1990 and thereafter, but the narcotics issue and Pakistan's support of terrorism were also very high on our national agenda. We had a long-standing security relationship with Pakistan, which benefited both of us. It was particularly useful to Pakistan which always sought outside support to counter-balance the Indian "menace." But the U.S.-Pakistan relationship has always been on a razor's edge. We certainly understood that; whether the Pakistanis saw it the same way, I am not sure. I am convinced that in 1990 when we terminated assistance, our decision came as a major surprise and shock to Pakistan despite our continual and ever escalating warnings; they just refused to believe that the U.S. would taken any negative actions against their country.

I had a long discussion with Najmuddin Shaikh, the new Pakistani ambassador to the U.S. in the fall of 1990. He arrived just after we had lowered the boom on his country. I had known Shaikh quite well since he had served as the DCM in Washington a few years earlier. In his initial meeting with us, which normally is a mere protocol call for an ambassador to provide the Department copies of his credentials, he said that he couldn't understand how the U.S. could have terminated aid "without warning." After this initial meeting with the Under Secretary, I suggested to the ambassador that we get together later in the week, so that I could brief on all of our efforts to warn his government of the potential consequences of their nuclear policy. I assumed that he may not have been fully briefed before his departure from Islamabad and was just embarrassing himself with his erroneous comments. So we had a long and fairly painful meeting with some of our people who had been personally involved in delivering some of the warnings. He took copious notes which suggested to me that in fact he had not been briefed very thoroughly before his departure.

Before we leave Pakistan, I would like comment briefly on economic sanctions. I was first exposed to this issue while in EB, but I really had to focus on it when I was the Pakistan Desk officer and then subsequently the DAS who covered that country. In EB, during the Reagan administration, I had to wrestle with the issue of applying sanctions on some of our closest allies because they had permitted some of their companies to participate in the construction of an oil pipeline in the Soviet Union. But the Pakistan case was far more important to me, which replicated itself this past year in our relations with India.

First of all, in the Pakistan case, there were multiple pieces of legislation in existence which stipulated that if Pakistan took certain actions - or failed to take certain actions - then some of the bilateral programs would have to be cut off. The most famous sanctions were those related to Pakistan's efforts in the nuclear field. The legislation which addressed this issue actually went back to the early 1970s with the original Glenn-Symington amendments which had been triggered by Pakistan's importation of fissionable material, technology and equipment related to reprocessing operation which that country was trying to undertake. That sanction called for a cut-off of assistance.

In 1985, the Pressler amendment became law. A new factor - Afghanistan - had been added by this time. In light of the close collaboration that the U.S. and Pakistan had mounted in the effort to expel the Soviets from Afghanistan, the last thing that the U.S. administration wanted to do was to cut-off assistance to Pakistan. Once the administration was no longer able to issue the necessary waivers of the Glenn-Symington amendments, new legislation was required in order to keep assistance flowing to Pakistan. The Congress therefore enacted the Pressler amendment which allowed assistance to continue as long as the President was able to certify each fiscal year that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear explosive device and that the continuation of our assistance programs would have a deterrent effect on Pakistan's interest in pursuing its nuclear program. At the time, that was the price the administration had to pay to continue what was the third largest US assistance program in the world. The Pressler amendment required the cut-off of all assistance and all new military supplies; there were also some nebulous provisions which the lawyers interpreted to put some restrains on deliveries under existing contracts; e.g., the non-delivery of the F-16s once sanctions had been imposed.

The next version of the sanctions passed after I had stopped working on Pakistan. This was another Glenn amendment. That specified a range of sanctions against any country not recognized by the NPT as a nuclear weapon state, after it had conducted a nuclear test. This new amendment broadened the range of sanctions to include a whole host of prohibitions against extending even commercial credits to the violating country. It also restricted American banks in extending credits to the governments in question. So the Glenn amendment was far more reaching than any of its predecessors.

Then came amendments which would have required sanctions to be imposed on those countries which the President certified as being non-cooperative on drug trafficking suppression. This called for very broad restrictions on US relations with the violating country. I think in this case, the sanctions include the banning of economic assistance, other than that given for narcotic reductions. Also it limited a variety of military relationships as well as US government commercial credit programs.

Another set of sanctions were approved by Congress to apply to countries which sponsored or assisted international terrorism. These sanctions were also broad and included restrictions in the commercial area.

Pakistan was a potential violator of all three categories of Congressional sanctions - nuclear, drug trafficking and terrorism.

In light of my experiences with Pakistan, I concluded that sanctions legislation is a very blunt instrument. Until a country has actually taken the action that triggers them, the threat of sanctions does give the U.S. a certain leverage which may help delay the evil day. I suspect however that it would be most unusual for a country to alter a major policy that it feels is vital to its national security because it may lose American assistance. It may consider its options a little more carefully; it may re-evaluate how important it may be, but when the chips are down, the national security concerns are likely to predominate. This was certainly the case in Pakistan - as there are other cases that scholars have studied recently.

Once the offending behavior has taken place, the fact that sanctions are legislated with no waiver provisions, puts the U.S. in a real bind. The consequences then are a cut off of assistance and other programs including commercial credits. One can philosophically argue that the U.S. government has a legitimate basis for cutting off governmental assistance, which after all is discretionary, but this view is not necessarily applicable to the commercial side, particularly when it is strictly in the private sector. After having applied these sanctions, what does the U.S. government do? Presumably, the U.S. still wants to reverse the offending behavior, if it can. In the case of the nuclear tests, which took place after I left the Foreign Service, you can't wipe out the history. The tests took place, but presumably the U.S. wants to prevent further ones, and prevent the onward spread of Pakistan's nuclear technology. What can the U.S. do to change the behavior of another country when it has had to cut off a major portion of its relationship with that country? It has lost a number of its negotiating tools because both the U.S. and the other country know that you can't violate the sanction regime without the approval of Congress. The other country also knows that it is not going to be a simple matter of satisfying the Congress on one point; it also has to fit in with the politics of relationships within the Congress and between the Congress and the Executive Branch.

So I concluded that sanctions are a tool that is not useless, but it has a very limited utility and it is much less useful when multiple sanctions are directed towards a single country. Iraq is another example of the limited utility of sanctions; I dealt peripherally with our issues with Iraq in 1991 when I was the DAS in NEA because I had economic responsibility as well as regional ones. Obviously the decision to impose economic sanctions in Iraq was reached by the President; the Bureau played no role in that. But Iraq was in fact an ideal case for sanctions. It had only one significant export - oil. Oil left Iraq basically only two ways: by pipeline through Turkey and by ship through the Gulf. The countries through whose territory the oil had to flow cooperated in the sanctions; essentially, the whole world participated in applying sanctions on Iraq, with the limited exception of Jordan. So this was a case which came as close as the world could expect to universal sanctions. I don't think we have seen a more effective application of sanctions. Nevertheless, it did not prevent continued occupation of Kuwait; it did not prevent Saddam from being even more strident in his attacks on the West and allied countries. I don't think there was ever a chance of the sanctions achieving their goals in less than twenty years. Obviously the world was not prepared to wait that long.

I don't want to say that in the nuclear issue the sanctions were counter-productive. The sanctions did not in any way drive Pakistan to exploding a device before it did. They caused a great deal of irritation, but that has to be viewed in light of the importance of the nuclear non-proliferation policy of the U.S. This was not a trivial issue. The sanctions did become the core of the relationship between the two countries to the detriment of other issues, even on Afghanistan where the cooperation was being provided in non-diplomatic channels and therefore somewhat isolated from normal relationships. They certainly were detrimental to progress on issues of Pakistani governance; that neglect may well bear some responsibility for the recent events in Pakistan - essentially the collapse of a stable government.

The other concern I have about sanctions is their widespread potential application. I have mentioned three areas which put Pakistan in peril of sanctions. In fact, the sanctions triggered by the Pakistani nuclear program were less severe than those that might have been applied had Pakistan been found delinquent in control of either drug trafficking or terrorism. So we had a lot of issues with Pakistan which I think detracted from the importance of any one of them. Once the nuclear sanctions were imposed in 1990, when the President concluded he could no longer issue the required certification, we were still stuck with the narcotics issue and the terrorism issue, not to mention our desire to influence Pakistani policy on accelerating, or even pursuing, its nuclear program. We were also still anxious to try to persuade both Pakistan and India to seek accommodations with each other.

Let me now turn to India. One major event that took place while I was a DAS was Rajiv Gandhi's assassination. I was eating lunch at my desk when someone from the Department's Operations Center called asking me to confirm that Rajiv Gandhi had been assassinated. I said that it was news to me, but that I would try to find out. I immediately called Ambassador Bill Clark in New Delhi at his residence, who soon called back to confirm that Gandhi had indeed been assassinated.

This event took place in the middle of an election campaign, which in India, unlike those in the U.S., are relatively short. In fact, the first round of elections had already taken place before Gandhi's demise. The second round was to take place a couple of days later. The government decided to defer the second round for a couple of weeks. Eventually, the Congress party won the election. It had been doing tolerably well, but there is no doubt in my mind that the assassination of its leader elevated its support - the "sympathy" vote. The party had to find a new standard barer; it chose P.V. Narasimha Rao. Our Vice President, Dan Quayle, had been visiting Indonesia; his wife, Marilyn, had been visiting Bangladesh to observe the relief efforts - in part performed by US Marines and their helicopters - mounted to help the victims of the record-beating floods. Both were requested to attend the Gandhi funeral. Ed Abington, who had accompanied Mrs. Quayle, went along as well.

I think the decision to send our Vice President to the funeral of an assassinated prime minister was due to the awful circumstances surrounding his death as well as the Quayles' presence in the region - or close to it - making his trip to Delhi quite convenient. I think the American gesture was noticed favorably in India. The funeral, in South Asia language, was a "largely attended funeral."

In general, we had continuing issues with India trade - and technology issues in addition to the events of 1990 which I have already discussed. In the technology field, we were unhappy with the provision of high sensitive technology that India had undertaken with countries that we did not think warranted such assistance.

On trade, the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations, which were then taking place, witnessed India taking policy positions quite contrary to ours. We thought we were modernizing the trade system and saw India as supporting the continuation of barriers to free trade. India did not want to erode the special and more favorable trade treatment to which it and other developing countries had long been entitled. The Indians were taking positions that were entirely consistent with their past attitudes - i.e., that India was basically a poor country which needed to have time for its industry to modernize so that it could compete with developed countries. Furthermore, India maintained that it had social obligations - e.g. increased employment, higher incomes - which were more pressing and had moral precedent over trade liberalization.

I don't think that in my three years as DAS, India changed its positions. There may have been some tactical changes to fit the situations of the present, but there was no change in its basic attitude. But a very significant economic reform was initiated in India during this period. India came perilously close to defaulting on its international debt (in fact that did not happen but there was a real foreign exchange crisis in the summer of 1991). This led a number of people representing different parts of the Indian political spectrum to conclude that India would have to re-examine a lot of their hallowed economic policies. These people also began to realize that East Asia, much of which had been considerably poorer than India fifty years earlier, had surpassed India in economic development, leaving India far behind by 1990. The Indians concluded that they needed to study the East Asia model to see whether any of the techniques and policies used there had applicability to their country. This examination included an analysis of the welcoming climate that the "Asian Tigers" had constructed for private investment in general and foreign investment in particular.

In the time frame we are discussing, there was a major change in India's domestic economic policy - in words and deeds. They may not have moved as fast as some of the Western observers might have wished, but in retrospect one must admit that this was a major turning point in India's economy. The Indians are probably reaching a stage now which might well also require another significant change if the country is really to take off economically. In the early 1990s, the Indians ratcheted up their growth rate to a considerable extent; they implemented some important policy changes and now need to put some new pieces into the puzzle.

When Rao became Prime Minister, he appointed as Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, a long-standing bureaucrat who had spent his whole career in the academic world and civil service. He had previously been the Secretary of Finance. He is rightly viewed as the architect of Indian economic reform. Finance is a highly sensitive political ministry. The new Minister had a major job in selling the new program to politicians, who may not have viewed reforms from the same point of view as a career bureaucrat. He succeeded in selling his program, in part because the politicians had been quite sobered by India's near default on its international debts. Today, there is a strong domestic political consensus behind the level of reform achieved so far. Any new efforts will be quite controversial. I have one friend, who in analyzing the relationship of domestic politics to economic reform, argues that the reform which will be achieved last will be the weaning away of the economy from subsidies. Those subsidies are the core of political power and will therefore be very difficult to abandon- a situation not unique to India.

One of lessons I learned is that if a country is to undertake serious economic reforms, it needs a proponent with credibility who can sell the program to the politicians. Furthermore, a country must stick to the program at least in its beginning stages even though in the first couple of years, the benefits are not obvious. They will become evident three or four years after the program has been begun. That suggests that a government intent on changes should make them soon after taking power so that the beneficial effects will be felt at the time of the next election. Doing it early in a regime's life also allows the new government to blame its predecessor for the "mess."

On the international front, this was a very interesting period because a lot of things came to a head at the same time. India was reforming its economy while still reeling from the consequences of the implosion of the Soviet Union for its foreign policy. One of its major supporters had in fact vanished. So India had to return to the drawing board to figure out its role in the new world which not only was confronting the disappearance of the Soviet Union, but also the diminishing influence of the non-aligned movement. It just happened that at this time, India became a member of the UN Security Council, just as the Council was focusing on the Gulf War and its aftermath. Almost all of the resolutions about the Gulf War faced India with major policy anxieties. So India joined the big leagues of international politics at a time when its traditional relationships had to be reexamined and when its domestic policies, particularly the economic ones, were undergoing major changes. It was an extremely unsettling time for the Indians. In some ways, I think the Indians are still trying to reconcile their former world views with the reality of the present. I don't think they have yet reached a comfort level.

On the economic side, the U.S. and other potential investor countries very much welcomed the Indian initiatives. These countries lauded the Indian efforts and gave them support which included encouraging the World Bank to be forthcoming to meet India's needs. They also encouraged private investors to examine all possibilities and opportunities in India. By 1993, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown was listing India among the top ten emerging markets. During my tour as DAS, the U.S. investments in India were still very much a trickle. There was not much of a base available to work from since foreign investment in India had never been very significant. So the percentage increases may have looked fantastic, but the volume was in fact not very large.

Two- way trade had increased very rapidly before 1989 and continued to increase. US exports showed a marked increase. The emigration of Indian computer-knowledgeable people began in this period building up to today's crescendo. There were a couple of American software companies which set up shop in south India. I think Texas Instruments and Hewlett-Packard were among the first companies that took this route.

Finally, I should mention a most difficult issue between us and India. This fell in the general area of science and technology. One aspect was the protection of intellectual property. The pharmaceutical industry was particularly unhappy about Indian practices. It charged that India was pirating recently discovered drugs and other newly developed products. At the time, India only granted process patents - not product. That is, it protected the way a product was made, but not the product itself. The intellectual property issue spilled over into the general science and technology relationship. Our trade people were dead set against any kind of science and technology cooperation. Most observers of the U.S.-India relationship feel that cooperation in the science and technology area would be most beneficial. But in view of the intellectual property issue, this area was a constant irritation.

The larger problem however resulted from a science and technology understanding that had been reached some years earlier. The US had signed a memorandum which obliged it to cooperate in some sensitive high technology ventures. For example, we were going to assist those Indian manufacturers who were trying to produce a light combat aircraft. Also we were supposed to provide a super-computer to an Indian laboratory. Both of these enterprises ran into endless problems in the export licensing process. Some of the bureaucracies that had a say in this licensing process had never accepted the legitimacy of the agreement signed by both governments. They found one reason after another to block approval of the licenses. We spent an enormous amount of time trying to obtain approval for actions to which we had committed ourselves several years earlier.

On the super-computer transfer, we worked endlessly on devising security arrangements for the Indian lab to make sure that it could not be used by anybody other than those authorized and approved. By the time we had almost reached agreement in Washington, two events took place. For one, both India and Russia had violated our policy on the transfer of missile technology components. The Russians had agreed to sell to India a cryogenic engine, which our policy prohibited. So many in the U.S. bureaucracies - parts of DoD and parts of Commerce - took this sale as an opportunity to reopen the question of the transfer of the super-computer.

Then we began to receive what seemed like plausible reports that the Indian scientists in the laboratory that was to receive the super-computer had developed a process which made the computer unnecessary. That left me with an increased sense of futility about much of our export control process.

Now let me turn to Bangladesh. Having lived there, I was certainly interested in what was going on. There were essentially three issues. Two were hardy perennials: development of a poor country and natural disasters. During my tour as DAS, there was one major set of floods. The third issue concerned the dramatic change in government in Dhaka. In the fall of 1990, there were continuing and escalating demonstrations against President Ershad's government - Ershad having seized power in 1982 when he was a general. For the first time, the leaders - both women - of the two major opposition parties had decided to join forces - even though they had a personal dislike for each other. Eventually, the demonstrations forced Ershad to resign.

This was followed by a technocratic government which lasted until internationally supervised elections were held. That brought the BNP to power led by Begum Khaleda Zia, the widow of a former president. Soon after that, in the 1991 monsoon season, the inevitable happened. The floods, even by Bangladeshi standards, were devastating. Tidal waves swept many out to sea. The Bangladesh ambassador to the U.S. came in to see us and asked for assistance. He had been told that helicopters would be the most helpful assistance that could be provided.

This was my first exposure to the disaster relief system, which is a fascinating process. It is an extraordinary efficient system if the bureaucracy has "adopted" a particular disaster. If the bureaucracy is overloaded - as it must be most of the time these days - it will do anything to try to fend off another suitor. So initially I had some rather disagreeable meetings with people with whom I wound up working very closely after they decided to help. They knew they were being disagreeable; it was part of their tactic. Finally, they were instructed to assist. Later, they joked about their initial attitude with members of my staff.

The first major disagreement came because U.S. disaster relief experts didn't think that helicopters would be the most appropriate response to help the Bangladeshis. In addition, helicopters were a very expensive way of delivering assistance. Based on this advice, we in the Department drafted a response to the ambassador stating that other efforts besides the helicopters would be more useful. In the meantime, that ambassadoone of a handful of envoys from the Third World who had figured out how to work the "system" - called Millie, the redoubtable assistant to Under Secretary Larry Eagleburger, and insisted on speaking to Eagleburger. The ambassador's plea worked, and my next phone call was from Larry, asking what was going on in Bangladesh.

The upshot was that Larry called someone in DoD - some one higher than we could reach. It turned out that there just happened to be a helicopter carrier, carrying a full complement of helicopters and Marines, which was about to leave the Gulf for its base in the Philippines. After much additional scurrying around, this carrier was instructed to head for the Bangladesh shore - Chittagong harbor.

The work to turn the carrier in the right direction took about a week. Soon thereafter, our recently-arrived- in- Dhaka Ambassador Bill Milam, had all this assistance from the U.S. Marines and their equipment. The operation eventually was named "Operation Sea Angel" - after a remark made by one of the villagers who said that the Marines had come like "angels out of the sea." I am sure that the Marines were very helpful; I know that their assistance generated tons of good will for the U.S. They not only used the helicopters to provide immediate relief, but stayed on to dispense dehydration powder, tents and plaster of Paris and other sorts of badly needed supplies. It was a very successful operation; it was pure happenstance that the right kind of U.S. ship was available at the right moment. The DoD operation also relieved the disaster relief organization from having to spend large amounts of funds since CINCPAC was instructed to absorb the cost of the relief operation - or in the parlance of the military, "capture the costs." The Department of State "eats" costs; DoD "captures" them.

We had some tense moments with Bangladesh during the 1889-92 period. The whole region was on edge because of the Gulf War. The governments of the area by and large supported us - some did it more nervously than others. But in the streets, there seemed to be an overwhelming sentiment in favor of Saddam, particularly once our attacks began and Iraq was subjected to very heavy bombardment. There were serious demonstrations in Pakistan, complicated by the fact that the Chief of Staff was making very unhelpful comments. In Bangladesh, a mob formed, quite uncharacteristically, and whipped through the suburban area where most of the Americans lived; in fact, one day, the mob burst into the American Club, damaging the facility. That brought forth a protest from us and eventually the police provided better protection. But both the Pakistan and Bangladesh had dispatched military contingents to Saudi Arabia as part of the anti-Saddam coalition.

The Bangladesh mob could well have an Iraqi "rent-a-crowd" operation. This is a practice well known in the area; with so many people it is not too difficult to find a sufficient mass that can be bought to demonstrate.

Those parts of the Department's leadership - principally the Under Secretary for Management - that were responsible for the protection of U.S. employees and their dependents followed the Bangladesh situation very closely, with frequent updates from the NEA Bureau. Normally, a process of this kind relies heavily on ambassadorial and bureau recommendations ranging from standing pat to voluntary evacuation to mandatory evacuation of parts or of the whole staff. These recommendations are made in a context; in this situation, the context was ever-changing. In some periods, when the leadership wanted to remove everyone as fast as possible, we would encourage ambassadors to submit recommendations which would meet the leadership's objectives. Soon thereafter, the leadership would stake out another objective - in part because we were abandoning so many posts that it was becoming ridiculous - not to mention counter-productive.

At one time, we had issued instructions that even in India we would approve voluntary evacuations as a result of some demonstrations. The only two posts in my area - South Asia - which were untouched by any version of evacuations were Kathmandu and Colombo. It was about this time that the Bangladesh government decided to send some of its military units to participate in UN peace-keeping missions. It was a very attractive source of foreign exchange for the military; it provided exposure to other world militaries; so it became a policy which suited everyone's interests. It was of course not all a plus; one Bangladeshi military unit was caught in Yugoslavia without blankets as the snow was falling. I am sure that was a very sobering experience for those nineteen year old kids who were undoubtedly very thin and who considered anything under 70 degrees as "cold" weather.

Let me turn now to Nepal. The major event there in the 1989-92 period was the end of the existing constitutional system, in which the king was very powerful and an electoral arrangement which permitted popular participation in village elections, but without party designation. Under pressure, largely from street demonstrations, the constitution was revised in the spring of 1990 to limit the king's powers. The ban on political parties was lifted allowing a real representative national assembly to be formed. This was Nepal's first effort to have a parliamentary democracy. It was a fascinating transition. Our ambassador, Julia Chang Bloch, was a political appointee - the first Chinese-American woman ambassador. She was a very enthusiastic and determined person. Previously she had served in both AID and USIA in Washington, so she knew her way around that bureaucracy. She went to Nepal full of enthusiasm for everything. She devoted all of her considerable energies in dealing with the new government. She figured out - quite correctly in my mind - that the people who were running the government were neophytes. Indeed, many had been in jail or exile or far from Kathmandu. To find themselves suddenly in charge came as a great shock to them; they didn't have a clue about a government's appropriate role in the new Nepalese democracy. They did have an absolutist view of politics; that resulted in a highly confrontational political system which unfortunately still exists today. This style not surprisingly has brought a series of government to power, with frequent elections.

Ambassador Bloch put a lot of effort in developing a program which would expose the new leadership to the outside world, including the U.S. She really emphasized the need to coordinate the USIA visitors program and the AID participant training program, despite the formidable bureaucratic hurdles that both agencies threw in her way. She managed somehow to overcome all the hurdles and brought some sense of rationality to both programs.

Kathmandu found it difficult to deal with the crisis. This was an embassy in a remote part of the world, in a Third World country, with mediocre communication facilities, even though the tourist industry in Nepal is a thriving one. The American community, which was rather large by Kathmandu standards - several hundred - , was accustomed to a lot of "embassy hand-holding." It had an elaborate American Club. The American back-packers provided the embassy's consular section with a number of "challenging" cases - e.g. "Flower children" left over from Woodstock or mountaineers who ran into trouble (and worse) on the mountain - some of whom were seriously injured. The demonstrations, which eventually resulted in the government's overthrow, that took place in 1990 were a new phenomenon; if anything similar had taken place in Kathmandu, it was so many years earlier that no one could remember them.

So all of a sudden our Embassy had to go into a crisis mode. It had to deal with an American community that was widely scattered all over the Valley. At one point, an AID jeep was highjacked by one of the political groups. Neither the Ambassador or the DCM had had any experience with this kind of turmoil. To their misfortunate, they were backstopped in Washington by myself and Jock Covey - the latter particularly having had considerable experience with crises in the Middle East. As I said, he was a very, very organized individual. He had nervous breakdowns about the Embassy's behavior primarily because it did not communicate very well. Of course, the problems were Nepal-internal and there wasn't anything much that we could do to assist. The demonstrations had the potential of having some Americans injured, which is what puts Washington's teeth on edge. An experienced embassy compensates for the nervousness at home by sending frequent messages reassuring everyone that all was well - known as "CYA" messages. But our inexperienced people in Kathmandu were not doing that. So it fell to me and the desk to urge the Embassy to say something; at least to report that the "Embassy's Emergency Action Committee" had met - anything!!! Please!!!!

After the new government was installed, I was very supportive of Ambassador Bloch's efforts to "educate" the new government. Inevitably, when there is a new ambassador at a post, facing an entirely new circumstance for an embassy, and an "old" hand in Washington, there are bound to be some tensions with Washington taking a jaded view of some of the ideas that the new team in the field brings forth. But basically, I thought the Ambassador was absolutely right. Of course, what an ambassador does or does not do in a crisis is in large measure a factor of that ambassador's personality. Julia Chang Bloch is not going to have the same public persona as a Bob Oakley or a Nick Platt. My own view is that the U.S. is represented by an individual; we hope that that person reflects his or her individual strengths, hopefully tempered to fit the circumstances he or she encounters. That means that some personalities will not blossom in some situations and on the other hand, some will take hold and bring energy and enthusiasm to a situation which may have lacked those attributes. When that happens, Washington is often mystified by an ambassador's behavior. It may well raise an eyebrow or two, but locally no one seems offended. In Bloch's case, the fact that she wore smashing shocking pink jackets might not have sat well with the Washington traditionalists, but it flew well in Kathmandu; she was liked and heeded. Her advice to the new government was within the parameters of her assignment and I certainly supported her efforts. I don't think that the events drew much attention of the Department's leadership.

Let me turn to Sri Lanka, which was in this period going through a period of great difficulties. The Indian Army had moved onto the island in 1987 in fulfillment of a pledge made in an Indo-Lanka accord. The Indian Army's peacekeepers were supposed to be the peace keepers between the government and the "Liberation Tigers of Tamil-Eelam" (LTTE). The LTTE did not cooperate and in fact fired on the Indians. The LTTE was supposed to disarm as a prelude to a broad political settlement, which would have included major constitutional changes. That never happened. So the peacekeepers found themselves in an unforeseen situation and rapidly became part of the problem, rather than a solution.

The Indian presence triggered a violent nationalistic response by the JVP - an organization somewhat reminiscent of the "Shining Path," whose name translated roughly "People's Liberation Front". I would describe the JVP as nihilists; they wanted to overthrow not only the government, but the existing societal structure and everything else. The support came from the dispossessed - people with a very poor education, unlike most of the Sri Lankans. The JVP had a substantial presence on university campuses. This JVP phenomenon was not new; it had surfaced violently in 1971. At that time, it was repressed by the government with the support of the U.S. and the PRC. In 1977, the JVP was legalized; it went underground again in 1985. In 1987, after the Indo-Lanka accord was signed, it began another violent uprising, including murders - both random and targeted - grenade throwing, leadership of general strikes, including threats of violence against anyone who might have tried to break those strikes.

So Sri Lanka had two civil wars going on simultaneously. When I started as DAS in 1989, we were receiving a weekly cable from Colombo, which we came to call the "D&D" reports (for "Death and Destruction"). The Embassy reported on the deaths that had taken place in the previous week due to these two uprisings. At one time they averaged 300 per week. By my calculations, had the same problems taken place in the U.S., the equivalent death rate would have been 4,000 - compared to the height of the Vietnam War when we were losing 125 Americans each week. So Sri Lanka was facing an extraordinary level of violence. It affected all of the people on the island.

I happened to be in Colombo during one of the general strikes. That was quite an eye-opener. The violence and related events were not directed against Americans, but they could not help be seriously affected. The Vice-Chancellor of Colombo University was assassinated in his bed. There were similar events in the Peradeniya University in Kandy.

In the summer of 1989, a new President was inaugurated. He was a former prime minister, and had opposed the Indo-Lanka accord from the outset. In July of that year, he wrote a rather stiff letter to Rajiv Gandhi asking that the Indian troops be withdrawn. That hit India like a bomb-shell, which was just a prelude to the uproar caused the following day when the letter was published in the Sri Lankan papers. This started a highly embarrassing public analysis of who actually had written the letter, what was really said, what was really meant. Eventually, the Indians left in March of 1990 - the so-called "de-induction" as it was called. That enabled the Sri Lankan government to give full pursuit to the JVP, which it did with a vengeance.

In the meantime, the JVP decided that its next target would be families of policemen. That had the effect you might expect; the police struck back with extraordinary ferocity. The JVP insurrection had always been marked by highly uncivilized behavior; now the government fought back in kind. By the April-June of 1990, the JVP had been essentially wiped out. All its leadership had been killed; most of their members were disbanded - either assassinated or scattered. So peace was finally restored.

The government then began a negotiation with the LTTE in the hopes of finding a non-violent modus vivendi which would have settled the dispute that had plagued Sri Lankan politics since soon after independence. Unfortunately, this process was ultimately unsuccessful; in June 1990, the LTTE decided that it would return to the battlefield and attacked a number of police stations including one which held several hundred policemen, most of whom were killed. That started the war again. That was pursued in a fitful way; the map really didn't change much and was the same when I went to Colombo and during my tour there. There were periodic fire fights and periodic terrorist incidents and a continuing series of high profile assassinations.

The US in the 1989-92 period had human rights high on its foreign policy agenda. In Sri Lanka's case, it was an awkward situation because that country's record was deplorable. I am not just referring to the actions against the LTTE or the JVP; in Sri Lanka almost everybody's human rights were being violated. At one time, Sri Lanka held the world's record for disappearances. There were also wide-spread reports of torture of accused members of either the LTTE or the JVP. The U.S. was critical of the government's human rights record; at the same time, we understood the challenges that the government was facing. When it came time for the annual human rights report, the Assistant Secretary for Human Rights was so revolted by the JVP that he wanted to take a much softer public line than the post or the bureau - a very unusual situation. We had to point out to him that the U.S. government had to mention certain specific Sri Lankan violations because they would be raised in Geneva and we would look foolish if we overlooked them.

We held some back-stage discussions with the Sri Lankan government about their activities against the LTTE and the JVP as well as trying to find some ways which would bring both of these bloody insurrections to a peaceful conclusion. We did not try to mediate, particularly since we had no contact with the JVP. I am also not aware of any regular contact in this period and even later with the LTTE. There were some low level contacts prior to 1989, those ended once the fighting resumed. A mediation effort on our part was never part of our policy.

I have mentioned two of our Sri Lankan agenda items: the war and human rights. The third one concerned economic relationships. On the latter, my predecessor, Marion Creekmore, worked very hard to push American exports. I tried to continue that policy. Sri Lanka had the usual barriers to trade and investment; in addition to the usual domestic barriers, new investors were very reluctant to explore possibilities in light of the conflicts on the island. The ones that were already in Sri Lanka managed to find ways to live with the situation, but I doubt if they could have been very encouraging to new investors. When the situation hit calmer periods, then there were some inklings of interest from new investors, but nothing major. The domestic barriers were restrictive, perhaps not as bad as in some other countries, but certainly far from being inviting. The governmental system that new investors had to work with was not very user-friendly. Some of the most potentially attractive investment opportunities - both then and later when I became Ambassador - were in the private sector infrastructure area. The Sri Lankan government had accepted in principle the idea of opening this area to private investment. But the implementation became very difficult for them. They always seemed to decide on one approach and then back-track because of perceived labor or some other societal sector unhappiness.

During the JVP period, the economy was in a quagmire. The terrorism had a devastating economic effect. Through the 1990s, the economy grew quite well despite the war against the LTTE. at about a 4-6% growth rate.

I testified periodically before Congress, primarily before Steve Solarz and his sub-committee on Asian and Pacific matters - a part of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Occasionally, I appeared before the counterpart Senate Committee and once or twice before a Appropriations sub-committee. I would also accompany Bob Kimmitt when he testified before or briefed the Intelligence Committees.

I well recall the first time I testified. It was before Steve Solarz and the subject was the sale of F-16s to Pakistan. I was briefed and briefed and briefed. My briefing book was voluminous. I had asked my staff to make sure that the book was well indexed so that I could find material readily. I was very nervous because this was my first experience. We did hold a dress rehearsal (a "murder board" as it is known in the Department) during which my colleagues played the role of various Congressmen trying to make life very difficult for the witness. But I must say that every time I went through the "murder board" exercise, some one would ask a question that was not covered by the briefing material. There was always something new that arose which speaks to the value of the "murder board." I tried to use "murder boards" for all of my appearances; I found them tremendously useful.

I should mention that I was active in the theater group as a college student. I viewed Congressional appearances as a performance. That gave me a mind-set which was very useful in getting through some of the rough spots; I recognized that the badgering was not personal, but thrown at a DAS, not Teresita Schaffer. So I dressed for the performance; I put on make-up and played the character of a DAS. When the lights went on, I was on stage and performed. For me, this approach was useful. It was also useful to have relatively good relations with the Committee staffs, so that often I had some advance notice of the questions which would be asked. I had known Solarz before becoming a DAS and had reasonably cordial relations with him, but I also knew that his style in chairing a hearing was definitely "smart-alecky." I knew that he would try to score some cheap debating points to which I could not respond in kind. He knew the subject matter well, so that witnesses had better know their briefs thoroughly.

In the F-16 hearings, I think I got through all right. I had a DoD colleague with me to answer technical questions. I felt that I had made my points as I wanted to. But as always there was a "curve ball" question. In this hearing, the difficult issue was Pakistani support for the Kashmiri insurgency. I had not been briefed on this and I improvised. I said something that may have suggested that in fact Pakistan was playing a role in Kashmir. Of course, that was true, but we had never made that public before. By the time I got back to my office, a phone call had been received by one of my staff members from an Indian journalist. He asked me what he should say. So we constructed some slippery talking points, which we used and managed to get out of the trap without serious damage having been inflicted.

I should finally mention the advent of the Bureau of South Asian Affairs. Although it was not legally founded until after my departure from the DAS post, the process started during my tour. The legislation establishing the new Bureau passed while I was still the DAS. John Kelly started his job in 1989; I knew that Solarz had introduced the enabling legislation several times and I also knew that he did not give up easily. He wanted an assistant secretary whom he could call "all his own." He also felt that the key witness on South Asia before his sub-Committee should be a full blown assistant secretary - not a mere deputy. He was quite up front with me about his goal and the reasons.

I well remember the day that Solarz, during the Gulf War, called an impromptu hearing of his sub-committee. He called us in the morning and said that he wanted to hold a meeting that afternoon. The subject was the response of various governments to the South Asian refugee crisis. I decided to gamble; I told the Committee staff that I would be delighted to appear that afternoon, but that I could not have a prepared statement. I appeared that afternoon and was grilled after having been berated for not having a prepared statement. I told Solarz, with a sweet smile, that I had foregone the submission of the statement so that we could appear that afternoon. In fact, I was delighted because lots of time was saved by not having a statement. Solarz asked a lot of questions about the refugees - how many, where were they, who were they, etc? At the end of his grilling, Solarz asked who was setting South Asia policy in the Department: was it John Kelly or me? I replied that even though I participated fully, it was John Kelly who made the decisions. He came back with the same question and I gave him the same reply. He then asked whether he could attribute the catastrophic failure of U.S. Middle East policy to the fact that John Kelly was distracted by the South Asia matters. I don't think I gave him an answer.

So Kelly knew that Solarz was hell bent to set up a new bureau in the Department. I urged

him, as soon as he was confirmed, to meet with Solarz alone. I urged him to try to establish some kind of personal rapport. Unfortunately, the chemistry between the two was non-existent. I think Solarz probably wanted to hate Kelly. I was not present at their first meeting, but I assume Solarz tried some of his "smart-alecky" approaches. John reacts to such an approach in one of two ways; he either blows up or he retreats into a shell and becomes very formal, apparently speaking through clenched teeth. More often than not, John took the second course when dealing with Congress. But it was clear after the first meeting that Kelly and Solarz would never get along. In fact, I don't believe they ever had another one-on-one meeting; certainly, my hopes for some kind of rapport were never reached.

After that meeting, Solarz held a hearing on South Asia. John recognized that it would be important for him to appear as the lead witness. I accompanied him; this established a pattern that was to be repeated several times thereafter. At the first meeting, I sat behind him; he was alone at the witness table. Kelly did not like to take a briefing book with him; he liked to give the impression that he had all of the facts in his head. In fact, he did spend a lot of time preparing for his appearances. But inevitably, there were questions for which he had not prepared; I would then have to pass him a note forward, which looked bad. So that was not acceptable and in subsequent hearings, I sat next to Kelly. He still didn't have a book with him, but I armed myself with a lot of little note papers, writing key words on them to try to jog John's memory. But there was always tension in the air when Kelly appeared before Solarz - more than the customary hearing tension. Solarz needled everyone, but he seemed to delight in sticking it to Kelly.

Once, Solarz really made Kelly mad. Fortunately John managed to control himself until he had left the hearing room. John was just getting over a serious case of laryngitis. I had sent word to the staff that under the circumstances the Assistant Secretary would be grateful if the hearing could be concluded in an hour. In fact, Solarz dragged it out for 2 ï¿½. It was clear that John was still ill; as time passed, his cough increased in severity. Solarz kept asking some of his needling questions. At one point, Kelly clearly showed some irritation. That made John mad at himself. He left that hearing is such a hurry that I couldn't keep up with him.

The chemistry between the two men was awful. Even though Kelly was very forthcoming, appearing whenever Solarz asked, Solarz would not be diverted from his ambition to establish a new bureau in the Department - one that he could call "his own." So he reintroduced his legislation. The Administration once again objected, pointing out that the new bureau would be very small - both in Washington staffing and in number of overseas posts - and therefore not likely to draw much attention. Furthermore, the establishment of a new bureau would further fragment responsibility for policies that often would cut into the jurisdiction of the Near East Bureau. For example, we maintained that it made good sense to have Pakistan in the same bureau with many of the other Muslim countries. None of our arguments seemed to make a difference; Solarz succeeded in getting his legislation approved by the House. A companion bill was never introduced in the Senate so that the Administration did not have an opportunity to make its case before that body - which was unfortunate since not all Senators loved Solarz. When it came time for the Conference Committee to reconcile the legislation passed by the House and that passed by the Senate, it said that it would allow a representative of the Administration to sit in on its deliberations. The Committee met just at the time of the annual meeting of the UN General Assembly. That always meant that assistant secretaries shuffled back and forth to New York to attend meetings - as note-takers - held by the Secretary with his counterparts from other countries. For this meeting, Secretary Baker had decided that he preferred assistant secretaries for note-takers, although in unusual circumstances he might accept a deputy. (The following year, he changed this practice, undoubtedly in response to complaints from assistant secretaries). So Kelly had to go to New York, leaving me to be the Administration's spokesperson on the issue of the new bureau.

Solarz of course was a member of the Conference Committee. At one stage, he looked over at me and asked the Chairman whether he could ask me why John Kelly was not present - if this issue was so important to the Administration. I gave the best answer I could, but it obviously did not convince him. When it came to a vote on this question, the pros and cons lined up in a straight party line vote. But one Democrat was not present; that would have resulted in a tie vote thereby defeating the proposal. At that moment, Senator Pat Moynihan, who I guess had been persuaded by his fellow New Yorker to support the legislation, went out of the room and dug up the absent Democrat. That assured passage for the establishing legislation and Solarz had his way.

I thought that Solarz was wrong and his idea was a terrible one. I accepted the arguments that the Department was making, but I had a more compelling one. I felt that with a separate bureau, South Asia, when all was said and done, would get even less attention from the Department's leadership than its issues were receiving under the then existing arrangement. I saw the South Asian issues - leaving aside Afghanistan which had been an issue of interest to the leadership, but was a temporary phenomenon - particularly Pakistan-India issues, were matters which I thought required continuing leadership awareness, even if not requiring immediate attention. This awareness would be helpful if and when situations arose which would require the attention of the secretary and/or his immediate subordinates and which would then permit someone from the Bureau to have immediate access to a member of the leadership. Under the NEA Bureau, we managed to keep the leadership informed on South Asia issues by using the Assistant Secretary's periodic meetings with them on Middle East matters. We rode piggy-back on those issues to keep the leadership informed about South Asia.

I thought that the assistant secretary of the new bureau would not have the same access that the Assistant Secretary for NEA had; at least, he or she would not see the Secretary or Deputy Secretary or the Under Secretary for Political Affairs as often as the Assistant Secretary for NEA did. Others may disagree, but I think that my prediction unfortunately came true. Rick Inderfurth, the present incumbent of that new job, was given that assignment because he had worked for Secretary Albright in New York. So he has a personal connection that I am sure is helpful when he wishes to see her. But I don't see the new Bureau having played a decisive role in the crisis of last Spring. [The reference is to the India-Pakistan clash that followed Pakistan's decision to send troops and irregulars into Indian-controlled Kashmir near Kargil in the spring of 1999.] I haven't seen the Bureau playing a decisive role in a number of other South Asia issues. So I don't think that the new organizational arrangements have been at all helpful in involving the leadership in South Asia issues; in some respects, it may even have played a negative role. The South Asia Assistant Secretary is not perceived as a particularly "heavy hitter."

The legislation was passed towards the end of 1991. It included a grace period before it became effective. This was the time when there was a shift in NEA Assistant Secretaries, with John Kelly being replaced by Ed Djerejian. So Ed was faced, as his first issue, with the loss of part of his Bureau. Before leaving for my next assignment in 1992, I worked for Ed - and enjoyed it very much. We did make preliminary plans for the separation. I spent months working on what the new Bureau would look like - organization charts and staffing patterns. I had Georgia DeBell from the Administrative Office was working with me and she put together some budgetary requirements. We proposed that the two bureaus be supported by a combined executive office, which is one proposal that has survived. The costs of another executive office would not have passed muster. Furthermore, I was concerned that the new executive office would have been so small that the grade classifications would have been so low that only junior people would have been assigned to it. That would have been disastrous. We also worked out office space requirements.

I knew I was leaving, having been proposed for my assignment to Sri Lanka in early 1992 - and approved in late May of that year. So it was clear that I would not be part of the new Bureau; that gave me a degree of detachment.

At this stage, Jock Covey had been proposed and nominated as the first Assistant Secretary.

He never made it. He was considered "uncomfirmable" because he had approved a memo recommending PL 480 loans to Iraq before the 1991 Gulf War. In fact, he and April Glaspie were the only people in the Department who were "hung" by Saddam's invasion of Kuwait. The whole nominating process in this case was very curious. Before Jock knew that he was the candidate for the job, he had shown strong resistance to some of my ideas for the new bureau, particularly on the division of the "assets." Basically, I had laid claim to more assets than he thought NEA would surrender. My assumption was that in matters of this kind, a bargaining process would ensue and that one should start with a maximum position if the final results were to be at all acceptable. That was my strategy. I think Covey became a little more sympathetic to my view when he became the candidate for the new assistant secretaryship. In any case, by this time, decisions had to be made and he stopped fighting my proposals. Furthermore, the management side of the Department basically supported my proposals.

By the time I was ready to leave for Colombo, the undivided NEA Bureau was still in existence with Ed Djerejian at its head. The approved staffing pattern for the new bureau called for an assistant secretary and one deputy. Jock selected John Malott as the future deputy. He also became very interested in the office space issue. We had designed a very nice little suite for the assistant secretary. Jock made the supreme sacrifice and agreed that unlike all other assistant secretaries he would not insist on having his own shower. In fact, the new suite did not have much conference room space - that had to be shared with NEA, but it had all of the other attributes. Then the word came from the White House that it wanted a second deputy assistant secretary in the new bureau - for a political appointee. This presented real space challenges; where would we put three high ranking officers? There was of course no way of fighting City Hall; in fact, a guy by the name of Sie Chun Soo. Had been selected as one of the deputies by the White House. This new development threw all of our space plans out of the window. We then went for a major expansion of the assistant secretary's suite.

So in effect, my DAS job was to be replaced by three very senior positions. Then Jock's nomination was shelved; the new administration did not consider the fight worth undertaking. So Jock essentially disappeared from the discussion. John Malott took over from me first as DAS; after the bureaus were split, he became the de facto head of the new South Asia bureau because initially, Ed Djerejian was in charge of both bureaus. That situation lasted until the new administration nominated Robin Raphel. She was nominated in May 1993. I remember that well because in light of the nomination she became the President's personal representative to the funeral of the President of Sri Lanka, who had been assassinated in May.

Q: In 1992, you were appointed US Ambassador to Sri Lanka and the Maldives. First of all is there any affinity between Sri Lanka and the Maldives?

SCHAFFER: The Maldives is a country consisting of a 1,000 islands - 1,000 miles from anywhere. In 1992, there were about 250,000 people living on those islands. We had established diplomatic relations with the Maldives in the mid-1960s, but neither country felt that maintaining a resident embassy in the other made any sense. From the very beginning, our ambassador in Colombo also became our emissary to the Maldives. In general, most of the diplomats in Colombo were also accredited to the Maldives. The embassies in Colombo were the nearest diplomatic institutions to the Maldives.

The Maldives have a very interesting approach to the management of their foreign policy. It has tried to avoid having any "special" relationship with any other state, even those that might be "close" by. It is on good terms with all of its "neighbors." The only countries that maintain resident embassies in Male' are Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and now Bangladesh. All four of these countries send a substantial amount of labor to the Maldives - teachers, hotel workers, etc. The Maldives maintains only two embassies: in Colombo and at the UN in New York.

My appointment was announced in early May; the confirmation hearings were in late May; I was sworn in in late August and arrived in Colombo on October 1. So the journey took about eleven months, which is about average. Other countries find our system bizarre, but that is the result of our "checks and balances" system.

The confirmation hearings went very smoothly. Only one or two Senators showed up; I was being interviewed along with Kenton Keith, who I believe was being proposed for the UAE.

After confirmation, I attended the ambassadorial course. I had taken it before - as the spouse of the ambassador-designate to Bangladesh. The first time, David Newsom and Shirley Temple Black were the majordomos of the course. It is hard to imagine two more different personalities. The second time the co-chairs were Tony Motley and Brandon Grove, who at the time was the Director of FSI. Both were superb. The content of the course had evolved over the years; so it was somewhat different from the one I went to as an ambassadorial spouse in 1984 - not radically, but somewhat. The course's main effort is to explore the meaning of leadership, both conceptually and in practical terms. This has been its focus since the beginning and was true in 1992 as well as later when I was the co-chair with Motley while serving as the Director of FSI. I might note that Motley is still co-chairing the course. We heard from a lot of people representing other agencies and many parts of the Department, particularly areas with which the putative ambassadors may not have had an opportunity to become acquainted. I found it extremely useful and it was an excellent preparation for my ambassadorial assignment.

My predecessor in Colombo was Marion Creekmore, whom I knew well and had worked with for quite a while. Creekmore's DCM was Don Westmore; they both left at the same time, which I think is under normal circumstances a terrible practice. They had both arrived at the same time and left at the same time after three years of service. Before I left Washington, I picked Steve Mann to be my DCM. My choice raised a lot of eyebrows. I have long believed that ambassadors should not pick clones of themselves, but should select DCMs who bring some different strengths to the post. I was an area specialist; the Embassy Political Counselor, Bob Boggs, was also an area specialist. Therefore I did not look for a DCM who had area expertise. I was looking for someone who had had overseas management experience since that was the area in which I had little experience. I was also looking for someone to whom I could turn for advice on subjects that I did not know well. Initially, I was very interested in John Holzman, who is now our Ambassador in Dhaka; at the time he was completing a tour as DCM in one of the West African countries. John had had a substantial experience in South Asia and told me that he would be interested in the Colombo assignment. He was a splendid officer, but in looking at the issue a little more closely, I had to reach the conclusions that his bio looked very much like mine. He was an economic officer, an expert on South Asia; furthermore, I was receiving mixed signals. He had family reasons to prefer a Washington assignment.

So in the end, I decided to ask John whether he preferred to become the Pakistan Country Director; that interested him greatly and I needed to fill that key job with an outstanding officer. That took care of John. I then interviewed people on the list of DCM candidates prepared by the Office of Personnel. I decided that Steve Mann was my choice; he was technically a consular officer, although he had spent much of his career in other fields. I had never met him before the interview. I knew that he had opened two posts: Mongolia and Micronesia. He appeared to me to have the necessary people-skills; he had experiences in those fields that I didn't know very well; he had run posts where the support services were minimal. He had no South Asia experience at all.

We were both interested in ideas. I had the impression, which turned out to be correct, that he would be willing to bring me bad news, if that was necessary. I think that attribute is essential in a DCM. An ambassador faces the ever-present danger of being insulated from what is really going on. I had been aware of this danger, but it was really brought home by the ambassadors' course. Both Motley and Grove emphasized that an ambassador must be served by people who will tell him or her things that may not be popular or well received. No ambassador can afford to be caught unaware when problems arise. Brandon used to say: "You have to have a psychological contract with your DCM so that you will level with each other, but at the same time, you function as one as far as the Embassy and the host country is concerned." I used the same phraseology when I co-chaired the ambassadors' course later.

I discussed this issue with all of the people I interviewed because this bond was very important to me. In fact, Mann and I had a very good relationship; we leveled with each other and made a good team. The Embassy in 1992 had about sixty direct American employees; by the time I left, there were about ten fewer.

My vision of the DCM job was that of managing the mission - that is assuring that it was pulling together toward common objectives. This was particularly important in Sri Lanka where many US government agencies were represented - AID, VOA, DoD, USIA and the intelligence community. For example, we were building a "Voice of America" transmitter; that required the presence of two independent sections of the "Voice" - the engineers building the new facility and the radio people who were managing the existing facility.

Without diminishing the role of the Administrative Counselor, I expected Steve to pay close attention to the Embassy's administrative functions. In the case of our Embassy in Colombo, quite often the Administrative Counselor was outranked by several of the representatives of other agencies. AID for example still had a relatively large mission in Sri Lanka and the Mission director certainly outranked the Administrative Counselor. So it was useful to have the DCM fully cognizant of the major admin issues; he could influence the representatives of other agencies as the Admin Counselor could not.

I also expected Steve to be my understudy/alter ego on political and economic issues. When it became apparent that we would be entering into an active negotiation for a new country-to-country agreement for the Voice of America, I assigned that to him. He became the principal negotiator. Others were of course involved, particularly the VOA staff, but he was the head honcho on this negotiations. I was held in reserve to be brought to bear if the negotiations ran into some heavy seas.

I was not surprised by anything I found in Colombo, having been involved in the various issues from my Washington perch. Since I had known that I might be assigned to Colombo since Nov. 1991, I had ample opportunity to pay attention to what was going on there and to prepare myself for this assignment. I should say that in Washington, Sri Lanka is primarily of interest to the desk officer. In my days, and even now, the Bureau's front office paid relatively infrequent attention to Sri Lankan matters. Only if a crisis arose or if our Ambassador was in town, would the front office focus on Sri Lanka. I don't remember Kelly ever going to Sri Lanka, partially because he was so preoccupied with the Gulf War that he didn't have time to visit countries not involved in that matter. The Department's leadership may have focused on Sri Lanka perhaps twice per year. VOA did pay attention to Sri Lanka, not only because of the station, but also because it covered internal developments there.

Let me just briefly cover the activities of the other agencies. I have already mentioned VOA and its activities. AID had about 12-14 Americans when I arrived to administer an assistance program of about $12-14 million, mostly technical assistance, as was true for most aid programs. AID was working on financial sector reforms - working with the stock market to increase its efficiency; it assisted some environmental efforts on the west coast to stem erosion and with some environmental co-ops in one of the major water-sheds. We had provided major assistance to developmental projects in the Mahaweli River basin which is the major river in Sri Lanka, used for major irrigation schemes for the last 1500 years. By the time I got to Colombo, we were still marginally involved in an international effort to assist in the further development of that basin. We did nothing in the fields of family planning or health, largely because of Sri Lanka's extraordinary record in these areas. They had already done a lot of what AID was working on in other countries.

When I arrived, we also had a substantial food aid program - PL 480. Sri Lanka was a food deficit country - had been so for many years.

Now for VOA. It had had a transmitting station in Sri Lanka (Ceylon) since 1951. It beamed programs throughout the area. The one that was functioning when I first arrived was not very powerful. VOA wanted to build a more powerful one that could reach further; it was to be build in a different location. After much delay and discussion, the Sri Lanka government had offered a site which was about two hours by road north from Colombo on the coast. But this offer had been politically controversial from the beginning, largely because the groups not in the government used this facility-to-be as a part of their anti-American politics. The Indian government, while negotiating their peace-keeping role in 1987, made the Sri Lankans sign an annex to the agreement which would committed them to not allow any broadcasting from its territory which would be anti-Indian. This document was widely interpreted as an anti-VOA action, although we chose not to interpret it that way by declaring that VOA was in no sense anti-Indian, which was correct. India has always been very sensitive about the interference - actual or perceived - of foreign powers in South Asian affairs. This annex was a manifestation of this concern. The book by a former Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka in 1987 makes it eminently clear that India was absolutely driven by a concern that Sri Lanka would become too closely aligned with the U.S.; that, in the Indian view, would have been quite contrary to the Indian interests. The VOA broadcasts was just another manifestation of this concern.

Both the U.S. and Sri Lanka saw the construction of a new transmitter as an opportunity to update the country-to-country operating agreement - something that had already been done two or three times before. This was not an agreement that focused on the new transmitter primarily, but merely an update of an existing agreement; there was a new feature because the new facility was going to be both transmitting and receiving - the latter being a new a feature not covered by the existing agreement.

But most of the issues were entirely straightforward and not contentious at all - such things as continued Sri Lankan sovereignty over the site, access to the site, conditions under which employees of the U.S. government would operate, etc. There was no argument about these matters.

More difficult were the questions about compensation. There had always been an understanding that the site then in use would revert to Sri Lanka once the new site was operational. But there had been a clause in a prior agreement which to the best of my recollection said that the U.S. government would give Sri Lanka the surplus broadcasting equipment - or its equivalent. We tried to negotiate an equivalent compensation package. VOA of course was trying to spend the minimum necessary to complete the new agreement. This part of the draft agreement took a long time to work out; it was further complicated by the fact that the Sri Lanka was somewhat reluctant to announce a new VOA agreement at a time when various opposition figures were using VOA as the symbol of all evil.

Sri Lanka had always had a very important political left. It claimed that new station was really a new method to communicate with U.S. submarines. Further opposition came from an unexpected source. The new site was in an area heavily populated by Catholics. The Catholic Church was a curious amalgam of exceedingly conservative theology - somewhat akin to the American Church up to the 1960s - and radical politics. So there were Catholic politicians who belonged to one of Sri Lanka's most conservative parties - the UNP - which was in power at the time. There were a substantial number of Catholics - both in the clergy and in the laity - who were very sensitive to the charge that because they were Christians they were foreign to Sri Lanka. There were clergymen who, either because they were leftists or because they wanted to show their Sri Lankan bone fides, looked for opportunities to wrap themselves in the national flag.

Unfortunately for us, the then Bishop of Chilaw, who was responsible for the Catholic souls in the area of the new VOA site, was one of these clergymen. He took a very strident position in opposition to the VOA project, charging not only that it was to be a communication station to submarines, but that it would spread AIDS and immorality among the youth of Chilaw and Iranavela, the actual site of the VOA facility.

When I arrived, this political issue was a very hot subject, widely discussed in the newspapers. Our negotiations were obviously being slowed down by an increasingly nervous Sri Lankan government. As I said, our main negotiator became Steve Mann, but I wanted to be as supportive as necessary. In that role, I wanted to call on the Bishop. He sent word that he wouldn't receive me. I made one attempt, through the Papal Nuncio - a Frenchman who had studied in the same Institute in Paris where I had also spent a year; he tested the waters and then advised me not to bother. The Bishop was not about to let go of an issue which was bringing so many headlines. That was the end of my efforts; I was not about to continue to beg for something that was not going to happen.

VOA was not very helpful to us in our negotiations. They were not unhelpful; they were essentially inattentive. As we were coming to a crunch, VOA assigned one of its lawyers in the Washington headquarters who I believe was less interested in trying to reach a conclusion than he was "looking for scalps." He would use the word "offer" to help us in the negotiations; I think a better term was "threaten." When we heard what his ideas were on how to get the negotiations moving again, we decided we would be better without him. He wanted to take the Sri Lankans to the World Court for not honoring the previous agreement. I am not sure that we had a strong case; there was no question that it would have been a tactic destined for disaster.

Finally, we had reached agreement on all of the issues except for compensation. We had some frank off-the-record conversations which gave us a pretty good idea of what it would take to satisfy the Sri Lankans. I decided to send Steve back to Washington - on Embassy funds - to see whether we could get headquarters approval for the final stage. VOA was absolutely astonished; I forewarned them by phone that I was going to do this. I felt some urgency to solve the final stumbling block because elections were about to be held in Sri Lanka and if we had to wait for the results of that, we might never have reached agreement. VOA bit the bullet; Steve came back and we made the offer.

By then the election appeared increasingly dicey. I finally went to the President and asked that the new agreement be ratified ASAP (as soon as possible). He gave me absolutely no answer at all. That led me to the conclusion that despite all of our efforts, the new arrangement would not be approved by Sri Lanka. But about a week later - just before the election - I got a call from the Foreign Minister who informed me that they were prepared to sign the new agreement, on one condition: no photographers. So we had a stealth signing the next day. We held a very quiet celebration in the Embassy. A week later, the government was voted out of power.

After the election, I called on the new Foreign Minister so that I could inform him of the VOA agreement that the previous government had signed. After the initial exchange of pleasantries, including the customary expression of hopes of close relations, I told the Foreign Minister that his predecessor had signed a new VOA agreement. I said that I thought it was a very routine matter, but I wanted the new government to know since VOA had so often been part of the Sri Lankan political dialogue.

That would have been the end of it had it not been for a scuffle that took place about two months later at the gate of the construction site in which a villager was killed by the police. That effectively shut down our construction project for about four months. During this time, the government selected a panel consisting of members of the new regime to decide whether the agreement should be implemented. There was a consensus that Sri Lanka should not abrogate the agreement, but there was a question of implementation. Among the panel members were several people who were very friendly to us and although the commission did a thorough study, it was clear to us from the beginning that the results would be entirely acceptable to us. But the new government had to show that it had its own independent view separate and apart from that of the old regime. Steve and his Sri Lankan counterpart negotiated a new memorandum of understanding which was very carefully crafted so that the new government could argue that it had arranged for some new aspects and we could argue that nothing had changed. In fact, this new memorandum explicitly stated in writing a lot of understandings that had been implicit all along. Fortunately, the VOA people recognized that an acceptable solution had been reached and did not just reject the process out of principle or because it was somewhat unusual. So eventually, the new transmitter was built but only after my departure. It was scheduled to be finished in 1996; I am not sure it is entirely completed yet.

I know that the construction had run into all sorts of problems. There were some political problems while I was still there, but they were resolved. There were some environmental impact problems even though we had insisted at the beginning that there be a study conducted to eliminate or mitigate that impact. But new unexpected environmental challenges arose later. Then there was a fire. Then there were technical problems with the transmittal equipment. So it has not been a very smooth operation, but one of these days it will fully function.

Back in 1951, having a VOA capability all around the world was an excellent idea. By now, I tend to think that VOA has outlived its usefulness in most places. It is not heard as widely as BBC; we may be reaching the time when even CNN will have a wider audience. In most countries, there are a wide variety or media outlets which cover the total spectrum of political thought - both domestic and international. VOA does create political problems for the U.S. - and not just the kind that I went through in Sri Lanka. All of these factors lead me to wonder whether this instrumentality of the U.S. government is really useful in most parts of the world. By the time I got to Colombo, the issue of a new transmitter had been so long decided that it would have been useless to raise any questions at the time. Furthermore, I think my doubts about the utility of VOA have greatly strengthened since the early 1990s.

Now let me turn to USIS. When I arrived in Colombo, USIA had four officers - that went down to two by the time I left and is now one. I found the USIS program in Sri Lanka extremely useful. It ran a library in Colombo - a few years earlier it had to close a library in Kandy, which is the second largest city in Sri Lanka. That library cost about $8,000 per year to operate, but USIA decided to close the facility principally because the Agency developed a new policy which barred the funding of any facility which did not have a resident American attached to it. I found that decision absolutely mindless, but the deed had long been done by the time I reached Colombo.

The closing of Kandy library was still an issue by 1992 with the local citizenry still wondering why the U.S. had taken such a step. It had cost us practically nothing, but had generated a tremendous amount of good will.

We still had a library in Colombo. USIS had an international visitors program which I have always regarded as one of our most successful foreign policy initiatives since it raised knowledge of the U.S. among foreign opinion leaders. In my years in Colombo, we probably sent 12-13 Sri Lankans for various period in the U.S. I always thought this was a wonderful program for the U.S.

The press work was not terribly effective. That was not anyone's fault. The Sri Lankan press was one of my major disappointments while Ambassador. The country has virtual universal education and a long tradition of university education. But it has a very weak press; it is a free press, except for those outlets owned by the government. But the reporting standards are very poor; stories are not checked for accuracy - out of laziness, I believe. Sometimes the stories are quite inflammatory particularly in the vernacular press. I thought that one of the weaknesses of our program as well as those of the diplomatic community in general was that we tended to focus on the English-speaking press. That was a large enough presence to make one believe it was the only major voice in Sri Lanka. But that is an illusion; the vernacular press is much more strident and much more popular with the average Sri Lankan.

I had some contact with the Sri Lankan press, but not as much as I would have liked to. I was surprised that the reporters, even for the English language press, had nothing to do even with their counterpart vernacular language publications. In many cases, one found one publisher with a Sinhala and an English paper, but the relations between the two was not good. Relatively little material was translated from one to the other. During my time, USIS did try to work more closely with the Sinhala press, but the reporters were not really interested. We also tried to place more material in the Sinhala press, with limited success. What would really have been useful for the Sri Lankan political process would have been for local commentators, who wrote on issues of war and peace - the ethnic question- to make more of an effort to have their views more widely disseminated. I found this material to be some of the most useful for me because much of it addressed the question of how to get beyond the current struggle and deadlock. Appallingly little of that kind of thoughtful material saw much daylight.

I did stay in touch with a number of press people. That did not tend to be as much "press work" per se - people did not tend to turn out in large numbers when I or American visitors did hold press events, but we did keep in touch with the editors-in-chief and publishers and the major columnists - and occasionally some reporters; these were people who were well informed about local situations; they moved in important circles. So I had a lot of press people who were important contacts, but it was usually for me to keep in touch, not for me to explain U.S. policy.

I had some opportunities to give speeches around the country. The most famous speech I gave was on the occasion of the opening of a new textile factory. When I first arrived in Colombo, President Premadasa - later assassinated - had a goal to open 200 garment factories in the country. He had sweet talked - and perhaps bludgeoned - some foreign investors into investing in these factories. I had heard that the opening ceremonies were usually amazing political theater. So I requested the Economic officer to see whether he could find a factory opening which had some American investment; I wanted to be invited to it. He did that; we went to a place in the Ratnapura district - about a five hour drive. I had been offered a helicopter ride, but I declined that with thanks because I wanted to be free to arrive and leave on my timetable. Furthermore, the helicopter was scheduled to return in the dark and I was advised by our Defense Attachï¿½ that that was much too risky.

The opening was quite an event. The President, a couple of Ministers, the representative of the American investor, local big-wigs and Howie and I were all on the dais. Of course the President was escorted by a whole host of troops and dignitaries. However, first came the unveiling of the plaque by the President, then the raising of the Sri Lankan flag and then in the anti-room of the factory, an oil lamp as lit - standard procedure for all ceremonial occasions. There were six or seven young women, wearing white sarongs and white tops, singing the traditional songs for an oil lighting ceremony. The VIPs in the group were invited to light one of the wicks of the lamp. I dutifully did that as did the Presidents, etc. Then we went into the factory and there the Sri Lankan VIPs stood on a stand that looked something like the award stands of an Olympic event. All the workers, some 500 strong, filed by this stand singing the "Lux Shirt" song; 450 of them - all women - then sat down at their sewing machines and 50 - all men - went to their cutting tables. The President then marched to one of the cutting tables - we all trooped diligently behind him to watch as he made the first ceremonial cut of a huge stack of fabric. At this point, someone appeared with a large sample of garments, similar to those which this factory would eventually produce. The President reached for a ghastly leopard spotted blouse; I had a sinking feeling that he then might turn and offer it to me. Fortunately, he just touched it and put it back on the rack. He then pointed to me and asked me whether my dress had been made in Sri Lanka. I replied that unfortunately it was not, but that my husband was wearing a shirt of local manufacture. So Howie had to be brought up from the crowd; the President reached for the shirt and sort of yanked on it; he pulled on the buttons, which fortunately held. The President asked Howie how much he had paid for it; he was told that it was about $18 - he probably had gotten it on a bargain day. The President nodded and then we followed him into a small VIP enclosure to have a cup of tea. Then we trooped into a huge public enclosure for the big ceremony.

So we were all seated on the dais, with fans moving the hot air around - it must have been almost unbearably hot in the area where the spectators sat. The President asked me to sit next to him. Then the ceremony started. A high school group sang, another high school group danced; a local comedian did a comic bit - in Sinhalese; a local politician who gave an overly long speech; the American investor gave a speech. One of the Ministers gave an extremely long speech. During this part of the ceremony, the President kept motioning to one or another of his multitudinous aides; they kept bringing him the program for the ceremony. I could see him changing the sequence of events and then handing it back to the aides. The President was a micro-manager with few equals.

Somewhere along the line, he leaned to me and asked whether I was still studying Sinhalese. I nodded. He asked me what I could say; I managed to get out some kind of a sentence. He then asked whether I could say a sentence that he pronounced. I told him that I thought I could do that. He then asked whether I could give that sentence at a public meeting. I swallowed hard and said that I thought I could. So he then said, he would ask that I be put on the program.

The President arose to give his speech. That was a real crowd pleaser - in Singhalese - which I understood in part. The speech included some semi-raunchy material - there were factories in Sri Lanka that produced underwear and the President commented that some had said that it was a shame that Sri Lanka was producing underwear for British ladies, but he said that at least then the world knew that the British ladies wore underwear.

At one point, in a sharp change of subject, the President began to discuss the ethnic problem. He said that the country needed to have Sinhalese people speaking Tamil and vice-versa. I never heard him say that again. And then he turned towards me and said: "Here we have the American Ambassador. She has been studying Sinhalese. She is going to say a few words." So I got up and managed three sentences of the "I am pleased to be here" and "I am pleased by this American investment" variety. Then I switched to English for a few more remarks. I wanted to express some thoughts that my minimal Singhalese could not have conveyed, along the lines that I was pleased that American investment would support so many more Sri Lankan jobs, but that I hoped that the Sri Lankan manufacturers would increase their purchases of American textiles so that we would have a two-way trade.

Those three Singhalese sentences were by far the most famous words I uttered during my ambassadorial tour. They were reported far and wide by the Sri Lankan media. The ceremony had taken place too late in the day to be covered by TV. The night of this ceremony we stayed at a local hotel; by the following day, my remarks were being broadcasted and reported widely. On that day, we reached Galle, a very nice seaport and the third largest city in Sri Lanka. I could then watch myself on TV delivering those famous three sentences. On the following day, as we walked on the 17th Century ramparts of Galle, we passed a mosque. In front of that were some young boys of about ten playing. One of the boys approached me and asked whether I was the lady that had appeared on TV the previous evening. Fame spreads in a hurry!

By the next night, we were back in Colombo, just in time to read about my sentences on the front pages and in the editorial columns of many papers. I think the word had been passed by the government that they wanted this event highlighted. The editorials supported the idea of learning foreign languages. I was delighted to be associated with this great cause; I am only sorry that in my three years, these were the only words that attracted any attention at all. That was too bad.

I did give some other speeches, mostly informal as I visited various places in Sri Lanka. People often ask me whether I also learned Tamil. I did not, but after the press outburst, I decided that I had better learn a few words. When I visited the East Coast, I had a Tamil teacher for two weeks so that I could use some of the rudimentary; e.g., counting to ten, basic vocabulary; and the sentences "I am happy to be here" and "I am happy to be at X". I actually had an opportunity to use this sentence when I visited Batticaloa, which is largely a Tamil town on the East Coast, where I addressed a Rotary Club. I had been taken to this meeting by an American Jesuit - a Rotarian. He had lived in Batticaloa for about forty years by this time. Inevitably, some one said that he had understood that I could speak Sinhalese and asked whether I could say something in Tamil. My one sentence did the trick.

The two languages are utterly different. There are some cognates. Tamil is a language related to those spoken in southern India. Sinhalese is a Sanskrit derived language, similar to the northern Indian languages. So the two languages had different alphabets, different grammar. If there were any similarities only a scholar could detect. I was told that some of the language structure is similar, but you would have to be a real expert in both languages before that becomes useful.

I did give one speech on Sri Lanka-US relations. That was late in my tour. That was the one time when I sought to give a speech. I did not do that, except for perhaps one other time, but on this occasion, I believed it important that I be given an opportunity to give my views publicly on those relations.

One of the Sri Lanka brighter spots was the economy. Sri Lanka in general has done extraordinarily well in the social sectors, but historically had not done well in production of goods. Both agriculture and industry had grown quite slowly. From 1977 until the early 1980s, there were great hopes for some major advances, following a change in government and in economic policy. Investments began to flow in. But as happens too often, in 1983 there was a serious increase in ethnic tensions with riots in most of the Sri Lankan major cities. That effectively put a stop to the economic revival. By the time I arrived, the UNP - the more conservative of the two parties - was still in power and was moving - with all deliberate speed - to the further opening of the economy. This policy, even if very grudgingly undertaken, was similar to that being adopted by many countries at the time. The fashions of economic policy had shifted in that direction. That was why the President was looking for foreign capital for his garment factories; in earlier years, he probably would have had the government make all the investments. The new policy called for deregulation of the economy, a more inviting climate for foreign investments and a more sympathetic attitude towards domestic private investment.

By 1992, Sri Lanka had attained a 4-6% GDP growth starting from the dark days when the JVP rebellion was underway. That rebellion practically closed down the country, as I have described earlier, until about 1991. This growth was not in the same league as the "Asian Tigers", but one would have to say that the Sri Lankan economy was performing reasonably well by 1992. The economy might have grown somewhat faster, but not much without significant changes in government policy. Sri Lanka was not a terribly "user friendly" country; even if you were willing to invest, there were many bureaucratic hurdles you had to jump over. The issue for Sri Lanka, essentially, was that India had reformed its economy significantly in the early 1990s; in order for Sri Lanka to compete for foreign investment it has to make considerably easier for that investment to enter the country than India does. It is a much, much smaller market, which somewhat reduces the attraction; on the other hand it is a much manageable market and government.

There was an American Chamber of Commerce which had been started by my predecessor. It may have 40 members in 1992; it had about 100 by the time I left three years later. The membership was overwhelmingly Sri Lankan - those who had some connection with an American company. There were some expatriates, but they were a small minority. The increase in membership in the three year period was due in part to an increase in American investments, but primarily to the fact that the word got around that this new institution was alive and well. We worked very closely with the Chamber. In fact, when I arrived, the Embassy's Economic section was doing most of the Chamber's staff work. Soon thereafter, the membership was large enough that the dues could cover the cost of their own staff - one person - and rent some office space.

I was interested in increasing American investment in Sri Lanka. We had some success. At one point, a large investment mission, supported by OPIC, came to Colombo. I took them to another garment factory opening, which was only slightly less colorful than the one I described earlier. There was some interest in investing in phosphate mining, which has by now materialized. There was an American owned flour mill, which had been in Sri Lanka for many years; most of its business came from milling PL-480 products. There were some garment factories in which American investors participated. There were a couple of American computer software and hardware companies; these were modest sized factories, but this whole field held potential for expansion. That was the kind of business that I was interested in attracting. Unfortunately for Sri Lanka, the competition from India and Bangalore was overwhelming; American investors went there rather than Sri Lanka.

AT&T looked for a long time to establish an equity position in a switching equipment project. Eventually, it turned out to be a complete sale to Sri Lanka. Unfortunately, this project ended badly, in part because of frustration generated by the dilatory Sri Lankan procedures and in part because of ill-advised bidding tactics by AT&T. As so often happens with American businesses, there is a sudden surge of impatience which demands that all the decisions be made in the next two weeks or the plug would be pulled. I think our businesses need to be more patient with their time schedules; the whole world does not work on American time. I do not object to a statement that time is running short and that the issues have to be resolved in the next four or five months. Then if the same American representatives return to maintain continuity, the time frame can be used more effectively than the usual practice of lurching from crisis to crisis and then demanding that everything be settled in two weeks.

We did not have a Commerce Department representative in Sri Lanka. When the commercial world was divided between State and Commerce, the latter took all the large markets; Sri Lanka was not one of them. At one stage, the Commerce Department put the word out that it was encouraging posts that had a Commerce representative to adopt nearby posts that did not. The "regional" Commerce representative was to provide ideas, some support and technical assistance. In a lot of places, I don't think this worked very well; initially Commerce undercut its effort badly. It would always invite State Department commercial officers to its regional conferences, but would never provide travel funds and would exclude them from important events. This insured that State participation would be minimal. Eventually, I believe under Susan Schwab's leadership in Commerce, that Department changed its practices and the conferences became a more friendly environment to State officers. All this was happening while State finally woke up and gave the commercial promotion the kind of support it deserved. So both agencies were coming to the appropriate conclusions at about the same time.

In Sri Lanka, we had an unusual arrangement. We had close working relations with two different commercial sections in two different posts - India and Singapore. We used each relationship in different ways. Singapore was the Asian headquarters for a lot of American firms. We used the commercial officers there to open doors to these companies. Some Singapore-based headquarters were authorized to cover Sri Lanka; some were not but we persuaded a number of them to take a look at possibilities in Colombo. As luck would have it, one of the commercial officers in Singapore had started his career as a Foreign Service officer in Bangladesh when Howie and I served there - a fact that we only discovered after he had agreed to come to Sri Lanka. In any case, this officer came and looked around and gave us some ideas. He returned to Singapore with our literature. This and my visit to Singapore on the way to my post in Colombo increased the consciousness of American corporations based in Singapore. All this effort resulted happily in considerable American participation from Singapore when we held a trade fair in Colombo a couple of years later. Very few American companies would come from the U.S. at considerable expense for a small market, but it made sense to them to send their Singapore representatives.

In India, there were Foreign Commercial Service officers in three different posts - Delhi, Madras and Bombay. Our relations were primarily with Madras. One of the officers from there came to visit us - part work and part beach hunting. He looked over our operation and tried to see what he could do from Madras to help us. He focused on the electronic industry which is concentrated in the Madras consular district - Bangalore. At one point, we were able to send one of our Sri Lankan employees to India to attend a training program that was tailored to our needs. He spent about a week in India - two days in Delhi, two in Bombay and one in Madras. He came back with a long list of contacts in the Commerce Department. That was very useful and is one of the major deficiencies of most State Department-operated commercial efforts - no contact with the Department of Commerce in Washington. So our employee was then able to contact the right person in Commerce when we needed assistance.

We pushed both trade and investment. Our pitch was that Sri Lanka was a good place to invest because it had a reasonably healthy economy, low wages, English-speaking and a reasonably friendly policy toward business. I recognized that if an American business had never worked overseas, it might not want to start in Sri Lanka. But if it had had experience in some other parts of the developing world - which is almost a must if one is looking for a low wage economy - then Sri Lanka was not a bad bet. Sri Lanka also has a very highly educated population; almost everyone had attended high school. Literacy is virtually universal. That is unusual in the developing world.

Tea was still an important export, although by then garments were by far the largest exports. Natural resources had become a much less important segment of the economy. Services and the garment industry were the fastest growing sectors. Agriculture was not doing as well as it should have. The hope was that some aspect of the electronic industry might find a home in Sri Lanka - probably manufacturing of some hardware.

The plantations, so well known around the world, had been established by the British in the mid-1880s. The first major crop was coffee, but that was wiped out by a blight. The British brought in tea, probably from south India, in the latter part of the 19th Century. The tea plantations were primarily in the hills, although some was cultivated in the low lands. Tea has to be grown on slopes, so the best teas are grown at the higher latitudes. At the time of independence, the plantations were run by expatriates. The labor was virtually all Tamil who had been brought from India to work on these plantations during the colonial period. These tea plantation workers made up about 50% of the Tamil population in Sri Lanka, although it has maintained its own culture. The workers were downtrodden, but were not especially involved in the LTTE insurgency. They were involved in politics; they had a veteran politician who has tried to be part of every government that has been formed in Sri Lanka with the expressed purpose of trying to achieve better working conditions for the plantation workers.

The plantations suffered a great deal when they were nationalized by Mrs. Bandaranaike's government in the 1960s and 1970s. Investments stopped. It turned out that in tea growing you can coast for about seven or eight years; that is without new investments. Then the plantation suddenly crashes because there is a replacement cycle for the plants that can not be continued if there is no new investments. The new plants don't produce much until they reach about seven years. By 1992, the government was starting to move towards what it deemed "privatization" of the plantation; actually Premadasa referred to this process as "peopleization." - he preferred that description. By this time, the plantations were almost all under Sri Lankan management. The government had decided to privatize by selling off an increasing percentage of equity. That brought in capital, but not the other important aspect of privatization; i.e. new management. The prospect of a new management structure was fiercely resisted by the plantation labor and their political backers; the workers were concerned that "new" management would be exploitive - which may at some level have been the case. Eventually, agreements were worked out which privatized management by giving it some tenure to encourage investment. I think this new approach is beginning to have a beneficial impact. There was some foreign investment, but not too much; the Sri Lankans were very concerned about Indian investment; they did not want large Indian holdings of tea plantations.

Sri Lanka has the highest per capita GNP of any country in the region, except for the Maldives, although the figures for that country are highly artificial which is not particularly significant. Sri Lanka had a significant middle class; it had a low population growth - about 1.4% for about a generation. So income increases don't get eaten up by population growth.

In traveling around, you can not help notice the gap between the very rich and the poor. You can see large estates; they also have beach houses or mountain villas. Then there are those who scratch out a meager existence in rice paddies. Historically, the rich Sri Lankans made their money in trade. There was relatively little industrial investment in Sri Lanka, so that trade offered the best opportunity to accumulate wealth. Many of these people started with some land - you had to have at least some paddy land in order to qualify as a full member of the establishment. In most cases, this land was rented out to tenant farmers, but you had to own some paddy land as a status symbol. In fact, the term for the establishment caste in Sri Lanka is derived from the term for paddy land. People who had really become rich had probably been traders during the British colonial rule; in many cases, they had then expanded into industrial investments, often in the garment industry; if they were Muslims, it would gems, both in the extracting and the manufacturing aspects.

There are urban slums, but much of the poverty can be seen in rural areas. One day, we had a fascinating tour of some parts of Colombo. The Housing Minister in Premadasa's cabinet was a very close political ally of the President; he was also known for his unsavory and thuggish approach to politics. He offered to give me a kind of Cook's tour of housing developments in Colombo. I accepted and found it an absolutely fascinating experience. The tour started from my Residence in his mini-van. We went to the northern part of Colombo in an area near the Supreme Court - he and I and some security staff. There he showed us a new development that was under construction. Of course, everyone knew we were coming; that Minister did not leave anything to chance. This was a "well planned, spontaneous" visit.

We saw a model apartment and the Minister briefed us in detail about the layout and square footage of the apartments that people were moving into as well as those they were leaving. He took great pride in the fact that all those that had been displaced by this new construction had found other shelter. He emphasized that this new development would be multi-ethnic - Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslims. He introduced us to a representative of each group - all of whom indicated great thankfulness for their new dwellings. As we moved along, there were lots of people who were pushing little folded-up pieces of paper into the Minister's hand. I asked what was in those requests; apparently they sought more apartments and jobs for their children. We spent about 2 ï¿½ hours going from one housing development to another; the Minister was able to tell us his involvement in the project, either when he was Mayor of Colombo or when he was Housing Minister; some were started by the President when he was Mayor of Colombo and later Housing Minister. It was obvious that these politicians were running on their housing program; not surprisingly, their party had overwhelming support in these developments. In the final analysis, I think he wanted me to understand what really mattered to him and how well he had Colombo organized.

Interestingly enough, he essentially made no demands on us. In fact, one day when I called on him to discuss politics, he told me that the Embassy had issued a visa to his son so that he could go to the U.S. to study auto mechanics. He said that he had sent this son to the Visa office without a letter of recommendation because he thought that he should begin to learn how to do things on his own. I know the son got a visa; I don't know that he did so without a letter from his father in his pocket. Had he used it, I would have known. But I thought the Minister's comment very interesting. He made a point of not asking us for a favor.

This Minister was unusual. Far more common, were people who were not well organized - or at least not as well as he was. Many of those people asked me for favors all the time.

Now for domestic politics. At the time I arrived in Sri Lanka, the President was Ranasinghe Premadasa. He was the dominant figure in the United Nationalist Party (UNP) - there was not even a close second. He worked very hard. He had been born in poverty. Upper class people in Colombo were embarrassingly snippy and snobbish and condescending about Premadasa's social origins. He was very much aware of this view. It was interesting to me that he reacted in ways that are exactly opposite to what one might expect from an American political leader. In the U.S., it is a sign of honor if you can say that you were born in a "log cabin" - or the modern equivalent thereof. You lower your origins as proof that you are a self-made man who has risen due to hard work and diligence. In Sri Lanka, Premadasa tried to gloss over his origins and I think it made life more difficult for him. For example, there was a story that he had had a photograph of his father retouched to make it appear that his father was wearing the traditional comb-in-the-hair - the traditional symbol of the Kandian gentry and nobility. In fact, his father had come from a very modest lineage from a relatively low caste.

He boasted that he had attended the St. Joseph School which is an establishment school; he in fact had never been there. He had risen in Colombo political circles which he was able to do since the population was quite diverse and the political practices reminded one of Chicago. That experience gives one a different perspective; one that was much broader than that of the upper classes. He had close associates who were Tamil and Muslims; that was unusual in Sri Lankan political circles. As I said, he worked tremendously hard; he was well known for rising at 4:30 in the morning and calling people to give out assignments; if he had not received a report within twenty minutes, he would call again.

He had taught himself English. It was said, and I found it quite plausible, that he had spent hours on end practicing both with tapes and in front of a mirror. His English in fact was very good, but he had not learned the way the establishment had - by listening while their parents talked to English-speaking visitors. English, I should note, has been a controversial issue in Sri Lanka from the beginning. As in India and Pakistan, the upper classes universally spoke good English. It was a sign of good breeding and economic success; it was also the way to greater economic success. It allowed Sri Lankans to interact with the outside world as well as other English-speaking fellow citizens, who were generally part of the same caste. The father of the present president, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, when he broke with the country's founding fathers - the first leaders after independence - quite cynically, I think, chose the language issue as a wedge to separate himself from them. He campaigned on a platform to make Singhalese the sole language of the country. This was as much a gesture against the English speakers - of whom he was one - as against the Tamil speakers. He was trying to enlist the support of the villagers around the island; they resented the fact that English played such a prominent role - even at independence, Sri Lanka had a 50% literacy rate which has almost doubled since then. So Sri Lanka has a population that may not all have spoken English, but who could in general read the local daily and who went to school at least until up through high school. They believe that just because they do not speak English they should not be considered as yokels. English is taught as a foreign language in school; in the 1950s it was the principal language in some of the schools. That has almost disappeared under present law; the only students who are allowed to go to a public school and study in English, are the burghers who are descendants of people who immigrated during the Dutch colonial period or people with mixed ethnic backgrounds - whose parents came from different communities. There are a number of international schools in Sri Lanka which teach in English; they are, however, not approved by local authorities, although Sri Lankan children certainly attend.

He was a doer; he wanted to make a difference. He was a political "junkie;" he was fascinated by politics. When I presented my credentials in October 1992 - during the height of the American presidential campaign - he insisted on talking primarily about two matters: a) his own efforts at decentralization - Premadasa style. He wasn't that interested in local elections, but he wanted to be able to appoint local village officials who would be answerable and beholden to him. He saw it as a very efficient way to provide service to the people, with him in charge. And b) he wanted to talk about the American political campaign. He was fascinated by the debates; he wanted to know how they were arranged, how they were managed and most particularly how the questions were screened - to insure that improper questions were not asked. I sent him a tape of the first debate; within hours I got a phone call from his private secretary saying that the President had really enjoyed it and if I had anymore, he would love to see them. I think he was considering using the American debate model in the Sri Lankan campaigns, but he wanted to make sure that he had control over the proceedings. I am sure that he thought he could best any competitor in such debates. What he eventually did was to start a radio call-in show which was a great success.

Premadasa had a dark side. Violence was practiced in his name even if he maintained plausible deniability. He would not give the time of day to any member of the opposition. He was harder on the heretics - renegade UNP people - than on the enemies, which is not unusual, I guess. He was a very dominating and autocratic personality. As so often happens, he did both very good things and very bad things. When I first arrived, it was already apparent that Sri Lanka was practicing poison politics. People of different persuasions were really not on speaking terms; there was tremendous animus and bitterness between them.

The principal personalities on the political scene were Premadasa and Mrs. Bandaranaike - who although getting on in years was still the leader of her party (LSFP). The UNP and the SLFP have taken turns leading Sri Lanka since independence. I should note that Sri Lanka's political history is somewhat unique because for the first thirty years of independence, the party in power always lost the elections - without fail. After that, the pattern changed. Premadasa's predecessor, J.R. Jayewardene, played around with the Constitution as Mrs. Bandaranaike had done before although not as effectively. Both managed to extend their stay in office - Mrs. Bandaranaike for seven years and Jayawardene for 17 years.

In the seventh month of my tour, Premadasa was assassinated. The week before that event one of his political opponents was assassinated - a man who had left the UNP; he was also a leader of considerable talent. He was shot during a political rally. The government blamed the LTTE - a little too quickly; it claimeagain a little too quickly - to have found the alleged perpetrator slumped over dead at the scene of the crime with an ID card on his person and a used cyanide capsule around his neck. Nobody believed the story; everyone thought that Premadasa had some how engineered this assassination. A week later, Premadasa was blown up by a suicide bomber. Suicide bombing is usually an LTTE signature.

Today, there are a couple of people who challenge the assumption that that assassination was LTTE sponsored, but I think the prevailing view, to which I subscribe, is that the suicide bomber was affiliated with the LTTE. It had many of the LTTE signature marks; the bomber had been a "sleeper" in Premadasa's neighborhood for years; he had approached the President on a bicycle and then triggered the bomb that blew up both of them and some others as well. I don't think that there is anything in the Sri Lankan culture that fosters suicide bombings, although they have had more than their share. Sri Lanka has always had a vigorous and strident activist left movement. This began in the labor circles in the late 1800s and much of the violence has some of the same characteristics that one observes in labor movements in many countries including the U.S. Sri Lanka is one of the last countries that still has a Trotskyite party - the members are not getting any younger but they still fly their flag. In recent years, there has been an abatement of terrorist violence, although it is not unknown even today. For example, in July of this year, a close friend of mine, a Tamil politician, was assassinated by a suicide bomber, undoubtedly by the LTTE; he was one of the last genuine liberal moderates and one of the architects of the present peace plan.

Premadasa's assassination brought a new President to power, D. B. Wijetunga. He was a man of rather limited abilities and intellectual acumen. He was from the Kandian countryside. I think he was a deeply divisive figure, even though he had a grandfatherly, folksy manner. He was not intelligent enough to know what a devastating effect his words were having on the country. This forced succession really shook up UNP politics because Premadasa had been such a predominant figure. Wijetunga didn't even try to grasp hold of the UNP; in fact, he consciously tried to move away from the Napoleonic style of government used by his predecessor.

Wijetunga completed the unexpired part of Premadasa's term - about a year and a half. The Parliament's term also came to an end around this time, although the President and the Parliament are elected at different times. Wijetunga, in what he considered a very clever move, suddenly decided in the late Spring of 1994, to call for a Parliamentary election in August of that year. He did this at a time when Mrs. Bandaranaike, still the leader of the opposition, was away in Singapore for medical reasons. She was not in good health; she had suffered a couple of strokes; she had very severe arthritis which limited her mobility. The assumption nevertheless was she would still be the standard bearer of her party, despite her health which would obviously have limited her campaign effectiveness.

At about the same time, the president's party lost a provincial election despite an intense campaign. Every politician in the country had been in the Southern Province handing out goodies and making speeches for his or her party and running the loudspeakers at every hour of day and night. The results were of earthquake proportions in political terms. The President's move to call for early Parliamentary elections looked to be have been too clever.

With the Parliamentary elections coming close, the SLFP decided that it would nominate Mrs. Bandaranaike's daughter, Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga as its standard bearer. I understood that the challenge of convincing the mother to let her daughter take on the leadership position fell to a professor who had been the vice-chancellor of Colombo University; he also had been a brilliant lawyer - one of Sri Lanka's two Rhodes scholars. He had resigned from the University and his position on the law faculty in order to join the SLFP because he felt the country was in desperate need for a change. He was the soul of sweet reason, a judicious and smooth personality; he became the obvious candidate to break the news to Mrs. Bandaranaike. She did resign and her daughter ran an absolutely brilliant campaign, based on a peace platform which all the conventional political wisdom deemed to be suicidal. But she had such passion and charisma that she was able to carry the day. She was helped tremendously by a nation-wide appetite for change.

Kumaratunga promised that, if elected, she would initiate real peace negotiations with the Tamils. She intended to approach the LTTE and bring about fundamental changes in the country. The election returns came in under intense scrutiny from both by the population and teams of international observers. When the ballots were counted, the People's Alliance - an amalgam principally of the SLFP along with some leftist parties - won a majority in Parliament by one vote. That immediately caused what could have been a constitutional crisis because the President was still of the UNP. The story in Colombo was that the President approached the Chief of Staff of the Army and asked whether, in light of such a close vote, if he called upon UNP to form a government would the Army be able to keep order. The Chief replied in the negative. The President really didn't want to ask the SLFP to form a government.

At that point, the prime minister, Ranil Wickremasinghe, who later became leader of the opposition, had what I consider to be his finest hour. He called a press conference at his official residence, and when the press arrived, informed the attendees that he wanted to thank them for their good relations while he had been in office, and to let them know that he was leaving the official residence because there would be a change in government. This gesture ended any effort to circumvent the electoral results.

Chandrika Kumaratunga had two big agendas in taking over as prime minister. She wanted to sweep every possible vestige of the UNP out of the corridors of power after their 17-year stint in power; and she wanted to start peace talks.

The first task was complicated by the fact that for her first three months in office, she served under a UNP president, and the constitution gave substantial power to the president. Wijetunga, however, basically withdrew from running the government, and what might have been a constitutional crisis became simply a somewhat awkward phase of government.

Three months after her party won the parliamentary election, Chandrika Kumaratunga ran as her party's candidate for president. The election was punctuated by a disaster: a LTTE suicide bomber attacked the election rally of her opponent, Gamini Dissanayake, killing him and some 25 others. Despite the shock, the election took place on schedule, and Kumaratunga won by an unprecedented margin.

Her other big agenda item was of great interest to me, and to the United States: starting peace negotiations with the LTTE. This was Kumaratunga's signature issue, and she started up quickly, designating a team of four close associates to be her representatives to the negotiations. I can't improve on what I have written about the negotiations themselves ("Peacemaking in Sri Lanka: The Kumaratunga Initiative," in Rotberg, ed., Creating Peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation).

Obviously, I wanted to support the peace negotiations, but it was clear that Kumaratunga saw no role for the United States in this process. She and the LTTE had decided on a purely bilateral approach. So I defined a more modest role for myself and for the U.S. government. I decided to try to give the Sri Lankans as much exposure as I could to the U.S. experience with other peace negotiations, in the hopes that techniques and approaches we had found useful would help them craft a productive approach. With the help of the Public Affairs Officer, I put together a small package of reading materials, and funneled them to the people who were most active in Kumaratunga's negotiating "brain trust". I brought Hal Saunders out to Sri Lanka, and he was able to speak privately with them about his experience in the Middle East and, more recently, in Tajikistan. I tried to bring Hank Cohen out to talk about his work on South Africa, but the best I could manage was a video-conference between him and a couple of people who were working on Sri Lanka's peace process.

In the end, neither their efforts nor ours were sufficient. The negotiations grew testy, and the LTTE resumed the war in April 1995. The Sri Lankan government tried for nearly four years to make some headway with the constitutional proposals it had put forward, first informally and then formally, starting in early 1995, but once the negotiating process had ended, the many skeptics in the Sri Lankan Political mainstream lost confidence in the government's proposals. What followed was the bloodiest period in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict.

We had one more dramatic development before I left Sri Lanka, the visit of Hillary and Chelsea Clinton in April 1995. As so often happens with high level visits, preparing for it was an exasperating process, full of missed communications and non-communications between Washington and the field. When they finally arrived, however, the Clintons were marvelous guests. Mrs. Clinton spent time both with the country's political leadership and with prominent women from various fields. She put on an impressive and gracious performance, and I think she too was impressed with the variety of female talent she saw - lawyers, doctors, university vice chancellors, bankers, from all Sri Lanka's ethnic groups. Chelsea, then 15 years old, had been traveling for 10 days without seeing anyone her own age, and handled that difficult situation with great poise.

The security presence that came with the Clintons was another story. Even in those pre-9/11 days, there were something like 80 security officers on the ground during their actual visit. And the traveling party's preoccupation with discount shopping at Colombo's outlet stores was a challenge.

I left Colombo in August 1995. It was by far the most fun job I had had in the Foreign Service. Being the leader of our small community was something I enjoyed far more than I had expected to, and something I knew I would not have another chance to do.

Q: Then in 1995, you were selected to be the next Director of the Foreign Service Institute. How did that come about?

SCHAFFER: Dick Moose, then Under Secretary for Management, had asked someone to sound me out about becoming Director of FSI some time during the spring of 1995. I'm not sure what led him to think of me, but it may have been some of the off-beat management innovations I had tried out in Colombo. At first, I was not particularly interested; FSI was way out in Virginia, and I saw the job as being primarily bureaucratic. But as the time for my departure from Colombo approached, I spoke with those who had worked at the new FSI campus, and decided that I had been quite wrong. I became increasingly excited about the opportunity to shape the Department's future work force. The tremendous enthusiasm of my predecessor, Larry Taylor, was a big factor in changing my mind. The month or so before I left Colombo made it clear to me that my relationship with Moose would be somewhat difficult. He had already filled three of the four top jobs at FSI, with no consultation with me; and then turned around and asked me to find a replacement for the fourth top job when the director of the Senior Seminar unexpectedly left.

Dick was trying very hard to bring about a real cultural change in the Foreign Service. He wanted more management sense, more openness to new ideas, more revolutionary thinkers who were prepared to use staff differently in light of the advent of information technology and he wanted people all over the Department to be much more radical in their approach to saving money. The latter goal of course was very much influenced by the budgetary disaster that was inflicted on the Department by Congress.

I basically agreed with all of those goals, including to a large extent the change in culture. But I felt Dick tried to reach his goals in the wrong way. He didn't try to build consensus; I think he thought to do so would take too long. I believed that without such consensus, no changes would be made. I am afraid that I was proven right.

Dick was also given to the enthusiasm of the moment. Some of those moments turned out to be enduring; others didn't. But even the enduring ones were easily displaced by a new crisis or by some new hobby horse. These continuing changes of focus were a very time consuming and frustrating exercise for people who worked for him. I think his staff was also frustrated by how Dick treated people, even those whom he basically regarded highly. He would belittle them in public; he would threaten them and bully them; he would erupt on a moment's notice without warning. So the atmosphere in the front office was very unpleasant.

We both saw FSI as a vital tool in bringing about the desired cultural change. But we saw in different ways and I think we placed different emphases on a range of approaches. When I first arrived, and even more when I left, I saw FSI as an institution that could make a difference. It could shape how the diplomats of the future would see their role and how they would go about doing the best job for their government that they could. That to me was the exciting part being the Director; it made the job fun - that as well as working with a terrific group of people.

I tried to create an opportunity to bring about change through the budget process. We knew we were in serious financial straits because all parts of the Department were being forced to share the burdens placed on the Department by Congress. FSI was both protected in some areas and devastated in others; it had the advantage that much of its budget came from reimbursements - tuition for their students - from other agencies, so that it did not have to rely entirely on the Department's allocation. We did two things, one which took a while to materialize. That was a review of how tuition costs were being attributed to other agencies. Eventually, we got permission to radically change the methods that FSI had used in calculating the tuition for language studies. We tried in this way to encourage agencies to enroll students in the same language courses at the same time, rather than staggering the assignments over a period of months. That made it more cost effective for us and therefore cheaper for the other agencies; it was a win-win effort.

The other initiative I took was to establish a Director's fund. This was not part of our regular budget submission, but a system that I installed within FSI. I arbitrarily, during my first exposure to the budgetary process, cut every program by something like 20%. This was true both in the preparation of the next year's budget as well as in the allocation of resources for the current fiscal year. I briefed Dick Moose on what I proposed to do so that top management was well aware of this fund, but the FSI budget was part of the Department's "Salaries and Expense" budget and the details were lost in that large budget submission. I put those resources into a fund that I would control and which I would allocate to the various programs based on the presentations that each manager would make at budget review time. That manager could request funds to make up for any deficits that his or her program had suffered either through the general budgetary reduction or through my initiative or to fund some new program. I called it "The Director's Investment Fund." I wanted to invest in something that was going to be a training asset.

When we had our internal budget reviews, we would review programs which could be funded by the allocations already made to the program directors. Then "The Director's Fund" would be available for competitive bidding from the program directors for activities which they considered of high priority but which could not be funded within their available resources. This bidding was open to all program directors. We received proposals for a number of new initiatives as well as requests for funding of already existing programs.

In one case, I insisted that a particular existing program be given additional resources. The professional study school staff wanted to eliminate all graduate school training in economics. That was not acceptable to me; I insisted that at least two FSOs be assigned to such training and the following year I insisted on three.

Through the use of this Fund, I was able to change the direction of some of the training programs. Changing the FS culture was a much more daunting challenge. In the first place, FSI was only one player in this major enterprise. The change can not be brought about only with training. I thought that the Junior Officers Training Program was doing a pretty good job in bringing change. I did try to expand participation in some of the management programs that were of interest to Moose. One - "Strategic Planning" - actually became quite popular. It was Moose's view that activities in the Foreign Service could be planned even given the unpredictability of the foreign affairs world. I am not sure we made much of an impact, although a few people accepted the thesis. Personally, I think strategic planning is a useful tool in foreign affairs if understood correctly. My understanding was that the planning process made one think more clearly; it will result in a plan which will be out-dated the minute it is finished. So the plan is less important than the process undertaken to produce it. That was my view then - and now.

One of our initiatives was to give greater emphasis to "distance learning." It seemed to me that we had completely neglected the Foreign Service Nationals. We had a desperate situation in all of our new embassies where we had a major rate of turnover among the American staff and Foreign Service Nationals who were new to the U.S. government. We were trying to create materials that could be used by the foreign nationals and the junior American consular and administrative employees in an off-campus training program. The latter group could not possibly have had sufficient training prior to their departure for these new posts because of the time pressures. We used the Internet or CD's or whatever means that were available for transmission of information. We did produce a couple of products - e.g., a cashier course and a passport course; I am not sure that my successors put as much emphasis on this program as I had. That was a modest success story; I wish I had been at FSI longer because I think there was room for more efforts in this program.

That was one of my initiatives to bring some changes to FSI. But I must admit that my first year as Director was focused principally on just keeping the institution going. Not only were the Department's financial resources severely reduced, but this was the year of the government's shut down. FSI was closed for about a month by this shut down and some heavy snow falls. In fact, we had a junior officers class which started one day in November just in time to be hastily sworn in and then furloughed the next day - for one week. Then they returned, not having lost any income - in that first shut down, payrolls continued. Then a few weeks later, just before Christmas, that class was furloughed again for three weeks - this time without pay - until much later. We did make a major effort to stay in touch with these new officers to reduce the impact of this introduction to the U.S. Government.

My other major effort was directed to team building. I felt that FSI could make a major contribution towards this goal. We had a training team that had experience in various aspects of leadership training in the DCM course, the Ambassadorial seminar and in various other leadership courses - which not nearly enough people in the Department attended. These trainers had been approached by various officers in the Department as well as by a couple of overseas posts to conduct some leadership training programs - away from the office. The hope was that these programs might develop a team approach which we thought would be more effective than present practices. Among other objectives, we hoped to stimulate greater participation by all office or post members; we also hoped to encourage innovative thinking and new approaches to problem solutions. I was willing to make training teams available to overseas posts .Our first effort was to take place in Turkey where Ambassador Marc Grossman was already among the converted. He wanted to imbue his staff with the same open approach that he personally had found so useful. Unfortunately, despite two reschedulings, we ran into the governmental shut-downs and became another casualty of that unfortunate occurrence.

We did conduct one of these training programs in the Dominican Republic. It worked out fabulously well. The post felt that after the program there was a definite improvement in the effectiveness of the Country Team. Of course, a program of this kind has a multiplier effect because one convert will take his or her new outlook to the next assignment and thereby spread the message.

In addition, as required by law, we had a very intensive diversity training program. I take great pride that we met all of the targets set by the court. We got all of the targeted people through their training by the stipulated date. We also used diversity training as another vehicle to encourage team building. We took the program overseas; a team went to Mexico, and then went to a couple of Western Europe embassies. We augmented the team with one of our leadership training trainers who led a few sessions in this area with some of the embassies' staff. I think we were able to make some contribution to Moose's efforts to improve the leadership qualities of the Foreign Service, although I wish we had greater resources and a more benign atmosphere - i.e. no government shut-down. That shut-down really threw us off stride and did major damage to our goals. It was terribly demoralizing on everybody - the staff, the students, as well as me personally. Not only was the work program flow disrupted, but the atmosphere was so nasty; everyone who was furloughed felt devaluated. At FSI, there were only six people who were not furloughed; we stayed there primarily as a custodial staff.

It was demoralizing even for those six. We would go into a corridor and the lights which were on motion censors would go on. They were completely dark until one of us entered because we were the only ones in the building. That just emphasized the emptiness of this institution.

By the time I finished as Director of FSI, I concluded that this institution was underutilized by the Department. I had learned from my counterparts around the world - during a meeting which we held in Turkey in 1996 - that all Foreign Ministries had the same kind of problems. No staff member wanted to be separated from his or her in-box to attend a training session.

FSI was outstanding in its language training efforts. The language school then and now is still the most innovative institution that I have known. It does not rest on its laurels despite its outstanding record of accomplishments. It keeps developing new techniques and modifications. One of the accomplishments that took place during my tour was to move some of the early morning languages classes to a room in the Department - not particularly popular with the teachers but greatly appreciated by the students and particularly those who because of time pressures might not availed themselves of this opportunity.

I was still wrestling with the challenges of leadership training when I left. I felt that there was more that could be done, but I was puzzled by what more should be done. We had tremendous resources, but it was a program which did not attract many officers. The Department's experience with mandatory leadership training had been a disaster - unpopular, ineffective, poorly attended. The challenge was to change attitudes. An effective program would probably take a week; that was too much for officers who were desk bound. I felt that we had the most important tools to give an effective program, but needed to develop a greater eagerness among the Foreign Service.

I wrote an article on training after I left FSI. I outlined a number of efforts that I thought needed improvement. One was planning; another was to increase participation in the leadership and management courses; another was to improve our training for participation in international efforts. I felt that the Service emphasizes bilateral diplomatic relations; it has not yet developed an adequate cadre of personnel who could work effectively in a multi-lateral context nor is the Service as a whole sufficiently aware of the rising importance of multi-lateral institutions. The bilateral aspects will probably continue to predominate, but the importance of multi-lateral policy making will grow. That will require a new group of officers because navigating through the thickets of multilateralism is different from dealing with another country.

We were well on our way to introducing an advanced negotiations course by the time I left; I hope it is now being offered. There were not enough officers who indicated an interest and those who did were not always the ones that needed it. The dirty little secret is that the State Department has not nearly the level of negotiating skills that it needs. Much of that talent lies in other agencies such as USTR, leaving much of a field that should be mostly in the Department's realm in the hands of others.

I have no doubt that such skills as leadership, management, negotiations and diversity management can be taught. Some people will learn their lessons better than others, but all can be brought to an acceptable level. For example, I know that when I was assigned to the Trade Office I had practically no experience with formal government-to-government negotiations. None of my experiences ever had involved inter-agency teams, which are the heart of trade negotiations. I learned on the job; I think I learned a lot on the job. When later I had an opportunity to read some literature on negotiations, I saw light bulbs flashing before my eyes. I recognized that had I had the benefit of that knowledge, that would have been very helpful.

On the training for leadership, that is a different challenge because when you undertake leadership training, much of it - 80-90% - is a matter of forcing people to look inward to see what resources they might have available to lead others to follow them. The most useful leadership training I had was the ambassadorial seminar, which I eventually ended up leading. Some of the best lessons can be learned by following the examples of some people you work for who have this leadership talent. There are effective techniques - partly introspective and partly studying models. There are aspects of this training that are psychological, but the successful leaders is one who develops his or her own style rather than slavishly following an example. I found it useful to have studied some models; you can't help it when in a Foreign Service career you work for so many different bosses - some were open, some very secretive, some were cooperative, some loners. You can't help seeing what qualities a good leader should have in particular circumstances. What is most lacking in the "making of a Foreign Service officer" is the recognition as one reaches the upper level of the Service - and particularly positions such as DCM - that the leadership requirements are different and that life becomes lonelier while at the same time it requires greater and greater attention of bringing people to move in a direction that you believe is desirable. This is a feature that the military incalculates in its officers constantly; it raises it from the very beginning of an officer's career. A friend of mine gave me as I was starting my FSI tour, which as I said included teaching the ambassadorial course, a book on leadership which was being used in the National War College. I Xeroxed the title page for the first chapter and the first chapter for dissemination to the participants of the course. The title page said: "WHO IS IN CHARGE?" Then the chapter began on the next page with the phrase "YOU ARE and don't you forget it!"

When I became an ambassador, I had not had experience as a DCM or a Consul General. What leadership experience I had had been in an organization which was very visible. I had to stop to think about the responsibilities I was about to undertake. I enjoyed it; I like to think that I was reasonably successful. I enjoyed the process of getting my staff to participate in the development of strategy and then to implement it. I think that the DCM course would have been very, very useful to me - as would have been a tour as a DCM. I learned something about leadership as the spouse of an ambassador, but I could not gain the experience of actually running a post in the absence of the ambassador. That is very useful as is the experience of trying to bring a disparate mission together to read from the same page. A good course in leadership can be a very useful substitute for that practical experience, although I would be the first to admit that you can not take a neophyte off the street, run him or her through a DCM course and expect a polished performance. Substantive knowledge is essential as is talent, but if we assume that Foreign Service officers have some intelligence and have acquired a certain amount of professional knowledge, the leadership skills can be elicited and honed through training.

FSI has a role in professional development, but its staff, for very understandable reasons, have had some excessively grandiose ideas of what that role might be. I am excluding language training from these comments. That is a part of FSI that is widely seen as very effective, although while Director, I tried to increase the level of proficiency for officers in very hard languages and was successful to some extent, but I hope that is still continuing. Substantive professional development consists primarily of the economics course and the area study courses. The other substantive professional courses are so short that they can not have a major impact. For example, there is an introductory course on political work; there is a course on "Congress and Foreign Policy". They are very useful and are subjects that lend themselves to good FSI teaching. These are topics which lend themselves to developing a curriculum that has some coherence, which covers the subject sufficiently in three to five days and which brings officers up to speed by exposing them to outside speakers with expertise. That kind of program is pretty well understood.

But the serious educational efforts, such as the economics course and the area studies, are gems. I took the economics course when it lasted for six months; now it is almost a year long. It assumes that the student has had no background in economics whatsoever, even though some of the participants have had some academic exposure during their undergraduate days. It produces something that is close to MA level - not quite, but close - with a strong concentration in "institutional economics" - e.g. how the World Bank and the IMF work. It includes enough theoretical underpinning to allow the student to read and speak "economics" with people with a more fundamental academic grounding without missing any part of the conversation. The officers can do the basic analytical work that is required in the Foreign Service, which with the rarest of exceptions, does not require a Ph.D. I think it is a good course; the lead teacher has guarded it jealously. She has kept enough academic content to produce graduates who are not embarrassed to call themselves "economists" but she has continued, under pressure from the Department, to update it to make more relevant to the day-to-day needs of the Service.

Every few years the question is raised whether the Service should not be recruiting more academically qualified economists instead of training its own. Theoretically, that probably is a good idea; in practice, as long as the exams are structured as they are, the Service will not recruit enough economists and will therefore require an in-house training program. Good professional economists are not likely to subject themselves to the rigor of the written and oral exams to enter the Service. So the Department has to make a fundamental recruitment choice and so far it has decided to use the exams as the basic recruitment device.

As I have mentioned, the other substantive program is area studies. We have two programs: an afternoon per week for area study for staff that is in long-term language training; that works pretty well. The other program is a two-week introductory area study. These courses have a very diverse audience; people who are being assigned as political counselors as well as new secretaries. Some have very advanced educational backgrounds but are neophytes to the area; some know a little about the area; some who have modest educational backgrounds. They all may have different expectations of what they will do with what they learn. I know that there are area study school staff members who look upon themselves as the main Departmental depository of area expertise. That is just not true. The main depository of area expertise is in the regional bureaus and perhaps INR and in overseas posts. Of course, not all officers are complete experts, but enough have been in one part of an area or another for long enough time to be the real experts. The main problem with those experts is that many of them - not the best - have not studied the history of the area sufficiently. They have not deepened their knowledge adequately through the use of other resources besides their own experiences. Furthermore, the vagaries of the assignment process too often result in putting people in situations in which they do not have sufficient background. I served in areas that I knew, except perhaps for my first tours in Israel and in South Asia. I was always very conscious in making assignments in having an appropriate mix of people with good area background with some new blood. I think it is also very important that there be on the staff at least one and hopefully even more people who knew the area better than the ambassador. Such a situation leaves the ambassador with a complete free hand without restraint and that is risky. But this matter is not addressed systematically; it depends almost entirely on an assignment officer to keep this balance.

One might well raise the question about FSI's role in deepening the historical knowledge of an area expert. A couple of the heads of area studies - particularly the one in charge of Latin America - made a major effort to bring into their classes people who were already recognized as area experts as a refresher experience - to expose them to some of the new academic work which these people had most likely missed. I don't think that effort was terribly successful. There was always the time pressure; i.e. would the Assistant Secretary for Latin America be willing to leave a job vacant for even two weeks for someone who had just finished three tours in the region? Or would the officer be interested in doing that? The answer to both question is most likely to be "no". Perhaps the officer would be willing to have lunch with the FSI area study teachers to bring them up to date. But that would only happen if the area study staff is professionally respected.

I think the area studies school can play a leavening role, but I think it is likely to be a very modest one. Their main task will be to introduce newcomers to an area. There is nothing that is going to force somewhat who believes he or she knows enough to attend school. The best area experts will be anxious to keep up-to-date with new academic work in their area, but I don't think that applies to the majority of officers. Sometime, an assistant secretary or one of his or her deputies will insist that an officer attend one of these two week courses, but that is also not universal. One very creative idea that has been proposed by a deputy office director in a regional bureau is that every member of his staff has to devote a half a day every month to doing something that is professionally relevant that is done away from the office. It is a sort of a sabbatical. It doesn't have to be in academia; it could be an art exhibit or a conference dealing with the area they are working on. This would not only broaden their perspective, but would also recharge their batteries. This idea, worthy in itself, also reflects, I think, a change in the cultural and management norms of the Department which could be exciting and very rewarding.

I should also mention another of my efforts at FSI. I asked the professional school to put together a one day conference on the U.S. experience in intervening in someone else's conflict. After lengthy discussion, we decided to limit attendance to active duty and retired officers - no academics, for example. I decided on this format because I was interested in the dissemination of knowledge in the Department. I remembered that as the South Asia DAS I had, with the enthusiastic support from the country director, led a brown-bag luncheon with people who had dealt with failing states. The issue was Afghanistan. Later we used the same format to discuss confidence-building measures for Pakistan and India.

We invited people who had worked on the Namibia elections, on Cambodia, on the CSBM European issue to join us. We basically picked their brains for an hour and then considered how their experiences applied to our challenges. It was great fun and it made a real impact on our thinking. It contributed directly to one of the proposals that we made during the 1990 India-Pakistan crisis. In light of that experience, when I became the FSI Director, I wanted to see whether we could use that technique on a larger scale. We had an absolutely fabulous day. We had presentations on such subjects as Cyprus, Ecuador-Peru, the Middle East, to Africa (Chet Crocker who was teaching at Georgetown at the time, gave us a presentation on that).

For this kind of endeavor attendance was quite good. People at the DAS-country director level came; I think we even had one or two more senior people. Quite a number stayed all day. A lot of people took notes. Some who left during the day sent substitutes to participate for the rest of the day. We had very good questions and some very enlightened discussions. This is the kind of event that I would hope would take place more often, with FSI playing a role. The discussions could be led by others such as S/P, INR, but it helps to have it managed by an organization that is not under constant pressure to produce action memoranda or talking points that must be in a superior's office that day.

You have to have, or create, a little space for thinking. At FSI, we considered Winston Lord our greatest supporter among the regional assistant secretaries. He actually participated in a half day seminar we held on Korea; he attended for the whole time. What is required to activate such a program is someone whose horizons and policy-making outreach goes beyond the bureaucracy and the day-to-day habits we all fall into. It also takes a temperament which accepts the benefits of getting away from his or her desk for a lunch hour, a half-day or even a full day or who sees the benefits of closing the door of the office, accepting no telephone calls or e-mail, just to talk and think with an office director. It calls for the discipline to shut out the daily world in order to reflect for a while. Hal Saunders was a master at this; he was one of my models when I started the FSI program.

Some have questioned whether the entrance examination, with its emphasis on specific knowledge, allows the Department to recruit individuals who might be more inclined to give time to thought. I am not persuaded that an open entrance, that is one based almost exclusively on a resume, would be any better. The Department could of course use an open entrance process to pursue more specialists such as economists, language and area experts who after six months of training would be bilingual and real area experts, etc. Arguably, one might be able to find talent more inclined to thoughtful consideration with a different kind of oral examination - one that is more like an interview rather than another examination. The current examinations are proscribed by law suits or the potential for suits. Today's oral examination can not seek to find out why a candidate wishes to join the Foreign Service or where he or she went to school or what his or her views might be on societal issues; it must avoid subjective questions which might be viewed by a court as discriminatory. It is different from the one that I went through, although I can't say that my oral examination would have detected anything, except my knowledge of some specific subjects. In any case, I do believe that the Department needs to pay greater attention to planning and to find time for thought.

Q: I think this brings to the end of your stint as Director of FSI and indeed your career as a Foreign Service officer. Do you have any final thought about that career?

SCHAFFER: I had a wonderful time. I learned a lot. I think I contributed. I think I had a lot left to contribute. At this point, two years later, I am doing things that I enjoy doing. I have successfully mentally separated myself from the Service; I am not looking for ways to get back in, but I am still in the foreign affairs business. I enjoy teaching; I enjoy my "think tank" work. But even with a career with huge satisfactions and crowned with professional success, as the Service measures it, it was not easy to be pushed out. Had I had the option of staying on where I was, I would have done so with good cheer and enthusiasm. As it was, I was out of time, so that theoretically I could have tried to obtain another presidential appointment which would have meant going overseas again instantly. I didn't try; I didn't want to go overseas again instantly. In that sense, I suppose it was my choice, but realistically I didn't think it was going to happen. I wish, I guess, that I hadn't been pushed out. But that is not a wish that I think very much about.

End of interview