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

NICHOLAS G. ANDREWS

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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[Note: This interview was not edited by Mr. Andrews.]

Q: Today is April 12, 1990. This is an interview with Nicholas Andrews. I am Charles Stuart Kennedy doing this on behalf of The Association for Diplomatic Studies I wonder if you can give me something of your background? Where did you come from? How did you get educated?

ANDREWS: I was born in Romania. My father worked for an affiliate of the Standard Oil of New Jersey, which has since become Exxon. He had been in Romania in the oil business before World War I, and returned there after the war. And, in fact, remained there until he died in 1937. I was sent to school in England, beginning at age ten, which was 1934; came to the United States in 1939, not for the first time but to reside, and finished school in Massachusetts, went on to Princeton into the Army. And in the Army they gave me a test because I said I could speak Romanian, so I passed the test and was side-tracked into the Military Intelligence area where they had the choice of using either my French or my Romanian. And after sitting around in Camp Ritchie (which is in Maryland and which now a part of it is Camp David area), four of us, and myself, received orders and ended up back in Romania in December 1944, at which point the Germans had been expelled from Romania by the Russians, and Romania was trying to find its feet again. I remained in Romania for two years, to November '46, came back and finished my studies at Princeton, and after that joined the Foreign Service in 1950.

Q: I'd like to go back to the Romanian period because this is really just about our first contact, wasn't it, with the Soviets and what was going to happen in Eastern Europe, 1944-46. What was your impression? You were obviously a young man but you were watching this happen.

ANDREWS: It's very difficult to reconstruct what it was that I was thinking in those days. I was aware of the fact that the OSS had sent people in to Romania as early as August 1944 when King Michael and some of his democratic associates pulled a coup against General Antonesen, the authoritarian ruler, and committed Romania to join the allies, and to get out of its treaty with the Germans. The OSS people were around and were sort of rather heroic in my eyes because they had come in so early, and therefore in the very exciting period, in fact before the Russians got to Bucharest. But by the time I got there, in December before Christmas, there seemed to be a pattern already established. There was an armistice commission, that is to say a commission of the three major allies, the Soviet Union, the British, and the U.S., who were supposed to enforce the armistice conditions, and the U.S. military representation was about 50 to 70 officers and men. The British had perhaps a few more. And, of course, the Russians were all over the country. The Generals in charge of the military, ours, the British, and the Russians, met regularly. In our small interpreter group of four people, we had two that translated to and from Russian, as well as two who did Romanian, and all four of us could do French. We had one of these Russian-speaking Poles. I think he came down to Sarajevo once, to hunt, which a lot of western diplomats like to do there, and I can't remember now making any very special arrangements. Those were usually made between Belgrade and Sarajevo. He didn't stay with us. I think they put him up at either a hotel or a lodge belonging to the Bosnian heads of government. I can't even remember precisely whether he had breakfast with us, because sometimes even when everything was arranged, they did come by and have breakfast with us.

But Rankin didn't play much of a role in my life, either as Consul or while I was in Belgrade. Kennan came-I suppose that would have been 1960.

Q: Probably '61, because Kennedy put him there.

ANDREWS: Okay, and he came in with...well, I think the Embassy was delighted, and he was very active, very busy. He came down to Sarajevo while I was there, and I set up the usual protocol meetings with so and so, and so and so, which were dull, I think, from his point of view considering the persons with whom he had spoken in other Republics, or in Belgrade. I think Bosnia leaders did not stand out very much, although I had a somewhat higher regard for the Prime Minister, than for the other people. He was still no great shakes compared to his counterparts in other Republics. So it was a protocolary kind of visit. There was a Czech built ski lift type thing, but which wasn't used for skis-well, yes, you could carry your skis on it, but it was more a sight-seeing thing. We went up on that, took one or two pictures of views of Sarajevo. I don't even remember if we did a party for him. We would have normally done some kind of a reception, but that doesn't stick in my mind.

But I remember wondering-wishing-that I could remember everything he said, because it seemed to me from the very first time he opened his mouth, what he said was interesting. And, of course, I didn't remember a single thing he said. We didn't only talk about Yugoslavia. And his wife came down with him, and we thought that she was very interesting too.

Q: To sort of tie this in with my own personal experience, one day in about 1963 Ambassador Kennan called me in, when I was chief of the consular section in Belgrade, and asked me from the consular point of view, could we survive without Sarajevo. I said, "Certainly. We had very little work there, so obviously I can't judge from a political reporting perspective, but we could certainly pick up all the consular work from Sarajevo without blinking an eye, and no extra staff." And whatever it was, George Kennan shut the post down. You were at the other end I take it?

ANDREWS: No, I wasn't because I was in the middle. Steve Palmer opened it, I think, in '57, and ran it to '59. I had '59 to '61, Charlie Stout, '61 to '63, and I think Bob Shakleford came in '63-'64, something like that.

Q: Sometime around there it was shut down.

ANDREWS: In '61 there wasn't the question of shutting it down. It was perfectly true to say that it was not a consular post dealing with consular work as such. There was very little visa business, a couple of passports once in a while. There were some Americans of Montenegrin descent who had returned to Montenegro, and occasionally had to deal with their passports, or the children they begot as the result of second marriages. There was no property protection, there was no shipping and seamen, or anything of that kind. There were a couple of fleet visits which were very nice. I got to go down to Dubrovnik. Bosnia, of course, has no outlet, or at least has a sort of an outlet on the Adriatic, but it was constructed by Tito, and the communists. It didn't have a natural outlet historically in the Adriatic.

But I argued with O'Shaughnessy, and others apparently supported me, that if I was going to try and deal with the Republic of Montenegro, as well as Bosnia, and I was going to keep on going out of my district through Dubrovnik to get to Montenegro, shouldn't I at least have Dubrovnik in my bailiwick. Because the rules of the game were, when you left your consular district you had to notify somebody in the State Department, and of course, if I kept on going out via Dubrovnik into Montenegro, I had to keep notifying, and wasn't this silly. So O'Shaughnessy relented, and I did have the district of Dubrovnik in my consular district, which meant that when the fleet came to pay its visits I was able to go down there and get rowed to the boat, and get lunch, and participate in their activities. But it was a political post basically. It was meant as a window on that part of Yugoslavia which had suffered the most during the war, where you had this peculiar mix of Serbs, Croats, and Muslims, Eastern Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox, Catholics, who had fought with each other during the war; who continued to compete for power within the communist party in Bosnia-Herzegovina. And where some Yugoslavs had consciously placed some of their industry which was supposed to survive in case they were again run over from the north.

Q: It was very obvious that the Yugoslavs had put themselves into a posture where they could go back to the mountains if necessary.

ANDREWS: ...to defend their territory. Yes, I think so, and Montenegro is very much that kind of a place also. So my function as far as I could tell, was to stay in touch with important opinion leaders in the area, report what they said and thought, and what they did. There wasn't much persuasion that I had to do about anything. There were a lot of talks I had with them about Germany because they were still extraordinarily anti-German more than 15 years after the end of the war. And having served in Berlin I had a milder attitude toward Germany by then. And it didn't fit for them to be so anti-German, and at the same time say, "But we want tourism." Because Germans were the ones who were doing the touring in those days, and bringing in foreign currency into these areas. And I think it showed because the Germans sometimes met very sort of rude Yugoslavs somewhere along the way, who were more conscious of the communist party attitude toward Germany, rather than the need to make people welcome in order to attract foreign currency.

But the Sarajevo experience was unique.

Q: One last question about this. When you were there, who was calling the shots? I mean were things pretty well located in Belgrade as far as what was happening there, or because of the ethnic rivalries were the people in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the communist party leaders?

ANDREWS: I think the leadership of the Bosnia communist party had gained a great deal of respect from Tito, and he let them run things the way they wanted to. There may have been plenty of consultation and discussion back and forth, but I think in the last analysis Putsar could decide how to do things in his own bailiwick. The communist party, of course, had both Croatian and Muslim, and Serbs in the leadership, and they worked reasonably well together. And then in all the district levels you had the same kind of thing, where you didn't have just Serbs here, and just Muslims there. You had some kind of a mix. At the time the Muslims seemed to be least...they appeared on the surface less than others. They were much more reserved, much more under cover. If there were Muslims on the board of something, they seemed to be less evident and didn't meet the public very much. I think that changed over the last 30 years, but that's since my time. At the time I was dealing with them, there were a few Muslims in the party leadership, including the Prime Minister, who were outgoing, and were active. But they were, of course, not church-going. I mean they didn't go to the mosques. Like all the communists, they didn't belong to any church, and didn't go for that. But the Muslims as a whole were those looked down on, both by Croatians and Serbs.

Q: This, of course, we're in 1990 and we're in the middle of a tremendous crisis going on in the Kosovo area because of the Albanian problem.

ANDREWS: In Bosnia-Herzegovina probably the Croats felt that they didn't have as much representation as they thought they ought to. But they were keeping very low also. You just didn't hear expressions of Croatian nationalism in those days. The Muslims have since become quite important, not only in the politics of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but also in the economics of it, and two or three years ago this huge scandal about money, and corruption centered around a very prominent Muslim political family in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But at the time they were brought into the politics of the Republic, but they were not part of it. They were brought into it because the communists wanted their representation, and thought it was only fair that they should be represented. But they were not naturally leaders in that area.

In Montenegro, it was just Montenegrins. There was no role played by Albanians or anybody else in Montenegro society. What you had though, I think, in both republics, beginning at the time I was there, was a sort of conflict between the older generation and the younger ones. The older generation being those who'd been part of the communist movement before the war, who had no great education, had not acquired much of an education at any time, but were still in charge and didn't understand economic things, didn't understand a lot of other things. In Montenegro you had this clash coming, I think, a little earlier. And I thought when I was there that there were a couple of younger people in the Montenegrin communist leadership who were up and coming, in fact did up and come, and they became leaders in Montenegro and have since been dumped by the new resurgent generation of forty-year olds. But at the time that they were thirty or so in the '50s, they were beginning to come up in Montenegro, and they succeeded. In Bosnia that was a little slower, and you had this rather complicated business of allocating seats according to race and creed, and origin even though people didn't pay attention to creed anymore. Still you paid attention to the origins, social and the racial origins. So young people had a lot of difficulty in coming up in the party, and after all, you couldn't make a career unless you were a party member, and unless you made yourself attractive to people.

Q: You left Yugoslavia in 1961, and then you came back and I have you on the Bulgarian-Albanian desk from '62 to '63, and then you were on the Yugoslav desk, '63 to '65. What was our major interest first with Bulgaria and Albania? In Albania we didn't have anything going.

ANDREWS: No, we didn't have anything going, and about the only thing that we received was some mail from Albanian American organizations in the United States, and maybe a newspaper or so, which I couldn't read but I passed on, if they were not available to INR.

Q: Intelligence and Research.

ANDREWS: ...where Steve Peters, a long-time employee there, was of Albanian extraction and knew the Balkans extraordinarily well, and so he was a great source of information on Albania; what all these Albanian organizations in the United States were doing, and saying.

Q: Might I add parenthetically, on the radio as I came in this morning I heard that AT&T said they have now opened up so people from Albania, for the first time since ever, can call directly to the United States, and next month people from the United States will be able to direct dial to Albania. We have no relations with the country, but it just shows you that haven't changed much in this period. Was there much interest in Bulgaria?

ANDREWS: No. Bulgaria, unfortunately, plays a minimal role in U.S. thinking about European issues, or even about Eastern European issues. There was a little bit more interest then because, although there were no Soviet troops in Bulgaria, there was general assumption that there were a number of Soviet officers in the Ministry of Defense, and so forth. And that Bulgaria could in a very short period of time become a threat to Greece and Turkey if things got heated up. So there was that kind of an interest as far as Bulgaria was concerned. We generally, I think, took the Yugoslav side in Yugoslav-Bulgarian disputes concerning Macedonian minority, and things of this kind. We generally thought that the Yugoslavs made a better case.

I think during my time on the desk a new Ambassador went out, Eugenie Anderson, who was a political appointee from Minnesota. She had been Ambassador to Denmark earlier, I think. And she, I found, was a very pleasant person to deal with, quite competent in her own abilities.

Q: She was Ambassador in '49 to Denmark, and then actually was Minister to Bulgaria in 1962.

ANDREWS: So I went through the process of briefing her, and making the appointments necessary for her to get her squared away, and I thought that she did very well. I think her experience in Denmark must have helped, even though she obviously was going into a different kind of situation. One of the strange things is that when she got there she found USIA officer __ Bloomfield, who was one of the guys dealing with the Russian translation and interpretation in Bucharest in 1944 to '46. So there he was with his, of course, fluent Polish, fluent Russian, pretty fluent German, pretty fluent French, and rather shaky American, interpreting for her when she dealt with Bulgarians, and Russians, and so forth in Bulgaria. I think that caused some trouble with the Political Section which thought he was too close to her, and they were too far from her. But she was very active in that way, and saw a lot of people, talked to a lot of people, et cetera.

One of the things I raised with her was whether it was possible to get the Bulgarians to stop harping on the threat from Greece and Turkey to Bulgaria, because I thought there it was just not necessary for them to be quite so violent on the topic. And they were, in their words, they were violent on the issue. I told her I thought that there was no reason why Bulgaria, and Greece, and Turkey, couldn't get along better. I didn't know if there was any opportunity for her in a private conversation with the Foreign Minister, or somebody like that, to try to get across the fact that we would welcome some slowing down of this verbal war, which didn't seem to do anybody any good. She thought that was rather unlikely, but she would keep it in mind. And I gather that she was able once to have such a quiet meeting with the Foreign Minister who made the usual excuses as to why the Bulgarians were fearful. But within a relatively short time the situation in Greece changed. There was a change of government, and the Bulgarians, I think, were clever enough to see that the situation had changed, and they could change their tone, and something might come of that. And, in fact, it did. During the "60s Bulgarian relations with Greece improved a great deal, and it's very difficult to think in terms of a threat from either side since about the late "60s. I don't know to what extent my idea had anything to do with it, but it seemed that this was a non-productive kind of war. There were all kinds of problems between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, but I didn't quite see why Bulgarians and Turks had to be at each other as if they were...

Q: I just wondered, you emphasize this. If these things get heated up, all of a sudden something can happen where we're all concerned, both in the Soviet Union and in the United States over something that maybe can be cooled by throwing...not our weight, but showing our interest and saying, "Let's not make these things into big issues," which may cut out what could be a major problem another time. Because any conflict between any of those countries would immediately involve us.

ANDREWS: Yes, it's important to distinguish between the small countries' support of big allies interests vis-a-vis the major opponent, and what is just the local concern in the issue. In other words, if the Bulgarians have a particular problem with the Greeks, that's one thing. But if they're merely defending Soviet interests vis-a-vis Greeks and Turks, and NATO, they shouldn't let their particular problems suddenly become the be all, and end-all of their policy. They should realize that if the Soviet's policy changes then they have no quarrel with Greece otherwise. And I thought that was the point that was worth looking into. Of course, the Bulgarians and the Turks is a different matter as we've seen more recently. But even then there was a chance, in fact I think relations did improve for a while before Gifcoff(?) got onto this project to assimilate the Bulgarian ethnic Turks by saying they weren't Turks at all. But that was '84, and for some period before then relations with Turkey had improved also.

So there is always the question of trying to find out when you're dealing with a small country, what its feelings are vis-a-vis as compared to what its obligations are to its ally.

Q: When you moved to the Yugoslav desk, what were your major concerns?

ANDREWS: '63 to '65. One of the problems at the time was Tito's visit to the United States. There had been an aborted visit during the Eisenhower years, and Kennedy wanted to have Tito come. And in fact, this happened in '63 before Kennedy was assassinated. The visit was prepared, I mean we went through all the rigmarole of worrying about security, and program, and so forth. Originally Tito was supposed to come to Washington for a couple of days, then go elsewhere in the United States. Then, as is usual in these cases, there was some heating up of the condemnation of communist leaders in the United States from various areas, Serbs against Tito...

Q: The ethnic groups within the United States...

ANDREWS: Ethnics and others. So finally Tito decided not to go to the West Coast, or to the mid-West. He arrived in Williamsburg, and we had him stay there overnight and then come to Washington the next day and be received, and talk to Kennedy, and then stay overnight at Blair House, and have some other meetings. Then he went up to New York. I didn't go up to New York. In New York he was at the Waldorf, I think, and there were a lot of people as part of his entourage, including people from the Ministry, journalists, and others. And basically all four exits to the Waldorf Astoria were covered by ethnics and others who were trying to disrupt the meeting, and screaming condemnations of Tito, or any Yugoslav who came out of the Waldorf. A few people were roughed up. The police were there, but the police couldn't tell which were Yugoslavs and which weren't, so it was rather difficult to organize the security. But it was rather difficult, and the Yugoslav press gave us a bad time. The New York police didn't enjoy it either. There was a terrible racket in the area when Tito came or left, and it was therefore really not such a great visit.

On the other hand, the talks with Kennedy went very well, and that was the most important thing for Tito. And secondly, after all this noise and hullabaloo in New York with various Yugoslav members of his group being pushed around by police, or by ethnics, or whatnot...I'm not sure at whose initiative, Kennedy called Tito at the Waldorf on the phone, and had a chat with him explaining. He apologized, he hoped that all this noise, and so forth, hadn't disrupted his visit. He said this was in the nature of the American system where people were able to state whatever they wanted to state. He apologized if the control of the crowd had not been effective enough, but that he would never forget his talk with Tito, and how much he'd enjoyed the personal contact, and so forth. So whatever it was, it was something that Tito remembered afterwards as not only a gesture, but also a kind of emphasis of the value of top level talks.

You always wonder in those things whether you could have done anything to prevent it. The problem is that the State Department doesn't really have any handle on how to deal with the police forces outside of Washington, DC, and even within Washington, DC They don't have control over them. They can just ask for cooperation and usually they get it. But in New York, or for that matter in any other state, there isn't any system whereby the police forces of the area where a foreign guest is going to visit, are alerted and prepared for that specific visit. They can deal with normal visits, but when there is a particularly sensitive visit, or one which may provoke violence, they're always taken by surprise. They're never able to handle it. It isn't that one doesn't sort of tell them, it's just that they somehow don't have the system for reacting. They don't have that sensitivity to how foreign relations impact on domestic affairs.

So it should have gone better. I don't know what we could have done to make it better, but I think Kennedy saved the visit by calling Tito on the phone, and reassuring him. Because otherwise the tendency was to think everything went well in Washington, but the real America is out in New York. And we in Washington won't bother, won't do a thing to prevent those people in New York from degrading the Yugoslav flag. So these visits are a real pain, and that didn't make me very happy, but you survive them. You can't do anything about it.

Q: One other thing in our relations I can think of that got George Kennan very upset was the threat to cancel most favored nations.

ANDREWS: That came out of the Non-Aligned Meeting, wasn't it, in Belgrade at which Tito announced...Tito took the position-which was an anti-American position...

Q: Probably colonialism, or something...

ANDREWS: ...something like that. Some issue that really turned us against him. We came to the conclusion that he was not non-aligned, if he aligned himself with Nyerere, and Nasser, and other, on this issue. It may have been colonialism...no, was it the ban on nuclear weapons or something?

Q: It could have been the ban on nuclear weapons. There were several of these issues. I'm just not sure.

ANDREWS: The meeting was in Belgrade. Tito was host, and here he was taking a leading role...

Q: This was in the early "60s?

ANDREWS: This was early in the "60s, and Kennan hadn't been there that long...it was probably '64 because in '63 he came to the United States. No, that could have been earlier, it could have been '62.

Q: It was something like that, before I got there, and I got there in '62. I was thinking it had something to do with the Kennedy round of negotiations, or something, and for some reason Yugoslavia was not going to get Most Favored Nation...it had something to do with Frank Lausche of Ohio, and some others, who were trying to give some difficulty to Yugoslavia for their ethnic constituents. It didn't go anywhere, but it caused a lot of hard feeling.

ANDREWS: It may have been '61 or '62. It seems to me it was mid- summer meeting in Belgrade, maybe August. And Tito made the speech, took the position of the non-aligned bloc which was pro-USSR, anti-U.S.

Q: I think it was condemning American atomic testing, and saying that the Soviet testing was all right. That was basically...

ANDREWS: Okay, something of that kind. And the reaction in the United States was, "He's not non-aligned." Frank Lausche, I guess, wasn't he himself of Slovene extraction? And others took the position that we should deny Most Favored Nation tariff treatment to Yugoslavia, and we saved it. I mean the State Department, and the Administration, managed to hold on to MFN for Yugoslavia, but it was a relatively close call.

Q: How did you save it. I mean how can one save something like that?

ANDREWS: In those days there were some powerful committee chairmen who were often willing to go along with the Administration, and who could round up votes for the Administration. Nowadays each Congressman is a lot more independent, and it's much more difficult to round up votes, and they don't listen to their committee chairman as much. Then you used the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, and the Secretary and Deputy Secretary made their own phone calls, and talked to people. And slowly you sort of rounded up the necessary votes, but it was more difficult, I think, than we had thought. And we were also uncomfortable because we didn't like Tito's action either, and Kennan himself was very much angered by it, and wrote a couple of fairly critical messages, as well as speaking critically to the Yugoslavs with the result that they started worrying about whether Kennan was on their side and understood them or not.

I think Kennan's view finally was that he had made his point, and after all, non-alignment didn't mean that they had to be on our side every time, otherwise you could hardly call them non-aligned. But that we had to do a better job in explaining to them what our position was so that they wouldn't take these positions. I'm not sure that we ever quite succeeded, but, I think, tried harder after that, because we somehow took things for granted sometimes.

Yes, that was a very bad point. I think that was before I got on the desk. The rest of the time on the desk was on the one hand, dealing with the Yugoslavs and that wasn't so difficult. On the other hand was trying to get some sort of control over what it was that the ethnic communities in the United States were trying to do to disrupt our relations with Yugoslavia. Their view basically was to destroy Yugoslavia, or to destroy Titoism. It wasn't clear what they were going to put in its place. I think the Croatians wanted to go back to an independent state, and the Serbs wanted to go back to a greater Serbia, but there was no sense of a democratic multinational Yugoslavia coming out of it. So that the State Department's view was not very sympathetic to the ethnic groups as such. Besides which they weren't above using violence to make a point. And the violence included, not just demonstrations outside the Yugoslav Consulate General in Chicago. I think they had a Consulate in Pittsburgh, and a couple of other places, but they'd waylay some Yugoslav coming out of the Consulate, or waylay him a couple of streets away. And then the police would get involved, and the police wouldn't know who it was. And I know dealing with the FBI during that period, that they were of two minds. On the one hand, they regarded Yugoslavia as a communist country, and all communists were therefore by definition threats to the United States. On the other hand there was an obligation to protect the Embassies, the Ambassador, and personnel, from violence by American citizens, and they took the point, but didn't want to do very much with it.

Q: Could you explain what you were doing in Ankara in 1965-1968?

ANDREWS: Yes. I was the second man in the Political Section dealing with Turkey's foreign relations, because I was not a Turkish language expert. And as such I found that Turkish foreign relations I was particularly concerned about were Turkey's relations with Greece, and with Cyprus, because there was not that much going on between Turkey and the Soviet Union, although much concern was expressed, there was not much in reality going on. Turkish relations with the Balkans were rather slim. Turkish relations with the Arab world were similarly rather slim, nothing of great interest. So Greece and Cyprus dominated the topic. And in 1967 there was a threat of Turkish military intervention on Cyprus. Turk Cypriots on Cyprus were being molested and their rights were being trampled on, allegedly by the Greek Cypriots, and at some point the Turkish government had had enough, and we were within a few hours of military intervention when President Johnson sent Cyrus Vance as his emissary to try to resolve the issue.

That was in itself an interesting period when Vance tried to deal with the Turks, and varied proposals and counter-proposals between Athens and Turks, and sent flash messages back and forth. And everybody stayed up, and didn't sleep during about a two to three day period. So the threat of military intervention was set aside, but Turkish feelings toward the United States were not improved thereby. The Turks feeling that we had interfered when they had a perfect right to help their Turkish Cypriot comrades on the island, and President Johnson had been very harsh in his threat to suspend assistance to Turkey if it took action in Cyprus. Turkey feeling that the threat from Russia was one thing, the problem of Cyprus was another, and we were linking the two and saying, "If you do this and such on behalf of your Turkey Cypriot friends then you're on your own vis-a-vis the Soviet Union." So that was, I suppose, a kind of a high point, although it was so quick it didn't last long.

I got more interested in the Turkish domestic scene just because there was not that much to do on the foreign scene. But it was a quiet period without the threat of Turkish military doing anything within Turkey. It was a period of civilian government.

Q: I'd like to go back to the Cyprus thing. What was your impression of what we were reporting from Ankara, what was being reported from Athens, and what was being reported from Nicosia? I'm thinking about our own. Were there bad cases of looking back on it, or at the time of what you would call localitis, everybody seeing the issue in terms of their post rather than U.S. interests?

ANDREWS: I think there's no doubt that there was localitis. I guess my feeling was also a form of localitis. My feeling, I think, has always been, Turkey is a much larger state than Greece, has a much larger military force than Greece. Therefore, if it comes to war, the Greeks will never win. Therefore, the Greeks should not posture as if they're going to use military force, and as if they could beat the Turks, because that just doesn't fit with common sense.

On the other hand apparently during some of this period, at least the early part, the Greeks did seem to think that they could match the Turks in a war. How exactly they were going to do this, I don't really know. But I think it is that feeling of not being inferior, in the military sense, which tended to fuel the Greek politician's views that that they would defend the Greek Cypriots to the end, and that they would win out eventually. Maybe it was really the feeling that, if push came to shove, we, or others, would help the Greeks and prevent them from being decimated by the Turks, and eventually, because we were on their side, they would win. But my view was that, if we said "a plague on both your houses," we're not going to help either one of you. We don't want to have anything to do with either one of you; maybe that would bring some sense into the views of both sides. Maybe it wouldn't. Maybe the Turks would take advantage of their superiority.

Q: Did you notice a cooling off of relations with the Turks? I mean as far as were sort of entrees being shut down?

ANDREWS: Not quite, but I think there were some hard feelings. I think there were one or two appointments that I couldn't get afterwards because they didn't want to bother to talk to me. I think there were some hard feelings on the military side of the equation where there was some reconsideration as to how soon they should get certain military equipment, and that made things worse. But the point is that over the long stretch of time with some Greek Ambassadors in Ankara who were very friendly to the Turks, who were very genuinely respectful of the Turks, and some good Turkish Ambassadors in Greece, it still hasn't worked out. In other words, relations have improved up to a certain point, and not beyond it. And then, as soon as something came up, the entire package of cards, building a somewhat better relationship, just collapsed again. Whether it had to do with the territorial sea boundaries, or whether it had to do with other things in the Aegean, or whether it dealt with Cyprus.

Q: I served four years in Greece, from 1970 to '74, during the time of the colonels and generals, so I was not that simpatico with the regime then. But we're talking about things that started with mother's milk as far as Greece is concerned, that these are animosities that are so deep that anything can spark them. And there's a certain point in common sense, and rationale, that diplomacy no longer has anything to do with it, which I'm afraid is true of much of the Eastern European area, and particularly the Balkan area. I mean there are these things that have been built in for so long.

ANDREWS: But realism does require, it seems, some kind of common sense in your foreign policy, and I don't see the common sense in Greece, given its size and population and military standing, being able to take on the Turks on the question of Cyprus or anything else. Just as I don't see the Hungarians being able to take on the Romanians. They may have everything on their side. They've got to achieve their objectives by diplomatic and political means, but not by military means. So waving that sort of threat, or having generals speak out on your foreign policy, is a mistake. Keep it political, keep it internationalized by all means, but don't get into the military end of things.

Q: I couldn't agree more.

ANDREWS: And the net result is, in fact, that the Turks are now on Cyprus, at least the northern part of it. And I don't know how we're ever going to get them out. In fact, I don't think its feasible really.

Q: No. I think probably it's a better solution than before in a way. I'd like to go from '68 to '71. You were the Political Counselor in Warsaw, with Ambassador Walter Stoessel. This must have been a fascinating period.

ANDREWS: Yes, it was very interesting. First of all, I didn't speak Polish. Secondly, the assumption was made that because they'd taught me Serbo-Croatian, I would now be able to speak virtually any Slavic language. Thirdly, I wanted to go to Prague instead of Warsaw, but Prague was not available. And perhaps it's just as well because if I'd arrived in Prague in July, I would have been just in time for the Soviet invasion, after which everything would have sunk into a rather depressive state. Whereas in Poland I came in after the March '68-well, you can't call it a crisis-the events which led to the first opposition in Poland among students, and writers, and intellectuals against the regime. It derived from the six-day war, and the feeling among a number of Polish Jews that the Israelis had triumphed at the expense of the Polish-backed, and Soviet- backed Arabs. And it led to anti-Semitic feelings, and actions, on the part of the regime. And that carried through into '68, protests against censorship. They had closed down a patriotic play in Poland written by a kind of Byronesque figure of Polish literature. And students, and intellectuals, had protested against the closing down of the play, and then the police got in there and started wielding their truncheons to break up the demonstrations on the streets, and a lot of people, including some who are now in the high and mighty in the Polish government, were arrested for the first time, and put in jail for their role in stimulating disorder.

I was still there at the end of that period when Polish Jews were making their decisions, whether to remain in Poland, or whether to take advantage of the escape hatch which Gomulka, the Polish communist leader, had given them by saying, "A Pole cannot be loyal to two countries," thinking of Israel and Poland. And a number of Polish Jews felt they had to leave because they were going to be treated as second class citizens. A number felt they were doing quite well, but their children would perhaps suffer as a result of this endemic anti-Semitic approach, deep in even the Polish communists feelings. And so there was a small exodus. I remember one of the first dinners I went to at the Charge's, Walter Jenkins, there were three other couples, and in two months time two of the three had already left for Washington. And then later on there was another dinner, and another couple of people at the dinner, had also left to New York University, to Israel, to other places.

At that time Edia Kosmenska left. She headed the Jewish theater in Warsaw, and came to New York and worked in New York with the Jewish theater. And the foreign editor for Trybuna Luda, and a law professor left. In other words, people of a certain standing in the party, and in culture, and a certain amount of courage on the part of those who stayed and who found that some of their Polish supervisors were willing to go to bat for them, and let them stay, argue in defense of them. So that was the first period.

And a couple of important events, I guess, from that tour would be the Polish-West German treaty on the Oder Neisse border in late 1970. Willy Brandt came to Warsaw to sign the treaty. He laid a wreath at the memorial to the ghetto in Warsaw, had a joint press conference with the Polish Prime Minister. It was a very moving moment. I think the Poles were to some extent surprised that there were some good Germans out there who were willing to go so far as Willy Brandt did. He did it very nicely, did it with great feeling, and emotion. And that was a triumph. It seemed at the time to be Polish foreign policy. But Gomulka didn't benefit very much by it because about a week later they suddenly printed in the Sunday paper a list of prices going up, and a list of prices going down. The list of prices going up was much longer, and dealt with much more important daily needs, than the prices going down. And on Monday we heard that the shipyards at Gdansk stopped working, and there were demonstrations. So there was a week of crisis until Gomulka was overthrown by his colleagues, and by the rest of the Politburo, and Gierek was put in charge.

Eventually, Gierek during his first two or three months, had to deal with the question of price rises, and eventually he had to back down. But there was a great deal of hope in his coming because he was regarded as a technocrat. His Silesian base was an efficient industrial base, which provided the wherewithal for Polish industrialization, Polish exports, and so forth. And he seemed to have around him a bunch of capable engineers, and technocratic-minded people who wanted to make things work-pragmatists more than ideologists. His first steps toward conciliation and interest in western contacts, western assistance, trade with the west, credits from the west, all these western connections, sounded pretty good. It made sense to the U.S. Embassy. Walt Stoessel knew perfectly well his own mind, but he had this habit of occasionally throwing out a question to see what other people thought. I remember in the spring, he said, "Well, Nick, what do you think about Gierek? Do you think we're going to be able to get along with him?" And my feeling was pretty instantaneous that, considering the way we had not been able to get along with Gomulka, there was really no reasonable reply except to say, "Yes, of course." And that, "He would be good for us in terms of a communist leader in Poland, Gierek would be a leader that we could deal with. We could get some things done. We could improve our relations quite a considerable amount." Then he said, "I agree with you." But I know that he'd made up his mind before hand.

Apparently I had a reputation, although I'm not particularly aware of it, as being rather unruffled. I doubt if that's true, but people perhaps haven't seen me in the right times. But the actual news of Gomulka being voted out, and Gierek voted in, came, I think, on a Sunday evening, Sunday after the newspapers had printed the price rises. And I saw it on television. We had bought a Polish television, a black and white set. I said, "Gee whiz, I wonder if anybody else in this Embassy is listening to television tonight?" We had, part of the back of our house, had a brick wall, on the other side of which was the Ambassador's residence. So I got out of the house, and ran around the block, and went to ring the bell at the residence, and Mrs. Stoessel came and opened the door, rather surprised...Sunday evening the help was out, and I said, "I've got some news for you. Gomulka is out." I've just seen it on television." And she went and told Walt, who came and I told him what was going on, and then we went to the Embassy and sent off a message. And Mary Ann Stoessel thereafter had occasion several times to say, "That's the first time I've ever seen Nick excited. Oh, how excited he was." And I thought I'd kept reasonably cool, but at least I reached the Ambassador before the PAO, who had seen it on television, and it's always nice when the political gets something up on the PAO. It was Jock a very capable person.

Q: Did things change as far as things opening up for you, and all that, with Gierek in?

ANDREWS: The atmosphere was much better, and there were a lot of signs...I don't know that I could pinpoint any specific issues right now, but you had a feeling that it wasn't just Gomulka who was leaving, but a whole gang of his that had supported him closely for 15 years, and who had had their stay. Had done their best, but it was time for a change. There were some changes. I think there were some changes relating to the ability of the Ambassador to travel throughout the country without restriction, or the Embassy to travel around the country without restriction. Because until then there were closed areas of Poland, just as there were closed areas in the United States affecting Polish and other communist diplomats. There were silly things like, we could go to Czestochowa. We couldn't go to Lublin without permission. We couldn't go to some other places without permission. We were constantly writing notes to the Foreign Ministry to get permission to do these things. And sometimes they'd turn us down because we, in Washington, had turned a Polish second secretary down when he wanted to visit some place in California. So little things like this were eased fairly quickly, and gave us a signal that things would get better. And then the public statements made by Gierek were more favorable to the U.S. than previous statements had been. You look at that point, and the exact language being used when there's a review of relationships, for example in a speech to the Central Committee dealing with both domestic and foreign affairs. You look at what they say in foreign affairs about the United States. Sometimes its higher up on the list of foreign countries, after the Soviet Union and the brotherly Warsaw Pact states, you have maybe France, and then U.S. Or maybe it's France, Britain, Germany and the U.S., depending on where you rank, and what the language is, shows there's a desire to be a little bit more, or less, warm and friendly. So those were indications. You have a change of administration, it's fairly easy...

Q: Did that hold on for the time you were there?

ANDREWS: Yes, and it held on for certainly the first half of the "70s.

Q: I'd like to keep moving on. You went to the White House, or the Office of Science and Technology.

ANDREWS: In '71 I came back and did the year at the Senior Seminar on foreign policy. And then in '72 there was no particular job around. They had me in mind for something in Arms Control, but as is often the case with Personnel, they have one person in mind, and they send him for the interview, but the guy who does the interview says, "Is this the only person available?" Personnel say, "Yes." And then the guy goes and finds somebody else who's available. So I didn't get that job. Roger Kirk did, and I was left hanging and I took this other job which was a sort of...I don't know if it was a real job or not. But they needed help on the U.S.-USSR Commission, or Secretariat, dealing with science and technology exchanges. My colleague there, Norm Neureiter, had been Science Attachï¿½ in Warsaw, and said he desperately needed help. So I said, "If I don't have anything by such and such a time, I'll come and join you." We worked for a while in the New Executive office building, and set up meetings on various topics relating to the S&T agreement-chemical something or other, and biological something or other. There was also some other stuff. And then we were also preparing for new agreements because Nixon was going, and Kissinger very much felt that a web of agreements linking Soviet Union and the U.S. would eventually lead to a kind of commitment to these joint endeavors, and make it more difficult for us to break them all for the sake of some political or military conflict, some kind of point of issue.

So we were then negotiating with the Soviet Embassy, or whoever came over from Moscow, on how to deal with agriculture, and how to deal with oceanography, and transportation, and I think there was another. I spent time there, and in SCI, or what was SCI then-OES now-working on these things. At the end in mid-'73 we signed a bunch of additional agreements.

Some of the negotiating was interesting because you dealt with Soviets who were rigorous about language, and who would agree this afternoon, but tomorrow morning they'd change their minds and back off from what they'd agreed to, and you had to renegotiate the whole damned thing over again. That was sort of tedious, but at the time it was better than nothing. I'm not sure if I remember it with great affection.

Also, it was interesting how the scientific community in the United States was sort of different from the political, or the State Department community. A few of them at the National Academy of Science were very much aware of the Soviet Union as a potentially hostile entity. But a lot of them looked on chemistry, or energy of some aspect, as a matter that we should be together on. That we should work together on, and politics shouldn't divide scientists from dealing with subjects which could be of benefit to all of all mankind, etc. So they were a little bit not as politically motivated certainly, and sometimes very idea. So that was interesting too, but not reassuring.

Q: And then you went to the Bureau of European Affairs from 1973 to '78.

ANDREWS: Yes. One year as Deputy Director in the Office of Northern European Affairs, which meant at that time Nordic countries, and Great Britain, Ireland, and Malta. It has changed now, its added Benelux, I think. There, apart from worrying about Norway, and Spitsbergen, and places like that, we didn't do much about the Irish in those days. We knew it was there, but we didn't really get involved much. But what I got involved in was trying to renew the base rights to Keflavik Air Base on Iceland. There was a rather difficult Icelandic political situation where no one of the coalition partners was very strong, and so the Foreign Minister's role-his name was Asgeirsson(?)-was not to shake things too much. Not to allow political change which would make things difficult for the coalition. On the other hand, the coalition had taken the position that they wanted to change the terms of the base agreement for Keflavik. We didn't want to change the base agreement because it was very favorable to us. So the problem was how to accommodate the Foreign Minister without changing the base agreement. And that was rather difficult to do. I got a trip to Iceland out of it, and therefore able to bathe in the thermal baths, and do other odd things like that.

And then we had another set of meetings in Washington, and it sort of settled the situation for an indefinite period of time. The settlement was really nothing. It was mostly cosmetic, but it did provide for some assistance to the Icelandic authorities to improve the airfield for commercial flights. That's the same airfield that is used for military flights. But they just wanted to use some of our equipment which was better on the military side, not the commercial side. This was an ongoing kind of thing, therefore there was no particular deadlines. And the other thing was that Asgeirsson wanted very much to meet with Secretary Kissinger, and this was extraordinarily difficult to arrange. So my role was to set up the negotiating session so that nothing unusual would occur, and so we would get our end result, and they would be happy with it. And secondly, to get this meeting with Kissinger.

McCloskey was sort of empowered to negotiate, and there were other people present. What happened was that we kept talking to the Icelanders until we knew what they were going to say, and then we told them what we were going to say. And then they said what they were going to say, and we said what we were going to say. And finally we worked out the script so carefully that it worked. I mean, it literally worked. They expressed their views. We expressed our views, and they expressed their views. Nobody had a surprise. In an hour the whole meeting was over, and Asgeirsson pronounced himself satisfied. We pronounced ourselves satisfied. Courtesy of McCloskey we got Asgeirsson in to see the Secretary, who read his briefing paper-Kissinger didn't always read his briefing papers, but he was aware of the two or three things that the Icelanders were concerned about. So he had Asgeirsson sit him down, was extremely warm and Central European to him, "Great to see, wonderful to see you, dear friend Iceland...We are so concerned about this matter..." Asgeirsson, "I was just going to raise that." Kissinger sort of preempted him throughout, had a lovely chat, and then asked Asgeirsson, "What can we do for you." And Asgeirsson, "But you have already dealt with all the issues that I was going to raise. You have a wonderful understanding of our problems. I so much appreciate the opportunity of having talked to you. I have nothing to raise. I hope that everything goes smoothly in the future." And fifteen minutes the whole thing was over, and Asgeirsson went back extremely happy. It was a funny sort of a way of dealing with the thing, but it worked.

Q: I'm sure it was the careful preparation.

ANDREWS: The point is, the Icelanders wanted it. If everybody wants to know, wants to avoid surprises, partly because of the coalition problems, and press, it can sometimes work. And McCloskey was pleased too because a lot of people suddenly stuck in the situation, wondered, "What have I got myself into?" So that was Iceland, and that was Northern Europe. I would have liked to have stayed in Iceland but I think Walt Stoessel was then Assistant Secretary in EUR, and for one reason or another, I moved to EE-Eastern Europe in '74, and stayed there four years.

Q: What were your main problems that you had to deal with at that time?

ANDREWS: I'm not sure that "problems" is the way of putting it. The things we were trying to do was to move the relations between the United States, and the Eastern European countries, to a better level throughout in the economic area, and in all the other areas. And each of them was a somewhat different level. Kissinger, while he was at the White House with Sonnenfeldt's support I guess, had established a kind of rank order of which countries were worth dealing with most, and then least, and what we wanted to do in general terms with each of them. And therefore we had to follow this kind of rank order, and pursue our policy within these terms. And we were constantly trying to broaden the terms, or push the speed.

Q: ...in Eastern Europe, what was the rank order that you recall?

ANDREWS: Well, Poland was at the top. Then came Romania, then Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria. Yugoslavia was a special case, Albania didn't really count, and we did also have...

Q: East Germany?

ANDREWS: No, East Germany was part of Central Europe. But we also had responsibility for dealing with the problems of the Baltic representatives in the United States, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia. Since we had never agreed to their incorporation in the Soviet Union, the remnants of their Embassies, or Legations, existed in the United States and we saw them from time to time, and had to deal with their budgetary and financial problems because the money they used to maintain their operations came from blocked funds, blocked when Russia occupied the Baltics in 1941, I guess. So we had to get the blocked funds released. We had those kinds of functions with the Baltic states as well.

But that rank order continued. Czechoslovakia was more or less in the doghouse because of the '68 invasion. Bulgaria was down about that level because things were not very busy, but there was some activity while Raymond Garthoff was Ambassador. We did a number of signing of various agreements with Bulgarians. But mostly Poland where relations with Gierek were continuing quite extensively in the economic field especially. They had MFN, there was a lot of cultural exchange, education exchange. With Romania and Hungary during that period we worked toward MFN also, in fact, both of them got MFN while I was still there in the office.

Q: MFN means Most Favored Nation.

ANDREWS: Most Favored Nation tariff treatment, yes. It did help both, but it helped Romanians more in the early period because we reached a billion dollars worth of trade in one year, and MFN certainly helped.

Q: What was your impression-I mean you were born in Romania, and carrying on a watching brief all along I assume on this. Had Ceausescu turned really as bad as it came out a decade later before he was shot...

ANDREWS: No. I think one has to recognize that Ceausescu went through phases. I think we were slow in recognizing changes in phases. For example, his liberal phase was, I think, from '65 when he took over as Secretary General of the Communist Party, until about '71. There was a small kind of cultural renaissance at the time. There was a little bit more freedom of the press. There was more travel abroad on the part of the intellectuals, scientists, and so forth. Things were a little easier, there was more optimism. And there was a feeling that since Ceausescu represented a new generation as he participated. He'd been in jail, he participated in the setting up of the Communist Party after the war, but he was a very young member. It was sort of hoped that this liberal trend would continue. And it didn't. It sort of slowed down in '72-'73, and it really stopped, but we didn't really see the stopping of it. I think things just didn't continue in the same way. In the "70s he was still very friendly to the United States. Kissinger and company saw in him a very useful instrument for dealing with the Soviets, showing our support for Romania when they differed from the Soviets, using Romania's ties to Arafat, as well as his official relations with Israel to our benefit, his refusal to join in the invasion of Czechoslovakia. So these things lasted for some time, and left a good feeling in the foreign affairs line. We were quite aware that in the domestic side things were not going so well. And there were problems at various times with individuals who were arrested and put in jail. There were religious figures, or there were Mormons who weren't allowed to have their own church yet. Or there were Hungarians who were a part of the ethnic minority. But there was no great program against all of them. It was always individual cases here and there.

At the same time Ceausescu was very interested in MFN. We told him what the deal was after the passage of the trade act, that they had to promise free, or freer, immigration, and he was willing to sign on. So we made the deal, and the Romanians were very pleased. I think the problem of Ceausescu's behavior toward his own people comes really in the early "80s, and that has to do with the fact that in '81, when the Poles found they couldn't maintain their payments on their external debt, suddenly the western commercial banks decided that if the Soviets were not going to be the guarantor of Polish debts, they wouldn't be the guarantor of Romanian or Hungarian debts either. And when the Romanians came in for some slight help in '81, they found the doors shut. Hungarians did too.

Commercial banks had suddenly decided that Eastern Europe was in danger, and they couldn't lend any more money. They just sort of closed the window. And Ceausescu at that point felt that the west had a hold on him that he didn't like. It limited his independence, his ability to feel master in his own house. So he basically changed policy entirely, and said, "Look, we are going to pay off these debts so that the west does not have a hold on us." So the economy was adjusted to provide for maximum exports, limiting imports, reducing domestic consumption, and just forced draft economy to pay off the foreign debts, which he did. By last year he had in fact paid off the foreign debt, which, I think, in '81 was about ten billion dollars, and last spring he announced that they'd paid off the debt. There is some question as to whether he paid it off entirely, or at least the debt that was due to come to him from the Third World was equivalent to the debt that he owed.

Ceausescu was still a reasonable person to deal with. I remember, though, there was one very disappointing visit of Kissinger's to Romania where Ceausescu invited him to go up to Sinaia or somewhere on a train, and he agreed. But he didn't take anybody with him. In other words...I think Sonnenfeldt was on that visit, and probably somebody from EUR, I was not there. But the point is Kissinger went off with Ceausescu and his interpreter on this train trip up to Sinaia, and they had lunch, and came back, something like this. Nobody else went along-let's modify that, maybe other people went along, but basically Ceausescu and Kissinger were a twosome by themselves with the interpreter, and the other people never participated. And as far as I could tell from the list of things that we wanted Kissinger to take up with Ceausescu, he didn't take any of them up. So from my point of view, the issues that would have been worth while taking up on behalf of United States, were just never addressed. And as far as I know nothing of that conversation between Kissinger and Ceausescu...which was probably very much big picture stuff, ever came down to our level. We don't know what went on.

Q: This has been a frequent complaint, and these things are important.

ANDREWS: It may have been big picture stuff, and I don't mind if it was not taken up. But if we had little picture stuff, the question of a Baptist church for which we thought that the Romanians ought to give us permission because they'd been holding us up for a long time; or a Mormon groups which had been treated badly by the local police; or some other issue which was at the working level. I still wish that he'd found time to read our material, and take these matters up, even if he thought that this was obviously not something that Ceausescu should be concerned with. We know that marriages between American citizens and Romanian citizens required Ceausescu's personal approval before the Romanian citizen could get an exit permit to leave the country. So it isn't as if these little things were not the kinds of things that Ceausescu dealt with. They were particularly the kinds of things that Ceausescu dealt with, because he dealt with everything, including the little nitty-gritty things, which would obviously get even to an Assistant Secretary level in our kind of system. He didn't take them up, so on that working level things remained difficult.

Also there were times during the "70s when the Romanians were closing down the window of opportunity for intellectuals to go abroad. I negotiated an extension of the educational and cultural exchanges agreement, went to Bucharest, sat down for three days in a dark room with an electric light, and all the windows covered by huge red velvet curtains. Yes, they were making promises, but they were not delivering. They were agreeing, "Yes, we will send you ten graduate students, and fourteen professors..." Even though the previous year they hadn't met requirements of a smaller figure. So there were problems there, and you could feel that things were not moving right, but you didn't know how to deal with it. On the top level, Kissinger to Ceausescu, things seemed fine.

And Ceausescu came to the United States in '78, his last visit. That was rather sad because...I'm not sure who made the decision, I don't think I initiated any action to that effect. But on Ceausescu's staff were people like [Ion Mihai] Pacepa, the one who wrote the book Red Horizons, the head of his foreign intelligence organization, who was here recruiting awards and presents for Ceausescu. There was a question of a visit to Texas Instruments. Texas Instruments was requested to please make a lovely, expensive gift to the Ceausescus. Texas Instruments said they didn't want to. So whoever was on the Romania side said, "Ceausescu isn't going to want to visit Texas Instruments unless you make him a present." I mean, this kind of thing, and this comes back to you. And you then start wondering who you're dealing with.

There was also some negotiation to get an award for Elena Ceausescu from the New York State Academy of Sciences. I'm not sure quite what the New York State Academy of Sciences amounts to, but it's another kind of a little thing for Ceausescu...

Q: To put on her wall in her palace.

ANDREWS: Whatever, but it grates on you to think that people are that low. Not only the Ceausescus. If you want you can say that these people are catering to them, and trying to make them feel happy. But they shouldn't be doing it either, and that makes you grit your teeth and say, "What the heck, why do they have to go through this kind of business."

But during that four year period, Gierek came to the United States. That was a successful visit, as these visits go. I think the most pleasure came from returning the Crown of St. Steven to Hungary. I like to think may have been my initiative, partly because I thought it was right that the Crown should be in Hungary; and partly because I didn't quite see how it would advantage us in any way to keep it forever in the United States.

Q: ...after the end of the war...

ANDREWS: Yes. The Crown of St. Steven, and various other parts of that ceremonial regalia was taken by some Hungarian guards to Austria, and there they were found, or intercepted, by some Americans who eventually brought it to the United States, and it was sitting in Fort Knox. That was a deep dark secret for a long time, also. The question of returning the Crown came up at various times, and there was always very strong feeling against doing it, partly because the government in Hungary was communist, partly because of the revolution in '56, partly because of Cardinal Mindszenty who was sitting in our Legation in Budapest for years after the revolution. But by 1976, my feeling was, if you don't try, you can't ever succeed. By 1976 we'd patched up our relations somewhat. Mindszenty had been out of Hungary. Hungarian economic reform, Kada's__(?) moderation and apparent good sense had sort of come through to us. The Hungarians wanted MFN, but felt that the Crown had to come first, although they didn't put it so clearly. I thought that the symbolism of returning the Crown would affect not merely the communists, who after all, why would they be interested in the crown, a symbol of royalty, but would affect all Hungarians who were aware of it. Because it was something that would appeal to any Hungarian. And the question was then how to return it. We did a lot of soundings among the Hungarian emigre community, there was a former Prime Minister of Hungary, pre-communist, living in Virginia somewhere. He was in favor of the return of the Crown. Some of the academic people that we spoke to were in favor of returning the Crown. An editor of an Hungarian language magazine in Cleveland, was in favor. So after making these soundings we said, "Let's see whether the Department would agree." Usually the objection comes immediately at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level. This time no objection at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level, or the Assistant Secretary level, or the Counselor level. So we did more soundings, and I forget now the exact order of things, but at some point the memo went over from the Secretary to Brzezinski.

Q: This was during the Carter administration?

ANDREWS: During the Carter administration, '76. And Brzezinski decided to call up some of his Hungarian friends, and find out what they thought. There are several we know he might have called, Charles Gatty__, Rudolph Turkish__, other. Fortunately, they were all in favor. So he said, "Okay." Then the question was, how are we going to do this? Because we knew there was going to be some kind of opposition to it. And, in fact, we had hoped to deliver it after a December meeting of NATO ministers, usually in mid- December, and Cyrus Vance would peel off from the meeting, and go to Hungary, deliver it. Another plane would come from the United States with the regalia. We'd meet in Budapest, and he'd deliver it. And the whole thing collapsed because of some change in schedule, and Vance couldn't do it then, etc. Meanwhile, the news got out, and there were several people who objected violently. I think Senator Helms was one, but perhaps the one who gave us the most trouble was Mary Rose Oakar, who represented a district in Cleveland, and who had a lot of Hungarian Americans in her district. Charles Vanik, who had a lot of Hungarian Americans in his district was very much in favor. But Mary Rose Oakar was very much against. So there were lawsuits, and things of this kind, and State Department's lawyers, and Justice lawyers were able to fend off these lawsuits. And I think it was very early January '77 a plane took off with Cyrus Vance, and various distinguished people of Hungarian extraction, we went to Hungary and delivered the Crown. A very wintry day in Budapest, very formal, very ceremonial. And it was fun. Everybody was extraordinarily happy.

Q: How did the communist authorities...I mean, they must have had dual feelings about this.

ANDREWS: Well, they didn't. I mean, they never admitted to having dual feelings about it. There was an argument as to which museum should have it, the National Museum, or the Museum of the Hungarian Revolution, or the Museum of something, something. And it was decided the National Museum should have it. We did require certain conditions. For example, that it be shown in public, that it be accessible to everybody, and things of this kind, and they agreed. So then we started worrying when it turned out that they couldn't show it immediately because they didn't have the space ready in the National Museum. But eventually, within a few months, they had the space ready, they had Swiss-made lights around the room, they had an alarm system by the Swiss, or something of the kind. They had looked at the equipment and made sure that it was in good shape to show it, and they showed it. And, of course, the National Museum was mobbed for days and weeks, and weekends, while everybody went to see what this was that they had never seen before.

Q: Let me ask one final question of this particular period. You were there during a transmission between Kissinger, Nixon, and Brzezinski, Carter, but anyway a change of administration. In Eastern Europe did you feel a change in atmosphere as far as directions from the White House, or was it business as usual from your vantage point?

ANDREWS: I think we felt there were certain restrictions during the Kissinger period. You really couldn't move unless you got authority to move, even if it was a fairly innocuous kind of thing that you wanted to do. The visit of any person of Deputy Assistant Secretary level, or up, had to be cleared with higher echelons. And it did seem as if policy was very strictly controlled from the top. And if the top was busy doing something else, then you just didn't get any answer to what you wanted done. That, I thought, was a pity. Occasionally though you could continue to make good arguments why something should be done, and you'd get approval. But it did require constant going back to the source for interpretation of the original decision of a random allowing you, or instructing you, how to go about it. With Brzezinski some of the language changed, some of the ideas changed, but down at the working level it didn't change much. That is to say, he didn't really want to rank order, he wanted to do it on the basis of what they deserved. But the principles were the same. In other words, we still were nice to Romania because Romania could still be useful to us in various international ways regardless of their domestic posture.

And on the other hand, Poland and Hungary were useful because we wanted to encourage a liberalization of the economic situation of the societal restrictions, and so forth, and therefore we wanted to continue the exchanges, and the other relations we had with them. Czechoslovakia remained in the doldrums although we tried to get the claims agreement out of the way. We could never resolve that during my time because the money that the claimants wanted, was much more than the Czechs were willing to pay. And the Czechs didn't yet realize that even if they paid us what we wanted, the value of the gold they got would be immense, and therefore they would be doing very well indeed, much better than 10, 12, 15 years before. But they didn't quite see it that way. In Bulgaria, as I said, there were some little things. There was an exchanges agreement, and a National Academy of Sciences agreement, maritime agreement, little things of this kind. It didn't change the overall picture, but it showed some willingness to make progress in various areas.

Yes, Brzezinski changed things a little bit by getting away from very strict rank ordering, and some of the specific nomenclature perhaps, but he was still very interested, especially in Poland. And he was just a little bit less autocratic about it.

Q: You mentioned Poland as your last assignment. You went as Deputy Chief of Mission to Warsaw '79 to '81, which was obviously an extremely interesting period. What were your main concerns? How did you operate as Deputy Chief of Mission, and what were your main concerns? William Schaufele was the Ambassador.

ANDREWS: The problem of being a DCM is that you have to function as if you might be in charge one day, and at the same time you have to do all the things that you don't really want to do on a day to day basis, as far as I'm concerned anyway. The day to day kinds of chores of worrying about the security of the building; worry about health of the staff, the employment or dismissal of employees; behavior of the Marine Guards, access to the airport to get your pouches; all the kinds of day to day things are really a bore. You can do them, and you can do them very well, but there is the question of how much time they should take, and how you can reduce the amount of time taken up by that in order to provide some sort of effective guidance to the Political, and Economic, and other reporting that the Embassy does. I also felt that since Ambassador Schaufele was not an Eastern European expert, that I somehow had to fill in and provide some kind of guidance to him when he needed it on Eastern European matters, especially Polish. So I found it difficult in many ways because I didn't do what I enjoyed doing as much as I wanted to, and I had this kind of dual thing, of one interfering with the other. So that's from the job point of view.

Schaufele, as it happened, was a very congenial person to deal with, and I found that I got along with him very well. I sort of knew where he stood, and in that sense life was quite easy. Our point was quite seriously that there were issues on the human rights agenda. Human rights in general had been ascending in importance during the Carter years, and we started taking up issues with Romanians, Hungarians, and Poles, especially the question of emigration because we had a long line of people who wanted to immigrate from Poland, and couldn't get exit permits. These kinds of issues were quite important. There were some economic issues, American investments in Poland where we intervened and tried to help to American investor vis-a-vis Japanese or others, with mixed results. In most cases we were overpriced, and under represented. That is to say, the Embassy couldn't do it for the American business concern. The American business came, spent a very short time, and wanted to get it all wrapped up within a week, and if they didn't, you didn't know when they'd come back again, and that made it difficult to push American business interests.

On the other hand, on the cultural side, things went very well. On the educational side, there was a Fulbright program, an American Studies group at Warsaw University, there was English language teaching programs, a lot of things going on in that area without any problem.

There was really very little contact between the Embassy and what you would call dissidents. And dissidents in Poland divided up into different areas. Some people didn't like the government, some people opposed the government, but they were not dissidents in the sense they didn't air their views in underground journals, or in other ways. They didn't get noticed so much. They didn't get arrested, or detained, by the police. And certainly we knew those people. In other words, intellectuals, or possibly journalists, or others, who would complain about this or that problem, and indicate their general disapproval of the way the Gierek administration was running things. But the dissident who was based in an organization like the Workers Defense Committee, with the initials KOR, we didn't have contact with them. That would be Kor__, Mis__, Lipsky__,(?) and a number of other people. They were regarded as outside society, and we were clear in our own minds that if we saw them, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs would immediately complain.

But we did see Catholic intellectuals who were non-communist, anti- communist, and in close touch with the dissidents as such.

In '79 to '80, we were aware of these groups, and we were aware of another outfit called Experience in the Future, which issued a couple of ringing criticisms of the regime, and proposals for reform and improvement, both in economic as well as social issues. But we really didn't have any handle on the worker opinion, and I think that that's sort of normal. Embassies very seldom have access to what workers think unless they go through trade unions that honestly represent the workers' interests. If the trade union organization does not honestly represent the workers' interests, and doesn't have its own voice independent from the government's voice, or the party's voice, then all you hear is what the government tells the trade union it wants to say. Yes, you can talk to the occasional taxi cab driver. I don't know if he's a worker or not, an occasional plumber, but you don't really have a sense of what goes on, especially not in the ship yards.

I think what struck us, as far as the '80-'81 period was that, first of all, we didn't know much. Secondly, we were kept very well informed once the thing was on because it couldn't be stopped, it couldn't be controlled, and without dealing with the dissidents we were well clued in by everybody who wanted to tell us. Thirdly, the actual movement by Solidarity was non-violent, and that always struck us as a miracle because Poles tend to be, not violent, but certainly emotional, and effusive, and given to rather romantic actions which may include violence.

I must say, at the beginning we didn't think that the strikes up in the shipyards were going to amount to anything. I mean, one is the strikes, and the other is the reaction to them. When you see that the reaction to them doesn't amount to anything, then you suddenly think, "Well, maybe the strikes will amount to something." And the reaction to the strikes around the country before they got to Gdansk, was sort of helter-skelter, and trying to deal with each one by itself as if it was a separate thing, and not part of a general malaise in the society. I think that was a mistake. They'd increased prices July 1, meat, I think, by 60 to 80 percent, and that just set things off the way they did in '76, the way they did in '70. And the party people didn't understand why. Everybody else understood only too well.

So, the Solidarity got its agreement with the government, and we didn't have contact with Walesa for quite a long time, to really '81, I think. We had a couple of people going up to Gdansk but they didn't have contact with Walesa himself. And then we followed things, press, television, contacts around town. Things were moving, it seemed to us, relatively favorably during the rest of 1980. There were delays, there were the usual kinds of hassles with the security people, occasional arrests of people, occasional interference, judicial interference as well, but Solidarity was registered. It acted to try to hold its membership together, tried to make a point of what it needed, what it wanted. It tried to get the terms of the Gdansk agreement with the government implemented, and there were a series of talks with the governments at different levels, different groups, different times. Then there were the threats from the Soviet Union about intervention in December '80 was the first. We couldn't see any signs of it in Warsaw, but Brzezinski and company evidently...whether through satellite photography, or through other means, were concerned about maneuvering on the Soviet side of the Soviet-Polish border. There was a Warsaw Pact meeting, I think. There were promises by Kania, the Polish leader who succeeded Gierek, to Brezhnev, and those were accepted for the time being. Then the government horsed around and didn't do very much. The one or two communist voices talking about reaching an understanding with the people. In February they got rid of the Prime Minister, and put in Jaruzelski as Prime Minister. He talked about both firmness and dialogue with the people of Solidarity. The dialogue didn't get very far. In March there was provocation where four people got thrown out of a regional council meeting, and beaten up in the process. I mean, they weren't just thrown out, they were beaten up in the process and three of them taken to hospital, and this kind of thing. There was sort of violence against Solidarity. There were demands for a general strike, and tensions, again rumors of Soviet troops. Walesa decided without benefit of appealing to his national coordinating commission, that they wouldn't go on general strike. So people, at that point, began to turn against him, thinking he wasn't tough enough. But, in fact, that crisis defused, and you got on to another series of talks between the government and Solidarity, concerning access to television, concerning religion, concerning social issues, concerning health conditions, concerning the economy, concerning justice. Each of them puttered along with different rates of speed. Meanwhile the party was having its own agonizing reexamination of what was wrong with it, and differences between the hard liners, and less hard liners, and the liberals. And they came up to a party congress in July where the Central Committee was completely changed. There was some internal democracy, freedom to participate, to vote, to produce candidates, not all hand picked. But all of that produced a Central Committee that was sort of meaningless to everybody because there was no real talent in it. They may have represented somebody, but you didn't have a feeling that they were able to express these views, or to make a change in the communist system.

I left after the Congress. There were further travails, further conflicts between Solidarity and the party. Solidarity tended to go out in the street more, which I think is a mistake because they were violating regulations concerning order, and they weren't getting very far. But the government simply was not taking any action, either on Solidarity demands as agreed to in the Gdansk agreement, or on any current issues. In the discussions with Solidarity they all ended up not getting anywhere. Finally there was a Solidarity Congress, which reiterated the Solidarity position. It wasn't clear on the economic issues, it was fairly clear on other issues, and they were getting a little tougher. And the reply from the party was tougher. And in the fall, also, Kania, who resigned as party leader, and Jaruzelski took over. And finally after one more aborted attempt of an understanding between Solidarity and the church, and Jaruzelski in November the thing petered out, strikes broke out all over the place spontaneously because the economic situation deteriorated terribly, it was a very bad harvest in '81. And Jaruzelski saw no way out except martial law, concerning which we had no official information. We didn't know about martial law, we didn't know that it was a viable option. We had at various times information about funny things going on. One Politburo member, a construction work type, had talked in a very local meeting, and said that if Solidarity doesn't shut up, we're going to use the military and imposed martial law. But he's saying this in September, and what does he know. He didn't provide any dates or anything. I think the Colonel Kukulinski who defected also left before martial law, so he didn't know when it was going to be held. But it was obviously the end of a phase, and I was rather happy to have left after the party Congress. I already knew that things were not going to get better.

Q: When we were getting the word that the Russians were beginning to assemble troops, and all of this, what was the feeling in the Embassy that if the Soviets came in, was the role of the Polish military problematical, or would they have joined with the Soviets, or would they have fought against them?

ANDREWS: Yes. The feeling was that it would be a mixed picture. We thought that a number of Polish army troops would follow their officers, and presumably do nothing, or be relatively loyal. We didn't think that the Polish army would be a very effective instrument of Soviet policy. We didn't think there would be very many who would actually fire at the Soviets, or fight. So we tended to think that the Polish army was going to be a washout, would not, as in '56, Gomulka used the threat that the Poles would stop the Soviets if the Soviets advanced any further, and Khrushchev changed his mind and didn't send the Soviet army further. But I don't think this was the case. Our feeling was that one or two units might fight, it wouldn't be any good. Most units would not, and some units might be loyal because they would do whatever their officers said, which would probably not be anything lethal, it would be, "move around here," "control the roads," "control the squares," this kind of thing.

We, I don't think, thought of martial law because we made the assumption, which most Solidarity people made and which they passed on to us, that the Polish army could not be regarded as loyal to the communist leaders because after all they were infected with the same ideas that the Solidarity movement was affected by. To some extent they were right, although the army also tried to keep some of the older recruits who had joined in '78, or '77, and they delayed their release for a year or so in '81. And that was an indication that they wanted to hold on to some of the more reliable elements perhaps.

But there was no sign of a Soviet intervention as such in late '81 I don't think. We knew there was a lot of discussion and planning, but we just didn't know what this would end up in.

I think in retrospect, yes you could argue that a) the Soviets wanted it clearly understood that they wouldn't tolerate this Solidarity business going on forever. Maybe the deadline was the end of '81; b) the Poles said, "Look, this is much more difficult than you think." And I think at the beginning that was true. The Soviets had no clue about how massive this was, and how difficult it would be to control it. Therefore they constantly blamed Kania, and the top leadership of the party. And Kania said, "You can say it, but it isn't as easy as all that. We're not organized to put a stop to this the way it has grown." And I think the Soviets also found out that if they gave Jaruzelski time, and Jaruzelski they'd pinned their hopes on, he would find a way of doing it. And from his point of view, I think he's right when he said, and I think he's speaking honestly when he said that if martial law had not been declared, Poland would have suffered much worse, by which he meant that if Soviet troops had entered Poland, it would have affected Poland's independence, and ability to govern. Whereas martial law at least kept the hands of Poland's fate in Polish hands. And I think there's something to be said about that. We can't tell, in the light of Russian occupation of a part of Poland during the entire 19th century, what the Soviets would have done in 1981 if they'd had to come in, to what extent they would have allowed an independent Poland, or to what extent they would have actually run things themselves.

Q: I know you told me you're under some time restraints, and I want to thank you very much. I've really enjoyed this. This is a very worthwhile interview. Thank you.

ANDREWS: You're welcome.

End of interview