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

WILLIAM V.P. NEWLIN

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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

Q: Today is November 26, 2001. This is an interview with William V.P. Newlin. Do you have a middle initial?

NEWLIN: I use either none or two: V. and P. I'd rather you used the two initials for this purpose.

Q: What do they stand for?

NEWLIN: Ver Planck. It really should be a small "ver." It's Dutch.

Q: What does that mean?

NEWLIN: It means "from the town of Planck."

Q: This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy? Could you tell me when and where you were born and something about your family?

NEWLIN: I was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on February 9, 1933. My family were traditional middle class people. My father had gone to MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology). It's an old Philadelphia family, 17th century Philadelphia. We came the year after William Penn. My father's father was kind of a rebel and worked for the railroad. My father was born in California and went to public schools. They kind of slowly worked their way back east. He married a Philadelphia woman. My father was trained as an electrical engineer, but when the New Deal split the trusts up and H.M. Billsby and Company was split into its electrical side and its financial side, Dad went on the financial side. He was an investment banker and finally kind of an entrepreneurial investment banker. Mother never went to college.

Q: What was the background of her family?

NEWLIN: Her family were New England. Her father's name was Battles and he was head of Battles and Company, a Philadelphia investment house.

Q: Where did you live in Philadelphia?

NEWLIN: We lived in suburban Philadelphia, in Wayne. It's one of the towns along the main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Q: Where did you go to school?

NEWLIN: I went to school at Wayne Elementary School through the fourth grade; then at the Haverford School in Haverford, Pennsylvania, which was reached either by a trolley car, which was a five minute walk from my house in Wayne and gave me a mile walk on the other side, or by a train, the Pennsylvania Railroad, which gave me a mile walk on the Wayne side and a five minute walk on the Haverford side. I went to the Haverford School through the eighth grade.

Q: Was the Haverford school linked to ...

NEWLIN: No, it was in the same community. It's in the town called Haverford, but it has no link. Then in the ninth grade, I went to St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, a boarding school to which my brother had gone and from which I was graduated in 1951.

Q: Let's talk about the elementary school and the Haverford School. Was Wayne a fairly well-to-do neighborhood? How was the school?

NEWLIN: Wayne is a neighborhood which had a well-to-do component and a less well-to-do component. In Wayne in the elementary school at that time there were four sections: A, B, C, and D. They were probably called "Bluebirds" and "Redbirds" or something. The section that I was in was completely white. I imagine it was a pretty good elementary school. They got darker as they went "down" until you came to a section that was almost exclusively black. I remember once, for example, being taken down to the lowest section and sat on a stool in the front of the class. The teacher gave me words to say. The kids in that section were supposed to learn to say the words the way I said them. If you can imagine that!

Q: So, up in Quaker Pennsylvania, you had a fairly segregated system.

NEWLIN: You had a segregated system that had gradations of segregation. Surely the top section was all white. The next section had a few black people in it. The next section was largely black. The last was completely black. That's how I remember it.

Q: And the sections were done by "scholastic ability."

NEWLIN: That would certainly be what the school would tell you. I remember one time we had a resectioning. We all knew which the best section was. I was terrified that I would be demoted from the best section. My feeling meant that that section had nothing to do with its being the white section. But it was just the best section. It was where the people who read the best were.

Q: Did you have brothers and sisters?

NEWLIN: I had an older brother and a younger sister. There were two and a half years between us all.

Q: Were you a fairly close family?

NEWLIN: Yes, a very close family. My mother and father were married to their death. My brother was killed when he was only 21. My sister and I are still very close. We were close to our parents until their death.

Q: What about at home, particularly education? Did you sit around the able and talk about events?

NEWLIN: Lots. I came from an interesting family. Superficially, you might think that it wasn't. I had this housewife mother and investment banker family. But they were interesting people and read books and loved books. Mother particularly loved literature. We had an interesting time at home.

Q: What about politics? I assume you were pretty Republican?

NEWLIN: Absolutely. We had a great uncle who lived in New York. For a while, he lived in the New York Yacht Club in Manhattan. He was the only man that I personally knew who wore spats. You simply couldn't mention Roosevelt in front of him.

Q: He was "that man in the White House."

NEWLIN: Yes. If we can skip a little bit ahead, I remember coming back from St. Paul's School, where in my ninth grade we had had an American history course. I learned, really for the first time, that Roosevelt was widely believed to be a tremendous American hero. I knew he was a wartime hero, but I was still sort of brainwashed with the idea that he had been a traitor to his class and that his social ideas were the ruination of America. I was taught otherwise and came to believe otherwise and came home and would talk to my father about this. We had what I considered to be wonderful debates at the table which mother would not allow to go on. The dining room table was not for arguments. She thought those were arguments. We had to conduct that conversation on our own time.

Q: What about international affairs? We're talking about '33. Particularly as we got into the war? You were old enough to be cognizant of what was happening.

NEWLIN: I certainly remember December 7, 1941. I couldn't understand initially why an attack that took place in Hawaii, which I was shown on the map and which was clearly very far from us, would so automatically, completely run us into the war. But I learned that it did. I was very aware of my father's unsuccessful efforts to join the war, to enlist. He had served in the First World War; was wounded in France; limped. He was born in 1893. So, he was 44 and was thought to be too old and too unfit to join the war. But I was very aware that that was a great disappointment to him. We followed the war. In the beginning, all the news was bad. We were having bad news in the Pacific and bad news on the Atlantic. It was surely not clear to any of us that the war would go our way. It was surely to me at my age? I thought that there had always been a war and that there always would be. There was something called "closed for the duration." As far as I was concerned, that was "closed forever."

Q: I was born in 1928. I found that World War II was the greatest geography lesson that any young person who took an interest could have. You learned all sorts of islands, places? Did you find that, too?

NEWLIN: Sure. We watched the war on maps. Our parents, my father particularly, was interested in showing us the war. We had an interest in it. We asked.

Q: At Haverford School, was this a normal progression, going up there? This was a private school?

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: What was the reason? Was it felt that you would get a little better education?

NEWLIN: Yes. There were a number of private schools in the suburban Philadelphia area. Philadelphia operates with a whole bunch of bedroom communities. If you had asked me where I was from, I wouldn't have said "Wayne." Quite early on, I realized that I was from Philadelphia. As I got a little bit older, my friends were not drawn from Wayne. They were drawn from other Philadelphia suburbs. I think part of that is that I was part of a somewhat rarified social class which thought of itself as being Philadelphian and not Wayne. If I had a friend in Wayne, it was by coincidence. I had my little buddies who were from Wayne. But as soon as I went to Haverford, that began to change. I began to draw more on friends beyond Wayne.

Q: When they use the term "main line" in Philadelphia, what does that mean?

NEWLIN: There is a railroad line that starts in Philadelphia and runs out west to Paoli. It used to be the main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad. From Paoli it went to Pittsburgh and points west. All along the main line from Philadelphia to Paoli starting at Overbrook, Wynnewood, Ardmore, Bryn Mar, Villanova, Rosemont, Radnor, St. Davids, Wayne, Berwyn, Paoli, there is a string of towns out straight west along the main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad which at the turn of the century were developed as bedroom communities to Philadelphia. That's what the "main line" refers to. Then there is another part of Philadelphia which is on the other side of the river. It is generally just referred to as Chestnut Hill, although on the Chestnut Hill side there were also other villages. Chestnut Hill is sort of like Georgetown, except it's not really because it's a good bit further away from central Philadelphia. But it's on another railroad line. It's a residential community of nice houses, expensive houses. It's a little bit more like where I live here. It's more like Silver Spring. In Wayne, the houses have a few acres typically. But in Chestnut Hill, they have a quarter of an acre typically.

Q: At Haverford, did you notice an increase in academic concentration for you?

NEWLIN: Yes. You worked harder. I don't remember ever doing any work at Wayne Elementary School. At Haverford, you had homework. You probably had homework at Wayne Elementary School, but I don't remember it. At Haverford, we clearly had homework. At Haverford, you went off to school wearing a necktie. Clearly, I was apprehensive going off to Haverford. I think my brother and I went off the same year. It was very new to me and I was very apprehensive whether these classy little boys in neckties were going to be people that I could be friends with. If Frank had gone off before me, I would think that I would realize that they were just good guys. I remember my first recess. We went into the boys' room. One of the boys said something about the "fucking teacher." Somebody else said that something else was "shitty." And I thought, "This is [okay]." [Laughter]

Q: While you were still in elementary school, did you find any areas of education particularly interested you?

NEWLIN: I don't think so. I liked the word things better than the number things for sure. I don't remember being very interested in my schoolwork at elementary school. I don't remember being really interested in my schoolwork at Haverford. I was never a very academically oriented student.

Q: How about sports?

NEWLIN: I did all the sports. It was a big part of our life at Haverford. It was part of the inter academic league and we played Episcopal, which was another school along the main line. We also played Pen Charter and Germantown Friends. These are on the other side of the river. There was a little group of similar schools. I'm sure that the same thing exists here. Sidwell Friends and St. Albans and Landon all play one another and so did we. You had to play baseball and football. If you went out for soccer, you were a sissy. There wasn't much soccer going on. You had to play basketball. When I say "You had to," I wanted to do those things. Then in the slush season, there was other stuff you could do. You could swim and you could do stuff in the gym, both of which I did.

Q: You went off to St. Paul's when?

NEWLIN: In 1947. I had the full four years at St. Paul's. I graduated in '51.

Q: What was St. Paul's like from '47-'51?

NEWLIN: Just before the war at St. Paul's, you still wore a stiff collar on Sundays.

Q: I have to say I wore a stiff collar. I went to Kent for four years. In '42, we wore them for one year and then they dropped them.

NEWLIN: By the time I came, the stiff collars were gone. But you were not asking me about St. Paul's because you want to know but because you want to hear me say it. St. Paul's was like Kent. It was a rich boys school. St. Paul's nol just can't get over thihas an endowment of $800,000 a kid. Isn't that just mind-boggling? It was a rich school then. It has a beautiful campus, of course. It was a religious school. Religion was much more-

Q: Which religion?

NEWLIN: Episcopal. We had kids who were Jewish, Catholic, who were lots of things. But it was an Episcopal school. You had to go to those services. The Catholic kids could also go into services in town. I don't know what the Jewish kids did. But they certainly had to go to those services. We had service every day. It wasn't exclusively a religious service. It was where stuff about the school was discussed and dealt with. If you went there, you could practice your own religion and you didn't have to believe ours, but you had to attend ours.

Q: Was it a difficult adjustment for you to go there?

NEWLIN: I had a brother who was there ahead of me. I had known for a long time that that's what I was going to do. You took a train up there with some people that you already knew. By the time ninth grade came along, you had been going to dancing classes in Philadelphia. You knew people at those classes. They weren't dancing classes, of course. They were just little dances. You rode up on the train and changed in Boston. Sure, you were away from home but we had gone to camp by then. We were accustomed to being away from home a little bit. I don't remember it as being particularly difficult. It was just one of the things that was going to happen and did happen.

Q: I assume the school, particularly in those times, was relatively Spartan?

NEWLIN: Yes and no. St. Paul's had a seventh and an eighth grade. We called them "forms." It had a first and a second form also. By the time the ninth grade came, there was a cadre of boys who had been there for either first and second or just the second who were already kind of the "in" group. The incoming ninth grade was put at that time in a dormitory with alcoves that had been used by the lower school. I guess the demographics of the school were that the school was building back up its student body. I can imagine that during the war it was a smaller school. But anyway, we were a third form class, ninth grade, that was being bunked in what was typically thought to be lower school quarters. We just had these alcoves with a curtain, two rows of alcoves down the side of a long room with radiators in the middle. You could climb over to your neighbor's alcove. So that was a little Spartan. We had a big communal bathroom, of course. That was how it was.

Q: Who imposed the discipline?

NEWLIN: You had a dual system of "masters," as we called our teachers, and prefects, which we called "supervisors," which were senior boys who lived with you in your "houses," as we called them, or in this one we called it a "dorm." They imposed discipline. Then, of course, the masters imposed discipline.

Q: What about classes? These schools had two purposes. One was to have the best and the brightest and the right families together. The other one was to give a really first rate education. Did you find a lot of emphasis on good teaching?

NEWLIN: Absolutely. The teachers there were outstanding. The classes were small. We were taught around tables. They were oval. You could sit probably six on either side and two at the end. You'd sit 15 people around the table. Therefore, your classes were conducted where you're looking at all your classmates and the teacher is sitting in that circle with you. So, discussion is much easier in that kind of a situation than it is where the teacher is standing at the head of the class and the students are sitting in rows in desks, which I think is a more typical school arrangement.

Q: How about languages? What sort of languages were taught?

NEWLIN: Only French and Spanish. There were always a few students? It's interesting. My brother had French starting at his first year at Haverford. For me, that was being pared back, not because of me but just because of the way the school went. So, he had four more years of French than I did when he came to St. Paul's. He took third or fourth year French and I took first year French. There was Spanish. It was a no-brainer for me whether I would take French or Spanish. Of course I would take French. It was a much more civilized language than Spanish for my way of thinking. My mother spoke French. My father spoke French but not as well as my mother.

Q: Did you get involved in extracurricular activities there?

NEWLIN: Sure. I was in the debating society. One of the things that you needed to do was have extracurricular activities on your list so that it would look good when you went to college. You had to be sure you did some extracurricular activities. But I was a bad boy. I was an uncooperative boy. I had what was called a "bad attitude." It was cool to have a bad attitude and I was nothing if not cool. So, I did these extracurricular activities to get them on my record, but what I was really interested in was girls in town. We were four miles from Concord. You had to sneak into town. I snuck into town a lot. I was interested in smoking and drinking, both of which would have gotten me thrown out. We'll get into drinking more because I drank all through my Foreign Service career. My Foreign Service career was completely undistinguished. It's very hard for me to think that the fact that I was drunk most of the time didn't affect that.

Q: I'm looking back at my own prep school time. Kent was atypical in that we got into town the day we left for vacation and the day we came back and that was it.

NEWLIN: We didn't get into town very? To get into Concord, you had to sneak in.

Q: We had a little village, Kent, where you stood out like a sore thumb. We'd all have hidden cache of cigarettes. But not much drinking. Was there a drinking set?

NEWLIN: Yes. My brother belonged to it. He drank. But as far as I'm concerned, the climate that I grew up in was pernicious for anyone who had a proclivity towards a drinking problem. These parties that I talk about early on had drinking. There was certainly no drinking at the parties. The Friday and Saturday evening dancing classes? This was going to the dancing school. When you started going to debutante parties, which you went to rather early oboys went earlier than girls and boys with older brothers went sooner than per usuayou knew the girls and the girls put you on the list. But in Maine, for example, I could get a driver's license in Maine at 15. We went to Northeast Harbor, but on Tuesdays and Fridays, there were dances at the Bar Harbor Club. Those were dances of which drinks were served. I used to count money by how many Tom Collins I could buy at the Bar Harbor Club. They cost 75 cents a piece and we left a quarter tip. I remember reading in "The Sun Also Rises" Hemingway talking about at the beginning of the running of the bulls at Pamplona, at the beginning of that weekend, when the people from the neighboring villages were still counting their money in terms of bales of hay and country things. Later money ceased to have that. That resonated with me. Money to me used to be the number of drinks at Bar Harbor Club.

Q: Was this when you were at St. Paul's for the summer?

NEWLIN: Yes. There was just a lot of drinking in my social life. There were clearly people who did not get caught up in this and who escaped, but I was not one of them. Drinking caught me in those very early years.

Q: Did you have any problems such as driving run-ins with the police or problems with family? Was this causing problems?

NEWLIN: Well, I was a well defended alcoholic for a long time. I could keep it away from everyone. In the Foreign Service, never once did anyone, any supervisor or any colleague, say to me, "You know, you ought to be a little careful about that," which is really quite remarkable. I was a well defended alcoholic. You hear these stories about Churchill and that he just drank all day long. Rather early on in my career, I began to drink all throughout the day. But periodically, it would catch me on the chin and I would go over the limit. But we're getting ahead of our story.

It began at St. Paul's School. At least, it was going on at St. Paul's School. One of my outlets for energy was getting into town and getting booze and, with my little group of other bad attitude people, sneaking off to huts that we had in the woods where we'd sit around and smoke and drink.

Q: What about girls?

NEWLIN: Girls were always a big part of my life.

Q: How about in Concord?

NEWLIN: I had girls in Concord.

Q: Were these girls from the "wrong side of the tracks?"

NEWLIN: No, they were girls from the right side of the Concord tracks. It didn't much matter to me who they were socially. I didn't pay attention to the Concord tracks. Obviously, in Concord, there was a strict hierarchy where people in Concord would be able to tell you that this girl was on the right side of the Concord tracks and this one wasn't. These girls would mostly go to the same school. The girls that I'm talking about went to the Concord high school. Anyone who was being sent away to school was out of my order. I wouldn't be able to see them. These girls went to the Concord high school. Their daddies held whatever jobs they held. I couldn't care less. I was not interested in the girls for their social position in Concord. I was interested in them because they were fun and we would have fun together.

Q: What about sports? I always think of St. Paul's as having magnificent hockey teams.

NEWLIN: That was our big sport. I played all of those sports. Again, you had to play football. There were people who did soccer. There were people who did cross country. But you really had to play football. In the spring, you had a choice? At Haverford, you had to play baseball. At St. Paul's, you could either row or play baseball. I rowed. Then in the winter, there was basketball, but really you had to play hockey. It's interesting to me? I was just back there for my 50th reunion. When I was there, the lower school pond around which the school was essentially built had on it half a dozen hockey rinks. You had a club team. All the sports were club sports. We played intramural sports. The only sport that we played extramural was hockey. We did play outside hockey at the beginning of the winter break, we had a game in Madison Square Garden where we played against one of the freshmen teams from Harvard, Yale, Princeton, or Dartmouth. It was a tossup as to who was going to win. We were not always beaten. Many of the people on that team came from St. Paul's. We were so far north and so cold that we had all these rinks on the ice. They were shaved by horses. They were wooden rinks. They could be dismantled, and horses would come and plane down the ice so you would have a new surface by dragging a blade. Now, there is nowhere near enough ice to have those rinks. We have indoor rinks and you can't put any rinks on the lower school pond anymore, let alone have enough rinks to have six rinks out there and people leaning against a rink, all those people watching a game.

Q: There has to be an academic side to St. Paul. What subjects did you find yourself getting involved in?

NEWLIN: Literature more than anything, and the government subjects. But I was not a particularly good student. My energies? I did as little as I could do and stay out of academic trouble.

Q: You were getting ready to graduate in '51. Where do St. Paul's kids go?

NEWLIN: I would say more than half my class went to Harvard, Yale, or Princeton. We sent 19 people to Harvard my year. That's where I went. If you didn't go to one of those schools or Stanford, which was by then thought to be in the first rank, even then Amherst and Williams, which now are thought to be harder to get into than those Ivy League schools, even if you went to Amherst and Williams, many people thought that you had a little bit failed. Harvard, Yale, and Princeton were the choice places.

Q: I went to Williams. I graduated class of '50. Williams was a good school.

NEWLIN: It's crazy. Williams was an outstanding school. It was an outstanding school then. There was just these funny little blinders that those big schools were the best. I think that the attitude is much better now that there is no such thing as the best school. The is the best match between a particular kid and a particular school. I sent only one of my kids to Harvard and he was certainly my least well educated kid. It isn't his fault. He graduated with honors. He did fine. But the kid who went to Hopkins had a fascinating, brilliant education. The girl who went to Swarthmore had an outstanding education. Both of them were very much engaged in what they were doing. My Harvard kid did not become really engaged in academics when he was there.

Q: You were going through this in a period when the academic world was undergoing quite a revolution. For one thing, many of the state universities were beginning to benefit by the GI Bill and all the veterans coming back and getting Ph.D.s. Knowledge was getting spread farther around than had happened. When we were going, I could count on 10 fingers the right schools.

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: All the bets are off now. It's changed.

While you were at St. Paul's, how about the world, international affairs? The Cold War was going hot. The Korean War started while you were there. Did this engage people and you particularly?

NEWLIN: Yes, it engaged people. Most of my friends and most of the energies at a place like St. Paul's were directed towards Europe, not towards Asia. Most of the interest was towards Europe, not towards Asia, although the Korean War came along and you had to pay attention to Asia. But people didn't travel in Asia very much for example.

Q: It was expensive and it really wasn't that open. It just wasn't set up to be visited very much.

NEWLIN: You had to get across the country before you even started thinking about going to Asia. It was just further. It was harder. So, we paid more attention to Europe than to Asia even though the war was going on. We had courses in history and we had current events clubs but to be perfectly honest with you, I don't think that my great interest was in what was going on overseas.

Q: Diplomacy didn't cross your radar at all?

NEWLIN: Not much, although the diplomatic service was always a little bit in my sites as a possibility. It seemed like something that a young gentleman might do and have an interesting time doing. My father talked about diplomacy as a possibility. He thought that one of the reasons that he made money was so that his children wouldn't have to make money and that his children could choose what they were going to do without having to focus on whether they would make a lot of money. He thought diplomacy was one of those careers that would be open to me if he gave me an extra income.

Q: You went to Harvard in '51. You were there until '55?

NEWLIN: Yes. I graduated in '55.

Q: What was Harvard like?

NEWLIN: I came with Conant. I left with Pusey. Pusey just died.

Q: We're talking about the presidents at Harvard.

NEWLIN: Yes. Harvard was a fascinating place. It was a very multifaceted place. Once again, if I'm going to talk honestly about my life, I have to make it a confession. I wasted my time at Harvard. It is just a terrible pity. I'd give anything to go to Harvard as a freshman again. I remember arriving at Harvard as a freshman. I remember walking around Harvard Square thinking that this was just so thrilling, this place that everybody knew. I have a father-in-law who went to Princeton. He's still alive. He repeats himself these days. I think it's a disappointment to him that Harvard continues to be the school that people mention when they're talking about the pinnacle of American education. It's Harvard that the jokes are about. He would like it to be at least Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. He'd like Princeton to be in there. It's offensive to him and an object of curiosity that Harvard continues to be thought of certainly in the popular culture although not in the academic worlthe academic world is too smart to think that anyone is at the pinnaclat the pinnacle. That's kind of the way I thought of it. I wasn't anywhere else. I was at Harvard. It was a thrilling possibility. For one thing, my education at St. Paul's had been outstanding. It was entirely possible to pretty well coast through your freshman year without doing very much work. I did. The freedom of Harvard Square was intoxicating to me.

Q: What house were you in?

NEWLIN: I was in Wigglesworth. This was my freshman house. When I went there, we still had biddies. You had maids who were called "biddies." They were called biddies in university publications. That was how they were referred to. They would come il forget how ofteand they cleaned your rooms. It seems to me certainly by the time I left Harvarand I'm not even sure by the time I left my freshman dorit had moved over to being a work-study system. You had Harvard guys coming in and cleaning your rooms. To me what that says about the social history of that time I don't exactly know, but it was utter madness, in retrospect, to think that you would have a work-study system that had some Harvard guys cleaning the rooms of other Harvard guys. That didn't last very long, but it lasted for a while.

Q: You can see it in the kitchen. It's a little different waiting on tables.

NEWLIN: Even waiting on tables I think is not right. You didn't have waiting on tables when I was there. But it seems to me you had guys dishing out the food. I don't think you should have had that. Certainly you have work-study stuff and you can have jobs provided by the university but it should not be menial jobs where one Harvard guy is patently waiting on another Harvard guy.

Q: What sort of subjects were you taking?

NEWLIN: I majored in government. I joined the Army ROTC. I think that my eyes would have kept me out of the Air Force. I wonder why I didn't go into the Navy ROTC.

Q: Eyes were also a big factor there.

NEWLIN: Yes, but I think that part of it was the least resistance. I think the Army one, was the easiest to join, and thought to be the easiest to do. I think I just took the path of least resistance and joined the Army ROTC. It was a joke. We all treated it as a joke. I had many friends in it. One of the few things I can say in my defense was that I always took five courses. You only needed to take four courses at Harvard. But the idea of having a fourth of my education be ROTC, which was a jokit was an academic course and it had nothing to do with being an academic coursso I took an extra course so that I would not waste a quarter of my education on Harvard ROTC. I did government. The things that I remember really were the big lecture courses where really neat lecturers would go and do improvisational theateSam Beer in Dove Two and Fenley in Humanities Two, the Iliad and the Odyssey. He'd cry onto the stage at Sanders Theater. He would stride around it swooshing his cord. He would talk for exactly 50 minutes. At the end of his lecture, the time would ring and you had been given a piece of theater. Then you had your sections. You'd discuss things with your sections. It's something that Harvard education is widely criticized for, that you had these big professors who would give courses for hundreds of students and then you were really "taught" by your section men. But in fact, you were taught also by those of the professors who were good at it. It was a great treat and a thrill. Then you also had people like Arbidge giving a widely attended Shakespeare course, which I think was terrible. You read all the plays, supposedly, and it was very superficial. How could it be otherwise to read all the plays in the course?

Q: By the time you were at Harvard, did you find yourself pointed towards anything?

NEWLIN: No. It was one of my terrors. I got married in June of 1955. I went to my wedding instead of my Harvard gradation. I was still a very blasï¿½ young man. I did not appear in my Harvard yearbook. I would not go and have my picture taken. I joined a club at Harvard. We had a club system and I joined the club. Much of my life centered around my club, not my house. When I was married, the course I had done in ROTC? It was clear that I had a military obligation to take two years. But the question that my in-laws would ask of me was an obvious one: "What's Bill going to do." Bill didn't know what he was going to do. He was going to go into the Army. Then he was probably going to go to graduate school. He didn't really know in what. Then he was going to have to face the question of "What's Bill going to do?" I always envied my friends who knew they were going to be architects or who knew they were going to be doctors. They had this calling rather early on. I didn't have a calling early on. I majored in government because it let you do a range of things. It let you learn about the world around you. It seemed like a good thing to know how you were governed. It was a liberal artsy kind of a thing. I certainly wasn't prone to a science. I didn't do well in the sciences. The sciences I took at Harvard were the general sciences, not the hard sciences. I could have done English literature or something, but I didn't.

Q: What was the background of your wife and how did you meet her?

NEWLIN: She was a little Philadelphia social girl. I met her on Mount Desert Island. At one time, the village that both she and I were going to at that time, the village in which we later bought a house? I'm still married to her. By far the best thing I did in my college years was to court Louisa Folk and marry her when she was still young enough not to see through me. She was two years behind me. She married me at the end of her sophomore year at Radcliffe and went off to see the world with me. But you asked how I met her. I met her on Mount Desert Island. I was able to continue our courtship. She was a little Philadelphia girl and lived in Chestnut Hill. I lived in Wayne. But we didn't think of ourselves as living in those communities. We both lived in Philadelphia. There was a series of parties which we were able to see one another at. Our relationship grew at those parties. Of course, at Friday and Saturday dances and later at debutante parties, she only got one year of being a debutante. Of course, guys got many years. Girls got one year.

Q: Here you are, 1955. You graduated from Harvard. You got married. Where did you get married?

NEWLIN: In Philadelphia. Big wedding. My parents? I got married instead of going to my Harvard graduation. My father never really fully forgave me for it. He came to my graduation from the business school and that satisfied him a little bit. He was allowed to come to a Harvard graduation of mine, but he thought it was just shameful that I would not go to my graduation from Harvard College, that I was so blasï¿½ I said, "Mail me my diploma." Anyway, I was married in June. ROTC said, "When do you want to go in?" I didn't want to go. I didn't want to ever go in. I was married to this adorable girl who I was wildly in love with. One of the reasons I married heI would have kept on my carefree, happy go lucky life for a whilexcept, A) I thought that if I was going to get that girl, I'd better get her soon, and B) I was graduating. I was about to have a little bit of freedom and I wanted to be able to travel with that girl. In 1955, there was no way in God's earth I could have traveled with her without being married to her. I'd never have done that. I would never have asked her to do that. She wouldn't have done it. Didn't even think about it.

Q: It wasn't in the cards.

NEWLIN: Yes. The Army said, "When do you want to go in?" I said, "How about February?" They said, "Fine." Then I said to my parents and my parents-in-law and I think maybe even to my wife, "The damned Army won't take me until February." We went on a honeymoon starting in Spain and we stayed abroad until February. I didn't tell my parents we were going to do that, but she and I knew we were going to have a long honeymoon.

Q: I remember going to Europe in '55 with my brand new wife as a Foreign Service officer. Ten dollars a day would get you around.

NEWLIN: There was that book that we all had: "Europe on Five Dollars a Day." We lived on the bottom end of things and we were able to have a wonderful time. We'd go back and forth. We'd splurge. The honeymoon, of course, started at some splurgy places. But in Spain, even the splurgy places were really cheap. We started at the Hotel Formentor on the island of Majorca in Spain. I can't remember what it cost, but I imagine it was $12-14 a day or something like that. We stayed in one place on the island of Formentera, the smallest of the inhabited Balearics. We got our room and board and all the wine you could drink at dinner for 75 cents a day a person. Extraordinary. There was no running water, but it was very clean and people took very good care of you.

Q: While you were in Europe, did this do anything for you other than have a good time and a nice honeymoon?

NEWLIN: Oh, yes. It made me realize that there was a huge and fascinating world beyond the U.S. I had been to Europe before. I went to Europe with my mother and father in 1951, the year I graduated from St. Paul's. We went on a European trip then. My mother and father took my sister and me. My brother had just gotten married, so he did not come on this. He went to Maine and had a honeymoon. He eloped, a bit of a scandal. He married an entirely suitable girl by everybody's standards, but eloping was a big disappointment to my mother and father. They wanted a big wedding and all that kind of stuff. But we had this trip to Europe. I sort of learned there the fact that there was a big and fascinating world out there that I wanted to have a bigger part of. Then on our honeymoon, we messed around for a while just traveling. But then we went to Paris and got a little systematic about working on French. We went to the Alliance Franï¿½aise. Then we went to the University of Grenoble and took their course for foreigners. To finish that course, I would have had to stay until March. I said that the Army wanted me in February. I said to the Army, "Could I come in March?" They said, "Sure." So, that's how I was able to stay over and finish up that little course at Grenoble. Then we came back and joined the Army.

Q: You were in the Army from '56 to when?

NEWLIN: '58. Two years in the Army.

Q: What branch of the service did you go to?

NEWLIN: The Artillery. It was anti-aircraft artillery, which was kind of preposterous because the equipment that I was using? I tried to go back to Europe. You had these forms you fill out asking where you wanted to go. I said, "First choice: I want to go to French-speaking Europe. Second choice: anywhere in Europe. Third choice: anywhere outside of the Continental United States." So they sent me to South Dakota. Another guy in my ROTC at Fort Bliss, Texas, a guy from Georgia, had been asked where he wanted to go. He said, "Preferably the American South and certainly within the Continental United States. God knows nowhere away from the United States." He was sent to Hawaii. He really didn't want to go to Hawaii because there were a bunch of "slant eyed" people in Hawaii. He didn't want to have anything to do with people who weren't good old American Anglo-Saxon stock. He was a real cracker. At Fort Bliss, Texas, the class of ROTC people? Of course there were plenty of Harvard people battered into this and plenty of other East Coast people. By then, you'd go to St. Paul's and Harvard and you'd have a little network of people from all up and down the East Coast. We were told that there was a major who, if you could find somebody in your class who would switch orders with you, this major would fix it. But it had just been closed down. It had been very easy and now you couldn't get to this major. Well, I really didn't want to go to South Dakota. I couldn't find anybody with orders to Europe to switch with. But I did find this fellow named Crowe who had orders to Hawaii and he would switch. When he realized how anxious I was to switch, he thought he might make a good thing out of this. He said, "I'd just as soon get a little something for this if I'm going to go through all this trouble." This is a terrible thing to admit. I decided that I was not going to try to whitewash my career in this little interview. So, I said, "Well, what do you want, Crowe?" He had with him a catalogue and he showed me a Remington shotgun. It cost about $100. I said, "I think we can handle that." So, we did. It was up to me, however, to do all the paperwork. I went to see this major and his sergeant guarding him wouldn't let me see him. I just hung around. I found out what he looked like and all my free time I hung around out there until the major came out and I swung in beside him and said, "Major, I understand you were very helpful to the class before me when there were two people who had orders that they wanted to switch just switching them." He said, "Sure, I can still do that. They don't want me to do it, but I can still do that. Give me a copy of each of the orders and I'll switch them." I got a copy of each of the orders and we waited. Then my orders were changed from South Dakota to Georgia. From my point of view, I'd have rather gone to South Dakota. Crowe was ecstatic that this would work and he could go to Georgia. He'd be even close to his house. Well, it worked. I got orders to go to Hawaii and Crowe got orders to go to Georgia. He was happy and I was happy. I would have rather gone to Europe, but Hawaii was fine enough.

Q: So you went to Hawaii.

NEWLIN: I went to Hawaii. It was anti-aircraft, but it was just preposterous. I was a platoon leader. It was very good experience. I really enjoyed my time in the Army, which isn't what you might have expected from me. But you had a bunch of soldiers and you had a bunch of sergeants. It was easy to kind of win over the soldiers. You're smarter than they and I'm a nice guy. I'm an honest guy. By then, I was a hardworking guy. I'm married by now. I'm a little different. Being married changed me a little. I worked hard at being an Army officer. But you had to win over those sergeants. That was harder. You had to learn about the equipment. Here you were, you were just a second lieutenant, absolutely wet behind the ears. I learned about the equipment and learned how to do a good job and won over the sergeants and had a good platoon and had an interesting time. But the equipment that we had? We had Quad 50 machine guns mounted on half tracks, old World War II half tracks. The real trick was keeping the damned things rolling. You had twin 40s. We used to call them "pom pons." You used to see them in World War II movies on ships shooting. Ours were mounted on M40 tank chassis, open topped tank chassis. We had this ridiculous stuff. The way you were supposed to aim most of them was through these? You had manual ways you were supposed to aim at the airplane and track the airplane. You had concentric rings on the twin 40s. The only problem was, if a jet aircraft was within your range, it went too fast for the mount to track him. We'd taught our soldiers to track and we fired against drones using the system we were taught. But you had to tell them, "If it's a jet, you have to pick a space out there in front of where he's going and fire into it. Just don't move your damned thing at all and hope that he's going to fly through it." You couldn't track fast enough to track him. What this stuff was really used for in Korea was perimeter defense. It had a lot of fire power. So, if you could place it in good perimeter defense areas, it would be a good, round perimeter defense.

Q: I was on an island off North Korea during the Korean War. I was in the Air Force. We had an Army unit next to us with sandbags and a Quad 50 sitting on top of a hill. It put an awful lot of lead into any particular area.

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: You really were the first line of defense if the Japanese fleet had attacked Pearl Harbor.

NEWLIN: No. We were sitting up at Schofield Barracks. We would have had to be deployed for that. We were not deployed for that. Any surprise attack would have just got us. Our vehicles spent every night, unless we were out on maneuvers, in motor pools.

Q: I was being facetious. The Soviets had no carriers. The Japanese fleet was? But there you were.

NEWLIN: I was part of the 25th Infantry Division. We were called Tropic Lightning. We were a combat ready division. That is the most ridiculous bit of wrong nomenclature. We were nothing like combat ready. We were periodically being threatened with being sent to combat. Half our vehicles didn't work. It just was preposterous.

Q: Did the 25th get deployed to Korea or not?

NEWLIN: I think it finally did.

Q: I think it's only the Second Division that's there now. But at one point, I think there were three divisions and one of them, I believe, was the 25th.

NEWLIN: I think you're right.

Q: How did you find Army life with your wife?

NEWLIN: We were allowed to live off campus. The first year, we lived in Waikiki. We had to commute 40 minutes to the middle of the island. I commuted with some friends. We picked up some people on the way. We all had crummy cars that were commuting cars. My wife and I had two cars. We lived in a penthouse. It's the top apartment on a little block of four floors. The bottom apartments were four apartments per floor. The penthouse had two apartments per floor and therefore a nice terrace. It wasn't very expensive. The downstairs one cost $175 and ours cost $225. But it was very nice. You walked up to this place and then you had your terrace and could see the little yacht club from there. We had a little dinky, inexpensive boat. The Army was a job then. I went off to my job in the morning. I came back and had my wife and we had our life. Then we had a baby. I made a bad mistake. The doctor said that although four flights up was fine when she was pregnanshe'd get better and better at doing it; it was probably great exercisonce the baby came and you had schlep equipment up, it was not a good idea and we had to live on the ground floor. We couldn't find anything in Waikiki that we wanted. We moved out to Sunset Beach to a really isolated place with a beautiful house right on the beach. The reason we got it was because it was just such a fabulous deal. But there I plunked my little wife with her brand new baby out in the absolute sticks with nobody around her. It was just madness. It worked. We got a neat woman who helped her with the kid. We got through this. We had nice times living on the beach. But in retrospect, that was a very stupid thing to do.

Q: As you're getting ready to leave the Army, whither? What were you thinking about?

NEWLIN: Graduate school. The question was, what graduate school? I was influenced by my father. My father really wanted me to go to the Harvard Business School. My father was a very powerful man and he had a big influence on me. I rebelled against him a lot at different times. But I didn't have anything that was really drawing me. I wasn't then sure that I didn't want to go into business. I was realistic enough to realize that I wasn't ever going to be rich enough to not work or to do everything that I wanted with the money that I was being given. I knew I had to do some kind of work. Of course, I wanted to do some kind of work. I was realistic enough to know that many of the things that I liked to do were really pretty expensive. It was clear to me that I was going to have to earn them, that I wouldn't have a happy life unless I earned pretty much money. So, the business school had that appeal. Maybe it would help me earn quite a lot of money. Anyway, I applied to business school. You couldn't apply to the business school right away. I got out in August, I guess. I'm a little muddled on the timing here. But I had some time to kill in Philadelphia first. I nepotistically got a job in the training department of the biggest bank in Philadelphia, the First Pennsylvania Company. Then from the First Pennsylvania Company, I applied to the business school and it admitted me. So, I went to the business school. There was some time living in central Philadelphia with my new wife and our new baby before I went to the B school. We lived downtown in Philadelphia in a tiny house in a very old part of Philadelphia, Elfreth's Alley, which bills itself as the oldest continuously inhabited street in the Western Hemisphere. I can't believe it's true. On Elfreth's Alley Day when visitors come down and traipse through the houses, that's what they say.

Q: Was the business school two years?

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: This was famous because of Case and all that.

NEWLIN: That's right.

Q: How did you find it?

NEWLIN: The first year was fascinating. It was just a really interesting year. You had about 90 students, a very interesting bunch, not necessarily quite as uniformly bright as you would have been led to believe. It's hard to get into the Business School and it's got sort of a mystique about it. There were some kids who were absolutely brilliant and others who seemed rather ordinary to me. I'm sure that they had areas in which they were brilliant. You did all of your classes with this same bunch of students. You'd sit in these amphitheaters and could see everybody. You'd have a professor who would come in. You'd have been given a case to study. You'd have a professor who would come in and ask a couple of provocative questions and you were off and running. You didn't have to speak. There were always some students who barely spoke in class. But I decided early on that it was insurance to speak in class. If you spoke in most classes, had something to say, then when you came and did the exam, if you had a bad exam, you were not certainly going to fail the course because the professor knew every damn day you came in and prepared your work and knew stuff. It was just more fun to participate in class. So, I participated in class. There were the little rivalries. You often with certain students would kind of go through? It was like the British parliamentary question period. You would say, "As my distinguished colleague, who regrettably is almost always off base on questions of this nature, has again made the grievous error of assuming that? whereby if only he had? he would have." You just sort of played it back and forth. But behind it all was the best analysis you could make of the case. You had seven disciplines you were looking at. The cases were all very different. They dealt with different kinds of problems. It was a fascinating year.

Then the second year was a completely ordinary year. You had courses and went off and took a course with a bunch of other people you didn't particularly know and they were not nearly as interesting to me as that first year.

Q: Looking towards the Foreign Service, were you getting a good dose of economic analysis?

NEWLIN: Not as much. We had one course that was economic analysis, but it was the second year? Having now poo-pooed the second year, in the second year, I did get more economic analysis. After the B school, I went off to the graduate school. There, I got a pretty good dose of economic analysis. I took all the economic analysis you could take at the Harvard Business School. I took all the economic analysis you could take in the one year program at the Fletcher School. So, by the time I finished, I thought of that period? If I had gone to law school, it would have been three years. So, I thought I would do the B school and the Fletcher School and go into training for the Foreign Service. By then, I was looking at the Foreign Service.

Q: How about business?

NEWLIN: If I had gone into business, I would have gone into my father's businesnot with him in business, although in fact? By then, he was mostly doing mergers. He would take a big position in a company that was doing very badly but that had a lot of good assets. He would take a big position in a company that was poorly managed. Then he would bring these assets to a larger, better managed company in the same field and sell the company that he had a big position in to a larger company and, of course, make a profit on the sale. He thought that he could bring me into that sort of thing with him, although he acknowledged that one of the reasons it worked for him was his great head. He had a track record and was credible. If a brash young man came in with the same proposal, it would have been harder to sell. But I certainly didn't want to work with Dad. I had an uneasy relationship with him. I was in awe of him. He was a very poor teacher. He was very impatient. I have some stories of his impatience as a teacher when he was much younger and when I was much younger. I didn't want to work with my father, I knew that. Perhaps one of the things that drew me to the Foreign Service was that it was a way that I could not work with my father that would not be difficult to explain to him. He had always thought the Foreign Service would be a good career idea.

Q: The Foreign Service is always considered a respectable career and something that one can aspire to.

Had you started to do anything Foreign Servicewise while you were at Harvard Business School, taking exams, etc.?

NEWLIN: I failed the first written exam. This is something that I would like to bleep out, but I can't bleep it out. I failed the first written exam. I failed it on the word portion of it, which was what got me to Harvard. I had the highest score in the oral portion of the SATs in my class at St. Paul's School, which annoyed many of my teachers because I didn't have that good grades. Then I came in with the highest SAT score in the word portion of it. But the first time I took the oral exam, I did badly on the timing of it. I spent too long on one section of it and then hurried through another section and failed it. I think, in fact, that's one of the reasons that I went to the Fletcher School. For one thing, I had to stall. I had to take the written part again. I had to do something while I was waiting to take it. It seemed reasonable to say, "I'm going to go to the Fletcher School," which is a good training for what I now had decided that I might do.

Q: You went to the Fletcher School when?

NEWLIN: I graduated from the Fletcher School in '60.

Q: How did you find that year?

NEWLIN: It was a good year. I had babies at the time. My wife, when I went back to the B school, went back to Radcliffe. She had one baby between the end of summer school after her junior year. Back to class for her senior year. So, we were very busy with babies then. Then she had another baby when I was at Fletcher. So, I wasn't as involved with my classmates as most of my classmates. But I enjoyed the Fletcher School. I enjoyed the courses at the Fletcher School. I enjoyed the foreign affairs aspect of the Fletcher School. I enjoyed the foreign student aspect of the Fletcher School.

Q: Did you take the written exam again?

NEWLIN: Yes, I took it again and passed it. I can't remember quite when in all these things I passed it. I was able to take the oral exam either while I was at Fletcher or right after. It was that fall that I came into the Foreign Service and came down to Washington. It was the fall of '60. I moved down to Washington. I moved to Washington completely on the basis of having been accepted by the Foreign Service. But they didn't give me orders. I said, "To heck with them. I've got to move my family. I've got to find a place to live and everything." So, I moved my family before I had orders. Then I got orders and put in for moving expenses. They hassled me about it because I had moved before I had orders. I said, "Be reasonable, for heaven's sakes. Here is this guy with a family of three who's been told he's going to be coming to Washington and I have to move my family and set them up." They paid.

Q: Do you remember the oral exam?

NEWLIN: Yes, I remember it pretty well. In the oral exam, the scuttlebutt is that it's "good guy-bad guy and middle guy who doesn't care" and that they decide who is going to be the good cop and who is going to be the bad cop and who is going to be the middle guy. In mine certainly there was a good guy, a bad guy, and a middle guy. The good guy was the head of the panel. The bad guy, he just clearly didn't like anything about the cut of my jib from the moment I walked into there. There was a guy who spent most of his time reading the paper. He kept glancing over the headlines in the newspaper. But the bad guy would find areas of weakness and then he would drill in on them. The area that he seemed to be the most knowledgeable about and I was the least knowledgeable about was the labor movement. He kept grilling on the labor movement. The only thing I can say in my defense here? I didn't know very much about the labor movement. I didn't answer these questions very well. Looking back on it, I knew a little more about the labor movement than my answers would suggest. But I had had a friend who was married to George Kennan's daughter, a beautiful, wonderful woman who still lives in Washington. My friend was not up to her caliber and certainly was not up to George Kennan's caliber. He took the Foreign Service exam. He reported to us that they asked him, "What do you think about the transcendental movement?" He just couldn't remember who the hell the transcendentalists were. He knew he couldn't admit he didn't know who the transcendentalists were, so he said, "Well, it's pretty interesting." Of course, they pushed him on it and finally he was forced to admit he didn't know who the transcendentalists were. That completely threw him off and he did a terrible exam and failed it. So, I knew that if I didn't know, I was going to say, "You know, this is a terrible thing to admit because certainly anybody who is going into the Foreign Service ought to be able to answer that question, but right now, I can't." Several times, I had to say, "I'm sorry, but I can't answer that question." The good guy would come in and save me. They'd keep coming back to the labor movement. He would say, "Mr. Newlin is weak in this area. We will take judicial note of that and move on to other areas." So, I was kind of gotten off the hook by the good guy. And then the bad guy tried to get me on economic policy, which he thought he was good at, too. I had just come out of the B school. I had taken all of their economics. I had taken all the economics Fletcher had to offer. There was a place where I was better than he was. He tried to pin me down and I would get it. I remember specific things there where he would try to pin me down and I would get it. So, I ticked him off a little bit perhaps, but I answered the questions pretty well. Then at the very end, they said, "Mr. Newlin, do you read very much?" I said, "I read pretty much. I've been at these schools, so I've had to do the reading associated with the schools for the past few years. But even within that context, I read pretty much outside of my school stuff." Then they asked me aboumost of the time it was the bad guy picking book12 books. Every single, solitary book he picked was a book that I not only had read but had either read pretty well once and knew pretty well or had read recently. It was just complete chance. My wife couldn't have picked the books better. But he picked books that I knew something about. I was able to say something about each of those books. I remember at the end of that exam, I thought, "Okay, you took the written exam twice because you knew you had done a bad job the first time around and you knew you could do a much better job. But you gave this about your best shot. You were about as lucky as you could be. If that isn't good enough, go and?" I had a job offer at the time from the international section of the First National City Bank. It was a pretty good offer. I was tempted by the First National City Bank. I thought, "If the Foreign Service doesn't take you, you can go with the First National City Bank. You're not going to do this exam better." They came in and the first thing they said was, "Well, Mr. Newman, we certainly have established you don't know anything about the labor movement." Then they went on with other places that I had been weak. Then they said, "Oh, by the way, make no mistake about it. We want you and we hope that you will come with us." That was my oral exam.

Q: I think we'll close this session at this point. We'll pick this up in the fall of 1960 and talk about entering the Foreign Service.

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Today is December 7, 2001. You joined the Foreign Service in 1960. What was your Foreign Service class like? Can you characterize it as far as male, female, minorities, where they came from?

NEWLIN: My impression of them was that it was just what it said that it was going to be, that it was a pretty good cross section of American life. Obviously, of well educated American life. But it certainly didn't have an Ivy League predominance and it didn't seem to me to have an East Coast predominance. It certainly had a pretty good scattering of minorities, probably not as many as it would have today. It certainly had quite a lot of women in it. I can't give you figures on any of that. But certainly the women didn't stand out. The minorities were more in the minority than the women, of course. I thought of it as just about what they said it was going to be: a cross section.

Q: Did any of the people go on to bigger and better things in the Foreign Service?

NEWLIN: The only one who comes right to mind is someone that I'm still in touch with: Winston Lord. He went on to bigger and better things.

Q: I've had a long series of interviews with him.

NEWLIN: I'm sure they're very interesting.

Q: How did you find the introduction to the Foreign Service, the basic officer course?

NEWLIN: We had two guys? I've forgotten their names. I forget things quite extraordinarily. At that time, there was a television program on. I think it was Ed Dirksen and someone else. I think it was two Republicans, a couple of senators, who chatted back and forth on issues and sort of joked with one another. But we nicknamed these guys "Ed and Charlie."

Q: Dirksen was the Republican minority leader. Charles was the Republican minority leader in the House.

NEWLIN: They were both Republicans.

Q: They had this show because they were good with quips and all.

NEWLIN: Nowadays you wouldn't get two Republicans doing it. You'd try to balance it. Anyway, these guys kind of quipped back and forth and were very nice. At one point I had a talk with one of them. He explained why he was doing what he was doing. He thought it was because his career had gotten derailed because he had stood up for somebody who was not getting decent treatment. I think it was a minority situation. He thought that derailed his career and that's why he was teaching kids what was going on in the Foreign Service. It was not very high-powered. It was very relaxed.

Q: This is something that has been brought up in other interviews by people who have reached the senior ranks later on: that, rather than putting what is in the Foreign Service's estimation its best foot forward to train the new generation, and give them a couple of years of seeing what a really hot shot Foreign Service officer is like, we put people off to one side. They may be perfectly fine people and may be better educators, but it's not what you really should be doing if you're looking at this in a practical manner. You should be inspiring the young people coming up.

NEWLIN: We certainly got passed in front of some senior and bright people. It would be very hard to get really good people to sit still for that job of shepherding this bunch of kids around. It's not a very interesting job. You don't have enough time with them to really have really good intellectual interaction. You're not the one who's really there. You're the shepherd.

Q: That's a good point.

NEWLIN: It may be that you would do better not to have Foreign Service officers do it. But in fact, I think that it's better to have Foreign Service officers. It's not bad the way it's done. These were very nice guys.

Q: You're making a very good point that it would be hard to get people to do this. They really don't have that much control over the? They're just gathering together people to come and talk.

NEWLIN: That's right, more than anything else. They did stuff themselves, but we went and saw places and people came to us. They were the ones who were the glue to all that operation.

Q: You finished this when?

NEWLIN: I went to Paris in February of '61. So, this must have finished just before going to Paris.

Q: As you went through it, had you decided in your own mind on what your career path might be and where you would like to go at the beginning?

NEWLIN: I certainly knew where I wanted to go in the beginning. I wanted to go back to Europe. But what I really wanted to do was to stay in Washington. I had three children. I had a wife and three children. We had come down to Washington from Cambridge. I mentioned in passing before that I came down before I actually had orders. You have to settle your family. I was in a little sublet in Georgetown. We were looking for a house to buy. Our intention absolutely was to stay in Washington for that first tour. I had been led to believe that that would be no trouble, that most people wanted to go overseas, most people were champing at the bit, and that if somebody wanted to stay, he'd be able to. So, we were looking for a house. We found a house and bought it. It was a complete shambles. Not structurally at all. It was very sound. But the inside had old wallpaper on it from a different era. The old couple had been there for a long time. It needed a lot of work before anybody was going to move in. We thought we were going to have plenty of time to have this done right. I remember very well going off to get my assignment. I had asked to stay in the Department and if we couldn't stay in the Department, French-speaking Western Europe. I got back to our house. First, when they were reading out the assignments, the guy who read it out kind of pretended he couldn't read mine and put it upside-down and fiddled with it. Then he said, "Paris" and there were oohs and ahs. Most people didn't want to go to Paris. Most people wanted to go to more exotic places than Paris. But I wanted to go to Paris. I wanted to stay home. So, I came back to my wife and said, "I have bad news. We can't stay in Washington for this tour." My wife's little face fell. She was up on the stairs. Then I said, "But if you couldn't be in Washington, where would you like to go?" Her face began to brighten. She said, "Paris." That was our first tour. It meant we had to get our house ready very quickly to rent, but we did and rented it and left.

Q: You were in Paris from 1962 to when?

NEWLIN: To 1964.

Q: What was your job in Paris?

NEWLIN: They had a new system then. Junior officers when they went overseas rotated throughout the embassy. I went to Paris on the Queen Mary at government expense, first class with my three children. We had a lovely trip over. On the boat with us was another guy who had been to Harvard Law as a graduate student. He was unmarried, but he and I were friendly. Here are these two Harvard graduate degree guys arriving in Paris. We are taken in hand by the personnel officer. We both want to know what we're going to do. He said, "Oh, you're not going to do anything. You're here to observe. You're going to be sent around throughout different offices in the mission and you'll observe what they do and learexcept when you're doing visa work. Then you'll be really working. But the rest of the time, you're just supposed to really observe." You can imagine how that struck us. We were at the beginning of our diplomatic careers ready to change the world and we're being told that we're being put on hold. But I had met a guy before I went out who was interested to learn that I was going to Paris. He wrote for "The New York Times." His name was Ed Dale. He wrote economic stuff. He said, "I've got a friend in Paris in the embassy. I'll write him and tell him to look out for you. His name is Jacques Reinstein. He is the economic minister-counselor there." I said to this personnel guy, "Okay, but I'd like to talk to Mr. Reinstein." He said, "You can't talk to Mr. Reinstein. Don't be ridiculous. You're you and he's the third guy in the embassy." Then we went to lunch. I called Reinstein's office. His secretary put me right through to him. He said, "Oh, I've been waiting for you to come. What are you doing for lunch?" I said, "Nothing." We had lunch together. He said, "I want you to work for me. I want you to work very closely in my office as my assistant. When can you start?" I said, "I don't see why I couldn't start now." He said, "That's fabulous." I said, "But I've got this thing with the personnel director." He said, "Don't worry about the personnel director. I'll take care of the personnel director." I guess I called him. I said, "I've just had lunch with Mr. Reinstein and he has told me to report for work at 2:00. He says that he'll arrange details." Pasqual could barely speak, he was so furious. But that's where I started. I started as Jacques Reinstein's flunky in the Economic Section. He needed a flunky. He was very disorganized. He was brilliant. I had great respect for him and was very fond of him, but he was very disorganized. It was very hard to work for him. It wasn't so hard for me to work for him because he took me as his alter ego. The guy who got off the boat with me and I were the most junior persons in the embassy. Therefore, I posed no threat whatsoever to him. I didn't mind when he spoke bluntly to me. I had no ego that I was protecting. So, we got along just fine. I, of course, sat in on all these meetings, which was a very interesting thing to me. I view perhaps that what Pasqual said was going to happen, happened. But in fact, it didn't quite. Reinstein really needed an assistant and I became that assistant. It was a great deal more than just looking over his shoulder. Then I would work closely with all the guys in the Economic Section, who came to see me as an ally working with Reinstein. They'd come to a meeting and Reinstein would say to do a paper one way. The guy would say, "Yes, we could do it that way, but if we did, we'd bump into this problem." He'd say, "Yes, you're right. Do it this way." He'd end up with three or four ways he had said. The guys would come back to me and say, "Alright, Newlin, what in the world does he want?" We'd go through our notes and try to figure it out. If we couldn't figure it out, the guys would say to me, "You're going to see if we can sort this out." I would go back in and say, "I'm thinking about that talk you had with Mike Ely. You guys were talking about a lot of things." From my talk with Ely, I'd know how he wanted to do it. I'd say, "Ely thinks this, this, and this. How would that be?" Reinstein would say, "Yes, except make this this." I could take that back to Ely and it would clarify things. It was an interesting position which clearly put me into the substantive loop, albeit in a peripheral way.

Q: Jacques Reinstein has made quite a name for himself in the Foreign Service. He was responsible for setting up the economic course, which was sort of the pearl of the State Department educational system.

NEWLIN: Yes. He was a very, very bright guy. It was a wonderful experience. He was a lonely sort of a guy who needed to have people around him. He couldn't possibly eat alone. If he didn't have someone to eat with, I kind of had to keep myself free so that he could say, "Come on, Newlin, let's go to lunch."

Q: What were you gathering about the economic situation in France at this time and American interests there?

NEWLIN: The big issue then was the beginning of the Common Market. The French were beginning? We weren't quite sure how the Common Market was going to play out. There was the common agricultural policy. My recollection of it is that Washington did not wish to believe and did not wish to hear that we really were going to be faced with a common tariff and that we were going to be the outsiders in Europe. It was very clear to the embassy that that's exactly what was going to happen. Reinstein would report that that was what was going to happen. Washington would come back and not wish to hear it. Reinstein had good relations with the top economic guy in the foreign office and the top French guy in the economic office. I think he was very well informed. I think that Reinstein kind of made himself a little bit unpopular in Washington. He kept coming back with this bad news.

Q: Who was our ambassador?

NEWLIN: It was Gavin. Kennedy had just come in and he picked Gavin, who had liberated France. 81st Airborne.

Q: What was your impression of the French bureaucracy and how they dealt with the United States? This was high de Gaulle times. De Gaulle was staking out a separate course. Was this reflected at the professional level on the economic side?

NEWLIN: That's precisely what we were dealing with. They were staking out their separate course and they were not listening to us. They had no intention of listening to us. They were going to stake out their course. They were negotiating with Europe and they were negotiating with England. We had views on how they should do this negotiation and they didn't give a damn to hear our views. I think that that's quite what we were dealing with.

Q: One of the interesting things is when a junior officer comes to an embassy, you're the new boy on the block, your antenna are out there. You're picking up emanations that maybe the older hands don't pick up. What was your feeling with Reinstein and others that you were observing about dealing with France? Was France just a pain in the ass? Particularly de Gaulle? Was it a matter of admiration for France and we were going to work things out? How were we coming at it?

NEWLIN: It's all of the above. I don't want to say that France was a pain in the ass and I don't want to say that we had admiration for France and we thought we were going to work all this out. In Washington, there was still the feeling that France was going to do what we wanted them to do, that basically we were so much more powerful than they that we were going to be able to call certain shots.

Q: George Ball was pretty much in control of things. He was a great Europeanist.

NEWLIN: Absolutely. Ball came over several times. I sat in on Reinstein's talks with Ball and had some time with Ball as a fly on the wall. Ball got it, but there were people in Washington who didn't get it.

Q: Did you have any dealings with the French bureaucracy?

NEWLIN: Not very much. I didn't have to arrange Reinstein's representational stuff. Most of the time, it was done in restaurants. I didn't do that kind of thing.

Q: Did you have any feel for the bureaucracy? I'm told that the crï¿½me de la crï¿½me of the French system is people dealing with economic matters.

NEWLIN: Yes. They had very bright people. They had very bright people who were doing the "chef de cabinet" (office director) job.

Q: That is the aide but more than the aide. It's a professional person who holds the Department together.

NEWLIN: Absolutely. Reinstein liked to think that I was his chef de cabinet. But in fact, the people that I was dealing with, who were the real chefs de cabinet of the people that he wanted me to be dealing with, knew the issues much better than I did. It was hard for me, particularly at the beginning, to see these guys one on one and really have a very intelligent conversation with them about what they were working on. They knew it so well and it was all so new to me. It was new to me when I left, too.

Q: It takes years to build up an expertise in something like that.

Sometimes a junior officer brought in to be the staff assistant to the head of a large section? How did you find dealing with Mike Ely and the other people in the Economic Section? Did you find you had a problem?

NEWLIN: No. They were very nice people. We were very lucky with the people who were there. Tom Smith was there, a lovely man. I posed no threat to any of them. I was in a position to be helpful to them and wanted to be helpful to them, wanted it to work. They wanted it to work and I wanted it to work and Reinstein wanted it to work. Having me there helped make it work. I didn't feel that we had anything but a good relationship.

Q: How long did you keep the job?

NEWLIN: I guess about a year and a half. Finally, they kind of found me and decided they had to do something else with me. They sent me to NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). I worked with John Auchincloss. There, Thomas Finletter was our ambassador.

Q: He at one point was Secretary of the Air Force.

NEWLIN: Yes. The issue there was the multilateral force, an absolutely cockamamie idea. I always thought it was a cockamamie idea. I thought that when I was there. I think it now. That was what we were trying to get everyone to agree with.

Q: Within the NATO and American embassy community, what were you picking up about the view of de Gaulle?

NEWLIN: De Gaulle was very aloof and very stubborn. De Gaulle was going to do it his way. It was just shortly after that that they moved the NATO headquarters. We were still in Paris when I was there. De Gaulle essentially threw NATO out.

Q: Was there a lot of gnashing of teeth?

NEWLIN: Yes. That's my recollection.

Q: Were you there during the assassination of Kennedy?

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: How did that play out?

NEWLIN: Oh, it was a terrible time. It was the time you could say the French were the closest to us. There was a great deal of sympathy in France for the American loss of Kennedy. They had admired Kennedy. Of course, they admired Mrs. Kennedy. At every level can't speak for the de Gaulle levethere was an outpouring of sympathy and understanding in France. In fact, to an extent after this Trade Tower bombing [September 11, 2001], our French friends, many of them, made a big effort to call us, send us notes, send us sympathetic things that had been written about it.

Q: How did you and your wife find Paris?

NEWLIN: We loved it in Paris. We lived right in Paris. We lived in the 16th. We would have rather lived on the Left Bank somewhere, but we had these three kids. We had to have a biggish apartment. The easiest place to find biggish apartments is in the very bourgeois 16th. We early on found quite a good jeune fille au pair who stayed with us the whole time and in fact came back to Washington with us, which had several implications. Of course, she didn't speak any English, so it meant that the kids all learned French very quickly. French became the first language of all three of them. Our oldest son learned to read first in French. My wife and I just loved living in Paris. We had gone to the University of Grenoble in the winter of '55'-56, part of our extended honeymoon. We had gotten to know a lot of young French people there. They were back in Paris when we came back, working in junior jobs in the various ministries. Very shortly after I started working with Reinstein, I gave a cocktail party. We invited all these people. Maybe we had been there four months. We were well settled into our apartment and this was our first big function. I sent Reinstein a list of the people who were coming. I gave a little squib on who they were or who their daddies were. I put them in context. He was quite flabbergasted. He said, "Newlin, what is this? You have just come." Well, I explained that it was just the Grenoble mafia. It turned out that those people who we knew in Grenoble all had come back and their daddies had been interesting people or they now were doing interesting things. It had nothing to do with my having worked very fast in my first four months in Paris. It was just that we had kept in touch with these people. They were there and we had picked back up with them. But we had a lovely time in Paris.

Q: As it comes to all men, in 1964, you had to leave-

NEWLIN: Well, we haven't quite finished my Paris tour. Just before I left, they decided that I had never done any visa work and that everybody had to do some visa work. I had to do some visa work. I'll tell you something that happened when I was in Paris. Twice when I was in Paris, people encouraged us to be interested in consular work. One was when Perry Cully, the consul general, came in. He got all the junior officers together and said, "You guys think you want to be political officers and you don't. Look around you. The best and the brightest all want to be political officers. If some of you will let yourself be consular officers, you'll have interesting work and you will rise in the Foreign Service more quickly. Don't forget that." Also, John Auchincloss said essentially the same thing. He said he had been in a consulate in Italy somewhere. I heard him talking Italian to his maid. He said, "I had a wonderful time. That was very interesting work. You really had things to do." I had this one little brief tour with the consular section and the visa section. I probably made a bigger influence, a bigger change on what went on there than anywhere else. When I came in, I was "framed" by the young officers who were running the Non-Immigrant Visa Section. They told me how to deal with students. They said, "Students are a real problem. They want to go over there and just knock around footloose and fancy free. Of course, you can't let them. You've got to have enough money to live over there. Therefore, you've got to prove they're going to come back. You need this and that and this and that letter to say they're going to come back. You've got to have notarized things from their university that they're coming back. B, you have to show that they're not going to become public charges. $400 is enough to show that they won't become public charges." So, of course, this same wad of $400 got passed from student to student. It was just preposterous. You come in with $400 and you've satisfied the requirement. It's just ridiculous. You come in with all these letters in handwriting from somebody. You've got no idea who it is. It says he's going to come back and therefore he's met the requirements, so you send him off. So, these guys all evacuated. They all left. I was left as the senior American officer in the Non-Immigrant Visa Section. I had been there two weeks longer than the guy who was behind me. So, I got to train a bunch of people. I said, "When students come in - you can recognize a studenyour job is to use that as an opportunity to clear out the waiting room. Students don't need to take very long. You want to send them off enthusiastic. So, establish to your satisfaction that they're students and get them out of here. Tell them to have a good time." I didn't make them scrape together $400. I didn't make them get a whole bunch of useless letters. I think that was the way to treat students and I think that was a good thing to do. I don't know how long it lasted after I left.

Q: Of course, you knew the French would come back for the most part. Some of them would get jobs. The present president of France, Jacques Chirac, went to the United States as a student. At one point, he was working in McDonald's or someplace flipping hamburgers.

NEWLIN: That was not something that was in our control. I didn't want to try to fight that losing battle.

Q: In some other countries, you've got real problems with the students because they don't come back. But when you're dealing with the French, they come back. What's the point?

NEWLIN: I just didn't think any of these people were trying to emigrate to the U.S. If they were, they could surely get their wad of $400 and letter saying that they were going to come back. There was nothing that was being done before that would prevent the serious one who wished to emigrate from doing so.

Q: It was also one of these bureaucratic things that gives the officer a feeling of power and makes for ill will.

NEWLIN: That's exactly what I thought. The other good thing that happened to me in the visa section is that I got to give the Beatles their visa for their first tour in the U.S. They came to the office to get their visas.

Q: Were they quite renowned at that time?

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: Did this cause a lot of stir in the office?

NEWLIN: Yes, absolutely. I decided how we would deal with the? There was another officer there, George Lowe. He took two visas and I took two visas. We had a lottery in the office to see which of the French staff were going to get their autographs signed. One person was going to be allowed to get autographs done. The Beatles were very cute about doing that. We made it quick for them, of course. But I said, "What's it like being a Beatle? What do you like the most?" They said, "The nicest thing about being a Beatle is not having to do things like this. You get people who do stuff for you."

Q: Time moved on. 1964. Whither?

NEWLIN: In '64, I came back to the Department and was assigned to the Trade Agreements Section of the Department in the Economic Office. We were working on the working on the Kennedy Round of the trade negotiations. I remember then talking to Winston Lord. He was working in a staff job. He spent a lot of his time on the way up in staff jobs. I was very pleased not to be in a staff job. I was very pleased to have my own little niche. But it was not a happy time at all for me. The first half of the trade agreements time-

Q: You were there for two years?

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: '64-'66.

NEWLIN: Yes. Robert Hill was my boss. Len Fessenden was my number two. About halfway through, Solomon was Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs. I was asked to come up and interview to be a flunky in that office. I turned it down. It was a dumb thing to do. I sort of thought I had my own little niche and I wanted to work on policy. I didn't want to be working for somebody else. But it was a dumb thing to do.

Q: In a bureaucratic sense, it was.

NEWLIN: Yes. I was not a very bureaucratic player. The second half of my trade agreements period was probably the most horrible time I've ever had in my life. I mentioned drinking to you. I know the drinking helped get me into this mess. It certainly kept me from getting out of it. There was an interagency meeting that was pulling together some studies that were going to back up the work of our delegation in Geneva on the Kennedy Round of trade negotiations. A guy named Trouthoff was heading up this interagency meeting. I was representing the State Department in the trade agreements from the Trade Agreements Office. One thing they needed was a paper on pulp and paper. There were some people in Commerce who said, "We'll do the pulp and paper paper. We'll turn to the State Department for help on things like shipping rates and stuff like this." These were the paper specialists, the Commerce Department. For some damned reason, in the first place, these meetings happened in the afternoon. I'd always have a couple of bourbon on the rocks at lunch. I'd be a little half in the bag by the afternoon and feeling a little cocky. I said, "I'll do the pulp and paper paper. That's fine. The State Department will take on the pulp and paper paper." Well, I had no idea how to write the damned pulp and paper paper. I didn't have the slightest clue. Rather than either admitting to my boss that I didn't or going to these Commerce people and saying, "Now I really need help on this," I didn't do any of those things. I just tried to find out stuff about pulp and paper. I never really learned about pulp and paper. I never wrote the thing. Nobody in any of these offices ever asked to kind of see where I was in the thing. They'd periodically ask me if it was finished. I said, "No." I'd carry stuff home with me. But I never really started the pulp and paper paper, let alone finished it. No one in the office or overseas or in my office or in the other office looked over my shoulder at all. I kind of foundered. Finally, somebody named Ernie Preeg, who was out with the mission, a very bright young guy who knew something about pulp and paper or found out about it, wrote this paper. But I never read the damned paper. It was just sort of terrible. Here I had this one major assignment to do which I was not doing.

Q: You mentioned drinking. How did you find it in Paris, the wine and diplomatic life?

NEWLIN: It began to be a problem. Lunch was always my big problem there. It was just so lovely going out to one of the little local restaurants that were for office working people. We're still where the dollar goes far. The French are still living a very civilized life. There was no fast food there then. Your lunch was a little piece of sole or a little piece of veal. You'd have a little glass of white wine with your first course and two glasses of red wine with your main course. When the afternoon came around, you weren't as sharp as you were in the morning. I remember at the time, thinking about Squibner in the Melville story. He copied out everything in a fine, beautiful hand. In the afternoon, he kept bloodying his copy book.

Q: Was anybody saying, "Hey, Bill, watch it?"

NEWLIN: Never ever. This pattern gets worse. Never once in my whole Foreign Service career, which ended with my being a very serious drinker? I gave up drinking 13 years ago, but it was after I left Nice that I gave it up. I had gotten it quite under control by Nice, but it would still escape me from time to time. Never once in the Foreign Service did anyone say, "You know, you really ought to pay a little more attention to what you drink." I think it's quite extraordinary and I don't know how many others of me there were.

Q: A lot of us were aware of the three martini lunch, but there were people who would disappear and have a very long lunch. I can remember people saying, "Well, you really ought to see So and So in the morning. He goes out and has a long lunch. He's really not quite up to it." It was sort of almost joking, but it was a way around. It really wasn't a very positive attitude. "So and So's got a problem and we'll just work around it, but we won't try to make So and So?"

NEWLIN: No one spoke to this So and So.

Q: In general, it was just kind of known, which is unfortunate, I think.

NEWLIN: Yes. Clearly, it was not good for my Foreign Service life and career. You can't go through life largely sozzled and do as good a job as you would have liked to have done.

Q: Were there any repercussions about not doing this paper?

NEWLIN: Yes. After the first half of my trade agreements, I got a rather glowing report which was written not by Hill but by Fessenden. I got a quick promotion out of it. By then, I had gotten two promotions. Then my second report from trade agreements was quite a poor one. It slowed me down from getting my next promotion.

Q: Was Frances Olson a name to be reckoned with?

NEWLIN: I don't remember her very well.

Q: I think it was more during the '70s when she reached her prime where she was quite instrumental as a civil servant in developing a strong economic cadre in the State Department.

In '66, where did you go?

NEWLIN: Guatemala.

Q: How did this come about?

NEWLIN: The way it was always explained to me was that in your first three assignments, one was going to be in the State and two would be overseas in different parts of the world. So, I had to go somewhere different. I don't remember quite how much say I had in where I was to go. But there were various choices I had. One of them was San Salvador. It seemed like a very nice country. It was Spanish-speaking. I said, "Okay, I'll take the San Salvador job." Then that got changed at the last minute to be a Guatemala job and I was sent to Guatemala.

Q: You were there from '66-'68?

NEWLIN: That's right.

Q: What were you doing in Guatemala?

NEWLIN: I was a political officer. My beat was the insurgency. It was a terrible time to be in Guatemala. It was a terrible time to be in Guatemala in any capacity. It was certainly a terrible time to be in Guatemala as an American political officer if you had any liberal leanings. What was happening in Guatemala at that time was that the Guatemalan government was systematically wiping out all of the good people in all of the liberal institutions, which included labor, the church, the universities, and anything in-between. But thousands of people were being disappeared. The line was that they were being disappeared by right-wing vigilante groups. That was utter bullshit. The right-wing vigilante groups did not exist. They existed in name. There was an organization that was known as the Mano Blanco [the White Hand]. It put out papers. It threatened people. People would disappear. It was said that they had been taken by the Mano Blanco. The Mano Blanco would say that they had taken these people. But in fact there was no organization at all called the Mano Blanco. It was a just government security forces operating clandestinely. The U.S. government was up to its ears in this. I did not know that officially. I don't know who in the embassy knew it officially.

You would talk to Guatemalans who would tell you that there was no Mano Blanco. You would report that this or that Guatemalan had told you that there was no Mano Blanco. But I don't know at my level, second secretary of the embassy, officially that this is the government that's doing this. But I know it unofficially because I'm not dumb. Everybody knows it unofficially. At that time, Gordon Mein was our ambassador. He was later killed there. There was a top secret report from INR that talked about the right-wing vigilantes operating in the capital who were killing off the liberal elements. It made me furious. This was a piece of paper that was theoretically going to go to the top levels of the government. It was a top secret magazine that they had put out at that time. It was to tell people who weren't normally following Guatemalan affairs what was going on in Guatemala. It was sort of like "Time Magazine" would come out and periodically have articles on different countries. This was the article on Guatemala. I said to Gordon Mein that this made me furious. Our reporting was saying that everyone was saying this was the government doing it, not a right-wing organization. Here they were reporting to our government that these were right-wing organizations doing it. He said, "What do you want to do about it?" I said, "I want to take it on head on. I want to say, 'This report from the INR is contradicting embassy reporting. It is not true. It's misleading our senior officials.'" He said, "Why don't you write it up and let's take a look at it?" I wrote up a two-page paper that was very blunt and direct. I gave it to him. Then he took that and gave it to my boss, Matt Smith, a lovely man who spoke completely fluent Spanish. I never got very good at Spanish. I didn't know any Spanish when I went in. I went to the Foreign Service Institute. I got the 2+ that you're supposed to get after the eight week Spanish course at FSI. I worked on my Spanish there. But I never got very good in Spanish. It was hard for me to do the kind of reporting that I should have been doing but that I didn't have the Spanish to do. I never did get it. Anyway, Matt Smith was bilingual in Spanish and knew a lot of the people and was very good at some things. He rewrote this thing. Together we reworked it. It ended up being much, much longer and putting the whole thing into a much broader historical context, but it did include what I wanted to have included. It included the fact that these were not right-wing vigilante groups but that they were government supported and that we were in bed with the government. We were complicit in this. That went in an airgram. Mein called me in a week or 10 days afterwards and was furious. He said, "I've just gotten a call from the Department. They said, 'Gordon, we've just seen this paper. Can we assume this is just Newlin and Smith getting a little bit off the deep end and we can ignore it?' If there had been a telegram, I could understand that attitude, but it wasn't a telegram. It was an airgram. They can see my signature on it. They should know that I wouldn't have signed something that I wasn't going to stand behind." He went back to Washington and there was a big furor about this. I don't think anything came of it. We continued to support these bastards and they continued to off anybody they wanted. But it made me feel better.

Q: What was the rationale for our supporting this thing?

NEWLIN: We were still worried about dominos. We thought that we had to keep? Earlier, we had kept Guatemala from having its revolution in the '50s.

Q: Was this with Arbenz?

NEWLIN: Yes. We had kind of quelled their revolution. That's their problem. They never had their revolution. The Mexicans got their revolution, but the Guatemalans never did. We thought that we had all these right-wing people in the army and in the oligarchy who had gone to school in America who were going to hold the status quo when the status quo was fine from a geopolitical sense, but from the social sense it was terrible. It was a very small number of people owning all the land and the means of production and holding down the poor people.

Q: How did you find life in Guatemala, you and your wife?

NEWLIN: We had a nice time. It was the first time we had been exposed to real poverty. It took a while to get used to that, particularly for Louisa. People knock on your door begging for food and looking for work. In the city, all kinds of people begging. The favelas were on the hillsides. You can accept the poverty in the countryside. We Americans can accept the poverty in Northern Maine much more easily than we can accept the poverty in Southeast Washington. But that was hard. Aside from that, we had a nice circle of Guatemalan friends largely educated in the U.S. There was an expat community down there. I got involved in community theater. I was in four plays during the time we were down there and had quite a lot of fun.

Q: In '68, whither?

NEWLIN: I came back to the Department and worked in the Office of German Affairs.

Q: You were there from '68 to when?

NEWLIN: '70.

Q: What piece of the action did you have of German affairs?

NEWLIN: Berlin.

Q: Oh, boy.

NEWLIN: At that time, we were renegotiating the Berlin Agreement. It was an interesting time.

Q: People who dealt with Berlin in these times were almost like Talmud students. There was a holy writ. Whether the tailgates could be lowered and the whole thing. What was the status of Berlin and what were we trying to do with this agreement?

NEWLIN: Berlin was still under Four Power control. But the access to Berlin was still only cleared to the allies by air. We blew it at the end of the war by not pinning down that we had secure access to Berlin, secure land access to Berlin, and the Soviets periodically would block land access to Berlin. Of course, we had the Berlin airlift. Then the Soviets would open the corridors and then they'd periodically close them. We had the Quadripartite Working Group, which played games talking about what we would do if the Soviets blocked access. We had the French and the Brits and the Germans and the U.S. dealing with how we would respond if the Soviets blocked access. We played wargames once a year. The people who were directing the wargames would block access. Then we would respond with this and that until finally they would back down and we didn't have to go to nuclear war. But nuclear war was at the end of all of those options. "Ich bin ein Berliner." The game plans that we had took us to war. Whether we would actually have gone to war, who's to say. The games always stopped before we got to war.

Q: Who was in charge of the Berlin group?

NEWLIN: Jimmy Sutherland was head of the German desk. Nelson Ledsky was the guy on the German desk who was doing most of the Berlin work. I worked for Ledsky.

Q: What were the negotiations about?

NEWLIN: I don't remember.

Q: There is always trying to smooth about problems.

When you were there, was the attitude that any give on Berlin could lead to the complete collapse of our position in Berlin?

NEWLIN: You put your finger on it when you said there? Every little word counted. Yes, we were very reluctant to give on anything. But I'd have to try and piece back together? I'm drawing a blank on what those issues were. In fact, I'd love to cut it off here and go back and try to pull my thoughts together.

Q: Okay.

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Today is March 15, 2002. You wanted to back up a bit and talk about what you had been dealing with previously.

NEWLIN: I was thinking of the time before I started to work on Berlin affairs. I was working with Elwood Brilliance, who was an older man who had been working in German affairs for a long time and who had multiple sclerosis and had a hard time doing certain things.

Q: Talk a bit about him. I used to see him. He'd be wheeled into the cafeteria. He was considered to be? People would point and say, "He's absolutely first rate on Germany."

NEWLIN: He was a wonderful man. He loved Germany. He loved the German desk. He loved what he was doing. When I came there, it was clear that there were some people who were trying to ease him out a little bit. I found that very painful. Alex Johnpoll was head of the desk at the time. I have forgotten who the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs was. I guess it was Leddy. Alex and Leddy were kind of trying to ease Ellwood out. I'm sure that they had their very good reasons. There was lots of stuff that Ellwood couldn't really do. He had somebody who assisted him and turned pages for him and did things like that. He dictated, of course. But what he really served as, among other things, was a wonderful institutional memory. Sometimes you didn't have the luxury of having somebody who was largely institutional memory.

Then we had a change of personnel and Jimmy Sutherland came in as head of the German desk. I can't remember who came in. There was a change at the Assistant Secretary level, too. Certainly Ellwood went back as a respected elder statesman, which was something that pleased me tremendously.

I might just mention a little anecdote, too. When I reported to the German desk, it was in the summer of '68. I was coming up from Guatemala. I moved into my house, which I had been renting and it was completely empty. I had a bed, but I didn't have a lot of stuff. I didn't have a radio. I got up early that morning. I didn't have breakfast. I thought I'd go into the Department, have breakfast in the Department, read my newspapers and things, and then report to the desk. I got into the Department quite early, maybe 7:00. In those days, you didn't have any security to speak of at all. I thought, "Well, I'll just go up and poke my head into the offices and see what they look like." I didn't expect anyone to be there. I poked my head into the office. I hadn't even bought my newspaper. The office was a beehive of activity. I was embarrassed. I didn't know what was going on. People with their neckties and shirts open and half shaved and bleary-eyed. Typewriters clattering like crazy. I couldn't just pretend I had gone to the wrong office. I was going to have to appear in an hour and a half and say who I was, so I had to say who I was. I was taken immediately in to see my new boss, Alec Johnpoll. I just knew that I was kind of in trouble. The best I could think of to say is, "You guys certainly get an early start." He looked kind of askance at his new political officer and he said, "You don't know what's going on, do you?" Of course, I had to admit that I didn't know what was going on. He told me that the Soviets had just invaded Czechoslovakia. That was my introduction on the German desk. I think that I got off on the wrong foot with Alex Johnpoll then and never got back.

Q: He was an interesting person. He was a political counselor in Belgrade when I was chief of the Consular Section under Kennan. Martin Hillenbrand was the man-

NEWLIN: Martin Hillenbrand. There you go. One lovely man.

Q: He was Assistant Secretary for European Affairs.

NEWLIN: Exactly. He and Sutherland were both lovely men and friends of Ellwood and had respect for Ellwood. That situation which had been painful and hurtful to me because it was painful and hurtful to Ellwood got resolved in a way that was satisfactory. I guess I said Vest because Vest is another fine man. If Vest had been involved in it, he would have been [inaudible].

Q: George would have been.

You came there at the time the Poles and everybody else invaded Czechoslovakia. Was it August of '68?

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: After Johnpoll, what did they have you doing?

NEWLIN: You can imagine that the German desk was [inaudible]. The German desk wished to think it was. It wished to think that it was the heart of everything. Alex wanted to have his group playing as big a role as possible. But it was the Soviets who invaded Czechoslovakia. It was not really our issue. So, we were on the fringes of it and appropriately and properly stayed on the fringes of it.

Q: When you got established, you had the Berlin side?

NEWLIN: I started out working on non-Berlin things for the first year or so. I was the junior person on the regular German side of things. You'd get a whole lot of stuff to do. You answer the congressionals. You take care of visitors. That was the 20th or the 25th anniversary of NATO and there was a big NATO meeting. The Germans at that time were in the NATO chair. Willi Brandt was foreign minister. He was the president of NATit was their turduring this big ceremonial meeting. I was his control officer. That's the kind of a job where it's completely sort of no-win. If you do it well, you don't get much credit. You're supposed to do it well. There is not much to doing it well. You've got a lot of details to take care of and you've got to be nice to the guy you're with. I was with him all the time. I'd ride in the car with him and that kind of thing. But if you do it wrong, something happens, it's a highly visible mistake, and you get in trouble for it. I do remember one time when it could have been very wrong. The political officer, of course, is in charge of that kind of thing. The details that go into the planning are extremely complicated. At one point, we were going in a motorcade from one place to another where we were going to have some presentations. Then we were going to go to the eighth floor of the Department. The motorcade was supposed to stay intact. Willi Brandt's car was in the front. All the other cars were following him. We were supposed to pull up to this place, let everybody off. Each car would pull up in turn. Then all the cars were supposed to circle the block and come back and line up in exactly the same order. But that was not clear to all the drivers, so when we came out, the cars were all completely piggledy wiggledy. We were supposed to be going from there to the Department. Brandt's car was nowhere in sight. The Turkish ambassador's, I think that was the car that was right in front. The cars all behind, all those flags, there was no German flag in sight back around the corner. I said, "Mr. Foreign Minister, we'll just keep the order. You should arrive first. We'll go in this car." I opened the door for him, whoever the hell's car it was. I went around to the other side. I said to the driver, "Go to the Department, please." The driver went to the Department. I thought, "Oh, boy. We're either all right or we're not all right." Everybody else just got into the next car and went off. Nobody said, "Boo" to me until quite late in the day when somebody from the Office of Protocol came up very quietly and said, "Are you the guy who stuck Brandt in that first car?" I thought, "Oh, here it is." I said, "Yes, I am." He said, "Oh, Jesus, thank you." Nobody paid any attention.

Q: As you were there, Willi Brandt being a socialist and we've always thought much more comfortable with the CDU (Christian Democratic Union), as you got there, what were you getting from the corridor and your impression of Willi Brandt at that particular point?

NEWLIN: I am not a socialist, but I'm a democrat. Willi Brandt, you have to remember, wasn't just a socialist. He was the guy who had done such a wonderful job as mayor of Berlin. He was thought to have done a wonderful job of mayor of Berlin.

At the end of that trip, he gave me a very nice photograph of himself signed, "To William Newlin with best wishes from Willi Brandt." I was with him quite a lot during that time. I thought that was very nice. It became particularly nice when he became Chancellor. Here people from the German embassy would come in? When I was in USEC (United States Mission to the European Communities) a little bit later, I had this picture of Willi Brandt on my desk. When people from the German embassy would come in and see this signed picture from their Chancellor, they stood a little straighter. You could sort of hear the heels click.

Q: You began to deal with Berlin affairs later on?

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: This was '69ish?

NEWLIN: In that period, yes.

Q: We had a new administration coming in, the Nixon administration?

NEWLIN: Before we get to Berlin, there was kind of something interesting in the way we reacted with the German embassy. We're in the '60s. The war is a long time behind us. But there was a war. All the people who were working remembered the war still very clearly. The German embassy was staffed with a lot of people who had fought in the war. Nobody in the German embassy fought anywhere but on the Russian front. I won't believe that.

Q: I found this when I went to Frankfurt, all the Russian front fighters.

NEWLIN: Yes. Their ambassador at that time was a man named Powels. He was a fine man. He had lost an arm on the Russian front. We had an awful lot of German evenings, as you imagine, where the German desk and the German embassy would get together for these great friendship fests. We had very good working relationships with our German colleagues. But I tended to be the person, as the junior guy on the desk, to write the toasts and things. I would read my toast to my wife, who couldn't help giggling and laughing. Then she would be at the affair and hear the German return toasts. It was quite comical what excruciatingly good friends we were then and were sort of thought to have always been.

Q: In that period, most of the Americans, too, had fought in the war.

NEWLIN: Of course. Most of them fought in Germany.

Q: Let's talk about your impression of the Nixon administration coming in to power and all this vis a vis the State Department and Germany. What was your impression?

NEWLIN: I don't remember its having made a big difference in the way we conducted our business with Germany.

Q: I would imagine that there would be a certain comfort in having Nixon coming in, coming from the more or less right-wing of the Republican Party. I've talked to people who have been involved when the Kennedy administration came in. These people dealing with Germany were very nervous because, as we all know, particularly the Berlin situation by precedent where everything is very nuanced and very careful because any deviation, our feeling was that it could lead to a wedge in our position in Berlin. In the Kennedy administration, people I've talked to have said they were playing kind of fast and loose at the beginning. They thought there was more room to maneuver than not.

NEWLIN: Let's move on to Berlin now. Certainly with Nixon, I didn't for a minute think we were being fast and furious. I thought that we guarded all the dotted "Is" and crossed "Ts" of the folklore that had practically grown up around all these agreements in Berlin. But we were trying to change it. If we weren't doing it from the very beginning, very soon, we became involved in this negotiation, which was leading towards the quadripartite agreement on access to Berlin. Obviously, we all remember that access had been poorly delineated at the end of the war. In fact, the agreements post-war only specified clearly that we had assured air access. Both train and rail had been left a little bit vague. The people on our side who had written it had thought that we had the access, but it wasn't really clearly spelled out in the agreement, so periodically the Soviets would block access on the autobahn and access by rail. That led at one time to the Berlin airlift. They never rocked it long enough for that to have to happen again, but we were trying to clear up that ambiguity and that very dangerous source of potential conflict. One of the things that I spent quite a lot of work on during that time on the Berlin negotiations was on the CCG [Contingency Coordinating Group]. It was contingency plans for what to do when and if the Soviets blocked land access to Berlin. You had in Washington the ambassadorial group. What you had was the governments of France and Britain and Germany had given to their ambassadors the authority to agree or disagree with American plans to use nuclear weapons. It didn't have to go back to governments. You could deal on the spot in Washington when you were dealing with Berlin access contingency issues. It was a curious, unique sort of a situation where ambassadors had been given more authority than is usual in a particular little area.

Q: All the way up through nuclear weapons?

NEWLIN: That is certainly my recollection of it, that that is what it was for. It was so that? We played these wargames. You had a bunch of peopll think they were military peoplwho would plan these contingencies and would all sit around pretending to be different players and would come together and be briefed, "The Soviets have done this. What are you going to do?" We'd go back and sit around and discuss what we were going to do and we'd say what we were going to do. We'd ratchet the pressure up a little bit on the Soviets in other areas. Then they would ratchet the pressure up. But mercifully and happily, in all of the war games, it was finally the Soviets who blinked. Land access was reestablished and we never had to go to any kind of a war in the war games. Then we'd go over to NATO and critique how these war games had played out. It was a never never land. But it was very scary stuff. Clearly, what our ultimate contingency plans were to go to nuclear war over Berlin.

Q: Eleanor Dulles had left by this time?

NEWLIN: Eleanor would keep coming back as a consultant. I never really understood where Eleanor fit, to be perfectly honest. She was popping in and out. She certainly was not part of the office.

Q: What piece of Berlin have when you were in Washington?

NEWLIN: In one sense, I was the junior person, but in another sense, I was the Berlin desk officer. Nelson Ledsky was my boss. He was certainly in charge of the Berlin negotiation side of it except that it was really the biggest thing that the whole office was working on it. But I had all the junky side of any Berlin stuff. I had all the paperwork side of the Berlin stuff. When I got there, the Berlin files were a mess. I tried to create some order around the Berlin files, which I think I did. During the negotiations, we were able to put our hands on the stuff we needed in the way that we hadn't been able to when I started.

Q: What was the status while you were there in '69, '70 or so? Were there any major movements in Berlin?

NEWLIN: When we left, we signed that agreement.

Q: Who was doing the agreement?

NEWLIN: It was Sutherland in our office. We had a main negotiator.

Q: What about the French and the British, who had pieces there. Were you talking to their Berlin person?

NEWLIN: Yes, we were talking all the time to their Berlin person. But it was a frustrating time for me in the Foreign Service. It wasn't sure to me that I was going to stay in the Foreign Service. It is such a layered business. I was at the bottom of that layer. I would never talk alone to colleagues at the other embassies except in this tripartite contingency stuff. I often was the person dealing with the contingency plans. But in the real negotiation, I was not the person who was a point man in any meetings with foreign embassy people. I would go along, but I was not the spokesman.

Q: At that point, from your perspective, albeit you were kept considerably removed from some of the action, how were we dealing? You had the East Germans, the West Germans, the Soviets, the French, the British, and the Americans.

NEWLIN: You have to remember that the East Germans didn't exist.

Q: Okay. In our perspective?

NEWLIN: Yes. Part of the liturgy was that we didn't talk to the East Germans.

Q: How about the West Germans? Were you all together? Were they part of the negotiations or were they off to one side but being sort of a silent partner?

NEWLIN: It's awful that I can't give you a straighter answer to that. I think it was a tripartite issue. The agreement was between the U.S., the French, and the Brits with the Soviets on access to Berlin. The West Germans were involved. We talked to the West Germans all the time. But they were not parties to this agreement.

Q: I imagine that they'd be off to one side but we'd keep them fully informed.

NEWLIN: Yes. They particularly wished to hold our feet to the fire on these?

Q: If we strayed from this quadripartite status, things got very loose.

NEWLIN: Well, the quadripartite is Berlin. The Soviets were in with us in the management of Berlin itself. Then tripartite versus the Soviets in things like access to Berlin. We had, for example, Hess in prison in Berlin. The Soviets had as big a say as we in how Hess was treated and how all of that was done. Hess was the single prisoner in Spandau Prison for many years. There were always people trying to free Hess. Hess' family was always trying to free him. People would claim that it was cruel and unusual punishment. It was, of course, solitary confinement. He had no one to interact with but his jailors. The jailors would rotate on a monthly basis through the four powers. One month, it would be the Soviets who would run Spandau Prison. There was a luncheon every month at Spandau Prison hosted by the country in charge. People would parade their visiting firemen? would ask that their visitors would be invited to this lunch. It was a very civilized lunch. I attended it once when I was a visitor in Berlin at the time of that lunch. They said, "We'll take you to the lunch at Spandau Prison. It will be interesting for you." It was. It was a bunch of more or less senior military and diplomatic people sitting around having a? If you didn't know the setting or anything, you'd have no idea that you were in prison and that these were the people-

Q: I take it that Herr Hess was not invited.

NEWLIN: Herr Hess was not invited.

Q: What about the Berlin Wall at that time? Were you having to deal with crises around the Wall, people escaping, getting shot?

NEWLIN: Yes, but there wasn't much that we did about it. People were getting shot. We did not protest people getting shot. That was not something that was going to bring us to war. If people tried to escape and got shot, we could raise a lot of moral indignation questions, but nobody thought that we were going to retaliate. We acknowledged that the East Germans had the right to have the Wall and to keep people in it. It was not like closing off access to Berlin, which we claimed they did not have the right to do and that was a right that we would fight to maintain. This was something that we would complain about. This happened throughout the period, but it wasn't anything that got our attention in any serious way as I remember it.

Q: You were thinking, what the hell am I going to do? Did you feel part of the German cadre in the State Department?

NEWLIN: No. The State DepartmenI suppose, particularly EIlwoowished to make me part of the German cadre. But I had never served in Germany. I didn't speak German. I was going to early morning German class.

Q: What were you looking at? Were you looking for a geographic home?

NEWLIN: I wanted my geographic home to be in French-speaking Europe. I had served in Paris as my first assignment. I later went to Brussels. Then I went to Nice. I guess I found my geographic home. But at that time, certainly the German desk was trying to create its German cadre. It had its German cadre. Hans Himmhof, for example, was part of that group. Quite early in the game after I got there, they sent me for an indoctrination tour around Germany. It makes me a little bit embarrassed. They really planned it as if I were a tourist. Hans was very careful to make sure that I drove down the Romantische Strasse and stayed at this and that hotel. He was very careful to make sure that I stayed in certain hotels in the places we had consulates. They made me visit all the consulates, which was fun, of course, but I really didn't feel that it was a very good use of taxpayers' money. You asked if I felt part of the German cadre. I never really did. I didn't speak German. I pretty much knew I was never going to learn to speak German. I had pretty good French and wanted to make that better. I had some Spanish. I'm not hugely gifted in languages. German is a hardish language. It's got a more complicated grammar than French or Spanish. I never thought I was going to get very good at German.

Q: So, in 1970, you're due out. Where did you go?

NEWLIN: I don't think I went out that year. I think it was a little later. It was after we signed the agreement, I think. That was in '72. Whenever it was, I wanted to stay in Washington at that point. We had kids in schools. You will see if you look at my history, I have much more Washington than would be typical for a Foreign Service officer. That was pretty much because I wanted to stay in Washington. I wanted my kids to be Foreign Service kids who had served abroad, but I wanted them to be largely American kids who had foreign experience, not expat kids in a variety of expat places who periodically came back to the U.S.

My next assignment was in the Operations Center a deputy director of operations. They used to be called senior watch officers. That's a much more descriptive term. You had five senior watch officers. The Operations Center is that portion of the State Department that never sleeps. The Operations Center is manned 24 hours a day. You work at it in what are essentially 10 hour shifts. You are expected to be there an hour before your shift begins and stay an hour after your shift is over. The three shifts are the obvious ones, from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm, 4:00 pm to midnight, and midnight to 8:00 am. You would work three or four days on that shift and then get a couple of days off and start up on another shift. Sometimes your couple of days off was a short couple of days and sometimes it was a long couple of days. Some people just couldn't handle that. You have to be a good sleeper to handle that. You have to be able to do some of your sleeping in the daytime and you have to be able to, when you lie down to sleep, go to sleep. Some people couldn't do it.

Q: You did this from '72 until when?

NEWLIN: It's supposed to be an 18 month tour. But in fact, they asked me to stay on for another six months. I think I had a two year tour, which was long.

Q: This would be until '74. As a watch officer, everything is episodic. You can have a crisis in the Eastern Hemisphere or the Western Hemisphere? Did any ones particularly come out that you got involved in?

NEWLIN: You don't get involved in them. You're on duty a third of the time and you're covering the world. If something is quiet during that particular third of the time that you're doing it, during the daytime? One of the most interesting parts of being a senior watch officer was getting to see the highly classified telegrams. In the security business, you have top secret, secret, confidential, and limited official use. People outside of the inner group think that top secret is really secret stuff and that a top secret clearance is the most secret clearance you can get, and if you can see top secret stuff, you can see any stuff. In fact, top secret goes all over the place. The way information is really limited in the State Department is not by top secret, secret, confidential, or limited official use, but by normal distribution (which doesn't have a name), limited distribution (LIMDIS), exclusive distribution (EXDIS), and then the final one, no distribution (NODIS). One of the things that the senior watch officers did was decide who would see EXDIS and NODIS cables. To decide who would see EXDIS and NODIS cables, you had to read them. Some kinds of subjects had very clearly prescribed distributions. Certain Middle Eastern issues and things had very described distributions. They all went, of course, to the Secretary's office. They went to S/S, the Secretary's outer officer. They all went to D, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State. I'm not sure that they even all went to the Assistant Secretary in charge of that area. Some maybe stopped at D. Most things then went to the bureau, but often in only one copy. That was one of the most interesting things about being in the Operations Center. You saw one third of the most sensitive traffic coming in to the Department on the most sensitive issues. Seeing only a third doesn't really allow you to keep up with an issue. You just see it when you're on. They're not kept in any file. You can't flip through them. Only the senior watch officers, the DDOs, got to see these things. Other people on the watch didn't get to see them. That was an interesting aspect of it.

But you ask if I got involved in any issues. I'm saying you kind of couldn't get involved with an issue. You had to be aware of too many issues and you only saw it for a third of the time.

Q: You were there when Kissinger became Secretary of State.

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: Did you see any change?

NEWLIN: Yes, you saw a change. It was all done out of Kissinger's office. If I had been an Assistant Secretary at that time, I think it would have been very hard. I just had the feeling that suddenly? We had been champing at the bit when lots of foreign policy decisions were being made by the National Security officer and Kissinger and the White House. Then Kissinger came over to the State Department. I in my naive way thought, "Ah hah, now the State Department is going to play the role that it should." In a sense, it did, but it was Kissinger playing that role. It meant that the issues that he was paying attention to real things happened in, and in the others, they'd kind of back up because real things weren't allowed to happen if he wouldn't let them happen and sometimes he was too busy to focus.

Q: One thing about being in the Ops Center is that people who go there are usually hand picked. One, they can take the lousy hours. Two, they are considered to be people who are reliable. It's one of the proving grounds for future leaders of the State Department. Did this seem to work?

NEWLIN: You look at my record and you see that I did not become a future leader of the State Department. After the Ops Center, I went to USEC, to Brussels. I had to go out. I didn't want to have another staff position. One of the things that I could have tried to get was a job in the outer office of the Secretary or one of the staff positions on the seventh floor. But I didn't seek that. If you will remember, when I was working earlier in trade agreements, I was offered a position to be one of the flunkies for an Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs. I turned that down. I didn't want to have such an obviously staff position. That was a bad career move. It was probably a bad career move not to try to get a position after the Ops Center, another position dealing in a completely staff position on the seventh floor. But I didn't. My efficiency ratings at that time would say, "Here is somebody who should go to the top of the Department." One of them said that I should do that kind of staff thing. But I didn't. No, I didn't feel that having been in the Ops Center suddenly put me on a fast track. My next job was out working in the trenches in an embassy.

Q: So you went to Brussels.

NEWLIN: I want to back up and tell a couple of Kissinger stories. Kissinger wouldn't use the secure phone, for one thing. He'd just call in from the Ops Center to his house on an open line. There was a green phone, but he didn't like to use it. The quality of the green phones at that time was not very good. I don't even remember what the issue was, but I remember it was a Middle Eastern issue and it was a NODIS cable. In the middle of the night, I called the Assistant Secretary for Middle Eastern Affairs and said, "We've got this cable." He said, "I think that we'd better tell Henry about that." I said, "Would you like to do it, Sir?" He said, "No, you've got the cable in front of you. You do it." I said, "Shall I use the secure phone, Sir?" He said, "No, he doesn't like the secure phone." So, I called him and reported the thing. There was a long silence. It was about what somebody was going to do. His only reaction was, "That son of a bitch!" Kissinger lived just off Massachusetts Avenue. That was the time that was leading up to his marriage to Nancy Maginnes. He had a companion whom he later married. I don't remember if they were engaged at the time or officially what the situation was, but he had this widely known very good friend whom he later married. On weekends, we would send a guy over with a bunch of briefing material. There were regular runs to Kissinger's house on the weekends. One time, the guy came back and said, "I hope I did the right thing." I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "Well, I rang the door to Kissinger's house with this big manila envelope of really secret stuff. A woman in a bathrobe opened the door and said, 'Yes?' I said, 'I have an envelope of classified material here for the Secretary.' She said, 'Give it to me. He's taking a nap.' I gave it to her, shut the door, and left." I said, "You did the right thing."

All right. What came next? I went out to USEC [United States Mission to the European Communities]. In Brussels at that time, we had three ambassadors. We had a bilateral ambassador. We had an ambassador who took care of NATO affairs. We had an ambassador who took care of the European Mission to the European Communities, which had its headquarters in Brussels. Joe Greenwald was the head of that mission. The head of that embassy is another story. It's not my story to tell. I was not involved with that embassy, but I'll tell it anyway. It sort of bugs me. It was Ann Cox Chambers. Jimmy Carter was in the White House. Ann Cox Chambers was the scion of the Cox newspaper dynasty in Georgia. She was named for that reason to practically whatever embassy she wanted. What she got was Brussels. Her formal education stopped when she was graduated from Miss Porter's School in Farmington, Connecticut. Miss Porter's when my wife went there was not particularly high powered intellectually. My wife complained about that.

Q: It was a good solid finishing school.

NEWLIN: Yes. And it was more that way when Ann Cox Chambers went there. Lots of people who worked at that embassy would come back with horror stories of how embarrassing it was when she had to go in and present papers. In USEC, where I was serving, we had Joe Greenwald as ambassador. He was a very serious guy indeed. I thought highly of him. I had known him from the Department days. We had bumped into one another during this and that. He had asked me and asked for me to come out there. I was a political officer in USEC, but my job was going to be looking after energy and scientific stuff. He wanted a political officer who knew something about economics and numbers and things. I had graduated from Harvard Business School and had worked for a while in the Economic Bureau, so he thought that I was a political officer who could be trusted with economic stuff.

Brussels was a hard assignment for us. Our oldest son was having trouble at home. We didn't take the boys with us.

Q: How old was he?

NEWLIN: He was about 14 or 15. He was in boarding school. I guess this is of some interest in an oral history about Foreign Service officers. Why was he in boarding school? I wouldn't have put him in boarding school otherwise. Although I went to boarding school and my wife went to boarding school and lots of people in our families have gone to boarding schools, we had decided that we would not send our children to boarding schools. We liked having them at home. There were plenty of good schools. But our son when we were in Washington came to us and called a family meeting, a family council, which the family could do. He said very reasonably and with no apparent rancor, "I have never spent more than two years in a school in my life. I would like to spend my four high school years in the same school." It's very hard not to think that's a fair request, particularly perhaps because, as is so often the case in families, you have different kids who are all very different and have different strengths. Our second son was a little friend of the world. But our oldest son, who was the son who came to us with this request, was a bit of a loner and always had two or three very good friends where he was but not a very wide circle of friends. You could argue that the fact that he never spent more than two years in a school in his life contributed to that. So, we took him around to let him look at a bunch of schools. I'd have done it otherwise if I had been a little older and knew what I know now. I'd have chosen a school for him. I don't think that a kid that age necessarily should be given a choice of school. But we showed him a bunch of schools. Of course, only ones that we thought probably would be all right. He chose the school that I had gone to and that his grandfather and grandfather and a whole bunch of uncles had gone to. When he goes to this school, he looks around at all those plaques on the wall, all the teams and honors and awards and things, and he finds names and he knows he feels kind of at home here before he's even set foot on it. He went to St. Paul's, which is where a lot of his family had gone. So, he didn't come to Brussels with us. Then when it came time for his younger brother to decide where to go, it didn't seem fair not to give the younger brother the same choice we had given Bill, and he, too, chose to go to St. Paul's.

So, when we went to Brussels, the oldest boy was doing fine. He was an officer in his class, the captain of a couple of teams, his grades were fine. His grades were either outstanding because he's very bright, or he'd take a term off and his grades would get flunky. But then his grades were fine. But we got a call from the headmaster at one point that said, "Bill has come to me and he has said that he is not doing the school any good and the school isn't doing him any good and he's decided to withdraw from school. He says he has some friends in the Boston area with whom he can go and live for a while. We think that's a plan." Well, from my way of thinking, that was so excruciatingly unconscionably irresponsible that I just couldn't get over it. I'm sure that what that guy was thinking about was, "This kid is some kind of mixed up and he's just the kind of kid who might take his own life. I don't want that to happen on my campus, so let's get him as far away from here as possible." We spent a good bit of our time going back and forth to Washington and Philadelphia, where he ended up, and Concord, New Hampshire first, and trying to sort out the problem with our oldest son. One of the things that had happened was that he was going through some kind of a breakdown. It was probably induced by LSD. I don't really know that.

Q: This was an era where kids were playing around.

NEWLIN: Oh, it was a very bad era and the school was rife with it. I think the school was not unique in that. I think all the boarding schools were in trouble with it. I think that the day schools were in trouble with it, too. It was a bad time for that kind of thing. Anyway, we were very discombobulated all during the Belgium time. Brussels isn't that much my kind of town anyway. It's sort of a stodgy town. When we went to Brussels, people said, "You're going to love Brussels. It's three hours down the autoroute from Paris." But when we went to Paris, nobody said that we were going to love it because it was close to Brussels. But we had our tour in Brussels, which was fine.

My work in Brussels I didn't think was particularly interesting. I didn't think what the Mission to the European Communities was doing was particularly interesting. In a funny way, we were kind of spies. I felt that that was part of what I was doing. We were trying to find out what the hell they were going to do. We were trying to influence what they were going to do. The first thing to do was to find out what they were doing. They had meetings and proceedings that we were not able to attend, of course. So, they'd have an important meeting. Before it was reported to the press and reported to anywhere else, the mission felt that we had to report back to Washington what had happened in this meeting that we knew was going to take place. Well, how do you find out? You make friends with people who attended the meeting and you tell them, "When the meeting is over, I'm going to want to know what happened." You wait for them to call. If they don't call, you call them. You hope that they will tell you what happened. You hope that they will give you the papers that were used in it and came out of it. You particularly hope that you can get the papers in English. If you get the papers in French, you are going to have to translate them yourself. Most of the time, that's what I was doing. I was schmoosing with people who were going to be attending those meetings who would give me the papers in the areas that I was the most interested in. That's sort of an uncomfortable kind of a job to have, I thought. I played squash with my British friends and I had a good relationship with a Swiss. The Swiss was in the same boat that I was in. We would trade stuff shamelessly. But he got his stuff in French mostly. I had good friend with the Irish, too. My friends with the Irish were through poetry. That's how I stayed close with the Irish guy. But it's a funny kind of a job to be meeting in the locker room before you play squash and have your squash partner hand you an envelope full of papers that is stamped "confidential" which you then were going to pass on to your embassand you're not a spook, you're a non-spook diplomat.

Q: An interesting aside on this is in an interview I did with Ambassador Ed Rowell, who was ambassador to Luxembourg and was a professional Foreign Service officer. He found that it was a wonderful place to find out what was going because hardly anybody pays attention to Luxembourg as part of the European Community, but they were quite willing to share and he'd get wonderful things. But the awful thing is that that embassy is usually used to dump Ann Cox Chambers-type people there and they just have neither the interest or the contacts or the knowledge to milk that for what it's worth.

NEWLIN: A little aside on Luxembourg in that embassy. Periodically, they'd get a Foreign Service officer. right after my time in Belgium, the Luxembourg government asked our government if they could please have a Foreign Service officer. They thought they were due to have a serious ambassador. Jim Lowenstein was given the job. Jim asked me to be his DCM. DCM is a very good job for promotions. You're thought to get managerial experience out of being DCM, which I think you don't ever get credit for when you're a consul general, which, of course, gives you much more managerial experience in a sense than being DCM because as a consul general you have to make the final decision. As a DCM, I suppose you make the final decision on lots of things anyway. Anyway, Jim asked me to be his DCM. This was right after Brussels. We had cut our Brussels tour to two years from three to come home and deal with our family situation.

As another aside, that kid is fine. He did some funny things for a while, just curious things, not weird things. But he ended up going to Johns Hopkins, did beautifully there, and has a nice job as a publisher. He straightened all that mess out. But we were home at that time. It was very important that we be home at that time. I have no doubt how important that was. We moved back into our house in Washington. The kid had moved back to Washington. He was looking for a place to live. He wanted his independence. Our communication was very bad. He didn't want to communicate with any grownups. He knew everything. Why would he do that? But we said, "We're here for whatever help we can give you. Never forget one thing. Of course you can live with us at any time. But there is the basement apartment. In the basement apartment, you can have your own exit and entrance. It's not a bad little apartment. It was built as a maid's room. The house had been built in 1907. One wonderful thing about it is, it's free." He moved into the basement apartment. He rarely used that door. All the magazines that he liked to read we made sure to subscribe to and have them on the coffee table. All the food that he liked to snack on we made sure was in our refrigerator. During those couple of years, our communication got very good.

But Louisa was not going to leave to go to Luxembourg because she wanted to stay with him. Lowenstein was not married at the time and wanted to have a DCM who had a wife. I was reluctant to leave, too. So, that didn't work out. Somebody else did that. I've always wondered whether my career might have been a little bit different.

Q: One always wonders making these choices. I've gone through this, too. You make certain choices in favor of your family. In a Foreign Service career, the run to the top leaves a good number of divorces. Jim and Dora Lowenstein got divorced. I knew them when we were in Belgrade together. Now it's Johnpoll and Larry Eagleburger. Jim, Larry and I took Serbian together. But before we leave Brussels, what was your feeling and that of the people around you who were dealing with this about whither the European Community? Was this going to be a real entity or were we talking about a solid customs union more than anything else? What were we thinking? We're talking about '74-'76.

NEWLIN: Backing up a little bit, when I was in Paris, we were wondering what the European Community was going to be like. My boss then, Jacques Reinstein, was telling the Department that the European Community was going to be a truly serious customs union and that it was going to keep us out and that we were going to have to deal with this entity that was going to have free trade within its own borders and not with us. The Department didn't want to hear that. Reinstein kept getting in trouble for being very blunt about how this entity was going to do what it wanted and that we weren't going to have very much say in what it did. Certainly by the time '74-'76 came around, the customs union side of the European Community was very clearly established, but where it was going to go beyond that was not very established. Among the issues that were on the table was how big it was going to be, who else was going to be allowed to join the European Community, and then what it was going to be, how much was it going to have a political role? It used to have its summit meetings where it got a chance to play a political role. At the beginning, those summit meetings were very structured and not particularly useful. As time went on and they got more regularized, they became much more useful. The European Community was able much more to take useful positions on political matters. So, it was evolving during that time. My feeling of the U.S. position about that evolution was that we supported it, that we wished the European Community? My feeling was, when it was deciding whether to become a real trading entity or not, we didn't quite so much support it. We wanted it to do that, yes, but us, too, okay? I thought that we not only said that we wanted the European Community to develop itself into an effective political entity that could play a real political role on the world scene. That was certainly our stated position. But my own understanding of it was that that was our position. I thought we saw things moving in that direction. You had at that time the European Parliament. It was meeting alternately in Strasbourg and Luxembourg. I was the guy at the mission who would attend the Parliament sessions. That was a sort of a waste of time. The Parliament had practically no power. It was not directly elected. The scuttlebutt was that if the European Parliament were directly elected, people would be prepared to give it some authority. But the other side was that it couldn't be directly elected because it didn't have any authority. Later, they did move to direct elections. It now does have some more authority. I'm not quite clear what that authority is. But when I was there, it did not have very much authority. I thought it was talking about funny regulations and it was interested in the environment but couldn't do much about the environment.

Q: That seems to be almost its main thrust, trying to unify things within Europe, but a lot of things are environment? While you were watching the European Community at that time, who was keeping an eye on the common agricultural policy?

NEWLIN: We were. As far as I was concerned, we couldn't do a bloody lot about it. We knew what we wanted. They knew very much what they wanted. Individual countries knew what they wanted. Each country wants to protect its own agriculture. The Community as a whole wishes to protect its agriculture vis a vis ours. That was the hardest nut to crack for them, the common agricultural policy. Each individual country is protecting its own farmers.

Q: In a way, the common agricultural policy has ended up with that's it? Each country is protecting its own agriculture. It's a common policy that they've all more or less agreed that they can't do a damn thing about it except to protect their agriculture.

NEWLIN: Yes. All of this stuff, we watched it, we tried to influence it. But I just didn't have the feeling that we were effective in trying to influence it. It would have been very hard to be effective. They had things they wanted to do and we didn't have a whole bloody lot of leverage in making them do it the way we wanted to do it.

Q: Was there a divide at all between what we used to call the "true believers?" Were our people on the American side divided into true believers and Euroskeptics?

NEWLIN: Yes, I think so. But I don't think that it really affected how we behaved terribly. Whether you were a true believer or a Euroskeptic, you weren't going to be able to make your view prevail, so that was pretty much the way you felt about it. Your true believers and Euroskeptics could work together.

Q: We're talking about '76. Carter came in in '77.

NEWLIN: I think we were there from '76 to '78.

Q: In '78, you came back to Washington.

NEWLIN: I came back to Washington.

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Q: Today is March 26, 2002.

I'm going to read from the crib sheet Bill has provided. 1961-'64: Paris. 1964-'66: Department, Trade Agreements (the Kennedy Round). 1966-'68: Guatemala, political officer. 1968-'72: German Desk, Berlin Affairs. 1972-'74: Department Operations Center. 1974-'76: Brussels, Mission to Community, political officer. 1976-'77: Department, Interagency Group, Law of the Sea. 1977-'79: Department, Benelux Affairs. 1979-'80: there was six months off sailing. 1980-'83: Department, Canadian Desk. 1983-'86: Nice as consul general.

1976-'77. How did you get involved with the Law of the Sea?

NEWLIN: By chance and fluke. Because I was cutting that Brussels assignment short, I had to get a Department? The Department, I might add, was very good in their responding to my request to come home early because of family problems. Nobody either in the Department or in the embassy gave me any guff and, in fact, were very understanding. But it did mean that I had to get a job quickly in the Department. Something came up on Law of the Sea. The sea is something that I've always... viscerally, the idea of protecting the sea was a fine one. I was glad to take that job. It was a funny time in Law of the Sea. I don't remember the name of the guy who was head of it when I arrived. I'm pretty sure it began with an "L." Quite soon after I arrived, Elliott Richardson took over. But I'll back up a little bit. The job I had in Law of the Sea was something like the head of the Secretariat of the Interagency Group. You can imagine the Law of the Sea was something that, more even than most other jobs in the Foreign Service, required a tremendous amount of interagency consultation and coordination. Every agency thought that they had a crack at the Law of the Sea. In the Department, it was run out of the Under Secretary's Office. Our address was D/LOS. But as a practical matter, the Under Secretary really had very little to do with it. We had initially a political guy who was the head of negotiation. Then he was replaced by Elliott Richardson, who came in with three hotshots. One of them was Dick Darbin. One was a guy named L.C. Smith. Another was Frank Hodsoll. Elliott Richardson came by rather early in the game by our office, D/LOS, which really was not nearly ever as involved in the policy of the Law of the Sea as it was in facilitating the preparations for the negotiations on the American side. My job was particularly as a facilitator. I was supposed to be the one who kept track of all the papers and generated minutes of meetings and things like that. It was not a particularly glamorous Law of the Sea job. It had been done before guy Otto Eskin. He is a nifty guy. Within the last week, I got a little notice in the mail about a performance of a play that he has written. For the last number of years, he's been writing plays. Because I see a lot of plays, I'm on a lot of play mailing lists and I saw that Otto had another play coming up. Anyway, I remember Elliott's coming through our office. He had these guys with him. He looked around and said, "Well, I don't know quite how I'm going to organize everything, but we'll leave Frank Hodsoll in charge of this little operation." We got a new immediate boss. Frank Hodsoll was in charge of D/LOS. He didn't like that job. He was jealous of Dick Darbin and particularly jealous of Smith. Smith and Darbin stayed up with Richardson in his immediate office, which was on a completely different floor from D/LOS, which was, as Richardson put it, "This little operation." Hodsoll said to Darbin, "I don't mind Dick's being right next to Elliott. That's where he belongs. He's the smartest person I've ever met. But dammit, I don't stand behind Smith." He thought that he was being shunted off with "This little operation."

Q: What was Hodsoll's background?

NEWLIN: I don't know. I know what he went on to be: head of the National Endowment for the Arts. Hodsoll has to have had some sort of a political background. He didn't show me anything. I don't know why he got asked to be National Endowment for the Arts except that they for some reason had to do something with him and gave him that. He was a great big guy. He had a lot of energy. He kind of felt that since the seventh floor of the Department worked long hours, he had to work long hours. It was a time when we worked long hours. Word processors were just coming in about that time. They were on tape. If you wanted to make a change, you had to go to the right place in the tape to make it. In a funny sense, often it took longer to mess around with those damned early word processors on tape?

Q: You couldn't see where you were. You had to guess. It was just awful. It would have been much easier to type the whole thing over again.

NEWLIN: Maybe for history's sake, it's worth just mentioning what had to happen in offices that were preparing papers for the signature of the Secretary. That's often what we were doing. Things that went to the Secretary had to be letter perfect, but they could have erasers on them. There are ways of carefully erasing so that nobody could see that it was erased except by holding the paper up to the light and seeing there was a thin place in the paper. But the people in the Secretary's office who were giving things to him to sign were very capable of holding things up to the light and sending something back if it had an erased place in it. This meant that you'd have your secretary typing along and everybody in the office studiously not hanging over her shoulder. It's 8:00 pm and everybody wants to go home and there is this paper that has to go up to the Secretary's signature. Suddenly, they say, "Oh, damn" and you know that you're back to the top of that page. Anyway, we had these machines finally.

Q: They were called Magcard machines, I believe.

NEWLIN: This one was even different. This one had a big reel. The Magcards had mag cards. But this had a big reel. You had to fast forward and fast back. It really was a nightmare.

Anyway, the other thing I particularly remember about the Law of the Sea time was that what really a completely inordinate amount of our effort went into was deciding how we were going to mine the sea bottom for magnesium nodules. There were these curious magnesium nodules that had been found in lots of parts of the sea bottom. They came in various sizes. The size that I still have in my house is about the size of your fist. It's completely round, though not smooth sided. They're full of valuable ore. There was a school of thought then held by lots in American industry that these nodules were going to make the people who could mine them rich and that we, the United States, who were the only ones who really had the technology to mine these nodules, were absolutely not going to give away to the world the right to mine these nodules. It's really what kept us from getting a Law of the Sea agreement sooner than we did. The U.S. blocked it on the basis of? We were working on completely Rue Goldberg-y kinds of schemes for allowing international authority to say who could mine the nodules. But we were preserving for ourself the right to protect the technology and to protect the first 20 years of mining or something like that. We were very much protecting a non-existent (except on paper) fledgling domestic industry for mining nodules so that we did not give away that huge resource. To my knowledge, nobody has ever commercially mined magnesium nodules. They were very deep in many cases. The pictures showed a vessel on the surface and a mile long tube going down to something that was scarfing up nodules on the bottom. The whole thing always seemed very problematic to me.

Q: This was the end of the Nixon-Kissinger administration. What was the attitude in the Law of the Sea? Were you all thinking that this was a good thing? Was there a positive attitude towards the Law of the Sea?

NEWLIN: The people working on it, some of them thought that it was practically religion. Many people thought that getting a Law of the Sea agreement was a wonderful thing. We, of course, had to protect our freedom to go everywhere. That was another thing that we were worried about: the freedom of the high seas. But people wanted a Law of the Sea agreement. But we had this particular hangup on deep sea mining.

Q: You were in this coordinating position. Was there a perceived "enemy" or set of "enemies," difficult countries with whom to deal on this who were on a different track than we were?

NEWLIN: I just don't remember well enough.

Q: Elliott Richardson did bring some panache to this.

NEWLIN: Absolutely.

Q: He had a distinguished name? During the time you were there, about a year, did it go anywhere?

NEWLIN: It went quite far quite fast getting an agreement that was pretty well nailed down with pretty much everything but the deep sea mining. I left before it went to the final agreement stage. But we were clearly gaining on a lot of stuff but we still had the deep sea mining and we never really overcame it. But we certainly got a lot faster progress when Richardson came. His being there was very helpful, but I always felt that, in fact, what was the most helpful thing was having Dick Darbin there. Part of Richardson's genius was having good people around him. Darbin was outstanding.

Q: When you left there in 1977, you went where?

NEWLIN: I went to the Benelux Desk.

Q: That was Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg. You were there from '77-'79. I just want to take each country separately. Let's start with Belgium. What were the issues with Belgium at that time?

NEWLIN: I'm not going to be able to tell you what any of the issues with any of the countries were. What the desk officer is working with mostly is a whole lot of little stuff. That's what I was doing as a desk officer. I told you that I would do some homework before? The way to do these interviews if you remember things as badly as I do would be to jog your memory on these things and I've not done that. If I get these back, it would be kind of a fun project to do.

Q: We will get a transcript and send you a draft. Let me put a couple of questions to you here. If you have a chance to take a look at it at your leisure and fill it in, we can get the draft back.

Were there any particular issues between the United States and Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg? I'm always interested in Luxembourg because we usually end up by sending political appointees there who are usually lightweight socialites. Yet I've talked to somebody who was an ambassador there, a Foreign Service officer, Ed Rowell, who said really Luxembourg is an excellent place because 1) it's the center of a lot of banking and 2) they have a seat on the various stages of the European Union and before that the European Community, so it's a good place to pick up information? The Luxembourgers will talk to you and share what they learnemuch more so than some of the other larger countries which have their own fish to fry in the European Union business.

NEWLIN: We had mentioned that a little bit earlier. Jim Lowenstein went down there as ambassador. He found that to be the case. I had mentioned that he asked me to go down as his DCM. I was not able to do that. We really didn't have any substantive political issues with Luxembourg. Luxembourg was mostly useful to us just the way you mentioned it. For one thing, they have a vote. If you can get the Luxembourg vote on any issue, it's as good as getting the French vote, except it's not really, of course. But secondly, it's a good place to pick up information. The Parliament meets down there. This brings leaders down there periodically. People come through Luxembourg. You can sometimes talk to French people more easily in Luxembourg than you can talk to them in Paris.

Q: With the Netherlands-

NEWLIN: We had energy issues with the Netherlands. We had gas issues with the Netherlands. I don't remember the details of them.

Q: You left there in '79. You took leave without pay?

NEWLIN: I took leave without pay and went sailing. I sailed away my midlife crisis. I started in Sarasota and sailed down to the Grenadines off the coast of Venezuela. I had a little 32 foot cutter, old in design, designed to be a pilot boat, a very solid boat.

Q: After six months sailing, you came back refreshed, tanned, and ready to have at it. You went to the Canadian Desk from '80-'83.

NEWLIN: Yes. You asked me how I happened to get involved with the Law of the Sea. I remember how I got involved with the Canadian Desk. I was in touch with my wife throughout all of this. She came and joined me twice on the sail. She loves easy sailing, but she doesn't like hard sailing. She doesn't like to be out of sight of land. She likes to sleep in a port. She came and joined me. But we were in touch by phone very often. The one sophisticated piece of equipment I had on the boat was a good single sideband radio which could get me to Miami, which could pass me through to her. She said that the State Department was kind of frantic to talk to me about my ongoing assignment. To be honest, I was not particularly interested in my ongoing assignment. I was more interested in what I was doing. But I knew I had to do something about it. I guess it was in Martinique that I went to the consulate general that I looked through the microfiches and picked the Canadian Desk from what was there. But during that whole sail, there were several times I put on a necktie. But the only time I put on socks was when the consul general invited me to dinner with some local dignitaries and I thought that probably I should put on socks. In fact, I think it would have been all right if I hadn't. I was the only one there with a necktie on. Anyway, I went to the Canadian Desk, right.

Q: You did that from '80-'83. You were a political officer. You got energy and fisheries, which strike me as being sort of the perpetual problems of Canadian-American relations. Fisheries starts even before the Republic came into existence and continues to this day.

NEWLIN: The big issue on the fisheries, the biggest issue during that time, was the boundary issue. We were working on that boundary negotiation for much of that time. If you remember, we pretty well lost our case. It was decided after I had left. The Canadians got more of what they wanted than we got of what we wanted.

Q: What was the boundary issue?

NEWLIN: Who gets the Georges Banks. When you extend your fishing rights out from three miles to 12, where does the boundary fall? It's kind of more complicated than you might think. There are various principles on drawing that line. Both countries want to get as much as we could and we didn't. We lost.

Q: Where did it gto the court somewhere?

NEWLIN: Yes, it went to the court in the Hague.

Q: Were you having people from New England pounding on your desk all the time about the fishing interests?

NEWLIN: Yes, but it seems to me that that was not as much on the boundary as on the regulations for fishing. Who would determine things like net size, big holes or little holes for Grand fish? The Grand fish industry was being hammered by more and more fishing and fewer and fewer fish. The Georges Bank was essentially fished out. It went from being one of the richest fishing areas in the world to being practically fishless. The U.S. and Canada were negotiating things like net sizes to protect that industry. That's when we got involved with the American fishing industry. They almost always wanted the more immediate gratification, the smaller net size, even though it looked to me as if in the long run that was cutting off their nose despite their face.

Q: Who was setting the net sizes? Was this within our government or was this also an international agreement?

NEWLIN: It was international on areas that were in dispute. We had to agree with the Canadians. I can't remember whether it was that we really had to agree, whether there was going to be an international agreement that dictated what each fisherman did, or whether there was going to be a gentleman's agreement that we would each in disputed areas do the same thing.

Q: What were the issues on energy?

NEWLIN: It had to do with gas pipelines and the extent to which they could undersell us with the gas coming down from Canada. They could produce gas more cheaply than we did or they were willing to sell it more cheaply than we were.

Q: I would imagine that the role of trade negotiators or experts would certainly take over there. Did you find yourself dealing with?

NEWLIN: Sure, the Canadian Desk was certainly not taking the lead role in any of these things. In the negotiation, it was the Legal department who was conducting the boundary negotiation. Our role was kind of peripheral. On the energy side, it wasn't the State Department either.

Q: Did you have much dealing with the Canadian embassy on these issues?

NEWLIN: Sure. We were very cozy with the Canadian embassy. But they were a conduit. It's easy to get to Canada. It's easy for Canadian officials to come down here. I think that the Canadian embassy didn't have a particularly substantive role to play. We could talk directly to the Canadians.

Q: Who was the head of the Canadian Desk?

NEWLIN: It was Wingate Lloyd.

Q: The Canadian Desk was quite a large one, wasn't it? We have so many issues of immediate impact all over the country.

NEWLIN: Yes. One of the things that the Canadians were disappointed in was that they were still part of European Affairs. They would have liked to have had at least a Hemisphere Affairs Assistant Secretary. But we argued that our issues with Canada were the same issues we had with other well developed, advanced, western economies like the European economies, not the issues that we had with the Latin American economies and therefore it made more sense to link Canada with the Europeans. They would have really liked to have had an Assistant Secretary for Canadian Affairs.

Q: Now, they are with Latin America.

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: I understand they're rather unhappy because what are they doing with all these Spanish-speaking people whose problems are not Canadian problems?

NEWLIN: Yes. It made much more sense to have them part of EUR.

Q: It really did. But it's now more politically or geographically correct.

In your last assignment, you went off from '83-'86 as consul general. How did you get that job? It sounds like a very nice job?

NEWLIN: I've always been very grateful for that. I had this rather undistinguished career and then this nice job came along. First, I was told I was going to be consul general in Bordeaux. Then that went to the person who was working in assignments in Personnel. But Nice came up and they gave me Nice, which I thought was very nice of them. It was a funny job. It's a one person post. This was the first time it had been made a consulate general. In the past, it was just a consulate in Nice. It was nice. It was a consulate general. It was nice for me. It was nicer being a consul general down there. They treated the American consul general as "une personnalitï¿½." It was treated as a big job even though, in fact, it was a little job. We have since closed it. Although I, of course, opposed closing it at the time? I opened it. There was no consulate there at the time. I went out and opened it and they wanted me to close it.

Q: Once you close something? What happened to make them want to open again?

NEWLIN: I think that there was some political pressure to open it in the U.S. Senate. I'm not quite sure why people wanted to open it, but they did. It had a limited role. It didn't issue visas. It was lovely not issuing visas. That's kind of a messy job. We took care of American interests. We issued passports. We showed the flag. There is a lot of American industry down there. We had a commercial Foreign Service national. When the place was closed, it was never completely closed. It was a Foreign Service agency. We had a consular agent. After I left, there was a consular agent. There is still a consular agent. Much of the stuff that was done when I was there is still done. Somebody comes up from Marseille to sign passports.

Q: We have a consul general in Marseille.

NEWLIN: That's right.

Q: Did Nice cover Monaco?

NEWLIN: Yes.

Q: Was that a major reason for? Particularly since Princess Grace? What was your impression of Monaco? It had gone through a period where it was putting itself out as a tax haven and the French got a little annoyed at this.

NEWLIN: Yes. Monaco is a company. The prince runs a company. Its assets are its tax laws and its ability to decide who is going to do business there and the conditions under which they're going to do business. He ran that company very well. He is very pleased to point out that the gambling for which Monaco is, of course, known really more than for anything else is a relatively small amount of Monaco's industry. Its real industry is banking? They do have some lead manufacturing and that sort of thing. But tourism and banking are their main industries. They run their little municipality very well. It says of itself that it's the only place where a woman in a long dress and an emerald necklace can walk down the street at 6:00 pm and feel both safe and not ridiculous.

Q: Did you get involved in any consular cases? Were any Americans in trouble in your area while you were there?

NEWLIN: There were always Americans in some kind of trouble. That was the thing that the consulate general did the most of and the best. We were a very good place for an American in trouble to come largely because of our Foreign Service nationals and largely because of one who had been there for a number of years, Jeanette Reese. She had a wonderful can-do attitude that she wanted to send people away satisfied. It was my attitude that I wanted very much to send people away with the feeling that they had come to the consulate with a problem and the consulate had solved their problem. I always thought that was very much not the attitude in Marseille, which had the bureaucratic feelinand their nationals had the bureaucratic feelinthat they had something to give and, by God, one of the things they could therefore do was to withhold it. What we did the best was deal with Americans and their problems.

Q: Do you recall any of the consular cases that you dealt with?

NEWLIN: They were mostly people with passport problems and money problems. The money problems were on two sides. One, rich people will have lost all their money and expect to get money to continue their trip. The other were people who were more or less destitute who lived down in the area who needed ongoing help. With the rich people, the biggest trick was to get them to realize that their biggest asset was their friendships at home. I'm talking about people who had a liquidity problem, not a money problem. If you have a liquidity problem, you call a friend at home who you figure hasn't got a liquidity problem and you say, "Can you send me $5,000 and as soon as I get back, I'll make you whole?" You try to get them to realize that, in fact, you would be flattered if the same person called you in such a situation. You wouldn't feel put on. You'd feel pleased that you were the person to whom they had turned. Then you had the people who were destitute and a little bit deranged, mostly had some kind of pension income coming in but they had run out of it before they got to the end of it. We would help tide them over. That was Jeanette Reese who knew them all and often would do things, in fact, that probably the regulations would have said that wasn't the way to handle a particular problem. We had a slush fund that local American organizations would give us to which we would just add money if it needed it. We would use that to tide people over when it seemed the best to do.

Q: Did you have fleet visits?

NEWLIN: We had a lot of fleet visits. We had two heads of the Sixth Fleet while I was there. One was Ed Martin and one was Frank Kelso. They were outstanding men. We worked very closely with the USO (United Services Organization). They were good people in the USO who coordinated lots of the stuff in terms of helping take care of soldiers ashore. The government of Nice was very helpful. It at the time was being run by Jacques Mï¿½decin, who was a crook. But he was Nice's crook, so he was hugely popular. His father had been mayor for a very long time. He was mayor and could have been mayor for life if he had not? When he was out of the country once? He was very right-wing. The country at that time was socialist. He was out of the country and his guys got a hold of him and said, "Jacques, this time you can't come back. This time if you come back, they're going to put you in jail." He didn't come back. He went down to Uruguay. The scuttlebutt was that he was selling tee shirts on the beach. You have to have known that Jacques Mï¿½decin knew that he had salted plenty of money away offshore and that he wasn't selling tee shirts on the beach. He had an American wife with a slightly? It's a name associated with the American cosmetics industry. People kept saying that she was an heir of that family, which was not the case. She didn't even claim that was the case. She was quite glamorous. But when he went to Uruguay, she did not follow him there. They got divorced.

The fleet? Therefore, Mï¿½decin was very pro-U.S. and very right-wing. So, he loved having the U.S. fleet come in and show the flag. The fleet put its band to good use. The local economy would put the band to good use. The band would play at things for the public. It was good flag waving for the U.S. We would entertain the officers and local dignitaries at our house, which was a good thing. Local dignitaries liked to be invited to meet the fleet. Then the fleet would invite them out to receptions on board ships, which was a nice way of making U.S. friends.

Q: Did you find that the writ of Paris ran strong in Nice or did Nice sort of run on its own?

NEWLIN: Nice ran on its own. You're talking about the government. No, Nice was always its own fiefdom. Nice was Italian until 100 years ago. Nice was operated by the Mï¿½decin family for a long time. You have lots of roles in? Mï¿½decin was not only a deputy and a mayor, but he was head of the conseille generale, which ran the? The region is run by two people, the head of the conseille generale and the prï¿½fet. The prï¿½fet takes care of the central government's part. The conseille generale is the elected part. Mï¿½decin ran that and ran the city. He didn't need Paris much at all. It was a little bit of a fiefdom. But they did get him. Then they extradited him. He did serve some time. Then he died.

Q: You left there in 1986.

NEWLIN: That was my last post.

Q: Where did you go? You came back to Washington?

NEWLIN: I came back to Washington. The world before you lies when you retire from the Foreign Service. You have some places that you love. You have to decide in the U.S. if you're going to? Some people stay where they last served because everybody treated them so well. It was where they had their most rank and they were sort of lionized.

Q: It usually doesn't work though.

NEWLIN: It doesn't work, no. You discover that when you're whatever it was you were, you're lionized and now somebody else is whatever it was you were and he is lionized and you're on the sidelines. Anyway, we had no temptation to stay in Nice anyway. We're Americans. We wanted to be home. We're city people. We've come to like Washington and Washington has changed dramatically since we arrived here in 1961. It now has a very vibrant theater scene and good music and it's just an interesting city.

Q: I forgot to ask, while you were in Nice, did you get to sail?

NEWLIN: I got to sail, but I didn't try to keep a boat. It's not very good sailing water. The winds are particularly reliable. The harbors are not particularly appealing. You don't anchor in the harbors. You go to a slip. There aren't very many natural harbors. In the West Indies and in Maine, there are just islands and harbors everywhere. Here, the best sailing along the Mediterranean there is to sail out to things like Corsica. Once you're out there, you've got little harbors to put up in. You either don't have much wind or you have an awful lot of wind. It's not particularly appealing sailing country.

Q: I was consul general in Athens. From putting around, you've got the Greek islands and all. You've got wonderful little harbors, but that's a long way away.

NEWLIN: From where I was, it's a long way away. What you would have done there is fly down and charter a boat for a week and sail in the islands. That's a fun thing to do.

Q: I guess we'll stop at this point. I want to thank you very much.

NEWLIN: Thank you very much.

End of interview