Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR JOHN GUNTHER DEAN

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
Initial interview date: September 6, 2000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background
- Born in Germany; raised in Germany and Kansas City Missouri
- Life in Nazi Germany.
- Harvard University; University of Paris Law School
- Family
- US Army World War II
- Gustav Hilger
- Fort Hunt

Paris, France: Headquarters, Marshall Plan: Program Officer for Greece and Turkey — 1950-1951
- European Payments Union
- Jean Monnet
- Operations
- Czechs

Brussels, Belgium: Headquarters, Marshall Plan: Industrial Analyst — 1951-1952
- Ambassador Robert Murphy
- De Gaulle
- Adenauer
- Treaty of Rome
- European Community (EC)
- Germany reconstruction
- European communists
- Vietnamese
- Soviet Union
- Greece/Turkey
- Marriage

Entered the Foreign Service — 1953

Saigon, Vietnam: Economic Mission to Vietnam — 1953-1956

French Military Expeditionary Corps
UN financial assistance
Communists
Ambassador Donald Heath
Dien Bien Phu
Sihanouk
Cambodia
Ambassador Robert McClintock
John Foster Dulles
"Neutrality"
Mendes-France
Foreign Service examination
Bank of Indochina assets sale
Bank establishments

State Department: Foreign Service Institute; (FSI) FSO Basic course 1956

Vientiane, Laos: Political Officer 1956-1958
Ambassador Jefferson Graham Parsons
Meo people
Ambassador Horace Smith
Souvanna Phouma
Phoui Sananikone
Political environment
French language
Neutralism
Pathet Lao
Liaison with French
Dissent
Role and authority of the Ambassador
Birth of son

State Department: FSI: Mid Career Course 1958-1959

Lomé, Togo: Consul 1959-1960
UN Trust Territory
Ambassador Amery Houghton
Environment
Establishing Consulate
President Olynpio
General Eyadéma
Diplomatic Advisor to Olympio
French presence
Lessons in protocol
Duke von and zu Mecklenburg

Racial groups
Economy

Bamako, French Sudan (Republic of Mali): Chargé d'affaires 1960-1961
Federation with Senegal ended
Ambassador Henry Villard
President Modibo Keita
Housing
Currency
Soviet mission
Lumumba
André Malraux
West African French Franc Zone
Air Afrique
US Military Aid Mission
French presence
Congressional delegtation
Robert Keeley

State Department: Officer in charge, Togolese and Malian Affairs 1961-196
African embassies in Washington
President Kennedy
Olympio assassination
Advisor at UN General Assembly
Recognition of mainland China
Vote buying at UN
Kennedy assassination

State Department: NATO Affairs, European Bureau 1963-1965
Political Advisor's Committee
George Vest
Rosanne Ridgeway
General de Gaulle
NATO two-pillar system
US supremacy
Operations
Isador Rabi
Science and Technology min foreign affairs
Russian association
Remote sensing intelligence
Priority of US national interest
Relations with Congress
De Gaulle
Soviet Union

Paris, France: Political Officer, East Asia Affairs Officer 1965-1969

Vietnam
Etienne Manac'h
North Vietnamese delegation in Paris
Messages from "Hanoi Hilton" prisoners
Senator McCain
Paris Vietnam Peace Conference
Ambassador Bohlen
Phil Habib
Robert Kennedy visit
Ho Chi Minh message
Senator Claiborne Pell visit
Hanoi "Peace Signal" leak
Charles Malo
End of political colonialism in Asia
Ambassador Sergeant Shriver
Wife's family
De Gaulle/Bohlen relations
Vernon Walters

Harvard University: Fellow, Center for International Affairs 1969-1970

Anti-Vietnam War demonstrations

Saigon, Vietnam: Deputy Chief Political Officer (CORDS) 1970-1972

Military Region 1
General Thieu
Ngo Dinh Diem
"Vietnamization" of War.
Ambassador Bunker
North Vietnamese goals
American advisors
Da Nang
Role of advisors
US military operations
Operations
Quang Tri City
Return from Vietnam
Refugees' plight
Lessons in leadership
FSOs in combat
Comments on human costs of war
General Abrams
General Freddy Wyant
Da Nang Cham museum
Vietnamese generals

Relations with US Embassy
John Paul Van
Ethnic Cambodians

Vientiane, Laos: Deputy Chief of Mission/Chargé d'affaires 1972-1973
Ambassador Mac Godley
Embassy staff
US Bombing target selection
Pathet Lao
Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma
Pathet Lao
Phoumi Vongvichit
King of Laos and family
Sisouk Champsak
Wife's family connections
Jack Vessey
Peng Pongasavan
Pathet Lao/Laos Government negotiations
Henry Kissinger
US support of Souvanna Phouma government.
Reporting r ole
Dick Howland
General Tao Ma coup attempt
Personal role in coup defeat
Presidential commendation
Coalition government formation
Comments on war and peace negotiations
Different viewpoint of Embassy and Kissinger
Foreign diplomats and journalists
Comments on future developments
Ambassador Charles S. Whitehouse

United States Ambassador to Cambodia: 1974-1975
Exiled Prince Sihanouk
French influence
Relations
Ho Chi Minh Trail bombing
President Lon Nol
Siri Matak
Evacuation of Embassy wives
Khmer Rouge control and atrocities
War against Khmer Rouge
Self-proclaimed Neutrality
Brigadier General Jack Palmer
DCM Robert V. Keeley

"Controlled Solution":
Environment
International and US press
US policy differences
Congressional interest
Sihanouk declines peacemaker role
French assistance
Vietnam War
Richard Armitage
Weapons against Khmer Rouge
Air-lift supplies for Phnom Penh
North Vietnam and China support for Khmer Rouge
Pol Pot
Personal solution views
Mekong River closing
Lack of US funding
Khmer Rouge advances
Evacuation from Phnom Penh
Ambassador Graham Martin
Farewell letter from Sirik Matak
Cambodian leaders decline evacuation
"Operation Eagle Pull"
Emotional departure
President Ford's commendation
Comments on Khmer Rouge
Fate of Cambodian leaders
Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
French Embassy assistance
"The Killing Fields"
Foreign embassies' requests for assistance
Destruction of files and security equipment

United States Ambassador to Denmark 1975-1978
Vietnam War
Use of Danish language
Prime Minister Anker Jorgensen
Soviet embassy
US commercial relations
Government
Royal visit to the United States
Personal relations with Royal Family
NATO

United States Ambassador to Lebanon 1978-1981

President Sarkis
Wife and family
Wife's family relationship with Lebanon
Civil War
Palestinians
Confirmation hearings
Wives
Religions groups
Suleiman Frengieh
Syrians
Phalange
Relations with President Elias Sarkis
Security
Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)
United National International Force in Lebanon (UNFIL)
Internal travel
Ambassador Francis Meloy
Israeli bombings
Bashir Gemayel
Visits to political/religious leaders
Bashir/Israeli connection
Colonel Johnny Abdo
Currency
Prime Minister Salim Hoss
Lebanese military
US military assistance
Nabih Berri
Lebanese currency reserves
Cardinal Cooke visit to Lebanon
Personal efforts on Lebanon's behalf
Gifts to religious groups
Congressman Steve Solarz
Relations with Palestinian groups
Teheran hostages
American hostages
US supporters of Lebanon
Assassination attempt
Israel source of US weapons
Abu Hassan assassination
Lebanon as integral part of Mid-East
Soviet Ambassador
Aid to Saudi Ambassador
Danny Chamoun
American University Hospital
Help from Saudi Prince Fahad

Saudi/US relationship
American-built radio station
Phil Habib
Reagan letter of commendation
Amin Gemayel

United States Ambassador to Thailand 1981-1985
US regional military requirements
US interests
Relations
Ambassador Morton Abramowitz
Prime Minister General Prem
Historical background
US agencies' "turf" battles
US military presence
Prime Minister Thanat Khoman
Thailand foreign policy
Japanese
Mainland China
European Union
Commercial relations
US assistance
MIAs
Ross Perot
Drug trafficking
Royal Family
Prisoner Exchange Treaty
Embassy staff
Fields of cooperation
Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)
Cambodian refugees
Cambodia developments
George Schulz
Alexander Haig
Trade
Anti-communist activity
Sihanouk
PANAM routing
Management Institute of Thailand
Petroleum Institute of Thailand
Mike Deaver
Reagan visit canceled
Oil/Gas deposits
Union Oil Company
Relations with neighbors

Association of South East Asia Nations (ASEAN)
Drug trafficking
Dr. Thanat Khoman
Currency
Chinese
Fulbright Program
India
Nuclear questions
Philippines
Religious tolerance
Local press
Political Parties
United States Information Service (USIS)
Leona Nieman
American High School of Bangkok

United States Ambassador to India 1985-1988
Congressional interest in appointment
President Bush letter to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi
Embassy buildings and furnishings
Prime Minister Gandhi
Computer programming industry
US/India commercial joint ventures
India/Soviet military relations
U.S. India Fund
Nuclear issues
Pakistan's nuclear program
US assistance to Pakistan
Pressler Amendment
Soviet nuclear submarine data
India as Non-Aligned leader
India's pro-Palestinian policy
Jewish population
Israel
Weinberger visit
India views on Afghanistan
Bhopal/United Carbide disaster settlement
Non-Proliferation Treaty
Afghanistan
Regional drug production and trafficking
US-Pakistan relationship
Israel area role
Gandhi US visit
US/India policy differences
Reagan/Gandhi relations

ATTACHMENTS

Aide Memoire:

Developments in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and US relationship

Wrong on Afghanistan

Views on US military involvement in Afghanistan

The New York Times

Health and unanswered questions
Letter from Rajv Gandhi
Gandhi assassination
Resignation
Global War Games

INTERVIEW

Q: Today is September 6, 2000. This is an interview with John Gunther Dean. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Let's start at the beginning. Could you tell me when and where you were born and something about your family?

DEAN: Okay. I was born on February 24, 1926 in the German city of Breslau, an industrial city of 650,000 people, where they made locomotives, airplanes. Silesia is one of the two lungs of Germany: the Ruhr Valley and Silesia. My father was a corporation lawyer who was on the Board of Directors of banks, chairman of a machine-tool company, mining corporations, etc... He was close to many of the leading industrial and financial people in Germany, in the period between the First World War and the Second World War. My father was also the President of the Jewish Community in Breslau. His friend Max Warburg played the same role in Hamburg.

Q: Was this the banking Warburg.

DEAN: That's right. Max Warburg was the head of the banking house at that time. Sigmund was his nephew who went to England.

Q: "Dean" was...

DEAN: My father changed our name legally by going to court in New York in March 1939. My father's name was Dr. Josef Dienstfertig. You will find his name in books listing the prominent men in industry and finance at the time. One interesting anecdote was the trip of my late father to Palestine in the late 1920s. He, Mr. Warburg, Mr. Goldschmidt and others were invited to attend the opening of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. All the representatives of the Jewish community in Germany said the same thing: “We are German citizens of Jewish faith. We are not Zionists. We will help you,

but we are part of an assimilated society." I mention this here, because this approach to religion had a great impact on my own attitude toward Zionism.

Q: I want to go back a bit. Breslau was...

DEAN: Breslau is a city which used to be in the 13th, 14th, and 15th century Polish. It then became Austrian. It then became Prussian when Frederick the Great defeated Austria in the 1740s. My father's family had been living there for the last 500 years, and we have records to that effect. The reason that Jews had been living there for such a long time is that they were probably descendents of the Kazars who were allowed to settle in about 1500 or so in Neustadt in Silesia, and later were allowed to move to the big cities. They lived there quietly. In the city of Breslau, where I was born, we had nine Nobel Prize winners, from the beginning of the 20th century to 1933. More than half of the Nobel Prize winners were Jewish. But they were all very assimilated Jews. They included Paul Ehrlich, Fritz Haber, etc... who were part of the German establishment. Along that line, I have in my possession a book given to my father in 1899. It is inscribed as follows: "This prize of the Emperor to the best student in town." The idea of belonging to a nation, being part of a community, and your religion being between yourself and your maker, was absolutely cardinal in my upbringing.

Q: What about your mother's background.

DEAN: It was completely different. My mother was the daughter of a well to do banker by the name of Ashkenaczy living in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Her father's cousin, Simon Ashkenaczy, converted (with a name like Ashkenaczy) to Catholicism. In 1920, he became the first Polish Ambassador to the Court of St. James. After being stationed from 1920 to 1926 in London, he served from 1926 to 1932 as Polish Ambassador to the League of Nations in Geneva. My mother's cousin became Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Poland in Warsaw. That is my mother's background. My mother's sisters and brothers got married all over the world.

Q: This was on your mother's side.

DEAN: Yes, my mother's oldest brother came to France in 1917 and fought in the war. Today, I have a French cousin who was honored by having bestowed on him the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor by the President of France. He was a hero in the Free French Resistance Movement. He then became an Ambassador in the French Diplomatic Service. Another first cousin went to England and attended Oxford. He ended up as Chairman of British Petroleum Chemicals. Another cousin is Dr. Petersdorf. In the early 1980s he was Chairman of the Association of American Medical Schools. He served as Chairman of Medicine at Harvard, Dean of Medicine in California. That is my mother's family. This family, Ashkenaczy, goes back to Amsterdam. They came from Amsterdam to what was the Austro-Hungarian Empire in about 1702. They never, like my father's family, stayed in one place very long. I still have family living in Europe. Some of them are Catholics, others Jews. The only lesson I learned from my own past was that tolerance

is important. I listen with respect to other peoples' views and I consider religion to be a personal relationship between myself and one's God.

Q: How religious was homelife for you?

DEAN: Not very religious. For the first four years of my life, I attended a rather exclusive private school. That was the end of that cycle. Afterwards, I had a Swiss tutor at my house, Mr. Pezet, and an English governess, Eleanor Mary McCarthy, so I would learn English. I also had a French teacher come to our home. Once a week, I had somebody come to the house to teach me religion. I was able to read Hebrew. While attending school at the age of 7 or 8, I had a friend who said to me one day: "My mom tells me I shouldn't go home with you; we shouldn't walk together." I said: "Why." "Oh, because you are Jewish. But never mind. We are buddies. We are going to play soccer together." I am mentioning this because some survivors of the Nazi persecution claim today that all Germans were Nazis and anti-Semites. From my limited I found this not to be true. We left Germany in 1938.

Q: Let's-talk about growing up. 1926. So, in 1932, you were six years old or so. What were your personal observations of the Hitlerzeit as far as how they gradually impacted on you.

DEAN: I was very young at the time. It impacted relatively little. I went from 1932 to 1936 to this private school for four years where there were only two Jews. That was the end of the cycle. At that point, I shifted and I had tutors at home. I assume the reason was that I could not go to the Kaiser Wilhelm Gymnasium.

Q: This was just when the Nuremberg laws were passed.

DEAN: The Nuremberg laws were in 1935.

Q: They were beginning to bite.

DEAN: The Prussian Jews had received citizenship in 1742. They were eager to be part of the nation. They assimilated and inter-married. They also converted at times. Making a contribution to their country was important to them. They did this in spades. They lived their lives as Germans. Today, some people carry their religion on their sleeve. It becomes their identity. This was not the case of my family. They wanted to be part of the nation. I brought that concept of life very much with me.

Q: Were you picking anything up from your family about Hitler and what was happening - at the dinner table?

DEAN: No, because my father always believed (and so did my uncles). "It's going to blow over." I won't say my father was part of it, but he was close to the "Herrenclub." The Herrenclub were the people who helped Hitler come to power. They were the

industrialists and bankers who decided that having to choose between communism and this crazy fellow Hitler, they said: “We can control this paper hanger.” My father remained until his death a carrier of German civilization, German culture. In order to please my father, I took a one-year survey course of German literature. Then, my father said to me: “You are not a complete human being unless you have read Faust.” So, I studied half a year “Faust” at Harvard. My father always claimed that I had German roots. Therefore, I should learn about German culture. Certainly, my father was disappointed in the way some Germans behaved. Others were very helpful. My father never had any hatred or ill feeling toward Germany. In 1938, I saw the concierge come up to our apartment and shout: “Herr Doktor, Herr Doktor, Sie kommen. Du must raus “which means: “Doctor, they are coming, you must go.” The Gestapo were coming to pick him up. The concierge was trying to protect my father. Another uncle was held as a hostage at Buchenwald in 1938 for ransom before he could leave Germany. The head of the Breslau police force was helpful to another uncle in getting him a visa in order to leave Germany because he had been awarded the Iron Cross first class during World War I. I think what happened to the German Jews (I'm not saying it about others) was the great effort they made to be assimilated into the German nation. For example, note the role the Jews played during the period of Romanticism (1830s) in German literature. The matter of faith was between yourself and your maker. The number of Jews who won the Nobel Prize for Germany in every field was amazing. There was no question of loyalty to another nation. Palestine became important for Zionists during the Hitler period as a destination for rapid emigration. There was a tremendous difference (and very few people ever talked about it) between the effort of the assimilation of German Jews and the Jews in some other countries who were never allowed to be part of a nation, as for example in Russia.

Q: This was reflected very much, say, in New York, where the German Jews were part of the establishment. When all of these people came out of Eastern Europe at the turn of the century, these were country cousins and they were not well appreciated.

DEAN: The German Jews who came to the U.S. in 1848 often inter-married and became part of the American scene. They went out West. They became merchants. They started as peddlers and ended up owning department stores.

Q: Sure, like Goldwater and all that.

DEAN: These people became part of the country. They assimilated. Today, in the 21st century, many young Jewish men marry non-Jewish girls. According to Jewish law, the faith of the children is decided by the mother. This is one of the problems the Orthodox and ultra-conservative Jews have in the U.S., saying: “Hey, wait a second! In the melting pot of America, we are melting away.” Reformed Judaism can live with that. The Orthodox cannot. This may lead to Orthodox Jews emigrating to Israel or in Israel questioning the validity of marriages performed by reformed Rabbis.

Q: When did you leave Germany?

DEAN: 1938.

Q: It was a good time to get the hell out.

DEAN: It was more the influence of my mother who made us pull up roots. My father believed that it might still blow over.

Q: In 1938, you went where.

DEAN: To Holland.

Q: How long were you in Holland.

DEAN: About three or four weeks. My father had friends there. They were together on the board of a mining corporation in Greece. They played a role later in my father's life. Then, we went to England. We went to see our governess. From there, we took the S.S. Queen Mary for the United States.

Q: That would be when.

DEAN: At the beginning of February 1939. I have a daughter-in-law who came on the Mayflower. When I went to the wedding, I said: "You know, I feel sorry for your ancestors. They spent six long weeks on that ocean, being tossed around. I came in five days. It was very smooth sailing." But we both got there! One of the first things we did when we arrived in the U.S. was to go to court. We petitioned the court to change the name of Dienstfertig to Dean. That was done. I have kept this paper very preciously for over 60 years. At that point, we became known as "Dean." In early 1939 my father got an offer to do some sporadic teaching at the University of Kansas. He did a few lectures and then got a job in Kansas City, Missouri. The family moved to Kansas City, Missouri in 1939. Kansas City played a major role in my life. Let me cite an example. My father was a very polite gentleman. One Saturday afternoon, we went to town in a streetcar. My father was sitting next to a white lady and he saw a black lady coming in. She had done her Saturday shopping and carried a couple of bags. My father, in his European manner, tipped his hat, got up, and tried to give his seat to the black lady. Well, in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1939, it was the custom for black folks to go to the back of the car. My father giving up his seat for a black woman was unheard of. The white lady objected. She said: "Why, you..." and used very foul language about my father and his relationship with blacks. The streetcar conductor said: "Fellow, you take your boy and get off that streetcar. I don't want no trouble on that streetcar." He stopped right there and then, and we had to get off. It was not even a regular street car stop. My father was involved in a debate when Mr. Lindberg came to Kansas. It was 1940. The war had broken out in Europe in September 1939. Congress had passed the "Lend/Lease Bill" to help the allies. My father wanted the allies to win. Lindberg favored staying out of war.

Q: Lindberg was part of the America First movement and kept saying: "Germany is our best customer" and all that sort of thing.

DEAN: He was quite friendly to the fascist regime. That ended my father's very short teaching career at Kansas University. We lived in Kansas City, Missouri. I first went to junior high-school and then to high school. One of the teachers, an English teacher, said: "John, you want to go to college, don't you?" I replied: "Yes, I want to go to college." "Where do you want to go?" I replied: "I want to go to Harvard." "You want to go to Harvard? We have never sent anybody to Harvard from this high school. I'll tell you, John, if you are really serious, you read one play of Shakespeare a week - extra assignment. Every time you come across a word you don't know, you look it up in the Webster dictionary and write out the definition. Then, you give me one page on what you think of the play." I did this for just about a year. Miss Seacrest, rest her soul in peace, never got a nickel for it, never received any real expression of gratitude from anybody, but she got me into Harvard. I was able to pass the Eastern College Boards. I am eternally grateful to her. That particular woman and her action and her willingness to help a young student influenced my actions later in my life. When I came into a position where I could be of help to others, I did. I sit on a board today in the Far East, of a university entirely devoted to science and technology. We only have master's and Ph.D. students. I pleaded for scholarships for young Vietnamese, a country where I had fought for 2 years. I pleaded for scholarships for Cambodians where I had played a major role in their country. I pleaded for scholarships for people from Laos and I got them altogether about 300 scholarships. I feel today that the Kansas City tradition of openness and tolerance, and giving young people a chance, had become part of my own outlook on life. I would like to mention something else. In Kansas City, we attended a congregation. You wouldn't know whether it was a congregation of Christians or Jews. It was a meeting hall. When the Christian Science Church burnt down about two blocks away, we offered our meeting hall to them and they used it on Sundays. It was reformed Judaism. It followed the Cincinnati Rite. I was the only one in my age group in the congregation who could still read Hebrew. All my colleagues didn't know a word of it. We got confirmed together.

Q: Not a Bar Mitzvah.

DEAN: No. It was a confirmation. I had the honor of reading the Ten Commandments, in Hebrew. I was the only one who could read that language. Some of my fellow confirmees went with me to Harvard. Most of them had gone to private preparatory schools. I had gone to public high school. Yes, Kansas City was a good place to grow up. While in Kansas City, I became a Boy Scout.

Q: You basically came into high school from Germany.

DEAN: Well, into junior high school.

Q: How did you find the adjustment? I'm just talking about the system.

DEAN: First rate. In Germany, I had an English governess, so the English language was not the big problem. The problem was that I did not know much about the American way of life. That was new to me. Mind you, I think every immigrant, whether they come from Latin America or Scandinavia or from the Orient, emphasis is on adjusting and being part of the gang. I learned to play baseball. I ran track for the school races. I played basketball. I was not good enough to become a member of the school team, but I participated in every sport. What struck me the most was that if you did your homework and you were willing to do a little extra reading, you could prepare yourself for college. In that effort, I found that most of the teachers were willing to help a student who was interested in learning. I also went to the public library to read and select books.

Q: We have a wonderful library system in the United States.

DEAN: I used it. Sixty years later, I still remember Miss Lewis, the librarian. She knew my past. She said: "John, what do you want to read now?" I said: "I want to read more about Alexander Hamilton." She said: "Alexander Hamilton is more authority-oriented. Why don't you read about Madison also?" I got interested in America's past. At that point, my father started collecting the original editions of books about the American Revolution. The books are still in my possession. In some of them are the drawings of Benjamin Franklin. Another series include Jefferson's memoirs, etc. He bought those books because he had great respect for the Founding Fathers of our country, I got interested in American history. For my father, it was more a question of learning about a new civilization. For me, it was learning more about my country. At this point, I began to think about ways I might be of service to my new country. Doing something for my country became a goal to be pursued over a lifetime. Nobody could change my mind. My father wanted me to go into banking. One of the last German Chancellors before Hitler was Heinrich Bruning. Heinrich Bruning was a friend of my father, so my father wrote him with the hope he could help me. In 1947 Bruning had suggested that I should go to Bering Brothers in London and learn about banking. "You'll get to be a good banker. Your father was chairman of a bank, so a career in finance makes sense." I replied that "I wanted to become a Foreign Service officer." He said: "Where did you ever get that strange idea? You'll never make it. Foreign-born, with all the baggage you carry..." I said: "I'm not interested in money per se. I would like to serve. I would like to do something for somebody."

Q: Let's go back. You were interested in the American Revolution. Did you read the Kenneth Roberts book, "Rebels in Arms?" This was a historical novel.

DEAN: No, I read more biographies about historical figures and the issues they were involved in. The Middle West in those days was quite different from today's; nobody locked their front door. You left your car unlocked. I had a paper route. Neighbors sometimes complained: "I did not get my paper" and I had to rush over and give them the latest newspaper. It was a nice environment. It was an open, caring society, and a very tolerant one. People did what they wanted to do. I enjoyed school. Today, I am told that

the high school I attended is closed. From Kansas City, my folks at one point moved back East. I went off to Harvard and I did not return to Missouri.

Q: During this time you were in Kansas City, was the family following events in Europe? How much were you involved? This was a great drama.

DEAN: In May 1940, I remember sitting in the dining room with a radio on the table. We were listening to H.G. Kaltenborn who reported on the surrender of France. It was General Hutzinger, the French general, who actually handed over the surrender document in the railroad car, to the German generals. My late mother, who had family in France, was crying. I understood at that point how attached she was to her family. I realized how meaningful was to her the defeat of France, the France she knew and loved. Her tears at that moment made a big impression on me. From that point on, I was hoping I would get as much education as possible and the war would last long enough so I could get into war and do my duty to my country and for the values it stands. This actually happened. I was in a hurry. I finished high school in June 1942. I was barely 16.

Q: You went to Harvard. Where did you get the idea of Harvard?

DEAN: As a child, I heard a lot about universities. My father had a doctorate and everybody in the family was well-educated. Harvard had the reputation of being the number one school in the U.S. Then, there was my father's friend, Dr. Bruning, who was teaching at Harvard. It never occurred to me that I should apply to several universities in case of being rejected. Also, I had not heard of so many other schools. Harvard was, as far as I could see, the best. The difficulty was how to get in and how to pay for it. My father paid part of the tuition and part of it I had to earn. I waited on tables my first year.

Q: Where? In one of the houses?

DEAN: Yes, As a Freshman I lived in Wigglesworth, B. Entry. I served at tables at Winthrop House, which was not my house. Later, I also served as an usher at football games so I could see, free of charge, the football game. Ambassador Arthur Hartman, with whom I was at Harvard, remembers me. “Hey, John, I remember when you were selling laundry contracts.” Arthur had bought one of my laundry contracts, which gave me an income. The second year, I had better jobs. I had moved up. I must admit that most people were nice and helped me.

Q: You adjusted quite well - at the right age - to the American system. In the European one, you don't work; you don't -

DEAN: In Germany, I was too young for higher education. In Germany, I was exposed to the concept of serving the state. Undoubtedly that idea stayed with me all during my school years in the U.S. The name “Dienst” means “service.” Somehow, “serving” became important to me and how to prepare myself to serve. I got the idea of serving in the field of international relations. Most of my elders thought this was crazy. They said:

“How can you make a name for yourself in diplomacy?” It was not common in those days for immigrants to enter the Diplomatic Service of the U.S. I think we should talk about the war years because the war years were absolutely of key importance to me.

Q: Let's talk about Harvard and the war years. First, at Harvard, when you went there in 1942, what were you taking? You were 16 years old.

DEAN: The first year there was no choice. You took the required subjects. I made fairly good grades. Among other subjects, I took during my Freshman year: English composition, world history, French, and science. But when I entered in 1942, some students were already leaving Harvard to join the armed forces. I was young - 16 - and had two more years before joining our military forces. Most of us who stayed at Harvard in 1942 and 1943 were eager to get as much education as possible before leaving for the war. I recall vividly, I was at the movies in Harvard Square when Field Marshal von Paulus surrendered an entire German army to the Soviets at Stalingrad in the beginning of 1943. It was the turning point of the war on the Eastern Front and the audience applauded at the end of the Newsreel.

Q: Von Paulus commanded the Sixth Army?

DEAN: Yes, that was a big event. I recall the image of the old Marshal von Paulus holding his Marshal staff high as he surrendered the whole Sixth Amy. I was worried that the war was going to end too soon for me to have made my contribution...

Q: Also, El Alamein had happened about that time.

DEAN: At that time, the Kansas City Star ran a story with a picture of my first cousin who had fought in North Africa. That is the fellow who received the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor in September 2001. He was the hero of the battle of Bir Hakeim, which was the first battle that the Free French won.

Q: This was part of the North Africa campaign...

DEAN: That's right. The French held the line against German and Italian forces, but needed ammunition. My cousin was a truck driver bringing badly needed ammunition to Bir Hakeim. The German Junker planes came to bomb the munitions convoy. The truck in front of my cousin got hit and started blowing up. He took his fire extinguisher and put out some of the fires until he was blown up himself. The convoy got through and he was left on the battlefield for dead. Scottish soldiers came to clean up the battlefield. They saw the 20-year old lad in a puddle of blood and gave him a direct blood transfusion. He lost his right arm at that battle and also lost two fingers on his left hand. He has three fingers left.

In 1944, I volunteered for induction into the Army. Born in Germany, I was classified by the draft board as an enemy alien and could not be drafted. I did not want to miss the

show, so I volunteered for induction. I left Harvard and drove to Fort Devens, Massachusetts, in 1944. There, I was processed as a private. In reply to a certain question, I made a boo boo. I was asked to sign up for a $10,000 GI insurance in case of death. So, I told the officer: “I am the only child and my parents would not need $10,000 if I am dead. I don't want to take out this insurance. I prefer to get the $21 a month a private is entitled to.” “Step aside. Dean.” So, I stepped aside. Half an hour later, “Have you changed your mind, Dean?” No. I didn't. “My parents still would not be happy with $10,000 in case of my death.” Well, I never took out the $10,000 insurance and I got processed.

“What do you want to do, Dean?” asked the sergeant processing me. “I don't want to walk.” “Okay, we'll send you down to the Corps of Combat Engineers at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. I was given orders to proceed to Fort Belvoir in Virginia, outside of Washington. I did my basic training there. Among the soldiers in my training unit were young men who did not know how to read and write. My name being Dean, the soldier ahead of me was named Corvin. Corvin was illiterate. He was 18, was married, and had a child. He came from the Appalachian Mountains. So, I said: “Corvin, I'll make you a deal. You clean my rifle and I'll write your letters.” We had a deal and we carried out this arrangement during the four months of training. Another fellow was named Baines. He was also illiterate. Because of that handicap, illiterate soldiers could not stand guard duty because they could not learn by heart the Orders of the Day. One of them put the flag upside down purposely so he did not have to stand guard duty again. They were clever and nice buddies. They knew how to shoot a lot better than I did.

At one point, we built a pontoon bridge. Building bridges in combat areas over rivers was one of primary duties of the Combat Engineers. During this exercise, we used a “gin pole.” A gin pole is a big, heavy pole used for maneuvering a large construction piece into place. It was a rainy day. Suddenly, I started sliding into the mud, always holding on to the gin pole. At one point, I was the only one holding the pole. Suddenly, I found myself under the pole and my leg caught under the heavy log. Next thing I knew, I woke up in the military hospital and spent two weeks there. They had to do a little surgery to repair broken veins.

After 2 weeks, I returned to my training unit and we finished training all together. By that time, the invasion (D-Day) had taken place (June 6, 1944) and every military unit had losses. By the time our unit had finished our basic training and our final maneuver in the hills of Virginia, U.S. forces had crossed France and were approaching the Vosges Mountains and fighting near Belgium. It was early November 1944. Winter was approaching and U.S. military units in Europe needed replacements for those who had been killed or wounded in battle. That was to be the fate of most of my buddies in my training course.

One day, after returning from maneuvers, we got orders to assemble on the parade ground of Fort Belvoir, Virginia. It was a cold autumn day. The commanding colonel said: “Men, you have finished your basic training. Now, it's your turn to do your duty and help your

comrades in arms." We had full field packs on our backs, rifle slung over the left shoulder, and a duffle bag on the side. The administrative officer called out names. As the name was called, the soldier had to take one step forward. On that day, everybody's name was called except mine. Everybody - except me - stepped one step forward, made a left turn, and marched off the parade ground. I was standing all by myself on the parade field. The administrative officer shouted: "Dean, go and see the Captain." I didn't know what was wrong. I went to see the Captain and said: "All my buddies are gone." He said: "They are going to be replacements in Europe. They are not going as a unit, so don't complain. They are being sent as replacements for those who have been killed."

Q: To a report depot.

DEAN: That's right. "They are going, but you've got different orders. Here is a nickel." I said: "What am I going to do with a nickel?" He said: "A staff car is going to take you to Alexandria, Virginia. You go to the drug store on Queen Street and call this number." I said: "What kind of nonsense is this?" He said: "I understand you speak German and French, don't you?" I said: "Yes." He said: "You do what you are told." A staff car took me from Fort Belvoir to Alexandria. I made a phone call at a booth in the drug store, with the nickel which had been given to me. "This is Private Dean reporting." "Okay, Dean. You wait at the corner of Queen Street and we will pick you up." Another staff car picked me up half an hour later. For the next two years, I served at Post Office Box 1142, Alexandria, Virginia. I was sent to Europe at one point, but I always remained part of "Post Office Box 1142."

Q: Was this OSS?

DEAN: It was military intelligence. The OSS colleagues with whom I worked lived in a mansion on the road to Mount Vernon. I went to Fort Hunt, also a stop on the Mount Vernon Highway, about 5 minutes from our OSS friends. Today, at Fort Hunt, you can see nothing that existed during the war. I took my wife there, 30 years later. There is nothing there except some areas designated "Off Limits." During my military career, I could wear most anything I wanted - civilian clothes, military clothes (but I was a little young guy at 18 to pose as an officer). In 1944, I heard for the first time the word "atomzertrummerung" meaning splitting of the atom. Few people had ever heard about it until one year later.

Some of my colleagues were interesting people. One of them died quite recently: Alexander Dallin. There was a long obituary in "The New York Times." He was a specialist on Russia. Alexander Dallin's father had been one of the revolutionaries in 1917. As the revolution devoured most of the others, he fled Russia via Berlin and Paris, and then came to the States. Alex Dallin's specialty was speaking Russian. We had others who spoke fluent Russian. They dealt with very senior officers in the Vlasov Army.

Q: This is the army... How did they get out? Weren't they still fighting on the German side?

DEAN: Yes, but some of these officers felt that the war was being lost by the Germans and they surrendered to American forces in France. The Vlasov Army were Russian forces who had deserted the Russian Army and had engaged themselves on the side of the Germans. The Russians considered them traitors, and the Germans used them as mercenaries. We, in the U.S., knew little about Russia. The high officers of the Vlasov Army knew a lot. But let me now turn to one episode of my military career that taught me a lot. While at P.O. 1142, I had the great pleasure of meeting and working in a most humble capacity with a German citizen by the name of Gustav Hilger. Gustav Hilger was a Russian of German extraction. His family had been living in Russia for centuries. They were well educated merchants. In 1924, Gustav Hilger was appointed by the German democratic government of the Weimar Republic to be the representative of the German Red Cross in the Soviet Union. Hilger spoke three languages fluently: German, Russian, and French. He did not speak a word of English. In 1932, as the Germans established diplomatic relations, Gustav Hilger became Minister Plenipotentiary of the German Embassy in Moscow. He was probably one of the most knowledgeable Germans about the Soviet Union. In 1939, Molotov and Ribbentrop signed the Armistice, the treaty dividing up Poland.

Q: The Ribbentrop Pact.

DEAN: Yes. In the famous photograph commemorating the occasion, our friend, Gustav Hilger, stood right in back of Ribbentrop. Hilger was married and had one son. The only son was killed in Stalingrad in January 1943. In 1944, Hilger constituted himself prisoner and he was brought to the United States. Gustav Hilger was the most knowledgeable man about a country we knew relatively little. He was a fine gentleman. People came from all over the U.S. Government to talk with him. Sometimes they needed interpreters. Sometimes I would just take him to a tea house and have a cup of tea with him – always in civilian clothes. He told me his life. I kept him company. We bought whatever he needed. He stayed on in the United States until the early 1950s. He was a major advisor to the United States. He held very balanced views. Hilger represented what I thought was good in the German people. He explained some of the horrors of the Stalin period. He also tried to explain why the Russians did certain things and how they did them, and the reaction of Russians and how Westerners interpreted them on the basis of their own cultural background. Very often, there was complete misunderstanding of each other's positions. Fear or suspicion on both sides - West and the Soviets - became to undercut the political alliance created by the common war against the Nazis.

I was able to practice my French and German with him. He was one of the first ones outside academia who explained to me the “game of nations” reality versus mythology. I learned that perhaps sometimes bad solutions are better than the alternative, which might be a tragedy. Hilger is long dead. When I talked to my German colleagues many years later about him, their eyes light up. He was an outstanding personality. He was not at all militaristic. He tried to understand and explain actions taken by the Soviets while in power. He also related how well the German army was initially received in the Ukraine,

sometimes with arches of triumph made of flowers. Some of the German prisoners of war I dealt with carried photographs with them of their arrival in the Ukraine, which bears out Hilger's explanations.

Q: Bread and salt.

DEAN: Yes, some dignitaries came forward with bread and salt. Some Ukrainians saw in the German army liberation from the Soviet yoke. This was for me, as a young fellow, a tremendous awakening. Alfred Rosenberg who was the racist philosopher of Hitler, some weeks after the German invasion of Russia, tried to explain that the Slavs are "Untermensehen" ("sub-humans") and Russians should be treated as such that turned the Ukrainians and Belorussians, who were basically suffering from the Soviet system, into supporters of the Stalinist regime fighting the Germans. For me, at the time, the fact that at the very beginning of the German invasion in June 1941, the Germans had been received with open arms until this racist Rosenberg turned the Slavs into supporters of Stalin, was a revelation. (The Russians had 26 million people killed during World War II.) I found that my relationship with Hilger was very educational. I learned about the drawbacks of the Soviet system as imposed by Stalin, as well as the heroism of the Russian people in defeating the German invaders. Hilger was an excellent historian who helped me to understand the various strands that make for the record of history.

Q: What was the purpose of Fort Hunt? Was this to understand the Soviet Union, or did it have other facets?

DEAN: The Soviet Union was only one aspect of the work at Fort Hunt. The main thrust was to interpret intelligence on the German war machine in order to help Allied Forces to win the war. But, even after the German defeat in May 1945, the work of Fort Hunt continued. Let me cite an example. On May 5 or 6 1945, a German submarine surfaced off the coast of Uruguay. The captain of the ship was Captain Muller. By radio he asked the Americans to accept his surrender. In the submarine, which was on its way to Japan, was a German four-star Air Force general, a German navy commander by the name of Heinz Schlicke, and some others, including $30 million worth of mercury. Two Japanese officers had committed hara-kiri. The survivors were flown to Washington where I was told to take care of Schlicke. At the age of 19, I was in good shape and we did all kinds of sports together. Schlicke was a terrific sportsman. As I got to know him better, he confided that he had been a physicist and had been working at Pennemünde, the testing station where the V1 and V 2 had been developed during the war. Schlicke talked about his work at Pennemünde where he and his team had as task to invent a system which would permit military planes to see "through clouds, woods, in darkness, and through other visible obstacles" in order to detect the presence of enemy troops or groups of resistance fighters. What Schlicke revealed was that his team had invented INFRARED technology, the location of humans by technology that picked up the heat generated by the human body. Hence, dense woods, darkness, etc. were no longer an obstacle for observation by the German military. His presence on the German submarine on its way to

Japan was to convey to Germany's ally, Japan, the technology of Infra Red! At the time, the U.S. and its allies did not have that technology, although we were working on it.

Schlicke agreed to work in the U.S. to help us develop our own technology, provided we could bring his family to the U.S. It turned out that his wife with their 2 children were living in that part of Germany occupied at the end of the war by the Russians. Hence, reuniting Schlicke with his wife and children implied somebody bringing them out of the Russian zone, and then all four back to the U.S. To make a long story short, I took a troop ship to France, from there got orders to enter the British zone, and finally ended up in Bavaria. In between, I had changed into civilian clothes, entered the Russian Zone, had met up with Mrs. Schlicke and the two children, and brought them to safety in Bavaria. There, Heinz Schlicke was waiting eagerly for his wife and children. Let me just add that the 24 hours in civilian clothes into the Russian Zone of occupation, engaged in an activity which was certainly not appreciated by our Russian ally, seemed long to me at the time.

But looking for scientists or researchers who had developed new technology and weapons for Germany was a quest shared by all victors of the war. I recall one of my colleagues brought the son of Professor Hertz to the U.S. The father, Professor Hertz, whose name is associated with the Hertzian wave, was given by the Russians a laboratory in the Crimea, after the war. His son turned out to be much less inventive than his brilliant father. German missile developers, German scientists in physics and chemistry, many working in Pennemünde, were sought by Americans, Russians, British and French. I don't think anybody cared at the time whether these people were part of the Nazi establishment or not. While in Germany, shortly after the war, I also became aware of the suffering of the German people caused by the war they had started. The destruction of certain cities was visible. Housing was scarce; the normal population had been swollen by the millions of refugees that had fled into that part of Germany occupied by the U.S., Britain and France. Most of the men folk were still in prison camps. Food was scarce. The economy was destroyed. No work. It was a difficult period for the Germans, and I admit that there were times I felt sorry for them. Yes, we had won the war. The Germans had committed atrocities during the war. They had invaded many foreign countries. Civilians in other countries had suffered from the German occupation. In 1945 and thereafter it was the turn of the German civilians to learn what it means to be defeated in war. Nonetheless, I could feel some empathy for those who suffered - regardless of what side of the war they had been on.

Q: You were discharged when?

DEAN: August 1946.

Q: What did you do, go back to Harvard?

DEAN: Yes. I went back to Harvard.

Q: When you went back to Harvard, did you have a different goal? Did you know what you wanted to do?

DEAN: Yes, I wanted to finish college and get my Bachelor Degree. But I came back a different man than when I had entered Harvard in 1942. I had been at war. I had done my duty to my country. I had seen a lot of suffering during my years in the army. I also had learned that events looked differently depending on which point of view one held. Were my values still correct? To explore our ethics, I asked to audit a course in theology at Harvard. The course was given at the Harvard School of Divinity. The year was 1946-47. The professor's name was La Piana. La Piana was a former Nuncio - a Pope's envoy. As I went for the last lecture in May 1947, I saw the President of Harvard, Conant, sitting in the front row. Most of the Faculty of Harvard was in attendance. Since the seats were taken by the distinguished visitors, the students had to stand in the back. La Piana spoke with an Italian accent; he was not easy to understand. His lecture centered on Albertus Magnus. As he was getting toward the end of his lecture, he looked around and said: "This is my last lecture before retirement. This is my goodbye. Well, gentlemen, perhaps my outlook on life can best be summed up in one phrase which goes back to the early days of Christianity: 'Ubi Libertas, Ibi Spiritu Dei' (where there is freedom, there is the spirit of God)." This event took place more than 50 years ago and still today brings tears to my eyes. The old Professor had given me guidance in the field of ethics.

Sure, I took all kinds of other courses: Economics, (Schumpeter, Harris,) German Literature, Geography, History, English Composition, French, etc... Since I had a good grade average, I was asked to sit for the honors examination. It was both a written and oral examination. On the written examination, there was a question on Walter von der Vogelweide, a German Mediaeval Poet. I am quite sure that I must have been the only candidate to write on that topic. Having taken a survey course in German literature, I could easily write several pages on that subject. I guess I was lucky. After several days of written and oral exams, I emerged with a Magna cum Laude degree from Harvard. When I was informed of the good news, I called my father and said; "Dad, I made Magna cum Laude." He said: "I would not have expected anything else." I was pleased that I had lived up to his expectations. My folks came for the graduation.

It was the year that General Marshall gave his famous speech at Harvard on the reconstruction of Europe. But there was a problem on the horizon. My best friend and I had met two very attractive young ladies. We planned to get married. We informed our parents of our intentions. My father was smart enough not to say "No." He said: "John, that is a wonderful idea. We are going to go to New Hampshire in the summer. Bring your girl-friend along. Promise me only one thing: For one year, you won't get married. As a matter of fact, I talked to your best friend's father, and we have decided that if you want to go and study in Europe in view of your European past, then when you come back, we will give you a wonderful wedding." We were very innocent and agreed to this deal. We went to New Hampshire and had a wonderful time. Then, we sailed for France. We had applied to Oxford University but the acceptance came after we had been accepted in France.

So, we sailed for France. On board ship, we met other beautiful girls. In France, we met many other attractive young ladies, and within six weeks, I wrote a letter to the young lady I considered my fiancée to the effect that "I'm too young to be married." While in France, I got interested in art, science, music, subjects which I never had the time to study at Harvard. My primary focus was international law and relations. I spent two years in France obtaining a Doctor's Certificate in Law.

Q: Which Faculty did you attend?

DEAN: I went to the University of Paris Law School. I learned a lot about different kinds of international law: International Public Law, International Private Law, International Law of the Sea, International Law of the Air, Conflict of National Law, etc. In 1949, I got my diploma. Again, my father said: "Now, don't you want to go into banking? This is a serious profession. I'll call my friends in London and we will see what they come up with."

My father's friend, Dr. Brüning, suggested Bering Brothers as a good place to get started. Since I was not eager to go into banking, it was suggested that I return to Harvard to study for a M.A. degree in international relations. So, I went back to Harvard in 1949 to the Graduate School. In that program, I met some wonderful people, among them. Ambassador Shoesmith, and Ambassador Robert Miller, Brademas who later became President of the University of New York and, while in Congress, became the whip of the Democratic Party. We were all together learning about economics and international affairs.

By the time I finished the Harvard Graduate School in 1950, I had received two job offers. 1950 was a wonderful time for a young man to come on the market. Jobs were abundant. Everybody who wanted to work could get a job. I got one offer from the CIA, and one job from Mr. Harriman, with the Economic Cooperation Agency in Paris. Mr. Harriman had in pre-war days been owner of a mine in Silesia where my father was on the Board of Directors. I was interviewed by Lincoln Gordon, who became later Assistant Secretary of State. He was a Harvard Professor and worked with Mr. Harriman. He said: "Why don't you come to Paris, to the headquarters of the European Marshall Plan? We'll put you in the Program Division. That is where economists are working on some very exciting ideas." My father urged me to accept the job offer in Paris. As for the offer to work in the CIA, my dad thought I was not cut out for it: "John, as a human being, you need applause. When you work for the CIA, you can't get applause. If something works, they will never admit it. If it fails, you might get the blame. It's a "marshy" atmosphere. Since the job in Paris has been offered, why don't you take it?" I took the assignment in Paris. It was one of the best learning experiences one can ever have.

Q: It was a very exciting time, too.

DEAN: It was a terribly exciting time. They needed people who had ideas. I worked with brilliant people: Tom Shelling of Harvard and his model building. He was one of the officers in that section. I was assigned as program officer for Greece and Turkey in the European Headquarters of the Marshall Plan. Jimmy Houghting, who became Professor at Pennsylvania University, was in charge of Italy. John Lindeman was Director of the Division. Henry Tasca was in charge of Finance. He was one of the people starting the European Payments Union, which was the forerunner of the European Currency (EURO). The European Payments Union was a step toward the convertibility of the European currencies. Every country had a line of credit which it could draw on. These increments were known as "tranches." Settlement of debts was in dollars. This mechanism permitted multilateral trade. Greece and Turkey were heavy borrowers and I spent quite some time in visiting specific projects for which requests for funding had been made. I went several times to Greece and Turkey.

Q: What dates were you there?

DEAN: September 1950 through December 1951. John Craig, who is still very much alive, was my buddy. He is a very intelligent man and made his entire career in the Economic Aid business. I learned much at the ECA European headquarters. Our office was located next to La Concorde in Paris, in what was known as the home of the great French diplomat Talleyrand. In 1950, Averell Harriman had been replaced by Abe Katz, as the chief in Paris. The people working in that office included some of the best academics and leading business people. Many of my colleagues and bosses were bright and brilliant. I learned something about economics, about business projects, finance, politics, central planning, and different cultures. The Marshall Plan was market oriented and promoted free enterprise. We in the U.S. benefited from obtaining new markets for our products, and Europeans profited from U.S. dollar credits to buy needed commodities and food to reconstruct their countries after 6 years of war. It was probably one of the finest periods in American diplomacy.

Q: I have been Interviewing Arthur Hartman.

DEAN: He was working with Ambassador Bruce on the bilateral side of the Marshall Plan for France.

Q: Yes. Did you have the feeling you were all true believers? Jean Monnet was sort of the guy...

DEAN: I went over once to Jean Monnet. He spoke English and never needed an interpreter, a role I often was asked to play. I went to his house on Avenue Foch, as a note taker. The people who worked on the Marshall Plan, whether it was Arthur Hartman on the French side of the Marshall Plan, or in the European Headquarters side which I was on, were mostly believers in the need to build up Europe and maintain a close link between the two sides of the Atlantic. We all thought we were doing something useful and important. We were building a new world. There was no doubt that part of our job

was to help Europe maintain some form of capitalism, a free enterprise system, and above all, democratic rule. One has to remember the spirit of the times. In the post-war period, the governments in France had included communists. There were also communists in other countries' governments. Governments in Europe were debating whether they were going to follow an authoritarian form of ruling with significant central government interference, or maintain a more democratic way of building up Europe. By 1950, Europe was already divided by the Iron Curtain. You remember what happened to Masaryk in Czechoslovakia?

Q: A coup which really turned the...

DEAN: It was a big change. The Czechs at one point had said "Yes" to the Marshall Plan. The Marshall Plan provided the essential foreign exchange for these countries to feed themselves and to get their industries started again. Was it altruistic on our part? It was good common sense. We, at this point, helped to make Western Europe choose a path which is similar to ours. As far as Greece and Turkey were concerned, the Marshall Plan also brought about some painful changes. Why? Because, they were the largest exporters of tobacco to Central Europe. In many part of Europe, people smoked Greek and Turkish tobacco. During the Second World War GIs handed out American cigarettes - Maryland and Virginia blends. People got accustomed to smoking American-type tobacco. They preferred it and bought American cigarettes. But the Marshall Plan helped Greece and Turkey to rebuild their economies.

We suggested new ways for the Greeks and the Turks to earn foreign exchange by exporting or by substituting domestic production for foreign imports. For example, we helped the Greeks to export and sell their grapes on foreign markets. In Turkey, we built a steel mill in Zonguldak, replacing some of the imports they could make cheaper themselves. In certain parts of Europe, without U.S.-provided foreign exchange and the Marshall Plan, people still did not have enough to eat. The U.S. provided badly needed wheat and corn to feed Western Europeans who did not grow enough grain immediately after the war. The Marshall Plan also provided modern technology. The concept of productivity was pushed by the Marshall Plan and it took hold all over the world. All of us who were involved in ECA felt we were doing something useful and it made our lives worthwhile.

Q: Oh, yes. I mean, what are you here for?

DEAN: You have to give a purpose to your existence. When I accepted the job in Paris, I had not yet passed the Foreign Service Examination. I was not part of the U.S. Foreign Service. It was more of a contractual arrangement. Yes, Paris was not only a wonderful professional assignment, but I also met my wife there. To be precise, I met her on the ninth of February 1951 and it was one of the luckiest moments in my life. We have now been married 50 years.

Q: What was she doing?

DEAN: She was working pro bona at the French Foreign Office, what is called the "Quai d'Orsay." At the time, I had an old aunt who died in the States and she had left me $5,000 in her will. With that money, I bought a car and it gave me a nest egg.

Q: You could get a pretty good car for $1,000.

DEAN: It was a brand new Ford. In those days, I could park near my office. One day, I found on the windshield, a paper with "Yankee, go home." I said: "These French are a bunch of unfriendly people who are ungrateful for what we are doing." Soon thereafter, I was invited to the home of the president of what is the equivalent in France of our Supreme Court. They gave a party and I was invited. The friend who got me the invitation had been a school mate of mine in Paris. At that party I met my wife. That was the luckiest moment of my entire life. But I was suddenly transferred to Brussels, Belgium and I was not going to see my future wife for a while. The job was with the Marshall Plan to Belgium and I was assigned as industrial analyst. It was also the first time that I came across corruption in government. My immediate boss accepted a bribe in order to give a contract to a certain Belgian company. A colonel in the Army Judge Advocate Corps came to Brussels to investigate. I was queried. What was my relationship with my boss? I replied: "Why are you here?" The Colonel claimed that my boss had deposited $15,000 in an American bank which was equivalent to what the Belgian company had paid him for getting the contract. It had never occurred to me that somebody who served his country could accept a bribe. One of the redeeming features of the Brussels assignment was on occasion to see one of America's great ambassadors at work: Robert Murphy.

Q: He was a major figure, particularly in World War II.

DEAN: In 1951-52, he was the U.S. Ambassador to Brussels. He was truly a role model for an aspiring young Foreign Service officer.

Q: I want to capture one thing. You were talking about currency and economics. Did you have the feeling that behind whoever was coming out ahead industrially, the basic thing that you were trying to do was to integrate a Europe so that basically the Germans and French would not go at each other again?

DEAN: I think this was part of it. I also believe that the immediate post-war period threw up these great leaders in Europe who realized that Europe has to work together if Europe is to play a role again on the world scene. Roosevelt had never got along too well with De Gaulle, but De Gaulle knew how to lead his nation. He understood that France could never be a major player without the full cooperation of Germany. De Gaulle started his rapprochement with Germany for strictly national reasons. On the German side, Adenauer fully understood that Germany, after World War II, needed to work closely with the rest of democratic Europeans to become "acceptable" and this meant in the first place an alliance with France.

In Italy, the U.S. helped the Christian Democrats to pursue a pro-European policy, and the Treaty of Rome is the corner stone of today's European Union.

Q: Particularly in the elections of 1948.

DEAN: Yes, there was discreet advice given to the Italians to join the fledgling European Community. This brings me to an important point. In the immediate post-war period, U.S. foreign policy seemed to me primarily oriented toward mutual benefits. We were interested in helping Europe to get back on its feet because only one country had won the war: the United States. While the British were among the victors, Britain was basically exhausted. The Russians had won the war but their country was partially destroyed and they had 26 million casualties. So, the only ones who emerged as the great victor from the war was the United States. By pursuing a policy of mutual interest toward Europe, our policies became highly acceptable to the Europeans. Americans were perceived as friends, in some countries as liberators. The Germans found out that while we had fought the war under the slogan of "unconditional surrender," once the war was over, we behaved with a great deal of understanding for Germany's problems. We held out our hand in friendship to the Germans. We provided funds under the Marshall Plan to build up and reconstruct Germany. But the U.S. also benefited from the reconstruction of Europe. American firms established branches in Europe and we invested in new industries in Europe. We helped to feed Europe and at the same time increased our market share for U.S. agricultural exports. It was a great period for U.S.-European cooperation in the mutual interest of both parties.

Q: Could you talk a little bit about how - we are talking about 1950-1952 - the Soviet Union was perceived? At that time, the coup in Czechoslovakia had happened. We were fighting the Korean War, which we felt had been inspired by Stalin and all. How did we feel about the Soviet Union?

DEAN: Let me be very frank. I am not a Soviet expert. My knowledge of the Soviet Union comes from my very interesting two years in military intelligence.

Q: We are talking about this particular period.

DEAN: The impression I get - and I did not voice it a great deal at the time but I felt it then and still feel it's true today - is that there was a certain amount of fear and distrust of each other. That fear was magnified when in the immediate post-war period; some European governments had to include communists in their government.

In the Resistance movement of some nations, the communists had been in the lead fighting the Germans. In France, De Gaulle asked Maurice Thorez to come back from Moscow and he put him in the French Government. In the areas under Russian occupation or control, the Russians shipped back to their country whatever they needed and was still standing. They helped themselves without any real pangs of conscience. As

a result, while the governments in the areas under Russian influence may have been imposed by the Russians, they did not make that many friends in the local population.

The distrust of the West of the Communist world and vice-versa may have undermined certain wartime agreements. Distrust and fear existed on both sides of the Iron Curtain. The Europeans had a different problem. Part of the population was communist. Sometimes, as much as a third of the population was. For example, in order to avoid civil conflict, De Gaulle had no option but to put communists in the government and later on remove them. The best example of a European statesman who managed to "balance" the West and the communists was Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia. He did not want to be under Soviet control, so he worked with the West and ended up as one of the leaders of the Non-Aligned world. In the European Headquarters of the Marshall Plan we quickly started a Yugoslav section which helped Tito to remain independent while still following a number of Marxist policies. But they were national Marxist policies!

Q: This was again 1948-1949.

DEAN: Yes. Not everybody perceived in that particular period of time - and I'm talking about the period of 1946-1951- that there was national Marxism, and then there was communism with nations subservient to another power, i.e. the Soviet Union. I want to open a parenthesis, because my name is very much attached to Southeast Asia. In the summer of 1947, Ho Chi Minh came to Fontainebleau, France. He wanted to be part of the French Union, which was comparable to the British Commonwealth. That process would eventually lead to independence. There were some key people in France who favored that process for Vietnam. It must be recalled that the United States had worked with Ho Chi Minh during the Second World War. Major Patty of the OSS helped the Vietnamese to fight the Japanese military. The French were politically too weak in 1947 to grant Vietnam membership in the French Union which would lead to independence. Instead of fighting, Ho Chi Minh wanted support to create an independent state with some linkage to France. He also represented national Marxism. Maybe some of the great scholars in our country will contradict me, but we in the U.S. have a tendency to equate communism usually with subservience to the Soviet Union. Many communists were also ardent nationalists. The Chinese are a good example.

Q: We certainly were talking that game. It was part of the rhetoric of the time.

DEAN: In the post-war period in Europe, Tito was the exception of a communist leader taking his distance from Moscow. We helped him financially and economically in his effort. He really built up a relatively sound state. Yugoslavia had a central government and the different ethnic groupings had their autonomous units with their own political assemblies. I think there were autonomous states and two or three "Territories." Tito had decentralized a great deal, but his strong, forceful personality kept the country together. Some of the leaders in today's Europe are former communists, but they are national communists and they adapted to the new world. As a matter of fact, the former Prime Minister of Italy was in this category. In those days, we did not differentiate much

between national communism and countries subservient to Moscow and under Soviet control. From the Soviet point of view, the U.S. and the West was anti-Moscow, and mutual distrust led to what became known later as the Cold War, Moscow interpreted most U.S. initiatives as being against the Soviets, regardless of what was the motivation of the U.S. or the West.

Q: They were being surrounded.

DEAN: That is the way the Soviets saw it in the period of Stalin. We were trying to contain the expansion of communism and not have this disease spread any further. That was our doctrine at the time.

Q: Let's go back. When you were with the Marshall Plan, you were dealing with Greece and Turkey. Did you feel that, as a Junior Officer, you were left with the katzenjammer kids, the real problems? These other countries had real economies. Greece and Turkey hated each other. They had lousy economies. They were backward and many felt they really were not part of this European business anyway.

DEAN: I don't really agree. Greece is, after all, the cradle of Western civilization. Turkey was the heir of the great Ottoman Empire which had many links with Europe. But the leadership was highly educated and eloquent. George Papandreou, the old George, spoke fluent French and German. Venezelos, another great Greek statesman, was in the same situation. In Turkey, it was the same foreign language situation. All the technical people, for example the engineers, were trained in Germany. Most of the lawyers, diplomats, and doctors were educated in France. Just because the elite of these countries did not speak English, did not mean that they were uneducated. They just had been exposed to European influence. Today, in both Greece and Turkey, most people speak English. This is the result of America's paramount role in the world. The two countries were very different from each other. At the time, in Greece, raged a civil war. First, the British helped the Greek government. When the British threw in the towel, we picked up the support for the Greek government. On Greece, you would be well advised to listen to Ambassador Robert Keeley who was one of our most distinguished ambassadors to Greece. Personally, I know little about the politics of Greece and Turkey. My job was to improve their economy, their balance of payments, and raise their standard of living. This implied obtaining funds for specific projects and see them to fruition. We had a huge ECA mission in Greece. Don't forget I was in the European Headquarters where I had to defend Greek and Turkish projects and explore how to finance them.

Other colleagues had the same job for Italy, France, Belgium, etc. One of the finest people in our Mission in Athens at the time was Mike Adler, one of the great Americans serving in Greece. As for Turkey, we must remember that Turkey had been very much part of Europe until 1914. After all, the Ottoman Empire got to the gates of Vienna. Whether people like it or not, Turkey has a great interest in Europe and Turkey was very much part of the European Recovery Program in which the ECA was directly involved.

Q: You were in the Program Office. What were you doing? Were you basically trying to figure out ways to get more money out of the system to go to "your" country, as opposed to one of the other countries?

DEAN: We tried to explain to much higher ranking people, both Americans and Europeans, what projects in the countries for which we had responsibility made sense. For example, in Turkey, the Turks imported steel though they had both coal and iron in ample supply. ECA helped to find them financing to build a modern steel mill at Zonguldak. That was one of the projects I worked on. In Greece, I searched for markets for their grapes and how to package them and transport then to new markets. When I worked with representatives of the European Payments Union in Paris, I would submit papers to justify the granting of credit, if needed, for the balance of payments of specific projects. My colleagues did the same for the countries they represented in the Program Office. The Program Office was a kind of planning staff. Decisions were made on a much higher level.

Q: When other people were saying "Belgium needs this" or "France needs this," did you say "You've got to think about Turkey and Greece?"

DEAN: No, not really. We were just one section in this European Headquarters of ECA. There were many other sections: a financial section, a political adviser's office, etc. We were something like the geographic bureau in the State Department. Obviously, we hoped that our program would also contribute to building democracy. Greeks and Turks have different ways of negotiating. When a Turk says: "Yes," it's yes. When it's "No," it's no. In reply to a leading question, Greeks have a tendency to waffle. But it's easier to strike a deal with the Greeks. They are more flexible and are quite compromise-oriented. Our role basically was to help these countries to move economically forward so that politically, they would shun the extremes. We were more sensitive to potential threats from the extreme left and perhaps, at times, more permissive on the dangers of the extreme right, i.e. the Colonels in Greece.

Q: In Belgium, you were there from 1951 to 1952.

DEAN: Yes, I volunteered there. At that point, my relations with my wife got to the point where I was saying: "Are you going to marry this girl or are you not going to marry this girl?" I went to see the Chief of the ECA Mission, Mr. Gilchrist, and I said: "I would like to marry Miss Martine Duphenieux. Here is my resignation, which I understand will be held until the Security people give their agreement. If the Security agents do not give her clearance, my resignation can be accepted." Well, I was willing to resign in order to marry my future wife. A few weeks later, I was told that the resignation was not accepted; I could get married. Little did I know that my wife came from a prominent family.

As a matter of fact, the NATO headquarters today, in Belgium, is on her land. In 1965 or 1966, De Gaulle asked NATO to leave Paris. The Belgians offered a site near Mons. During the Second World War, there stood a huge castle which belonged to my wife's

family. The Germans requisitioned it as the Western Headquarters for the German Luftwaffe. They built an air strip on it. It remained the Headquarters of the Luftwaffe until January 1945 when the British bombed the chateau. Today, there is very little left. When De Gaulle asked NATO to leave, the Belgians offered that piece of land with the destroyed chateau on it, but it had an excellent air strip. When Alexander Haig was Commander-in-Chief of NATO, he was always invited to do a big hunt on the grounds. In 1952, we were married in Paris. I immediately offered to leave Brussels. I had heard there was a war in Indochina. I offered to go to Indochina for the Marshall Plan. Since I spoke and wrote French, and that language proficiency was essential in those days in French-speaking posts, American French-speaking officers were needed, and I volunteered to go to Indochina. We were accredited to Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Our main residence was in Saigon. We arrived in Saigon in March of 1953.

Q: You were in what was Indochina from 1953 until when?

DEAN: From March 1953 until January of 1956. I was with the Economic Mission to Indochina (i.e. 3 countries). During that time, I decided to take the Foreign Service Examination and become a regular member of the Service. By that time, I got to be fairly well-known among U.S. Government employees in Indochina. Some of the American ambassadors I had worked for wrote back to the State Department recommending me for acceptance if I passed the exam. I went back to Washington, took the written Foreign Service Examination, and passed it.

Q: You got a score of 72, and 70 was passing. George Kennan, by the way, got something like 71. I was on the Board of Examiners and looked him up.

DEAN: I barely passed and got in.

Q: You went to Saigon in March of 1953. What was the situation when you arrived?

DEAN: There was a huge French military Expeditionary Corps. The American Embassy and Economic Mission were small. It was to a large extent a French show of fighting the Viet Minh. The fighting basically took place in North Vietnam.

Q: Around the Red River and that area.

DEAN: The first job was to work with the Financial Adviser of the French High Commission. Few people realize today that the French Expeditionary Corps, the Vietnamese Armed Forces, the Cambodian Armed Forces, as well as the French advisers to these Indochinese forces, were all financed by the United States. That year, 1953-1954, the United States spent $875 million in support of the French and Indochinese armies to fight the communists. My job was to document how the money was spent, I had a counterpart who I have met again many years later, Pierre Hunt, who became a well-known French Ambassador to Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt. He was on the side of the French. The French military would give us details on how they spent the money, for

example for pay, for ammunition, for training of Vietnamese or Cambodian pilots, etc... In Cambodia, there was not much fighting. My official title was "Economic Commissioner."

We also worked on development projects in the 3 Indochinese states. I was at hand when the French Commanding General of the Expeditionary Corps, General Navarre, came to see Ambassador Donald Heath to ask for American air strikes to silence the North Vietnamese artillery which was installed on the hills overlooking the French camp of Dien Bien Phu.

Q: He was my ambassador in Saudi Arabia.

DEAN: I remember one occasion when the French Forces were surrounded in Dien Bien Phu. He had a party for the French High Commissioner. Ambassador Heath climbed on the table and toasted the French "heroes" defending the Free World. As I said before, one day, I was asked to go to the Embassy. The Commanding General of the French Forces, General Navarre, was going to come to see the American Ambassador, and in case of need for an interpreter, I was there. Fortunately, the embassy had other competent interpreters and the First Secretary was asked to attend the meeting. It was at that meeting that General Navarre requested U.S. air support for the encircled French Forces at Dien Bien Phu. The request to bomb the hills overlooking Dien Bien Phu was turned down in Washington a few days later. It should be added that during the campaign at Dien Bien Phu, American pilots flying Air America, risked their lives to deliver precious ammunitions and supplies to the beleaguered French troops. So, the U.S. was helping France in this war. At one point, since the ambassador was accredited to all three countries, I was asked by the American authorities to go to Phnom Penh with my wife for two months. The Chargé had left on home leave. Having no children yet, we were available to spend 2 months at a neighboring posting. It was on that occasion that I first met Sihanouk.

Q: He is still around.

DEAN: He is still around. Sihanouk played a major role in my efforts, 20 years later, to find a negotiated solution in Cambodia - something I achieved in Laos. My role in Cambodia in October 1953 consisted largely of looking after the few economic aid projects we had in Cambodia. But I got an insight into Cambodia and how Sihanouk functions, which later on was going to be helpful. When I see Sihanouk today, nearly 50 years later, he still remembers some of the events that occurred at that time.

Q: What was your impression of Sihanouk at the time?

DEAN: He was extremely Frenchified but he was truly the "father" of his people. That role he took seriously. When Sihanouk mounted on the throne in 1941 or 1942, he was a young man of 18 or 19 years of age. He was not the logical choice to become king. On his mother's side, Sihanouk was a Sisowath, the other royal family. On his father's side, he

was a Norodom. The Sisowaths were more nationalistic and more independence-oriented. But the Cambodians, whose territory had been reduced both by the Thais and the Vietnamese, had to worry about two tigers, one on the East, and one on the West, who had designs on the remaining Cambodian Empire. So, the Cambodians turned to the French who were far away but had no territorial designs on the country. Cambodia was under French tutelage but also protection against encroachment by Cambodia's neighbors. Between all the evils they faced, French influence was the lesser of the evils. Sihanouk Norodom was a young man well prepared by French military and civilian advisers to assume his duties. While he, the Prince of Cambodia, had never read Machiavelli, he received a good education in what it means to govern. There was no doubt that over time Sihanouk became truly the father figure of his country. The average Cambodian saw in him the incarnation of the nation. In America, we have had a difficult time understanding Sihanouk. During my long career, I stood up for Sihanouk many times. We will get to this. I always thought Sihanouk's primary interest was to defend Cambodia's national interest. I recall that in 1954 Sihanouk left his capital Phnom Penh, went to Bangkok, and said to the French: “I will not return unless I get full independence.” He insisted on it and he got it. When students study the Geneva Conference of 1954, it was Sihanouk who absolutely refused any mention in a treaty which alluded to organized opposition within his country (i.e. Khmer Rouges). Both Vietnam and Laos had to sign a document which discussed the Viet Minh and the Pathet Lao. In 1953-54, we knew relatively little about Cambodia. We considered Cambodia to be part of the zone of French influence. Cambodia had a small, well educated upper class. It was small, but the French had helped Cambodia to have their own military, their own doctors, their own atomic scientists, their own lawyers, etc. In 1975, I took a Cambodian atomic scientist with me out of Cambodia. (He ended up in France). If needed, Sihanouk would also stand up against the French. In 1970, when he was deposed by a coup d'état of Lon Nol and Sirik Matak, Sihanouk spent a couple of days in the Soviet Union, but from there he went on to Beijing to await the end of the conflict. Sihanouk had a sense of history. He knew that for centuries China had been the protector of Cambodia.

Cambodia is first mentioned in the diplomatic annals by a Chinese emissary who visited Angkor Wat in about the 10th century. Cambodia was a vassal of the Chinese Emperor. Sihanouk knew that if he wanted to return to Phnom Penh, he had to work with the Chinese. He did return to Cambodia after the Khmer Rouges had occupied Phnom Penh in 1975. Sihanouk always understood power, but we made little effort to see the area through his eyes.

Q: I'm talking about the time you were there. Were we seeing him as a powerful figure, or were we seeing him as a figure of fun?

DEAN: Our ambassador at the time, who was one of my bosses, McClintock, always called him the “Little King.” He made fun of Sihanouk and Sihanouk knew it. This was poor psychology. Sihanouk also had an ego and he did not appreciate any gesture or remark which did not give him his due as Chief of State of an ancient kingdom.

Q: That was Robert McClintock.

DEAN: Yes. He was the first American ambassador to Cambodia. He was a very able man, but he saw Cambodia as an operetta state. Sihanouk, at one point, was King, then he put his mother on the throne, but he always remained the real power behind it. He established the "Royal Socialist Boy Scouts." He saw no contradiction in terms. He was surrounded by French advisers. Sihanouk did not listen to the U.S. a great deal. Even back in 1953-54, Sihanouk was basically a neutral and a neutral at the time of Secretary of State Foster Dulles, was not the best way to endear oneself to the U.S.

Q: I can't remember the exact wording, but it was basically, if you are neutral, you are a communist or you are the enemy.

DEAN: Basically, Secretary Dulles preferred to see the small states being either in one camp or another, i.e. communist or free world. The advisers to Sihanouk realized that Thailand and Vietnam were the real long-term threat to Cambodia's territorial integrity. They favored a middle road, a neutralist policy, as the best way for Cambodia's survival. Sihanouk was one of the founding fathers of the Bandung Non-Aligned Nations Conference in Indonesia, and he may be the last surviving one. That policy was anathema to American diplomacy at the time. I was, at the time, at the dawn of my 45 Year Foreign Service career. I honestly felt that it was okay for small states to be neutral. I was not convinced that every nation had to choose sides. I remembered that Belgium had been neutral in World War I. Belgium was invaded and Herbert Hoover made his name by helping the starving Belgians during the German occupation to survive. The Belgians, still today, so many years later, are grateful to Herbert Hoover. For many years, neutrality had been a respected principle. The Swiss had neutrality in 2 wars in the 20th century. After the Second World War, Austria was given neutral status. Sweden was neutral during World War II and they were helpful to all sides. Portugal was neutral in the Second World War. The U.S. had remained neutral from September 1939 to December 1941; I felt at the time that Cambodia was a rich country, agriculturally. It had a unifying cement: Sihanouk. People did not go hungry. It was not a democratic republic but a Monarchy where King and deity were somewhat linked. But the people of Cambodia also remembered that nearly 100 years earlier, the Vietnamese had put a puppet as Viceroy in Phnom Penh to rule on behalf of Vietnam. During the Second World War, the Thais had annexed all the rich provinces west of the Mekong. Who remembers that the price for Thailand's entering into the United Nations was to give back to Cambodia and to Laos the areas annexed during the Second World War?

Neutrality made sense to me at the time because some of the small countries did not want to be dragged into the Communist-Free World conflict. And Vietnam was already looming on the horizon as a conflict between two ideologies and a war of independence as seen through Vietnamese eyes. After all, Cambodia had independence and did not need to fight for it. We are in 1953.

Q: You were there when McClintock replaced Heath?

DEAN: No. McClintock became Ambassador to Cambodia in 1956 or so. At that time, we sent separate ambassadors to Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. When I went in October 1953 with my wife to Phnom Penh, we had one Ambassador, Donald Heath, who was accredited to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. We had Chargés in Cambodia and in Laos. I went there in order to replace a Chargé who was on home leave. It lasted two months. There was one prominent American who supported Sihanouk at that time: Mike Mansfield, Senator from Montana. Senator Mansfield remained a friend of Sihanouk until the very end. Let me switch the subject from politics to art. In 1953, my wife and I drove for the first time to Angkor Wat. Both of us were deeply impressed by the great ruins and temples swallowed up by the tropical forest. The "Smile of Angkor" had done its magic. We got interested in another civilization, an art form alien to our Western culture. My wife and I spent a wonderful week ambling through these ruins at a time when there were hardly any tourists. We were alone with the temples and the trees.

Q: During this time with AID, particularly in Saigon, were you getting a feeling that the French were on a losing streak... What was the atmosphere?

DEAN: The atmosphere was basically that, unfortunately. The French made the same mistake we continued to make after their departure. The Vietnamese are an able people, regardless whether they are from the North or from the South. When we were there in the early 1950s, I thought that the French should be more willing to give the Vietnamese control over their own affairs. I honestly felt at the time that President Roosevelt had been right because he understood that open colonialism had come to an end. Unfortunately, we also made the same mistake some years later. A people struggling for their independence will take their support from wherever they can obtain it. The West was clinging for too long to obsolete concepts. The Vietnamese turned to the Russians and Chinese and used communist support to gain their independence.

Q: Roosevelt was quite emphatic about this.

DEAN: Yes, I think Roosevelt was right. I would like to say, there were people on the French side who agreed with this reasoning and they were not communists. Mendes-France, Prime Minister at the time of the Geneva Accords, was certainly one of the more enlightened French leaders. He afterwards played an absolute cardinal role in giving independence to Tunisia and to Morocco. He was involved in that process of turning over sovereignty to the newly independent countries without losing the relationship with the former colonial power. Not everybody was able to do that, turning over sovereignty to the indigenous governments and still maintaining a close link with the former colonial country. Perhaps French leaders don't see everything in black and white but more grey. Let me switch to Laos. We are in 1953. I am sent to Laos. Mike Reaves, a FSO-6 - the lowest rank in the Service, was Chargé. As for me, I was not in the Foreign Service yet. There was also a lady with him in charge of economic assistance. Prince Souvanna Phouma was Minister of Public Works in the Royal Lao Government. He was a French-trained engineer. He was a graduate of one of the best specialized schools in France.

Prince Souvanna Phouma was part of the Viceroy's family of Laos. In those days, the children of this elite often were educated in the good private schools of France, for example, “L'Ecole de Normandie.” In the summertime, during the vacation period, it was too difficult for the youngsters to return to Laos. A round-trip by boat took 6 weeks. My wife's family had some cousins who attended the same school. At least two of the children of Prince Souvanna Phouma had gone to school with my wife's cousins. During the summer vacation in France, not being able to return to Laos, they were asked to spend some weeks at the country home of my wife's family. Furthermore, the King of Laos had attended the same school in France as my father-in-law. Hence, when I went up to Laos in 1954 or 1955, I was invited by these two gentlemen to the homes of key Lao officials. These contacts were to play an important role in my later assignments to Laos. When Martine and I went for the first time to Laos, we saw about 10 or 12 automobiles in Vientiane. Working toilettes were rare. When Secretary Dulles visited Vientiane, he was lodged at the King's guest house which did not have a solid water closet. Mr. Dulles had an unfortunate incident which did not help to dispose him more favorably to the neutralist government of Laos. In the 1950s, Laos was still living in a different world, many years apart from the modern world. In 1954, I returned to Washington to take the Foreign Service Examination. I first passed the written examination and then was scheduled to take the oral examination. When I entered the Foreign Service, there were very few foreign-born Americans in the career Foreign Service. While I had reached a relatively high rank in the Economic Aid Program, I was determined not to be integrated laterally. I did not want to be criticized later that I had entered the Foreign Service by the rear door. So, I took the written and oral examinations and started my career from the lowest rank upward.

Q: Do you recall your oral exam?

DEAN: Yes, I do. Ambassador Green, former Ambassador to Ethiopia, was a distinguished Foreign Service Officer. He presided. I had a Foreign Service officer from USIA, one from AID, and a consular officer by the name of Rose. Actually, he had given me my visa in Berlin in 1938 to go to the United States. He was also on the Board of Examiners. They did not give me an easy time. They wanted to test me whether I could represent honorably and knowledgeably the United States. Here are some of the questions they asked me: “Mr. Dean, what makes you think you are able to represent the United States? You were born in Germany. How do you think you can represent the United States?” I said I had come to the States at age 12. I had attended the American public school system. I had served in the American Army during war time. I had known the rich and the poor. I had lived in the Middle West. Above all, I thought I had acquired the values which made the United States great. Like all immigrants, I had made George Washington a role model and I wanted to serve the country which had given me a new home. When asked to talk about Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson in my oral examination, I remember that I was well equipped to address these questions.

Q: Thanks to the librarian in Kansas City.

DEAN: Later on, mind you, I had a good political science course at Harvard. Education in the public high school system of Missouri, plus Harvard University helped me to explain differences between both men but both views were needed to make the United States. After that question, I was asked what kind of cattle is raised in Texas. Answer: Longhorn. What was the economy of Oregon? Did Oregon have different economies in the east and in the west? I was able to address these questions quite well and passed the oral examination. Having passed the Foreign Service Examination, upon my return to Saigon, the Economic Counselor of the Embassy, Mr. Gardner Palmer, took me into the Economic Section.

Q: You went back to Saigon.

DEAN: Yes, I went back after taking the examination. There was no money to get an appointment In the Foreign Service right away, but I had passed the written, the oral, the physical and security examinations, and once back in Saigon I was treated somewhat differently. I was awaiting appointment as a Foreign Service Officer and had become a "colleague." It was in those days that I met Patricia Byrne, later one of our able ambassadors and friends. In the Economic Section in Saigon, in 1955, I was given the job of helping in the negotiation of the sale of assets of the Bank of Indochina to the Bank of Vietnam and to the Bank of Cambodia. For the sale, the French sent from Paris one of the top executives of the Bank of Indochina. He was rather well known because he had been a major player during the Vichy period in France. Some considered him a war criminal. As Préfet in France, he had been responsible for rounding up Jewish children who were sent to concentration camps. He was the person with whom I negotiated.

Q: What was his name?

DEAN: His name was Rene Bousquet. He was assassinated around 1990 in France. René Bousquet's name appears on the negotiating contracts. The Bank of Indochina sold its buildings, its facilities, and they wanted to be paid in convertible currency. The year was January 1956. Since the U.S. Government needed local currency, piastres, I was asked to convert the piastres paid by the Vietnamese Government into U.S. dollars, which is what the French wanted. At the time, Ngo Dinh Diem was President of South Vietnam. The U.S. Government agreed to exchanging dollars for piastres. The Vietnamese put up the piastres. We put up the foreign exchange. The French took it home, and the Bank of Vietnam was created. I then flew to the United States to get new bank notes printed - no longer in France - but in the United States. The plates were in the United States. That was an important consideration. As will be noted, this transaction also reflected the change of influence in Vietnam, from France toward the United States.

Q: Was this a point of conflict?

DEAN: There is usually suspicion and some bad feelings when one foreign country is being replaced by another foreign power. At the time, Ngo Dinh Diem, who was a highly educated, French-speaking, nationalist mandarin, came to power. Perhaps there were

elements in the French military and political establishment who felt that the U.S. did not give them the support they wanted or needed. But it was at that time that we began to replace the French in Vietnam as the guardians of the ramparts fighting communism. This was not the case in Cambodia. Cambodia was a relatively peaceful place in those years, Laos had not yet become a site of confrontation. In January of 1956, I left Indochina, having helped the Vietnam National Bank to be established. In Cambodia, the National Bank of Cambodia was established. In Laos, it was slightly slower. The Bank of Indochina stayed up there for a couple of years longer and the Lao Government took over financial control in a very peaceful manner. Most French realized that the era of French colonialism had come to an end in Asia. The more enlightened political leaders, for example, Mendes France and General de Gaulle were decolonizers. They realized that the time of overt political colonialism had come to an end. The overpowering influence of the former colonial power behind the scenes also had come to an end and different ways had to be found of working with these emerging nations. Was there bad feeling? Probably some, but not for very long. Colonialism had brought good and bad features. At first, the countries of Indochina saw us as supporters of their independence. As time went on, in all three countries, the authorities realized that the United States also had its priorities and they did not always coincide with the goals of the indigenous governments. For example, in Vietnam, Ngo Dinh Diem was killed; Sihanouk was forced out by Lon Nol; and in Laos, the Pathet Lao replaced the King. It was too bad that the West did not accept earlier that colonialism had come to an end in 1945 with the conclusion of World War II. In January 1956 we returned to Washington and that spring I formally entered the U.S. Foreign Service. I entered at the bottom of the scale as a FSO-6. At the time, that was the lowest level. Shortly thereafter, the ladder was extended by 2 grades to FSO-8.

*Q: You came in 1956 as a 06, then fell back to 08, and got promoted rather quickly to FSO-*7.

DEAN: That's right. That is exactly what happened to me. I fell back to an 8 and was quickly promoted to a 7 at my first FS posting. Before leaving Washington, I attended the FSO basic course where I made a lot of good friends.

Q: You started your FSO basic course when - in 1956?

DEAN: Yes, in 1956. Then, Jefferson Graham Parsons said "I need a very junior officer in the Political Section in Vientiane. I have been made Ambassador to Laos. I want you to go with me out there." I had an offer. Obviously, what had helped me up to this time was the fact that I had studied in France, spoke fluent French, and wrote French without difficulty (and if needed, I could always take the paper back to my wife who would correct it). 1956 was the period when we replaced the French in supporting the Meo tribesmen in their struggle against the communists. The French had used the hill tribes as mercenaries in their fight against the Viet Minh in North Vietnam. As you know, Dien Bien Phu is located in that area between Laos and North Vietnam where the hill tribes hold sway. The U.S. was going to replace the French by hiring not the Thai Dam tribe as the French had, but by using similar people, the Meo people who were basically not Lao

or Thai, but Chinese. They had drifted southward from China. My big boss was Ambassador Jefferson Graham Parsons. He had a very able wife, Peggy. Ambassador Parsons believed in Foster Dulles' policies that all countries had to choose sides. Neutrality was frowned upon.

Q: You were in Laos from 1956 to 1958.

DEAN: Yes, I served two Ambassadors. Jefferson Graham Parsons who went back in 1957 to Washington to be Assistant Secretary for the Far East, at a time when Laos had moved to center stage in our effort to contain communism in Southeast Asia. The second Ambassador was Horace Smith, who did not speak a word of French.

Q: You were in Laos from when to when?

DEAN: 1956 to 1958. As the lowest member of the Political Section, I was the French speaker on the team. I worked with the Prime Minister, Souvanna Phouma, an outspoken Francophile and an avowed neutralist. The Ambassador at the time, J. Graham Parsons, who had been kind enough to select me to go to Vientiane, was close to Secretary Dulles and did not believe that countries should follow a neutralist course; rather, they should choose either "to be with us or against us."

Q: Did Parsons buy this? This was Dulles' line?

DEAN: Yes, but he was the executor of this policy. My wife and I had this personal relationship with Souvanna Phouma. We were asked at times to go to his house and play bridge in the evening. At the time, it became clear to me that the French did not believe that the policy pursued by Ambassador Parsons was the right one in Laos. I had a particularly close relationship with the adviser to Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma. His name was Mathieu. He was a military officer. He wrote speeches for the King; then, he wrote the answer for the Prime Minister, and then the Prime Minister would make a speech which required a response from the President of the National Assembly.

All the speeches were written by the same man: Mathieu. My wife and I got along with him. The Ambassador asked me to report directly to him, thereby knowing what was going on in Laos. There was no doubt that Mathieu was the best informed foreigner in the country. It was a time when the CIA sent an extremely able Station Chief. His name was Henry Hecksher. Henry and I got to be friends. From time to time, he would ask me: "Can you do this?" I felt my job was always to be helpful to my colleagues - so I did. One day, Hecksher asked me whether I could take a suitcase to the Prime Minister. Since I had easy access to most Lao, I complied. Whereupon, I received an official reprimand from the Secretary of State that I had abused my functions as a Foreign Service Officer.

Q: In the first place, how did whoever did the reprimanding action at the State Department find out?

DEAN: Somebody must have informed them. I never saw any difference between members of the Embassy. We were all supposed to be one team. What I did find out was that not only a suitcase was taken to the Prime Minister, but several suitcases full of money were being ferried over to the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Phoui Sananikone, who was much more In line with the official American position on Laos. But the delivery of these suitcases was not entrusted to me. Unfortunately, events lead to a political confrontation between Souvanna Phouma, the neutralist, and Phoui Sananikone who was basically very pro-Thai and lent the American Embassy his ear. Souvanna was forced out of office in 1958, which coincided with the end of my tour.

Phoui Sananikone took over the reins of the government and initiated a more hostile policy towards the Pathet Lao. Souvanna Phouma's half- brother, Souvanna Vong, was Head of the Pathet Lao. The two brothers always kept some channels of communication open. Souvanna Phouma was a great believer in finding a negotiated solution. Phoui Sananikone not at all. He was more interested in fighting the Pathet Lao and favored the business interests in Southern Laos. My Ambassador, J. Graham Parsons, appeared to prefer Phoui to Souvanna. I do remember something which I think is of interest to future generations of Foreign Service officers. J. Graham Parsons was a reflective ambassador. He would write think pieces to the Secretary of State, Foster Dulles. Then he would call me in and say: "John, (and I was then the lowest man on the totem pole) I know you disagree with this paper, so would you please write one paragraph, no longer than a page, and I will put it at the end of my message?" He started the paragraph. "My political officer, John Gunther Dean, disagrees with me. His views are" and I provided the rest. I thought, for a junior officer, I could not ask for anything more. I did differ, but I was pleased that I was allowed to put my analysis forward without having my criticism held against me. Then, Parsons was recalled to Washington to take up the position of Assistant Secretary of State for the Far East. We received a new ambassador by the name of Horace Smith.

Q: Before we do that. What was the situation in Laos when you were there at that time?

DEAN: No, the joint government came much later, when I served again in Laos in the 1970s. The Pathet Lao were still up in the hills or on the Plaine des Jarres. They were not yet a major military force nor was Laos yet a divided country. The King was still quite respected around the country. His son may be less so. But it was the beginning of training and arming the Meo hill tribes against the Pathet Lao. This trend was accelerated after the new Ambassador, Horace Smith, arrived at post. He arrived in Vietnam toward the end of 1957, Horace Smith was a China expert and spoke Chinese. Unfortunately, he did not speak a word of French. The working language in Laos was French. It was used in public speeches, in written communications with the government and in daily contact with the elite. Even among educated Lao, they used French among themselves. The Ambassador's inability to speak French made it difficult for him to communicate with the leading personalities of the Kingdom. My wife and I were asked to help him. Ambassador Smith was a nice man, but people wondered whether he was the right man for the job. To assist in the communication, Ambassador Smith asked me to accompany him on his calls. The

Ambassador would say something, and I would translate it into French. When the King, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, or the Commanding General of the Lao Armed Forces spoke, I would translate into English and at the same time take notes. My wife and I played a similar role at the Residence when the Ambassador entertained. At one point, we were asked by Ambassador Smith to move into his residence to help him entertain. Later in 1958, when I accompanied the Ambassador on his calls, he said: "John, you know what to say." I would be allowed to say more or less what I knew was on his mind. I would present that point of view and take notes when the person answered. While the Ambassador was nominally in charge, there was another person at the post, the Head of the CIA, Henry Hecksher, who was both professionally able and spoke good French. I had good relations with Henry Hecksher. But it seemed to me that his orders were quite different from the policy pursued by the Ambassador. The Ambassador was supposed to support the Lao Government and basically not rock the boat. Henry Hecksher was committed to opposing the neutralist Prime Minister and perhaps bring about his downfall. That is what happened in 1958, and the pro-American and anti-Pathet Lao Prime Minister Phoui Sananikone took charge. American resources and support were funneled to Phoui's Government, probably at the expense of French influence, which had supported Souvanna Phouma. Phoui Sananikone, former President of the National Assembly and then Prime Minister, and his brother Ngon, were basically nice human beings. They were Bangkok-oriented. Souvanna Phouma was Paris-oriented. He was a prince from the ruling class. He was nationalist but looked to France not only to oppose communist expansionism but he also feared encroachment of the Vietnamese and Thais on his territory. He thought that the best way was to stick with the French. His policy was more oriented toward keeping Laos from being dismembered by neighbors and less motivated by fighting communism. In all these attitudes, Souvanna had a lot in common with Prince Sihanouk. Perhaps Souvanna was more educated than his Cambodian colleague. The dichotomy in the American leadership in Laos got to be known in Washington. In 1958, when I returned from Laos, a Committee had been established in Washington on how to avoid a leadership conflict, a turf battle within large diplomatic missions overseas.

In 1960, after John F. Kennedy was elected, one of the first steps he took was to write a letter which has been institutionalized ever since. It is the Letter of the President to the Ambassador. It says that "You, Mr. Ambassador, are responsible to me for all the activities going on in the country of your jurisdiction, whether they are military, political, intelligence, financial, agricultural, economics, drugs, etc. except if there is a military command which is directly responsible to a higher American military authority outside the country." This letter was designed to make the American ambassador the coordinator of all American activities in the country of his accreditation. It meant that if the Drug Enforcement Agency wanted to run a certain operation, it needed the approval of the ambassador. If the CIA wanted to penetrate a certain institution, it needed the approval of the resident ambassador. If there was a conflict between U.S. agricultural interests shipping U.S. wheat or rice to a country, versus the Secretary of the Treasury making the money available for this transaction, the coordinator in the field was the ambassador. It also meant that the ambassador had to be well informed on all activities carried out by the

representatives of U.S. departments and agencies within the diplomatic mission he is leading. Hence, when you have several intelligence agencies in large diplomatic missions and turf battles develop, the ambassador must arbitrate. If you have a professional ambassador at the post, he usually can weigh the pros and cons and make a decision on the spot. He does not have to consult "Washington." The Presidential Letter says: "You are in charge" so, you do it. It can happen that, for example, on drug enforcement issues, the CIA representative may have different views than the DEA officer at the post. The military may have a conflict with one of the Intelligence Agencies. They may be targeting the same person - which could be a disaster. Both of them may be running against a double agent.

In the economic area, we may be dumping PL-480 rice into a country which is actually exporting rice grown at home. You, ambassador, are in charge of this. I would think this letter, which has been used now for the last 40 years, is one important reason why in sensitive posts the professional ambassador makes a difference. A political appointee having to arbitrate the differences among U.S. departments and agencies may not know all the ramifications of every decision which is to be made. On the other hand, most career people do have the background. Let me give you an example. A wife of a very prominent Prime Minister was deeply involved in the sale of drugs. We knew that. When the Prime Minister refused to sign a certain piece of paper which we wanted signed, we had to threaten the Prime Minister, or at least make it known, that we knew that his wife was very much involved in drugs. The paper was signed. The ambassador, as coordinator of U.S. activities abroad, is probably the only way to avoid in the field what is a problem in Washington where every department and every agency runs its own policies and operations. While theoretically the National Security Adviser to the President is supposed to be the coordinator, I don't think that every problem can be resolved from thousands of miles away. A good relationship between the National Security Adviser in Washington and the Ambassador at a sensitive post is very helpful to the over-all interests of the United States.

Q: Tell me, while you were in Laos, from 1956 to 1958, what was the importance of Laos?

DEAN: It was being built up, artificially I think, as a major point of confrontation. If you think at one point there was a Bermuda Conference with British Prime Minister MacMillan involved with the American President in trying to diffuse the confrontation in Laos, while most average Americans had never even heard of that far away place. Laos had become a flashpoint where the U.S. saw its interests being challenged by the communist world through the communist Pathet Lao. I thought this conflict had been blown up beyond our real national interests. We saw the Pathet Lao not as a national force, but as a prolongation of the communist Vietnamese and the communist Chinese. We saw Laos as part of a global challenge. The Bermuda Conference was held because it was feared that this regional confrontation could spread into a broader conflict. Mind you, we were living in an era of "containing communism."

Q: At the Embassy, were we saying that maybe this thing was getting exaggerated? You were a Junior Officer. Were people pretty much on board that this was the navel of the universe?

DEAN: Since I had been close to Souvanna Phouma personally and I played the role of liaison with the French, I supported Souvanna's neutral policy. With the approval of Ambassador Parsons, I could make known my views. I was allowed to dissent. Most of my colleagues thought their job was to support the new Lao Government under Phoui Sananikone which opposed neutralists and gave priority to fighting the communists. Also, many officers in the Mission were staff involved in supporting the Meo forces fighting the Pathet Lao. There was relatively little dissent in our Mission. After the U.S. elections in 1958 when Governor Harriman entered the Lao scene, he supported again a neutralist general as counterweight to the warrior clan. That was in 1961-1962. It also reflected a slight change in U.S. policy. Dulles had disappeared from the scene. The elections in 1960 brought Kennedy to the fore and an effort was made to find a negotiated solution. It was Harriman who at that point succeeded to deflate the Laos confrontation. I would like to pay a tribute to a person who may still be alive: Campbell James. His grandfather had been one of the founders of the Pennsylvania Railroad. He was quite flamboyant. I had started at my home regular roulette evenings. I learned how to be the croupier to run the roulette table. People were able to bet small amounts. I held the bank. This was a good way for the Lao military, Lao politicians, and foreign diplomats to come to my house. People of high rank came to our home to mix, talk, and enjoy themselves. Campbell James, who came from a well-to-do family, said: “John, why don't you introduce me to your friends?” I did. I felt - and I still feel today - that whether you work for this department or that agency, we all work for Uncle Sam. While he may have had different reasons for coming to my house, he was my colleague. When I was scheduled to depart post, I turned over most of my contacts to Campbell James, who continued to run roulette evenings and used fun evenings to make friends among the Lao military who loved gambling. Campbell James and I had contact with many foreign missions: Poles, Canadians, Indians... These roulette evenings helped to keep all channels open. Perhaps the most important result of my tour of duty in Laos was the letter from the American President to the Ambassador which put an end to confrontation between different U.S. departments and agencies at diplomatic missions abroad. At least, that was the purpose of the Presidential Letter making the Chief of Mission the Coordinator of all U.S. activities under his jurisdiction.

Q: It became a very important instrument. Some ambassadors used it; some did not; but they had the authority up to a point.

DEAN: I used it extensively later, wherever I was assigned as Chief of Mission. Some called me a “meddler,” an “intervener.” Years later, when I appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for confirmation, Senator Javits chastised me and said: “If you are confirmed, Mr. Dean, will you continue to intervene in the domestic affairs of the country where you are stationed?” I think I replied to the satisfaction of the Senators, because I was confirmed. But when you are the American Ambassador, you have the

means at your disposal to influence the situation. The naked truth is that the Ambassador is more “than a reporter.” Often, he can't help but take positions. Whether you call this “interference...” I don't know. For example, when you answer the question to the King “Are you in favor of this?” and you reply: “Yes,” you have “intervened.” Most of the time, when it's a vital issue, you can't say: “I am going to get my instructions from the State Department and I will get back to you.” Your personal relationship with the interlocutor and his confidence in you matters. That is why I do believe that the selection of ambassadors is a very important process. Yes, there are many situations where the ambassador's advice or opinion is a form of intervention in the internal affairs of a country.

Q: While you were in Laos, was any European press present during the time you were there?

DEAN: It was still off the beaten path and foreign journalists were a rare breed. The medical facilities in Laos were also very limited. That kept some people away. For example, foreign women were reluctant to have their baby in Laos. My wife happened to be pregnant in Laos. Everyone urged her to go to the American Hospital in Bangkok but my wife replied: “I prefer to stay with my husband.” I have one son who was born in Laos. Quite often, he has to explain to a Passport Officer why he was born in Laos. At the time, there was only one hospital in Vientiane: the French military hospital. That is where our older son was born. The Lao have remained themselves. Western ways have not had a significant impact. They are basically nice, decent people who got hurt when Laos became a bone of contention between the West and the communist world.

Q: Let's go to 1958. Where did you go then?

DEAN: In 1958, I got orders to go to East Africa. I was supposed to go to Nairobi. But before proceeding to Nairobi, I was first sent to Washington to attend the mid-career course. I never worried about promotions. They came by themselves. Once back in Washington, I was told: “You speak good French. We are going to open up some new posts in Africa and you are the right man for that job.” Togo had been a German colony before World War I and some of the old Togolese still spoke German. French is the official language. “We want you to open the post in Lomé, Togo.” I wrote my mother the good news; “I'm going to Lomé.” She wrote back: “Oh, congratulations! You are going to Rome.” I replied: “No, Mom, I'm going to Lomé in Togo. It's right next to Upper Volta.” She said: “Upper Volta? Where is Lower Volta?” I said: “Let me explain to you. Togo was a German colony. It is now a U.N. Trust Territory under French administration!” In Washington, I was instructed to first proceed to Paris because the Consulate in Togo was going to be under the supervision of the Paris Embassy. I said: “You mean my supervisor is going to be living in Paris, a couple of thousand miles away? That's great! I'm all for that!” In Paris, I saw Ambassador Amery Houghton who asked his Administrative Assistant to give me $5,000 in cash and a small code book. The latter was tiny - about four inches by three inches. “In case of emergency, you use that to send coded messages to Paris.” I was also given a small American flag. With the good wishes of Ambassador

Houghton, I was put on a plane to Dakar and looked at a number of other African posts before proceeding to Togo. I also went to look at Abidjan; Liberia (where the only good road at that time was the paved road from Monrovia to the Firestone plantation). I also went to look at Guinea. Then, I went to Accra where I met the American Ambassador. Embassy Accra offered administrative support in my assignment to open the Consulate in Togo. I was given a car in which I drove to Lomé. Lomé was a very small town. I think I was through Lomé before I knew that I had been in Lomé. I tried to find a hotel and I did. After finding a lodging, I went to the Post Office and said: "I would like to register the address of the American Consulate" and suggested that I may be getting telegrams via the local post office. Next, I put down a deposit, and returned to the hotel to get a room. I was given a room which was in the annex of the hotel. There was no air-conditioning; no overhead fan; but I had a mosquito net. It was March 22, 1959. I also sent a message to Washington saying: opened Post - March 22. 1959."

Q: I take it your wife was not with you.

DEAN: No, I was all by myself. In my room, at the hotel, I had a small fan on a chair, and there was no private toilet. My room was next to the public toilets. One day, as I woke up, I noticed a rather odd smell. There was an overflow from the toilet next door to my bedroom. I complained. I was moved into a better room. Then, I had the very interesting job of making all the administrative arrangements involved in opening a post. I had to find lodgings for all future American employees who were scheduled to join me. I had to lease a building which would become a Consulate, and interview local Togolese for staffing the Consulate local secretaries, general service assistants, chauffeurs, translators, etc. To carry out my responsibilities, I established relations with the French Governor, who was favorably disposed toward the U.S. It was the last year that France was in charge of the U.N. Trust Territory of Togo.

Q: Your arrival was before Togo became independent?

DEAN: It only became independent in April 1960. I arrived in March 1959. I was the first foreign representative to Togo to be accredited. It had been decided that after the Trusteeship had come to an end, the Togolese leader, Sylvanus Olympio, would become President. In 1959, Olympio was only Prime Minister. Olympio was a very able and nice person. Olympio had been a Director of the United Africa Company which was a well-known Trading Company in England. Olympio had been raised in England where he had attended the London School of Economics. He spoke still some German which he had learned in grammar school before 1914. He also spoke rather good French, but English was definitely his first language. He was to become Togo's first President.

I then started to look for real estate to lease. I found a large house but it needed some alterations. This meant further delay in having my family join me. From March onward, I was all alone in Togo. There was nobody else from Washington to help me at this stage. I had to go and get another house and an office. For the office, I leased a villa next to Mr. Olympio's personal home. I am mentioning this because its location was going to play a

major role. In 1963 or 1964, Olympio was assassinated as he was climbing over the wall between his house and our Chancery. He died in the arms of the American Ambassador, Mr. Poullada, after I had left the post. Who killed him? Today's Chief of State, General Eyadéma who then was a Sergeant in the army!

Q: Very sad.

DEAN: Olympio was the first African Chief of State to be assassinated. A few months later, in the Summer of 1959, an American Administrative Officer arrived. Finally, a Principal Officer was assigned to take charge of the post. He was Jesse McKnight. My wife and three children joined me in the late Summer of 1959. In April 1960, independence came to Togo. The French Government had sent the Baron de Testa to be the Diplomatic Adviser to President Olympio. Since he did not enjoy good relations with Olympio, de Testa was sent back to France, just before independence. At the same time, Olympio sent a message to Secretary of State Herter: "You have this chap, John Gunther Dean, down here, who is Consul. He opened your post last year. We get along well with him. In a few weeks, we will have our independence celebrations. Would you put him at our disposal as Diplomatic Adviser for a short-while? He speaks English and French and we have to use French in every day communications. He also speaks German. We were a German colony. In short, we need some help." The Secretary of State approved the request. I was asked to go every morning to work with President Olympio and his team. Every day, I went to the big castle overlooking the ocean which the Germans had built as their Governor's Palace, to work with Olympio. Independence came, and the celebration was grand. For the United States, the Head of the Delegation to the Independence celebrations was Attorney General Rogers who later became Secretary of State. When the celebration was over, I was asked to come to the newly established Togolese Ministry and help President Olympio to reply to the mountains of mail which had come for the independence celebration. Olympio had received messages from many dignitaries, among them: President Eisenhower, President de Gaulle, the Queen of England, and the Presidents of China, Taiwan, the Soviet Union, etc. All messages had to be answered in French. So, I submitted a draft to Mr. Olympio and then took the incoming mail home and showed my suggested reply to my wife so that there would not be any mistakes. Then, the Togolese typed up the letters and I would submit the correspondence to the President. I remained always deferential. Olympio was an impressive man. I liked him and it was mutual. He signed most of the correspondence submitted for his signature. Among the mail to be answered was a letter from His Holiness the Pope.

So, I looked up in a French protocol guidebook how to address correspondence to the Pope. We had to answer all communications in French. How does the Chief of State close his communication addressed to the Pope? The French protocol book states that it depends - if the Chief of State is Catholic, he signs one way, if he is not Catholic, he signs another way. So, I went to Olympio with the mail and said: "Here are a couple of letters, Mr. President, for your signature. By the way, Mr. President, are you by any chance Catholic?" "Yes, I am." He continued signing. I went outside to look at the protocol book. It said that if the Chief of State is a practicing Catholic, he signs one way. If he is not a

practicing Catholic, he signs another way. I had a good friend and colleague in Accra who was a very good Catholic and I asked him: "John, how does it work out here in West Africa, practicing or non-practicing?" He replied: "Well, it depends. Since there are some Africans who have several wives, they can attend Mass, but they cannot take communion. But if they are monogamous, then they can take communion. If they take communion, then they are fully practicing Catholics." I said, "Thank you, John, that's very helpful." The next day, I went back to the President and said: "Tell me, Mr. President, do you ever go and take communion?" I could not ask him "Are you monogamous?" I knew some of his ministers in the cabinet were Catholic but were polygamous. He said: "Yes, I take communion. Why do you need to know?" I said: "The way you sign your letter to the Pope. In your case, you sign 'Your Devoted son.' I then showed him the protocol guidebook to support my point. He signed the letter to the Pope just as he signed all the other letters to de Gaulle, Eisenhower, the President of the Soviet Union, and all the other leaders who had written him on the occasion of Togo's accession to independence.

Q: You know, the French must have been spitting mad at this.

DEAN: No, I don't think so. What I always do when I have a problem is to keep people informed. That is the best way you avoid a problem. Whatever I did, I told my colleague on the French side. When I had a letter from the President of mainland China or one from the Chief of State of Taiwan, I answered Taiwan first, and after a while answered the letter from Beijing. Olympio signed both letters but Taiwan was quicker in establishing a resident mission in Lomé. But I also had to answer the Queen of England. Olympic had gone to university in England, the London School of Economics, and he had been a member of the Board of Directors of an important British company. Writing to the Queen was a different matter for Olympio. This was the first time he would write to Her Majesty in his capacity as Chief of State of a sovereign country. Do you know how to address a letter in French to the Queen of England?

Q: "Chère Majesté?"

DEAN: No, "Madame." Olympio answered exactly what you said: "Votre Majesté." He first refused to sign that letter. He said: "John, it must be at least "Your Majesty, Your Gracious Majesty." I said: "Here it is in the protocol book: "Madame." The envelope is addressed differently: Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of This, and Duchess of That, and all the other titles which she has. Again, I showed him the French protocol book. Olympio was not satisfied: "Isn't there another book you can show me?" I said: "Look, English protocol and French protocol may not be the same, but you are supposed to use the French language. That was part of the agreement of independence." So, he signed the letter. We remained good friends and I saw him again when he came to Washington as the guest of John F. Kennedy.

Q: Let's stick to the time you were there.

DEAN: One of the first assignments I had as adviser to President Olympio was to help with the visit to Togo, after independence, by the last German Governor of Togo in 1914, the Duke von und zu Mecklenburg, a relative of the Russian Czars through Catherine the Great. He came with his own "Leibartz," his personal doctor accompanying him. Ever so often, one heard a little ring from the doctor's watch and he would say: "Your Grace, It's time to take your pill." The Duke was an old man. He spoke not a word of English. He spoke fluent French and German. I accompanied him on his trips to help him in translations and to facilitate his travels. Before he came, all the constructions and lasting achievements had been attributed by the Togolese to the German colonial period. The Togolese would say: "Oh, the Germans did that." So, I took him to all these places, and quite often the Duke would say: "Well, this did not exist in my time. When was that built?" He was an interesting person. The Togolese brought out all the German speakers they had, Togolese who had gone to German schools or had been brought to Germany before 1914. It was a very sentimental event and the Togolese were very pleased to have his visit. Perhaps the Togolese also hoped that the visit would help the German Bundesrepublik of 1960 to consider assisting Togo in its development as a sovereign nation. On the whole, the Togolese are one of the most educated people of West Africa. The country of Togo, unlike many West African nations, is long and narrow, like a sliver into the heart of Africa. The racial groups align horizontally. Hence, as you went from the Atlantic Ocean inland, you encountered different racial groups. The Ewe race, which was also Olympio's race, was spread between Togo and Ghana. The Hausa people inhabit the inland areas of West Africa and are completely different from the Ewe. The Hausa are largely Muslim and over time intermarried with Arabs. I found that Olympio was very much western-oriented, very pro-American and pro-West in general. He was interested in developing economically Togo. He succeeded partially because the Grace Company from America got involved with the extraction of minerals. The Germans then built a port years later. During my time in Togo, the struggle for power was between Grunitzky and Olympio, but Olympio became President and stayed President until he was assassinated. There was, and still is, a certain rivalry among Western nations for influence. In Africa, I always felt that there is enough work to be done by the West. Instead of rivalry, it would be preferable to have a certain amount of cooperation to avoid duplication and waste.

Q: Were the Soviets involved in this at all?

DEAN: No, not really. The Soviets were not players in Togo. The only nation in West Africa which might be open to Soviet influence was Guinea. In Guinea, the Soviets played a significant role just after independence, when Sekou Toure walked out of the French Franc Zone and declined to work with the French. From 1960 onward, the newly Independent countries of West Africa which had been under French colonial administration, remained in the French Franc Zone and continued working with France for the next 40 years. Guinea was the exception.

Q: Was it a chasse gardée?

DEAN: The French provided a lot of help to the newly independent West African states. Their assistance was quite generous, both in the military and economic fields. Some of the French assistance was provided through the Lomé Convention, or through the European Union. The cultural aspect was also important for France and led to the establishment of Universities in Dakar, in Abidjan, and in the Cameroon. The French Oil Company ELF/TOTAL brought in a number of oil wells in the former French African colonies, for example in Gabon. Humanitarian assistance came also from voluntary associations, for example: Médecins Sans Frontières. Above all, the former French African colonies remained in the French West Africa Franc area, which gave their currencies value and convertibility. Guinea was the only country to walk out of the French Franc Zone and its currency became nearly worthless. While Sekou Toure was able to establish a very independent Guinea, the country's economy suffered enormously. The Russians gave them some assistance, but on the whole, the West stayed out for many years. Guinea does have natural resources, and a joint American-French operation invested large amounts in a bauxite/aluminum facility (Harvey-Pechiney). Guinea fell behind, and still today, 40 years later, suffers from the fact that they factored themselves out politically and economically from the area. Yes, France also benefited from their close links with their former colonies. French remained the administrative language for most former African colonies. French culture was paramount and was actively promoted. French Africa remained a market for French exports, and African commodities found markets in Europe. For example, the French made cacao a big export of the Ivory Coast. In 1954, as France withdrew from Indochina, rubber trees were sent by French plantations in Vietnam by plane to West Africa. Today, rubber is a major export of Ivory Coast. Togo is a poor country, but its people are relatively well-educated and able. Many Togolese found work as clerks in other French African countries. Colonialism was not all bad. One of the worst features of colonialism was racism, the suppression of indigenous cultures and lack of respect for the African individual. Compared to Liberia, which had been independent for over one hundred years, West Africa had a decent road system, well-trained military officers, teachers with school buildings, dispensaries staffed by indigenous and foreign staff, etc... In Ghana, the British left behind a rather well educated upper class. The same is true for Nigeria. In Togo, independence came to a competent people, in a country with few natural resources.

Q: Did we find ourselves as a policy saying: "Okay, here are these West African countries. We are going to keep our presence here, but we are certainly not going to try to supplant the French." So, were we sort of pussyfooting around to make sure the French did not get their noses out of joint?

DEAN: I think this is not a bad description. I honestly thought that at that stage in history, there was still a feeling of "We, the U.S., can't do it all." This approach may have changed in those countries where we would like to participate in sharing markets, develop resources, or for strictly strategic reasons. For example, Dakar has always been a jumping off point for air and naval traffic from Europe to South America. New technology may also change the strategic importance of specific areas. Today, I think the competition may well be between the U.S. and the European Union for influence in many parts of Africa. It

is no longer France alone, but the European Union that defends certain economic advantages in Africa. But, more than 40 years ago, the U.S. was not unhappy to "play second fiddle." From Togo, I went to Mali.

Q: You were there in Mali from…

DEAN: From March 1960 until July 1961. From Togo, I was assigned as Principal Officer in Bamako, French Sudan.

Q: That is a name that is completely lost.

DEAN: Yes, the French Sudan is known today by its ancient name of MALI. When assigned to Bamako, the French Sudan was part of a Federation with Senegal, which had its capital in Dakar. In short, I was heading a Consulate under the jurisdiction of the American Ambassador in Dakar, Mr. Villard. Before taking up my new posting, I took a vacation in Switzerland. While relaxing in the mountains of Switzerland, I received notification from Washington that there had been a break-up of the Mali Federation. Modibo Keita, a Malian who had been a minister in the French Government, left Dakar in a huff and declared the Republic of Mali (in what used to be the French Sudan). At that point, I sent a message, at my own expense, to the State Department: "Am proceeding directly to Bamako" and booked a flight from Paris to Bamako. By the time I arrived in Bamako, the split-up of the Federation had been consummated. Modibo Keita was declared President of the Mali Republic. I went to call on him. The American Government followed suit by declaring the post of Bamako directly linked to Washington. All links between the American Consulate in Bamako and the American Embassy in Senegal were severed. My boss now was the Department of State in Washington. Letters of credence as Chargé d'Affaires à pied were sent to me. It meant I was Chief of Mission, and for the foreseeable future, the American Embassy in Bamako would not have a resident U.S. Ambassador. I was "in charge" but had no American staff. Quite often, I drove up to the Presidential Palace which was on top of a small hill overlooking the city in order to meet President Modibo Keita. He was very pleased that the U.S. Government, as the French, had immediately recognized the newly independent state of Mali. He asked what sports I was interested in. I replied that I loved to play tennis. "Do you play volleyball?" I replied that I had played volleyball in the past. "Do you want to come and play volleyball with me up here from time to time?" It took me no time to accept his offer. Modibo Keita was about 6 feet 5 inches tall, a good looking man, and an excellent athlete. From time to time, I went up and played volleyball with him, which established a relaxed relationship with him. Later, when the American staff had joined me, I took my colleagues with me and we had a regular American-Malian sports competition.

Q: We had nothing there.

DEAN: For the first few weeks, I was all alone. Both my bedroom and office were at the Grand Hotel, which was quite grand and comfortable. Later, all other foreign missions got

their start there. One of the first to arrive were the Soviets. The French had their own building. Everybody else had to look for lodging and office space. All foreigners lived at first together at “Le Grand Hotel.” The Russians would come and say: “Hey, I'm going back to Moscow. I need some dollars. Can you give me some dollars? I want to buy something there.” I would say “Okay” and give him $20 and he gave me some local currency. Mali had remained in the West African French Franc Zone and its currency was convertible. Then the revolutionary shadow of Sekou Toure began to fall on Mali. Modibo Keita was flirting with the idea of establishing Mali's own currency, the “Malian Franc.” Next, he asked the French military forces to leave Mali. The Soviet Mission was quite popular among the Malian politicians. The Soviets offered aid and advisers from Guinea. The Advisers came from Guinea to Bamako to offer their services. Mali showed its political leanings by holding protest marches at night with torches, objecting to the killing of Lumumba in the Congo. The Malians made it clear at the time that they thought foul play was involved in Lumumba's death, and the West was responsible. It was the beginning of discussions among Malians whether to leave the West African French Franc Zone and discontinue membership in the French Union, and questioning their ties to the former colonial power. With storm clouds on the horizon, I received a phone call from Fernand Wibaux, who was the French High Commissioner in Mali. Prior to his diplomatic posting, Wibaux had been the Director General of the Office du Niger, a 10,000 hectares (25,000 acres) project to grow rice and cotton in Mali. It was a highly successful project in developing the agriculture of that relatively poorly endowed country. When I met with the High Commissioner, he asked me to do him a favor: “The French troops are standing down. Would you come and see the last parade?' General Charles was the commander of the French troops stationed in Mali. I replied that we were NATO allies and I found it natural to stand next to the Frenchman, taking the salute of the departing troops. Then Wibaux said: “Don't be surprised if the Malians ask you to help them in the training of their troops.” “Why not” I replied, “but let's wait and see what happens.” It was my impression that the French had even suggested the idea to the Mali military. Perhaps they thought better American advisers than Russian officers. My attention then turned to finding office space. A former French bank building was offered to me. Soon, the first American colleagues began to arrive to staff the post: an Economic Officer, an Administrative Officer, an Economic Aid Officer, and a Political Officer. The Head of what became the Economic Aid Mission was Sam Adams, a very distinguished Afro-American who later became U.S. Ambassador to a country in Africa. We became good friends. The new head of the Political Section, Robert V. Keeley, became my best friend in the Foreign Service. One day, I received a request from Modibo Keita to call on him. He said: “John, I have André Malraux coming as the Representative of Charles de Gaulle. His flight arrives at 4:00 in the morning. Would you accompany your French colleague to meet him, thereby showing Western solidarity on what I am trying to do in Mali.” It was an interesting experience for me to meet with one of Europe's leading authors and cultural personalities.

Q: Was he Minister of Culture at that time?

DEAN: Yes, he was Minister of Culture under De Gaulle. But he was sent on many diplomatic missions by General de Gaulle. He was going to play a role later in my life with Robert Kennedy. When I first met him in Bamako, in the early hours of the morning, he thanked me for meeting his plane, and revealed the reason for his coming to Mali. "We have to try to keep the Malians in the West African French Franc Zone. We don't want to repeat Guinea and be overrun by Soviet advisers and Soviet ideology in Mali." Malraux also stressed the "strategic location" of Mali. I never thought of Mali in these terms. Mali is south of Algeria and north of the Ivory Coast and Guinea, the latter two leading to the Atlantic Ocean. It's the ancient trade route between the Arab North Africa and the Negro tribes in Western Africa. He also urged us to keep each other informed so that there would not be any duplication of effort. Shortly thereafter, I went to see Modibo Keita and he said he would like to establish his own currency. Instead of giving a negative or positive answer, I took a piece of paper and drew up a bank balance sheet with credit and debit on opposite sides. I showed what items to put under assets, and what to list under debits in a Central Bank balance sheet. I explained that you cannot just go down into the vault of the Central Bank and take the bank notes as if you had earned the money. We discussed the need for drawing up a national budget and the advantages of a convertible currency. What I had learned about finance at Harvard came in very handy. I was surely not the only one who tried to convince President Keita of the advantages for Mali to remain in a convertible currency zone. Malraux made the same points and he undoubtedly had much greater Influence with Modibo Keita than I ever had. In the course of this continuous dialogue I had with President Keita, I was asked what I thought about Mali establishing its own Airline. My response was very negative because I thought Mali was too small a country and had an insufficient number of air travelers to make Air Mali a profitable operation. Despite my advice, for a very brief period, a few planes flew under the Air Mali flag. Then, common sense prevailed and Air Mali became part of the regional airline: Air Afrique. But independence and the departure of the French military also meant that President Keita started to look around to find new sources of assistance for equipping and modernizing the Malian Army. When approached by Modibo Keita whether the U.S. might be interested in this role, I replied that I would query Washington. Specifically, Modibo Keita wanted training for paratroopers, because the huge size of the country and the desert in the north may require the means to move troops quickly and by air.

The U.S. Government agreed to send a couple of airplanes and trainers to teach the Malians to jump out of planes. A Military Aid Mission was established at Embassy Bamako, and a competent Lieutenant Colonel arrived to head the mission. He took charge of all military cooperation. An agreement was signed - military to military - which undoubtedly contributed to the good relations between the U.S. and this new West African independent republic, which has been continual for more than 40 years. The military agreement was matched by an economic assistance agreement which was signed in 1960. All along the period I remained in charge of this growing U.S. Mission, I kept my French colleague informed of what we were doing with the Malian Authorities.

Q: Were the French disturbed about this?

DEAN: No, I don't think so. At this stage, the important objective was to keep the Soviets out. If we, the U.S., would not have done it, the Soviets were willing to move in, as they had done in Guinea.

Q: Were the Malians getting their idea from Guinea or from Senegal?

DEAN: The French role in Senegal goes back a couple of centuries. In Mali, ex French Sudan, the French presence was much more recent. Some Senegalese had been French citizens for over 200 years, as for example in St. Louis du Senegal which goes back to Louis XV. The Malians were aware of the problems the Guineans had with the Soviets, but Sekou Toure was an African hero, a nationalist, who had dared to defy De Gaulle. The Malians did not want to offend anybody. They did not defy De Gaulle. As a matter of fact, Modibo Keita had been a Minister in the French Government in Paris - just as Houphouët-Boigny, of the Ivory Coast, had been. Both African leaders were French-speakers and French-educated. When the West Africans asked for independence, De Gaulle gave it to them. The French helped the newly independent states of West Africa and did not object to anybody else coming to support this effort. But the French colonial past and traditions surfaced from time to time. One day, the Malian Commander in chief of the Army came to the Embassy and asked if we could provide uniforms for the Malian forces. "But we want the buttons to be not American buttons, but French buttons." Our American officer in charge of the Military Assistance Mission inquired: "What do you mean, French buttons?" "Like French cavalry buttons. Not infantry buttons, but cavalry. They are kind of rounded at the top" was the answer. Our American Lieutenant Colonel explained that "Our buttons are flat" and the Malians got the American variety. Don't let me give the wrong impression. Compared to French and European assistance to Mali, our effort was modest. But it was greatly appreciated and above all, it was timely. Mali is not the most promising country as far as resources are concerned. Foreigners were not lining up to come in to exploit their oil, chrome, or whatever they may have. It was not there. Nonetheless, with our timely efforts, and above all warm personal relationship with the Malian leadership, we built a solid link with a country which became more and more democratic with time. While I was in charge, we had the visit of Edward Kennedy, who was running for the U.S. Senate that year, and Senator Church. When they saw how hard we worked in Mali and the relations we had established with Africans, they became supporters in my later assignments.

Q: I was wondering about Edward Kennedy only because in his very early years, he was a little bit difficult to handle.

DEAN: I found Edward Kennedy and Frank Church to be very outgoing and friendly. Let me give you an example. All staff of foreign missions lived at the Grand Hotel. The Russians, the Yugoslavs, the Bulgarians, the British, the Israelis, and the Americans were there. Everyone was living in the same place. The evening the Senate Delegation arrived in newly independent Mali, there was a dance at the hotel. All the foreigners danced with each other, and with Malians and other Africans from the region. It was co-existence at its

best. In conclusion, I would say that our timely, energetic presence prevented Mali from going the Guinea way. Mali remained in the French Franc Zone, part of West Africa, and with close links to the West. The U.S. had put its best foot forward and Mali did not present an opportunity for communist countries to subvert it or wean Mali away from the path of democracy. Shortly before my departure, a new American ambassador arrived. I relinquished my chargéship to Ambassador Ken Wright and I left for my next assignment a couple of months later.

Q: You left in 1961.

DEAN: Yes, but before discussing my 4-year Washington assignment, let me just say that in Bamako, I made friends for life with Robert Keeley, one of America's great ambassadors, and John Leonard who left the Foreign Service to become a priest. We are friends still today and see each other regularly. Today, Mali is not a major factor. 40 years ago, newly independent African countries were flirting with the Soviet Union because they postured as friends of the underprivileged and the poor. Guinea had received from the Soviet Union aid and advisers, but their assistance did not develop the country. Mali has become a democratic success story in West Africa. I would like to believe that our opening an Embassy in 1960 and the programs we started in conjunction with the former colonial power had something to do with it.

Q: You came back in 1961 to Washington.

DEAN: I came back in 1961 to Washington to work in the Bureau of African Affairs. I had known "Soapy" Williams when he came to Africa and I had helped him in collecting African artifacts. Prior to taking the job as Assistant Secretary for Africa, a position only created the year he was given the job, Soapy had been running for the presidency of the United States. He was a liberal Democrat. The Africans liked him and he, in turn, liked Africa.

Q: He had been Governor of Michigan.

DEAN: Right. We knew him slightly, and his wife, Nancy, from Grosse Pointe, Michigan.

Q: You were in African Affairs from 1961 until when?

DEAN: Until 1963.

Q: What was your job?

DEAN: I was Officer in charge of Togolese and Malian Affairs.

Q: Oh, yes.

DEAN: It was a time when African States established their first missions in Washington. My job included duties beyond those linked directly to Togo and Mali. For example, when new African ambassadors and their wives arrived in Washington, I often helped them to establish themselves and open a functioning office. My wife also was helpful to Mrs. Rusk and Mrs. Williams to entertain the wives of the newly arrived African ambassadors, who had quite often not been exposed to life in the capital cities of the world. I worked mostly with the French-speaking Africans. Helping the new African ambassadors to hire local French-speaking staff sometimes gave rise to difficult situations. Attractive Haitian ladies had the professional skills, spoke French and English, and knew their way around Washington. But when the new ambassador found the local female staff more attractive than their own older African wives, it could cause a family problem which ended on the desk of the State Department. Another example was trying to persuade some African servants who were brought by the ambassadors that you don't make a wood fire on the floor of the basement of your house, but you turn up the thermostat of your heating mechanism. For two years, we (my wife and I) worked with many of these new African ambassadors and their staffs in making them feel at home in Washington. During this 2-year tour, President Olympio came on an official visit to the United States, so did Sekou Toure. All official guests of the President were housed in Blair House. The lady in charge of Blair House showed the visiting President to his rooms and those for his staff. She used to say: "Mr. President, this is your room. Mrs. Lincoln slept in this bed. The room for your foreign minister is on your right. On your left, I have put the governor of the central bank of your country. Then, upstairs are some rooms for your secretaries." Sekou Toure said: "Send the foreign minister upstairs. Send my secretary to the room next to mine." You can imagine the reaction of the lady in charge of Blair House! When Olympio came on an official visit to Washington, I had the privilege of writing a paper for President Kennedy and briefing him for five minutes the day before. He asked for my name. "My name is John Gunther Dean. I was asked to brief you." The next day, I accompanied Olympio on his call on the President of the United States. As I came in, President Kennedy said: "John, so happy to see you again. You have done a wonderful job in Togo." President Kennedy gave me a big build-up, and I felt proud to serve my country. Olympio made a very good impression on all American authorities. He clearly felt at ease in an Anglo-Saxon environment. Little did we realize then that shortly thereafter both would be assassinated. Olympio was assassinated in Togo.

Q: How did we figure... What was the cause of this?

DEAN: The cause of Olympio's assassination was well known at the time. Olympio died in the arms of Ambassador Poullada, the second American ambassador to Togo. Olympio, who had his personal residence next to the U.S. Chancery, climbed over the wall to escape his assassins. The man who held the gun was a sergeant at the time. Today, he is the President of Togo and he holds the rank of General!

Q: How did we view this at the time?

DEAN: Olympio was the first African Chief of State to be assassinated. In the U.S., we were debating whether to cut off aid, or recall our ambassador. We left the decision to the African Chiefs of States who had assembled in Africa to debate what action they would take. They talked... but did nothing. We followed suit. We did nothing. We did not understand in 1963 that if we thought some sanctions should be taken, we had to be out in front in order to play a role for justice and decency. Olympio's assassination was clearly linked to local Togolese political machinations. But there may also have been some geopolitical considerations. So, since neither the Africans nor the former colonial power imposed meaningful sanctions on the very person who killed Olympio, we decided to stay out of the fray.

Q: Were we sort of waiting to see how the French were going to respond?

DEAN: After the Africans did nothing of consequence, the French recognized the new Togolese Government. In the Autumn of 1963, I was sent to the United Nations in New York to be one of the advisers to the American Delegation to the General Assembly. My job was to advise on the French-speaking African Delegates who represented 18 countries. The voting pattern of that group in 1963 at the United Nations was well-known. The French-speaking Africans (and that Included the former colonies of Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda) had agreed that they would vote all the same way. Sometimes, they discussed in private caucus how they would vote, before the official vote. In the 1963 U.N. General Assembly, the question of recognition of Mainland China and its seat in the Security Council came up. In those days, the French Delegation had the most influence with the French-speaking Africans. Hence, I decided to work with them. Ambassador Seydoux of France had agreed with Governor Stevenson, the Chief of the U.S. Delegation that France would vote against recognition in 1963. That was the last year the French voted the same way as we did. When the vote on China came up, I was sitting with the American Delegation in the big Assembly Hall. The Assistant Secretary General of the U.K. pulled a name out of the hat and that country was the first to cast its vote. This time it was Gabon. All the countries in the French African block - 18 countries - had the instructions to vote as the other French-speaking Africans. So, here was Gabon, the first one. The Assistant Secretary General called out again: “Gabon! Yes? No?” No answer. “Oui? Non?” I was watching Ambassador Seydoux of France. He gently shook his head in a negative way so that others could see it, and finally Gabon came out with a loud “No.” It was the last year France voted with the U.S. on the China issue at the U.N.

Q: China got into the United Nations much later, but we were not getting the African vote.

DEAN: Later, the African vote split, and they did not vote any longer as a block.

Q: China really did not get in until 1975.

DEAN: This, I don't know. But shortly thereafter, the French established a Diplomatic Mission in Beijing. Then, around 1971 or so, France sent its first ambassador, which I

will discuss later since the incumbent played a major role in Cambodia. At the U.N. I came again across corruption. I was asked to approach certain delegates to vote a certain way in return for financial favors. Since this was not my job, I would refer the chap to somebody else whose job it was to buy votes. Unfortunately, the delegates of the poorer countries were particularly vulnerable and targeted.

Q: We had somebody with whom you could put them in touch.

DEAN: All major countries at the U.N. had people whose job it is to find the "shortcomings" of individual delegates.

Q: I am told by people who claim to know that when Sukarno or somebody like that would appear on a state visit, you would look around for the stewardesses or what have you. The State Department would say: "We don't do that," but they would contact a DC police officer who had connections. There would be a certain accommodation made.

DEAN: I have stayed out of private lives, both those of my American colleagues and those of foreign dignitaries. I have stayed away from using the frailties of human beings as pressure to obtain a diplomatic success. Also, different cultures have different customs. For example, in the Middle East it's very common to give a new arrival a small present in order to get into his or her graces. This could be interpreted as an effort to undermine your integrity. When a foreign businessman is sent to Lake Tahoe and he gets a long week-end at a lovely lodge where he finds company and money to play at the casino, all this at the expense of the inviting company, is that just showing hospitality to a foreigner or is it a way of getting at his integrity?

Q: It's a way of getting at his integrity.

DEAN: There are two different ways of interpreting the same facts. In our example of Lake Tahoe, one way is to consider it corruption. The other is to count it as an essential expense in the interest of the company. Let us return to the United Nations. Some of the African delegates come to New York and are tempted by the fast social life of the city. Their financial resources are limited. Am I their moral shepherd? I don't think so. But there is a difference between a delegate who is a stranger in the U.S. and an American Foreign Service Officer who represents America. Basically, most Americans want their representatives - elected or appointed - to behave in a way to avoid controversy and to set a good example.

Q: We all work on this two-track thing. If you take too high a hand, you are not accomplishing what you are supposed to.

DEAN: If it is to get the delegate's vote. I would just pass him or her on to a colleague. I remember a specific example. The new-born daughter of one of the Chiefs of Missions was going to be baptized. He made it known that he did not have the funds to decorate the chapel with flowers. I did find somebody who provided the needed flowers. While I was

at the U.N. in 1963, an unforgettable event occurred: President Kennedy was assassinated in Texas, I remember I was in the Delegates Lounge having lunch with my French counterpart. Mrs. Pandit Nehru, former President of the United Nations General Assembly, sat on the other side of the room. Somebody from her table came over and said: "Is it true that the President has been shot?" Later, I went into the United Nations General Assembly hall and there Governor Stevenson accepted the condolences of the Chiefs of Missions accredited to the United Nations. The sadness, the silence, the seriousness of the foreign diplomats, reflected the shock of the world to the news but it also showed the respect and perhaps even the affection for the United States and what it stands for. Everybody realized this tragedy also had an Impact on the lives of others in the world. Shortly afterwards, we all flew to Washington to help taking care of the dignitaries who came for the funeral.

Q: We will pick this up in 1963. You finished your time with African Affairs and the United Nations.

DEAN: Then, I was assigned to NATO Affairs, in the European Bureau of the State Department.

***

Q: Today is September 7, 2000. John, let me have the dates of your assignment to the NATO Desk.

DEAN: From 1963 to 1965. In that section, formally known as the Bureau for Regional Political and Military Affairs, I had an outstanding stellar cast of colleagues. My immediate boss was George Vest. Roz Ridgway worked with me, Ron Spiers was Deputy Director. He later became Under Secretary for Political Affairs at the United Nations. David Popper was the Chief. My job was to backstop the Political Advisers Committee of NATO.

Q: I would like to get the dates.

DEAN: I was there from December 1963 until July of 1965. Then, I left to go to the Embassy in Paris.

Q: Could you tell me a little bit about some of the people you were dealing with? Let's talk about George Vest.

DEAN: George Vest was one of the finest Foreign Service officers I have ever met. He was the head of the political side. Both Roz Ridgway and I were working for George. George was a wonderful boss, and Roz a superb colleague. George was not only an excellent Foreign Service Officer, but he cared about the Foreign Service. I came across George again toward the end of my Foreign Service career. He had been Director General of the Foreign Service.

Q: He was Director General later.

DEAN: Yes, later, and he was also Assistant Secretary for Europe for a short time, and had some differences with Dr. Kissinger.

Q: He was actually spokesman for a little while until he found he just did not have the stomach.

DEAN: It's people like George Vest and Roz Ridgway, bright, able, and decent that made that assignment interesting and enjoyable.

Q: Could you talk about Roz Ridgway at that time a bit?

DEAN: Before her assignment to Washington, Roz had been Political Officer in Italy. She had a very perceptive mind and wrote beautifully. At the time, she was single; we often lunched together and talked. We talked a lot about what we wanted to do in life, and that made for a wonderful relationship. She later had a brilliant career in the Foreign Service.

Q: This was 1963-1965. Given a certain general over in France, this was a very interesting time.

DEAN: Yes. General de Gaulle is a very complicated person. It was a time when we were discussing already then the one-pillar versus the two-pillar system in the NATO command structure. Our military insisted on the one-pillar system, i.e. the U.S. remaining the sole power holding the top military job in NATO. As seen through U.S. eyes, in these early days, NATO had the U.S. in charge, and the other countries working together under U.S. leadership. Even then, there were people on both sides of the Atlantic who were suggesting that the time had come to have two pillars, i.e. that this alliance would have a North American pillar and a European pillar, with the top military positions divided up between military officers from both sides. The overall commander would remain American. It did not happen. My job was NATO's Political Advisers Committee. They met once a week in NATO Headquarters in Europe. It was not a discussion, but most of the time a briefing by Americans on subjects of direct concern to the alliance. Only rarely was there an input by other NATO countries. If, for example, a particularly difficult situation in the eastern Mediterranean was in the news, I would go to the folks in the Department of State in charge of this issue who would provide me with a briefing and action paper. After reediting it for use by NATO, I would send it to our Political Adviser or to the U.S. Ambassador to NATO to be used at the meeting.

Q: These Political Advisers were known as POLADs.

DEAN: Yes. It was more of a briefing than a discussion.

Q: How did this develop? Was this just, you might say, American dominance, arrogance, or lack of interest by other countries?

DEAN: The entire NATO establishment goes back to 1950. It was the time of absolute American supremacy. Therefore, people were delighted to have this American umbrella. As we developed NATO, some Europeans were put in high positions, but the entire decision-making process, and the military command structure, pretty much remained in American hands. We felt that we had the responsibility to bring subjects up for discussion, and we also proposed courses of action.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about the briefing business. Where were you getting your thoughts? Who was supplying you to put the prose together?

DEAN: I would get suggestions from the American Mission to NATO regarding the subjects to be placed on the Agenda. With this list, I would go to the various bureaus in the Department of State to obtain their briefing papers, or at least a paper on how we see the situation. That was then sent by telegram to the POLADs who either circulated it or discussed it. George Vest, who had been very close to one of the Secretary Generals of NATO, knew exactly how it should be presented. The other part of my job was to backstop the NATO Science Committee. My interest in Science and Technology stems from that period. One of my duties was to accompany the top American Delegate to the NATO Science Committee meetings: Nobel Prize Winner Isidor Rabi. He needed a Political Adviser like he needed a hole in the head. Professor Rabi won his prize in physics. He played a significant role during World War II in the development of our atomic bomb. Since I had an uncle who was also a Nobel Laureate in physics, Otto Stern, Rabi accepted me and took me along as baggage. But I did begin to understand that the NATO Science Committee discussed issues which were just coming onto the horizon: lasers, environment, atomic fall-out, etc. When I was traveling with Professor Rabi, he explained to me how lasers worked and what they can do. His NATO counterparts were also highly interesting people, especially the scientists from England, France, Italy, and Germany. They often discussed the growing role of Science and Technology in foreign affairs. These prominent scientists would also discuss, at fabulous dinners with excellent wines and brandy, new scientific and technical developments and how these inventions would affect the future of the world. It was a privilege just to listen to people like Sir Zolly Zuckerman discussing how the world was going to change as a result of these inventions.

Q: During this time, as I recall it, lawyers came on the scene, and there was great concern because the Soviets seemed to be putting an inordinate concentration on laser technology. These were considered to be killer lasers that could knock down satellites. Battle theories of lasers and all that.

DEAN: All science and technology creations have a dual use. Back in 2001, I had five operations on my eye. Most of them were executed by laser. You can use the laser to destroy tissue and to heal the retina. You can also use lasers on heavy metals. You can

also use lasers for war. Hence, lasers have a dual use. Nearly all chemical inventions have a dual use: to heal or destroy. The discussions among NATO scientists were not geared exclusively on how the Russians would use new inventions but how these Inventions would impact on the world in general.

Q: What were the discussions about information technology? I'm talking about computers. It was still in its infancy.

DEAN: I did not attend these. I think there was discussion outside the conference room on this subject. There was some attention placed on remote sensing. At first, remote sensing was an American monopoly. The Russians also had satellites in space, i.e. seeing from the sky what is happening on our small earth. The technology got so refined that these sensing satellites could even read the license plate on a car from the sky. This technology also played a role in explaining what happened to the plane of the late President of Pakistan, Zia al-Haq. As long as we had the monopoly of knowing what was going on - and above all our interpretation of photography - other nations had to rely on American technology. For example, is there a build-up of forces in a certain area? From this remote sensing image, you could see two divisions being amassed with armor and tanks. At least, that was our Interpretation of the Images.

As long as we had the monopoly, other countries in NATO were dependent on us. As time went on, other NATO countries began to develop similar remote sensing capability. Shortly before the end of the 20th century, the French and German governments got together to help finance an advanced French satellite system to compete with the American system, thereby breaking the monopoly of interpreting remote sensing intelligence. That is of importance because the interpretations may differ and hence the course of remedial action would differ. Perhaps we must all accept that even within NATO, member countries wish to remain in charge of their own destiny and not be dependent on vital intelligence interpretations coming from the U.S. alone.

Q: Was it not a fact that a great many of the European young scientists went to the United States for their higher graduate education?

DEAN: Yes, a lot of people came. But no one country has a monopoly on brains... The people came for graduate work to the United States because our educational system at the time was well developed and advanced, after World War II. These countries had to play catch-up ball, and sending young scientists to the U.S. was one way of doing it. Even the British turned to the U.S. universities and research centers. Before the war, Cambridge University was one of the leading centers of learning for Science and Technology. Now, many young British switch to MIT, Berkeley, or other educational centers in the U.S. This is not only true for the European countries, but for the rest of the world as well. But the NATO structure in those years was basically an American show. Perhaps, if more responsibility had been passed on in the 1960s to the Europeans, the NATO structure today, in the 21st century, would be somewhat different. Would there be a greater

willingness by the Europeans to cooperate? Anyway, in 2002, NATO underwent a major change with the association of Russia with that body.

Q: Of course, John, you are talking as a diplomat. We understand these things. But as a practical politician in the United States, it was very difficult to continue to keep American troops over in Europe. You had your friend, Mike Mansfield, that kept talking about withdrawing troops and all. One way we can toss the raw meat to a reluctant Congress is, we have control of these American troops and other troops in NATO.

DEAN: Let me put it very bluntly. We do not keep American troops overseas for other peoples' interest. It is in our own national interest to do certain things. The best example is the presence of American troops in Okinawa. We have troops in Okinawa not because the Japanese want them there, but because this happens to suit our objectives as well as certain Japanese policies. But, usually, troops and planes stationed on foreign soil are not popular with the population of the host country. A good example is the request by the German Government to the U.S. Air Force to stop overflying certain parts of Bavaria. There is nothing wrong with the United States, as the major power in the world, having stationed U.S. troops in various parts of the world for strategic global interests. I don't think we should justify all foreign bases or troop presence abroad as doing a favor to others. At best, it is a shared, common goal.

Q: I know, but it is a political battle that has been constantly waged and it's getting more and more difficult to defend. We are talking about people who really are sensitive to foreign affairs, to costs, and they ask: why not bring our boys home?

DEAN: Unless we can explain to our legislators that our troops are overseas for our own national interests, we won't get any funding from Congress very long. Our diplomats have a more difficult time convincing some foreign governments they should permit our forces to remain in these bases despite the popular unrest to get U.S. troops withdrawn from their soil. In short, if we want to keep troops overseas, it's because we think it is in our own overall interest.

Q: This is understood, but not necessarily within our political structure.

DEAN. I agree. But the influence of Foreign Service officers on Senators, on Congressmen, is very limited. Legislators are swayed by domestic, local considerations. How do you explain to our Congress that in a changing world, the U.S. position must also change. When we started NATO in 1950, the U.S. was the all-powerful sole victor coming out of the Second World War, and we made the other members of NATO "partners." Building up our NATO allies as co-decision makers and partners has been the role of U.S. diplomacy over the last 50 years as the NATO alliance changed in character. What is wrong with having an Italian commander for the NATO Mediterranean fleet home ported in Naples? Why must it be an American admiral? If we want control over more of our ships, we send them to another port, for example Alexandria, Egypt. We put an American admiral in charge. Except it won't be a NATO fleet. There are ways of

working with NATO as an organization of mutual interest to North America and the Western European countries, while at the same time keeping certain national forces outside the NATO framework.

Q: Back to 1965, when you got there, what was the situation in France regarding NATO? Were we seeing the handwriting on the wall? Were we getting ready for De Gaulle to say "Move out?"

DEAN: Our relationship with De Gaulle goes back to 1940. When De Gaulle came to power in 1944, he really did not have a lot of U.S. support. During the Second World War, De Gaulle had the support of Winston Churchill but not of Roosevelt. De Gaulle was a nationalist. At one point, during the war, Roosevelt supported General Giraud and not De Gaulle. Some Americans found De Gaulle too nationalistic and not enough of a supporter of the over-all goals of the United States during the war. As Churchill put it: De Gaulle was the heaviest cross he had to bear. The Cross of Lorraine was the emblem of the Free French. In my opinion, De Gaulle understood power probably better than most. He made his major contribution - and it angered Americans as well at the time - when just before the Allied landing in Normandy, the Free French parachuted people into France. When the American, Canadian, or British generals landed, these agents of De Gaulle said: "In the name of the Republic of France, I thank you for helping us liberate my country, I am the representative of the legal French Government." During the war, we had prepared at Camp Richie in Maryland, just as we had done for Italy, a military government of occupation for France. We had printed occupation money, and prepared French-speaking officials to administer the country. When our people landed in Normandy, unlike Italy, we encountered a French Government which had taken charge and voided any need for an allied "occupation." Every move by the U.S., De Gaulle always asked himself "What does this mean for France?" I find this quite normal for a foreign Chief of State to defend his country's long-term interest. It was frustrating for others. The French - and above all De Gaulle - thought that they had a role to play in the world and they made known their views. This approach led, in 1966, to De Gaulle asking NATO to leave France, because he no longer thought it was in France's long-term interest to have foreign troops on French soil. This again changed when the European Union came of age.

Q: In 1965, how did we view the Soviet threat?

DEAN: At the time, U.S. foreign policy centered on containing Soviet expansionism. With this threat, Congress voted funds for the U.S. military establishment - and later for stationing - missiles on European soil.

Q: This was in the 1980s.

DEAN: The stationing of U.S. missiles came in the late 1970s. I was then Ambassador to Denmark. In 1966, the request by De Gaulle to move NATO out of France came quite suddenly and unexpectedly.

Q: Did we see any particular reason for the Soviets to attack Western Europe at that point? Obviously, this is what NATO was technically about, but did we see this as being a possibility? In talking to people over the lunch table or military people, how did they see the possibility that the Soviets might attack us? Be very frank.

DEAN: I am not an expert on Soviet policy. On NATO, I had a very narrow responsibility, preparing our delegation for POLADs meetings and the NATO Science Committee. I am certainly not qualified to discuss the question of the Soviet Union and the perceived threat, real or imaginary. All I knew was that both sides felt they had to be prepared militarily, because mutual distrust prevailed. The examples of Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and the building of the Berlin Wall, were a clear indication that the Soviet Union wanted to maintain or expand its ideology and control in Eastern Europe.

Q: In your meetings, did you get involved with delegations from other countries, or was it just the Science Delegations and that's it?

DEAN: I did not attend the POLADs meetings, just the Science Committee. It led to my assignment to the American Embassy in Paris as the regional expert on East Asia. In 1965, Southeast Asia was one of the confrontation areas in the world. I welcomed my new assignment in Paris.

Q: So you were there from 1965...

DEAN: From 1965 to 1969.

Q: An interesting time. When you arrived in Paris in 1965, what was the political situation in France?

DEAN: Again, keep in mind that my assignment was East Asia Affairs. I was not reporting on domestic political affairs. While I was in Paris, during the 1968 upheaval, I was as much a spectator as anybody else. I was not involved in predicting it or writing about it. My main job in Paris, from 1965 to 1969, was dealing with Southeast Asia and how the French could help us in a situation they knew well. Most of my time was spent on Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

Q: President Johnson at just about that time was beginning to introduce ground troops.

DEAN: Yes. At first, we only had advisers to the Vietnamese military and civilian authorities, but we were moving towards sending American troops. We were very interested in talking with the French because they had decades of experience in dealing with the countries of Indochina. My main French contact was the Director for Asian Affairs in the Quai d'Orsay, the French Foreign Office, Etienne Manac'h. He was a most interesting person. He was far from being anti-American. He told me one day, with some sentimentality, how well he remembered when President Woodrow Wilson arrived in France in 1918 and how he, as a young boy, stood there waving a flag welcoming the

American “liberator.” He vividly remembered the arrival of the first American troops in France in 1917. “Lafayette, here we are.” Manac'h considered himself all his life a friend of America. Born in Brittany, Manac'h remained loyal to De Gaulle and spent most of the war years as a professor at the French Lycee in Istanbul, Turkey. During my years in Paris, I went to his office every week. I was not a high ranking member of the Embassy, but he, as Chief of Asian Affairs, always received me with open arms. He even introduced me to the Foreign Minister of France, Monsieur Debré. Perhaps my ability to speak French and relay precisely what he told me was the reason for the friendly reception at the Quai d'Orsay. My lengthy reports on what Manac'h told me about Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam are still available at the State Department. France had maintained a Diplomatic Mission in Hanoi and the French also passed messages from the North Vietnamese to us. At this stage, the French still had a major influence in Laos and Cambodia. A few years later, Manac'h became the first Ambassador from France to Communist China. De Gaulle had confidence in him. Manac'h played a major role again at that post. Years later, when I was Ambassador to Cambodia, Manac'h transmitted my messages to Sihanouk when the Prince was living in Beijing from 1970 to 1975. Manac'h was the person who helped bring together President Giscard d'Estaing and President Ford, in December 1974, to entice Sihanouk to return to Cambodia to put an end to the war. It failed. But in the years 1965-69 we made friends in the French Foreign Office who tried to find ways to help us in the Vietnam imbroglio in which we found ourselves. We also started in Paris exchanging ideas through Manac'h with the North Vietnamese Delegation in Paris headed by Mai Van Bo.

Q: When you say you started negotiations...

DEAN: We had, thanks to Monsieur Manac'h, direct access to the North Vietnamese Delegation in Paris, one day, Manac'h said to me: “I would like you to meet the Editor in Chief of “L'Humanité” (this was the leading French communist newspaper). I think he can help you get some of the mail out from Hanoi written by American prisoners.” I went to see the Editor of L'Humanité, Monsieur André, who was living in one of the suburbs of Paris. He had two small apartments put together into one large one. On the wall, he had magnificent Picassos. Monsieur André said: “A French journalist by the name of Madeleine Riffaud is proceeding to Hanoi. Do you want her to bring back any messages from American prisoners?” I said: “Yes, by all means it's very important that we hear from them and know what's going on at the Hanoi Hilton” (the place where our American prisoners were held). She went and came back with many letters written by American prisoners in Hanoi. These messages I was able to pass on to the families in the United States. Among them, was a tape with pictures of who is today, Senator McCain. At the time, McCain was Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy Air Corps and had been shot down over North Vietnam. He had parachuted into a lake in Hanoi, and in the landing had broken both of his arms. Among the pictures, was one of McCain holding up both arms to show his bandages. Ms. Riffaud brought back that picture and it was taken immediately to his father, Admiral McCain, who was Commander of the NATO fleet in London at the time. Manac'h facilitated these contacts. He also facilitated contacts for me. He was telling me what the Representative of North Vietnam in Paris, Mr. Mat Van Bo, was

saying. (A book on his Paris days was published by him in the 1990s in Vietnamese.) Much of what we learnt about Hanoi, before the Paris Peace Talks, came through Mr. Manac'h. Mai Van Bo was in one room, and I was in another room. Manac'h would go forth and back to find out what was the response to a specific issue. For example, in very early 1968, I came back from one of these meetings and wrote a cable saying: "I understand that the North Vietnamese are agreeable to holding talks on Vietnam in Paris." Whereupon. I received a thundering reply from Mr. Rostow "We will never go to Paris." Since in this exchange, I was just a reporter, I took Mr. Rostow's message back to Mr. Manac'h. "You tell me one thing, and look what I get back from the U.S. National Security Adviser." He said, "Don't worry, it has already been decided between President Johnson and President de Gaulle that the meetings will take place in Paris."

Q: A little background. You being the contact person, obviously, this was of tremendous national interest. Who was briefing you and telling you what you could do?

DEAN: Nobody, because I was mostly a channel of communications. In the Embassy hierarchy, I was in the Political Section under the supervision of the Political Counselor Richard Funkhouser. But Ambassador Bohlen had instructed me that on specific issues, I should report directly to him.

Q: I have to mention that that was an extremely able Embassy at the time.

DEAN: The DCM was Bob McBride who later went as U.S. Ambassador to Zaire. Serving with Ambassador Bohlen was one of the great experiences of my career. One day. Ambassador Bohlen called me into his office and said: "John, we've got too many Johns around here. I am going to call you 'Josh'." From then on, I was 'Josh.' In early 1968, it became apparent that what Monsieur Manac'h had told me about the convening in Paris of a conference to find a solution to the Vietnam conflict was about to happen. Ambassador Bohlen had near his office a "scrambler phone," that is a phone that was secure and which was used nearly exclusively by him if he had to discuss a sensitive issue with the Secretary of State. In those days, it was Dean Rusk. Ambassador Bohlen suggested that I could use it, if needed, regarding the arrangements for the Vietnam Conference. But before I ever used it, I got asked one day to come quickly to the Ambassador's office because a person in the Department of State wanted to talk to me. When I picked up the receiver, I heard a male voice saying that "Secretary Rusk wanted to speak with you." Next, I heard Dean Rusk instructing me to report back to him, by phone, when the location of the site for the conference was discussed in Paris by the French with the North Vietnamese. Shortly after that telephone conversation, I talked to Monsieur Manac'h at the French Foreign Office and said: "I understand that there is an agreement on holding a conference in Paris, but do you have any specific site in mind? Manac'h left the room and went next door where the North Vietnamese Representative. Mai Van Bo, was waiting for him. Four different sites were under consideration. They were in different parts of Paris. Among them was the old Majestic Hotel, which was the place where the Peace Talks were held. With this information in hand, I returned to the Embassy and telephoned Secretary Rusk's office. Since I was passed on directly to the

Secretary of State, I was too nervous to sit down and stood up during the entire telephone conversation. I discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each site, and passed on Manac'h's recommendation that the Majestic Hotel site appeared to be the best location for all parties. Mai Van Bo also agreed; so the site was settled.

Then, the question arose whether there were going to be two delegations or four delegations? This was an important decision. Were the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong of South Vietnam one delegation? Were the Americans and the South Vietnamese Government one side? Or were there four separate delegations? The decision had political, legal, and practical ramifications. The seating around the table would reflect that decision. I want to give credit to a colleague of mine because it was my colleague Jack Perry, who came up with a solution of the seating at the negotiating table, which left the issue open to interpretation. He said: "You know, you ought to have one big table and just fill the whole room with that table. Also, you need separate entry doors. One group enters through one door and sits on that side of the table, the other group enters through the other door and sits on the other side of the table; this fuzzes the question whether you have two sides or four separate parties. Manac'h went himself to the French Government store - house to find a table big enough to fill the room - and the conference room had two separate doors. Since there was a little bit of space between the table and the wall, two small secretarial tables were introduced, one on each side to divide the room into two halves. In this way, clearly, there were two sides. The South Vietnamese Government sat on the same side as the Americans, and the Viet Cong sat on the side of the North Vietnamese. The bathrooms were not separate. As a matter of fact, they could be used in a way of permitting negotiators to meet discreetly to hold confidential brief exchanges.

Q: This is always a problem as we get more women into diplomacy. I can't tell you how many times I have talked about personnel assignments, issues being taken care of, during the pee break.

DEAN: The U.S. Delegation was headed by Ambassador Harriman and Secretary Vance. Phil Habib came with them as the top Foreign Service Officer.

Q: Vance was not a Secretary, was he?

DEAN: He had been Deputy Secretary of Defense before that time. The lowest man on this delegation was Richard Holbrooke. In this delegation of 13 people, Richard Holbrooke and I often were the sole dissenters. We were negotiations-oriented. Since I was in liaison with the French, I looked to the French to help us find compromises acceptable to both sides. Richard went on to have a wonderful career in the 1990s.

Q: He is today Ambassador to the United Nations. He was quite junior in 1968.

DEAN: He was the lowest man on the totem pole. When Phil Habib arrived in May 1968, he stayed in my apartment for three weeks until he got his own lodging. Phil and I became close friends. In parts, I turned over my contacts to him. He became the American

contact with Mai Van Bo and Manac'h. Phil spoke good French. He was one of the best and most decent officers in the Foreign Service. In 1992, I flew over to Washington especially from France to attend the memorial service at the National Cathedral for Phil Habib. I don't want to anticipate, but let me go back to something which was equally important. This occurred in January 1967. Robert Kennedy came to Paris and John Gunther Dean was made Control Officer for Robert Kennedy's visit.

Q: Robert Kennedy at that time was Senator from New York.

DEAN: He had been elected Senator from New York. In 1967, he was considered to be the front-runner for the Democrats in the Presidential election. My job during this visit to Paris consisted in picking him up at the airport and accompanying him in his official calls. While in Paris, he also received a tremendous amount of fan mail. He came with his friend, Bill vanden Heuvel, who later served a short time as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva. As Control Officer, one of my jobs was to answer the mail for his signature. When he made official calls, I went along as his interpreter. One day, he asked to see the French Minister of Culture, Andre Malraux, who had just returned from seeing Mao Zedong in Beijing. We had a two-hour conversation where I was the notetaker and interpreter of that conversation. Robert Kennedy was very interested in what was going on in Beijing, what Mao Zedong was like, etc... They had a long conversation. (As I had mentioned earlier, I had met Andre Malraux back in Mali, and indeed he was very gracious in remembering that event.) It took several hours to write the reporting telegram on that meeting. Then, Marshal Juin, one of the great French military leaders of the Second World War, died. His coffin was lying in state at Les Invalides which is the 17th century building housing the military trophies and history of France, built under Louis XIV. Napoleon's tomb is also located there. Kennedy said: Let's go and pay our respects to Marshal Juin. Get me a wreath with the inscription “From the Kennedys.” The American Embassy's administrative staff got us the wreath. With the wreath in hand, we drove to Les Invalides. Indian file, we advanced to the coffin, as French soldiers lined in parade dress the path to the coffin. I carried the wreath. Kennedy was in front of me. Then, I gave the wreath to the Senator, and the Senator gave the wreath to a French military officer with whom he advanced to the coffin draped with a big French flag. The Senator put the wreath on the coffin, kneeled down, and sobbed. It was very dramatic. The television was grinding away at a mile a minute. The many spectators were stunned by the gesture of sympathy by this prominent American political leader. The Kennedys came often to France. Robert Kennedy's mother, Rose, had come to Paris nearly every year. The French public was clearly impressed by Robert Kennedy's friendly attitude toward the French people and their leaders. As we returned to the Embassy, the Senator received a phone call from the French Foreign Office that he should come over for a meeting. At the encounter, there were four people in the room. On the French side was Mr. Manac'h, Director for Asian Affairs, On the American side, were Senator Kennedy, Bill vanden Heuvel, Kennedy's friend, and Dean as the notetaker. Mr. Manac'h said that the French had received three days ago a message from the Vietnamese which was being held for this meeting, at the request of the French Foreign Minister Michel Debré. It was what was then called the first peace signal from Hanoi. The

message from Ho Chi Minh was: “If you stop the bombing of North Vietnam, we will come to the negotiating table.” The date of our memorable meeting was the end of January 1967. The French Government wanted Senator Kennedy to transmit this message to the President of the United States. We are one year before any discussion about peace talks in Paris. I went back to the Embassy and realized that Senator Kennedy had been given an important message. I wrote up the conversation as a top-secret telegram. Before showing my draft to Senator Kennedy, I went back to see Monsieur Manac'h again. It was not easy to see him. He was terribly busy. I said: “Would you please read this? Is this what you told the Senator?” He said: “Yes, it's an accurate report of what I said.” I showed the telegram to Senator Kennedy at 6:00 pm and he agreed to having it sent. The Senator returned the next day to Washington, and I flew to Egypt with my wife for a ten day holiday. Before leaving, the Senator wrote me a brief note; “John, if there is anything I can ever do for you - officially or personally - don't hesitate to let me know. Bob.” Prior to the meeting with Kennedy, I had worked with a couple of very senior American personalities, one of whom was Mr. George Ball, who was interested in contacts with the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. They had representatives in Algeria and in Egypt. I had also worked with Senator Claiborne Pell, who was the only former Foreign Service Officer in the Senate in recent times. The latter wanted to meet Mai Van Bo when Pell had come to Paris on a personal visit. This happened in 1966-1967.

In early February 1967, my wife and I went to Cairo. From there, we took a boat to Luxor. While in Luxor at the hotel, I received a phone call: “John, your name is on the front pages of the newspapers. Your telegram reporting on Senator Kennedy's meeting at which he received, via the French, the “signal” from Hanoi, is on the front page of “The New York Times.” You had better get back to Paris because apparently the President is angry about the leak, and you are being blamed for the leak. You have a very good chance of being thrown out of the Foreign Service.” I said: “How can I be blamed? I left Paris, went to Cairo, and I'm now in Luxor. I was not even around to leak anything.” But I did fly back immediately to Paris. Fortunately, I had a fabulous Ambassador, Ambassador Chip Bohlen who was in Washington at the time. When this story broke, he defended me. The event is also described by Schlesinger in his book on Robert Kennedy. The newspaper reported that upon his return to Washington, Robert Kennedy went to the White House to brief the President on the 'peace signal' from Hanoi. President Johnson is alleged to have accused Robert Kennedy that the State Department was particularly friendly to him. The “peace signal” in January 1967 was the beginning of the fallout between President Johnson and the potential Presidential contender, Robert Kennedy. Fortunately, Ambassador Bohlen was back in Washington on consultation and he defended me. President Johnson was quoted as saying: “Who is that fellow, John Gunther Dean? Fire him!” Ambassador Bohlen pointed out that it could not be Dean because he left Paris immediately after Kennedy's departure from Paris and he was in Egypt at the time the story broke.” The leaking of the telegram reporting on the Hanoi signal was traced back to one of the Assistant Secretaries in State, and that it was done for political reasons.

But this was not the only time I was in hot waters during my duties with the U.S. Delegation to the Vietnam Peace Negotiations. One day, perhaps toward the end of 1968,

in one of my conversations with Monsieur Manac'h, I asked quite innocently: “Monsieur Le Directeur, why don't you help us to extricate ourselves from this situation in Vietnam?” I also alluded to my years in Indochina and the fact that the French also had been unable to cope with the Vietnamese drive for unification and Independence. Now, the U.S. was more and more involved in the quagmire. After that meeting, Monsieur Manac'h went to see the French Foreign Minister, Michel Debré, who was close to de Gaulle, and explained that Dean had suggested that the French help the U.S. to extricate themselves from the Vietnam imbroglio. Later that same evening, Cy Vance got a phone call from the French Foreign Minister to come and see him. When confronted by Debré with Dean's remarks made to Manac'h, Secretary Vance made it very clear that Dean was not authorized to put forward any ideas to the French authorities and that Dean had been speaking on his own. I laugh about this incident sometimes, and wonder whether the idea of a “brokered solution” in 1968 would not have been better than what actually happened. I continued working with Manac'h until my departure from Paris in the summer of 1969. I would like to say a word about Manac'h's deputy, Charles Malo. He is the only French ambassador who served twice as Ambassador to China. Since we were both young at the time, we enjoyed a close professional relationship. I have seen him again after our retirement from the Foreign Service. Malo is today one of the few people alive who could bear out some of the events I cite in connection with the Peace Talks. Whenever Manac'h was not available, I met with Monsieur Malo at the Quai d'Orsay.

Q: Did you find the French critical of the U.S. getting bogged down in Vietnam?

DEAN: Not at this stage. A few years ago, I appeared on French television. It's one of the shows devoted to the discussion of history. It's entitled “The Meaning of History.” I was asked about the American involvement in Vietnam and Cambodia, and specifically whether the French did a better job in Indochina than the U.S. I replied that I did not think anybody did a better job or a worse job. Rather, the mistake was made in 1945 by all western countries, including France and the United States, who did not recognize that the time for overt political colonialism in Asia had come to an end. In 1954, Mendes France tried to extricate France from Indochina with the help of the Geneva Conference. Unfortunately, the U.S. followed in French footsteps and the U.S. also could not defeat Vietnamese nationalism and drive for unification. If anybody was wrong, I think it was the West for not seeing early enough the rise of nationalism around the world and the drive for an Asian identity.

Q: Being with this delegation that came at this time, what were you picking up from the attitude of Harriman, Vance, and Habib? What did they expect? How were things going? What did they want?

DEAN: I think most of these personalities wanted to find an honorable end to the confrontation. The military briefer every day was Colonel Paul Gorman, later four-star General, and one of the brainiest military officers I ever encountered. When I was in Vietnam in 1970, he was in charge of the 101st Airborne Division. In the course of his briefing, I would hear him say: “Our bombers hit a shipyard.” Averell Harriman would

inject, “What do you mean, shipyard? A couple of guys hulling out a few tree trunks, that's what you are talking about.” There was certainly a will to work with the North Vietnamese. Both Harriman and Vance tried to find ways of meeting with the North Vietnamese, away from the limelight, in efforts to find a mutually agreeable formula. But it takes two to tango. In November 1968, delegation members and certain embassy officials were all at breakfast at the Ambassador's residence when election results were coming in. By that time, Ambassador Bohlen had been replaced by Sergeant Shriver, President Kennedy's brother-in-law. The results showed Nixon elected and Humphrey had lost. The negotiating delegation appointed by a Democrat, President Johnson, knew that meant the end of their tenure. When Cabot Lodge arrived, I continued my liaison work with the French, but the action was between the U.S. and the Vietnamese Delegation. Although Kissinger and Le Duc Tho received the Nobel Prize for their work in Paris, the meetings did not lead to a negotiated solution. The Paris Peace Talks led to the Vietnamization of the war effort: withdrawing of U.S. troops and letting the South Vietnamese face the North by themselves. As everybody knows, the war ended with the collapse of the South Vietnamese Government some years later, and the unification of Vietnam under Hanoi control.

Q: In 1975.

DEAN: Yes, But back in the summer of 1969, I received word that I should proceed to Saigon to work in the political section, as deputy to the chief of that key section.

Q: Who was this?

DEAN: Martin Hertz, later U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria. The State Department decided to give me a year off to recharge my batteries. I said: “I will go back to Indochina next year, if you so desire.” I kept my word. Remember, I had spent 5 years in Indochina, from 1953 to 1958. Few people had served in the same area as long as I did. I had also spent four years in Paris working essentially on Indochina. I was tired and I wanted a change. I was sent to the Center for International Affairs at Harvard, the program headed by Robert Bowie. That was to be my seventh year at Harvard.

Q: Before we talk about that. I realize you said you were a bystander on domestic French political events. What did your fellow officers at the Embassy in May and June of 1968 say about the events of that time in Paris? How were they seeing these events? What were you getting from your wife?

DEAN: Nothing from my wife. Basically, my wife has always kept out of politics. As I told you, we got to Paris in 1965. You ask about NATO and De Gaulle's decision to have NATO move out of Paris, when the unexpected request came for NATO to move out of France to another country, the Belgian Government advanced a site in southern Belgium: Bauffe-Chievre. During the First World War, my wife's grandmother's chateau had been requisitioned by the Germans. In 1940, the German Luftwaffe made the same place its western headquarters and built a runway for aircraft on the adjoining land. When in 1945

the chateau was destroyed by Allied bombing, the Belgian Government took over the land, and in 1966 offered the site to NATO. The offer was accepted.

Q: You mentioned that before, about the property having been owned by your wife's family.

DEAN: Yes. That became the NATO Headquarters. Not only in Europe, but generally, my wife stayed completely out of politics wherever we were.

Q: What was the reaction within the Embassy? First, let's think about having France kick NATO out of France.

DEAN: The Officers at the Embassy usually worked at that time with their French counterparts. There was no anti-French feeling. We had many common goals with the French, but obviously every country has its own national interests. They do not always coincide. There was no fear or distrust of the French. We knew that De Gaulle had his agenda which might differ on certain issues with U.S. objectives. Ambassador Bohlen had been at the Yalta Conference and De Gaulle had not attended this conference where major decisions were made on the shape of post-war Europe. It was one of De Gaulle's great regrets not having been invited to that meeting. Was it Yalta or something else, De Gaulle had a tremendous respect for Ambassador Bohlen. Few people knew more about De Gaulle's relationship with Ambassador Bohlen than Robert Barrett, who was once my deputy in Lebanon years later. In 1968, he was Ambassador Bohlen's personal assistant. De Gaulle listened to Bohlen, and Bohlen listened to De Gaulle. It was two heavy-weights exchanging views. De Gaulle, who usually was quite protocol conscious, never turned down Bohlen's request for a meeting - day or night, weekends or Sundays. The two men understood each other. That does not mean they always agreed, but they could work together very well. Ambassador Bohlen was a consummate professional, in 1969, De Gaulle had a referendum on decentralization of the French administration. His proposal was rejected by the electorate. He resigned and died in 1970. So, Bohlen's ambassadorship corresponded to the closing days of De Gaulle's life. De Gaulle respected professionalism and he respected the role Bohlen played in the Roosevelt Administration, where he was one of the experts on the Soviet Union.

Q: Was the Embassy at all divided about the De Gaulle decision to kick NATO out? I can see this going two ways. One, the diplomats saying "Okay, fine. So be it. We've got to deal with this." I can also see hardcore people saying "Screw this," arousing all sorts of francophobia and all that.

DEAN: Personally, I had a full plate-looking after East Asian Affairs at the Embassy. I was not involved in the reporting or analyzing of French domestic politics. The only time I was involved in domestic politics was in 1968 when there was a student uprising. Ambassador Shriver wanted to attend, as a spectator, a meeting at the French National Assembly, which he did, in the galleries. I did not think it was a good idea for the U.S. Ambassador to be seen at that point at the National Assembly, when a domestic issue was

under intense debate. In my opinion, when there is a domestic political squabble, it is much better for the American Ambassador not to be perceived as being involved.

Q: Did you ever run across Vernon Walters?

DEAN: Very much so. We had different approaches to the problems of the day, but personally, we got along well. Since he was such an accomplished linguist, he was used by different American administrations for important missions. He came out of the military, rose to the rank of Major General, and then was appointed to positions at CIA and State. He worked well with his French counterparts, who had known him for many years, going back to the days he was Eisenhower's interpreter. Dick Walters (which is really what he goes by) spoke absolutely impeccable French, and many other languages. On Vietnam, he was very much of a hawk. He said: "My day will be made when we march down Main Street in Hanoi." Having said this, Dick Walters and I became good friends, although he would add: "Oh, John wants to negotiate everything. He wants to compromise. No, we have to stand our ground."

Walters and I had different politics. He is an honest, decent, committed person. When you are friends, you can hold different political views. I differed with him on many issues, I start with the assumption that your adversary today is your friend tomorrow, and vice versa. Therefore, I always want to maintain contact with as many people as possible. I don't believe in building walls around a people, which usually ends up by building up its leader. I believe that the art of diplomacy is maintaining contact and trying to resolve issues without the use of violence, if possible. For example, I fought in Vietnam in 1970-1972. Immediately after leaving Vietnam, I tried to negotiate with those who were backed by the North Vietnamese. Dick Walters has a more military approach. I had serious reservations about the use of military power in today's world to solve serious international problems. With the development - with or without our consent - of more and more highly sophisticated technology, it became obvious to me that more countries will have lethal weapons of mass destruction. People knew my views when I was assigned to Military Region One in Vietnam as Deputy to the Corps Commander. I went to Vietnam with the U.S. military because I strongly feel that if your country needs you, one has the duty to comply with the decision of the President.

Q: You went to Harvard for your seventh year.

DEAN: As a Fellow of the University.

Q: From 1969 to 1970.

DEAN: That's right.

Q: What were you doing there?

DEAN: I had no specific duties. It was a year when I could catch up with what was going on in the U.S. in various disciplines of society. By 1969, I had left university 20 years earlier, and I was trying to catch up on what was new in the arts, poetry, music, economy, science... in short, society. One day, during my year at the Center for International Affairs at Harvard, I saw a brutal attack on a colleague who was also assigned to the seminar, Navy Captain Kruger, who had been a Navy pilot in Vietnam. Some elements in the Boston area were so fiercely opposed to U.S. involvement in Vietnam, that Kruger was attacked with sticks and clubs. He was wounded and needed medical care. I was appalled that this could happen on the Harvard campus.

Q: Were these Harvard students doing it?

DEAN: I don't know whether they were Harvard students, or were rabble rousers from the outside who had infiltrated the campus, but they obviously had targeted our colleague as a symbol of U.S. military involvement in Vietnam. I was appalled by it. While you can oppose government policy, holding individuals who carry out the policy responsible and physically hurt them is despicable. During my tour of duty in Vietnam 1970-72, I would like to say perhaps at this stage that my wife and three children stayed in Cambridge. Whenever anti-Vietnam demonstrations or vigils were held in Cambridge, my children and wife always stood by me. For example, when I left Harvard for Vietnam to serve with the U.S. military, my children said: "If my dad is involved, it can't be all bad" and they did not participate with their fellow students in demonstrations. I remain grateful to them for having had faith in me and allowing me to do the job asked of me by our country. At Harvard, all the participants in the program had to write a paper. I wrote my paper in 1969 on Vietnam and the need for a "negotiated solution." These words became the key in later years to my efforts to find "controlled negotiated solutions." That paper is available at Harvard, and I have a copy at home.

Q: What was your impression of how the authorities at Harvard handled the demonstrators and the situation? I was somewhat removed. As a matter of fact, I was in Saigon during the time you were at Harvard. I had the feeling that Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and some other places, did not come out very well as letting the lunatics take over the asylum.

DEAN: I would not go that far. Students, and for that matter every citizen, have the right to differ. I also have no problem with demonstrations or night vigils. It is violence that I deplore. I did have a slightly different problem, an issue which I still have not resolved in my own mind. It turns around the role of a government servant - civilian or military - and how to react to receiving orders with which he disagrees. Specifically, when the Secretary of State tells me, as a Foreign Service officer, that I have to go to a certain post and I disagree with the policy, what should I do? In my case, I always decided to go. The only alternative is to resign. I went from Harvard in 1970 to Vietnam. I had seen the anti-Vietnam demonstrations at home. I had been involved in the Paris negotiations on Vietnam. I ardently believed in the negotiations. I still believe today, that first and foremost, regardless who is our adversary, let us find a way of sitting down and explore

whether we can find a negotiated solution. That is my profession. In my opinion, diplomacy is in part the art of trying to convince others of the mutual advantage of our policies or actions. But above all, as a Foreign Service Officer, I accept to go where the Secretary of State or the President believes I can be of greatest service to the country. Hence, when I received orders to go to Vietnam, I went as Deputy for CORDS in Military Region One. In 1970, we had five U.S. divisions in that military region alone. Before we get into my assignment to Vietnam, I would like to express my gratitude for this year away from the "pressure cooker." I learned a lot at Harvard: how the world was changing and continues to change. Intellectual institutions look at any problem from many different points of view. There is never unanimity on any one point of view. Hence, I was willing to accept some others having a different view from mine or that of our government. Perhaps I also learned something about dissent and how to differ with my superiors. I still believe today that I owe my country the best assessment I can give, even if others disagree with my evaluation. If I differ on a policy, I believe an honest Foreign Service Officer should make it known. Silence is not an option. Personally, I did not make my career by ingratiating myself to my superiors. Many of the things I had seen and heard about in Vietnam shocked me, but I felt that as a Foreign Service Officer my duty was to serve the country. Just like a military officer who gets orders to go to war, I felt that if I was assigned to Vietnam to work with our military leaders, I had no choice but go - and I went in the summer of 1970. I was detailed by the Department of State to the 24th Corps in Military Region One, which was the region in the northern part of South Vietnam against the DMZ.

Q: When did you go out to Vietnam, and when did you return?

DEAN: June or July 1970, and I left Vietnam in July or August 1972.

Q: What was the situation in South Vietnam at that time when you got there?

DEAN: The South Vietnamese Government was headed by General Thieu. General Thieu had established a certain amount of political stability since the 1960s when a number of Vietnamese generals had toppled Ngo Dinh Diem and vied among themselves for power. But North Vietnam was determined to unify the country. During my period in Vietnam, the U.S. withdrew our divisions from Vietnam. We "Vietnamized" the war and left the South Vietnamese to oppose their northern countrymen. The U.S. provided the funds and weapons to the South Vietnamese military forces, as well as advisers to assist the South Vietnamese to withstand the northern drive to bring all of Vietnam under its control. We also assisted in the economic and social development of South Vietnam. It was a privilege to work with Ambassador Bunker on the civilian side, and General Abrams and General Wyant on the military side. Ambassador Bunker's assistant was Charlie Hill. While we may not have had the same politics, we certainly had a good working relationship. The country was governed by a group of Vietnamese dedicated to opposing militarily the expansion of North Vietnamese communism. The South Vietnamese army, navy, and air force were competent but the war had been going on for years without diminishing the will of the North to unite Vietnam under its control. In addition to the

regular Vietnamese army, there were provincial forces and regional forces all over South Vietnam. These forces had American advisers. In my military region, I had 1,100 advisers. 100 of them were civilian advisers, and 1,000 were military advisers. The headquarters for Military Region One was in Da Nang. I moved into the house formerly used by an American admiral which was commonly referred to as the White Elephant.

Our job was to help the Vietnamese regional and provincial authorities in both military and civilian affairs. In short, I was in charge of the American advisory effort for Military Region One. But more important than our advisory effort in 1970 was the presence in our military region of five U.S. divisions. The entire U.S. effort was under the 24th Corps. The first commander of the 24th Corps in my time was a four-star Marine General, an aviator. He was followed briefly by Marine General Robinson. Then, the Army took over the Corps. Lieutenant General Sutherland was followed by Lieutenant General Dolvin. My last boss was Major General Kroesen, who became a four-star General and Commander-in-chief of the U.S. Army in Europe. But by the time General Kroesen took over in late 1971, all U.S. divisions had left Vietnam and we had only an advisory function to the Vietnamese. May I add that I got to know General Kroesen very well and I think the world of this excellent soldier. Let me say a word about my work. The position of Deputy for CORDS (Civilian Operations for Reconstruction and Development Service) to the Commander of the 24th Corps was assimilated to the rank of Major General. The person who held that position had a dedicated helicopter at his disposal. Nearly every second day of the week, DEPCORD's duty was to meet with the advisers in the field and see what was going on, and what headquarters could do to support the advisers in the field. One of the military advisers under my command was a full colonel. He was killed. He tried to land on a U.S. ship. It was he who usually briefed me in the morning, at 6:00, at my house, on what happened during the night in the military region. Our region extended from the Demarcation Line (DMZ) to the next four provinces southward, and included the city of Da Nang. At 7:00 a.m. was the Commanding General's briefing at the headquarters of the 24th Corps. In a U.S. military installation, about 20 minutes by car from my house in the city of Da Nang. The first day I attended the Commanding General's briefing, I could not answer any questions on what had happened during the night. Thereafter, I asked one of the colonels under my command to give me a “pre-brief.” I said to him: “You brief me one hour before I go to the 7:00 a.m. meeting. I don't ever want to be caught being a dummy.” In the course of the 7:00 a.m. briefing, we might be told that a certain military post was overrun and the American adviser to the Vietnamese military had lost his leg, or an eye. At that point, the Commanding American General could turn to me and say: “Dean, what are you doing about it?” “Sir, I am flying up there and see whether medical help has been given, and whether I have to repatriate him or replace him. I will give you a report in the afternoon.” Sometimes, it was a different kind of a problem, for example, taking care of refugees who were fleeing from violence. At one point, in 1972, Quang Tri Province, the northernmost province of South Vietnam, was completely overrun by the North Vietnamese. In the process, in April 1972, the North Vietnamese had surrounded the provincial capital where 100 American advisers were huddled together, awaiting rescue, in order to prevent our advisers being taken prisoners. I decided to fly with the helicopter dedicated to my duties

to Quang Tri City and take out as many Americans as I could. I was able to take three or four trips from Da Nang to Quang Tri City, and every time would take seven or eight people out. On my last trip, as I was going up with American Consul Fred Brown (Frederick Z. Brown), we were shot down over Highway One, about 15 kms south of Quang Tri City. Fortunately, the rifle shot by hostile forces hit the oil line of the helicopter and not the gas line. I would not be here to relate the story because the helicopter would have exploded. Our helicopter dropped to the ground like a bag of potatoes and we hit the ground hard. We were shook up. The helicopter could not go any further. There was a may day call, i.e. an American in distress and in need of help. Another helicopter came, under fire, to pick us up and lift us out from the spot where we had been shot down. We were taken to an installation near Hue where I asked the U.S. military whether the Vietnamese could not give us some tanks so that we could try to rescue by land the U.S. advisers for whom I was responsible. I was told that this was no longer feasible. Perhaps 24 hours later, General Hudson of the U.S. Air Force, was flown to Da Nang and it was from there that he organized the extraction of the remaining 50 Americans from besieged Quang Tri City. The entire operation was carried out while North Vietnamese tanks were firing into the installation. We took out not only Americans but also many South Vietnamese who had been fighting the forces from the North. The extraction by American helicopters from the beleaguered city took place at night. The pilots were so hot that they flew without clothes, except for jockey shorts. The helicopters hovered over the extraction site just long enough for the people to climb into the helicopters. There was no time to land and take off. It was also too dangerous. We got everybody out who was supposed to leave. The Vietnamese Governor of the Province and the key employees of his staff were air-lifted out to Hue.

Q: Did we have anything with which to retake Quang Tri?

DEAN: No, not at this stage. By April 1972, there were no more American military units in Vietnam. We still had aircraft which could bomb the advancing enemy and give the South Vietnamese forces an opportunity to push back the Northerners. After the fall of Quang Tri City, I was told by one of the top people in Saigon that I would not be allowed to go home until the South Vietnamese had taken back Quang Tri Province.

We did take the province back, in June 1972, and I was allowed to go home one month later.

Q: The South Vietnamese had some of their crack divisions...

DEAN: They had some excellent troops and some very good generals. They fought well on the whole. The Governor of Quang Tri was evacuated to Hué. I saw him daily and I urged him to keep his provincial administration intact. In this way, he administered in "exile" the refugees from Quang Tri Province in Hué. Our advisers helped him by providing food, tents, and wood for cooking. Three months later, the Governor of Quang Tri was back in his province after the South Vietnamese military had retaken the province. One of the advantages I had in the 1970s was that all the Vietnamese senior

military officers and civilian officials had been trained by the French and spoke rather good French. This made it easy for me to communicate with them. Most of the senior Vietnamese officers and officials were dedicated and decent. But the war had been going on for so many years that the population had become weary. The destruction was tremendous. People had been fighting since the early 1950s. Before fighting the French, there had been the Japanese occupation. Certainly, the people in the countryside were tired. The Vietnamese military had American advisers and American-supplied weapons, but the war-weariness also permeated the troops. Not every war story relates the heroic behavior of the valiant fighting forces. In the extraction of the surrounded Vietnamese forces and their American advisers in the Citadel of Quang Tri City, I recall the pusillanimous behavior of an American adviser which taught me a lesson.

In Quang Tri City, in the compound in which the U.S. advisers were lodged, there remained only one air-conditioner functioning. It was April - beastly hot. That lone air-conditioner was run on a small generator and cooled down the code-room for sending messages. While all the advisers - civilian and military - regardless of rank, had to stand guard all night long, the Lt. Colonel in charge of the Advisory Unit was sleeping in the air-conditioned code-room. After the extraction, the American advisers complained about the bad example set by their leader. Shortly after the story got around, I received a phone call from the American Commander-in-Chief in Saigon. He said: “John, do you have any sons?” I replied: “Yes, I have two sons” “Would you ever want them to be serving under this lieutenant colonel?” I said: “No. This guy does not perform very well.” “What are you going to do about it?” “Well, I decided I was going to give him a bad Efficiency Rating.” The Commander-in-Chief, a four-star American General, said: “John, you prefer charges against him” and he hung up. That means: have the officer court-martialed. On my staff, I had a lawyer and he drew up charges against the Lt. Colonel. The Lt. Colonel had been on the promotion list to full colonel. He was taken off the list. He was a West Pointer. His career was ended and he returned to civilian life. Under fire, the man had failed in his duties as a leader. On the whole, the American advisers were an outstanding group of able, dedicated people. But the behavior of some of the support troops left something to be desired, especially when it came to black marketing. The advisers in the field were mostly fine soldiers and acquitted themselves with distinction. Vietnam was a war where the American soldiers got little support from the home front. It mattered. When I came home from the Second World War on a troop transport ship, there was a band playing at the wharf in New Jersey and young ladies with donuts and coffee came aboard to welcome the returning heroes. When I came home in 1972 from the Vietnam War, after two years and one month, there was nobody to greet you. Not only were there any festivities but nobody talked about their experiences in the Vietnam War. It was more like people wanted to forget about that chapter in our history. It took time for the folks back home to realize that the Vietnam War, like all wars, had caused hardship, wounds, and bad memories.

Q: I have to say that when I came back from Korea in 1952 or 1953, nobody was interested. You just sort of came back.

DEAN: In Korea, we had done our job and militarily it was a “draw.” In Vietnam, we lost. That word, “lost,” is only being used today. It was not used from 1975 until the end of the 1980s. Let me go back to some of the outstanding work done by our American advisers to Military Region One. It also shows what CORDS, the Civil Reconstruction and Development program, was all about. Refugees by the thousands were streaming out of Quang Tri Province. They preferred fleeing to living under the communists. From Quang Tri they walked to Thua Thien Province whose capital is Hue, the imperial city of Annam. But Thua Thien was also under attack, so the refugees walked close to Da Nang. These refugees had nothing but their clothes on their back, or perhaps a small bundle slung on a stick over the back. The American military forces had left by that time (1972) but the neat white barracks had remained. These barracks, made of wood, were spic and span, with showers, toilets, and screens. They stood empty. So, I telephoned the American Commander-in-Chief in Saigon and said; “Sir, I intend to turn over this former American base to the Vietnamese refugees.” He replied: “John, you are in charge” and hung up. I decided that his reply was enough and I did not ask for any other opinions. I turned over the empty barracks to the refugees for lodging. Others gave them food, mostly non-governmental agencies (NGOs) from all over the world, including many American organizations. Yes, the refugees partially destroyed the barracks. As it got colder, the refugees used the wood to keep warm, and they dismantled certain buildings to obtain the wood. But I thought that the war was about people, about trying to make the refugees feel that our side cared more about people and their welfare than the other side. So, I made the decision to turn over a former U.S. military installation to the refugees coming down from Quang Tri Province. Not every military man agreed with that decision. After all, they might have preferred to turn over this facility to the Vietnamese army. I turned over another former small American installation to the refugees because they kept on coming. That installation also was partially destroyed by them. Working with senior army flag officers helped me to learn about decision-taking. If you are the field commander, you rarely have the time to request guidance from headquarters. The decision has to be taken on the spot. The immediate situation requires action. This experience in Vietnam undoubtedly influenced me when I was faced with difficult situations in Cambodia, in Laos, in Lebanon, and in India where the tactical situation on the ground often required immediate action. In all these posts, I had to make quick decisions and my experience in Vietnam made me realize that “Time is of the essence.” Take responsibility. Do it. If your superiors don't like it, they can remove you. As I look back on my time in Vietnam during these war years, there was a sight which bothered me then, and still sticks in my mind today. Every day, at 7:00 a.m., I had to be at the briefing of the Commander of the American military presence in MR1. A Vietnamese civilian drove me from my residence in Da Nang City to the headquarters of the 24th Corps. On the way to the military headquarters, I saw Vietnamese - old and young - male and female, on top of the huge mounds of leftover food from the plates of our military, searching for food, for their own consumption. They used a stick with a sharp point in their search for edible leftovers. Seeing these poor people, in the early hour mist, on top of garbage piles, with the headlights from cars bringing this picture into focus - darkness giving way to the sight of misery - made a deep impression on me. The misery caused by war is a memory I still carry with me today. One of humanity's better qualities is compassion. This experience

and sentiment felt in Vietnam played a role later on in Cambodia. I found it difficult to leave the Cambodian people to a fate which I feared could be a genocide. Perhaps this sense of compassion is one of the differences between Dr. Kissinger and myself on the Cambodian tragedy. Perhaps I don't see the entire global picture as those in charge in Washington, but I do see the suffering humanity and I am affected. I am on the spot. Is that one of the differences between a field commander and his superior sitting in an office far, far away?

Q: Did you have any contact or get any feel for what was going on in Washington?

DEAN: No.

Q: Was it just a different world?

DEAN: I had very little knowledge of what was going on outside of Vietnam, except from reading the Army newspaper. I felt I had a job to do in Vietnam, and people had confidence in me. I tried to do my best. I saw things in war which were despicable. I also saw acts of great bravery, or ordinary people just doing their job - Vietnamese and Americans alike. Let me recite another experience which will underline the importance of good leadership. Back in 1970, when we still had American divisions in Vietnam, I was up in Quang Tri Province when I saw an American tank column coming out of an incursion from Laos. As they came out of Laos, they were surprised in Quang Tri Province by North Vietnamese troops who pursued them. When tanks are in danger of being captured, the soldiers get out of the tanks and run toward friendly lines in the hope of saving their lives. I happened to have been there, standing in back of the American Brigadier General speaking to American troops, when they arrived in a safe area. He said: "Men, you go back and get these tanks. These tanks are going to turn against us. We can't afford to have our tanks in the hands of our enemy. Go and get them!" The answer of the troops was: "General, up yours. Go and get them yourself!" The man was relieved of his command. What he should have done was: "Men, follow me. I am going to lead you. We've got to get our tanks back. We can't let the enemy take over these tanks in good condition and use them against us. Follow me, men!" I have tried to apply this lesson in my role as leader of a team: Lead by setting a good example.

Q: Did you find at this point of the war that the American military, particularly at the troop level, was beginning to not disintegrate, but there were a whole series of things, including...

DEAN: You did have fragging. I was aware of that.

Q: You might explain what fragging is.

DEAN: Fragging is throwing a grenade from the rear, usually against an officer who is disliked by the troops. It's using explosives to eliminate a member of your own team. What I noticed in Military Region One was that most soldiers were counting the days

until their tour of duty would come to an end. The average American soldier in a fox-hole was alone with his buddy in an isolated advanced position, and he acquitted himself with valor and a sense of duty. They were in my mind great guys. I also had under my command young Foreign Service Officers on their first tour of duty, assigned to some out of the way district in Thua Thien Province, or in the hills of Quang Nam Province, etc... Many a night, these distant, isolated districts came under attack by the North Vietnamese or the Viet Cong. How many of these young men, assigned to help in rural development, education, and hygiene, came under attack at night? Was this the kind of duty they expected when they had entered the U.S. Foreign Service? I have the greatest respect for these young FSOs at the time. They learned about leadership, how to set an example. Some of them are today ambassadors. They did not sign up for that kind of hazardous duty in Vietnam. Nonetheless, the Foreign Service officers assigned to CORDS in Vietnam carried out duties far removed from what is generally associated with traditional diplomacy. When I had to fly to some distant field hospital and decorate an adviser who had lost an eye or a limb, I understood the meaning of "duty" and "service to your country." I liked the Vietnamese people and I had a good relationship with their leadership. The South Vietnamese were beginning to worry - "Are we being seen as the stalking horse of the Americans? "Are the North Vietnamese painting us South Vietnamese, as collaborators?" I still wear today, with some pride, cufflinks given to me by General Thieu when I finished my tour of duty in Vietnam. I was asked by Ambassador Bunker to go to the Presidential Palace in Saigon, and I was awarded a number of Vietnamese medals for my service in Vietnam. Another realization I gained during my years with the military in Vietnam was that war hurts mostly civilians. I also gained the impression that most American generals don't engage troops lightly and prefer a negotiated solution to war. Senior military officers know what it means to ask soldiers to risk their lives. Politicians very often don't take sufficiently into account the results of violence and war, both on our soldiers and on the civilians of our enemy. The experiences I gained in Vietnam were very useful for me in the positions which I was about to receive for the next 20 years.

Q: In Vietnam, who was the head military commander while you were there?

DEAN: General Abrams. Years later, I went to his funeral in Washington. He was an excellent chief, indeed. Once a month, the top brass, including the 4 DepCORDS, assembled in Saigon to be briefed and to exchange views on what was going on in the four military regions. General Abrams presided. On occasion, he could be very outspoken with those who may have made a mistake, even with other top generals under his command. General Abrams was also a very private person. Sometimes, late at night, he would listen to classical music. He was one of the best. He was replaced by Freddy Wyant. His style was different. He was less aloof than Abrams. We got to be friends and stayed in touch for many years. He was in charge when the Quang Tri invasion occurred and we worked together closely during that period. He came often to Military Region One and he was still in charge when South Vietnamese troops retook Quang Tri Province in July 1972. I learned from General Wyant that when you are in charge, that means you must take the decision and you are held responsible for the result. Often, he would say:

“Don't come to me for advice. I have confidence in you. Do what is necessary.” That style of leadership helped me to do what I did later in Laos. Not everybody appreciated that kind of leadership. I remember, I was reprimanded in Laos by the Secretary of State for answering the Prime Minister's question when he asked for advice, for not referring the question back to Washington. I assume that Washington was afraid that I might give advice which was not “politically correct.” We will discuss it in our discussion on Laos.

Q: I would like to know a little more how you operated. You are saying the young Foreign Service officers were performing well - the Foreign Service officers assigned to CORDS.

DEAN: Very well.

Q: I assume that you flew by helicopter to the outlying districts where the young FSOs were stationed?

DEAN: Yes. We only had advisers - civilian and military - in regions under South Vietnamese Government control. Certain areas in South Vietnam were written off to the Viet Cong and obviously there were no South Vietnamese Government presence there, nor American advisers.

Q: Basically though, it was really the North Vietnamese who controlled areas in MR1 not under South Vietnamese Government control, wasn't it?

DEAN: Whether you call them North Vietnamese or Viet Cong does not really matter. There was some support in the outlying districts for Hanoi's struggle to unite Vietnam, for nationalism and for ending fighting which had lasted for a couple of decades. Our FSO advisers tried to help the districts to improve the conditions of life of the poor farmers. For example, young officers in a small district or in a small town would say: “I am going to get you some seeds to grow some corn.” Or they might say: “I can get you some lumber so that you can repair your house.” Or “We will get you some pigs to diversify your farming.” They might have a literacy program, I recall that during my tenure in MR1, CORDS helped to keep functioning the University of Hue. After the 1968 debacle in Hue, we helped the Vietnamese rector and professors to reopen the university. Final examinations were being given at Hué University during the fall of Quang Tri Province, in 1972. The graduation of a new group of civilian students was essential to the future of Central Vietnam. Our CORDS advisers helped the university teachers to supervise the exams, provide security, and make the university function. We received an award of gratitude from the University for our assistance.

Q: You spent quite a bit of time flying out and talking with the senior officials of the region.

DEAN: A great deal. I visited regularly the 4 provinces under CORDS control. I also worked closely with the major urban centers. Da Nang was a relatively important port and

the hub of Central Vietnam. During my tenure in Central Vietnam, I received an instruction from Washington to protect the famous Cham Museum. The message said that President Nixon had received a request from Phillip Stern, curator of the Guimet Museum in Paris, asking the U.S. to ascertain that the Cham Museum in Da Nang would not be destroyed nor damaged, as the museum in Hué was in 1968. With the U.S. advisers to the Mayor of Da Nang, I went to look at the Cham Museum. I learned that the museum was entirely dedicated to the preservation of Cham art. The Chams were carriers of Hindu influence which is reflected in their sculptures and their temples. Their art is similar to the sculptures at Borobudur in Indonesia. Cham temples can still be seen in Central and South Vietnam. The Da Nang Cham Museum is an open air structure - the building has a roof, but is open on at least one side. Every item in the museum is locked into a wall with a steel rod. Hence, with metal rods, the art pieces could not be stolen. This museum survived entirely intact. I asked the mayor to send a military detachment to the museum to protect it from greedy traders cutting off heads of the sculptures for resale abroad. A group of soldiers was assigned to guard the Cham Museum in Da Nang. Today, that museum is one of the great tourist attraction of Vietnam. It is certainly the most outstanding museum of that particular art form in the world. In 1999, the French published a guide book with reproductions of each artifact in the Cham Museum and offered thousands of volumes to the Da Nang Museum to be sold to tourists. In the foreword, there is specific mention of President Nixon's Instruction to the American authorities to help protect this unique museum.

Q: At the Da Nang level, how did you find dealing with the Vietnamese Commander? Was General Lon still there? I have heard from other people that General Lon was more a political general and had large warehouses full of his stuff. In other words, a lot of corruption there. Did you find this?

DEAN: I am quite sure that there were abuses. As for the general you mention, I was in Vietnam to help the South Vietnamese to withstand North Vietnamese efforts to topple the Saigon regime. I tried to understand and work with South Vietnamese civilian and military officials. They had mostly been French-trained and spoke fluent French. They came from a rather privileged class of people. Their wives sometimes used the position of their husbands to increase their material well-being. Some generals were less action-oriented than others. Some of the senior military officials also had second thoughts about how they were perceived by their own people so as not to be seen as “puppets of Americans.”

We could at times be quite heavy-handed by wanting to run the show by ourselves. This tendency obviously changed after the American military units had left Vietnam. Perhaps the general you referred to was a more cautious person. The general in charge of Thua Thien was a very scrappy general who led his troops himself. Some Vietnamese military in 1972 were also asking themselves if perhaps this war was not going to lead to a victory, would the Americans stand by them in time of difficulty? It's easy to say “He did not fight hard enough,” especially if he is sitting in a very comfortable easy chair in Da Nang or in Saigon. I once received a book which was dedicated to me with the words

"We manned the walls of freedom together." Yes, I was in the front lines on the ground, having my windows shot out, sometimes being physically targeted by the adversary. The man who dedicated this book to me was sitting in a comfortable office back home, thousands of miles away from the military confrontation. I am sure he worried a great deal, but it is not the same when you are in the field facing physical danger. You asked about General Lon and the Vietnamese generals. Some were good generals. Some may have had sticky fingers. But we had our own problems among American soldiers. Let me cite the example of my own orderly. Three out of four of my orderlies were punished for abuse of my commissary privileges. I cannot change others, but I tried to be a worthy representative of the United States. Setting a good example was more important to me than pointing fingers at others.

Q: Were we concerned about the generals - the reputation was there of General Lon, who was spending more time aggrandizing his personal fortune than leading... Was that a concern?

DEAN: Definitely. It was also a concern later on in Cambodia, trying to shore up the military to do the fighting. But as time went on - and that is the difference between being a field commander and being a political observer - you see it differently when you are on the ground than when you are back in Washington looking at the global picture and wonder how it fits into the relationship with the Soviet Union or with China. Colonel Jacobson, who was the Deputy Head of CORDS, was a legend. He was a tough, likeable colonel who thought our mission was to have South Vietnam win. I came to CORDS with a reputation of being a negotiator. If I could have negotiated, I would have negotiated. But I could not. I was merely a small cog in a big wheel. But I always asked myself - and that was going to be a leitmotif in different periods of my life - on whose side is time. I fear that some policy makers misread that terribly. All I can say, I had great respect for all those who carried out their duty with candor, strength and determination. There were abuses, yes. There were abuses by Vietnamese and perhaps also by some Americans, but that is focusing on the warts.

Q: I am trying to touch various elements, including the overall picture and the warts.

DEAN: The overall picture was that in 1972 you could see a certain battle fatigue setting in both in the United States where the war demonstrators got more vocal, where people in Congress were beginning to criticize our policy as for example Senators Church and Kennedy, and in Vietnam where some elements were beginning to question whether President Thieu could withstand Hanoi's efforts to take over the whole country. Before leaving the subject of Vietnam, I would like to say a word about a great American: Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker. He was a fine human being, a great patriot, who saw the picture accurately. He was not afraid to criticize our military on "body count." He was not afraid to send candid messages to Washington in which he set forth his doubts about certain policies. Would we be loyal to our friends and allies to the end? I thought Ambassador Bunker, who came up to Da Nang quite often, was a loyal supporter of our

policy, although he probably saw problems ahead. Ambassador Bunker knew whatever he was doing was for his country and not for his own glory.

Q: How did you work with the Political Section in Saigon? They would send their gallopers out to...

DEAN: I had very little contact; practically none with the Political Section in Saigon. We had a Consulate in Da Nang and that was its function.

Q: I was going to ask about the Consulate. Who were Consuls when you were there?

DEAN: I knew two. Fred Z. Brown and Terry McNamara. I had a perfectly good relationship, but their role was largely as observers for Embassy Saigon. CORDS officers were supposed to be doers. As I said earlier, Fred Z. Brown was in my helicopter when we both got shot down. Terry McNamara was a brave officer who later went on to become DepCORDS in Military Region Four where he made a name for himself.

Q: Did you ever run across John Paul Van?

DEAN: I worked with him. I also went to his funeral. I knew his girlfriend very well.

Q: Which one?

DEAN: who was there when he died.

Q: Were you...

DEAN: I saw him regularly once a month at the briefing session in Saigon. He was a strong personality, a military man with strong convictions about our role in Vietnam. He was in Two Corps, which was a particularly difficult region because most of the Hill Tribes lived in that area. Keeping the Hill Tribes from supporting the North Vietnamese and have them handled in a way that they would support the government in Saigon was a challenging task. John Paul Van was certainly the most recognized personality in the CORDS program by the media for his outstanding service.

Q: Were the Koreans gone by the time you left?

DEAN: No. We had Koreans, but they were not in I-CORPS. We had two Australian advisers who received the Victoria Medal in our region. That was prior to my arrival in Vietnam.

Q: I think this is a good place to stop for today. We will pick it up next time with where you went in 1972.

DEAN: In 1972, I was asked to be Deputy Chief of Mission of the largest Mission at the time in the U.S. Foreign Service: Laos. I had the honor and privilege to work with Mac Godley, one of the "field marshals" who enjoyed his position of great power and making military decisions. When Mac asked me "John, what do you take, the war or peace?" I said: "I think I am better qualified for peace." It was in Laos that I was able to achieve a peaceful solution to a war.

Q: All right. We will pick this up then.

***

Today is September 9, 2000. One question I meant to ask about your time up in I-CORPS. Did you have much to do with the "Montagnards," the hill people there, and how did they fit into the equation?

DEAN: The answer is. Military Region One did not have many Montagnards. They were in Military Region Two and Three. John Paul Van really had the Montagnards problem. It was in that area that he did some of his best work. We did have some Cham temples west of Thua Thien, but that area was at that time already Viet Cong territory.

Q: Didn't you have some resettlement from...

DEAN: The people from Hue were resettled. They were obviously Vietnamese.

Q: A friend of mine, Fred Elfers, was in I-CORPS. He took me up and showed me a fishing village where they had taken people from the interior to settle as refugees along the coast.

DEAN: We did have refugees because of the fighting, but they were not, on the whole, the minority tribes. Hill Tribes in Vietnam were racially completely different from the Vietnamese.

Q: "Vietnam" means "Southern Viets" doesn't it?

DEAN: That's right. By the way, South Vietnam, formerly known as Cochinchina, was taken over by the Vietnamese from the Cambodians. When we supported Marshal Lon Nol's government in Cambodia, we helped raise a whole division in South Vietnam of ethnically Cambodian people to fight for Cambodia. The Vietnamese moving south from Tonkin only reached the tip of South Vietnam about the year 1800.

Q: Let's move on to Laos.

DEAN: When I arrived in Laos in the autumn of 1972, I had a long conversation with Ambassador Mac Godley. By that time, I had the reputation of being a "fighter." Embassy/Vientiane was a huge Mission of 680 Americans. Mac Godley was a person

who inspired loyalty. He, in turn, reciprocated with full support for his staff. He believed in the doctrine that we should put as much military pressure as possible on the Pathet Lao and their Vietnamese supporters, especially through aerial bombing. In the course of this meeting, Mac asked me: "Do you wish to take the war or peace?" I took the peace. Had I opted for "the war," it would have meant selecting targets, for bombing by American planes, and supporting efforts with the Meo mercenaries fighting the Vietnamese. There was a whole section in Embassy/Vientiane that was involved in selecting targets for bombings by the U.S. Air Force. Bombing helped to push Pathet Lao troops off a hilltop or giving support to the Royal Lao Army units facing the enemy. We had a very close relationship with the Lao military. When I arrived in Vientiane in 1972, a Pathet Lao delegation had just arrived in town to explore the possibility of negotiations. So, when I took over the role of following, for the Embassy, efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Lao conflict, I was lucky, as far as timing was concerned.

Q: Excuse me. You were there from 1972 to when?

DEAN: Until October/November 1973. One of the reasons the Pathet Lao delegation had arrived in Vientiane was that the leader of the Pathet Lao was Souphanouvong, who was the half brother of Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma, who was very much committed to finding a way of ending the armed conflict. The presence of Souvanna Phouma as Head of the Royal Lao Government was probably the reason that we were able to help find a negotiated solution in Laos. In Cambodia, unlike Laos, there was no major local personality in the country with whom you could negotiate or who was a credible neutralist leader. Souvanna Phouma was known as a neutralist, and proud to be one. In an earlier interview, I had discussed the personal links I had with him. Since I came back to Vientiane, this time as Deputy Chief of Mission, my wife and I were invited quite often in the evening to the Prime Minister's home. Dinner was usually followed by bridge. Souvanna Phouma was an avid bridge player and he liked to win. If by 11:00 p.m. he had won, we went home at 11:15. But if Souvanna Phouma was losing, we stayed on until 1:00 a.m., until he started winning. These social occasions gave me an opportunity of discussing in a leisurely manner the problems of the day. Since Souvanna Phouma was an avowed neutralist, he did not really enjoy the enthusiastic support of the United States. Most of the time, Souvanna Phouma was interested in exploring solutions which saved face for both Lao parties.

Q: In 1961 or 1962, what had been the solution at that point?

DEAN: Back in those days, Mr. Harriman worked with the neutralist General Phoumi Nosavan. Back in 1962, Lao neutralists were more acceptable to the U.S. You must remember. Secretary Dulles was no longer on the scene. Certainly, by 1972, Souvanna Phouma had emerged as a compromise figure on the Lao political scene. The French gave him full support. I am also inclined to believe that the Russians supported the coming of the Pathet Lao to Vientiane in order to find an alternative to the war. The Pathet Lao official who was sent to Vientiane as Head of the Delegation was Phoumi Vongvichit who later became President of Laos. A word about the other important players on the Lao

side, in this crucial period. One of them was the King of Laos. You may remember that he had gone to school with my late Father-in-law, when the former was the Crown Prince. When we went to Luang Prabang, this made some difference in my relationship with him. The King was a mild-mannered person, while his son, the Crown Prince, was prone to act at times high handedly. Both the Lao Dynasty in Luang Prabang and the Princes of Champasak in Southern Laos had links, not only to France, but also to Thailand. In Southern Laos, Prince Boun Oum had fought the Japanese during the Second World War, and after the war served briefly as Prime Minister of Laos. Prince Boun Oum, a huge man, was basically a country gentleman, not terribly well educated, but he loved the good things in life: booze, beautiful women, and having a good time. I had been told that when he came to Paris as Prime Minister, he was supposed to meet with the President of France. On his way to the meeting, he had met a nice-looking floozie so he just forgot about his appointment with the President of France. His nephew Sisouk Champasak played an important role in Laos in the 1960s and 1970s, and was quite pro-American.

Q: When you say "we," I assume your wife was with you.

DEAN: Oh, yes. She always played a very major role. Her family was known to Souvanna Phouma. By 1972, his children were grown up. One was in the military. Another was in business. His very attractive daughter, Moune, had attended prestigious schools in France. Later, she married an American, Perry Stieglitz, who was in the U.S. Embassy. She was a very refined, beautiful lady. She also had a sister who worked with NGOs. General Kouprasith was the Head of the Royal Lao Armed Forces. Among his accomplishments, is the building of the Arch of Triumph in Vientiane, which every tourist visits today. He was the son of the Head of the King's Council, the senior position of the Lao civilian administration. He had spent many years in school in France. By the time I returned to Laos in 1972, he was an old man. But with that family we also had close links going back to earlier years. We had spent time with them at their family home in southern Laos. Nearly all Lao officials spoke French, in addition to their native Lao language which is very close to the Thai language. If we wanted to communicate with the key Lao personalities - civilian or military - it was essential in those days to be able to speak French. Ambassador Godley spoke good French, and most of the Embassy staff spoke French. We also had a few Thai-speaking officers. On the American side, I would like to single out Jack Vessey. He was a Brigadier General at the time. He was in charge of providing our Mission with military support, out of Udorn in northern Thailand. This entailed providing military hardware and military intelligence to the Royal Lao forces. Jack and I became good friends. On a number of occasions, we traveled together in his plane, visiting the Royal Lao Armed Forces or the Meo Hill Tribes fighting the Vietnamese who were supported by the Central Intelligence Agency. One day. Jack and I were on the Plaine des Jarres, in northeastern Laos, when suddenly we came under intense artillery shelling from the Pathet Lao, supported by the North Vietnamese. The artillery shelling was pretty precise. Jack Vessey and I were forced to lock arms and jump together into a ditch to avoid being hit by enemy artillery shelling. Jack was a very thoughtful person. In the hours we spent in his plane traveling, we would discuss the role of the United States in Indochina, in Asia, and in the world. Among the many American

military I had the honor of working with. Jack was tops. Later, he served with distinction as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

It was in 1971 that I started working closely with Peng Pongsavan who was the President of the Lao National Assembly. He had been selected by the King and by Souvanna Phouma to be the negotiator for the Royal Lao Government side. On the Pathet Lao side, was Phoumi Vongvichit. The two Lao delegations met during the daytime and tried to find compromises to their opposing views. In the evenings, usually after 10:00 p.m., I went over to see Peng Pongsavan to obtain a read-out on the status of the negotiations. Armed with many notes, I returned to the Embassy to send a detailed message to our National Security Advisor on the status of the negotiations to find an end to the Lao conflict. My message was not sent always through the State Department channels, but directly to the White House, i.e., the Security Adviser.

Q: This would be Henry Kissinger at this point.

DEAN: You are right. That was Henry Kissinger. He came to Laos quite often as part of his trips to Vietnam. In Vientiane, I would act as his interpreter. Although Dr. Kissinger speaks good French, he preferred to speak in English and I would interpret. Vice-versa, when Souvanna Phouma spoke, he would ask for a translation. This way, both men had time to prepare their replies.

Q: At this time, when you were hearing this, how did we feel about the outcome of this? We were saying "This is not acceptable" or were we willing to sit back and say...

DEAN: I received practically no guidance from Washington and I was very much on my own. It should also be noted that in March 1973 Ambassador Godley had left post for a new assignment and I was left in charge for the next 6 months. Souvanna Phouma's neutralism was not our preferred solution. Yet, Washington was eager to receive a read out on the status of the negotiations. Often, Peng Pongsavan, the Royal Lao Government negotiator, would ask: "What do you think about this compromise or that approach?" I did not have time to ask the Department for guidance. I would give my opinion, suggesting: "Maybe this approach might work." In a way, I was part of the negotiation by extension and the faith Peng Pongsavan had, that I reflected the official view of Washington. Sometimes, Peng Pongsavan would ask: "Do you think this is acceptable?" (presumably to Washington). I would say: "If it leads to a settlement, yes." We both knew that the outcome of the negotiation would have to be a coalition government. That means sharing power with the Pathet Lao. By 1972, Laos was no longer perceived by Washington as a bilateral problem but rather as part of a much broader U.S. effort to contain the spread of communism in South-East Asia, and that entailed all 3 former Indochina states of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Q: The Soviets were involved.

DEAN: The Soviets had been involved in Laos for some time. You will recall that Governor Harriman had fortunately found a solution supporting the neutralists in the early 1960s, with General Phoumi Pongsavan. In 1972-1973, the Soviet Ambassador to Laos was definitely in favor of a compromise solution for Laos. That basically meant supporting a denouement to the conflict by the formation of a coalition government with the Pathet Lao. In my nightly reporting, I had the help of a very dedicated Foreign Service secretary who would come to the office at midnight in order to type up the message to Washington. Before that, Dick Howland, an excellent FSO who later became ambassador, was my political chief and he was also at the office in the middle of the night to ensure that the message was perfect.

Q: Dick has almost a photographic memory. He knows all the Lao names.

DEAN: Dick would come in and be sure that what I had drafted was coherent and I had used the right words. He was an excellent wordsmith. Again, I would like to state that all chiefs stand on the shoulders of their team.

Q: Using the military terms, the wiring diagram gets rather important - who reports to whom. Here you are, a Foreign Service Officer. I can see sending something to the National Security Adviser, but we did have a Secretary of State and the whole thing there. This was the main focus of our foreign policy at the time in Indochina. Where did you get your orders from to do it this way, and how did this work?

DEAN: Basically, I got answers to my reports from the National Security Adviser, Dr. Kissinger. He came from time to time to Vientiane, on his way to Vietnam. It was quite clear that I was expected to address my messages to the National Security Adviser. On my staff of 680 Americans, more than half were involved either in support of the Meo Hill Tribes fighting the communists or gathering information to support our effort to oppose the spreading of communism. We also had at our post Army Intelligence, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the Drug Enforcement Agency. In Washington, the only place where all this information was coordinated was in the Office of the National Security Adviser. At the post, the coordinator was the Ambassador, or in his absence, the Chargé d'Affaires. One day, something happened which was written up in detail in “Time Magazine,” “Newsweek,” and the international press. My nice boss, Ambassador Mac Godley, was asked in February 1973 to become Assistant Secretary of State for Asian Affairs, in Washington. This was an important job where he was also going to be in charge of the Indochina problem. It was also a vote to keep on fighting and continue aerial bombing as an essential part in using military pressure to find a solution.

Q: The bombing was basically against the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

DEAN: Not always. The bombing could be in the Plaine des Jarres which had nothing to do with the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The American bombing was often directed against a hilltop where the Pathet Lao had displaced the Royal Lao Government Forces. The idea was to get them off the hill and have the friendly forces retake the hill. This was also a

time when some vocal reservations were expressed in Congress about bombing. Some Congressmen even urged stopping the air operations altogether. Back in Washington, Mac Godley's designation as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs ran into difficulties in the Senate. Instead of being confirmed for the Washington assignment, his name was proposed for the Ambassadorship to Lebanon. With Godley's departure from Vientiane in early 1973, I became Chargé d'Affaires, a position I held for 6 months, until a new ambassador arrived at post. The official orders we had at that time were clear: support the government of Souvanna Phouma. We supported the Royal Lao Government, and I followed these instructions scrupulously. Souvanna Phouma and this policy were going to be put to a test. In August 1973, General Tao Ma, a Lao dissident Air Force General, sneaked across the Mekong River and occupied the Vientiane Airport. He was supported by a group of dissident Lao military officers who had come from northern Thailand in an effort to topple the neutralist government of Souvanna Phouma. That group of coup plotters undoubtedly had the support of some branches of the U.S. Government and also perhaps the support of Asian countries which opposed the neutralist policies of Prince Souvanna Phouma. After they had also taken control of the Vientiane Radio Station, they went on the air to alert the public that their mission was to evict Souvanna Phouma from power. They took full control of the Vientiane Airport and control tower, and wanted to use the small American-supplied military planes given to the Royal Lao Air Force, to subdue the Souvanna Phouma Government and force the Royal Lao Government to turn over the government to them. When I was notified of this development, I first found a safe house for Souvanna Phouma, and he was out of harm's way. I then had my driver take me to the Airport to confront the coup plotters. I then tried to organize Americans to help me to put down the coup, but all of them saw their role as reporters or observers. My staff was very generous in writing up the events. One of them was Frank Franco who was in charge of fire security at the airport. Colonel Bailey, the Military Attaché, was equally active in keeping abreast of developments, but was reluctant to be directly involved in defending the Prime Minister or putting down the illegal coup d'état hatched outside Laos.

Q: What was Frank Franco's position?

DEAN: He was involved with the airport.

Q: Was he in the CIA?

DEAN: I don't know. I think he was on the AID payroll. All I can say is that he was a very hard working and a very devoted person who took the time to write an 18-page report on the coup attempt. It said exactly what happened. I felt pretty much alone in crushing the coup. When we arrived by car at the airport, I got a bull-horn and, standing below the Airport Control Tower, I shouted in French to the coup plotters: "Go back across the Mekong. If you are not going to go back, I'm going to cut off the gasoline supplies and all other items needed by the Lao military and provided by the U.S. Get out of here! My job is to support the Government of Prince Souvanna Phouma and this coup is against this government. I will not have you undermine the legal and internationally

recognized Lao Government!" Nobody moved, except some plotters who were getting the small military propeller-powered planes ready to fly over the city and take over the government. So, I asked my driver to drive the car to the middle of the runway in order to block the planes from taking off. I sat in the car with my chauffeur. The latter was shivering with fear. He wanted to get out. I said: "You stay here. I am staying in the car with you. Put the flags on the car." The two flags (the American flag and the Presidential flag) were flying on the car and we were blocking the runway. Well, General Tao Ma was not going to be put off by this show of bravado by a young civilian officer. He fired up his plane and he tried to take off. Since I was about midway on the airstrip, he tried to avoid the car. He did not have enough height. In the process of avoiding a collision with my car, he veered off to the right and crashed. He was killed instantly. I must admit that at that point, I was also a little shaky myself. So, I told the driver: "Let's go back to the Control Tower." There, I took my bull-horn again and shouted: "Get your buts back over the Mekong River! This thing is over!" At that point, there was a Royal Lao Army detachment waiting near the airport for the outcome of this confrontation. Sisouk Na Champasak, the Lao Minister of Defense, and a good friend, was heading the troops, but he was still waiting to see how this struggle was going to end. Was it going to be neutralist Souvanna Phouma or hard liners? At that point, a putschist colonel, second in command to General Tao Ma, took off by plane and left for across the Mekong River. The rest of the coup plotters followed by boat. Finally, seeing the failure of the coup plotters, the Royal Lao military detachment decided to move and take control of the airport. The coup was over!

Q: They went where?

DEAN: They went back to Thailand. This was the last attempt to stop the negotiations for a coalition government which would bring the Pathet Lao out of the bush and into the Royal Lao Government.

Q: You are talking about Royal Lao Forces in Thailand. They came across the Mekong.

DEAN: But these were rebellious officers who had taken refuge in Thailand.

Q: Had they been sitting in Thailand? You mentioned that maybe there was some tacit support within the U.S. Government for this.

DEAN: There was a major U.S. support operation in Udorn, in northeastern Thailand to assist the Royal Lao Armed Forces and the Royal Government. I think enough books have been written about it. General Tao Ma was an officer in rebellion against the political leadership of Prince Souvanna Phouma. He and his coup plotters could not have undertaken this entire operation unless they had support from other well organized foreign groups. There is no doubt that there existed at the time elements on the American and Thai sides who opposed the neutralist policies of Souvanna Phouma. My instructions were very clear; to support the government of Souvanna Phouma. I was there to carry out that policy. I did not have time to ask for guidance from Washington or from anybody

else. In any case, had the coup plotters succeeded in their takeover, there would have been elements in the U.S. who would have blamed me for failing to support Souvanna Phouma, and others for trying to stop the plotters from doing what was needed to stop Laos' sliding toward communism. I thought I was carrying out the official U.S. policy and I threw my own life in the balance to achieve our objective. Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma was now free to continue his efforts to bring the war to an end through negotiations. My superiors in Washington were generous in praising my actions. There were undoubtedly factions back home who regretted that the coup had failed. While most of the action centered around the airport, I also had to think about the safety of the Pathet Lao delegation who had come to Vientiane for the negotiations and who lived in a large house in town. Knowing that these Pathet Lao negotiators were very much a target of the coup plotters, I asked some of the American Marines guarding our Embassy to send a few marines to the Pathet Lao house to protect them against those who wanted to harm them. After General Tao Ma was dead and after all coup participants had fled across the border, I went over to the Pathet Lao Delegation where its chief negotiator, Phoumi Vongvichit, thanked me for the protection. The Pathet Lao Delegation members and their American protectors all joined in a glass of sparkling wine, the closest thing to Champagne, to celebrate the success of our intervention. The road for a negotiated solution was free. The Pathet Lao Delegation members understood that their lives had been in the balance if this coup had succeeded. At that point, we continued working with the two negotiators, Peng Pongsavan for the Royal Lao Government, and Phoumi Vongvichit for the Pathet Lao. They signed the famous Protocol which opened the door to a coalition government a few weeks after the aborted coup. On October 18, 1973, I received a personal, signed, letter from the President of the United States which reads as follows: “Dear John, You have my warm congratulations and my sincere thanks for the outstanding contribution you made to this successful completion of the Lao Protocol which was signed on September 14. You are far more than an observer and a reporter of the events leading up to the agreement. You also played a vital role as mediator and catalyst earning the respect and admiration of all the parties. You vigorously and skillfully represented the United States and thus helped fulfill the earnest desire of the American people to advance the cause of peace for the people of Indochina and the world. Sincerely, Richard Nixon.”

We never broke relations with Laos after 1975 when we left Vietnam and Cambodia. Christian Chapman was then in charge of our Embassy in Vientiane and he and Charlie Whitehouse knew how to build on what we had accomplished.

Q: I have an interview with him.

DEAN: Christian Chapman and Ambassador Whitehouse did an excellent job in honing our links with Laos. We never broke diplomatic relations with Laos, even during and after the withdrawal of all American presence from Vietnam and Cambodia in 1975. There was no genocide in Laos. Unlike Vietnam and Cambodia, there was no mass killings in Laos. A few people went to “reeducation camps” after 1975. Others fled to Thailand or the U.S., or France. A coalition government was formed in the autumn of 1973. Then my very good friend Ambassador Charles Whitehouse took charge of the

American Embassy. The new Lao Government included Pathet Lao and Royal Government ministers under the leadership of Souvanna Phouma. One day, Souvanna Phouma called at his home a meeting of all the ambassadors and chiefs of mission in Vientiane. At that occasion, he publicly thanked me for the constructive role I had played in helping to bring about a peaceful negotiated solution to a long conflict between the Royal Government of Laos and the Pathet Lao. In my long career which was to follow, it was one of the great moments in my life, having been instrumental in helping people find a controlled, negotiated solution rather than continuing military confrontation where I felt then and later, time was not on our side. This particular aspect of time is repeated in many messages which came out of Vientiane. Let me give you an example of some of the anecdotes. At one point as we were very close to a conclusion in a negotiated solution, the Pathet Lao had pushed the Royal Government off a hilltop and they, in turn, occupied the hilltop. They had broken the cease-fire agreement. Whereupon Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma called me and said: "John, should I call for a B-52 air strike?" At this time, there were no more regular air strikes and I told the Prime Minister: "If we have an air strike, we will kill the Pathet Lao on the top of the hill. They would be off the top of the hill and the Royal Lao Army would reoccupy that hilltop. But I fear that one week later, the Pathet Lao would come back and expel the Royal Lao Army from the hilltop. We would be back at the same point. Personally, I would not break the cease-fire on the B-52 raids just for this small incident. We are so close to the negotiation of a Lao coalition government which would end the hostilities that I would recommend that you do not call for an air strike." Before executing an air strike by American bombers we usually had to have the prior approval of the Prime Minister. I went back to the Embassy and reported this conversation by telegram through State Department channels. In return, I received an official reprimand from the Secretary of State, which is in my Foreign Service file, for not having asked for instructions from the State Department. I still believe that, when you are in the kitchen, you have not always got the time to ask the big chief how to handle an immediate problem. You just do your best.

Q: While we are on the subject of bombings, in the first place, you mentioned sometime back that we had tried the bombing pause. Could you explain what the effect of that was as a try-on? After Godley left, were you picking up the bombing side of things?

DEAN: By the summer of 1973 bombing by U.S. aircraft in Laos had stopped for all practical purposes. Public pressure in the United States and the opposition by a number of Senators and Congressmen had severely reduced B-52 strikes in Laos. Many legislators had come to Laos and seen for themselves that the bombing was a two-edged sword. While it may have saved a particular military situation for the moment, quite often it turned the local civilian population into violent opponents of the United States. This also happened in Cambodia. It is difficult to explain to the little guys on the ground that suddenly they get bombed, their cattle gets killed, and they have personal losses, but that this destruction carried out by a foreign nation is in the overall interests of the country. Not all bombs hit their target. The bombing halt undoubtedly helped me to negotiate the settlement in Laos. Had bombing been resumed, it would have been tantamount to admitting that negotiations had failed and did not lead to an end of hostilities.

Q: While the negotiations were going on, you had your 600-odd Americans there, many of whom were involved in supporting the war effort. We had Thai troops in there, in Laotian uniforms. We had tribesmen. In a way, this whole apparatus was geared for war. Here you were, trying to negotiate a peace. For some of these people, war was their profession, including the Americans. I would have thought it would be a little hard to reign them in.

DEAN: When you negotiate, you also have to have some way of putting pressure on your adversary to promote your point of view in the negotiations. I made a distinction between U.S./Thai support for Meo Hill Tribes fighting themselves against the Pathet Lao/North Vietnam, and the Royal Lao Armed Forces opposing the Pathet Lao. Quite often, I joined my colleagues in visits to Meo villages to better understand what was the situation on the ground. But in serious negotiations, one can do two things simultaneously: fight and negotiate. I put the emphasis on negotiation. My analysis at that point was that time was not on the side of the Royal Lao Government in pursuing warfare, and therefore I placed my emphasis on moving rapidly on negotiations.

Q: Could you talk about Henry Kissinger when he came and some other government officials? There must have been a lot of consultation. Did Henry Kissinger share with you the idea that time was not on our side?

DEAN: No. On that issue, we did not see eye to eye. The instructions I had been given by Dr. Kissinger when I left for Cambodia in early 1974 was "Go and fight. Don't get yourself involved in negotiations." To the best of my knowledge, Dr. Kissinger does not believe that the people in the field have a sufficient grasp of the global picture, nor the contacts, to negotiate a solution. In Laos, it was somewhat different: the local Lao factions were negotiating among themselves and we were just "facilitators." It is quite possible that elements in Washington supported my efforts with other important players, and perhaps even Dr. Kissinger was among them. When what you do appears to lead to positive results, others jump on the bandwagon. Dr. Kissinger and I have had a strange relationship. We have similar backgrounds. I admire Dr. Kissinger's keen intellect. Today, historians and pundits are a lot more critical of Dr. Kissinger than in the 1970s when Henry Kissinger was on the cover of TIME MAGAZINE as superman. It is a fact that you see a problem differently when you are on the ground as a field Commander than when you are in Washington and look at the overall picture. Any differences which may have existed between Dr. Kissinger and myself are largely a difference of perception. If you are on the ground and you see what's going on, you hear what people are saying, and you see the battle fatigue of the civilians and the fighting forces, you come to one conclusion. Therefore, as Field Commander, I may have had a more parochial vision compared to Dr. Kissinger who looked at the same issue from the global point of view - which might include how the Chinese felt about it, where the Soviets stood on developments, and how did Laos fit into the overall picture of containing communism. In bringing about a negotiated solution in Laos, I had the full support of the French Ambassador, André Ross, who went on to be Ambassador in Japan, India, and Secretary General at the French

Foreign Office. I had the impression that the Soviet Ambassador to Laos also favored emphasis on negotiations. As far as I know, no efforts were made to throw a monkey wrench into our efforts to find a negotiated solution. The Australian Ambassador also was helpful. In Vientiane, I felt that I had the support of some other foreign missions. Not getting much guidance from Washington, I did not feel completely isolated. It probably reinforced my tendency to take decisions without asking too many questions or soliciting advice from Washington.

Q: Can we talk a bit about the media in Laos? What was your impression of media interest and reporting there?

DEAN: I met many journalists - foreign and American - who were to follow me into Cambodia. The lady who wrote the book "The Fall of Phnom Penh," Dieudonnee Tan Berge, was a Dutch journalist in Laos and later in Cambodia. She interviewed me years later on her book on Indochina. She, as most journalists, was witness to what was going on. They saw the suffering of the civilian populations. Representatives of the non-governmental agencies and the International Red Cross had an accurate evaluation of the destruction, the battle fatigue of the civilian population, and they sympathized with the Lao people. On the whole in Laos, I felt that the media was not unfriendly. Certainly, the European press was not unfriendly. Yet, by the end of 1973, Laos was a side-show. Everybody was focusing on Vietnam. By 1973, the resident journalists, and even visiting press people, were not hostile to my efforts to press for a negotiated solution. Some were even helpful! A final word about Laos. The Lao got caught in a war not of their choosing, first by the French, and then by the United States. They certainly did not want Vietnamese occupation or communist ideology. They are a rather smiling, friendly, docile, uncomplicated people, who quickly gained the hearts of most foreigners who served there. They are not impulsive warriors. Most of them are not great intellectuals, but they have a lifestyle and a Buddhist approach to life which endears then to many people. They lived in a different era from the rest of their neighbors. More isolated today, Laos, still under communist-inspired leadership, is very much linked to the more dynamic Thai society. Helping to make peace was one of the most satisfying moments in my professional life. My wife and I still have some Lao friends. Fortunately, only a few Lao suffered after the 1975 communist take-over. Some of our friends found safety in France and in the United States. Laos was first caught in a struggle between Japan and Western colonialism. Then, reoccupation by the former colonial power. Then, war between France and Vietnamese communist expansionism; and finally, U.S. efforts to contain Vietnamese communism. Lao independence did not bring economic development nor modernity as envisioned by the Lao elite. War and conflict were the order of the day for more than 25 years for most of the rural population. Even after the American withdrawal from Indochina, Laos did not participate in the economic boom that characterized the 1980s and 1990s in Southeast Asia. Prince Souvanna Phouma, son of the Viceroy of Laos, saw the problem, not only what was best for the well educated elite but what he thought was best for the great majority of the Lao rural population. The solution of a coalition government with the communist Pathet Lao was probably the best solution possible at the time 1973. It did not last once South Vietnam was taken over completely by the North

and the Khmer Rouge entered Phnom Penh. The Indochina conflict was also a struggle for independence, without foreign interference. The interim coalition government solution which we helped to broker in 1973 led to a complete takeover by the Pathet Lao of the country in 1975. But the basic problem remains of taking a very under-developed society and country and bringing it into the modern world. For that task, the Laos of today still needs the West, including the United States. Whether Laos has a communist government or a non-communist regime does not really matter. Laos needs the know-how and the capital to develop its potential, and for that it must look to the West, Japan, and its more advanced neighbors in Southeast Asia.

Q: Let's move to Cambodia. How did your Cambodian assignment develop? You left Laos in October 1973.

DEAN: I stayed on with Ambassador Whitehouse in Laos for a very short period of time. It must have been in November that I left Laos for the last time. I never returned to that country, even after retirement from the Foreign Service, despite many invitations from Phoumi Vongvichit who was President of Laos by that time.

CAMBODIA

March 1974 I arrived in Cambodia. On my way out of Laos, and on my way to Washington, I had a long meeting with Tom Enders in Bangkok. Tom had been Chargé d' affaires in Phnom Penh and had done an excellent job. His briefing was useful. I respected Tom Enders. The media tried to give Tom a bad reputation, but the professionals knew better. Enders went on to become ambassador to many countries. He was also Assistant Secretary for Latin America where he was again criticized by the media. Later on, I used to get phone calls from the press or pundits inviting me to criticize Tom Ender's role in Cambodia. I did not comply. Most authors who have written about Cambodia did not know that Enders also tried to find negotiated solutions in Cambodia. He was way too intelligent a man not to see the problems ahead. As DCM or Charge, his recommendations to seek a negotiated solution also were not accepted, except that his recommendations were made in 1972 or 1973 when a negotiated solution was easier to implement. When I passed the confirmation hearings to be Ambassador to Cambodia, I flew commercially to Hong Kong, and from there, by a small U.S. Government jet, to Phnom Penh.

Since I had been to Cambodia before, I knew the important role Sihanouk Norodom had played in his country. I respected Sihanouk, and even liked him, for his efforts to defend his people against all outsiders.

Q: Was he the King at that point?

DEAN: He was at that point Prince Sihanouk and resided in exile in Beijing. About 800 or 900 years ago, a Chinese envoy was sent to the court of the Khmer kingdom, and he wrote the first report about Angkor Wat. At the time, Cambodia was the vassal of China.

Over centuries, as the Khmer kingdom lost power, Vietnam and Thailand tried to control what was left of Cambodia. Both the Thais and the Vietnamese had come originally from southern China and in their migration southward occupied certain areas which had been settled by the Khmers. In the early part of the 19th century, the Emperor of Annam even placed a viceroy on the throne in Phnom Penh. The Thais also had their eye on the Khmer provinces west of the Mekong, the rich areas of Battambang. Parts of Thailand and Vietnam had originally been part of the Khmer Empire. Hence, in the latter part of the 19th century, the Cambodians were quite willing to accept the far away rule of France. The French obviously had their own agenda in Cambodia, but in the 20th century they supported the Cambodian desire to remain outside the Thai or Vietnamese orbit. It was in 1941 that Sihanouk Norodom was selected by the French to take the throne. Sihanouk was only 18 years old at that tine. The French preferred Sihanouk to a Sisowath who had a better claim on the throne but was less pliable and older than Sihanouk. Sihanouk was schooled by French advisers. He really was a popular ruler and many rural folks in Cambodia looked up to him not only as a ruler, but as an intermediary between them and their gods.

Perhaps I should add that when I arrived in Phnom Penh in 1974 I knew that Sihanouk had had a problem with the CIA. Back in the 1960s, Sihanouk had written a book “My War with the CIA.” My former boss and friend, Randolph Kidder, was never allowed to present credentials to Sihanouk and hence, never served as U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia, although appointed to the job around 1966. Some people say this was the nefarious role of the French advisers who kept out the Americans. I did not see Cambodia - I still don't see Cambodia - in this way. The Cambodians saw the French for what they were, a colonial power with interests to play their “rôle civilisateur” (civilizing role), but also, the French dominant foreign role happened to fit the interests of the Cambodians. In 1966, some Khmer officials left the Royal Khmer Government and disappeared into the bush. They became the leaders of what became the “Khmer Rouge.” They were critical of Sihanouk's way of ruling Cambodia. In 1970 when Lon Nol and Sirik Matak overthrew Sihanouk, the latter was in France completing a medical tune-up in Grasse. Sihanouk first went to Moscow, and after a few days flew to Beijing where he remained for the duration of the war, until 1975. Hence, from 1970 onward, he saw the American support for Lon Nol and Sirik Matak as a revolt against him. If you believe in democracy, there is no doubt that Sihanouk basically had the support of the ordinary people of Cambodia. Perhaps some of the better educated people were aware of Sihanouk's shortcomings. In 1970, the revolt which brought Lon Nol and Sirik Matak to power made the United States, in Sihanouk's eyes, an adversary because he blamed the U.S. for supporting the coup against him in Phnom Penh. One must remember that at the beginning of the American intervention in Vietnam, Sihanouk had proclaimed Cambodia a neutral country. The U.S. considered the Ho Chi Minh Trail, on the extreme eastern border of Cambodia, to be part of the Vietnamese theater of operations. There is little doubt that the North Vietnamese used the trail inside Cambodian territory to move their equipment into South Vietnam in order to come into South Vietnam as protected as possible and to attack the South Vietnamese army from the west. That led to a policy decision by the United States to bomb the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

The bombing of the Ho Chi Minh Trail had preceded King Sihanouk's departure from the scene in 1970. He did not approve of the bombing, but he did not object, which was good enough for the American position. It led, however, to what we called American incursions into an area of Cambodia known as "the parrot beak." We used American ground forces for these incursions into a country which was avowedly neutral and where the ruler had been one of the founders of the Bandung Conference of Non-Aligned Nations. Cambodia was not in the same category as Vietnam. Sihanouk must be today the last survivor of the Bandung Non-Aligned Conference. After the 1970 coup in Phnom Penh, American bombing was then extended beyond the Ho Chi Minh Trail. At that point, American bombing was in support of the government which the Cambodians themselves established in the absence of Sihanouk in Beijing.

Lon Nol and Sirik Matak were very different people from Sihanouk. The atmosphere had changed. Cambodia was now a war zone. I presented credentials to President Lon Nol not in a government palace but in a military camp which looked like a Foreign Legion outpost with barbed wire and fencing all around it. Lon Nol was a likeable man, but he had already had a stroke by the time I arrived. He was hence slightly handicapped and used a cane for walking. For a military man, his physical handicap must have bothered him psychologically. The credentials ceremony started a relationship where I would see the Chief of State very often. Many of my contacts with him were devoted to trying to help him correct some of the shortcomings of the administration in the country. Lon Nol lived in a modest villa. His partner in the overthrow of Sihanouk, Prince Sirik Matak, who was Sihanouk Norodom's uncle, was no longer active in the government. When I got to Cambodia in March 1974, I called on him in his very elegant home and found him easier to work with than Lon Nol. Sirik Matak spoke flawless French. He had been Ambassador to Japan, and was more of a cultured aristocrat than a military leader. We maintained a close relationship to the very end when I tried to evacuate him. He wrote this heart-wrenching letter which was read by the President of the United States to the American Congress in order to obtain funds for Southeast Asia.

Above all, I had a wonderful staff of 200 Americans, the number authorized as the ceiling for my staff. Some of them had their wives with them.

Q: Your wife was with you?

DEAN: My wife was with me. At the end of our struggle, about end of February 1975, I had to order all wives out of the country. The military situation in Phnom Penh had become too precarious. They were evacuated to a U.S. military installation in Thailand, awaiting the denouement of the war. Congress had mandated that at no time more than 200 Americans could serve in Cambodia. This excluded wives. It meant that at the end of each day, I could not have more than 200 people physically present in Cambodia. Hence, if people came in from the outside, from Washington or from CINCPAC (the headquarters of the United States Navy in the Pacific in Hawaii), I would have to order other people to take the plane to go over to Thailand and wait until the visitors had left. I

applied the spirit and the letter of Congress mandate. The longer I stayed, the more I realized that most of the country was no longer in the hands of the Lon Nol and Sirik Matak regime. By 1974, Cambodia looked like a leopard skin with the Lon Nol government only controlling enclaves, most of them linked to an urban center. Much of the countryside was held and controlled at night by the Khmer Rouge.

Permit me to broach a subject where I have doubts and where there is room for many different interpretations... The American bombings from the air of Cambodian areas far away from the Ho Chi Minh Trail were justified by us on the basis that they were under the control of the Khmer Rouge and hence against the Lon Nol regime we supported. But those of us in Cambodia already then realized that these bombings created a great undercurrent of anti-Americanism among poorly educated farmers who only had to worry about survival. They then became easy prey for the Khmer Rouge to be recruited into their forces. They did not quite understand why they were being hurt. Did our policies of open support for a rebellious regime against Prince Sihanouk, the legal ruler of Cambodia, help the Khmer Rouge recruitment policy? Who were Lon Nol's allies, in addition to the U.S.: the Thais, and South Vietnam - both countries who were feared by the average Cambodian. What about Cambodia's earlier declarations of neutrality? Nobody really respected that self-proclaimed neutrality of Cambodia. Neither the Lon Nol regime, nor the Khmer Rouge, nor any of those countries supporting either side. But I am inclined to believe that all these factors helped the recruitment policy of the Khmer Rouge who made nationalism one of their central themes. That the Khmer Rouge were brutal, inhuman, and committed acts against humanity, everybody knew that, and during our tenure there we documented some of these events. The press went to see the various sites where the Khmer Rouge had committed these atrocities against their own people, in the years 1974 and 1975.

Q: You mean that it was already well-known, documented, how they were operating?

DEAN: That's right. We knew that the Khmer Rouge were ruthless butchers, and we had sent to Washington documented examples of their brutalities. The regime of Lon Nol had some good generals who fought well. They also had corruption, soldiers not being paid, shortages of ammunition, etc... The job of our team of 200 military and civilians was to help and assist the Lon Nol regime in rectifying some of the shortcomings so they could withstand the Khmer Rouge military attacks.

Q: Could you give me some names of the embassy staff and maybe your military?

DEAN: One of the finest military officers I had was Brigadier General Jack Palmer, who is dead. Jack was a dedicated military officer, with an able, beautiful wife who also worked with the wives of some of the senior Cambodian military officers. I remember him in one of the most difficult moments of his life. We were beginning the evacuation, on April 12, 1975, when he received a phone call from the Cambodian General in charge of the aviation who said: “Jack, are you evacuating and leaving us alone here?” Jack Palmer had to waffle his reply (i.e. deny) in order to ensure that the evacuation would go

smoothly, but his relationship with the Cambodian General was one of honor and friendship and lying in the interest of the security of the American evacuation must have hurt. I remember seeing him as he answered that phone call. Our staff, both military and civilian, worked every day for well over 8 hours a day. All members of our staff were committed to doing their best to help the Cambodian Government to withstand the Khmer Rouge and keep on fighting. I owe a particular debt to my deputy, Robert V. Keeley, who got to be ambassador in three different countries and was a particularly well-known figure for his straight and honest stand in Greece. If our evacuation from Cambodia went so smoothly at the end, it is to his credit. We have remained friends ever since Mali where we first met in 1960. Keeley had been my choice for the position of Deputy Chief of Mission. Jim Engle had been in Phnom Penh in this slot, but he did not stay very long. Robert Keeley is a thoroughly fair-minded and honest man, one of the ablest drafters in the Foreign Service. While at times we differed and discussed matters, I usually ended up listening to him. The Chief of USIA was another great person. From time to time, I briefed myself the 20-30 accredited journalists on the state of play in Cambodia.

Early on in my tenure, I tried to find a person who could do for me in Cambodia what I was able to do in Laos to find a negotiated "controlled" solution. My orders when I had left Dr. Kissinger were: "John, you go there and fight and help the Khmers to withstand the communists' efforts to control the country. Don't get yourself involved in political solutions." While I had these instructions from the Secretary of State, in early 1974 I received word from various sources regarding efforts by the Romanians to act as intermediaries. Every time I heard about possible intermediaries for negotiations, I would talk with my fellow Harvard graduate Sydney Schanberg. He later wrote a book which was made into a movie "The Killing Fields." As a matter of fact, Sydney often wrote stories from Phnom Penh which tried to support my penchant for a "controlled solution." At one point, I had told him: "You know, I understand the Khmer Rouge have a list of eight Cambodian leaders who have to be removed from power before they are willing to come to the negotiating table. I would personally urge all eight of them to leave Cambodia, if this would get both sides to the negotiating table." Well, I did not know when I was on the record and when I was off the record. The NEW YORK TIMES printed my offer on its front page. Sydney was never unfriendly. The questions he asked - "What are you doing on the negotiations? How do you see the situation today?" - were usually designed to advance my idea of a "controlled solution." At one point, he said on television, years later, "Kissinger shot the dove off Dean's shoulder." As for my messages to Washington, some people accused me of getting perhaps a little shrill. My leitmotif remained: "Time is not on our side. We must find a controlled solution. Otherwise, there will be a bloodbath." The newspapers printed it. THE ECONOMIST printed the same message a few weeks before we left Phnom Penh.

Q: Did you find that the State Department was leaking like mad?

DEAN: No. Very honestly speaking, we were in Cambodia and we really did not have the time to focus on how Washington handled our messages. We were living in a beleaguered city. We spoke to the press and we did not mind saying things the way we saw the

situation. Miss Elizabeth Becker, the WASHINGTON POST freelancer, a lovely young lady and a highly motivated person, was in Cambodia in my days but she did not see the Khmer Rouge in 1974 or 1975 in the same light as we did. We saw the Khmer Rouge as a bunch of butchers. We could not turn over a nation of 7 million people to these butchers. Some of our critics in those days saw the Khmer Rouge as "agrarian reformers," and that was how they tried to depict themselves. The international and American press was not on our side at that time. We were perceived as trying to hold on and impose our will against these "agrarian nationalists" who were opposing the "corrupt, imposed regime of Lon Nol."

Q: For the researcher in the future, I hope they will go back to the files of the "Washington Post," the "New York Times," and other newspapers and magazines to see how this whole period, 1974-1975, was being reported.

Was there any place to negotiate? This seems sort of amorphous.

DEAN: This is exactly the position Dr. Kissinger explains in his book which was published in June of 1999. He claims there was nobody to negotiate with in Phnom Penh. Let me explain what I meant by a "controlled solution." A controlled solution is that if you have the desire to find a negotiated controlled solution, you can find it. It may be a bad one. But my position, starting in 1974, and it got shriller and shriller as we came towards April of 1975, was that a bad solution is better than a human tragedy. The world is not white or black. It very often can be very dark grey. But at least, it would not lead to turning defenseless Khmers over to the Khmer Rouge. The argument you will find in all our messages was always the same: there is still a pro-government army, a fairly efficient navy, and a fledgling air force fighting on the side of Lon Nol. In addition to the military, a group of hard working, well-educated Cambodians who understood the danger of a Khmer Rouge take-over, remained in Phnom Penh. A civilian administration remained in place - perhaps not always efficient - but it was there. Hence, we had something to negotiate with. When the other side takes over and there is nobody to negotiate with because they are all gone - the army, navy, air force, civilians - it is a simple take-over; it's a defeat and it leaves all power exclusively in the hands of the victors. In my vision, the man who undoubtedly enjoyed the most support in Cambodia remained Prince Sihanouk, even when he was in exile in Beijing. I tried to get him involved in a search for a compromise solution. I urged that we try Malaysians as intermediaries. The Malaysians offered themselves for this mission. The Indonesians offered themselves. The French were always there, willing to find an alternative solution to fighting until the end. Whatever a "controlled solution" entailed, it would have been contrary to what we had tried to achieve by the policy pursued by Washington. I felt in Phnom Penh that we could not just walk away from our responsibilities to the Cambodian people. But, that appeared to me more and more a possibility.

Q: How about Congress?

DEAN: The reason I began to plan for an eventual closing of the American Mission to Cambodia was that Congress was debating the reduction or elimination of funds to support the struggle against the Khmer Rouge. We had no idea whether new funds would be voted for Cambodia, just to finish the fiscal year, or for the new fiscal year. In January 1975, I went on American and international television and pleaded: "Don't walk out on the Cambodian people, but rather give us the necessary funds so that we can keep going to gain time to find a "negotiated solution." There were Senators in Congress who agreed with my position. In fact, there was a move in Congress to vote an additional $122 million for the period March-April to the end of June 1975, but during this period a negotiated solution should be found. Dr. Kissinger did not testify before Congress on this issue. He sent his Deputy. Perhaps he disapproved of this approach. Personally, I felt that even if we were dealt a poor hand, (perhaps no more funding), I still had to find a solution. I could not just turn over the Cambodian people to what we knew was a ruthless regime. Our messages from Phnom Penh were crystal clear: if the Khmer Rouge takes control of the country, there was going to be a bloodbath. The exact word was "bloodbath." It turned out to be even worse: a genocide. Determined to find a controlled solution, I wrote through the French Embassy in Phnom Penh letters to my friend Etienne Manac'h who was at that time French Ambassador in Beijing. He brought about the meeting in Martinique in December 1974 of President Gerald Ford with the President of France, Giscard d'Estaing. They issued an invitation to Prince Sihanouk to return to Phnom Penh and head a coalition government representing the two Cambodian sides. Sihanouk at that time was the Head of the Khmer Rouge Government in exile. Probably Sihanouk was only the nominal head, but his name meant so much not only inside Cambodia but also on the international scene that his involvement would assure the success of this effort. To convey the invitation, the French sent an ambassador to Beijing but the Chinese authorities would not give him a visa. Sihanouk answered that the offer came too late and that he could not return to Phnom Penh. Was he a free agent at the time? I don't know. Did he really feel it was too late, that he saw the handwriting on the wall? He turned down the offer. I would like to say, the fact that the President of the United States did go to Martinique for this meeting and helped in issuing this invitation, showed there was in the United States some support for the effort not to leave Cambodia in an uncontrolled situation.

Q: You have these orders from Kissinger to fight the war. The reports going back were that the war was unwinnable. Your letters to Manac'h and others…

DEAN: The idea of working with the French may have been anathema to some elements in Washington. I was grasping at any straw. Whoever offered to help search for a solution, I passed it on to Washington. At the end, I got a message saying - and it is also in the most recent book of Dr. Kissinger - that there was a feeling in Washington that I was doing this for the record rather than really believing in it. I think Dr. Kissinger himself knocks down this thesis. Personally, I was not interested whether it would make the American negotiators look strong or weak, politically correct or incorrect, but as long as I had something to negotiate with, I was trying to find a "controlled solution."

Q: At this point, it was not as though we were going to win the war. If you are not going to win the war, you either negotiate or you go down the tubes.

DEAN: Cambodia always was a side show. The big show was Vietnam. In 1974 the Vietnamese were still holding. It was only in 1975 that the South Vietnamese military really began to crumble badly. On January 1, 1975, I went by helicopter to look at the military situation in Battambang Province, the western province, adjoining Thailand. The Cambodian authorities admitted that the situation was not good. Visiting a Buddhist monastery in an out- of-the-way densely wooded site, I came across some magnificent ruins of a Khmer temple at least 1,000 years old. This antique site was not on anybody's map at the time. I felt like some of the early western travelers who first saw the Khmer ruins in the 19th century. I then went to the pagoda to bring rice to the monks. They took me outside in the back of their pagoda. There, in the ground, was a huge fabulous Cambodian sculpture, I would say 1.200 years old. The sculpture was so enormous - it was a four-face Cambodian sculpture, and only one side was easily visible - that a crane would be needed to lift it out of the ground. Fortunately, such earth moving equipment was not available at the time and the art piece stayed in the ground. I then rushed back to Phnom Penh because I had been alerted by radio that the Khmer Rouge offensive had started in earnest. It was January 1st, 1975.

One of the people who was indispensable in our effort to resist the enemy's offensive was Richard Armitage, an Annapolis graduate, later Secretary of the Army and today Deputy Secretary of State. He was in charge of helping the barge convoys up the Mekong River from Saigon to reach safely Phnom Penh. These barges brought essential ammunition, rice, and other equipment. When the Khmer Rouge began to dig into the banks of the Mekong River in order to interdict the transport by river of essential items, we needed Armitage to help us. The Khmer Rouge were shooting at the river convoys from eye level. If there was ammunition on it, just one shot, and the entire cargo would blow up. Armitage thought of the idea of putting metallic armor around these barges so that the bullets would not penetrate the cargo. At that point, the Khmer Rouge found different kinds of rocket launchers which would go up into the air and drop into the barges.

Q: Sort of like a mortar.

DEAN: Like a mortar. When mortars were used, the armored shields were not of much help. At that point, General Jack Palmer, my Military Adviser, came to see me. He said: “John, we can't get rid of the Khmer Rouge dug in the sides of the Mekong River. Regular aerial bombing won't do the job. Could we authorize the Cambodian Air Force to use “lazy dog” grenades?” “What is a 'lazy dog?” I asked. “It is a grenade dropped from the sky which explodes about six to seven feet off the ground. It has a tendency to explode at a level of a person standing up. That weapon is against the Geneva Convention,” Jack said. “John, we should try that explosive in order to dislodge the Khmer Rouge so that we can get the river convoys through again - otherwise, we would have a huge problem of getting the necessary ammunition and food in sufficient quantities to those Cambodian areas holding out against the Khmer Rouge.” I went into

my office and reflected on the idea. I decided I would not ask Washington for advice. I had learned from General Abrams and General Wyant that I was in charge, and I had to make the decision. I knew that if I would refer the matter back to Washington, they would have had a tough time putting an affirmative reply in writing. (For once, perhaps Washington was happy that I did not put "the monkey on their back.")

Q: I am surprised - I mean, we have daisy cutters, and all this sort of thing - that are against...

DEAN: Allegedly, this weapon is against the Geneva Convention - which we had signed. Nevertheless, I gave the instruction to use it. I remembered the instructions that the Secretary had given me to "go and fight." We were in a war, declared or undeclared, and our job was to help the Cambodian forces to resist the Khmer Rouge. I gave the instruction to also use that weapon. But it was of no avail. The Mekong was progressively closed to our shipping going up to Phnom Penh. Therefore, our military in Washington, with the help of our military bases in Thailand, thought up an airlift like we had in Berlin, to supply by air Phnom Penh and the outlying districts under the control of the Lon Nol government. Anywhere from six to eight DC-6s landed every day at the airfield in Phnom Penh bringing food and ammunition. These items were then redistributed to other areas.

Q: Was Sihanoukville open?

DEAN: Sihanoukville was open. There was severe fighting around Sihanoukville, but the road between Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh was kept open. That road is the link from Sihanoukville on the ocean, winding its way through a narrow mountain path, to Phnom Penh. It had been built by American economic assistance in the 1950s. However, the Khmer Rouge made increasingly determined efforts in early 1975 to cut the road at the mountain path and even tried to overrun the Lon Nol troops at that post. Unfortunately, some of the troops had not been paid for some time and that gave rise to one of the more gruesome incidents, which I don't think is germane to our main story.

Q: What happened?

DEAN: They did not get paid, and when the paymaster cane with the money many months later, they killed him. One of the main shortcomings of the Lon Nol regime was inefficiency. In all fairness to the regime, it was difficult, when much of the countryside was in the hands of the Khmer Rouge, to get pay, food, and support to the troops on time.

Q: Let's talk a little about the military situation. What was the basic problem? Were the Viet Cong involved? Was the Khmer Rouge doing it on its own? Why were they so much more effective than the Lon Nol army?

DEAN: The Khmer Rouge received strong support from the North Vietnamese, and also equipment from China. The Khmer Rouge had no transportation problem, i.e., getting supplies from North Vietnam to the areas under Khmer Rouge control. I am not sure

where the Soviets stood. We had a Soviet Diplomatic Mission in Phnom Penh. As a matter of fact, we helped to evacuate a Soviet journalist in April 1975. The Khmer Rouge held most of the countryside at night, and certainly were also "present" during the day time. The Lon Nol regime held the urban centers and small towns. In the countryside at night, the Khmer Rouge were able to move quite freely. They had no shortage of equipment. By 1974-75 more and more people had joined their ranks, by force, by conviction, or both. You must also remember that the father figure, Sihanouk, was Head of the Khmer Rouge movement and that mattered for the average, poor farmer in Cambodia. Sihanouk's role in the Khmer Rouge hierarchy was a major attraction for the average little Cambodian to ally himself with a cause headed by Prince Sihanouk. Sihanouk was a great asset to the Khmer Rouge.

Q: One hears so much about when the Khmer Rouge took over Phnom Penh that you had basically very young kids doing this.

DEAN: That's right.

Q: Were mature adults involved too?

DEAN: Yes. But the bulk of the troops which entered Phnom Penh in April 1975 after the collapse of the Lon Nol regime and our departure from Cambodia, were young people, many of them from the minority hill tribes who had been recruited by the Khmer Rouge. Among the adults were also some of the most brutal thugs, including some French-educated Cambodians. Presumably idealists, they had become murderers. One of them was a graduate of Polytechnique. France's leading engineering school.

But there were also many Cambodians who honestly believed or hoped that once the Khmer Rouge had taken over, the Cambodians could settle their differences by peaceful means. For example, the Prime Minister of the Lon Nol regime, Long Boret, believed that the old school "tie" of having attended the same French Lycee in Hanoi, back in the good old days, with some Khmer Rouge leaders, would help him to survive after the Khmer Rouge take-over. It was one of the great mistakes the Cambodian bourgeoisie made: that everything could be forgotten and forgiven. We knew what to expect from the Khmer Rouge and we tried to tell our contacts, especially towards the end, that a Khmer Rouge victory meant a bloodbath.

During most of my tenure, our team was sending back messages to Washington about the difficulty of supplying the Phnom Penh regime, the war weariness, and that time was not on our side. I pleaded for a "controlled solution." My Malaysian colleague agreed with that approach. So did the French. Every time I received an indication of a country trying to help us in the search of a "controlled solution," I would send a report to Washington. I understand that at some of Secretary Kissinger's early morning briefings Dr. Kissinger would inquire: "And what have we received during the night from Professor Dean in Phnom Penh?" He was skeptical of any effort by Embassy Phnom Penh to find a negotiated solution.

Q: Was Pol Pot just a name, or was there contact?

DEAN: No. We had no contact whatsoever - direct or indirect - with Pol Pot. Pol Pot was merely a name. In Phnom Penh, we had contacts with Cambodians who knew other leaders of the Khmer Rouge. Also, the C.I.A. had a good idea of the makeup and leadership of the Khmer Rouge. The daily briefings I received from Mr. David Whipple, C.I.A. Station Chief, helped us. He gave us documentation of some of the barbarous acts being committed by the Khmer Rouge before April 1975. We knew that the Khmer Rouge were not "agrarian reformers." In addition to the C.I.A. briefing, we also had a strictly military briefing every morning. Based on these intelligence assessments and our own impression received from traveling around the country or talking with knowledgeable Cambodians and foreigners, we continued to send message after message to Washington pleading not to abandon Cambodia to the Khmer Rouge. When in December of 1974 Sihanouk turned down the invitation of the Presidents of the United States and of France to return to Phnom Penh to find a compromise solution to the war between the two Cambodian factions, it looked as if Sihanouk was no longer a free agent and was merely being used by the Khmer Rouge for his tremendous prestige. But in earlier years, 1972-73, he might have been able to play that role. As a matter of fact, when I had finished successfully the negotiations in Laos in September of 1973, I had sent from Laos a cable to Washington in which I had suggested that the role of Souvanna Phouma in Laos could be duplicated by Sihanouk in Cambodia. After all, Sihanouk was one of the founders of the Non-Aligned Movement and favored a neutral position between two worlds. I never got an answer (but I still have in my possession that cable). When Sihanouk refused to play the role of peace-maker in December 1974, I looked for other ways to avoid a tragedy. But while remaining wedded to the idea of a "controlled solution," I did all I could to shore up the Cambodian military fighting the Khmer Rouge. Positions held by the Lon Nol forces received our visit. Nine Generals who fought well were rewarded. Ammunition and food were delivered and our staff made sure, to the extent possible, that the supplies reached their destination. Sometimes, some journalists misunderstood our efforts to praise and reward units who fought bravely against the Khmer Rouge. Some journalists covering the war may have misread completely the nature of the Khmer Rouge and what lay in store for the Cambodian people.

Q: Did you feel that the press in a way was exercising... I had the feeling an awful lot of the press in those days was pretty amateurish. They were all trying to make a name for themselves as being reporters. Did you have the feeling that they were trying to cut you down?

DEAN: I don't think they were trying to cut me down. They mostly thought that the U.S. was supporting a losing cause, and perhaps some journalists were not as moved as we were at the Embassy when in April 1975 we left Cambodia by helicopter. The departure of the American staff with some Cambodians on April 12, 1975 was for most of us a dramatic moment in our lives. Dieudonnee Ten Berge, a Dutch journalist at the time in Cambodia, wrote a book entitled "The Fall of Phnom Penh." In it she describes the last

few months before the fall of Phnom Penh in April 1975, as seen through her eyes and other fellow journalists. She also interviewed me in the 1990s for her book. Some observers saw me as a dove, others saw me as a militarist. One journalist, Sydney Schanberg of the New York Times correctly saw me as a negotiator who saw the handwriting on the wall.

Little by little, reporters noted a difference in emphasis between Dr Kissinger and myself, on how to end the Cambodian struggle. My efforts to isolate Cambodia from Vietnam - something I succeeded in doing in Laos - were unsuccessful. In Washington, the majority of the Administration saw Cambodia as part of our overall effort to stem the communist drive for control over what used to be French Indochina. In this vision, the fate of Cambodia was linked to that of Vietnam. I saw every country with its own history and past. The fact that Cambodians have no love for Vietnamese was clearly brought out by the bellicose relationship the Khmer Rouge maintained with communist Vietnam during their years in power.

At the beginning of 1975, it became apparent that the Khmer Rouge offensive meant greater expenditure of ammunition by the Lon Nol forces. The closure of the Mekong River preventing the supplying of military equipment, ammunition, and food to the Cambodians by this mode of transportation also meant switching to the use of U.S. airplanes to bring these essential items to Phnom Penh and the outlying districts under Royal Khmer government control. All this implied the need of additional funding, beyond the original amounts made available for Cambodia by Congress. In short, there was not enough money to keep on going until the end of the U.S. Fiscal Year: June 30, 1975. The Cambodian military also knew that. If there was a cut-off of U.S. funds, the Cambodians would no longer have the means to fight on. There would not be any food for the people in the government controlled enclaves ammunitions would run low. Some U.S. Senators came out to see for themselves what was going on. I met with them as a group, as well as separately. I pleaded: “Give us time to find a controlled solution.” But that was not the official policy of the Administration. Certain Senators, Congressmen, and staffers returned to Washington and spoke up in favor of additional funding for Cambodia. It was March 1975. Was it too late? Perhaps.

In the meantime, our Mission in Phnom Penh was in a progressively more precarious situation. The Khmer Rouge were advancing toward Phnom Penh. Perhaps our telegrams to Washington became more alarming by the day. But all members of our Mission were trying to avoid a situation where the United States would leave Cambodia with its tail between its legs and abandon an ally that we had pledged to support.

Q: Was there much contact between you and Graham Martin? How did this work out?

DEAN: Yes, there was quite a bit of contact. As we approached the closing days of our presence In Vietnam, I got the impression from some telephone calls I received from Martin that, on certain basic issues, Ambassador Martin disagreed with top policy makers in Washington. In all fairness, the evacuation of Saigon was a much larger operation than

our departure from Phnom Penh and also did not go as smoothly as ours did. I think Graham Martin was trying his best in Saigon but only came very late to the conclusion that a compromise settlement was needed. By the time he did, the North Vietnamese were at the gates of Saigon.

We did have a great deal of contact with Admiral Gayler, the Commander of CINCPAC, the U.S. naval headquarters for the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii, under whose military control we were. The Admiral and his predecessor visited us several times during my tenure. Relations were very cordial. When Admiral Gayler came, he came with 10 additional officers. Since I had a 200-man ceiling on our Mission, we had to put 10 of our people out of Cambodia in order to respect the letter and spirit of our commitment to Congress. The discussions we had with CINCPAC were especially useful as the time approached for our evacuation. When we left Phnom Penh on April 12, 1975, I took the American flag and the President's flag with me slung over my left arm. Graham Martin also left with the American flag in his arms. For me, it was a last minute effort to shield the honor of our country.

When I returned to the States after our departure from Southeast Asia, I went to see the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Sparkman. The two flags I had taken out with me from Phnom Penh were given back to me. The Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee indicated to me at that meeting that the U.S. Mission in Phnom Penh had done a good job for the United States. Unfortunately, the Senator was not as kind with Ambassador Graham Martin. I felt that my colleague in Saigon had a more complex situation in Vietnam. I also know that in the closing days of our presence in Vietnam, Graham Martin was desperately trying to find a compromise solution. When he retired from the Foreign Service, he took a number of messages which could have cleared his name with him. One day, after retirement, these highly classified messages were found in the trunk of his car. Apparently, his car had a flat tire. He closed the car, left it on the side of the road, and walked a couple of hundred yards to a motel where he spent the night. He had hoped to find somebody at the motel to fix the flat next morning. During the night, people broke into his car and opened the trunk. To their disappointment, there was no money, nothing of value, just a sheath of messages which he had kept as a way of clearing his name. The next morning, these messages were strewn all over the countryside. I lost contact with Ambassador Graham Martin. He had a very distinguished career. But when things go wrong, politicians look for scapegoats.

I was more fortunate than Graham Martin. Few people criticized my tenure in Cambodia. Moreover, after our dramatic departure from Vietnam and Cambodia, people in the U.S. wanted to move on and forget about Southeast Asia. I was very lucky. I was offered a wonderful next ambassadorial position: Denmark.

Before closing the chapter on Cambodia, I would like to relate what was for most of us one of the most tragic moments of our service in Cambodia: the departure from Phnom Penh.

Q: Before we get to that. I've got two questions. Was Graham Martin telling you to hang in there? Were you sharing your ideas of how to get the hell out of this situation by negotiations?

DEAN: He was very much aware of my long struggle for a controlled solution. He obviously had much better links to the White House and the State Department than I did. I was a first-time ambassador. He had been ambassador to some key countries like Italy, Argentina, and Thailand. He knew a lot of people in Washington who listened to him. I sent him a copy of some of our messages addressed to Washington so that he knew what we were thinking and doing. I also visited with him in Saigon.

While our jobs in the evacuation were similar, they were also very different. The number of people for whom our Mission was responsible was limited. In Saigon, that number was enormous. For reasons I cannot explain, people in the United States thought we had done the best possible job under incredibly difficult circumstances. Graham Martin and his team did not get the same reception. Perhaps our Mission in Saigon was under the impression that the U.S. would not walk away from its responsibilities in Vietnam. After all, when the French were losing the war after the battle of Dien Bien Phu, the Geneva Conference of 1954 provided for an orderly controlled ending of the war. Could anybody think that we would leave Vietnam by helicopter from the roof of our embassy? Graham Martin's job was more difficult than mine. The evacuation of Phnom Penh had been planned with CINCPAC for many weeks. I am not sure that the same contingency plans were drawn up for Vietnam. In addition, in Saigon, the American Government was responsible for the safety of many more people than our Mission in Phnom Penh - American officials, plus private American citizens, more foreigners, more Vietnamese closely linked to the U.S... In Phnom Penh, we were able to move people over a number of weeks because we had empty DC-8s leaving every day Phnom Penh Airport for Thailand. This permitted us to move people out, and not wait for the last moment.

Q: Was it done quietly?

DEAN: It was well organized and those who needed to know how to avail themselves of U.S. assistance knew how our system worked. Even Cambodians and foreigners in the outlying provincial enclaves knew about our daily shuttle service to Thailand. At the same time, Americans in the outlying districts came to Phnom Penh by helicopter and then flew by fixed wing aircraft to Thailand. In Phnom Penh, we had also sent all dependents out of Cambodia several weeks before the final evacuation.

Q: Our Mission in Saigon was doing some of the same. There was a period when we were even getting orphans out of Vietnam.

DEAN: We received the same request to evacuate Cambodian orphans and we complied with this request. They were moved to safety, but obviously they were only a small number compared to those who needed help. In the closing days of our presence in Cambodia, some events occurred in Southeast Asia which had an impact on our own

decision-taking process. One of them was a difference of views with the Commander of CINCPAC, General Gayler, on how we would leave Phnom Penh. By that time, in March/April of 1975, the city of Da Nang in Central Vietnam had fallen to the North Vietnamese. The photograph in the newspapers reflected the effort of some people to flee the city. It was bedlam. In Da Nang, many Vietnamese had close links to Americans. They wanted desperately to leave Da Nang because they feared that their very lives were in danger. As the North Vietnamese advanced on the city, some desperate Vietnamese tried to leave on departing aircrafts which were full up, by holding on the wings of the plane. Others tried to climb into boats which were over-loaded and were pushed off by those who were in the boats. Seeing those pictures of despair in the newspapers, I had suggested to Admiral Gayler that we should leave Phnom Penh not by fixed wing because the airport was about 4-5 miles out of town, but from a football field very near to the Embassy, in town, from where we would be extracted by helicopter. After a number of exchanges of cables and after the Admiral had come to Phnom Penh himself to survey the situation first hand, our view prevailed. Selecting the safest, nearest, and most convenient site as the staging area for our departure made a great deal of difference when push came to shove.

There was also a difference of views with Washington over who we at Embassy-Phnom Penh were responsible for. Obviously, all official and non-official Americans were eligible for evacuation. In reply to a query about which Cambodians should we take out, Washington suggested: Cambodians in the government and Cambodian military closely linked to the U.S. Also, all well-educated Cambodians who Washington felt (and rightly so) were a target for the Khmer Rouge once they came to power. Our Mission took exception to that cable, pointing out that anybody who had been working for Americans, Cambodian or third country national, whether he or she was illiterate or a Ph.D., was in danger. Our team agreed that "we would take everybody who wanted to go, whose life could be endangered." We took gardeners, houseboys, Koreans working for our Mission, Cambodian Generals or Ministers, or educated Cambodians. One of them was a Cambodian atomic scientist who was still in Phnom Penh and who later went to work for the French Atomic Energy Commission outside of Paris. In short, we took people whose lives would be endangered when the Khmer Rouge came to power. I also sent helicopters into the provinces to bring back some members of the International Red Cross. Sixteen of them came back to Phnom Penh by U.S. helicopters. I went to see the Archbishop of Phnom Penh, at the beginning of the year, he believed that all clergy, nuns, monks, regard-less of nationality, would be safe. Some of the young French priests were not particularly supportive in their sermons of the American role in Cambodia. By the end of March 1975, I pleaded with the Archbishop to permit all Cambodian priests, nuns, monks, whose lives might be in danger, to leave with our planes for Thailand to await there developments. After a great deal of pleading, I was able to take out some 40 nuns and monks on the DC-8s to Thailand. The Cambodian Bishop of Phnom Penh refused to leave his flock and was among the first to be killed by the Khmer Rouge. Seven or eight years later, when His Holiness the Pope came to Thailand, where I was then the U.S. Ambassador, the same Archbishop (a Frenchman) accompanied the Pope on his trip. In front of the Pope, the former Archbishop of Cambodia - who had been my interlocutor in

1975 - fell into my arms and started sobbing and crying. Perhaps he had realized that back in 1975, he had waited too long in authorizing the evacuation of the Cambodian clergy and Christians. After the Paris Accords on Cambodia in the early 1990s, the same man was named again Archbishop of Cambodia. I can only assume that this very decent man was so horrified by what the Khmer Rouge did that he wanted to contribute to the moral and physical reconstruction of the Cambodian society in the 1990s. But the Archbishop was not alone in his assessment of the consequences of a Khmer Rouge victory. There were quite a number of people - both Cambodian and foreigners - who believed that one could deal with the Khmer Rouge. In my opinion, you could only deal with them if you had something to negotiate with. The existence of a Cambodian army, navy, air force, and educated elite which was able to govern, and major foreign powers who could help on the international scene, would permit the Phnom Penh side to have sufficient weight to be taken seriously in a negotiation by the Khmer Rouge.

In February of 1975, we had sent our wives and all dependents of our Mission to Thailand. We also reduced the size of our staff in Cambodia. The evacuation from Phnom Penh, which went off without a hitch, was run by my good friend, Robert V. Keeley. Again, I would like to give him full credit for all he did for our embattled Mission. We were also on the telephone with Washington shouting "Help us: We are going under. We are going to leave this country unprotected." On the other end, on the telephone, was our old, dear friend, Assistant Secretary Phil Habib. The time of negotiation had run out but even Phil Habib could not convince Dr. Kissinger that the existing "fight on" policy was going to lead to a disaster. (Ambassador Keeley's Oral History gives some interesting details on that telephone call and subsequent telegram from Washington on this subject.)

Q: There was no doubt by then about when this was going to end?

DEAN: Certainly by the end of February and the first week of March, the Khmer Rouge were pressing hard. We used that time to move as many Cambodians, Americans, and foreigners as possible to safety in Thailand. We had set up a system imagined by Robert Keeley (DCM). Ray Perkins (Chief political Section), and Tim Carney, a junior officer who spoke Cambodian. Tim became Ambassador later in his life. All those who felt endangered were sent out by plane over a period of 8 weeks before our departure. In addition, we had set up a procedure whereby key Cambodian leaders were told to send an assistant or secretary to the U.S. Embassy at 6:00 a.m. every day to find out the situation and decisions taken by us regarding taking people to safety. That system worked rather well when on this fateful day of April 12, 1975 we had decided to leave Phnom Penh by helicopter.

These aides and secretaries all came on the morning of April 12. One of them was the aide to Sirik Matak. We had prepared during the night a message stating that we were evacuating, and urging the recipient of the note to come along. In his reply to this message, Sirik Matak wrote one of the most heart-wrenching letters ever sent to an American official:

Phnom Penh
12 April 1975

Dear Excellency and Friend,

I thank you very sincerely for your letter and for your offer to transport me towards freedom. I cannot, alas, leave in such a cowardly fashion. As for you, and in particular for your great country, I never believed for a moment that you would have this sentiment of abandoning a people which has chosen liberty. You have refused us your protection, and we can do nothing about it.

You leave, and my wish is that you and your country will find happiness under this sky. But, mark it well, that if I shall die here on the spot and in my country that I love, it is too bad, because we all are born and must die (one day). I have only committed this mistake of believing in you the Americans.

Please accept, Excellency and dear friend, my faithful and friendly sentiments.

(signed) Sirik Matak

Basically, Lon Nol was no longer in Cambodia. On April 1, 1975, Lon Nol had left with his immediate family, via Indonesia, for Hawaii and had found refuge there. He died some years later a broken man.

Many people asked me whether Lon Nol had stacked away millions of dollars in the United States. The answer is no. I think the Cambodian Central Bank had moved a few hundred thousand dollars in advance of Lon Nol's departure, but it was not a huge amount. Originally, he had asked for a million dollars to be set aside for him in case of need, but to the best of my knowledge, at most $500,000 were transferred by the time he reached Hawaii.

By the time the end came to the Lon Nol regime, Lon Nol himself was handicapped. He already had suffered a stroke. For such a man, with wife and children, and retainers, the amount transferred by the Cambodian authorities was not a huge amount. He had fought for his idea, his vision of Cambodia, and had placed his trust - like Sirik Matak - in the United States. I do not find it appropriate for me to criticize a man who had many flaws, but he certainly tried to keep the country together against the Khmer Rouge, a policy we supported.

The story of the Prime Minister's ending is tragic. Long Boret refused to be evacuated. He was a competent, able man much younger than Lon Nol or Sirik Matak. When I personally went to see him, on April 12, the very morning of our evacuation, to ask him to take his wife and himself and his young children out of Phnom Penh because I feared for his safety, he thanked me but thought his life was not in danger. In his mind, he had me many contacts among the Khmer Rouge with whom he had gone to lycee in Hanoi.

That “old school tie” would save him, he believed. So, I said, “Give me your wife and your children.” Again, he refused. I thought he was making a grievous mistake.

Lon Nol's younger brother, a military officer, had actually gone to a site north of Phnom Penh to talk to the Khmer Rouge about an unopposed entry of the Khmer Rouge into Phnom Penh. He was turned down. That man, so close to the Chief of State, was also under the impression that he could convince the Khmer Rouge to enter Phnom Penh peacefully.

Other members of the Embassy went to other Cambodian ministers in these fateful hours of April 12 to try to convince them to come along with us to safety. The American Marines who had come to secure the soccer field near the Embassy's Chancery did a magnificent job and made sure that all those who had found safety in the American Embassy - Americans, Cambodians, foreign nationals - could be taken to the waiting helicopters on the adjacent soccer field. The number of helicopters available was well beyond the number of people who showed up for evacuation.

Q: Where were they coming from?

DEAN: They were coming from town.

Q: I mean the helicopters.

DEAN: I think they were coming from Thailand and from U.S. aircraft carriers cruising off the coast of Cambodia. The job of the helicopters was to ferry all those who were leaving not directly to Thailand, but first on U.S. soil. That piece of U.S. soil were the American aircraft carriers on which we were to land. When I came back from Long Boret's house and the others had returned from seeing the other Cambodian dignitaries and generals, I realized that only one key Cambodian had asked for evacuation with us. It was General (retired) Saukam Khoy, former President of the Senate, who had taken over as Chief of State on April 1, 1975, after Lon Nol's departure. He came with his wife and family and we ferried them to safety.

On that fateful day, I said to General Palmer that I wanted to be the last person to leave Cambodian soil. I felt like I was the captain of the ship and, as the tradition goes, the captain is the last man to leave the ship. My wish was granted. Awaiting to be called to move to the extraction site, I was sitting in my office, fully aware of the meaning of the moment for our country. I read the letter from Sirik Matak which had arrived about 45 minutes earlier. Looking out of the window, I saw the Marines taking people to the helicopters and to safety. I watched the Embassy personnel driving themselves to do all they could to help those who had thrown in their fate with us. Many had worked all night long drafting the letters which were delivered in the early hours of April 12, offering to take them to safety. Robert Keeley had drafted that letter. Nobody was turned down for evacuation, including at the last moment, Sydney Schanberg's Cambodian staffer working for the New York Times. We took foreign nationals out, for whom we had responsibility,

or even if we had no responsibility. We did not distinguish between illiterate gardeners and highly educated intellectuals. We took the Cambodian girlfriends of some of our bachelor staff members out to safety. I asked our resident military and the Marines in charge of the evacuation to take out anybody who wanted to go with us. At one point in my office, I took a pair of scissors and cut the American flag and the President's flag off the staff of the poles which were in back of my desk in the ambassador's office. I was trying to figure out a way of giving some form of protection to the symbol of our country and to the people whom I represented in Cambodia. Tears were rolling off my cheeks. I was alone. I took the two flags and put them over my arm. I got some plastic so they would not get wet. Unkind newspaper people wrote that I had put the flags in a body bag for dead soldiers.

On our way to the helicopters, I stopped at my residence where the American flag was flying, and I struck the colors. I took the flag, the third flag, and put it with the other two flags. I asked the Cambodian staff at my residence whether they wanted to go with me. Some of them had been sent to safety before. Those who were still at the residence on April 12 thought they could stay behind without fearing for their safety. At that point, I abandoned the ambassadorial limousine and walked the rest of the way to the waiting helicopters with the American flags draped over my arm. As a Boy Scout in Kansas City, as an officer in the United States Army, and as a Foreign Service officer, I respected the Stars and Stripes as a symbol of our country. I was the last man in our Mission to leave Cambodia in a very large helicopter. One of the correspondents of an American broadcasting system sat next to me weeping because he understood what was going on. We landed on an American aircraft carrier. The entire extraction was called “Operation Eagle Pull.” It was described at length in a Marine Corps magazine some years later.

As I landed on the deck of the aircraft carrier, the loudspeaker announced that “Operation Eagle Pull” was completed. I was asked to go into a large room and there I heard the President of the United States' voice speaking to me.

Q: This was Gerald Ford.

DEAN: He praised all 200 Americans who had done their very best to uphold the dignity and reputation of the United States. Years later, a book was published, “Exit Without Honor.” I had a hard time understanding those who only criticized those who represented the United States under very difficult circumstances. We all risked our lives and tried to serve to the best of our abilities our country. The President of the United States, on the 14th of August 1975, months after the evacuation date of April 12, wrote the following letter;

“Dear Mr. Ambassador,

On behalf of the United States Government and the American people, I want to commend you and your staff for your valiant leadership and service in the successful evacuation of Americans from Phnom Penh. In reviewing the events surrounding the last few tragic

months in Indochina, I can look with pride at your selflessness and devotion which are so appropriately in keeping with American sacrifices of the last decade. You were given one of the most difficult assignments in the history of the Foreign Service and carried it out with distinction. I know that all Americans join me in expressing our most sincere thanks and appreciation.

Sincerely,
Gerald R. Ford"

We left the aircraft carrier by helicopter and landed on a military base in Thailand. There, I was reunited with my wife. She had been with the wife of General Palmer at an American base, waiting for us. In whatever I did in my professional life, I always had full support from my wife. We are now married half a century. I am grateful to her and to all those with whom I served in Cambodia under very difficult circumstances. Whatever honors and distinctions were bestowed on me during my service, it was in recognition of all those who served our country with distinction. The Cambodian experience was a wrenching experience for all of us who served there. Whether they were secretaries or generals, ambassadors or clerks, we stayed in contact for a long time. After our evacuation, I was instructed to remain in Bangkok for three weeks, writing Efficiency Reports. All those who had served together in Cambodia - Americans and Cambodians - got together one last time on a pleasure cruise boat in Bangkok to say goodbye. As the leader of the team of 200 people, I was asked to speak. I thanked them for what they had done and for the valiant service they had rendered to our country. I closed my remarks on that occasion with a quotation from Shakespeare's Hamlet - Act I, Scene 3. It is Polonius speaking to his son Laertes:

"This, above all: to thine own self be true
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not be false to any man.
Farewell, my blessing season this in thee!"

This quotation became the leitmotif for the rest of my years in the Foreign Service.

Q: Why don't we stop at this point?

DEAN: Let's go and have lunch.

Q: We are back from a lunch break now. I've got a couple of questions I would like to ask you about your time in Cambodia. Did you feel that while you were dealing with the Cambodian problem, Watergate, the whole problem with Nixon and Congress, had an influence on our policy and efforts to get something done?

DEAN: I went at least once back to Washington. So did Robert Keeley, my deputy. We were all reading the newspapers of what was going on in the United States. The resignation of President Nixon was an important political factor. The Watergate scandal

also meant that the focus of attention was domestic and there probably was not enough time or will to make a major shift in our policy toward Southeast Asia. There was some effort in Congress, in early 1975, to find money for Cambodia to continue the struggle. But that petered out when there was no strong support by the Executive Branch to get behind this alternative. Finally, military developments in Vietnam and in Cambodia made at the end the entire issue theoretical. TIME HAD BEEN AGAINST OUR POLICY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

Q: What about dealings with the Cambodians? I am talking about the working level? Each type of country is different when you try to deal with the bureaucracy and all that.

DEAN: All of us on that team of 200 spoke pretty good French. The only way you could interact with all of them, except for Tim Carney who spoke Cambodian, was to speak French. All members of our team were able to interact very easily with their interlocutors. The Cambodians are nice people. Perhaps they are not quite as work-oriented as others. They enjoy having a little bit of fun from time to time. But most of the Cambodian military officers and officials we encountered were first rate and worked very hard. When you finance the whole war effort and prop up the whole regime, obviously, whatever you say makes an impact on your Cambodian counterpart. It was not difficult to have access to people since they needed you badly to carry out their effort to withstand the Khmer Rouge.

Q: Did you get involved in trying to find out what happened in 1972 when a number of American newspaper reporters who came in to follow the incursion into the Parrot's Beak had disappeared?

DEAN: Yes, there was a sustained effort to find these people. But by the time I assumed charge of the Embassy, in March 1974, we were not able to move around freely. The newspaper people probably ran into some Khmer Rouge, who saw spies everywhere, and they were liquidated by them. The Khmer Rouge believed in cleansing the Cambodian society from the scourge of western culture, and the western press was one element of that culture.

Q: I am told that at one time targets for their annihilation were people who wore glasses because this showed that they were enlightened.

DEAN: They had certain criteria for annihilation: anybody who was upper class; anybody who was educated; anybody who opposed leveling society... People threw away their glasses not to be associated with these elements of society. No Cambodian dared to speak French because that meant you had been exposed to a foreign culture. The Khmer Rouge were fanatics and in remodeling Cambodian society they did not take into account the cost on human life.

Q: Did you get any feel that this was the culmination of French socialist idealism or something like that?

DEAN: Khmer Rouge ideology and action went much farther than French socialist idealists, Jean Jaures and people like him, were highly respectable.. The Khmer Rouge were revolutionaries, using violence, closer to the Bolsheviks who imposed themselves on Russian society in 1917 in order to impose a new political order and a new social order on their country. The Khmer Rouge was fanatical revolutionaries, and unfortunately some foreign observers, including Americans, did not see them in that light.

Q: What happened to people like Long Boret and Sirik Matak?

DEAN: Sirik Matak was killed on the 19th or 20th of April. The Khmer Rouge entered Phnom Penh on the 17th. Two days later, Sirik Matak was executed publicly, near the Grand Hotel in the center of Phnom Penh.

Q: Was it just out of hand?

DEAN: He was shot. Long Boret's ending was different. He thought he had "the old school tie" and he tried to find a way to ingratiate himself with the Khmer Rouge by saying that all Cambodians were part of the nationalist movement to rid themselves of foreign control. He found that he and his views were completely rejected. Long Boret, in an effort to flee from the Khmer Rouge, drove with his family to the Phnom Penh airport in a jeep. At the same time, some military officers from the Lon Nol regime were trying to take off in a helicopter to save their own skins. Long Boret tried to climb on the helicopter with his wife and young children. He was brutally shoved off the copter by Khmer military into the jeep. The helicopter took off and flew to safety. As for Long Boret and his family, the Khmer Rouge caught up with them and they were all assassinated.

Q: Let's move to... You spent several weeks in Bangkok.

DEAN: I was asked to write an evaluation on every officer. Also, Washington was going to be busy with the evacuation from Saigon at the end of April. For all these reasons, I was asked to stay in Bangkok for a few weeks longer.

Q: They wanted to keep you from...

DEAN: We left Phnom Penh on the 12th of April. On the 30th of April Saigon fell. I think Washington was involved, with CINCPAC, in making preparations for the much more difficult extraction from Saigon. Meanwhile, our team was kept busy in Bangkok, and out of the way of Washington. I also had to review the claims of all members of our team who claimed to have lost property in Cambodia. Some people came up with large bills. I lost one item for which I claimed something. I had a tapestry by Lurçat which I left behind. I put in a claim for that. In addition to looking after our American team, we had to be sure that the Cambodians we had taken out had enough rice for their stay in Bangkok.

My wife and I took to the Acting President of Cambodia, Saukam Khoy, whole bags of rice so that they could survive while awaiting orders from Washington regarding their future, from time to time, we also shared some of our personal funds with our Cambodian friends so that they could take care of some urgent needs. Our team felt that we had a moral obligation to take care of those for whom we had taken responsibility by evacuating them with us. We continued doing these functions for about three weeks. As a matter of fact, to the credit of plain decency, some civilian food supplies (rice and dried legumes) left over from the Cambodian Aid Program were still in Bangkok. After April 12, when the Khmer Rouge had actually taken the city of Phnom Penh, the American authorities still parachuted some of the left-over supplies to the Cambodian civilian populations so that they would have something to eat.

I did not discuss enough the helpful, courageous role played by the NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) during all of my tenure in Cambodia. Some of the NGOs originally got their start in Indochina. Congress was willing to help these NGOs, but the NGOs themselves had to collect funds on their own. Among the NGOs in Cambodia, we had World Vision, Care, Catholic Relief Services, and many others. In previous chapters, I had already praised the unselfish, noble manner in which these various humanitarian organizations helped the suffering civilian populations. One humanitarian organization which always plays a special role in time of conflict is the International Committee of the Red Cross whose headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland. ICRC, as it is commonly referred to, helps both sides in a conflict. For example, they exchange prisoners. They do many jobs nobody else can do. The ICRC members were active and stationed all over Cambodia, including in Khmer Rouge controlled areas.

In the closing days of our presence in Cambodia, I asked the top ICRC official whether any of them wanted to return to the capital, Phnom Penh, in case of future evacuation. We did send at their request American helicopters into the provinces to pick up those who wanted to return to Phnom Penh. Eighteen ICRC members availed themselves of that offer. As you know from the book or movie “The Killing Fields,” after the American Embassy evacuated Phnom Penh, the French Embassy acted as a haven for anybody who had stayed behind and feared the Khmer Rouge. It was only at that time, after our departure from Phnom Penh and before the French took out the last group at the end of April, that some critics of the U.S. realized that the Khmer Rouge were not a bunch of “agricultural Reformers” but brutal revolutionaries dedicated to remodeling Cambodian society. Shortly after the Khmer Rouge took over Phnom Penh on April 17, they started to vacate the city of its population. Old and young, male and female, walked for miles to new destinations selected by the Khmer Rouge. Some people in hospital beds were forced to leave Phnom Penh; many of them died and their beds were abandoned on the road. Many old people collapsed on the way. Those foreigners who had not left with the U.S. evacuators took refuge at the French Embassy run by the Chargé d'Affaires. Many U.N. people and foreign humanitarian workers found temporary safety at the French Embassy between April 12 and 30. Some Cambodians also took refuge at the French Embassy. The accommodations for these hundreds of safety seekers were rudimentary but the French did their best to cope with the influx of people - beds on the floor, basic food to survive...

One day. a Khmer Rouge official came to the French Embassy, which by that time looked like a refugee camp, and asked: "Do you have any Cambodian citizens? If you do, they must be declared and given up to us." I do not want to go into detail, but I heard from my French friends who were at the French Embassy during these fateful days, that humans react differently when their own lives are at stake. One European gave up his Cambodian girlfriend in order just to save himself and not endanger others. To the best of my knowledge, the French convoy left for Thailand from Phnom Penh at the end of April. We had left on the 12th. Sid Schanberg was one of those who got out with the French. He had to deny his American identity when their trucks were stopped by the Khmer Rouge on the way to Thailand. He said that he was French, and his beret on his head and a Gauloise between his lips probably made his claim ring true. Some Cambodians in the French convoy gave themselves off as French. The French authorities had given them papers in order to document them as French citizens. This way, they had French protection. While in Phnom Penh, in the French Embassy, if a Cambodian was turned over to the Khmer Rouge, he or she had a good chance of being eliminated. One Cambodian lady had a coke bottle broken off in her vagina. Most of those who had found refuge in the French Embassy got out to safety. A few foreigners stayed behind, but they soon were disillusioned and left via Thailand.

Q: You mentioned, off the mike, an incident while you were still in Cambodia with the Israeli Embassy.

DEAN: As we had the DC-8s coming to Phnom Penh every day during the last six to eight weeks, bringing food and ammunition, on the return trip, these planes were empty. People for whom I had responsibility who wanted to leave Cambodia could come to a certain American office in Phnom Penh to obtain documentation for a flight to Thailand. We had responsibility for some 12-15 nationalities and certain Cambodians closely linked to the U.S. From Thailand, these evacuees had to find their own way to wherever they wanted to go. The standing order for all those to be evacuated by U.S. Government aircraft was the same for all: Two suitcases per traveler. That order applied to Americans, Cambodians, and other nationalities, including our closest allies (NATO members, Australians, etc.).

Q: Including the Soviets?

DEAN: I took one Soviet journalist out, but I had no formal responsibility for him. The Israeli Ambassador, whose first name was Shimon (Simon), came to me and said fairly early in April; "We would like you to take out our coding equipment. It's about 1,000 kilos." I said: "Shimon, I really can't help you." Israel had a large technical assistance program in Cambodia. "Any one of your technicians and embassy staff who wants to leave can take two large suitcases along. If you put some pieces of the coding equipment into these suitcases, then you can get much of it out." Shimon said; "You are not really very helpful. I'll see about that." I guess he sent a message back to Washington saying: "The Ambassador is not very helpful. The Israeli Embassy has coding equipment which we have to get out and Dean did not want to take it." Next day, I received a message from

Washington: “John, why are you difficult with the Israeli Ambassador and his request to take out their coding equipment.” I sent back a message to the Secretary: “Mr. Secretary. I am giving the Israeli Embassy and its staff the same treatment I have applied to all Americans and our closest allies who are still in Cambodia: two suitcases per person as they get on the U.S. plane leaving for Thailand. If you want me to give preferential treatment to the Israeli Embassy, please let me know, and I will comply.” I never received an answer to that message. As a result, the 1,000 kilos of the Israeli Embassy were left behind, near the Phnom Penh airfield, and never got out. I might tell how we handled our own encrypting and coding equipment. We put grenades in the machines and the equipment was destroyed by explosion. We did not have the time to take the coding equipment out because we sent messages until shortly before our departure. Hence, in the last minutes, we destroyed our equipment by explosives, as instructed by Washington.

Q: Did you have any problem destroying files, or was that done way ahead of time?

DEAN: That was done very early. The files and security equipment were destroyed days before the evacuation. The departure from Phnom Penh was orderly because we had six/eight weeks of 6/8 daily plane flights from Phnom Penh to Thailand, which permitted us to plan and draw down over a certain period of time. We were amazed that, on April 12, not more Cambodians wanted to leave. For eight weeks we had been taking people out from Cambodia, so people who really felt very insecure had been able to leave before our final departure. Others lived under the illusion that they could survive under Khmer Rouge takeover.

Q: In May 1975, you came back to Washington?

DEAN: I came back to Washington. I presented myself to the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and many other members of Congress. The legislators were very cordial in these meetings and the Executive Branch assured me that I would get another ambassadorial assignment. I was told to take a good vacation because I needed it after these stressful months. I went to Switzerland, took my family on a trip to Italy and showed them Rome, Venice, Florence, Siena, and other cultural sites of the West. By telephone, I was told that I was under consideration for an ambassadorial assignment: either Morocco or Romania. At that point, I was more interested in getting some of my weight back than in future assignments. I had lost more than 15 pounds by the time I came out of Cambodia. One day I received a phone call from Larry Eagleburger, Under Secretary for Management, who said: “John, there is a change of plans. We would like you to go to Copenhagen. Come and see us in Washington.” In Washington, I was told that the Embassy in Copenhagen had become available. This was a post mostly reserved for political appointees. Hence, I was one of the first Foreign Service career officers to go to Denmark. I suggested to the State Department I would like to learn Danish. Since I was fluent in German, had a smattering of Dutch, I was confident I could learn basic Danish in a relatively short time. Above all, I was trying to find a way to show to decision makers that having a career Foreign Service Officer at a post could make a difference to our foreign policy. Speaking the language of the host country was a step in the right direction.

I was sent to the Foreign Service Institute in Washington and learned a few phrases in Danish before leaving for Copenhagen. When I arrived in Copenhagen airport, the local press was waiting for me and I gave my first statements to the press in Danish. Since Denmark never had an American ambassador before who even tried to speak Danish, the local media was, on the whole, very kind to me during my tenure.

DENMARK

Well, that was the beginning of a very interesting assignment to the Court of Denmark. I don't think I got the appointment as ambassador to Denmark because of any similarities I might have with Hamlet. I don't think I had that much of a problem making up my mind on decisions. But I think there was a clear effort by the administration to reward me for my work as Ambassador to Cambodia, under extremely difficult circumstances.

Q: You were in Denmark from when to when?

DEAN: From September 1975 until the summer of 1978.

Q: Who had been ambassador before you?

DEAN: Ambassador Crowe. Crowe was a political appointee who I had known socially. Crowe had been in the Information Service during the Second World War. After the war, he served as U.S. Ambassador to South Africa, Norway, and Denmark. While in Denmark, his wife, who had not accompanied him to his various diplomatic postings, divorced him and he married a very attractive young Danish lady. He had a child with her. Later on I met the lady after Phil Crowe had died. We helped his widow from the second marriage to return from the U.S. to Denmark, after Phil's demise. Phil Crowe was a well-known and likeable person.

Q: Could you tell me about the political situation in Denmark when you arrived, and what were American interests there?

DEAN: In 1975, the Vietnam War was a major subject in all of Scandinavia. It was a subject where our Scandinavian friends, especially the young people, had more empathy for those who demonstrated against our war effort in the United States than those who went and were involved in the Vietnam-Indochina War. As a result, I came with what I would call “baggage.” I was at first perceived not as the guy who tried to negotiate things, but as the one who had been in Vietnam with the U.S. military and had been U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia in the closing days of the war. People did not pay much attention to my successful efforts in Laos to find a negotiated solution. I thought that I should try to explain to the newspapers and young people what was our position in Indochina, and why we did the things we did in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos. In order to do this effectively, my wife and I took, every single morning Danish lessons from 8:00 to 9:00 at our home. Then I went to the office. I read Danish quite well, and spoke Danish outside the office as much as possible. I visited various universities in Denmark to debate

with students subjects of interest to them. To the extent I could, I spoke in Danish. When I felt my Danish was not good enough, I switched to English. Since the young Danes spoke very good English, there was no problem of communication. I felt it was important to explain the position of all parties to the conflict. I tried to explain our position to those who were demonstrating against us, the young people, why we did it, and tried to make them understand our position. I said that I was willing to come and talk and discuss all subjects with the Danish public. This openness and willingness to discuss even sensitive subjects were rather well seen by the Danes. Sure, I sometimes encountered Danes who accused me of being a "warrior..." I met these criticisms by discussing the various different views on a subject and admitted that sometimes I had myself differences with the government's policies. I was trying to explain why we were doing things and the responsibilities of a major nation like the United States, which might be different from smaller countries with no major global responsibilities. I used Danish extensively, even more so because the Danish Prime Minister at the time was a very likeable labor leader by the name of Anker Jorgensen. Anker Jorgensen did not speak much English at the time. So, if I wanted to have a conversation on a sensitive subject, without the presence of an interpreter, I had to speak Danish. The Prime Minister and I went on two working visits to the United States. I would like to believe that I was able to convey most any thoughts in Danish - perhaps faulty, but fluent enough to be understood.

It is important to remember that Denmark has a very close emotional relationship with the United States. Denmark was at one point not always rich. The Scandinavians (Norwegians, Swedes, Finns, and Danes) came in droves to the United States before the First World War and settled in many parts of the Middle West. Whole cities in the U.S. came under Danish influence. The Danes in Denmark frequently had relatives in the States. Basically, there was absolutely no doubt that Danes liked Americans. They may have had differences with our policies in some areas, as for example with the U.S. Government policy in Indochina, but they basically liked us. This helped to make this posting a very pleasant experience. I would like to believe that I enjoyed a good relationship with all the Ministers of the Danish Government. Most of them thought that it was very sporting of me to try to speak Danish. I even went on television speaking Danish. I tried to convey, as U.S. Ambassador to a small country, that despite the difference in size and role, we wanted to work together in the mutual interest of our countries.

My job in Denmark was made easier by the atmosphere of detente that prevailed at that time. I was not known as a cold warrior. While evacuating Cambodia, I had authorized taking the Tass correspondent, a Soviet citizen, out with us. My Soviet counterpart in Denmark was a former minister or deputy minister of industry in the Soviet Union. (I was going to meet up with him again in South Asia.) When I called on all my diplomatic colleagues, I naturally also called on the Soviet Ambassador. On one of our meetings, he said: "We should do things publicly together. For example, let's do a sport together." At the time, ping pong was an activity used to establish a link with continental China. It was called "ping pong diplomacy." I asked my Soviet colleague: "Do you play ping pong?" "No, I don't play ping pong." "Do you play tennis?" "No, I don't play tennis." "What do

you do?" He replied that he rode a bicycle. "Well, let's both go cycling together to show that we are at least civil to each other." So we went cycling together in a velodrome and in a public park. Newspapers and picture magazines took photographs of the two ambassadors riding side by side on a bicycle. It reflected for the public an atmosphere of detente. In reality, Denmark was strategically located to keep track of Soviet shipping. Knowing what was going on with the Soviet fleet operating in northern Europe remained important for our military. Even in time of detente, it was important to know what other major powers were doing or planning. Certainly, potential adversaries or competitors were doing the same with movements by U.S. shipping. Ever since the end of World War II, everybody was keeping track of the whereabouts and plans of submarines, and Denmark and the rest of Scandinavia were in an excellent geographic location to do just that. But the spirit of detente clearly made it easier for Western countries and communist countries to interact in Scandinavia where the public opposed hard cold war confrontations.

While In Denmark, I tried to increase the number of business ventures and trade between Denmark and the United States. When the Queen of Denmark came on an official trip to the United States, she took a number of key Danish businessmen with her. This gave me an opportunity to introduce a number of top Danes to the President of the United States. Among them was Maersk Mc-Kinney Møller, the owner of the world's largest navigation company, who had also entered the petroleum business. He owned at the time the Danish sector of the North Sea oil fields. The mother of Mr. Maersk Møller was American, and during the Second World War the huge A.P. Møller fleet had sailed exclusively for the Allies. More than a million tons of the A.P. Møller fleet had been sunk on behalf of the Allied cause by the Germans. It was probably the greatest single contribution of Denmark to the Allied war effort. Both in shipping and in oil/gas exploration around the world, this enlightened, pro-American industrial tycoon remained close to the U.S. until today. I am proud to have known this outstanding personality who exemplifies the strong linkage between Denmark and the United States.

Another example of my assisting business ventures between Denmark and the U.S. was the establishment of a factory by the Danish pharmaceutical company NOVO in North Carolina. The owner of that company, Mr. Hallas-Møller, was looking around where to place the new plant and, after listening to many offers from different U.S. states, decided on North Carolina because of the factory's links to the University. Since then, NOVO has more than 30 plants around the world and is also listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

Perhaps the most important strategic issue I had to deal with during my tour of duty was the stationing of NATO missiles in Denmark and areas controlled by Denmark.

Since a socialist government was in power during my tenure, I spent time on explaining the United States' position on many issues, including the principle of stationing missiles on Danish soil. This subject was a very important issue at the time. The Secretary of State followed personally this issue. The Danes worked closely with us and we succeeded to find a solution of mutual satisfaction to this problem.

One small incident that occurred during my tenure was the Danish celebration of our 4th of July. Every year, the Danes celebrate our National Day at Rebild, a park in Denmark, to honor the U.S. where so many Danes have made a home for themselves since the beginning of the 20th century. In 1976, America's bicentennial, the Queen herself attended this event. Unfortunately, it was one year after the Vietnam War and some young people, dressed as Indians, staged a large anti-American demonstration on that day. The Queen did a magnificent job, speaking to the crowd, to calm the unruly youngsters and to stress the positive elements of U.S.-Danish relations. I also spoke in Danish, thanking Her Majesty for attending this bicentennial meeting, and perhaps my effort to express myself in Danish also helped to calm the demonstrators. The event got a lot of coverage in the press. It was at a time when young people in many countries showed their differences with United States Government policies in the developing world.

In the same year, 1976, I accompanied Her Majesty and the Consort on their official visit to the United States, on the occasion of the 200th Anniversary of the United States. It was one of the most pleasant duties you can imagine. I accompanied Her Majesty to many places and represented the President outside of Washington. One of those occasions was the U.S. Denmark sailing race which took place along the coast of Connecticut. I am a notoriously bad sailor. I get seasick. It was a large sailboat with nine people on board. The skipper of the boat was none other than Prince Henrik, the husband of the Queen. I was on board just for baggage, I think. He came in second out of 300 sailboats, which was a very good showing. At one point, I prayed: “Lord, if I don't get seasick, when I get back on land I am going to show you my gratitude.” I did not get seasick. The Danes made me a member of the Copenhagen Royal Yacht Club. I showed my gratitude to them.

I should make a little digression here. When I presented credentials to Her Majesty Queen Margrethe, with her husband Prince Henrik in attendance, my wife was waiting outside until the end of the brief ceremony. Then, the wife of the ambassador is asked to join the royal couple in a glass of champagne. The Prince consort, Prince Henrik, is a Frenchman. My French-born wife happens to know the family quite well. As a result, my relationship with the Queen and her husband was perhaps a little more personal than with some other ambassadors. Quite often, we were invited to play bridge with the royal couple in a relaxed setting. We also saw them both during vacation time at Prince Henrik's estate in southwestern France, which is located very near to where my wife's family hails from. When Prince Henrik's parents came to Denmark we were usually invited to keep them company. This cordial and relaxed relationship with the court also helped in solving issues which might arise between the two countries. It also promoted our business links. When I went with Her Majesty the Queen to the United States on the occasion of our Bicentennial (1976), the Danish delegation included prominent Danish business people. I had the opportunity to introduce some of them to the President of the United States. Some significant joint ventures were started as a result of this visit.

Q: The Carter administration came in. Were there any difficulties with the Danes and the Carter approach to things?

DEAN: No. The Danes had a socialist government and the socialists also wanted to have a mutually beneficial relationship with the United States. The geographic location of Denmark makes the Danes look in different directions for their political, economic, military, and cultural ties. Denmark is part of the European continent. Denmark is also part of Scandinavia. Denmark's trade is largely with Germany. Politically, the Danes are comfortable with the British. Many family ties are with America. Militarily, Denmark is a member of NATO. The Danes are geographically near Eastern Europe. Regardless of the political orientation of the Danish government, the Danes are part of the Western world and have a social conscience for the needs of the developing world. The change of administration in the United States had no real impact on American-Danish relations. We worked together with the Danes just as before on subjects of mutual interest. In the people to people relationship, the Carter administration made a special effort. For example, President Carter's mother came to Denmark on a visit. As a former Peace Corps volunteer to Denmark, her return to Denmark was a big hit. My tenure coincided with an effort to overcome a period when the Vietnam experience had made some Scandinavians uneasy about U.S. policies. We, in turn, put our best foot forward, stressing cultural cooperation, as for example Fulbright scholarships, exchange of ballet companies, people to people exchanges, starting joint ventures, etc. I am still grateful today to the Danes for their outgoing attitude toward me. One of my last memories of Denmark is an hour-long Television program in which I was interviewed in Danish, and I tried to explain - in Danish - U.S. actions and policies. For my wife and me, Denmark was a happy posting.

Q: What about during this 1975-1978 period the NATO connection with Denmark? I was always told that Denmark was almost a stone's throw from East Germany at the time, and really did not have much of an army. Was there a significant neutralist government within Denmark?

DEAN: No. I think membership in NATO was important to the Danes. The U.S. Embassy had a close working relationship with the Danish army. During my tenure, the U.S. Secretary of Defense came to Denmark and we attended together a joint U.S.-Danish military exercise under the umbrella of NATO. Our navy to navy links were important. The U.S. air force worked with their Danish counterparts, especially on radar installations in Greenland. In short, Denmark was at that time an active participant in NATO. But, as you pointed out, the relationship of five million people to 250 million people makes for an uneven relationship. The most powerful nation in the world is also an easy target for criticism, and in that respect, Denmark is no exception. It is this gap - difference - I tried to bridge by learning to speak Danish, a language spoken by less than 10 million people. It reflected my approach to Denmark, its government and people.

In conclusion, I would say that for U.S. diplomacy, Denmark is not a difficult country. We are working with friends and our historic relationship with Denmark has been of a "family" nature. Furthermore, I was posted in Denmark only 20 years after the end of World War II. And the German occupation of Denmark and the Danish resistance to the Nazis were still fresh in people's minds. On the other hand, the United States had

emerged from World War II as the great defender and champion of democracy and freedom, two values of major importance to the Danish people. The timing of my posting to Copenhagen (1975-1978) was particularly propitious to a mutually beneficial and friendly relationship between these two countries. It also made the work of the American Ambassador to Denmark much easier than my previous posting - Cambodia - and my next assignment as U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, a country struggling to maintain its identity, sovereignty, and independence.

LEBANON

Q: Then, off you went, from this pleasant interlude as U.S. Ambassador to Denmark, back into the heat of the kitchen. Where did you go from when to when?

DEAN: I went from 1978 to 1981 to Lebanon - three years. I would have stayed longer, as President Reagan had asked me to, but I first asked President Sarkis of Lebanon whether he was going to stay on as President of Lebanon. But I don't want to get ahead of myself.

I have to give a little explanation of Lebanon and why Lebanon worked as far as I was concerned. In 1947, I was shipped off to France by my parents. I went to law school in France. There, I met a Lebanese friend who was the owner of the largest brewery in the Middle East. It was he who introduced me to my wife-to-be a couple of years later. My wife's father was a banker for a French bank with interests in the Middle East. One of his residences was in Beirut. At the time, there were only about three large foreign banks in the whole of Lebanon.

In the 1950s my father-in-law had made a name for himself by selling off French assets to the people in the country where they were located. So, whatever was in Syria, for example insurance companies and the tobacco monopoly, was sold to the Syrians. Whatever was in Lebanon, for example the tobacco monopoly and banking establishments, was sold to the Lebanese. In Egypt, it was to the Egyptians. In Turkey, it was to the Turks. He did it because he saw the handwriting on the wall and said: "It's better for us foreigners to be a junior partner, and let the people in the country buy the foreign assets located in their country." So, when I got to Lebanon, I was not an unknown quantity. I had traveled to Lebanon several times with my wife to visit her parents. I visited my friends in Lebanon with whom I had gone to school. The President of Lebanon at the time I became U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon was a former governor of the National Bank. Naturally, my father-in-law, who had died in 1970, had had a relationship with the leading Lebanese banker in town. When we arrived in Beirut in 1978, a full civil war had been going on for three years.

Let me just start from the beginning.

Q: Whom did you replace, by the way?

DEAN: Dick Parker.

Q: Whom I have interviewed.

DEAN: I don't know whether it's in his oral history, but at one point, I think, the Lebanese army wanted to go south in Lebanon. Lebanon was very much in the news two months before my arrival. The Israeli army said "No." Ambassador Parker could not get Washington to overrule the Israeli interference in Lebanon and the Lebanese army could not send its troops to South Lebanon. Shortly thereafter, Ambassador Parker was transferred from Beirut. May I say at this point that Dick Parker was a very erudite, experienced U.S. diplomat who, in my opinion, was not supported by our own government when he invoked the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, which was and still is, U.S. policy. Well, I had the same situation happen when I was Ambassador. The Lebanese army wanted to move two battalions of the Lebanese army to South Lebanon without too much referral to Washington. I helped the Lebanese move the troops south, and I did not need any "advice" from Israel, Syria, or anybody else on what the Lebanese central government wanted to do in its own country. When I arrived in 1978, Lebanon was in the midst of a civil war.

Q: Between who and whom?

DEAN: It started as a war against Palestinians who had been chased out of Palestine. The large number of Palestinians who came to Lebanon after the establishment of Israel did not at first live in camps. They felt so much at home in Lebanon that some Lebanese felt that they wanted to take over the country. Some Lebanese were so concerned about the threat to Lebanese identity and control that the Lebanese Government called in the Syrian army to contain the Palestinians. It should also be said that many well-educated Palestinians were well received in Lebanon, intermarried, took Lebanese nationality, and made major contributions in nearly every field of endeavor. In the mid-1970s, the conflict degenerated into a civil war and struggle for power between two Maronite factions, i.e. led by Gemayel and Chamoun. Then, some Moslems and other Christians joined the fray. When I was in Lebanon, there were 18 different religious confessions in the country. I visited the chiefs of every one of the various confessions. After being named Ambassador to Lebanon by President Carter, the night before I was supposed to go for my confirmation hearings before the Senate, I got a phone call from the personal assistant to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance sayings "John, you are going tomorrow to be confirmed by the Senate. This is your third time as ambassador and you have been chargé d'affaires twice before. Do you really want this job?" I said: "Why?" "Well, we just found out that your mother was Jewish." I said: "My father, too." "And do you still think you can go as ambassador to Lebanon?" I replied: "I thought I represented a secular state. If you think this is not the case, that I am not qualified to go as a representative of the United States to Lebanon, please let me know and I will withdraw on my own." "Oh, no, no, no. We were just wondering." The next day, I went up for my hearings, and after a rather thorough going over by Senator Javits, I was confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon.

Q: He was a senior Senator from New York and a strong representative of the Jewish community.

DEAN: That's right. He said: "Mr. Ambassador, if you are confirmed, do you think you really can function there? You are known as an interventionist. You intervene wherever you go. Do you think that is what you want to do in Lebanon?" I said: "Senator, in all fairness, I tried to do in Southeast Asia - Laos and Cambodia - what I could do to bring as much peace as possible. In Lebanon, it is again a very difficult situation. I don't know whether I am known as an interventionist, but I do believe that sometimes you have to intervene in order to make certain things happen. But I certainly don't intervene for the sake of intervening." It was a rather spirited exchange. Fortunately, Senator Pell, my friend at the time, spoke up and said: "John has done an outstanding job in previous postings," and I was confirmed.

That was the background before I arrived in Lebanon. As I took the plane to fly to Beirut, I was given a coat which weighed a ton. It was an armored coat which was so heavy that I had to be strong to put it on. I had two bodyguards. It was really like a third-rate B movie. My arrival at the airport…

Q: With your wife?

DEAN: My wife arrived two weeks later. I had mentioned at the time that I would only go to Lebanon if I could take my wife with me. I would not go alone. I said that meant that if my wife goes, all officers assigned to the post could also take their wives along. I said that it makes for a better atmosphere if the officers can take their wives along rather than being off by themselves in a place such as Beirut. As the Lord's Prayer says. 'Don't lead me into temptation.' I thought it was much better to have the wives along. I had my way.

It was the beginning of a challenging assignment which I enjoyed, and I would like to believe that the Secretary of State, Cy Vance - a great American statesman - appreciated my service in Lebanon. I was able to put forward my views on the key subjects of the area and I would get a fair hearing.

I came to Lebanon at a time of unbelievable strife. It was a war which was being kept going by elements within the country and there were also other players from outside who also took sides in this free for all civil war.

Q: Who were the outside players?

DEAN: I think that Lebanon was like a football which was being pushed around not only by the domestic forces, the Maronites, the Shia, the Sunnis, the Druses, the Orthodox, the Syriacs, the Palestinians, but I also think the major countries were involved, seeking to further their own interests by supporting certain groups, be it the French, the British, the Americans, or the Israelis. The Syrians, the Iraqis, and the Iranians also had their objectives. They are traditional players in the Middle East, and this was to be expected. I think it was one of the most important periods in my career as well. Everybody knew my background. By that time, I was in the "Who's Who." Nobody had a hard time looking up

that my mother's name was Askenazy. They knew where I was born. I was born in Germany. What I did from the beginning in Lebanon was to have a relationship with everybody. When Mr. Godley had been ambassador in 1975, when the civil war started, the President of Lebanon, Suleiman Frangieh, went to New York to speak at the United Nations, and some dogs from the U.S. Customs Service did some sniffing of Frangieh's baggage and the dogs acted as if there were some drugs in the luggage.

Q: You are talking about drug dogs.

DEAN: That's right. They thought that maybe President Frangieh had in his luggage something which might be illegal to bring into the country. It caused a major rift between the U.S. Ambassador in Beirut and the President of the Lebanese Republic. The President of the Republic, Frangieh, never, never forgave the Americans, and he held the U.S. Embassy in Beirut responsible for what he considered an insult. When I arrived in Beirut in 1978, Frangieh was living in northern Lebanon in retirement. He was the leader of the Maronites in northern Lebanon. He had the reputation of being quite close to the Syrians who apparently supported him.

I decided I would call on all political personalities, regardless of their political views or religious affiliation. I did, including former President Frangieh. My request to be received by Frangieh was accepted and I informed the Lebanese President, Elias Sarkis, Bashir Gemayel, and the Syrians that I was driving up to President Frangieh's home.

Well, driving from Beirut up through the northern city of Tripoli in Lebanon, and up to this huge home, a palace, I had to go through very different control checkpoints. They were manned either by Syrians, by Maronite soldiers, by pro-this militia, pro-that militia, but it was worked out. I drove up in a three-car convoy to meet with Frangieh with whom we had not had any contact since 1975. I went up there and I met his son. There had been a lot of infighting between Frangieh's forces and another Christian militia, the Phalange. They had been killing each other, to be very frank. I came and paid my respects on the old man. He said: "You know, I am receiving you not as the American Ambassador." I said: "What's the matter?" "I am receiving you because I used to go hunting with your mother-in-law and she was an excellent shot. I want to honor her. That is why your request to see me has been accepted." It was an elegant way to establish a relationship with him.

I also did the same with other leaders. I called on the Sunni Mufti. I called on the head of the Shia community, who only died recently. I called on the head of the Druzes, Walid Jumblatt, and Arslan. Wherever I went, I showed respect and willingness to enter into a meaningful dialogue.

I also made it very clear that I would always inform the President of Lebanon, Mr. Sarkis, of whatever I was doing. When I traveled, I would tell him where I was going and I would ask for security assistance. When I traveled in areas under-government control, he might give me an outrider or two, but there were areas where government control was not present. I then went to talk to the various factions who controlled the terrain: the PLO, the

Phalange, the Syrians, etc... For example, I would say: "I am going down to the southern border. I want to endow a Shia nursing home near Saida and help deserving students, but I do need security assistance to get there", or I would get some outriders from the PLO or some Shia elements to provide security. Usually, the central government provided a security group from the Ministry of Interior to protect me.

Q: Were you allowed to do that at the time?

DEAN: I did not ask too many questions at that stage. I had received authorization to met with the PLO. I was given this authorization to take care of security matters and in defense of American interests. I considered meeting with all groups and assisting in humanitarian ventures to be in the defense of American interests. I was determined to be on good terms with all elements in the country. So, when I geared up my motorcade with PLO or other outriders up in front, I would also have waiting for me as I got to southern Lebanon Israeli planes overhead watching me as I was winding my way towards the border.

One of the things that had happened very early when I got to Lebanon was the establishment of a relationship with the United Nations International Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). This military force was supposed to keep the Israelis from going into Lebanon and interfering in their affairs, and keep the Palestinians from infiltrating into Israel. In short, it was designed to protect the southern border of Lebanon. Early on in my posting to Lebanon I drove down to UNIFIL in southern Lebanon. Having been ambassador in Cambodia and having played a key role in Laos and in Vietnam, I was accustomed to working with the military. I went down to UNIFIL and was met by a Ghanaian general. Well, the Ghanaian general was not terribly effective. I immediately went back to town and sent a message to Washington, saying: "we've got to get a feisty guy in there who is going to fire up these guys so that UNIFIL can carry out its mission. All parties to the conflict know where certain forces are located." If one side wanted to infiltrate into Lebanon or into Israel, they always infiltrated through the least combative UNIFIL forces. Some troops, for example French paratroopers or Irish military, were tough. Whether it was Palestinians or Israelis who tried to go through UNIFIL lines, the tough troops stood their ground. They enforced the law. So, I suggested that UNIFIL get a tough general. Sure enough, the more gentle Ghanaian general was changed, and an Irish officer, General Callahan, came to take command of the UNIFIL forces. He was a hardened general who could not be pushed around either by the Israeli generals or by the Palestinians, or by anybody else.

I also established what I could call a good relationship with the Syrians. It's not that I like Syrians or don't like them. They were a fact of life in Lebanon and above all in the Bekaa Valley. They were very important. Traveling all over Lebanon was one way of showing the unity, the independence, and the full sovereignty of Lebanon. Usually, I took the ambassadorial limousine, and with an American security contingent, drove to visit U.S. economic aid projects, humanitarian groups, or political leaders. On my limousine I had two flags flying, the American President's flag and the American flag; this way, I drove to

every part of Lebanon. I first told the President where I was going. I told the Syrians where I was going. I sent a message down to Tel Aviv saying: "This is where I am going." People in Damascus, I would tell them: "I am going to look at a former American aid project.

I am going to look at a school. I am going to look at some Armenian orphanages" whatever it might be. I went out as often as I could. My security officers had kittens but in this way I showed the unity of Lebanon within the territorial limits recognized by the International community.

Q: I was going to say, an ambassador had already been killed.

DEAN: That's right. The previous ambassador had been killed. Frank Meloy had been assassinated. I will be glad to go into this question if people want to go into it, but you must have the story from Ambassador Parker or Ambassador Brown. The PLO helped us to get the body back and, to the best of my knowledge, the PLO were not involved in the assassination of Meloy, whom I knew and had served with in Saigon so many years ago.

Q: Who did it?

DEAN: I don't think this is germane to my watch.

Q: Well, but...

DEAN: I don't know who did it, but I know who did not do it and they got blamed for it: the PLO. We went to the PLO. I think it was Dean Brown who did when he was acting there in the interim period and they helped us find the body and bring the body back.

Let me return to my extensive travels through Lebanon, not for pleasure, but to show the flag and thereby give visible and concrete support to what Washington said was its policy toward Lebanon: support for the territorial integrity, independence, and sovereignty of Lebanon. I did go to the south. I went to UNIFIL. I went all the way down to the Lebanon-Israel border. I went to areas which were supposed to be strictly Shia-controlled. I went into the Bekaa where the Syrians were supposed to be in control. I went down to the southern part of the Bekaa Valley. I went to Akkar, in northern Lebanon, which is right next to Syria, where no American had been for years, always flying the flag and saying: "I am doing this and this and I am showing the unity of this country," When people said: "You can't do it," I would say; "I am accredited to the President of Lebanon, and as long as he gives me the green light, I can go." This led to a very stirring exchange of cables with my colleague, Sam Lewis, our ambassador in Tel Aviv. There were certain things that he objected to. For example, when I observed an Israeli plane over Lebanon on just a reconnaissance mission, I would send a regular protest to Tel Aviv and a copy to Washington because it was breaking the U.N. resolutions which were in existence. Overflight has become so routine today that Israelis can bomb from Israel a power plant in Lebanon and nobody says "Boo." In those days, every time there was a crossing of the

border, we protested. There was no blue line, but there were only the instructions from Washington which supported only the internationally recognized borders of Lebanon, its territorial integrity, and its sovereignty over that land. I supported this policy by actual deeds, putting myself on the line. "This is one country. It is not under Syrian domination or under Israeli control, or anything else."

Q: What was Sam Lewis's problem with this?

DEAN: Well, he objected to a certain number of things. For example, when I was trying to work with the Phalange militias of Bashir Gemayel, I told Bashir Gemayel: "You should stop seeing the Israeli Mossad officers who are coming all the time to Lebanon because it makes you look 'beholden" to the Israelis. You (Bashir), you are a Lebanese trying to maintain Lebanese independence and you cannot lean toward any of your neighbors. If you like, we can establish a direct link with you so that you do not have to rely on any immediate neighbors of Lebanon."

I don't want to mention names because some of the people who came to see Bashir Gemayel are still prominent today. They gave him money, weapons, advisers, and from time to time Mr. Begin asked to see him. In that case, an Israeli helicopter was sent, and he flew to Israel. I said to Bashir: "If you do that and it is known, you are endangering the future of the Christian community. You, the Christians of Lebanon, are part of the Middle East. Don't factor yourself out. If you want support for an independent, sovereign, tolerant Lebanon, look to the United States. Look to the master and not to the servant." Anyway, Bashir Gemayel and I used to meet at first in the high mountains, in a Christian monastery, where I would try to persuade him, saying: "Look, the entire Middle East had Christians, Jews, and Muslims, and all of them lived together, especially in Lebanon. Now, a Jewish state has been established. If Lebanon, which is a multi-religious state, takes sides in the Near East confrontation, you are going to hurt the many different Christian groups in the Middle East, which are all minorities. The Maronites are only one Christian religion in the region. There are the Jacobites, the Chaldeans, the Assyrians, the Syriacs, etc. You also have the Greek Orthodox and the Armenians; add some Protestants... Don't define yourself in religious terms. You are a Lebanese nationalist. If you are a Lebanese nationalist, you want your country free of any foreign forces. Above all, you have a majority of Sunni and Shia. You have Druzes; all Christians, Moslems, and Jews living in Lebanon are first and foremost Lebanese. You want a free Lebanon within internationally recognized borders."

My own assessment of Bashir was that he was a Lebanese nationalist with strong Christian leanings. He had charisma. He reached beyond the Christian community. Mind you, the Christians - especially Maronites - were fighting among themselves. You had the Chamoun Tigers fighting the Gemayel Phalangists. Some of the Greek Orthodox got along well with the Sunnis. The Shia had a relationship with other religions, Lebanon was a maze of different political and religious groups who nonetheless had a common bond in Lebanon. I urged Bashir to have a direct relationship with the United States, which might be able to help him. I was doing this because I honestly believed this was in U.S. national

interests, that we should be able to have a dialogue and influence with all elements. "For example, I went regularly to the Sunni Mufti who was a very fine human being. I went regularly to the Shia chief. I visited the head of the Druzes and was his guest at his castle. We spent the night there and talked about the need for all groups to work together in the overall interest of Lebanon. I maintained a link with all political and religious groups, including with the Vice Prime Minister of Syria. After all, the Syrians played a major role in Lebanon and on the broader scene of Israel's place in the Near East. With Bashir Gemayel, I thought it was important for him to look for support anywhere except to Israel. At the beginning of my tour of duty in Lebanon, the Israelis came regularly to see Bashir, or the Israelis sent a helicopter to fetch him for meetings with top Israeli leaders.

I am going to be very frank: my effort to wean him away from the Israelis and look to the United States for support was quite successful. It was a covert relationship. He received funds and advisers from the U.S. instead of dependence on Israel; in short, my goal was to move Bashir to a more neutral position in the Near East imbroglio. As you know, after I left Lebanon, Bashir was elected President of the country. I will just finish this particular part of the story: Bashir telephoned me when I was on vacation in Malaysia, in 1982 I think. I was then ambassador to Thailand. Bashir said; "John, I want you to attend my inauguration." This never happened because he was assassinated and his brother Amin was elected to succeed Sarkis. My relationship with Bashir was matched by other meetings with leaders from the left, Sunnis, Shia, Druzes, etc... The head of the country was President Sarkis. He was an extremely honest, intelligent and moderate person who tried to steer a realistic course between Syria's historic role in Lebanon and Israel's ambitions in building their Zionist state. Sarkis was a Lebanese nationalist in the best tradition of Lebanon's role as a link between the Mediterranean world and the Arab Near/Middle East. Sarkis was a Maronite but his religion was subordinated to the duties of serving his country with tolerance and justice for the entire population, which was in majority Moslem. Sarkis and I were neighbors in the hills overlooking Beirut.

I used to go to the Presidential Palace twice or three times a week to play bridge with him. In our regular bridge games we had Sunni, Shia, Druze, or Christian players, and the atmosphere was always most pleasant. Colonel Johnny Abdo, Chief of Intelligence, often came to the Presidential Palace when I called on Sarkis professionally. Abdo was an outstanding officer with whom I worked closely. He was on good terms with all elements in Lebanon and knew what was going on in every corner of the country. Sarkis knew that his capacity to have an impact on the Near East political scene was limited. He therefore placed a great deal of emphasis on the stability of the Lebanese currency. During my three years of service in Lebanon, the Lebanese Pound was worth three pounds to the dollar. Today, it is 1,500 pounds to one U.S. dollar. It went up as far as 3,000 pounds to the dollar. During Sarkis's presidency, the Lebanese currency remained at U.S. 1 dollar equals three pounds. That was a great achievement for which nobody gave Sarkis credit at the time. Today, the Lebanese have realized the great contribution he made to his country.

A word about the two Lebanese Prime Ministers with whom I had the privilege to work. Salim Hoss was Prime Minister for the greater part of my tour. Mr. Hoss is one of

Lebanon's most honest and upright leaders. He studied in the U.S, where he earned a PhD in Economics. He worked well with President Sarkis. Mr. Hoss, a Sunni Moslem, at the time was married to a lovely lady who was Christian and who has since died. A perfect gentleman, Hoss strongly supported my efforts to provide military equipment to the Lebanese army. It is worth mentioning that the Lebanese army was a truly multi-religious force, with all religions of Lebanon represented in that body. When in 1980 and 1981 the Lebanese army sent two battalions into South Lebanon, Prime Minister Hoss and a great number of Lebanese politicians and leaders walked in front of the troops, moving south from Sidon, as a symbol of Lebanon reasserting its sovereignty over the South, where a collaborator - Major Haddad - was a mercenary of Israel, keeping the legitimate Lebanese government from controlling the area.

Shefic al-Wazzan, Hoss's successor, was a very different personality. Since I do not speak Arabic, conversations with him were carried out in French. Like Salim Hoss, he was a decent, honorable person trying to do his best under difficult circumstances. I also visited with Mr. Karami, in North Lebanon, who became Prime Minister well after my departure. All these Sunni personalities were favorably disposed toward the United States but sometimes queried me why the U.S. was so biased in our policy toward the region.

I have mentioned earlier the links I established with the Lebanese military. The officer corps of the Lebanese Armed Forces was largely French-educated and had excellent links with the French military. When I offered to provide equipment to the Lebanese army in order for them to assert control over their country, I first discussed the matter with my French colleague. The French fully supported the idea, and with the Commander of the Lebanese Army, General Victor Khoury, we drew up a list of military equipment needed by our Lebanese friends. Obviously, our military attaché at the Embassy was of great help, and we provided 105 howitzers, 155 howitzers, and armored personnel carriers among other items. General Khoury was a friend and the relationship among "military to military" was started with General Khoury. It has been continued off and on since 1980.

Finally, I maintained contact with Nabih Berri, who was leader of the Shia militia Amal. For many years now, he has been Speaker of the National Assembly of Lebanon. It gave me a better understanding of the Shia outlook on events in Lebanon, and above all, Israeli incursion into southern Lebanon. Even then, I was aware of the Shia's problems with General Sharon and his ambitions in southern Lebanon. I have remained in casual contact with Mr. Berri whenever I am back in Lebanon.

I want to say something now which I don't think is generally known. Because of the very close personal relationship I had with the President of the Republic and the Governor of the National Bank of Lebanon, I was asked whether I would be agreeable to having the countersignature over the reserves of the National Bank of Lebanon, which were held in Switzerland. To the best of my knowledge, the reserves at that time were still several billion dollars. The Governor of the National Bank, Michael Khoury, said he was afraid that in these unsettled times, some gangster could come and hold a gun to his head saying: "Sign this paper" thereafter releasing 10 million dollars to the thug in Zurich or in

Bern. By having two signatures, all releases from the reserves of the National Bank of Lebanon needed my counters signature. As long as I was ambassador in Lebanon this situation prevailed. When I left and I suggested my colleague in Switzerland could be given the signature, the answer was "No, when you leave, this arrangement ends." I don't think there were many American ambassadors who had the signature over the foreign exchange assets of a foreign nation.

I must say that in all of my professional activities in Lebanon, I had the tremendous support of people in Washington, including in the White House. One way to obtain support for a balanced policy toward Lebanon was for some influential personalities to speak up, to form a group who would "lobby" on behalf of U.S. support for a tolerant Lebanon. There are not many people in the U.S. who are willing to go out of their way to support an active U.S. policy in Lebanon. Some other countries have very important lobbies in support of a democratic Lebanon. But I was able to put together a few people in the U.S. who wanted to help. There were three or four Congressmen who had Lebanese ancestry. I found a U.S. Senator who had some links with Lebanon or Palestine. I went to see the Cardinal of New York, Cardinal Francis Cooke. I had met Cardinal Cooke when he came to visit the troops in Vietnam. The Archbishop of New York is also the chaplain to all Catholics in the U.S. armed services. So, he came out and visited. At one point, when he came to Military Region I in 1970, I was told: "Dean, you take care of the Cardinal" and I was his control officer. So, I got to know him. I called on His Eminence in New York and I said: "Would you, Eminence, accept to come out to Lebanon as my guest? I am the representative of a secular country. So, you come as a guest to Lebanon and then you make your rounds to see all the chiefs of the various religions in that country. But, please, promise me that, first, you go and see the Sunni Mufti and then the head of the Shia community. Afterwards, you call on all the patriarchs of the different Christian religions." He did come. Cardinal Cooke did exactly that. He went first to see the Mufti, and then the Head of the Shia community (I think Shamseddine was his name). Then, he went to the Druze community, and then he went to see the Maronite patriarch, and the Melchite patriarch, and so forth. Whenever I needed money to endow the humanitarian activities of all the religions of Lebanon, I would call His Eminence in New York, who in turn tried to help. He had a wonderful assistant, Monsignor, Charlebois. He was an American of Canadian extraction. He was absolutely fantastic. He was Head of Catholic Relief Services and was very much involved in helping on humanitarian causes. I said: would you ask His Eminence to call the President of the United States; I need money. I need $500,000 to give to the 18 different religious denominations in Lebanon, for humanitarian projects. I could not give any less to one. If I did, that would show that one denomination was not as good as another. So, I always gave half a million dollars to everybody. For example, the Armenian Orthodox, the Armenian Catholics, and the Armenian Protestants each received $500,000. So did the Shias, the Sunnis, etc... It was usually an orphanage, or an old age home that received the funds. Once, I went to an old age home in Sidon, which was shortly afterwards bombed by the Israelis. I was trying to show physically my respect for every religion, which caused me to do what Benjamin Franklin was told by Congress he should never do: bend his knee when he went to see the sovereign of a foreign court. When I went to all these leaders of the various religious

denominations, I very often bowed down to show my respect. Then I would discuss a project which could be helpful to the various religions or to specific institutions. That made me travel to the place which had been designated for a project. Sometimes, it was a very insecure area. But I went anyway to demonstrate that Lebanon was one country and that the U.S. gave material support for all religions. I made no exceptions between Christians and Muslims. To show the true openness of the Lebanese society, I recall that my head steward was a Muslim from southern Lebanon. He always said: "I need a raise, I have so many children." I said: "How much do you need?" He would say: "I need a little bit more money. But, you know, one of my children goes to a Hebrew school." I said: "What do you mean, a Hebrew school?" He said: "Yes. You know, they have very good schools. I don't mind sending my kid to a Hebrew school as long as he gets a good education, and it's free." The tolerance of the Middle East... Remember the Crusaders and their behavior in the Middle East, and when they came up against the Byzantine Empire. Who remembers today Saladin, the Kurdish Moslem defender of Jerusalem, who finally defeated the Crusaders and told Richard Lion-hearted to go home without holding him for ransom.

As you know, Richard the Lion-hearted then was held for ransom on the Danube and his brother, the king of England, had to pay ransom to the Holy Roman Emperor. The Middle East today remains complicated and it was imperative that I remained on good terms with everybody. Above all, I defended the territorial integrity of Lebanon and I gave strong support to President Sarkis and his Prime Minister. In trying to have contact with all elements having bearing on the Lebanese political scene, I also met with American visitors who often represented strongly pro-Israeli views. For example, at one point, one of the congressmen from the United States came to Beirut in order to help American Jews of Near-Eastern background to marry Jewish girls from Syria or from Lebanon.

Q: This was Stephen Solarz.

DEAN: That's right.

Steve Solarz was a staunch defender of Israel and he used his position in the Congress to advance Israel's interests. I recall on one visit, Solarz was riding with me in the Ambassador's car and as we crossed one of the checkpoints manned by some militias, our armored car picked up a bullet. Steve Solarz asked: "What was that ping?" I replied it was somebody shooting at our car, but he should not worry because our car was armored and it was not a very well aimed shot. Solarz requested that we turn around and drive back to the Embassy so that he could send a message to his staffers in Washington. We did return to the Embassy and the message Steve Solarz sent went something like this: "Arafat tried to kill me." I think this little anecdote shows how differently people interpret events, depending primarily on their preconceived views of the political situation.

Q: I have interviewed Steve.

DEAN: Steve came a couple of times. I helped Steve with his "war brides" in Syria so that he could be a match maker with his constituents.

At this point, it may be useful to note that I also had meetings with my American colleagues in Damascus. I had regular meetings with the ambassador in Damascus. We met at the Lebanese-Syrian border, lunched together, and tried to work out a relationship which permitted us to work together in the common interest. At all times, I never permitted anybody within Lebanon, or from a neighboring country, to tell me where I could go and where I could not go. I was accredited to the President of Lebanon and he was the only one to advise me on my internal traveling destinations.

Q: Who was the American Ambassador to Syria at that time?

DEAN: Talcott Seelye most of the time. It was a very good relationship and a very harmonious one. I had a good relationship with Sam Lewis in Tel Aviv, but we saw the problems differently. I admired Sam. But I had major differences with him on policy and specific Israeli actions in Lebanon. I did not mind differing. I thought I was being paid to give the best opinions I could, and I did. Perhaps the opening of the State Department files on that period will shed light on these issues.

At one point, I found it necessary to have a relationship with the Palestinians. Looking after the security and national interests of the United States, there was a foreign group in Lebanon which had power and with which I did not have a relationship. Officially, we were not supposed to have it. That group was the Palestinians. At the Embassy I had a telephone which worked by satellite and which connected me with the State Department. It was a very bad connection, but I could go and talk to people in Washington and get confidential advice. These conversations were put on paper but I do not know if they were recorded. In one of the early conversations on this confidential telephone, I asked Washington for authorization to meet with the PLO and they said that if it was in our national security interest I could do it. One of the first important problems I was asked to raise with the PLO was the release of the American hostages in Teheran. It was the autumn of 1979. The U.S. Embassy and its staff were besieged and occupied by Iranian revolutionaries who had deposed the Shah of Iran.

Q: This was November of 1979.

DEAN: That's right. I was asked by my interlocutor in Washington whether the Palestinians might be able to help to obtain the release of the American hostages. I decided to ask my Palestinian contacts. Among those who gave me advice was Walid Khalidi, who later was a professor at Harvard University. He was Cambridge-educated, the son of the last Sunni Mayor of Jerusalem. Today, he must be close to 80. When I worked with him in Beirut, he was very active. I also worked with Abu Jihad, who was assassinated by the Israelis in Tunisia in the 1990s. I also worked with Abu Walid.

Abu Walid wore on his hand a ring which indicated that he was a graduate of Fort Leavenworth, the General Staff College in the U.S. I asked him whether he could do anything to get our hostages in Teheran liberated. Shortly after this conversation, he and Arafat went to Teheran, where they obtained the liberation of 13 American hostages. The 13 hostages were released for Thanksgiving 1979 and there is no doubt that this release was linked to Mr. Arafat's and Abu Jihad's personal intervention with the Iranian authorities in Teheran. Abu Walid was also involved.

Q: And also somebody named McQueen, I think, who had multiple sclerosis, was released.

DEAN: I don't remember all the names of the thirteen who were released but they were African-American, and some women.

While I did have contact with Fatah and the PLO, there were other elements of the Palestinian resistance movement who were very polite to me, but said: "We prefer not to have any contact with Americans, even as nice a guy as you are, but for political reasons, it is better that we don't have contact."

Above all, I worked closely with the Chief of Lebanon's Intelligence Service, Johnny Abdo. Whenever I had a problem of an American taken hostage or detained in Lebanon by some militia or group, I would immediately see Johnny Abdo. Whether it was in Christian or Moslem held areas, Johnny always had a contact with all groups and I called on his assistance very often. I could say: "Can you help me to get so and so released? I cannot have an American taken prisoner in Lebanon."

That link worked very well. Johnny Abdo would go to the Syrians, to the Palestinians, or to various Lebanese factions to plead my case. We had several Americans who were released in Lebanon during my tenure and most of the negotiations were done by Lebanese, Palestinian, or Syrian contacts.

I continued working with the PLO through intermediaries until my departure from Lebanon in 1981. I would ask for escorts in order to assure my security going down south where the PLO were well entrenched. Major Hadad, a Lebanese Christian military man, was a collaborator with Israel. But if I would go to the Christian heartland - the Metn - I would ask the Lebanese Government to give me a couple of outriders or security people. Above all, I took the sovereignty of Lebanon seriously. Whenever there was an infringement of that sovereignty, I would protest. There was a very spirited exchange of messages between the American Embassies in Beirut and Tel Aviv regarding what I considered violations of Lebanese sovereignty, i.e., Israeli over-flights, incursions into Lebanese territory, etc...

Knowing how Washington works, I tried to bring together a group of personalities who would speak up for Lebanon's legitimate interests in Washington. Some Lebanese Christians had contact with Americans particularly interested in protecting or promoting

the role of Christians in Lebanon. But the great bulk of the Lebanese in those days looked to France to the extent that a Western protector was required. With the help of Mary Rose Oakar of Ohio, Nick Rahall of West Virginia, a Congressman McCormak from California, and Cardinal Cooke, I was able to arouse some interest in Lebanon, a country caught between two larger countries - Syria and Israel - who had different ideas about Lebanon's role in the Near East. I also approached Senator George Mitchell.

Q: Was George Mitchell's mother from the Near East?

DEAN: Yes, to the best of my knowledge, she was either Lebanese or Palestinian. The Senator is a wonderful human being, but he told me at the time that he would prefer not to be involved in the Near East. About five prominent Americans came regularly to Lebanon and were interested in knowing what was going on. They returned to the U.S. with a realistic assessment and they made known their findings in their own circles. I also received material assistance from the President of the United States. In short, it got to be known that I was defending Lebanese sovereignty and territorial integrity. My task was made easy by having this great Lebanese team to work with: President Sarkis; Colonel Johnny Abdo, the Intelligence Chief; and Salim Hoss who was Prime Minister at the time.

One interesting feature was that I was not an Arabic speaker. So, I spoke either in French or in English. Most of my public interventions were in French because in the 1970s the Lebanese were mostly French educated. As American Ambassador I was asked to be on the board of the American University of Beirut. We obtained some funding from the American Government to assist the University in those difficult times. At one point, I also had to intervene, at the request of Lebanese personalities, to have the President of the American University of Beirut transferred. It seems he was not the right person for the job.

In short, Beirut was a very active posting, and at times rather dangerous. The Ambassador had two residences, one in West Beirut and one in the hills, in Yarzé, near the Lebanese President's Palace, overlooking the city of Beirut. I preferred the latter. It was cooler. The air conditioning did not always work in Beirut because of power failures, so it was cooler in Yarzé. Also, I was closer to the residence of the Lebanese President. The security people sometimes were upset about my extensive traveling around the country. Some of my security people would come to me and say: "Oh, Mr. Ambassador, you can't travel. We have indications that this part of town is not safe." Well, if I had listened to them every time, I would have stayed at home in my bunker and would never have talked with anybody.

Q: Did you get shot at all?

DEAN: Yes. By August 1980, I was perceived, both in the Near East and in the U.S., as a defender of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity. I was also known for being a representative of a secular state. Finally, I was seen by the Israeli Government and by

some elements in the U.S. as a "protector" of the Palestinians or, as some Israeli newspapers wrote at the time, a champion of Palestinian resistance against Israeli Zionist goals. On August 27, 1980, an election year in the U.S., I was being driven from my residence in the hills of Yarzé to the home of the Acting President of the American University in Beirut. It must have been about 7:00 p.m. As the car turned into the road to Damascus, about 5 minutes from the residence, we saw an old Mercedes car parked at the turn. We were traveling in a three-car motorcade and the Ambassador's car was in the middle. The road at that stretch was wide and a Mercedes car was parked below a small hill overlooking the road. As we turned, our convoy took 21 rifle bullets and two grenades anti-tank fired against the car I was in. My wife threw herself on top of me and said: "Get your head down" because I was trying to look out and was stunned by the "fireworks". When you have these light anti-tank weapons (LAWs) explode, there are a lot of sparks and explosions. The two LAWs fired at my car bounced off the rear of the car. I also noticed that on the window of my armored car there were some shots all very well centered where I was sitting, but they had not penetrated because the plastic windows were bullet-proof. As I raised my head, I noticed that the car in front of our car, where two bodyguards and our daughter and her fiancé were seated, had all four tires shot out. Under rifle fire, our daughter, her fiancé, the driver, and the bodyguards fled from the lead car into the third car which was exclusively for the security guards. One man sitting next to the driver in the third car, a bodyguard, fired back. The assassins dropped their weapons and fled. The valiant bodyguard, Mr. Morris., had an automatic rifle with which he could shoot about 20 rounds and he was spraying' the area where the shots had come from. The assassins ran away. Shortly thereafter, security people from the Lebanese Government picked up both the weapons, which had been dropped by the assassins, and the empty containers of the spent light anti-tank weapons. But the job of the security detachment in that situation is to save the Ambassador at all costs. The chauffeur, Cesar, who was unfortunately killed when the embassy was bombed after my departure, had orders to drive as quickly as possible from the scene of the attack and not present a target. The ambassador's car was not only armored; it had self- inflating tires. The tires inflated themselves and we drove as fast as we could to the Embassy in downtown Beirut. When we got to the Embassy, we only had two cars. One car, in which our daughter and her now husband were seated, was left at the place, completely destroyed.

All those seated in the lead car climbed into the third car and drove off. We got to the Embassy, and there the Ambassador's limousine just collapsed. The tires went "whew." I got on the phone to inform the Department of State of the events. "Give me the Secretary of State." I talked with the personal assistant of the Secretary who said: "'You sound terribly upset." I said: "Yes, they tried to kill me! But fortunately, I'm still alive!" We had taken 21 bullets and two light anti-tank weapons. I might say that the purpose of shooting a light anti-tank weapon against an armored car is to make the roof of the car pop open. These two light anti-tank weapons bounced off the rear end and did not hit nor penetrate our limousine. The impact of these two weapons would have caused an opening of the top of the car. Th n, the assassins shoot down from above and kill the persons in the car. Ten days after the attack on my life, that same method was used on one of the dictators of Latin America. I think it was Somoza, and he was killed.

What happened afterwards was that Johnny Abdo, the Chief of Intelligence, did a very thorough job tracking down the assassins. Not only did his men pick up the empty canister of the two light anti-tank weapons, but they got the numbers of the weapons, and raided the house near the intersection where they confiscated eight more light anti-tank weapons. I received the numbers of all eight which were confiscated and the two which had been spent and had been used. I sent the numbers to Washington, asking: "Would you please trace the shipment of these 10 light anti-tank weapons?" It took three weeks to get a reply. The attack was in August 1980. It was an election year. When I did not get an answer after one week, I picked up the telephone and I was not tender. I said: "Listen, I have been exposed to danger many times in my life. I don't mind putting my life on the line, but I would like to get an answer to my messages about the latest assassination attempt." Silence. Then, after three weeks, I got the answer of where the light anti-tank weapons came from, where they were shipped to, on what date, who paid for them, and when they got to their destination. Suffice it to say that the weapons had been manufactured in the U.S. and were sold and shipped to Israel in 1974. Hence, American weapons delivered for defensive purposes had been turned against the American Ambassador in Lebanon!

I must admit, my daughter was always affected by the ambush. Still today, it is something that sticks in her throat. My son-in-law, who has been to the Middle East many times, including Israel, is a very even-handed, balanced person. We don't really talk much about this assassination attempt because it is one of the more unpleasant episodes in our lives, and we regret the Israeli involvement in this episode.

As time went on, I did find out a great deal about this incident. All I can say is that it is one of the more unsavory episodes in our Middle Eastern history.

Q: Finishing the story, who got them?

DEAN: Maybe that is something we should leave for another meeting sometime.

Q: You are implying that it was Israel?

DEAN: The arms were shipped to Israel. They were turned against the American Ambassador. We know exactly when they were shipped, what date, what ship, and that the LAWs were shipped to Israel. Our Ambassador to Israel, Sam Lewis, took up this matter with the Israeli authorities.

According to the Lebanese Chief of Intelligence at the time, Johnny Abdo, the most likely group in Beirut behind the assassination attempt were surrogates of Israel. Let me change the subject slightly. It is still about Israeli involvement in Lebanon during my tenure in that country. In the last part of 1978 - early 1979, the personal assistant of Arafat, Abu Hassan, was assassinated in Beirut. I had been briefed by the Embassy staff that Abu Hassan had also maintained a relationship with one of the intelligence officers on the

Embassy staff. When Abu Hassan turned on the ignition key, he set off an explosion and his car exploded. He was killed instantly in this incident. The Lebanese Intelligence Service brought to light that three MOSSAD officers had come to Beirut. They had Belgian and Australian passports, they had registered as tourists in a fancy hotel on the beach in Beirut, and their assignment was to kill Abu Hassan. Perhaps Abu Hassan's greatest drawback, as seen by the Israelis, was his close links to the Americans.

Some people in Lebanon said: "Well, Mr. Ambassador, you sound like you are terribly anti-Israeli. What about the Syrians?" I used to reply that the Syrians had been asked to come into Lebanon by the Lebanese President in 1975 in order to avoid a Palestinian takeover of Lebanon. The Lebanese had asked the Syrians to help them put down a Palestinian uprising endangering the very existence of Lebanon. Hence, their presence in Lebanon was legal. I also added that I knew that the Syrians did interfere a great deal in the domestic affairs of Lebanon. But they had made a major contribution at the time by helping to maintain law and order. Obviously, some elements in Lebanon fought the Syrian presence tooth and nail. Some will say today that Syria has overstayed its welcome. But the Syrians also have their own agenda. Today, Lebanon is part and parcel of the overall Near East conflict and it is not politic to raise that issue. But it must be said that the illusion some Lebanese groups had, especially the Phalange and the Chamounists, that "Lebanon could balance Syria and Israel, i.e., have Israel offset Syrian ambitions in Lebanon, was and still is fallacious. Lebanon is not only a Mediterranean country, but it is part of the Near East. The population is predominantly Moslem and feels a kinship with other Moslems threatened by Zionist expansionism. It was an unrealistic idea of certain Christian militia in Lebanon to dream about the establishment, with Israeli help, of a Maronistan (i.e., a small Christian state) near Israel where the fringe element, in cooperation with Israel, would brave the entire Arab world in the Near/Middle East. I always tried to convince my Lebanese friends that they should shun open links to Israel, as Israel's covert envoys tried to do with the Phalangists and Chamounists.

Let me say that, at one point, I had a relationship with the Russian Ambassador, Ambassador Soldatov. Ambassador Soldatov had been Deputy Foreign Minister in Moscow, Ambassador to Cuba, Ambassador to the Court of St. James, and he was, at my time, Ambassador in Lebanon. Soldatov's assignment reflected the importance the Soviet Union attached to the area. I went to Soldatov and said; "Listen, I already have enough problems here staying alive. Let's do one thing. Don't have your guys shoot at me and I won't have my friends shoot at you. Let's try to keep U.S.-Soviet confrontation out of this thing. This Near Eastern problem is already complicated enough. But why don't we work together to try to bring all Lebanese elements together?" Once, during my entire tour of duty, and the only time during the entire civil war, the heads and leaders of all Lebanese factions, military, and government, came together. We all went together to a movie. The leaders of the left, the right, the unmentionables, representatives of various religious groups, all sat together in the same movie theater without killing each other. The Soviet Ambassador and I also attended this gathering. It was the one time we all got together, thereby proving that if the U.S. and the Soviets could do something together, perhaps the

various Lebanese groups, militias, etc., could also co-exist together in their overall interest.

When I left Lebanon, I was given the Grand Cross of the Ordre du Cedre by the President of Lebanon in recognition of my work there. I might say it was an unforgettable moment. At the airport, on the day of my departure, again the leaders of nearly all factions and religious groups came to say farewell to my wife and myself. It was a tremendous satisfaction to me that I was perceived as a unifier and not a divider. It was a last tribute to what I thought had been my mission: to hold Lebanon together, radiate tolerance and fairness, and have foreign powers respect the territorial integrity of Lebanon.

Let me mention one particular incident which again came close to costing me my life. The cause was my good relationship with my diplomatic colleagues. I was close to various ambassadors, including many Arab representatives. At the time, there was no Egyptian ambassador in Beirut. But there was a Kuwaiti ambassador, a Saudi ambassador, a Turkish ambassador, and the French, the Belgian, the Dutch, the Spanish, the Brazilian, the Mexican, the British, Canadian ambassadors - you name it. Everybody was represented. One evening, I was at a social reception with the chairman of the Middle East Airlines. He was of Palestinian origin, a Christian man named Asad Nasr. He was a very competent personality and we had become friends. He told me that evening: "Listen, I just got a phone call. The Saudi and Kuwaiti Ambassadors were shot down in a Lebanese Government helicopter over the Christian part of Lebanon. The Saudi Ambassador has a bullet lodged in his leg. He is in pain. He has been taken to one of the Christian private hospitals in the Christian heartland. You should go and see him." I said: "Who said I should go and see him?' "I am telling you that" said the head of the Middle East Airlines. I said: "Why?" He said: "Because the Saudis look to the United States whenever they have a problem; you are supposed to help them out." I said: "Wait a second. It's 9:00 p.m." He said: "Yes, but 9:00 p.m., Saudis expect service all year round and 24 hours a day." "That means I have to go and get my entire convoy going, and we have to cross over from West Beirut over to East Beirut and go up to the hospital in the hills?" He said: "Yes, that's what you've got to do. I'll tell you. It's good advice." I said: "I will take it." I got my security team together, the convoy of three cars with bodyguards ready to drive at night from West Beirut over into East Beirut and into the hills often manned by Christian militiamen. Driving at night between these two areas was not without risk. I told my wife that I was going to visit my Saudi colleague and she pointed out to me the danger of being on the road at that time of the night. When I got to the hospital, I saw Lieutenant General Ali Shaher, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia, lying in a bed under an image of the Virgin. He was a very tall man. He said: "John, please get me to the American hospital. It's not that I am not getting good medical care here, but I am in pain. I want to go where I am completely at ease and my family can visit me. I want to go to the American hospital in West Beirut." I said: "Okay. It's now after 10:00 in the evening, so tomorrow morning at 10:00 we will have the motorcade get you and take you to the American University Hospital in West Beirut."

I went back to my residence in West Beirut, which I used in case I was stuck in the city. That night, this was the case. I must have gotten back about 11:30 p.m. I also made arrangements to have the Saudi Ambassador moved by motorcade and ambulance at 10:00 a.m. the next day, to the American University Hospital. The transfer went smoothly. Ali Shaher got a nice room at the American hospital, his family visited him, and he got great medical attention.

One of the great figures at the time, was Danny Chamoun, the son of Camille Chamoun, former President of Lebanon and militia/political leader of the free enterprise political elements in Lebanon. Danny Chamoun had the idea to visit the Saudi Ambassador at the American hospital. Danny, like his father, had a relationship with the Saudis, but was that enough to expose his life by crossing over from the Christian-held East Beirut to the more international West Beirut, where enemies of Danny could easily try to kill him? When it was known that Danny Chamoun was at the American hospital, elements hostile to Danny gathered around the American hospital and started shooting out the windows at the American hospital. Who made up the mob trying to storm the American University Hospital? Mostly Lebanese who opposed the Phalange and Chamounists - people who were more influenced by leftist propaganda, who believed that the Syrian model had some value for Lebanon, dissatisfied Moslems and Palestinians who saw in Chamoun "a friend of Israel." By late afternoon, a couple of thousand demonstrators had surrounded the American hospital and the worst was to be feared. By about 8:00 p.m. I was informed by one of my valiant security men that: "It's absolutely essential that you come immediately to the American hospital. They are shooting up the American hospital. There is going to be nothing left. They are going to take it by storm to get a hold of Danny Chamoun. The crowd is made up of Palestinians, Syrians, Muslims, Christians, crazies who are absolutely determined to destroy the American hospital. The Saudi Ambassador's life is in danger. He needs you badly. This time, he is calling for you." I replied: "Okay, fellows, let's get the motorcade ready and go!" We entered through the large garage door of the American hospital. As the door opened, the guard who opened it got shot and killed by one of the snipers in the crowd. Once inside the hospital, I rushed to Ali Shaher's room. There he was, with his wife and daughter. He said: "Listen, this crowd is crazy. You've got to help stop this madness." I replied: "What shall I do?" He said: "Go and call Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia, and tell him to contact Arafat and President Assad of Syria and tell them to stop this shooting. Otherwise, this thing is going to get out of hand and everything will go up in flames." I got in my car in the garage and as the garage door opened to drive to the Embassy, rifle shots killed two Lebanese security people protecting the garage door! Three people had been killed by my entering or leaving the American hospital. Once out of the hospital, the road to the Embassy was safe. My car picked up a bullet, as usual, but as the limousine was armored I was used to that kind of harassment.

By this time, it must have been 9:00 p.m. at the Embassy and I asked for the communicators to come to the office. I never realized how easy it was to communicate with the world from the American Embassy. The communicators came within 10 minutes. I said; "I would like to talk to Crown Prince Fahd in Saudi Arabia." It was as if I

had asked to speak with my aunt in New Jersey. The communicators did not ask me to give them the telephone number. They took it in their stride.

Within two to five minutes, I had the Lord Chamberlain of the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia on the line. I identified myself. He said: "What can I do for you?" I said: "I have a message from Ambassador Lieutenant General Ali Shaher who asked me to transmit it to Crown Prince Fahd." "Yes, Prince Fahd is standing right next to me. What is the message?" "Tell him that they are shooting up the American hospital in Beirut, where Ambassador Shaher is recovering from a flesh wound in his leg. Please call President Hafez el-Assad and Arafat and tell them to stop the mob from attacking the hospital. If there are no interventions from above, the hospital will be destroyed, many innocent lives will perish, and the confrontation in the Near East will get much worse. Ali Shaher and his family fear for their lives." The Lord Chamberlain said: "Yes Sir, I will transmit the message." We then left the Embassy and drove to the American hospital. In the process, we picked up a couple of stray bullets as we went into the garage. Nobody was killed this time. The situation was out of hand. They were shooting all over the place. It was about 10:00 p.m. I asked one of my security guards who had a walkie-talkie, to notify my wife. "Please call my wife and tell her that I am not coming home to night. I'm spending my night at the American hospital, near the room of the Saudi Ambassador, so he will be reassured," Then, I told Ambassador Shaher that I had conveyed his message to the Crown Prince and that I was taking a room near his room. By one o'clock, silence descended on the entire area of the American hospital of Beirut. Except there was hardly any air conditioning anymore and it was hot outside. There were no more windows in most parts of the building. The crowds had dispersed. Next day, I went to see Ambassador Ali Shaher in his room and then I returned to my office. My security guards informed my wife that I was back at the office and not to worry about me. To finish this story, Ambassador Shaher had the bullet removed from his leg. After Shaher's release from the hospital, he gave me a small, intimate reception and thanked me for my assistance. After he returned to Saudi Arabia, Ali Shaher became Minister for Information for the next 10 years. He then became one of the advisers to King Fahd. From this episode, I came away with a feeling of respect for the role of the Saudis in the Near East, and a better understanding of the U.S. relationship with Saudi leadership. If the Saudis want to play a role, they certainly have the power to do so.

Q: What about Danny Chamoun? Did you get him out?

DEAN: Yes, he got out on his own, the next day. He was a wily fellow and not without charm.

Q: Some years later, the Taif Agreement helped to end the Lebanese conflict.

DEAN: Yes. But that was well after my tour of duty in Lebanon. When I was Ambassador in India years later, I got to be close to Amr Moussa, who was at the time Egyptian ambassador to India. Later, he became Minister of Foreign Affairs, and now is Secretary General of the Arab League. I saw him a couple of years ago and we talked

together about my service in Lebanon. He reminded me that there was no Egyptian ambassador in Lebanon during my time and that was a serious shortcoming. Egypt had always played a balancing role among Arab nations in Lebanon, and the absence of an Egyptian representative in Lebanon during the Lebanese civil war did not help to find a denouement to the strife.

Before I close the chapter on Lebanon, I would like to discuss another event in South Lebanon which had an impact on American relations with the Sarkis government of Lebanon. It is the story of the illegal installation of a radio station manned by Americans in South Lebanon. One day, in 1980, President Sarkis asked me to call on him because he wanted me to intervene with Washington regarding the need to close down a radio station installed on Lebanese soil, without Lebanese authorization, and broadcasting Zionist propaganda. Sarkis explained that a group of Americans had built a radio Station in South Lebanon, had put up barbed wire fences around it, and laid mines "to protect" the site against unwelcome intruders. The area was located in a largely Christian-inhabited area and the radio had no authorization from the central government to establish the site nor to broadcast from Lebanon. Sarkis thought that the Americans were Christian fundamentalists spreading what appeared to be Zionist propaganda. I replied that I would query my government what I should do to comply with Sarkis's request to close down this illegal, unauthorized violation of Lebanese sovereignty.

Two telegrams to Washington went unanswered. After 10 days, I picked up the telephone to call a member of the National Security Council in the White House. The response was quite specific: "John, if you know what is good for you, shut up." I gave President Sarkis a reply that I could not intervene on this matter. Today, more than twenty years later. I believe that a vocal group of American Christians - for reasons of their own - continue to be strong supporters of Israel. Perhaps, the end goals of Israeli Zionists and American Christian fundamentalists are not quite the same, but today their voices and views are similar.

This interview would be incomplete if I were not to mention the outstanding role of Phil Habib. We were good friends and remained good friends until he died in 1992. I flew over to Washington to attend a memorial service in his honor. If we had a difference of perception, and I am not sure that we did, it was about the feasibility of factoring out the Lebanese problem from the overall Near East imbroglio. Could one make peace in Lebanon without finding a modus vivendi for the Palestinian determination to have a land of their own? Perhaps Phil believed that one could find a way of settling the Lebanese problem through a bilateral Lebanese-Israeli accord. If that was indeed Phil's view, then he reflected in my opinion the State Department's hopes at the time. I felt then, and still believe it today, that Lebanon is part and parcel of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The interview President Emile Lahoud of Lebanon, Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, and the Speaker of Parliament Nabil Berri gave to the Executive Editor of the International Herald Tribune as recently as May 30, 2002 would confirm my analysis. Having said this, Phil's miraculous success to save the PLO from destruction in 1982 made it possible to

bring some justice and tolerance into efforts today to find an honorable, fair solution to the problems of the Near East.

When I left Lebanon after 3 years, they gave me and my wife a fabulous send-off. Part of the close relationship I enjoyed with the Lebanese of all religions was due to my wife and her family's reputation in Lebanon. Many Lebanese knew my wife. She had attended university in Beirut for a couple of years while her parents were stationed in the Near East. If my mission to Lebanon was a success, much of the credit goes to my wife. Judging from President Reagan's letter at the end of my tour, the U.S. Government also thought I had done my duty under difficult circumstances on behalf of my country.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Washington
June 2, 1981

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

I have your letter of January 20, and accept your resignation as Ambassador to the Republic of Lebanon, effective upon a date to be determined. You have ably represented the interests of the United States under extremely difficult and dangerous conditions, and the combination of skills you have brought to bear in your work have provided a valuable contribution to our relations with Lebanon. You have every reason to be proud of your accomplishments. I look forward to having you assume your new responsibilities as Ambassador to Thailand and I am counting on your support and expertise in the days ahead,

With best wishes,

Sincerely,
(Signed) Ronald Reagan

The Honorable John Gunther Dean
American Ambassador
Beirut

EPILOGUE

The Christian militia leader, Bashir Gemayel, was elected President of Lebanon on August 23, 1982. He was the only candidate. In any case, the presidency of Lebanon was, by agreement of all parties, confided to a Maronite Christian. During my tenure, Bashir had moved close to Americans and away from Israelis. It is quite possible that after my departure in July 1981, General Sharon and the Israeli intelligence establishment tried to re-establish their prominent position with Bashir. Whether it was with American approval or not, I cannot tell. In any case, after Bashir's assassination, his brother Amin was under great pressure from the Israelis to sign a bilateral agreement with Israel. This story is well

told by Mr. Boykin in his book "Cursed is the Peacemaker." Shortly after Bashir Gemayel was elected President, I received a telephone call from him while my wife and I were relaxing in the hills of Malaysia from our assignment to Thailand. Bashir told me that he was sending two military officers to Bangkok to fetch my wife and me to attend his inauguration in Beirut as President of Lebanon. It was never to be, because on September 14, 1982 Bashir was assassinated! His brother Amin replaced Bashir as the head of state, but I never had the links with him that I had established with Bashir. Years later, in the second part of the 1980s, while I was Ambassador to India, I was approached to bring together Rajiv Gandhi and Shimon Peres. This was done at the U.S. General Assembly in New York.

The idea of those who asked me to bring about the encounter was to get India - the leader of the non-aligned world - to get a better understanding of Israel's position. India had in the past given Mr. Arafat a hero's welcome in India. I doubt that this meeting, which was attended by Congressman Solarz, changed much in India's assessment of the Near East conflict. The question of Palestine and Israel's reluctance to recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinians to a home of their own (within 1967 borders) unfortunately did not only impact on neighboring Lebanon but on many countries of the world where the U.S. had, and continues to maintain, its own national interests. Perhaps it can best be summed up by restating that I thought diplomacy was trying to avoid the worst, and I still believe today that "blessed are the peacemakers."

THAILAND

Before we get into the individual events which occurred during my tenure as ambassador to Thailand (1981-1985), permit me to describe the political and psychological atmosphere that prevailed at the time in the area. Only six years earlier - 1975 - the United States had withdrawn from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Some less friendly observers would say that the United States had suffered a severe defeat in South-East Asia in its effort to contain the spread of communism to that part of the world. Mainland China was in the process of reasserting her identity, unity, and growing political and economic power in East Asia. Thailand had militarily supported U.S. efforts in Vietnam and probably did not like to be perceived as on the side of "the loser." On the other hand, Thailand had a long record - more than 300 years - of balancing the influence of foreign countries which had permitted Thailand to escape the clutches of colonialism. Hence, nationalism and the will of individual countries to be independent and to be in charge of their own destinies was also a strain in Thai national policies. Finally, Thailand also had its own agenda over the last couple of hundred years, especially as it concerned Thailand's relations with her neighbors, Burma on the west, and Cambodia and Laos to the east. One must also add that the Thai people came originally from southern China into what is today Thailand in the 13th century, and that they consider themselves very much part of East Asia, where China plays a leading role.

As for the United States, the reverse suffered in Indochina increased the need for the U.S. military to have access to facilities which would permit the U.S. to project power in East

Asia. In that period, the Asian governments not under communist control were told that making available to American military authorities naval or air bases would help the U.S. to better protect their countries against communist encroachment. While this was the official line, it also reflected the need of U.S. military planners to project military powers for strictly U.S. national strategy and objectives.

Hence, I believe that by the time I was named U.S. Ambassador to Thailand in 1981, U.S. primary interest in Thailand was U.S. access to certain Thai military installations, and secondly, maintaining a friendly government in power in Thailand with an economic system which permitted U.S. corporations access to the Thai market. Add to this a rather long-standing U.S. tradition of helping Thailand to develop economically, socially, scientifically, and in the field of education, and you had in 1981 an atmosphere propitious to mutually beneficial U.S.-Thai cooperation. I honestly believe that my four-year tenure in Bangkok helped to promote this policy.

Q: All right. You went directly from Lebanon to Thailand. Is that right?

DEAN: Yes.

Q: This was from when to when?

DEAN: I was in Thailand from 1981 to 1985.

Q: How did your assignment to Bangkok come about?

DEAN: When I came back from Lebanon, I was a Foreign Service Officer who was quite well known to the Washington foreign affairs community. Having made peace in Laos, taking the flag out from Cambodia, speaking in Danish on Danish T.V. defending U.S. positions in Copenhagen, having survived Lebanon and having helped to increase U.S. influence in the Near East, was known to both Republicans and Democrats. One day, I was asked to meet a personality quite close to the Republican foreign affairs establishment who was highly regarded by the newly elected President, Ronald Reagan. The gentleman in question was impressed with the fact that I had worked successfully with the Palestinians in Lebanon, that I had survived two assassination attempts, and probably also that I had not spoken to the media about my experiences in Lebanon.

Q: Who was this?

DEAN: I don't think it is a good idea to mention his name. He told me: "John, you are going to get another assignment abroad. It will be another challenging posting. In view of your extensive experience in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, we think you are the right man for Thailand."

We had an able ambassador in Thailand at the time, Mort Abramowitz, whom I knew well. In many ways, I built on his legacy, just like I would like to believe others built on my achievements.

Abramowitz had done something very good. In early 1981, there was some kind of brouhaha in Bangkok. Mort sided with the Prime Minister, General Prem, who was a bachelor and an honest man. He did not have any family members needing jobs or wives greedy for jewelry. He was an honest servant of the King. He had been Commander of the Thai army before being designated Prime Minister by the King. Mort had supported General Prem's efforts to remain in office when challenged by some politicians. When I arrived, General Prem had been Prime Minister for about two years. During my four years in Thailand, I got to know General Prem very well and we became good friends. All I can say is that I inherited from Mort a very good relationship with the Thai Prime Minister, for which I was grateful.

Having said this, I would like to recall that Thailand had been during the war quite acquiescent in the Japanese occupation.

Q: It's called bending bamboo.

DEAN: Yes. In the immediate post World War Two period, the United States had a very knowledgeable ambassador in Bangkok. In about 1948, he made Thailand an "honorary neutral" during the war period, in return for Thailand giving a significant political role to those Thai who had been fighting alongside the Allies, known as the Free Thai. The latter had been recruited and worked with the OSS during the war. This small group of pro-western Thai would become an important element on the political scene in Thailand, taking positions as prime minister, key ministers, etc. During the Second World War, Lord Mountbatten had on his staff in India a group which followed events in Southeast Asia. People like Dillon Ripley, who became our eminent head of the Smithsonian, and his wife, Mary Livingston Ripley who played a role in the OSS. Ripley was among those who were sent or dropped into Thailand and helped to create an anti-Japanese resistance movement. These Free Thai continued to play a key role in Thailand all during the fifties, the sixties, seventies, and eighties. This also permitted the United States to maintain a close relationship with the King of Thailand, with the government, with the armed forces, and with the Thai security establishment. U.S.-Thai relations blossomed as Thailand became the country closest to the U.S. in Southeast Asia. We started making Thailand the center for our activities in that part of the world. Thais adjust easily to new circumstances, and our relationship was close and mutually beneficial. Our diplomatic mission became very large. Every branch of the U.S. government was represented in Bangkok. Every agency wanted its regional representative to be stationed there. Gradually, some regional representatives moved to Singapore.

After World War Two, a new threat became important which heretofore had not been much of a problem: drugs. We worked extremely closely with the Thai in order to stop the growing of opium poppies in the northern part of Thailand, offering replacement

crops to permit farmers to earn a living. We found full support for these ideas in the projects carried out by His Majesty the King. Thai and American experts persuaded Thai farmers to plant substitutes for poppies but which would be financially rewarding for those who enrolled in the poppy destruction program.

The problem of the poppy culture exceeded Thailand and reached into northern Burma. The northeastern part of Burma, known today as Myanmar, was a no man's land ruled at the time by Chinese War Lords, remnants of Chiang Kai-shek's army who had withdrawn from mainland China into Burma where they had found refuge. That area of Burma was a haven for poppy growing and heroin refineries. The area was then referred to as "the Golden Triangle". To coordinate the efforts of various U.S. departments and agencies in fighting drugs with our Thai friends, interdicting the movement of drugs, the growing of poppies, and the destruction of heroin refineries, was part of the ambassador's duties. Fighting drugs with our Thai colleagues meant, at times, going beyond the national borders of Thailand.

It was also in Thailand that I began to realize that some of the worst wars are not with foreign enemies, but internal strife among American agencies and departments battling for turf. If you read "Newsweek" or one of the other magazines or newspapers published during my tenure in Thailand, you will find that at one point I had to throw out (reassign to Washington) regional heads of one agency and also the regional chief of the competing agency. But turf battles were not confined to drugs. Within the Embassy, the military and U.S. Intelligence agencies may have differences. The Department of Agriculture and the Treasury Department may have different views on financing U.S. agricultural exports, etc… Sooner or later, these differences landed on the Ambassador's desk. One example was rice exports to Thailand, from the U.S., a problem for Thailand, one of the world's leading rice exporting nations.

Q: Basically, we are talking about Louisiana, California, and Arkansas.

DEAN: Yes. Obviously, these senators considered it as their duty and saw it as their responsibility to defend the local American rice growers.

Then, we also had to ascertain for our U.S. military to have access in Thailand to places where we could preposition equipment and supplies. These facilities were inherited from the days of the build-up during the Vietnam War, and our military wanted to maintain some access to them.

For example, we had built airfields which were not really fully used by the Thai after our withdrawal from Vietnam. Our navy needed access to ports to use for repairs and R&R for the U.S. Air Force and fleet. Thailand remained a strategic location in our overall global approach to the Pacific and East Asia, well after the end of our military presence in Vietnam.

The single most important policy maker for Thailand, in the field of foreign affairs, had been Dr. Thanat Khoman who was Foreign Minister for 14 years. It was he who had negotiated with Dean Rusk the Agreement creating ASEAN. For all practical purposes, Thanat Khoman was the "father of ASEAN." Thanat Khoman was a convinced nationalist and worked well with the United States, as long as he felt the relationship was mutually beneficial. As time went on, Thanat's close relationship with the United States became progressively more strained and he became vocally critical of the U.S. on many subjects. When I was in Bangkok as Ambassador, Thanat was Deputy Prime Minister. Since Thanat and I had attended the same French Institute for International Law in Paris - at 10 years interval - we had a common bond and I always tried to work with him. I continued to work with Thanat until the year 2000 on foundations and regional university centers, as for example the Asian Institute of Technology, after my retirement. For a total of 19 years I worked with Dr. Thanat. As Foreign Minister and as Deputy Prime Minister, Thanat played a great role in Thai foreign affairs. Most of the Thai ambassadors and diplomats who had something to do with foreign affairs until very recently were Dr. Thanat's protégés. As his relationship with the United States became for him a disappointment…

Q: What was the cause of this?

DEAN: He saw the United States as a power that sought hegemony in Asia. As a nationalist, Dr. Thanat saw the United States behind efforts to limit Thailand's role in Southeast Asia. Thanat favored Asians working together in their own national interest and not relying on one single foreign power for leadership. This concept was basically accepted by a number of people in his own country. Some of our people felt that Thanat was at times pursuing an unfriendly policy toward the United States.

Q: Do you think there was any validity to his concern?

DEAN: Let me put it this way. We had emerged from World War Two as the world's leading power and we accepted that role. The Thai have a long history of independence and pride in their identity. Thailand was never colonized. The Thai retained their independence by playing off the two leading foreign powers in their area against each other. The Thai had diplomatic relations with France since Louis XIV and in this way balanced British influence as Britain was pursuing its drive eastward towards Malaysia and Burma. In order to stay out of these two western orbits and be colonized as Burma was on the western side of Thailand, as Malaysia was in the south, as Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam were in the east, the Thai tried to play one off against the other. For centuries, the British and the French were balanced. In the late 19th century, the Thai began to modernize their country by bringing in foreign advisers from small countries to help them on issues such as internal security. The Danes were put in charge of that field. The Danes had been great traders. The Oriental Hotel was owned by them. The Danes owned the East Asia Company which played a role all over the Far East. The Belgians were advisers on legal matters. A small country like the United States at the end of the 19th century provided foreign affairs advisers. We would send somebody from Harvard to

advise the Foreign Office. The Thai kept their balance this way, by staying out of the orbit of great powers.

The American foreign affairs advisers stayed on in Thailand until the 1930s. During the Second World War, when Singapore fell to the Japanese and the Japanese promoted independence movements in Southeast Asia, they also occupied Thailand. While Thailand was not part of the Japanese orbit, the Thai bent in the wind as a bamboo does. When the war ended and we had this bright American chief of mission who made the Thai "honorary neutrals," the United States emerged as the most important single foreign power influencing Thailand. Some Thai accepted the United States as the major foreign influence in Thailand. Others favored balancing U.S. power with other foreign Influences - specifically, the Japanese became more and more respected in Thailand in the economic field. Economic assistance, exports, establishment of Japanese factories in Thailand, became more important during the 1980s. Japanese cars replaced American cars, Japanese television replaced other foreign televisions, Japanese tourists rubbed shoulders with American tourists, etc. Japan was the first foreign country to balance U.S. economic influence in Thailand.

Then came the gaining of importance of Mainland China in East Asia. The rise of communist Mainland China in the 1950s, ‘60s, ‘70s, and ‘80s was for the Thai a new phenomenon (although they had close links with China for centuries). They had worked highly effectively with Taiwan since the 1950s. From the Thai point of view, the new Chinese mainland giant required balancing and they invited the Presidents and Chiefs of Governments of the European Union to come to Bangkok to increase their trade and influence in Thailand. The European Union has become the fourth balancing element in Thailand - this time to balance Mainland China. Already during my time, it was apparent that Thailand was returning to the old policy of balancing foreign influence in Thailand. Perhaps one major exception, still at the time of my tour of duty, was that U.S. strategic and military influence remained unchallenged. Thailand sent its officers to the United States for specialized military training and bought U.S. military equipment - army, navy, and air force.

Q: You as an ambassador understood this, but how did you see your role? Did you want to change this or play with the game?

DEAN: I think this will come out as we go along. You are not going to change the Thai. Originally, Thailand was inhabited by Mon people. They had a Hindu-type culture. Then, the Thai came down from southern China in the 14th century. At that time, eastern Thailand was under Khmer control and influence. Gradually, the Thai replaced or absorbed the Khmers in eastern Thailand and from Ayutia Thai Buddhist culture radiated to the rest of the country. In the 19th century, many Chinese left their homes to immigrate to Southeast Asia. Most of the emigrants from China were poor. The ethnic Chinese became traders and merchants, while the Thai, who were slightly darker in complexion, remained military or servants of the state. Above all, they remained farmers in the provinces, while the Chinese had a tendency to settle in urban centers. Basically, Thailand

had been governed for many centuries by the military and later they also established banks and businesses, in short entered the business world. When I took my first trip with Prime Minister Prem to the United States in 1982, I had suggested to him that he takes along business people who would constitute a new link between American business and Thai business. This idea was new at the time because the social status of the merchants or businessmen was not equal to the Thai military or the civil servants. It took time for the Chinese from China to take a Thai name, to honor the King (which was the key), and be part of the Buddhist Thai establishment and become fully integrated into the Thai establishment. My initiative to invite Thai businessmen to accompany General Prem to the United States certainly promoted U.S.-Thai relations.

Q: I am told that many of the Chinese made a point of marrying Thai women.

DEAN: They did. Everybody did. As a matter of fact, my former Thai colleague in Washington had ancestors who came from Persia. There had always been people coming to Thailand who were attracted by the relative richness of the land, the outgoing nature of the Thai people, and the pleasant Thai lifestyle. The Thai are good-looking people. The Chinese immigrants often intermarried, took Thai names, and little by little were assimilated. The Chinese Thai took to business like ducks to water, not only in their country of adoption but also in their dealings with the Chinese in Taipei, the Chinese in Singapore, with the Chinese in their country of origin, China itself. They became an element in the 20th century of also making known Thailand outside the borders of Thailand itself.

When I arrived in 1981, I followed a number of outstanding American ambassadors who had preceded me. Among them was Wild Bill Donovan, the founder of OSS. Another was U. Alexis Johnson who became undersecretary of State. It was one of the more important posts of our Foreign Service in the second half of the 20th century. It was a Class-One Embassy. Part of the job was coordinating the work of 500-600 Americans in the embassy so that there would be no infighting among different U.S. agencies and departments.

Let me be more specific. Our U.S. military in 1981 wanted to use the base of U-Tapao, which had been a huge air base for B-52 bombers used during the Vietnam War. It had an excellent runway and large warehouse facilities in good condition. After 1975 - the end of the Vietnam War - we could not use U-Tapao. After the collapse in 1975, the Thai had a somewhat standoffish policy towards the United States, about access to former U.S. military bases. I was asked by Washington to explore whether the Thai authorities might find a way for us to use that facility for American military aircraft flying from Japan westward. We also suggested to stock spare parts for repair at U-Tapao. The Thai inquired whether we could modernize the fueling facilities for aircraft. This would require a fairly important investment. I started working with Prime Minister Prem, whom I found to be a very straight, honest, hardworking individual with close links to the King, whose confidence he enjoyed. I suggested that a Thai flag be hoisted over the base since it was Thai territory and also a Thai facility. But I suggested that the U.S. might use this facility

when we needed it. I also agreed that we would install a new refueling system for the planes. Obviously, the Thai could also use the new refueling system for their planes, both civilian and military. The new refueling system would permit any aircraft to be refueled within an hour. We also received permission to stock spare parts and equipment needed for the revision of aircraft. We agreed that the base could be used by Thai and U.S. planes and that U-Tapao was definitely under Thai jurisdiction. It was on that basis that the agreement was reached with Prime Minister Prem. Also, crews would be able to go for R&R into town while their aircraft was being fixed.

This agreement was respected by both parties. By the way, the U-Tapao air base played a major role in the war against Iraq, as U.S. aircraft from East Asia was flown eastward to be used in the Iraq conflict.

Q: This would be 1990-1991.

DEAN: Exactly right. I was no longer there, but I was reading with interest in the international media that U-Tapao was prepared for emergencies. The American strategy always remains to be prepared for emergencies.

Another priority for our military was that we wanted to continue working closely with the armed forces of Thailand. We trained Thai officers and enlisted personnel for the Air Force, the Navy, and the Army. As I said earlier, the Thai military always played a significant role in their country, sometimes also on the political scene. Traditionally, the Thai military had been the power brokers in the selection of governments before the civilian political parties got to play a more important role. One of the great contributions made by General Prem was that, as a civilian, he was eight and a half years Prime Minister, and during that period there were no coups. He was a civilian from a military background. He was able to work both with the Thai civilian sector and with the Thai military. He had the full confidence of His Majesty, the King. General Prem gave continuity to the Thai political system which had been known previously for frequent changes of governments.

The Thai navy needed ships. Well, our Embassy helped the Thai to get ships built at the Tacoma shipyards, in Washington State. These vessels, built in the United States, were equipped with advanced technology, including certain missiles. In short, the Thai navy was modernized. It became an up-to-date navy.

Another reason for good military to military relations was that the Thai army played a role still in the 1980s in Thailand, coping imaginatively with insurgencies in far-off places which had not benefited yet from the rapid growth and progress of the Thai economy, as in other parts of Thailand. The Thai army built roads into these areas so that these dissatisfied elements - mostly farmers - could get their produce to the market. As roads came in, schools were built, television reached the boondocks, teachers, health officers, doctors arrived in those regions, and those small elements which were in revolt, rejoined the mainstream in Thailand. The reasons for dissent had been addressed by the

Thai government. To the extent the U.S. could, we helped the Thai authorities in their development efforts to erase the reasons for opposition to Bangkok. U.S. aid programs assisted in many areas. Not all U.S. assistance was government supplied. For example, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund had provided for 60 years professors to Thailand's leading Medical School: Mahidol University. Missionaries from the United States also had established clinics in Thailand. Graduates of Thai medical schools - which were free of charge - had to serve as doctors in Thai government clinics in the provinces, for 2-3 years, before setting themselves up in their own private practice. In this way, the population up country also received adequate health care. The United States was very closely linked to the development by the Thai of a modern, social, economic, and educational infrastructure in their country, and this was recognized by the Thai. In return, the Thai were understanding of our needs as a global power for facilities to support our role in Asia.

But there were elements also in Thailand who felt that our influence overtly and covertly was perhaps too large. So, there were some elements like Dr, Thanat who thought it would be better to diversify the influence of foreign countries, and above all develop Thailand's own potentials. Today, you can buy fax machines made in Thailand. Scientifically advanced projects in remote sensing are done jointly with the United States and France. Over the years, the United States and the American ambassadors in Bangkok played a very constructive role in working with Thai authorities in modernizing and developing Thailand. I felt that if it's good for Thailand, it's also good for us, provided we are somehow involved, and we were.

Q: Let's talk about some of the turf battles within the Embassy.

DEAN: One example was the difference between two agencies that were very much involved in trying to curb poppy growing, destroying of refineries, regardless where they were located. Sometimes there was a race to determine who would get there first to destroy the refinery. Such competition could take on very nasty proportions. Both worked closely with Thai military forces to carry out their programs. At times, it could be the Thai Air Force that worked with one and the Thai Army might be working with the other, or vice-versa. Thai and U.S. authorities had a well thought out program on interdicting drug trafficking, destroying refineries, crop substitution for growing poppies, in short, U.S. - Thai cooperation in that field was good. Rivalry between agencies involved in the struggle could complicate the task. I might also mention that at times, those involved in destroying refineries might have to go into areas somewhat beyond the territorial boundaries of Thailand.

Q: You are talking about what was Burma.

DEAN: Yes, There were refineries in northeastern Burma which were not under the control of the authorities of Rangoon.

There were also people in the United States who believed that there were still American prisoners held in adjacent Laos during my tenure in Thailand, i.e., 1981-85.

Q: You are talking about the MIA (Missing In Action) and some movements in the U.S. determined to search on their own for POWs, a group that continues to be active still today.

DEAN: Yes. I had the visit in Bangkok of people searching for POWs in Laos. For example, a certain Mrs. Chapman whose husband had flown Air America planes in Laos, came to see me in Bangkok. Some years earlier, it had been my sad duty in Laos to give her the bad news that the plane her husband had piloted had crashed. Since the plane was carrying ammunitions, the plane not only crashed but exploded. There were no survivors. When Mrs. Chapman came to my embassy in Bangkok years later, she said: "Mr. Ambassador, I am sure that my husband is still alive and he is held prisoner in Laos." There had been some people in the United States who had made her believe that her husband was still alive and was a prisoner in Laos. These people often were soldiers of fortune, treasure hunters, who were misleading people that their loved ones were still alive and they could help them to recover either their remains in some distant place, or bring them back alive from a prison camp.

Q: Confidence men.

DEAN: Yes - con people. Exactly. I said: "But, Mrs. Chapman, you know me. I had to give you the bad news that your husband had been flying a plane with ammunition and that it exploded." At that point, she broke down in tears and said:" You know, these people who talk with me give me hope and I live on hope. They say maybe he is still alive and I believed it." She left my office, perhaps better informed, but I don't think I made a friend being truthful.

Other people - often former military - came to Thailand with the sole purpose of searching for MIAs or POWs in Laos. They brought with them very sophisticated communications equipment which they carried with them into Laos. They had a backup group in Thailand with whom they stayed in contact while in the bush in Laos. They were going into Laos to look and free the American prisoners of war held against their will in Laos, according to their story. Having served in Laos twice, having been involved in the Vietnam War, I knew that there had always been in every conflict a number of dissatisfied people who went AWOL and found a local gal and they deserted - stayed behind. I did not believe that more than six years after the end of the Vietnam War there were Americans in Laos held against their will. As for MIAs I thought this was an honorable U.S. Government supported program.

Q: Saigon had a sizeable community of these people.

DEAN: I don't know that much about Saigon itself. I know that I heard about some deserters - after the war - usually in far-off places in the Dalat region. In Laos, in 1981,

there were still some Americans who, for some reason or other, had not cared to return to the U.S. and had found a quite comfortable life in the bush and had stayed there.

Personally, I thought at that time that there were no Americans held against their will in Laos. On the other hand, there were definitely still men missing in action and a U.S. Government supported program was active in searching for MIAs because in our vision of life, having the remains of somebody who had fallen in battle was an important factor for our society and I supported that effort fully. But this group of people searching for POWs in Laos in the 1980s was a private organization and not government supported. This particular group was going to get paid for the bones they brought back, allegedly the remains of American soldiers missing in action! In this particular case, this group of American adventurers got into trouble with the Lao army and were wounded as they tried to escape capture by the regular Lao army for entering Lao territory without authorization. One of the Americans and one of the Lao who came with the group were wounded. They used their communications equipment to get a message back to Bangkok that they needed help. Their message was addressed to the clandestine Thai group supporting them. They did not contact the U.S. Embassy directly but an American came to me and said: 'Mr. Ambassador, this gentleman and his party are in serious trouble. They are surrounded. They need to be extracted from there. Since they are in a foreign country, could you ask the Prime Minister of Thailand to insert Thai special forces to get the Americans and a few Lao out and back to Thailand." Thailand recognized Laos as an independent sovereign country. Invading a foreign country with Thai paratroopers was not exactly their idea of a neighborly policy. But I went to the Thai Prime Minister - General Prem - late at night and asked if the Thai military could insert special forces to extract the intruders. Some people on my staff also approached the Thai military to obtain their assistance. We gave the Thai military the exact location of the group awaiting extraction, information which had been transmitted by the sophisticated communications equipment the group had brought with them. Thai Special Forces extracted two Americans and some Lao and brought them back to Thailand. The Thai action was certainly a sign of friendship and loyalty by the Thai military and by the Thai Prime Minister towards the United States. When the Americans who were rescued came back to Bangkok, I suggested to the Consul General on my staff to pick up their passports, to get them medical attention and send them back to the States on the first flight back. That same afternoon, the Consul General came back to me and said: "I don' think we should do that." Well, I found out by talking to my counselors that my suggestion was difficult to execute. Apparently, the two Americans had some pretty high protection back in the States, who supported ventures searching for POWs held over from the Vietnam War.

Q: We are probably talking about Ross Perot and his organization, aren't we?

DEAN: Since you mentioned it, I will continue with the story because Mr. Perot does enter.

Q: I might add that Ross Perot was the presidential candidate of the Independence Party or something, and has been a perpetual supporter of the conspiracy theory or whatever

you want to call it, that there are prisoners of war still in camps in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

DEAN: Since our own American Consul General was reluctant to act, I went to see Prime Minister Prem and suggested that perhaps the Thai authorities could curtail the visa of stay of these intruders, thereby forcing them to leave Thailand. This was done by Thai police and immigration officers so that the gentlemen in question and their wounded colleagues were put on a plane without too much delay. But I learned that my power of control as Ambassador over these American troublemakers was limited.

Q: I might add, I am a professional consular officer. It used to be that we could take somebody's passport away, get them out of the country if they were a little bit crazy. Somebody would give them a shot of something and put them on a plane with a nurse or something, and we would just get rid of them. Those days, particularly by the mid-1970s, have gone forever. However, what you just said... We could usually go to the host government and say: "Look, you have a troublemaker here. Get them the hell out of here. But we can't do it; you do it." Sometimes there would be fights. But this became sort of the remedy. Where there is a will, there is a way.

DEAN: That's exactly it. Let us close this particular chapter by relating a related incident. One Friday afternoon, the manager of one of the large American banks in Bangkok came to me with a large envelope with $50,000 in cash in it. He said: "John, I have been asked by somebody to give this envelope to you because you would support efforts to recoup the remains of Americans killed in action (MIAs). These Americans are infiltrating Laos and are bringing back the remains for the families back home. Please give them this money when they return with the remains." I replied, "Look, we have had these guys come to the Embassy and they came back from Laos with chicken bones - all kinds of animal bones. But most of these guys were just interested in the money they might get. I have no instructions from the government on these ventures. They are private initiatives. I don't want to be involved in this transaction. It's Friday afternoon, and I don't want to have this money in a government safe over the week-end. Please take it back. This was the end of that story. At the Embassy, we had a section that was in charge of looking for the remains of MIAs and after they had located the spot, they would make an official request to the foreign authorities to explore the site. Our Embassy fully supported this important operation. It was an official, overt, U.S. Government operation. I was not convinced that the U.S. Embassy should be involved in private efforts to find MIA remains, especially if they violated the law and were primarily motivated by financial gain for the treasure hunter.

Q: The official U.S. effort to identify remains of U.S. MIAs is legitimate. But this idea that somehow, for some reason, the Lao, the Cambodians, or the Vietnamese were holding people did not make any sense.

DEAN: One should add that, allegedly, these Americans were held against their will, i.e., there were still POWs in the early 1980s. I think this thesis has not been proven.

But what was proven, as time went on, was that there were in Laos, and in Vietnam, soldiers who had deserted. As they got homesick, as they got older, or as they got sick, they would walk out of the bush, out of the jungle, and turn themselves in and then ask to be repatriated. I think, on the whole, the armed forces of the United States dealt very fairly and humanely with these cases. They were not prisoners of war held against their will, but people who for one reason or another had left the armed services and stayed on. At first, they were probably known as deserters. Perhaps, as time went on, they were seen somewhat differently. That did occur. But still today, anything that can be done by the United States, in conjunction with local authorities, on identifying the remains of MIAs and getting them to the children or the widows of those who fought in this conflict, remains an important duty and responsibility of U.S. government officials serving overseas.

I would like to change the subject for a while. Since we were talking about the important role of the Drug Enforcement Agency, the various intelligence agencies, and the military, in fighting the flow of drugs and the production of drugs in that region, ever so often, the local Thai authorities would arrest what we call a "mule" - a carrier of drugs - who would bring heroin from Bangkok by plane to the West. He or she might be paid $3,000 - $4,000 for such a service. A number of them were caught.

Also, a number of users and dealers, including Americans, were caught by the Thai, as part of an international effort to interdict the flow of drugs. Sometimes, the local authorities would not arrest the Thai, but the guy working the street would be an American or he was involved in the movement of drugs from up-country to Bangkok, but he was caught with large quantities of drugs on him. They always got, as we had requested for all drug dealers, pretty stiff sentences from the Thai courts. I received a number of requests from American Senators or high-ranking Executive Branch officials for their liberation. Most of the time, the request took the form of asking me to obtain a Royal Pardon for an American who was caught in the drug trade. The sentences were severe. In Singapore, it was even death. In Thailand, it could be 20-30 years, depending on the size and nature of the offense.

I remember in one particular case an American Sergeant, who had been working in the U.S. Military Mission attached to the Embassy, was caught having hidden drugs in his household effects as he was leaving Thailand to return to the United States. The Sergeant had served in Thailand with his wife. In his household effects, as they were being assembled and crated, they found that he had in that shipment fairly significant amounts of drugs. Was he responsible for hiding the drugs? Were they placed there by somebody else who wanted to get rid of him, somebody who did not like him? The end result was: he was put in jail and he received a stiff sentence. I received a personal note from the Secretary of Defense asking me to intervene on his behalf and he suggested a Royal Pardon.

My relationship with His Majesty was excellent. His Majesty was one of the finest human beings I ever had the chance of working with. We could ask for a royal pardon when high-ranking Americans intervened for an American drug offender. But soon, requests from Congressmen, Senators, Generals, Admirals, for royal pardons would be so numerous that it would be impossible for the King to grant
a pardon every time. Furthermore, what about all the Americans in Thai prisons who had nobody to intervene for him or her? The problem was how to protect American citizens and at the same time be fair to all Americans who were in prison?

Once, while on vacation in France, I was introduced to a distinguished Frenchman who said to me, "Mr. Ambassador, I made a terrible mistake in my life. Many years ago I married a much younger wife who was part of the hippie generation and she was deeply into drugs. A couple of years ago, she took our three children to Thailand and all of them are now deeply into the drug culture. They have all been arrested in Thailand and now are serving long-term sentences in Thai jails. Can you do something? I am willing to pay any amount of money to get them out." I replied: "Look, I am soon flying back to Bangkok and will consult with my French colleague. The latter spoke fluent Thai and was much appreciated by the Thai authorities. When I spoke to my French colleague. Ambassador Jean Soulier, I explained my meeting in Paris and added that the Frenchman had offered money to use in Bangkok to get his wife and children released. Jean Soulier replied: "Look, that's the last thing you want. Don't ever get involved in this sordid case. There is a story around in some countries that the Thai judges are corrupt. Most of them are not. They are just applying the law. If you offer them money, you will be accused of corrupting them." He suggested that we ask for an audience with His Majesty the King and ask whether instead of asking for a royal pardon for our citizens in jail for drug offences, we could negotiate a Prisoner Exchange Treaty. The treaty would specify that after the convicted persons had served one year in the local jail, they would be eligible to be exchanged, i.e., sent to their country of origin (U.S. or France), and serve the rest of the sentence in their own country, or whatever sentence the legal system of their own country would impose on them. My colleague thought that such an agreement would be acceptable to the Thai authorities and would not undermine the Thai legal system nor the Thai effort to fight drugs - a program the United States had promoted in Thailand. We did go separately to His Majesty and asked for His Majesty's advice. As always, he was of good counsel and said that he would support a Prisoner Exchange Treaty with the United States and France. Afterwards, we discussed the subject with the Thai Government. Both the United States and France signed a Prisoner Exchange Treaty with Thailand that year. That took care of the royal pardon problem for our drug offenders and we did not have to distinguish between the Americans who "had pull" in high places, and those who were forgotten and rotted in Thai jails. This solution also permitted the Thai to be even-handed with all offenders, regardless of nationality, as long as the foreign government had signed a similar treaty with the Thai authorities.

Now that I have mentioned His Majesty the King, let me say that he was an extremely able Chief of State. I am not talking about chiefs of Governments. His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen had longstanding ties with the United States. The King was

born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where his father attended Harvard Medical School. His mother had gone to Simmons College in Boston. When I was in Thailand, the King's mother, known as "The Prince's Mother," was still extremely active, flying all around the country, in spite of her advanced age, and dispensing assistance (medicine, blankets, clothing) to the hill tribes. She was a wonderful old lady, an excellent role model for the Thai elite. The King had come on the throne as a very young man and he had to impose himself, which was not easy. He had an older brother who died before the present King mounted the throne as a young man of 19 years of age or so. King Bhumibol of Thailand is today one of the longest living rulers. The King married the Queen whose father was military attaché in France. She was a very accomplished, very beautiful young lady. They truly became, as time went on, the cement that binds the entire country together. They are the common bond for the ethnic groupings and religions (Muslims in the south, Buddhists all over, Christian minorities, etc.) that make them all part of the Thai community. People from the left, from the right, politicians and statesmen, the rich and the poor, for all of them, the unifying cement is above all His Majesty. When I presented credentials to the King in 1981, I was known in Southeast Asia for my work In Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Not everybody had agreed with my approach to diplomacy. Little by little, my wife and I established a direct, personal relation- ship with Their Majesties, which helped solving many problems which arose in U.S.-Thai relations. My work was facilitated by the invitations we received every three or four months to visit Their Majesties at the various palaces they had at their disposal around the country. Sometimes, we would go for the week-end. During these audiences away from Bangkok, I would ask for His Majesty's advice on issues of national interest. "What is feasible? What is not feasible? What is right? What is wrong?" His Majesty might ask me: "Is this person loyal? Is he or she honest?" The American Ambassador has so many assets at his disposal, knowing what is going on in the world, and Their Majesties knew their own country so well, that these exchanges were usually mutually beneficial. I am still today grateful for the friendly reception Their Majesties gave me during my four years as Ambassador to Thailand.

Within the Embassy, I was the coordinator of all U.S. activities in Thailand. If we did undertake covert operations, I insisted on being advised. But on many issues, other members of the Embassy played key roles. The station chief continued to be an important official. The head of the U.S. military mission had a close relationship with his Thai counterpart. I was blessed with an outstanding team of very professional officials in every section of the U.S. Mission to Thailand. Perhaps I was a lucky guy: my deputies were Stapleton Roy and Chas Freeman, two of our best Foreign Service Officers, who made major contributions to our country as Ambassadors to China and Saudi Arabia respectively. Certainly my success in Thailand was largely the result of the efforts of our team. If I differed with representatives of other departments or agencies on my staff, I would first try to enlist the support of the Department of State. If this did not help, I would contact members of the National Security Council at the White House. Often, it would also require a telephone call to heads of departments or agencies in Washington to achieve a common U.S. position.

What did I discuss with His Majesty? The drug problem, local politics, or the problems and needs of the people of Thailand. Getting American universities to cooperate with Thai universities in the fields of science and technology was another subject. At least twice a year my wife and I, joined by all the other chiefs of mission and their wives, were invited to accompany Their Majesties when they traveled around Thailand to see for themselves the needs and problems of the rural people.

We would see the King and the Queen sitting on the ground with the farmers, asking: "What do you need?" The answer might be "A water pump, Your Majesty." There usually were 50 aides around him. The command from His Majesty might be: "Water pump for village so and so." Then, another woman might come up and plead: "We haven't got a dentist within 100 miles. Could somebody come and take care of our problems and pain with our teeth." The Queen would speak up and one of her assistants would get the order "to get some dentists to come to the village within 14 days." At the request of Their Majesties, Thai dentists would volunteer their services free of charge 2 or 3 times a year to visit outlying villages, to comply with Their Majesties' requests. From time to time, His Majesty the King, or the Queen, would do me the honor to visit an American aid project. Although it was no longer the period of intensive U.S. economic aid programs, we still worked closely with the Thai on rural development. When the new annual calendar came out one year printed by the Thai Government, it had on the cover the picture of His Majesty with John Gunther Dean next to him. In the picture, His Majesty was pointing into the distance as if he was suggesting a site for a development project. Some years later, well after my departure from Thailand, the Thai Government printed new 500 baht bank notes. The same picture of His Majesty was used on the bank note, with the King in exactly the same posture as in the picture on the calendar. When I visited the American Embassy in Bangkok after retirement, a Thai employee came up to me holding up a 500 baht bank note and reminding me that it was the same image of the King as the picture from the calendar taken with me a few years earlier. In December 1999,"TIME" Magazine reproduced the same picture of His Majesty with John Gunther Dean next to him. Thai Airways published the same photograph in its publication in early 2000. Perhaps it was the symbol of the golden age in U.S.-Thai relations.

At one point, His Majesty asked me whether his son, the Crown Prince, could go to the United States, perhaps for one year, for pilot training, flying F-16s and helicopters, in addition to some exposure to the education of general staff officers. The U.S. military assigned a Lt. Colonel to the Crown Prince, who sent monthly reports on the Prince's training also to the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, which I turned them over personally to His Majesty. I would like to believe that the year spent in the United States by the Crown Prince was beneficial and helped to perfect him in some of the military arts as well as some of the civilian virtues needed for those holding high office. Since the Crown Prince today is playing a more important role than ever before, I would like to believe that the year he spent in the States was in the long-term interest of Thailand and our relationship with that country.

During my tenure, we also tried to be helpful to two of the daughters of Their Majesties, Princess Sirindhorn and Princess Chulabhorn. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn attended courses at the Asian Institute of Technology where she received a Master's degree in remote sensing. The Asian Institute of Technology (A.I.T.) near Bangkok was founded by President Johnson in 1962. It looks like an American University campus and has an outstanding international faculty with a student body from more than 25 countries. Remote sensing is a tough science, but Princess Sirindhorn is very gifted and she got her degree with flying colors.

By the way, Princess Sirindhorn is truly beloved by the people of Thailand. We also had a chance of working with the youngest daughter, Princess Chulabhorn, who was then married to a Thai air force officer. She is also a good scientist, in addition to being a well-known singer of Thai songs.

Much of my interest was directed to promoting linkages between the United States and Thailand in science, technology, and education. As a member of the Board of Directors of A.I.T., I was able to bring students from all over Asia to the Institute. Funding for U.S. sponsored Asian students was provided by the U.S. Economic Aid Mission. The students came to study for the Master's or Doctor's degree and most of them returned to their native country where they were able to pass on their knowledge gained at A.I.T. to their fellow countrymen. (Today, this program is largely financed by Japan.) Especially smaller countries, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, benefited from that regional educational Center. Later, in the early 1990s, I was instrumental to have Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Burma rejoin that organization. But I also helped to promote bilateral links between U.S. and Thai universities in fields as diverse as business administration, medicine, and science. The Fulbright Scholarship program educated many leading Thai personalities and the American Alumni Association of Thailand Is still today one of the best examples of constructive U.S. cooperation with Thailand. Let me say at this point that I was blessed with excellent colleagues at the Economic Aid Mission who were the motor in our policy of helping the host country on their road to development. Our military mission attached to the Embassy did the same good job in training Thai officers in the army, navy, air force in the ever more technical aspects of their work.

Q: It was also a difficult period. This was the first part of the Reagan Administration. Reagan came in with a strong right-wing, nationalistic reputation. Things change, as they do in all administrations after they have been through the mill. But this was still pretty hard-edged.

DEAN: I was a Reagan appointee.

Q: I know that.

DEAN: I had never been involved in domestic politics. I had served as Chief of Mission under Presidents Reagan, Carter, Ford, Nixon, and Eisenhower. I was neither a Democrat nor a Republican. The new factor that emerged in 1979 in our relationship with Thailand

was the flight of hundreds of thousands of Cambodians to Thailand, a problem which had already occupied my predecessor Ambassador Mort Abramowitz and was going to play a significant role during my tenure in Thailand. Let me explain.

In 1979 (hence, two years before I arrived), the Vietnamese had intervened in Cambodia and had thrown out the Pol Pot wing of the Khmer Rouge. The Vietnamese were concerned and were already adversely affected by the excesses of the Khmer Rouge regime, both in their own country and by their attacks into Vietnamese territory near the border and against Vietnamese communities living in Cambodia. In 1979, the Vietnamese army threw out from Phnom Penh and eastern Cambodia the brutal government of Pol Pot and his cronies. The Vietnamese supported and installed a government of dissident Khmer Rouge in Phnom Penh who had realized that the excesses of Pol Pot had harmed the Cambodians and their neighbors, the Vietnamese. Without Vietnamese military intervention this could not have happened. This new situation caused a dilemma for the United States: the Vietnamese in 1979 had invaded Cambodia to help the Cambodians rid themselves of Pol Pot. It also expanded Vietnamese influence westward beyond their borders. Not knowing whether the Vietnamese military support for the Cambodian anti-Pol Pot forces would lead to a better life for themselves, many Cambodians fled the fighting and moved westward to the Thai-Khmer border. They entered Thailand where they became refugees in large camps set up for them. These camps became a humanitarian problem for Thailand and a resettlement problem for the international community. At that point in history, the Cambodian government was still perceived by the United States to be Khmer Rouge and anti-American. The new government in Phnom Penh was clearly close to Vietnam and relied on Chinese and Russian assistance.

As for the Thai, they were being submerged on their eastern border by the flow of Cambodian refugees and by attacks from remnants of Pol Pot forces hiding in the northwestern border region of Cambodia. Some of the Cambodians in the refugee camps joined the armed struggle against the regime in power in Phnom Penh which had replaced Pol Pot. In their struggle, they received the support of Thai and U.S. organizations. The real victims were the people in the middle who had chosen to be refugees in the camps at the Thai border. But at that time in history - both for the Thai and the U.S. - the adversary remained the rump forces of Pol Pot and the government installed by the Vietnamese in Phnom Penh. The Cambodian anti-communist resistance at the Thai -Cambodian border was not united. Among them was Prince Ranariddh, Sihanouk's oldest son, and various Khmer generals and officers who had been part of Lon Nol's army. Some were decent people, but they could not prevail militarily against the Vietnamese-backed regime in Phnom Penh. Meanwhile, the refugee camps continued to grow in population, and the only hope for the refugees was resettlement in other countries. Hundreds of thousands of Cambodians, hill tribes, and to a lesser extent Vietnamese, were resettled with the help of both government services and NGOs, in North America, South America, Europe, Australia, and to a lesser extent, in Asia. The role of the international community and of the United States was an example of humanitarian concern for our less fortunate fellow men. Perhaps, we can today be sufficiently honest to admit that many of these refugees became homeless and in need of help because of the political, military, and strategic

struggle between two different ideologies in Southeast Asia. Most of the refugees just wanted to find a place to live in peace and raise a family who will live a better life than they had, as a result of half a century of warfare In Southeast Asia.

The refugee problem, the camps at the Thai-Khmer border, the expansion of Vietnamese influence beyond its borders, also impacted on U.S. relations with Thailand. The Thai needed us, and we in turn needed the Thai more than ever. The Thai had a special unit on the border whose job it was to ascertain that the Cambodian refugees would not slip surreptitiously into Thailand. The refugees were processed in the camps in an orderly manner by the immigration services of various countries to determine whether they could be admitted to some foreign country for resettlement. The refugees lived in these camps which were like a no man's land, with Thai troops stationed on the western side, NGOs working within the camps, and on the eastern side Vietnamese supported Cambodian troops from the Phnom Penh government keeping the refugees from drifting back. On top of that, groups loyal to Pol Pot tried to get food or whatever they could from relatives or sympathizers within these camps. The refugee camps on the Thai-Cambodian border added an international dimension to the bilateral relationship with Thailand.

Q: Let's talk about the role of the Chinese. Also, we might mention here that we will talk a bit about dealing first with Alexander Haig, and then George Shultz, and your relations with the State Department.

DEAN: At my posting in Thailand, my relationship with George Shultz appeared to me to have been always good. Before George Shultz came to the State Department, he was a very senior President of Bechtel in California. I had a good personal relationship with the Head of Bechtel for Southeast Asia who was stationed in Indonesia. He was a very nice gentleman with an attractive Afro-American wife. Both were competent. Bechtel received a contract putting up wire fences around certain U.S. military installations in Thailand. Furthermore, I had met George Shultz before he was named Secretary of State. At the time, we talked about my previous posting - Lebanon - and he seemed to know a lot about my work in Lebanon. Little did I know at that time that I was going to be working for him as Ambassador both in Thailand and in India.

As for Alexander Haig, I had worked for him in previous postings, I worked with Alexander Haig when he was Supreme Commander of NATO. At that time I was U.S. Ambassador to Denmark. With Denmark in NATO, we sometimes had his visit to inspect the northern flank of NATO. I should also mention that I had known Alexander Haig prior to Denmark, when he was Deputy to Dr. Kissinger and we did the peace negotiations in Laos. Later, as U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia, I was grateful to Haig and his wife Pat for having adopted in the U.S. two Cambodian orphans. Also, Alexander Haig's father had played a significant role in the Catholic Relief Services in New York. You may recall that I worked very closely with the Catholic Relief Services in order to get their humanitarian help in Cambodia and Lebanon. I had known Alexander Haig's fathers past links to that organization. I got along well with Haig. This does not mean that we agreed on all subjects. But I think it was a comfortable relationship based on mutual

respect. When I was in Thailand, I went at least twice on official visits with Prime Minister Prem to the United States. One of them, I remember very distinctly. We were invited by President Reagan for lunch at the White House. The President was flanked on one side by General Haig, then Secretary of State, and on the other side by Mr. Weinberger, Secretary of Defense. At the table, I was the lowest-ranking man and I was expected to take notes on the discussion during the meal. Prime Minister Prem's English at that time was not yet perfect and he would sometimes ask for one of the Thai Ministers to whisper to him a translation.

At one point during the meal, the President received a note from an American assistant who had entered the room. After a second message was handed to the President, Mr. Reagan rose to his feet and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I have the sad duty to announce that the President of Egypt has been assassinated."

Q: Oh, yes, Anwar Sadat.

DEAN: Anwar Sadat. As soon as the President sat down, Secretary of State Haig stood up and said: "Mr. President, we must move the Mediterranean fleet forward." There was silence. I don't remember what happened thereafter, but we finished the meal and briefly resumed our discussion of United States - Thai relations. The meeting broke up shortly after coffee. In my opinion, Haig's spontaneous reaction was motivated by his efforts to limit the possible political fallout both within Egypt and on the international scene - caused by Sadat's assassination. A few years earlier, when I was Ambassador to Lebanon and Haig was Secretary of State, Haig had called a regional ambassadorial conference in Jordan. At that meeting he was trying to obtain ideas on how to move forward in the Middle East. He asked for ideas on how to reduce tension between Palestinians and Israelis. My impression then was that Secretary Haig was more favorably disposed to the Israelis than to the Palestinians.

Q: We will pick this up. You have covered the background of the problems in Cambodia. We will talk about what you did dealing with the Cambodian problem, the Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge, the Free Cambodians, and the Vietnamese, and what your particular concerns and dealings with that were. We have covered Thailand pretty completely. Did you get involved in the great tobacco controversy about selling American cigarettes?

DEAN: I did. It was not an easy task. On the one hand, every cigarette package had a warning printed on its packaging that tobacco is not good for your health, while at the same time we were pushing cigarette sales for exports. My answer was to leave this job to the Economic Section which handled this hot potato very efficiently.

Q: I have interviewed Bob Duncan, who at one point had to do this. Bob is a heavy smoker, so he was able to...

DEAN: I guess everybody had to deal with this problem in his own way. Another example was American rice sales to Thailand. It was difficult to explain to the Thai why

we had to sell subsidized rice from the United States into Thailand when the Thai themselves were selling their own rice, not subsidized, to the rest of the world.

Q: Also, it was different rice. It tasted different.

DEAN: Out trade problems were just beginning at that time. They are much worse today. In those days, it was our 301 legislation which permitted us to put quotas on imports from certain countries and/or impose tariffs on a strictly unilateral basis. This U.S. legislation caused a lot of grief in many developing countries and their doubtful legality made free trade more difficult as countries became more conscious of their own identity and sovereignty, and the need to compete on a fair basis with more powerful nations. It is obviously much more interesting for the American ambassador to assist an American telephone company to sell their switches, promote American advanced communications technology and biotechnology to enter the Thai market which help the development and modernization process of Thailand, than selling cigarettes or rice to Thailand. Quite often I would take my trade problems to His Majesty the King for advice. At one point, we were selling F-16s to the Thai military establishment; His Majesty said: "Mr. Ambassador, it would be better for Thailand if you would sell more bulldozers to our Corps of Engineers rather than more military aircraft.

The Corps of Engineers, with their bulldozers to build roads, markets, schools, etc., might actually be a better way of fighting communism and insurgencies than Thailand acquiring more advanced aircraft." I tried to provide both. Yes, when you also represent U.S. manufacturing industries, there are some industries which are easier to defend and promote abroad than others. I ran into a similar problem in India with the movie industry. The Indians make more movies in India than Hollywood does in the United States.

Q: Let us turn to the problem of Thailand's reputation as the preferred destination of sex tourism. The fact that Bangkok by this time had a reputation of being the sex capital of the world, did this cause a problem for your embassy?

DEAN: It did not cause a problem for our Embassy but the Thai elite was very upset with this image. Some Thai ladies had started organizations to reeducate young prostitutes and teach them a trade with which they could earn a living. Many years later, I supported personally the sending of Thai cultural exhibitions to Europe and the United States, as for example, "Fifteen Centuries of Thai Buddhist Art." The idea was to promote a different image of Thailand around the world to replace the prominent role of sex in attracting world tourism to Thailand. We must also keep in mind that Bangkok's reputation for easy sex with attractive young Thai ladies was greatly enhanced during the Vietnam War when U.S. troops would be allowed to travel from Vietnam to Thailand for R&R. There is no doubt that Thailand was a great attraction for U.S. soldiers - many bachelors - as a break in the fighting where many soldiers risked their lives and their tomorrow. In this way, the U.S. military is no different from other fighting forces around the world. But let me return to this subject a little later, because the attitude toward sex, monogamy, and prostitution

differs in different societies and time also brings about a change in attitude on these important issues.

***

Q: Today is September 15, 2000. How did Cambodia impact on your Embassy and on what you were doing?

DEAN: The largest number of people at the Embassy were involved in working with Cambodian refugees who had come from 1979 onward into Thailand. They were fleeing what was then the Khmer Rouge regime in Phnom Penh, which in turn was supported by the Vietnamese government. Above all, they fled the excesses of the ousted Pol Pot regime which had killed more than one million Cambodians between 1975 and 1979.

The American Embassy in Thailand joined other governments and Non-Governmental Agencies from many different countries in providing roofing, food, medicine, and even starting schooling for the refugees in the border camps. These ad hoc refugee centers became fairly well established little agglomerations, towns, where youngsters went to school, mothers were helped by midwives, and medical care for all ages was available. Food rations were handed out to families. Unfortunately, the men did not know what to do. Some of them were carving small wooden artifacts which they sold. Some enlisted in the Cambodian anti-communist fighting force. The true nature of the Hun Sen regime in Phnom Penh was not known by the refugees in the camps, and often not by those supporting them.

Q: Hun Sen was anti-Vietnamese.

DEAN: No. Hun Sen had split with the Khmer Rouge of Pol Pot. One of the problems was that the brutal Pol Pot regime was highly nationalistic, claiming to be a modern successor to those who created the great Khmer Empire one thousand years ago. They recalled that South Vietnam had once been part of Cambodia and the Vietnamese only settled the southern tip of South Vietnam some 200 years ago. It is true that the Vietnamese had moved southward from Tonkin and little by little had settled South Vietnam (what the French called Cochin-China). The Cambodians under Pol Pot had harassed the Vietnamese on the Cambodian-Vietnamese border, something the Vietnamese resented. When the Vietnamese moved into Cambodia in 1979 in order to drive out Pol Pot and his henchmen, it was not perceived in the United States as an effort to punish the Pol Pot regime for their brutalities committed at home, or for attacking Vietnam, but as a Vietnamese effort to grab Cambodian land and expand their influence. Some critics even saw Hun Sen as a Vietnamese puppet ruling in the exclusive interest of Vietnam. Personally, I think that one of the Vietnamese considerations for invading Cambodia was to kick out Pol Pot from the area near the Vietnamese border and to punish this regime for the brutalities committed against the Vietnamese living in Cambodia. Once Pol Pot had been kicked out of Phnom Penh and he had retreated to the hills in western Cambodia, the Vietnamese backed a breakaway group of Cambodians

who were also Khmer Rouge but who had opposed the outrages committed by Pol Pot against his own people. In 1979, this pro-Vietnamese group of Cambodians were able, with the support of the Vietnamese Armed Forces, to gradually assert control over much of Cambodia. In 1979, when the refugees stumbled over the border into Thailand, they were sick with malaria; they were hungry, undernourished. Many had lost their loved ones - children, parents... In 1979, it also became evident to the whole world what had happened to the people of Cambodia under Pol Pot from 1975 to 1979. To some extent, it made U.S. support for the Lon Nol regime before 1975 more understandable and the struggle against the Khmer Rouge more acceptable to the world. Critics of America no longer harped on U.S. bombing of "non-aligned" Cambodia before 1975, but focused on what followed the withdrawal of the United States from Southeast Asia in April 1975. Pol Pot and his gang had committed such atrocities and caused such unbelievable suffering among the Cambodians that the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1979 was approved by a number of countries around the world. The United States was not among them. We continued to oppose those who ruled Phnom Penh, especially since the U.S. saw Vietnam behind them. The fact that we had lost the war in Vietnam, and that the Vietnamese had installed a friendly regime in Phnom Penh did not sit well with American authorities, in Washington. We centered our effort in Thailand on helping the refugees on the border and in opposing the new masters in Phnom Penh. The latter group included some of the senior officers who were still around from the Lon Nol era. General Dindel was one of them whom I had known in Cambodia in 1974-75 and who continued struggling from the border camps against Cambodian communism. Since Prince Sihanouk was nominally the Head of the Khmer Rouge movement, I was personally more willing to help those Cambodians who favored putting an end to the tragic warfare which had devastated Cambodia for so many years.

Q: Am I correct that essentially it was a three-way thing? You had the Khmer Rouge under Pol Pot. You had the Hun Sen Vietnamese-supported regime in Phnom Penh who also considered themselves to have been Khmer Rouge. Then, you had the anti-communist movement and groups from the refugee camps who fought both the rump Pol Pot followers in western Cambodia and the Vietnamese-supported regime in Phnom Penh whose forces had extended some control over Cambodian land, up to the Thai border.

DEAN: Yes. Basically, this explanation is correct. At the time, the division and separation between Pol Pot and his followers on the one hand, and the Hun Sen people supported by the Vietnamese on the other hand, was not that evident. The Khmer Rouge were nominally under Prince Sihanouk. One of the problems which I explained in an earlier chapter was that we did not have a good relationship with Sihanouk who was still residing in Beijing at the time. Sihanouk was still the symbol who rallied international support for the Phnom Penh regime and also gave any regime in Phnom Penh support among the masses in Cambodia. To a large extent, the Khmer Rouge was hiding under the umbrella of Prince Sihanouk. After all, Sihanouk had been on the throne off and on, and the real power in Cambodia since 1941! He either was King himself or he chose his mother or father to mount the throne. In real terms, he remained the Head of the

Monarchy for the last 60 years. During my tenure in Thailand, some elements in Washington gave some support to one of Sihanouk's sons: Prince Ranariddh, in the hope that he could give some legitimacy to the Khmer opposition in exile against the regime in Phnom Penh.

Prince Ranariddh was a highly Frenchified Cambodian. He had been an assistant professor at a French University. He looked a great deal like his father, King Sihanouk. The relationship between Ranariddh and his father was not always good. At one point, Sihanouk left Beijing to travel in order to gain support for the Cambodian regime in Phnom Penh. He also came to Bangkok, where I was Ambassador. Knowing him from a previous era, I invited him to come to a big dinner in his honor at our home. For the occasion, I had invited Chiefs of Missions of the diplomatic corps whose governments recognized Sihanouk as the Head of Cambodia. It was also a way of showing my personal support for Sihanouk. You may remember, from previous chapters, that I had tried in December 1974 to have Sihanouk return to Phnom Penh to head a coalition government.

Q: What was our official... Did we recognize him?

DEAN: We certainty did not. I had known the man for many years, and many governments around the world had recognized him as the legal Head of Cambodia. When I gave a dinner for Sihanouk at my house in Bangkok, I would like to point out that the Thai Government had given him a visa to come to Thailand. While in Thailand, Sihanouk acted as Chief of State for Cambodia. Specifically, he went to the Thai-Khmer border and stepped about one mile inside Cambodian territory. There, he received the letters of credence of the foreign ambassadors who wanted to be accredited to his regime. He would receive the envoys in the jungle, on Cambodian soil, but he would serve cold champagne as he would have done in his royal palace in Phnom Penh. After the presentation of credentials in the middle of the jungle, near the Thai-Khmer border, he would toast the foreign ambassador who had presented credentials. Quite a number of countries took the opportunity of Sihanouk's presence in Thailand to accredit their envoy to Thailand, also to Sihanouk, Chief of State of Cambodia. The period was 1983-84 and most people knew what the Khmer Rouge had done to their own citizens. Sihanouk quite openly criticized some of the acts perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge. But in the eyes of his countrymen, he always remained the father of his country. At certain meetings, Sihanouk even asked himself whether the Monarchy had a future in the long run in Cambodia. As for the question of succession, when Sihanouk came to our house in Bangkok, he was accompanied by his current wife, Monique, and a son from her. Sihanouk had many wives in his lifetime, and many children. His current wife, Princess Monique at the time, had a European father and a Khmer mother. She was a very beautiful, intelligent, woman and she continues still today to be active on behalf of many good causes in Cambodia. The son of Sihanouk and Monique became in the 1990s the Cambodian Ambassador to UNESCO.

Since we are on the subject of UNESCO, I might mention that upon my retirement from the Foreign Service In 1989, I was named by the Director General of UNESCO, Federico

Mayor, his personal Ambassador for Cambodia. In that capacity, I returned to Cambodia in 1992 with the Director General of UNESCO for the purpose of protecting the cultural heritage and monuments of that country. In the course of a luncheon offered by Sihanouk, then King again, in honor of the Director General of UNESCO, Sihanouk spoke about who might succeed him on the throne. While expressing uncertainty over the future of the monarchy in Cambodia after his demise, Sihanouk opined that if a King was to remain a symbol of the unity of the country, he thought Prince Ranariddh would be the wrong person. In his opinion, "Ranariddh will never succeed me." I should add that the Khmers at the border, fighting against the Vietnamese-supported government in Phnom Penh, were very much under the influence of a special Thai military force that Thai military unit provided food, medicine, ammunitions, and weapons to the anti-communist Khmers, which in turn was supplied in large part by the United States. Prince Ranariddh was a political symbol for that group.

Q: I am confused. We were opposed - or maybe not - to the Pol Pot group.

DEAN: Oh, very much so, and still today.

Q: But we were not fostering rebellion within Vietnam itself. We said: "Okay, You won. That's that." Is that right?

DEAN: No. The Cambodians in Phnom Penh were there with the military assistance and full support of the Vietnamese. As seen by Washington, the Vietnamese were expanding their zone of influence, promoting Marxism all the way to the Thai border. We opposed in the early 1980s the Vietnamese-supported Cambodian government in Phnom Penh. At one point, the Cambodian Government in Phnom Penh was sufficiently strong and self-confident that the Vietnamese military were able to withdraw their troops and only leave behind advisers. When I visited Cambodia in 1990 on my own, without anybody's blessing or support, Hun Sen was Prime Minister and it appeared to me to be an independent regime, probably Marxist-oriented, but willing to work with everybody who respected their sovereignty and independence. In 1990, most of the support came from Russia and China. The Vietnamese armed forces or military were not visible. I traveled all around Cambodia in 1990. I was taken by helicopter to Sihanoukville, a port on the southern coast of Cambodia. I also traveled to various other towns in different parts of the country.

The Pol Pot diehards were still entrenched in the hills of northwestern Cambodia and in Pailin, near the Thai border, best known for being the mining center for blue sapphires in Cambodia, renowned for their color and purity. The Khmer Rouge of Pol Pot had kept control over that area as a source of financing themselves. The role of the Thai military on the border was absolutely of cardinal importance to all parties. I do believe that during my tenure, the Thai were in support of what we were doing, but they also did not break off all of their links with the other side in Cambodia. I don't blame them, and such a policy was very much part of the Thai political tradition.

Q: In their support of the Cambodian Freedom Fighters - or whatever you want to call them - the Thai were obviously helping. But was this basically a Thai operation or an American operation? Who was the instigator saying: "Let's support this?"

DEAN: Generally speaking, the driving force behind the anti-communist policy in Southeast Asia was the United States. The Thai went along with it as long as it suited their interest (which I find normal). They always left a door open to a change in Thai policy if they found that U.S. strategy was leading nowhere. In addition, U.S.-Thai military links were close and mutually profitable. The Thai units on the border, supporting the anti-communist Cambodians, received U.S. material support, plus training, and at the same time they also protected their own country from unwanted immigrants or intruders.

But let us not underestimate the will of the Cambodian refugees and fighters who wanted to see their country under a more open, less oppressive regime. After all, many Cambodians on the border needed work and some of them volunteered for military service against the Vietnamese-supported, Marxist, Cambodian regime. Conditions inside Cambodia remained difficult for the average Cambodian under the Hun Sen government, until the Paris Peace Agreements brought calm and foreign assistance on a broad scale to Cambodia.

The fact that the anti-communist Cambodian resistance received food and pay in joining the fight also made a difference. Furthermore, a number of foreign countries felt that the Vietnamese occupation of part of Cambodia was against the interests of the Free World and had to be pushed back. This encouraged the anti-communist opposition. After the Vietnamese military had withdrawn from Cambodia, more and more foreign countries felt that the Hun Sen regime was much less harsh on the Cambodian people than the Pol Pot regime. Foreign observers inside Cambodia noted that the new masters of Phnom Penh wanted, above all, to reconstruct the country and to let people live. But since most western countries did not respond to Hun Sen's plea for help in the reconstruction of the country, the Phnom Penh authorities continued to rely on those countries which wanted to help them, i.e., Russia and China. When at one point foreign countries began to realize that the Hun Sen regime included many elements which were primarily interested in trying to find a way of dressing the wounds of a horrible genocide which had occurred under Pol Pot, some nations began to recognize the Hun Sen Government and send NGOs to help in that endeavor. When I returned to Cambodia in 1992, there were already a number of countries, including western countries, which had relations with the Hun Sen Government. The United States did not establish direct relations with Phnom Penh until after the signing of the Paris Agreement.

Q: What was our attitude towards Sihanouk? You don't have a dinner with somebody in diplomatic terms if you don't recognize him.

DEAN: I am not sure that I agree. After all, the host country, Thailand, had a working relationship with Sihanouk. I had known Sihanouk since 1953 and I remained his friend

even after the political situation changed. I don't think I am a "fair weather friend". I always felt that Sihanouk was a major figure on the East Asian political scene, and just because he opposed U.S. policy and was co-founder of the Non-Aligned movement was not a reason for me to take my distance from him after so many years of working with him.

Q: I can understand.

DEAN: So, I invited him for a dinner party at my house. We had lots of ambassadors there. The Thai authorities preferred Sihanouk to spend his time in southern Thailand, in one of the resorts, rather than in Bangkok. When Sihanouk arrived in southern Thailand, I sent him a couple of cases of American wine and some whiskey, with a note welcoming him to Thailand. Whether this was U.S. Government policy, I cannot say. But I was convinced that my friendly relationship with Sihanouk would help the United States in the long run. It did. At the end of the meal, Sihanouk stood up and said in French: "and now, Mr. Ambassador, I would like to sing for you." Sihanouk loves to sing. He sang "The White Lotus" which is a well-known Thai song. Usually, he sang sweet, romantic, melodious, tunes. He had a pleasant voice.

When I attended his 75th birthday party in Paris years later, where you had Khmer Rouge leaders rubbing shoulders with foreign diplomats and anti-communist Cambodians, His Majesty Sihanouk got up and said: "and for my friend, the American Ambassador, I would like to sing for him "The White Lotus". I dedicate this song to my friend, Ambassador John Gunther Dean." I would like to believe that the Paris Accord on Cambodia signed in Paris in the early 1990s is really another compromise solution, as I had found in Laos in 1973, i.e., a coalition government in which Sihanouk plays an important role.

To those who criticize U.S. ambassadors who maintain contact with adversaries, let me cite here that, at one point during my tenure in Thailand, when we had no direct diplomatic relations with Vietnam, I received word from Washington to meet with the Vietnamese Ambassador to Thailand on a subject of great importance to PANAM Airways. The flight of PANAM from Bangkok to Hong Kong flew around Vietnam and therefore it took one hour longer to fly the distance. If PANAM could cross the Vietnamese airspace, it would shorten the flight by one hour. The cost of fuel for one hour for a large aircraft is considerable. I was able to negotiate directly with my Vietnamese colleague so that PANAM flew over Vietnam, i.e., the shortest route to reach Hong Kong from Bangkok. It cost PANAM two used Boing-707 planes which were given in exchange for flying through Vietnamese airspace. Everybody was happy, including the U.S. Government.

When I left Bangkok in 1985, we were still very stand-offish with Vietnam and Cambodia, but not with Laos. We had maintained diplomatic relations with Laos ever since the arrangement I had helped to broker in 1973. Diplomatic links with Laos were never broken, even after our withdrawal from Vietnam and Cambodia in April 1975: The

French and other countries who did have diplomatic relations in Phnom Penh began to say to us in the late 1980s: "Look, we've got to do something with Cambodia. "I would like to believe it may have been a collective guilt feeling of many countries, that what had happened in Cambodia under Pol Pot was in part due to the failure of the civilized world to oppose the Khmer Rouge in the crucial years of the 1970s and they felt something had to be done to get Cambodia back into the community of nations, with a future for the survivors of the Pol Pot genocide. Perhaps out of that feeling and out of that sentiment came the Paris Peace Negotiations on Cambodia in the early 1990s. The first effort which was made to bring the parties to a conference table failed. One year later, the peace negotiations on Cambodia got started in Paris. The key foreign diplomats were Pickering for the United States, and Levitte for France. These two diplomats held the pen on this entire negotiation. The agreement called for foreign troops to come in to maintain law and order. Also, a coalition government was established. Most of the money which was pledged went to pay for the foreign troops who did establish some order in the country. They also tried to fix the potholes in the roads, string communications lines which permitted contact between the different areas of the country, and brought back Phnom Penh as the control center for Cambodia. The Pol Pot regime had truly come to an end for most Cambodians. One of the first ambassadors to be sent by the United States to Cambodia was one of my former colleagues who started his career in CORDS, in Military Region One, as a District Adviser. His name is Quinn.

Basically, the Paris Peace Accords did what I had done in Laos nearly 20 years earlier: establish a coalition government in Cambodia, with all factions represented.

Q: Let's get back to the time you were in Thailand.

DEAN: While Ambassador to Thailand, I started a number of projects which are still very much part of the Thai scene today. As a matter of fact, I am still involved in some of these institutions more than 15 years after my departure from Thailand. One of them was the Petroleum Institute of Thailand. I helped in its establishment with the support of the President of the Union Oil Company of California, which was very successful in the exploitation and development of gas and oil fields in the Gulf of Siam. Our assistance took the form of providing funds, bringing American petroleum engineers to train Thais in that discipline, forming Thai technicians to work on platforms, and setting up a technical library for the Institute. The training program included also how to market the precious oil and gas, how to administer one of Thailand's largest industries. The Petroleum Institute of Thailand is today housed in a skyscraper of 34 floors. When we started this Institute with our Thai friends, this was a one-room operation. Obviously, whatever I did was inspired, financed, and supported by the very able Economic Aid Mission which was part of my Embassy. As I have stated so many times above, for the U.S. Government to be of assistance to countries in developing their own institutions so that they can become partners with foreign governments or corporations, used to be part of U.S. foreign policy in the post World War Two period. The developing world particularly appreciated that policy and usually responded with supporting U.S. initiatives on the world scene.

With another group of Thais I started the Management Institute of Thailand. The purpose of this Management Institute was not to teach accounting at university level, but to have Thai speakers go to the countryside and small towns and get shopkeepers and small businessmen to attend elementary courses on bookkeeping. With this knowledge, they could then apply for loans from banks or government institutions, to modernize or make their businesses more profitable. The Institute was also a successful organization. It was, in part, financed by the U.S. Economic Aid Mission, but most of the funding came from Thais convinced of the need to reduce the economic differences between the urban and rural areas. The teachers of that Institution were able to reach Thais who spoke no foreign languages, had relatively little formal education, but quickly learned how bookkeeping gave them access to the instruments of modem business.

Q: I just wanted to mention that how you keep books... There is a Marxist way of keeping books and you might say a western way of keeping books. By creating this Management Institute, it meant that we were making sure that Thais were looking at their economy in a rational way, without a political agenda.

DEAN: You are very right. I would like to use this opportunity to again pay tribute to our Economic Aid people at the Embassy who were imaginative in helping with limited U.S. means to assist in the development of Thailand's economy and human potential.

Q: Before we leave Cambodia completely behind, there was a book that came out (I think it was called "Betrayal") by Shawcross which had quite an impact. It concentrated on Cambodia. What was your feeling about it and its importance.

DEAN: Shawcross was very much involved in trying to sort out and explain the impact of the foreign policies of foreign countries on Cambodia and the Cambodian people. It is an excellent book on the background leading to the collapse of the Lon Nol regime, the coming to power of the Khmer Rouge, and the responsibilities of the various actors or countries in this tragedy. It was written very shortly after the coming to power of the Pol Pot regime and without the benefit of the knowledge what Pol Pot was going to perpetrate. The movie "The Killing Fields", based on the manuscript by the New York Times journalist Sydney Schanberg, was an equally gripping book. The Dutch novelist Dieudonnee Tan Berge wrote in Dutch a book entitled "The Fall of Phnom Penh" which also was turned into a documentary on these fateful years. In 1975, Shawcross was critical of certain U.S. policies in Cambodia. It is my understanding that in his later writings he changed some of his views. In his book written shortly after the fall of Phnom Penh in 1975, Shawcross gave pretty high marks to the American Embassy in Phnom Penh for trying to find a negotiated solution, but that Washington, and Dr. Kissinger in particular, were not interested in finding a "controlled" solution which I advocated. I met with Shawcross shortly after coming out of Cambodia, and he interviewed me. I admit that I was not particularly helpful to him because I had had differences with Washington on Cambodia and I felt it was not the time to wash our dirty linen in public. Shawcross

did talk to other members of my team. As time went on, Mr. Shawcross became much more critical of North Vietnam and their policies.

Q: The wounds were a little too raw?

DEAN: I never did talk about Cambodia, except for helping a Dutch lady, Ms. Dieudonnee Tan Berge, to write a book on "The Fall of Phnom Penh" which she had witnessed as a Dutch journalist. Today is the first time I have talked on the record. There are people in Washington who hold completely different views from those advanced by Embassy-Phnom Penh and who are quite critical of U.S. policies in Cambodia and in Southeast Asia in general. These critics are both on the extreme right and on the far left. Some of the young critics and dissenters active in the early 1970s may have realized twenty/thirty years later that their position in 1975 was perhaps too radical and there was truth on both sides. As for some of the extreme American hawks, perhaps they still maintain today a certain nostalgia for war and the use of force to obtain their policy goals. During my tenure in Thailand, I got to know a key person in the Reagan White House Mike Deaver.

Q: Deaver left at a certain point.

DEAN: He left towards the middle of the second term of President Reagan. I worked with him in Thailand during Reagan's first term. At one point, President Reagan announced that he was traveling to Thailand and to other countries, members of ASEAN. It was billed as a major trip, and the Presidential advance party came to Thailand to determine the exact program, where to go, with whom, and where was the best place for a "photo opportunity." I went to see the King and the Queen in order to ascertain in which events they planned to be involved. While I was back in the United States for final preparations for this Presidential tour of ASEAN, the President - for reasons that I was not privy to - decided to cancel the trip.

Q: I think part of the problem was the Marcos regime in the Philippines. The odor was coming up from that area. I think it was a factor.

DEAN: It could be. I don't know. As Ambassador to Thailand, I just knew the problems in my jurisdiction. It was decided in Washington that a team of Americans would fly to the area to limit the damage caused by the last minute cancellation of the President's trip. Assistant Secretary for East Asian Affairs, John Holdridge, Presidential Assistant Mike Deaver, and others climbed on Air Force One near Washington, and we all flew to Singapore. From there, most people went to the post they knew best. From Singapore, I caught a commercial flight to Bangkok. Shortly after my arrival back at post, I asked for an audience with Their Majesties in order to explain that President Reagan would not be able to come to East Asia, and the visit would have to be indefinitely postponed. In order to avoid bad feeling because the Thai had made elaborate preparations for the visit, and that the cancellation would not be misinterpreted as a lack of interest in ASEAN countries, I went out of my way to highlight U.S. efforts to support the economic, social,

and military development of Thailand. With the Petroleum Institute, and with the Thai Petroleum Authority, I helped them find a compromise solution with the Malaysians to sharing the offshore petroleum/gas deposits in the Gulf of Siam. The problem was that the oil/gas deposits in the Gulf of Thailand were partially in Thai waters, partially in Malaysian waters. The solution carried out by the Union Oil Company of California was that the two countries shared the production 50/50. This formula is still in effect today.

Q: Several questions. During the time you were there, how were the Thai viewed? How were their relations with China, with India, with Vietnam, with Burma?

DEAN: Thailand has always been the balancer. In the period 1981-1985, the Thai began to look at China as a market. Up to that time, they had worked exclusively with Taiwan to the mutual interest of both parties. Then, gradually, the Thai made a few investments in mainland China. Some of the Chinese-Thai business people started corporations in mainland China and began to balance their relationship with Taiwan. The Thai see mainland China as a huge colossus and they have to live with that giant. They have done so for over a thousand years and will continue to do so in the future.

As for India, Thailand was not a non-aligned country, while India was the leader of that political orientation. The Thai considered themselves, ethnically, closer to China than to India. The rather large Indian community in Thailand was largely involved in the textile trade. Indians mostly married among themselves. On the other hand, the Thai intermarried quite freely with the Chinese.

Burma was an enemy of Thailand at one point in their history. Many of their famous drawings and pictures depict fighting between Burma and Thais on elephant back. As Thailand developed more rapidly than Burma after the Second World War, Burma no longer loomed as an adversary, but more as an economic competitor. The Thai remained always a little leery of Burma because Burma, unlike Thailand, is a country of many ethnic groupings and does not have a royalty to give unity to the various populations. This made the Burmese military believe, since independence from Britain, that a firm hand is needed to keep the internal situation under control. In America, we are inclined to criticize military regimes as undemocratic. I am not an expert on Burma, nor am I an apologist for the military, but there are many different ethnic groupings in Burma resisting control from Rangoon. In the northern part of Burma, the remnants of Chiang Kai-shek's army had taken control. The Shan people in northern Burma had been granted by the British a certain amount of autonomy and were ethnically and culturally different from the Burmese. You also had significant Indian influence in Burma who had been brought to Burma by the British colonial administration. People in the south of Burma are different again. The Thai-Burmese relationship was also adversely affected by Burma's inability to stop certain elements in opium refining and drug trading. But the Thai are realists. They know that Burma will be Thailand's western neighbor for eternity. As a result, I would say that both countries wish to avoid a deterioration in their relationship which could be mutually disadvantageous.

I have said a great deal about Thailand's relationship with Cambodia. But it must be remembered that many centuries ago Khmer influence permeated eastern Thailand. Khmer temples and ruins in Lopburi remain a reminder of that period. After the decline of the Khmer Empire, Thailand considered the Khmer province of Battambang and parts of western Cambodia to be vassals of the King of Thailand. The Paris Peace Agreement in the early 1990s brought some degree of law and order back to Cambodia. From that point, the Thai saw western Cambodia as their zone of influence. Many investments in the tourist centers of Siem Reap and Angkor Wat are Thai. In today's relationship with Cambodia, Thailand sees itself to be Cambodia's big brother.

In Vietnam, Thailand had provided troops in support of the U.S./South Vietnamese effort to stem the advance of communism In Southeast Asia. Thailand has always had a free economy. Vietnam only started moving in that direction in the 1990s. Thailand has been moving towards democracy for the last few decades. Vietnam has still some way to go. In Thailand, the civilian sector has come a long way in taking power away from the formerly all-powerful military. In Vietnam, the Party still runs the country, supported by the military. But, having been on the side of the losers in Vietnam, the Thai politicians did not take kindly to that. The United States withdrew from Indochina in 1975, and the Thai had to face the Vietnamese by themselves. I think at this point there developed a feeling in Thailand and other countries of Southeast Asia that they were first and foremost Asians and that they had to find a way of co-existing with each other. Colonialism and Imperialism are often based on the principle of "divide and rule." The defeat of "powerful America" by a small Southeast Asian country probably contributed to greater respect for the traditional Thai policy of balancing foreign Influences, and trying to work with all countries, regardless of orientation, provided it is also in the Asian country's interest.

After the end of the Vietnam War, the Thai political establishment also began to think in terms of developing ASEAN. The Thai supported Burma's entry into ASEAN. On the other hand, Burma being under military rule was often criticized by Western countries for human rights violations. Thai foreign policy is often based on long-range considerations. Hence, in the post Vietnam War period, balancing the influence of the West with the growing power of China and Japan became an objective for Thailand.

ASEAN was another instrument for the small countries of Southeast Asia to stand up to the "Big Guys." From this point of view, Burma's membership in ASEAN made sense to the Thai. They spoke up for Cambodia's joining ASEAN. The Thai also supported Vietnam's membership in ASEAN. I can only assume that the smaller East Asian countries felt that in unity lies strength and it also gave the individual members more clout working with big countries. ASEAN also gave individual members more self-confidence in their own national identity. While Thailand had never been colonized, Burma, Malaysia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Singapore, and Indonesia had been under colonial influence for decades, if not centuries. By banding together under ASEAN, and maintaining their own national identity, they created a larger market, attractive to both domestic and foreign investors. The ASEAN idea, which had been around for some years, really took off after the United States withdrawal from Indochina. At first, ASEAN gave

certain Western countries associate status, but quickly Japan and other Asian powers, for example South Korea, were asked to join the annual ministerial meetings. I realized during my tenure from 1981-85 that, while the United States still had a great deal of influence in Thailand resulting from our constructive role in the past, the time had come for Thailand also to work with other countries, and to reduce the American predominance. We encouraged the Japanese to be generous in their economic development aid to Thailand. More and more U.S.-Thai relations turned around military and security considerations, with the U.S. giving them top priority, while the Thai preferred projects which developed their economic/social potential.

Q: What was our attitude that you were getting out of Washington towards ASEAN? Were we looking at this as being really important or just a passing whim?

DEAN: Most American policies are based on good intentions and trying to promote the welfare of both the U.S. and the other country or region. After the post World War Two period, until quite recently, the United States was genuinely interested in promoting the development of friendly countries to which we were accredited, rather than exclusively American national interests. I call this period the golden age of American diplomacy. As for ASEAN, we gave a lot of scholarships for students from ASEAN countries. We were very active in the annual ministerial meetings. We recognized the strategic importance of the area, which coincided with the geopolitical importance our military attached to it. Thai ports received about 40 U.S. naval ship visits per year. Our armed forces trained their Thai counterparts in the latest technology. We worked with ASEAN in reducing growing, refining, and exporting of drugs. We found that the King's projects in that field were similar and supportive of our approach.

Q: Was there a concern in some of the upper reaches of the Thai Government, even among the members of the Royal Family, about the corrosive and destructive power of the drug culture? We have seen Colombia dissolve. We have enough problems with it in our own country, and certainly in Mexico. How did we see the corruption factor within Thai society?

DEAN: There always were people in every country that were corrupt and used this source of easy money as a way of acquiring great wealth, and with it, influence. I don't think this was a significant factor in Thailand in 1981-85 when I was there. A great effort was already afoot by the Thai themselves to replace poppy growing with other agricultural crops, to interdict smuggling, and to cooperate with the international and other organizations to bring this problem under control. There were undoubtedly some people involved in drug smuggling, but you will find such undesirable elements in all countries, including our own. But the Thai Government, and the King and his family, were 100 % behind the effort to fight the drug culture in all its dimensions.

When you are involved in foreign affairs as I was for so many years, you also work with people whose job it is to find the flaw in a human being in order to exploit this flaw in your national interest. This shortcoming could be women, money, influence, whatever.

What is this man's or woman's price and how can we use it to advance our overall national interest? As Ambassador, I knew those who pursued this line. Furthermore, when there is a producer of drugs, there is also a buyer and a seller. U.S. policy was one of trying to cut off the supply of drugs. I hope that the United States is equally zealous in prosecuting people in our own country who are involved in the clandestine importing, financing, and marketing of drugs. This is the complaint you hear when you listen to the producer of drugs: Why isn't the United States equally zealous about prosecuting and going after the buyers and traders in drugs in your own country. What about those who finance the purchase of large quantities of drugs in the United States? My reply was citing the great effort made by the U.S. authorities in all domains of the drug trade, but it usually did not satisfy those who wanted to be critical of the United States. Some of my Thai contacts might say: "Yes, we are trying our best, but we still have people in our own country who see drugs as an easy way of making money.' By the way, the United States may have been involved in corrupting these very same people." Five or six years ago, two ministers in the Government of Thailand were told by the State Department that visas would be denied to them to visit the United States. The reason given was that they had been involved in drug trading. To my great surprise, one of my colleagues from one of the many Intelligence agencies at my post, came to testify on their behalf against the accusations made by the Department of State. The Prime Minister of Thailand, knowing that he had a hot potato on his hands, did what most officials would do under these circumstances; he established a Commission to investigate the problem. The differences between two U.S. authorities played out in a foreign country caused a major domestic political problem for the Thai. After all, two Thai ministers had been denied access to the United States, one of the great allies of Thailand. A former American intelligence operator had come from the United States to testify on behalf of the Thai ministers, but it did not change the position of the State Department. Dr. Thanat Khoman, former Deputy Prime Minister, long-time Foreign Minister of Thailand and considered the father of ASEAN was asked to be in charge of the Commission of Inquiry. In the course of the investigation, Dr. Thanat Khoman visited the U.S. Embassy, in Bangkok. Coming out of the American Embassy where he had long discussions with the Chargé d'Affaires, he was besieged by T.V. commentators and journalists who asked him what had transpired. Dr. Thanat Khoman explained that he was in charge of the Thai Commission of Inquiry to look into the allegations and would report back to the Prime Minister, and to His Majesty the King. After Dr. Thanat had left the Embassy grounds in his car, and as the television people were just packing up their gear, a young officer came out from the Embassy and said: "I just want to make a statement that the position taken by Dr. Thanat Khoman was not at all what was discussed at this meeting here at the Embassy." What a tremendous loss of face for Dr. Thanat Khoman who became even more anti-American than ever before. Yes. By the 1990s, there were people in Thailand who blamed the United States for being partially responsible for the economic melt-down in 1997, which brought the Thai local currency of 26 baht to one U.S. dollar to 52 baht. (It has settled down now to somewhere around 40 baht to the dollar.) In any case, it was a devaluation of the Thai currency and it caused major problems for the Thai Government and the people. I am talking about these developments which occurred many years after my tenure in Bangkok because such accusations or talk about the United States would have been unheard of

during my days. The change in attitude toward the United States came with time and perhaps was the result of a less constructive and generous policy by the United States toward Southeast Asia.

By the end of the 1980s Thailand had developed into one of the Little Tigers. The annual growth rate had been well over 5% and Thailand had made significant economic, social, and political progress. The United States had played a positive role in many areas over the years; in the fields of health, education, road construction, agriculture, commerce, finance, administration, and internal and external security. We had helped the country to move toward democracy, toward greater participation of the Thai people in controlling the future of their country. Thailand, a country of 60 million people is a success story in Southeast Asia. It has today a number of highly skilled people in the fields of medicine, technology, computing, finance, agriculture... you name it. Is corruption a factor? I think different civilizations have different ways of looking at this problem. What one culture may consider corruption, another may consider a gesture of hospitality. I do know that the Thai governments and their rulers are fighting the kind of corruption that we, in the west, associate with that word. I regret, however, that the friendly, mutually beneficial relationship which did exist for more than 40 years in U.S.-Thai links appears to have given way to a less benign look at each other, and perhaps more of an approach "what's in it for me, and what's in it for you."

Q: You mentioned the development of Thailand. I interviewed somebody who was saying that up until close to the period we are talking about, close to the 1980s, you had two strains in the Thai economy or the Thai culture. The pure Thai, the upper-class, their kids took law degrees or other degrees, but not technical degrees. The Chinese tended to stick to business. They had not been pushing the technical side. It sounds like we gave great emphasis like this AIT and other things to move the Thai to the place where Asia was showing such great strength in the technical field.

DEAN: I think we helped not only in the technical field, but basically in every field. As for the question of the difference between the Thai and the Chinese Thai, I think most differences between the two groups have been reduced a great deal over the last thirty years. Except in the social context, they are now all Thais. Time has helped to integrate the Chinese immigrants into the Thai national community. The younger generation has no memories of mainland China. They grew up in a Thai culture, but maintain some aspects of Chinese culture, as all Chinese, regardless of where they live.

But I would like to mention one important factor which is probably more visible in Thailand than in other countries. The Thai upper-class, civilian or military, used to be trained In England until the 1960s. Many had attended Oxford, Cambridge, or Sandhurst. They were very proud of their links with the British academic establishment. The girls quite often went to France to study the arts, fashion, dance, painting or sculpture, in short, how to be an accomplished young lady.

For example, the sister of the King, Princess Galyani, upon her return to Bangkok, became professor of French literature. With the emergence of the United States as the preeminent power in the West, and with our increasingly important role in Thailand, we also influenced the destination of Thais wishing to study outside their country. The Fulbright Program and the many scholarships available in the United States made the redirection of the destination of Thais studying in the United States rather than in Europe feasible. Upon their return from the United States, civilian and military students alike, created in Thailand an organization which is still today America's best ambassador to Thailand: The American University Alumni Association. The building is located in Bangkok not far from the American Embassy. Thousands of Thais attended college or university in the United States since the 1960s. Most of them returned to Thailand at the end of their studies abroad and contributed to raising the level of excellence in all fields of endeavor. Today, the American-educated Thais constitute a major element in the friendship between the United States and Thailand. Many eminent Thais, over the last three decades, were educated in the United States, in engineering, medicine, public administration, science, technology, etc... Officers in the Thai Armed Forces often attended specialized training courses in the United States, including at the army, navy, and air force academies. It is this educational experience which may be one of the most durable linkages between our two countries.

Q: What about India? India, at this time, was beginning to strengthen its military power and develop a fleet in the Indian Ocean. Were the Thai at all concerned about India becoming a regional power?

DEAN: All relationships change with time. In 1981-1985, India was the President of the Non-Aligned Movement. Thailand was aligned with the United States. Hence, India and Thailand pursued different foreign policies. They saw their national interests differently. Thailand today is less aligned with the United States than it was in my time. One must also remember that India was the great cultural and religious influence on Southeast Asia. It is there that Chinese culture from the north and Indian culture from the west met. That is why the region is known as the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, of which Thailand is a part.

Q: We are talking of 1981-1985.

DEAN: Yes. The cultural and spiritual linkage should not be completely neglected. Buddhism came to Thailand from India and Sri-Lanka and is still today a factor in Thai-Indian relations. Politically, the emergence of India in the 1950s as a great regional power created some problems for Thailand, especially in the Andaman Islands. In these islands, Thailand and India had conflicting interests regarding fishing rights, use of strategic sites coveted by the armed forces of both countries, etc... In modern times, the Indians had come to Thailand as traders. During my tenure, the Indians had a near monopoly on the textile trade. (The Indians held a similar position in Vietnam in the colonial days.) But the Indians in Thailand did not really intermarry with the Thai, as the Chinese did when they came to Thailand. Also, the two groups are physically quite different: the Thai people are not hairy, neither on the body nor on the face. Indians, and especially Sikhs, are very

hirsute. The Sikhs have long beards, and tie their hair in a knot on top of their head. The chest of men are hairy. I don't think that these different characteristics helped to bring these two groups - Indians and Thais - closer together. Both Thais and Indians I talked with in Thailand are quite conscious of these physical differences and make no bones about it. Furthermore, the Thai are considerably less numerous than the Indians and Chinese and this factor also affects Thai attitude towards Indians. In 1981-85, the Thai were about 48 million people. At that time, India had 750 million people and China about one billion people.

Thai attitude toward India varied. Some of the more educated Thai saw India as the champion of non-alignment, not taking sides between the United States and the Soviet Union. If one thinks of it, until the Second World War, Thailand had pursued a foreign policy which amounted to non-alignment between the English and French colonial ambitions in Southeast Asia. But after the Second World War, for reasons I have explained earlier, Thailand found herself on the American side and remained so until the end of the 20th century. The non-aligned movement lost its raison d'être with the collapse of the Soviet Union, but India remained aloof from the United States in the field of arms and weapons purchases where India continued to work with the Russians. (I will elaborate on this issue when we discuss my tenure in India.)

Q: In many ways, India talked about being non-aligned, but the Non-Aligned Movement was really aligned to some extent. When you look at it, in terms of the East-West confrontation, they were much more on the eastern side.

DEAN: That is your view. It may not be mine. I think we should add that subject to our discussion of India, my next posting. But permit me to say now that, for example, Nehru was culturally and sentimentally linked to the West. India, with Sanskrit, has always been the cradle of all western languages. Still today, in India, the English language, English law, English accounting practices prevail despite the departure of the British from the Indian sub-continent, since 1948.

No, I honestly believe India was and remains truly non-aligned and uses this policy to advance its own national interests. Non-alignment does not mean that you have to be always with the United States 100%. When we refused to sell India spare parts for weapons we had sold to them, or ammunition for American weapons while they were fighting Pakistan for the "liberation" of Bangladesh, they felt that it was not the role of a seller to decide on a political basis when or whether the United States should honor the request for spare parts or ammunition for weapons the Indians had purchased. Dissatisfied with U.S. efforts to intervene in Indian foreign policy, the Indians replaced American combat aircraft with French aircraft. Non-alignment meant that countries could follow policies in their own national interests even if they differed from the policies of the two super powers. The Indians have always looked after their long-term national interests. It was a U.S. decision not to send spare parts and ammunition to India when they fought Pakistan over Bangladesh. Perhaps the United States decision was ill-advised. Certainly the sending of an American aircraft carrier facing Calcutta as a signal of American

discontent did not enhance India's willingness to buy American military equipment for the next few decades. The result was India eventually turning to the Soviet Union to build in India a modern weapons manufacturing industry where India remained its own master. If a foreign country decides whether or not to ship spare parts or ammunition, the country that needs these items forfeits part of its independence. It is no longer a buyer/ seller relationship but the seller can impose his political will on the buyer.

Q: The real test of the Non-Alignment Movement came after the 1958 conference when the Soviets exploded a major atomic device. The Non-Alignment Movement had been opposed to nuclear testing. From the way I gather, it came out saying "Well, the Soviet blast is not really bad, but an American test is bad."

DEAN: It's not my job to defend the Indians. I am just trying to explain a concept. Non-alignment does not mean being anti-American or pro-Soviet. After both the United States and the Soviet Union became nuclear powers, the Indians - a people of 750 million, with distinguished, internationally renowned scientists, and an industrial capacity, with their own raw materials - decided to make nuclear devices which permitted them to become masters of their destiny and pursue a foreign policy in the interest of their own people. That is not being anti-American; it is looking after Indian national interests. I would like to add that while India had conducted its own nuclear testing, India was also able to simulate on sophisticated computers nuclear explosions, something which was highly advanced for the time. As far as cooperation with the United States is concerned, during my tenure, 1981-85, India had made available to the United States facilities which permitted the U.S. to monitor nuclear explosions and developments outside India. The American scientific establishment appreciated Indian cooperation in the nuclear and scientific field in general. I don't think that India's development of its nuclear potential was directed against one country in particular. It was a way to affirm its policy of development and a clear signal that India was determined to remain in charge of its own future and its own foreign policy. Why can Israel, in U.S. eyes, have a nuclear arsenal, and India not? To the Indians, non-alignment meant not taking sides in super-power confrontations but willingness to judge each issue on its merits. Furthermore, the merits of specific issues may change as time goes on. Non-alignment permits a country to reappraise events and policy as time goes on, somewhat like the Supreme Court in the United States did on many issues. On certain issues, the Supreme Court made decisions 100 years ago which were reversed as the world changed. Doing nuclear research and developing a deterrent for security reasons is basically an option for any country that has the means to do so. India today is certainly in a position to do so.

Other countries will join the club. It is not by the U.S. saying "country A may have a nuclear deterrent, but country B may not, "that the issue is resolved. The situation may change in both countries so that they adopt opposite policies. This issue has been faced by all major countries since 1945, and can probably only be handled fairly by an international body, as for example the International Atomic Energy Agency or the United Nations. I doubt that a U.S. "diktat" is the correct way to approach this problem.

Q: Going back to the period of 1981-85, were you getting any feelings from your Thai contacts of disquiet about China and India in the area?

DEAN: Thailand is part of the Indochinese Peninsula. Thailand is caught between two giants in nearly all fields; culture, religion, economics, strategy, security... Both India and China are not adverse to expanding their zone of Influence. That obviously perturbed the Thai. In an earlier interview with you, I said that the Thai called for the Europeans to become more active in Southeast Asia in the 1990s in order to offset the growing Chinese Influence.

Q: Did developments in the Philippines have any impact on our role in the Philippines?

DEAN: Marcos was generally known as a strong-man regime, and not for its democratic tendencies or its incorruptibility. The United States usually sees the Philippines as a country where we have played a constructive role for 100 years. We are proud of having given to the Philippines independence shortly after the end of World War Two. Most Filipinos had espoused our position during that conflict and fought with us during the trying days of the stand at Corregidor, until victory in 1945. The Philippines have always been perceived by other countries as being close to the United States in nearly every domain. Both sides were relatively comfortable in that position. The Philippines also had the legacy of Spain which made the Philippines, to a large extent, a Catholic country. In certain parts of the south, Muslims are in the majority. All this was known at the time of my tenure in Thailand. The efforts of some Philippine nationalists to close the large American base in the Philippines were also known. As far as I could see in the mid-eighties, the Philippine upper class who could make money under President Marcos did not have much of a problem with the Marcos regime. Some intellectuals and less privileged classes wanted the spreading of the wealth. Many groups in the United States - both civilian and military - never had any problem working with Marcos, until corruption got so bad that something had to be done to help the Philippines rid themselves of the bad image the country had acquired. There were elements in the United States who saw, in the economic sphere, that the "trickling down" policy under the Marcos regime moved too slowly, and the Filipino masses became restless. This dissatisfaction in the economic and social areas among the Filipinos spread also to the religious realm where some Protestant sects competed with the Catholic Church for the loyalty of the rural people.

Turning to Thailand, the country was known for its tolerance, especially on matters of religion. One day, I had the visit in Bangkok of the former Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, Mr. Kennedy. He was a Mormon. He came to Thailand in his capacity of an elder of the Mormon Church. He said: "John, I wish to explain to you a problem we have in Thailand. Many young American Mormons do their one-year missionary service in Thailand, explaining our faith and hoping that we can find people interested in our message. The Thai have suddenly decided to ask our missionaries to leave the country. Can you help?" Having heard his side of the story, I went to see the Secretary-General for Religions in the Thai Government, but finally ended up seeing the Prime Minister on this subject. He explained that in Thailand every religious denomination has to fall into a

category. As examples of religious categories, he cited the Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Zen, etc... If you are Episcopalian, you belong to the Protestant group; a Baptist, to the Protestant group. If you are Presbyterian, you belong to the Protestant group. If you were Mormon, the Thai asked you to be part of the Protestant group. There was no special category for Mormons in Thailand. The Mormons claimed that they belonged to a separate group Mormons. The Thai replied!: "we have nothing against Mormons. But since visas for the Mormon missionary group had expired and they had refused to be part of the Protestant grouping, we asked them to leave Thailand." Mormons were not refused entry into Thailand, but like the others, they had to be part of a larger religious category set up in Thailand. The Prime Minister explained that American Evangelists had accepted to be listed under the Protestant category. The Shia, the Sunni, the Ishmaelites, had all agreed to be part of the Muslim category.

I went back to Mr. Kennedy and explained to him the category system for those Mormons waiting to exercise their religious duties in Thailand.

As far as I could see, there was complete tolerance once religious practitioners had accepted being placed into one of the religious categories outlined by the Thai authorities. Since the Mormon Church was holding out for a separate Mormon category and this was not available, the Thai suggested that first all Mormon missionaries whose visas had expired leave Thailand and go to a neighboring country. Once outside Thailand, the Mormon missionaries could apply for a tourist visa to enter Thailand. The Thai authorities indicated to me that if the tourists would also engage in the pursuit of their religious responsibilities, they would look the other way, until the category problem was resolved. And this is how it happened. There was no doubt that the Embassy had been helpful to the Mormons and the Thai to diffuse a problem acceptable to both parties.

Q: I talked to one of the elders of the Mormon Church in Greece. I explained to him that Article One of the Greek Constitution is "Thou shalt not proselytize." They just would not accept this.

DEAN: Thailand is tolerant. Most Thais are Buddhists. But if you walk around Bangkok, you will see Hindu temples, Catholic churches, Protestant chapels, Muslim mosques, and Jewish synagogues. The current Catholic Cardinal Archbishop of Bangkok is a highly respected Thai personality, particularly close to the Thai people. The Foreign Minister of Thailand during the late 1990s was a Moslem who studied in the United States. The southern part of Thailand is largely Moslem. Yes, I admire Thailand's tolerance in the religious field.

Q: During this 1981-1985 period, how did you find the Thai media, their influence, how they came out, and our dealing with them.

DEAN: In Thailand, one has to know who founded the newspapers, who owns them, and who is behind the publication. The "Bangkok Post" was started by Americans and Thais who were involved with the OSS. That publication was friendly to the United States. It

has a good group of foreign correspondents and good management. The people who founded the "Bangkok Post" are dead. Nonetheless, that newspaper remained a moderate, internationally oriented publication, which has influence even outside of Thailand.

There was, and still is, an English language competitor, "The Nation" which is perhaps more nationalistic in its orientation. Some people say that "The Nation" looks at any problem from the Thai point of view and is less globally oriented. It is a high-class newspaper and does not shy away from taking a stand on sensitive issues.

Then you have "Thai Rat," and many Thai language newspapers which are basically similar to the news media in England and in the States. They are more focused on strictly local, often quite parochial, news as for example who won a boxing bout, a soccer match, or who won the Miss Thailand Beauty Contest. These publications invariably defend the Thai position, whether good, bad, or indifferent, and enjoy a wide readership in Bangkok and up country. Foreign affairs is not of great interest to the readership.

Television is different again. Stations or chains are often owned by very wealthy businessmen who then side with political parties in Thailand. They have their choice among the Democratic Party, the National Republicans, the Nationalist Party, the left, the right, the pro-Royalists, etc... Some of the TV stations are owned by wealthy Thais of Chinese origin. These stations often line up with the government, whoever it is. They are always in favor of the current King. Most stations will run American soap operas, dubbed in Thai, but lately, Thais have produced their own TV serials. American productions from the ‘60s and ‘70s are cheap and the Thai audience loves them. These American TV films are perceived by the Thai masses as a reflection of life in the United States, a country of opportunity. In the 1980s, the average Thai looked at the American people with sympathy. Sometimes, when the United States tries to sell rice from Louisiana to Thailand, or competes with cheaper Thai rice exports in a third market, the TV commentators may get upset with the United States. The highly educated Thais who have a certain sense of responsibility are often more critical when they think Thai long-term interests are not sufficiently taken into account by the United States or by any other country treading on their toes. This viewpoint is also reflected by the more serious commentators on Thai TV.

Q: How did you find through your USIA representative that you dealt with Thai-American problems?

DEAN: You must remember that the relationship between Thailand and the United States was a very old one. Our relations with most of Thailand's neighbors in Southeast Asia were more recent because they had been under colonial rule until after World War Two, like Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Indonesia, etc. For example, USIS in my days gave publicity to the wonderful 19th century letter from the King of Siam offering to President Lincoln elephants to be used by the Union forces in our Civil War. He thought that the elephants could be used to what some years later was the role of tanks in World War One.

While in Thailand, I asked USIS, with the help of Thai scholars, to publish a book: "The Eagle and the Elephant." It was sent to every university in the United States. The book relates U.S.-Thai relations from the 18th century to the present (1985). It was a wonderful hymn to friendship and cooperation between our two countries. It had many photographs and the book is still much appreciated today. In "The Eagle and the Elephant" the United States is the eagle and Thailand the elephant. A very deft, sensitive group of Thais and Americans working at USIA put this book together and I am grateful for their contribution to long-run U.S.-Thai relations.

Q: Did you find that you were having trouble (this was early on in the Reagan administration - they came with their point of view, which is considerably to the right on the political spectrum) that particularly early on you were getting rather heavy-handed instructions: "Tell the Thai Government this - Tell the Thai Government that - Make them do this and that"? Did you have a problem with that?

DEAN: I never did have any problems with Washington. Sometimes I would suggest policies or actions to Washington, as for example the desirability of having Prime Minister Prem's tour of duty extended. Some Thai politicians criticized Prime Minister Prem for having been in office too long (since 1981) and some military were getting restless, saying: "Let's change the Prime Minister." But I admired the Prime Minister who was an honest man, pursued a moderate policy both on internal and external affairs, and enjoyed the full confidence of His Majesty the King.

Q: He was cutting out the sources of gravy.

DEAN: He was an honest, moderate man who also knew how to bring the Thai civilian sector to work with the Thai military. He was staunchly pro-West. So, when there were some ramblings by some opposition elements to topple Prem, I asked Washington for instructions: "How do you feel about a change in the Thai Government?" The answer from Washington repeated the standard line: "We support the territorial integrity and the constitutionality of Thailand." I used that all-embracing phrase to make a speech in Chiang Mai in which I did not refer to any instructions but just stressed how well the American Government had been working with Prime Minister Prem, how Prem had emphasized in his dealings with the U.S. the importance of the economic, social, and military development of Thailand, and what a respected representative Prime Minister Prem had been for Thailand in his dealings with the international community. Prem remained Prime Minister until well after I left Thailand in the summer of 1985. After 8 years in office as Prime Minister, the King made Prem the President of the King's Council, an important and potentially powerful position.

Before I close this chapter on Thailand, let me say again how much I owed to others for the success of my tenure. I was fortunate in taking over the Embassy in 1981 from Ambassador Mort Abramowitz who had initiated many good projects and had pursued policies which I found easy to continue and endorse. I also had a good successor, Ambassador Bill Brown, who continued most of my ideas in Thailand. As for style, every

ambassador has his own. In every post I ever served, I used sugar rather than vinegar. My deputies in Thailand, Stapleton Roy and Chas Freeman, were among the ablest Foreign Service officers in our country, and the outstanding careers they had after Thailand reflected the high esteem in which they were justly held. I cannot mention all the fine officers who served with me in Thailand, but I had a truly great team. My secretary who had followed me from Lebanon to Thailand and later to India was responsible for much of the praise the U.S. Government and others heaped on me. Leona Nieman, from Michigan, was for more than 14 years my "guardian angel." For our children, she was known as "Aunt Leona," a member of our family.

How do I see the role of the American Ambassador? Primarily as a person committed to making friends and trying to bring foreign policies of the host country parallel to those of the United States. To the extent they are radically different, sparks can only lead to conflict and open up the possibility for others exploiting the situation to their own interest. I also see the Ambassador's role as a "doer" in the country to which he is accredited, not merely as a reporter writing messages to the home office. Within the Embassy itself, I see the Ambassador as the coordinator of the various agencies and departments represented at the post. This was in Thailand a particularly difficult job. Some of the worst battles I ever had to fight were playing Solomon in turf battles within the Embassy among American agencies and departments. This could involve shipment of grain, investments, differences among Intelligence agencies, drug interdiction, and the role of different agencies in this effort. These differences could erupt over the analysis of the geopolitical goals of potential adversaries. Representatives of our own Armed Services could differ among themselves on who should do what with their Thai opposite members. Should the FBI operate overseas, or was that role the prerogative of the CIA? On all these kinds of problems, the Ambassador must take a position. The representatives of other agencies or departments within the Embassy often cabled back to their own back stoppers in Washington so that they could have support for their position. It is not always easy to obtain a clear-cut decision from the National Security Advisor in Washington on all issues dividing different agencies and departments in the field. During my period in Thailand (1981-1985), I took many decisions in Bangkok, and if the top authorities in Washington disagreed, they would let me know. Judging from the letters I received from our leaders in Washington, and that I was selected for an even more difficult onward assignment, I can only assume that the Administration in Washington was not too unhappy with Embassy Bangkok under my leadership. I don't think it made any difference whether a Republican or a Democrat was in the Oval Office in Washington. Every nation has a national agenda and the ambassador has to try to advance these goals. If the ambassador is lucky, the President of the United States has long-term interests at heart and short-term domestic political interests are not carried over into foreign affairs.

Q: One last question before we finish this session and this time in Thailand. I hate to keep using the word, but I come back to the sex problem. This is not a minor thing when you are the Ambassador dealing with the American community. This was probably even worse with the German and Japanese Ambassadors. You have these people coming to

Bangkok and Thailand for sex. This was a pretty well developed market for this during this 1981-1985 period. Did you have any particular problems?

DEAN: Let me put it this way: Sex is a universal factor and all people of the world are involved in it. But in addition to sex, there is also a cultural approach to the same subject. Some societies had polygamy. Thailand was a country which, I believe, until 1932 allowed polygamy. Thereafter, some men who could afford it, kept a 'mia noi', a minor wife - we would say, in western terms, a mistress. A man could have the wife to whom he was married, and in addition, have a 'mia noi', a mistress. The minor wife had no legal standing, but the children born from that relationship had certain legal rights; specifically children born from the official wife and the mia noi (there could be several mia nois) - all children - had the same right of inheritance. They were on an equal footing. I don't think that this concept is the same automatically in Western jurisprudence. The minor wife was usually not mentioned in the Last Will but would be compensated during her lifetime.

The approach to sex in Thailand was perhaps different from the Western attitude. Also, remember that even in the West, prostitution existed in most countries. Officially, prostitution existed in France until 1947. It was carried out in legalized houses. Bordellos following the French Armed Forces around the world existed until World War Two. The United States had perhaps a different approach to this issue harking back to our puritan days, although perhaps in Las Vegas that approach was looked at differently from the way it was looked at in Boston, in the 17th century. What is one important reason for prostitution? Go to Germany in the year 2002 and see who is engaged in prostitution. Mostly poor women from Eastern Europe and Russia, lining the roads hoping for a car to stop and pick them up, so that they can make some money in order to survive. Prostitution is as old as mankind. We still have legalized prostitution in Western Europe in our lifetime - for example Holland.

What I objected to, as U.S. Ambassador to Thailand, was the involvement of minors - i.e., children of American employees - in sexual activities which, in addition to everything else, might be prejudicial to the image of the Americans at the Embassy. Let me explain.

As President of the American High School of Bangkok, I was faced one day with the following problem: a 14-year-old girl attending the American High School, good-looking and rather precocious for her age, had been "discovered" by a gentleman aged 60 who had taken a fancy for this young lady. The father of the young girl was an American employee of USAID, part of the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok. Every afternoon, after school was out, a large black limousine was waiting for her and she was driven to the house where the gentleman in question covered her with jewelry and gold for having the favors of this 14-year-old girl. The Rector of the American School came to see me and told me that the classmates of the girl had become aware of this daily routine and that her comportment had created a problem in the school under his direction. What could I do about it? I said that this kind of question was usually handled by my Deputy, the DCM. I would talk to him and he would let you know. My deputy at the time was Stapleton Roy, one of America's great FSOs, the son of an American educational missionary in China. I was

confident that such a discussion would lead to a good solution. I suggested to Stape Roy that since the father of the 14-year-old girl worked for the American economic development agency, we could have him transferred, and his family would have to leave with him. While it was not my job to intervene in the sex life of dependents of employees of the Embassy, it was my job, as Honorary President of the American High School, to see that this kind of problem did not adversely affect the reputation of the school, or other students. When we explained the situation by phone to the appropriate officials in Washington, the father of the girl was transferred to another post. The entire family left within a month.

To the extent you are in charge of 680 Americans on your staff and some are single, I found that the best thing I could do was to set a good example. My wife and I did just that and hoped that it would be followed. But I could not call in an employee, a bachelor, just because he had a Thai girlfriend. My attitude on sex has always been that, as representative of America abroad, I must set a good example. I think this was also the case in Thailand.

Q: Let me stop at this point. We will pick this up in 1985 when you are off to India. We will talk about how the appointment came out and your experience there.

INDIA

DEAN: Giving an accurate account of my assignment to India is undoubtedly the most difficult part of discussing my professional career. Over 40 years I thought I was able to identify long-range American national interests to whatever country or regime I was sent to by the U.S. Government. In India, I found that there were times I disagreed with our policy toward the region, or that the U.S. authorities had not one policy but several policies, sometimes even conflicting policies with each other. More specifically, one Government Department pursued policy A, and another Department engaged in policy B. The two policies would be diametrically opposed to each other. Furthermore, unlike at other posts, I found that in India the Ambassador was at times not the coordinator of U.S. activities in the field, but behind the Ambassador's back Washington took initiatives on major issues without keeping the Ambassador directly informed. For the purpose of this oral history, I prefer to remain imprecise on certain subjects, or even omit certain events, and leave it to others to search for the truth.

Perhaps the first question I should answer is why I was ever appointed to India and how this came about. To be quite candid, I don't really know myself. In December 1984, around 3:00 a.m. (3:00 p.m. Washington time), the phone rang in our bedroom in Bangkok, Thailand. A person on the President's White House staff called me to say that the President was thinking of sending me to India. Since my wife and I had been fast asleep, I guess my reply was not very enthusiastic. I replied that I did not speak the language. My interlocutor came back by pointing out that in India English was the official working language. My wife only heard what I was saying, and when she heard that "I did not speak the language," she was convinced I was offered a posting in Central America. I

don't speak Spanish, and my wife and I had decided many months before that we did not want to get involved in the imbroglio in that part of the world. After so many tough assignments, we had agreed to beg off if Central or South America were offered as a follow on to Thailand. I then suggested to my caller over the phone "that I had no previous experience in the area." Since this statement applied both to South Asia and Central/South America, my wife got more and more convinced that I was being offered an assignment in Spanish-speaking America. She made it known by vigorous signs and shaking of the head that she did not think that my caller's proposal was a good idea. Finally, the person on the telephone said: "The President wants you to go to India" and at that point, I replied that I was very honored to be considered for such an important position by the President. Before hanging up, I wished everybody a "Merry Christmas." When I explained to my wife that our next assignment might be India, she was stunned. And so was I. The actual transfer only occurred several months later, in the summer of 1985. What I did not know at the time was that the State Department had a different candidate in mind for New Delhi and that the Foreign Service Officer was actively lobbying for the job. The newspapers in Washington in 1985 reported some of the behind the scenes maneuvers to have Jim Spain fill the New Delhi position, but I was far away in Thailand and only knew what I had been told over the telephone in December 1984. Once in Washington and getting ready for the assignment to India, I was briefed by different Departments and Agencies on the problems with and policies toward that country. Some stressed the close links we had enjoyed with Pandit Nehru and his family in the past, others worried about India's reliance on Soviet weapons and experts to build a domestic arms industry in India. Others called my attention to Pakistan's quest for advanced conventional arms and even nuclear weapons and India's opposition to this effort. The United States also had to take position on India's self-proclaimed nuclear power status achieved in 1974. I was also briefed on the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the old British/Russian rivalry over control of that part of Asia. Some of my State Department colleagues noted that I had an excellent predecessor - Harry Barnes - and that I should follow into his footsteps. Did I detect a difference in guidance from Republicans or Democrats in our policy toward India? Perhaps the liberal Congressmen or officials focused more on the developmental challenges facing India, while conservatives and the Defense Department showed more interest in India's role outside of India. Some Congressmen and Senators asked to meet with me in Washington prior to my departure for New Delhi, and most of them stressed the importance of preventing nuclear proliferation in South Asia. This meant primarily keeping Pakistan from obtaining information or parts to build their own atomic weapon. Both the Pentagon and the Intelligence Agencies appeared favorably disposed toward Pakistan, while I felt some concern on their part about which way India would go in the cold war confrontation which was still very much part of our world in 1985. After all, India had been the leader of the Non-Aligned world, while Pakistan had been one of America's oldest allies since the creation of CENTO in 1950.

In Thailand, I had worked closely with the Reagan White House and I had numerous contacts with the President's personal staff. It was also apparent that the Reagan Administration was quite pleased with my style of leadership. In short, there is no doubt

that my appointment to India was the result of the White House decision to send somebody to India they knew and trusted and not leave this up to the State Department to fill this sensitive position. But I would like to underline again that I never used my professional links to advance my personal career. I think I never in my entire career asked for a job or solicited favors from my contacts. I hope it is not too indiscreet to insert here the letter the then Vice President George Bush wrote to Prime Minister Gandhi to introduce me to him:

August 1, 1985

His Excellency Rajiv Gandhi
Prime Minister of India
New Delhi

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

I am delighted that my old friend, John Gunther Dean, has been appointed to serve as American Ambassador to India. I have known John for many years and have the highest respect for his professionalism.

You will find him an "active" ambassador. We believe that there are unparalleled opportunities to strengthen relations between India and the U.S. and that an ambassador like John is what is needed to take fullest advantage of them. I hope you know, Mr. Prime Minister, of my own strong interest in doing all that is possible to see that our countries move closer together.

Barbara and I think often of our times with you and Sonia in New Delhi, Washington, and Houston. We think of you as close friends and I am delighted to commend to you another close friend. Ambassador John Gunther Dean.

With warm regards,
Sincerely,
George Bush

It will be recalled that I worked with Mr. Bush while I was Ambassador to Cambodia and he was in Beijing. Later, I worked with him on Thailand when Mr. Bush was Vice President.

For those who do not know India or had no dealings with the American Embassy in New Delhi, it may be useful to describe briefly the setting. Among the sites best-known in India is the Taj Mahal. It is an impressive monument of an Indian ruler to his wife. The British colonizers continued the tradition of impressing the many Indian rulers, princes, maharajas, with the might and power of the British Empire by building magnificent palaces, gardens, and mansions for the British Viceroy and some of his representatives.

The British Viceroy's Palace in New Delhi was every bit as impressive and grand as Buckingham Palace in London. By the time I arrived in India, the President of India had moved into the Viceroy's Palace and it became known as "The President's Palace." When the United States emerged after World War Two as the most powerful nation on the globe, the American Ambassador's residence and Chancery in New Delhi reflected the new power status of America. Both the Ambassador's residence and the Chancery were designed by Edward Durrell Stone who also was the architect for the Kennedy Center in Washington. Both in scale and design they resembled the Kennedy Center. In short, the buildings and the landscaping of these two American buildings were impressive and were tourist attractions in New Delhi. Some people even called the residence "the American Taj Mahal." Living in such a grand home with beautifully landscaped grounds, with numerous Indian helpers and gardeners also did not make the occupant forget that one only lived in such a place for a few years and that the real owner of the house and what it represented was the United States of America.

In order to stress the American side of the residence, which was called “Roosevelt House,” I had brought to India a life-size painting of George Washington which hung in the main hall. My son's father-in-law obtained it for me on a loan from the current owner and the painting quickly became a tourist attraction for visitors from America. The portrait of President Washington was by none other than Gilbert Stuart and had a history linked to India. In 1801, the famous painting was presented by grateful American merchants in New England to an Indian merchant in Calcutta. It hung there for more than a century and a half before it was sold to an American collector. When I brought it back to India, it became a symbol of U.S.-Indian cooperation for the three years it graced the official representation of our country.

Presenting credentials in India was also on an impressive scale. Having had the honor to present Letters of Credentials in several countries - republics and monarchies - I was quite used to the ceremony involved in the official beginning of an ambassador's mission. In this ceremony, the ambassador presents a letter from the American President to the Chief of State in which he confirms his trust in his envoy and asks the recipient to assist him in his mission. When the Chief of Protocol came to the residence to take him to the Presidential Palace, he was accompanied by 12 Indian lancers dressed in colorful costumes on beautifully groomed horses. After reviewing a detachment of Indian troops in modern battle dress, I walked up the huge stone staircase at the Presidential Palace to meet the President of India. At every step of this very broad staircase Indian Lancers, with their lances and small flags, saluted the foreign Chief of Mission until he faced the President of India standing in front of the silver throne, formerly used by the British Viceroy. It was certainly a memorable event for me, as it undoubtedly was for my predecessors and successors. In 1985, the President of India was a Sikh. It is customary for Presidents of India to be either Hindu, Moslem, or Sikh, which reflects the secular character of India. I stress this aspect because it is essential to understand India today. For example, one of India's claims to Kashmir is in part defended by the Indians as the basis of India's secular status where states can be in majority of different religious affiliation, i.e., Moslem, Hindu, Christian, or Buddhist. The same secular tradition is also very much

part of the Indian Armed Forces where the command positions are rotated, and very senior officers in the Indian Armed Forces could be Hindu, Moslem, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist, and even Jewish.

From the day I first met Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in the summer of 1985, until my departure in November 1988, I supported Mr. Gandhi's efforts to modernize India. Rajiv was the grandson of Pandit Nehru and the son of Indira Gandhi who were both forceful Prime Ministers. Rajiv was very much aware of the responsibilities that weighed on his shoulders, as heir to the Nehru dynasty. I liked Rajiv Gandhi and found that with his attractive wife Sonia they made a good team to lead India into modernity. Both the Prime Minister and his wife were nationalists, secular, and tolerant, while at the same time they also had a very good understanding of the West, and specifically what the United States could do for India on its road to progress. Rajiv was directly involved in liberalizing the Indian economy, but also agreed with an Indian tradition of avoiding giving multinational corporations control over sectors of the Indian economy. Another feature I observed and fully supported was the Nehru tradition of religious tolerance which endeared him to the large Muslim minority. In his relationship to Pakistan, he was aware of both the problems caused by emotional outbursts of violence by the masses against each other, and the tradition of powerful foreign countries applying the policy of "divide and rule" to South Asia. Navigating between these forces was the fate of any Indian and Pakistani leader.

Rajiv Gandhi was a thoroughly modern man and understood the developmental role high technology could play in modernizing India. Shortly after my arrival, the Chairman of Texas Instruments came to India and set up a branch office in Bangalore where Indian computer experts turned out computer programs at a fraction of the cost of similar programs designed in the United States. This information was then beamed via satellite from Bangalore, India, to the U.S.A. A huge satellite dish was built in Bangalore to receive and send messages via this device. Texas Instruments was only the first of many other companies that came to India to have their computer work done by highly competent Indian mathematicians and programmers. It became one of India's great exports and certainly Mr. Gandhi encouraged this development. Bangalore and Bombay were the first cities to benefit from this new industry.

How did the U.S. Embassy help in this field? Among the many ways our Commercial Section assisted directly Indians and American businessmen, was that the Embassy issued a booklet listing some 300 projects of U.S.-Indian cooperation actually in progress. Once it became known how many U.S.-Indian joint ventures were in progress, especially in Science and Technology, companies from other countries as well as new American companies became interested in following the American pioneers. The Reagan Administration also gave U.S.-Indian cooperation in high technology a big boost when the White House approved the sale of a CRAY super-computer to the Indian Meteorological Service. Robert Dean, a namesake but no relative, who worked on the White House staff at the time on high technology issues, was most helpful in obtaining top level clearance for the sale of such high technology to India. The sale of this item was an exception, at the time, of U.S. willingness to export its top technology. In the

meantime, U.S. authorities have learned that if the United States will not permit the export of American high technology items, foreign countries will fill the gap from non-American sources.

And this brings me to a field where U.S. and Indian national interests did not coincide: arms sales. When India became independent in 1948, India first turned to the United States to obtain weapons and equipment for the Indian Armed Services. As the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi explained to me one day, the United States refused to sell ammunition and spare parts for American military equipment during the Bangladesh War of Independence which pitched India against Pakistan. Mr. Gandhi said that when the United States refused the Indian request, it was interpreted by the Indian political establishment and the Indian Armed Forces as American interference in Indian internal affairs, and even worse, it was considered by some as the U.S. military tilting toward Pakistan in this conflict. To make things worse, the United States decided to send an aircraft carrier in front of the city of Calcutta which, again, was interpreted by the Indians as a symbolic gesture of intimidation and a sign of pro-Pakistani support. It will be recalled that since 1950, Pakistan had received significant U.S. support for its armed forces. In the eyes of India, the U.S. was not even-handed in its approach to the problems of South Asia. Rajiv Gandhi also mentioned that he had detected some American concern about India's role in the area, which he felt the U.S. interpreted as an Indian effort to establish some form of hegemony over the area. Even more worrisome for Gandhi was what he thought was American unjustified concern over India having turned to the Soviet Union for weapons to replace American suppliers. In U.S. eyes, Rajiv Gandhi opined, India had tilted toward the Soviet Union. He disputed that. Gandhi reassured me, and also in private letters to our leadership in Washington, that the construction of Soviet arms factories in India gave India control over its own destiny and was in line with India's overall political policy of non-alignment. Had the United States been willing to build arms factories in India, Rajiv Gandhi thought India would have preferred that alternative.

As I will explain in a later section, it was during my tour of duty in India that India "leased" a Soviet nuclear submarine so that the Indian Navy could learn how to operate such advanced naval vessels. The failure of the United States to provide weapons and parts to India when requested or needed meant that India turned to those countries which provided and sold arms “without political strings attached to it.” I might add that in the 21st century U.S. leaders indicated a willingness to sell advanced American weaponry to India, but nonetheless, in June 2001, Russia and India signed an agreement to manufacture advanced Soviet arms in India until the year 2010. Covered by the agreement is the construction in India of fighter aircraft, transport aircraft, and the exchange of missile and submarine technology. Also, Russia agreed to sell to India an aircraft carrier from the Soviet fleet. On the subject of arms sales or weapons manufacturing in India, perhaps it would be better for both countries to acknowledge that their long-term objectives are different, and spend more time on working on those areas where there is a willingness to cooperate.

One of those areas was education and exchange of information on science, technology, and agriculture. The close relationship I enjoyed with Prime Minister Gandhi and his team permitted me to initiate a project which I felt reflected the willingness of both countries to work together. I am referring about the use of funds deposited in India by the United States Government stemming from the PL 480 surplus food legislation. The amount came to the equivalent of $200 million and I negotiated with the Indian financial authorities that these funds be turned over to a "U.S.-India Fund" to be spent over 10 years for U.S.-Indian cooperation in education, science, technology, and agriculture. The head on the U.S. side was the American ambassador to India, and on the Indian side, it would be the Minister of Finance. The authorities in Washington favored the use of these funds for the administration of the American Foreign Service establishment in India, i.e., for running the Embassy in New Delhi, and the three American Consulate General in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras. In my opinion, then, and now, the establishment of the Fund in 1987 for the purposes and projects set forth above is an excellent example of U.S. assistance for the development and progress of an emerging nation. It also highlights mutually beneficial cooperation rather than confrontation with India, the latter policy not being without followers in Washington.

During the 1980s, there existed a tendency in Washington to confront India in the field of nuclear arms and nuclear technology. In that period the U.S. authorities had a tendency to twin India and Pakistan on nuclear issues. Gandhi discussed this issue with me on several occasions and he deeply resented equating India with Pakistan. He argued that India was at least six times bigger than Pakistan, and it was like equating France with Belgium. Reality was different. Gandhi argued, and I reported it to Washington, that India had the brain power and the industrial capacity to be a full-fledged nuclear power.

On the other hand, Pakistan had to import or obtain through illegal means essential parts to develop a nuclear capacity. Armed with these facts, obtained through overt and covert sources, I was able to convince my colleague Mike Armacost, at the time Under Secretary of State, to have the U.S. Senate reverse a Senate Committee resolution which treated Pakistan and India equally on nuclear matters. The Senate Committee had originally adopted that resolution on the advice of some State Department experts, and reversing course on that issue was an achievement that could only be brought about by the top leadership in the State Department and in the White House seeing the logic and good politics of Mr. Gandhi's reasoning. Confronting India on nuclear matters leads to the opposite result sought by the United States. For example, despite persistent U.S. pressure, India in 1996 refused to sign the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty as drafted. As we all know, today both India and Pakistan are considered nuclear nations by the world, but it would be a great mistake to equate the nuclear power and potentials of the two nations.

But the nuclear competition between India and Pakistan has another angle which, to the best of my knowledge, has not been discussed anywhere else. The reason is simple: it is political dynamite not only in Asia but especially in the United States. I am referring to the role of Israel and pro-Israeli elements in the U.S. to prevent Pakistan to develop “the Islamic bomb.” While I had some American visitors trying to convince me of the need of

"doing" something about Pakistan obtaining the “Islamic bomb,” I found Mr. Gandhi more relaxed on this issue. For him, nuclear arms were a deterrent, and he certainly thought that India needed them, not only for deterring Pakistan, but as a deterrent against all others who wanted to do serious harm to the Indian nation. Mr. Gandhi did not hide his disappointment over U.S. willingness to provide advanced conventional weaponry - at times on credit - to Pakistan but at the same time refused similar weapons or technology to India.

Many American visitors came to India to discuss with me compliance with the Pressler Amendment, U.S. legislation which prohibited assistance to Pakistani efforts to build an atomic bomb and, if proven, would lead to a cut-off of U.S. overall assistance to Pakistan. Some American legislators who came to me on this issue appeared to me less concerned about the danger of a Pakistani atomic bomb used against India than the development of an "Islamic bomb" which could threaten Israel. But obviously the discussion was in terms of making Pakistan live up to the letter and spirit of the Pressler Amendment. At the same time, I followed closely in New Delhi the efforts of the Pentagon to build up Pakistani conventional forces and covert efforts to assist the Pakistani Intelligence Service support the Afghans fighting the Communist regime in Kabul brought to power by the Soviet Union. Since the Indian Intelligence Service was well informed, I was always told about the weapons the Pentagon provided to Pakistan, and sometimes even their final destination... Afghanistan. But more about that later, the United States and India also held different views on national long-term interests in South Asia, and this was also reflected in the field of Intelligence. On the whole, in many Intelligence areas, cooperation between the two countries was good. For example, in the field of exchanging information on nuclear developments in third countries. Also, remember, the Indians could also obtain information on the same countries from the Soviet Union. But let us be frank: every nation that can afford it wants to know what others are doing in various vital fields, and U.S.-Indian relations were no exception to this truth. In short, situations arise in which U.S. agents get caught in flagrant violation of the law, and vice-versa to Indian officers. Let me say here that the job of certain members of the staff is to penetrate certain secrets of the host country, and foreign countries do the same in their contacts with the United States. My job as ambassador was to avoid situations where "incidents" became an obstacle in the relationship between our country and the host nation in order to preserve the over-all trust in mutually beneficial cooperation. Failure meant the deterioration of the relationship.

In 1987, the Indian Navy had leased a Soviet nuclear submarine. The purpose of the lease was to train the Indian navy in the use of such a technically advanced naval vessel. The reactor unit was sealed and the spent fuel was to be returned to the Soviet Union. Mr. Gandhi had assured President Reagan that "this specific submarine on lease from the Soviet Union would not be used in any manner in the event of any hostilities." Prime Minister Gandhi had assured President Reagan in writing that there was “no ground for any apprehension.” Naturally, our navy wanted to know more about the submarine leased from the Soviet Union to India, and this led to a covert operation to obtain detailed plans and drawings of this vessel.

The incident occurred when an Indian Navy Captain was arrested at Bombay International Airport before boarding a flight for the United States in possession of detailed technical data on the Soviet nuclear submarine. Apparently, Indian Intelligence had tracked the Indian naval officer - or was he a double agent - and, in any case, I was asked to meet with the Prime Minister who confronted me with the facts. I did my best to smooth ruffled feathers, and fortunately Mr. Gandhi was sufficiently experienced in international relations to know that information on the Soviet vessel was a legitimate target for our Intelligence agencies. I urged that the apprehension of the Indian officer before leaving India with the drawings should not adversely impact on over-all U.S.-Indian relations. At the same time, I protected vis-a-vis Washington the American official who had been in charge of this case at the Embassy. He left the post quite rapidly, but has enjoyed an interesting career after his service in India.

Another incident occurred in southern India in 1988 where the Security of the American Consulate General in Madras was breached. Again, I was called in by the Prime Minister who apparently had been thoroughly briefed on the issue. I agreed to the immediate departure from India of the American employee in question. He left within 24 hours and his personal effects had to be shipped to him, since he was unable to pack them in time to take them with him. In this case, I also stood up vis-a-vis Washington and New Delhi for the Consul General in Madras who was nominally responsible for everything going on at the post. Since India and the United States had different views on their long-term national interests in South Asia, it was quite normal in my opinion that incidents could occur - in overt diplomacy and covert actions - which had to be handled expeditiously to prevent them affecting adversely the over-all relations between the two countries.

Let me switch from the opaque world of intelligence to the more transparent discipline of diplomacy. India, as the leader of the non-aligned group of nations, had played a prominent role in supporting Mr. Arafat's efforts to obtain a home for the Palestinians. In those days, Mr. Arafat sometimes wore a military uniform and even carried a pistol as a symbol of his fight for his people, even when invited by a friendly country to present his case. India, having struggled for decades for its independence from Britain, had empathy for the Palestinian cause and Mr. Arafat was invited to visit India on several occasions. Some American legislators and Indian businessmen had pleaded with me to try to convince the Indian authorities to upgrade the role of the sole Israeli representative in India - the Vice Consul in Bombay - so that India would be able to hear both sides of the story. Whether it was my effort in New Delhi or other diplomats working in other capitals, after a couple of months the Israeli Vice Consul in Bombay was elevated to the rank of Consul General and his jurisdiction was extended to the port of Cochin, hundreds of miles south of Bombay, where an ancient Synagogue is still standing. As far as I could see, the Indians had been quite tolerant toward other religions. It must be remembered that India has a larger Moslem population than all of Pakistan. Also, Jews had lived in peace with their Indian neighbors. Some Jews have played an important role in Indian business for centuries. Many of the prominent Jewish families from Bombay had come from Bagdad decades ago and had made a name for themselves in India. That was the

case of the Sassoon family who were raised to the peerage in England in the 20th century. Could it be that the Indian political establishment made a distinction between a religion (Judaism) and a nationality (Israeli Zionism)? The latter was perceived by the Indians as being opposed to the concept of secularism, principle enshrined in the Indian constitution.

But apparently the upgrading of the Israeli representation to the rank of Consulate General was not enough for some elements in the United States. I was asked whether I could be helpful to bring Prime Minister Gandhi together with Foreign Minister Perez of Israel at a forthcoming U.N. General Assembly in New York. The reason advanced for the suggestion was to "give more balance to India's policy toward the Near East." I must have mumbled something about my wish that my own government would be more balanced in its approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but through some private circles, a meeting did take place in New York at the United Nations between the two leaders. It was my understanding that a well-known American Congressman attended the meeting, but according to Mr. Gandhi not much came out of it. India's policy toward the Near East imbroglio did not change visibly. U.S. relations with India had been through many phases since Independence in 1948, and during my tenure, the Republican administration made a determined effort to improve the relationship which had been somewhat neglected during the period of Mrs. I. Gandhi's leadership. One element which was very helpful in the process was the thousands of well-educated Indians who had made America their home and had begun to have some influence in their country of adoption. Earlier in the 20th century, some Sikhs had come to America and had been successful in farming on the West Coast. But the arrival of highly skilled and educated Indians in America well after the Second World War introduced a new dimension into U.S.-Indian relations. These Indians had often become prominent in computing finance, research, academia, and business, and they were a natural bridge between the United States and India. They organized themselves in the United States and got to know their congressman, and became part of the local establishment where they lived. Having contact with their family left behind in India, they promoted trade, research, and contact between the two countries. During my tenure, I spoke to several Indian associations in the United States and I was amazed to see how helpful they were to "bridge-building" between our two countries. Many of the joint ventures started by American corporations in India were the result of an Indian engineer who was able to convince his American boss in the United States about the prospects of India as a reliable, hard working, inexpensive partner. The primacy of the Soviet Union in the arms field annoyed the Pentagon. As far as the U.S. military and the American Intelligence Agencies were concerned, India "was in the Soviet camp." As I explained earlier, this was a complete misunderstanding of modern India, but under President Reagan an effort was made to increase military to military links. One way of doing that was for the Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, to visit India. On the policy side, cooperation in the field of defense was clouded by the permissive U.S. policy toward Pakistan obtaining advanced conventional arms, over U.S. policy toward Afghanistan, and specifically, the role of the Pakistani Intelligence Service in Afghanistan. Weinberger came to India on an official visit with a large entourage, and the Indians appreciated the visit of an American Secretary of Defense, the first in many years. It was also important for the Indians that the

Americans had taken the initiative, interpreted by New Delhi as a desire by America to work more closely with India. While there emerged no change in the Indian determination to stick with the Soviet Union on the procurement of arms and weapons, the Weinberger visit did help to identify areas of possible cooperation between American and Indian armed forces. The fact that the officers of the Indian Armed Forces were all English speakers and followed English military traditions made contact easy. But the Indians are proud of their past and their traditions. Successful interaction with all Indians must be based on treating counterparts with equality and respect. The difference in long-term goals regarding Afghanistan's future once the Soviets had withdrawn was one important limit to U.S. military cooperation with India. At the risk of repeating myself, during the 1980s and 1990s, India and the United States did not share the same vision as to the kind of world the 21st century would bring. India needed U.S. support for India's efforts to develop its economy, infrastructure and society, but India was not prepared to follow automatically U.S. lead in international affairs, especially in South Asia. On Afghanistan, both countries had different goals. As I saw it then, India considered non-alignment for Afghanistan good enough. We wanted a pro-western Afghanistan.

Before discussing Afghanistan, let me mention briefly a factor which counted in U.S.-Indian relations, but which played no role during my tenure. It is the role of Diego Garcia in the American global strategy to be militarily present in every corner of the globe. This tiny island, which was made available to the United States by the United Kingdom, has become over time the major forward base of the U.S. in South Asia. It is perhaps the largest warehouse for U.S. military equipment in Asia and it can support both men and equipment needed in most parts of southern Asia - from Suez to Indonesia. Since the island is near the Indian subcontinent, the Indians are sensitive to the use of this island by the U.S. Armed Forces, but over time this essential base is no longer a source of major dispute between the two nations.

Another subject on which I was asked by Washington to stay on the sidelines was the Bhopal chemical disaster which occurred before my arrival in India. On the night of December 3, 1984, a toxic cloud released by a pesticide plant belonging to the U.S. multinational Union Carbide killed between 16,000 and 30,000 inhabitants and poisoned half a million others. It was the most deadly chemical accident in history. Those deemed responsible for this tragedy, to begin with Warren Anderson, at the time Union Carbide's CEO, have never been brought to court to explain why they shut down one by one the devices which were to guarantee the safety of the plant. Mr. Anderson retired in 1989. Soon after the horrible disaster, the Indian Government filed suit for $3 billion in damages, but the case was settled out of court in 1989, with Union Carbide agreeing to pay $470 million toward compensation. Of that amount, $200 million was spent. As of today, the balance remains unspent. Efforts by the numerous victims to bring the case to court have been unsuccessful, but occasional hunger-strikes or demonstrations revive the sad memories of this disaster where 95 % of the people who have been compensated received only $500 each. I am still today grateful to my superiors in Washington for the telephone call I received from them "to stay out of this legal confrontation." Still today, the numerous victims of this horrendous disaster are trying to get the U.S. multinational

corporation Dow Chemical - now the owner of Union Carbide - to assume the responsibility of the defunct corporation in matters regarding medical treatment of the victims and the liability for damages done to the environment. Union Carbide disappeared in 1984, leaving hundreds of tons of toxic effluents on the side of its abandoned plant. This mass of poison pollutes each day a little more the underground system that provides the water for the wells of those who still live in the immediate vicinity of the rusting metallic structure of the old Union Carbide installation. But today, the emphasis in India is on getting major international corporations to invest in the subcontinent and it is doubtful that the victims' voices will be heard so many years later.

Before leaving completely the nuclear field, it may be useful to discuss the differences between the Indian and Pakistani nuclear programs. In the spring of 1987, I wrote a paper on this subject based on what I was told by Indian specialists, and approved by my staff: According to my paper:

- The Indian nuclear program was originally conceived in great detail 45 years ago, before the Non-Proliferation Treaty had been discussed. India's declared objective at the time was to use its 500.000 tons of thorium in Kerala, the world's largest deposits, for energy production.

For political reasons, India detonated a nuclear device in 1974, but that explosion used enriched plutonium. The Indians tried to demonstrate by that explosion their ability to master complex advanced technology. The Indian nuclear program was primarily civilian and open. Financial and technical details of the program were published by the GOI. Foreigners were allowed to visit Indian nuclear facilities. It is for these reasons that India has not gone in for many years for the enrichment of Uranium which is the fuel best suited for a nuclear armament program.

The Pakistani program, on the other hand, has been kept highly secret, and its thrust, as stated by Prime Minister Bhutto in the mid-1970s, is to build a nuclear weapons capability. The large enrichment facility at Kahuta is not justified for a civilian program because Pakistan has neither the ability nor a declared program of building numerous nuclear power stations, as has India. Moreover, Pakistan has obtained materials in a clandestine manner and does not allow visitors to see those facilities. Pakistan also chose to produce enriched uranium, which is the ideal fuel for nuclear armaments. The financial and technical details of Pakistan's program have always been kept highly classified. India's baseline nuclear program today is to build natural uranium, heavy water-moderated CANDU reactors, which produce plutonium, and to use this plutonium in breeder reactors to get energy from India's vast deposits of thorium. Thus, India's main nuclear energy program is not enriching uranium, as is Pakistan. It is reprocessing its spent fuel to recover plutonium in order to reduce its waste storage problems and to use the plutonium in its fast breeder reactor program. Current estimates are that less than half of India's plutonium production to date is used in its one small breeder reactor at Kalpakkam. The rest, India argues, is an inventory to be used in a new generation of commercial scale breeders, currently being designed. In the case of Pakistan, there is no

such demonstrated need for either an inventory of plutonium or enriched uranium. India's commitment to nuclear power required that it has the capability to reprocess waste from both CANDU and the enriched uranium Tarapur-type reactors. Their experience with Tarapur fuel and parts requirements makes it natural for them to want to do everything themselves. The Pakistan uranium enrichment and related occurrences of U.S. export violations strongly suggest that their goal is to produce weapons.

- Finally, the positions of India and Pakistan on full scope safeguards are philosophically different. In the case of Pakistan, their concern is India's nuclear capability. In the case of India, it considers the NPT discriminating against the non-weapons states. It also finds that its major long-term adversary, China, is treated differently under the safeguards regime, simply because it happened to have tested a nuclear device before India. Nonetheless, it must be stated that India developed a nuclear weapons program and tested these weapons again in the late 1990s. Obviously, over time, this rationale has changed, but it may be useful to remember what was the thinking back in 1987.

In order to understand U.S. relations with South Asia in the 1980s, one must also have some understanding of Indian-Pakistani relations during that period, and the crucial role of Pakistan in U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. Little was written in the United States during the 1980s about the links between arms for those fighting the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and the boom in the drug culture in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Perhaps the overriding U.S. policy consideration toward all of South Asia in those days was "to trap and kill the Russian bear in Afghanistan, and Pakistan was a staunch ally in its strategy." (CNN film on Afghanistan entitled: "Terror Nation, a U.S. creation?")

For obvious reasons, I prefer to quote from public documents in discussing the connection between drugs and arms for Afghanistan rather than as reported in the TIMES OF INDIA, Bombay, page 27, Wed.19, 1994.

This subject was much discussed at the time within the American Embassy in New Delhi. As I stated in earlier chapters, different agencies and departments of the U.S. Government could have conflicting positions. Generally speaking, to protect its "assets" abroad, the CIA had ensured in those days that the DEA's concerns outside the United States were subordinated to its own. We are talking about the 1980s. No DEA country attaché overseas was allowed to initiate an investigation into a suspected drug trafficker or attempt to recruit an informant without clearance from the local CIA station chief. DEA country attaches were required to employ the standard State Department cipher and all their transmissions were made available to the CIA station chief. The CIA also had access to all DEA investigative reports, and informants' and targets' identities when DEA activities outside the United States were involved. (International Herald Tribune - December 3, 1993)

The boom in the poppy growing and heroin refineries in Pakistan and Afghanistan coincided with the beginning of the Afghan War in early 1990. Madame Benazir Bhutto,

then Prime Minister of Pakistan, said that "today Pakistan society is dominated by the culture of heroin and the Kalashnikov rifle" (Le Monde - Page 11 - 19 April 1990.). With drugs came arms. But who had heard in the United States, in 1985 when I arrived in New Delhi, about the role of General Zia-ul-Haq's adopted son and drug smuggling? Yet, in December 1983, a young Pakistani was arrested at Oslo airport with 3.5 kilos of heroin. It eventually led back to the President of Pakistan's involvement in drug smuggling. Even as the U.S. Government was congratulating in 1984 General Zia-ul-Haq for helping control narcotics traffic, the Police of Pakistan, under Norwegian pressure, arrested Hamid Hasnain, the "adopted son" of General Zia, who turned out to be a kingpin in the drug running mafia. In Hasnain's possession were found checkbooks and bank statements of Zia-ul-Haq and his family. I am relating these facts here not to undermine General Zia's reputation but to demonstrate the linkage of drug dealing with arms to fight the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and how we interacted with these criminals to achieve our own ends, i.e., the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the toppling of the communist regime led by Najibullah in Kabul. On the Norwegian bust of the Pakistani drug smuggling ring, I rely on the detailed newspaper article which appeared in the TIMES OF INDIA. Please note that the author is an American journalist, formerly the South Asia correspondent of the FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW and later working on special assignment with the New York publication THE NATION. (TIMES OF INDIA - Pages 1 and 7 - October 24, 1988 - Article by Lawrence Lifschultz.).

By reproducing Mr. Lifschultz' lengthy article, I am trying to give the American public a glimpse of what we knew at the American Embassy in New Delhi, India, in 1988 about the covert struggle and the relationship between Pakistan - United States - Afghanistan, subject which remained taboo for the American mass media for many years: drugs, arms, and Afghanistan. It may also explain my actions taken in 1988 as American Ambassador to India, which I will relate shortly. Please note that what follows was written on October 25, 1988 when I was still the American Ambassador to India.

"THE HEROIN TRAIL: PAKISTAN AUTHORITIES ARE DEEPLY INVOLVED" by Lawrence Lifschultz (TIMES OF INDIA - Pages 1 and 5 - October 25, 1988)

The Norwegian case is almost completely unknown in Pakistan. Until now efforts have been largely successful within the country to keep it from public view. Yet, other similar scandals involving heroin are well known. In 1986 the British Broadcasting Corporation's documentary program, Panorama, told the tale of a Japanese courier named Hisayoshi Maruyama who was arrested in Amsterdam in May 1983 carrying 17 kilos of high grade heroin.

Serving a ten-year sentence in a Dutch prison, he spoke on camera describing the organization in Pakistan with which he had worked as a courier for several years. Maruyama identified the head of the syndicate as Mirza Iqbal Baig who based his smuggling operation out of the Plaza and Capital cinemas in Lahore. A BBC team traveled to Pakistan and managed to briefly meet Baig in his office at the Plaza cinema.

Carrying a disguised camera and microphone, the BBC reporters began to interview Baig about allegations concerning his involvement in heroin smuggling.

The two British reporters were promptly dragged out of Baig's office by a dozen thugs and severely beaten on the road in front of the cinema. The cinema is opposite the town's main police station, and as the two journalists were kicked and their equipment smashed, the local police stood and watched. The police were no fools. They knew not to interfere with Baig's men. Iqbal Baig is well known in Lahore for the political and commercial associations he maintains in high government circles at the provincial and national level. The immunity and protection he enjoys is quite evident. Besides the BBC program, Baig was named when the Pakistan press in October 1986 published a list of 30 known drug smugglers which had been drawn up by the country's Narcotics Control Board and presented to the Interior Minister, Aslam Khattak.

The Islamabad newspaper, The Muslim, quoted a custom's intelligence agent describing Baig as the "most active dope dealer in the country."

Many of the names cited by The Muslim from the PNCB report were read out in the National Assembly by the Interior Minister. However, no arrests were made.

The position and brazen quality of men like Iqbal Baig in Pakistan has to be seen to be believed. Twelve days after General Zia's recent death in an air crash, the government-owned Pakistan Times in its Lahore edition, published a prominent front page advertisement signed by Iqbal Baig extending his personal greetings to the new President and the commanders of the Armed Forces.

A senior Pakistani narcotics officer when asked during an interview why Baig had not been arrested, stated that the hands of the police were "tied" in the case by higher authorities. Another police officer confirmed that Baig was a major target of both American and European narcotics police, and that the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency had attempted several ruses to lure him abroad in order to make an arrest. When asked why the Drug Enforcement Agency had not been able to secure Baig's arrest within Pakistan, as the Norwegians had secured Hasnain's, the police officer noted an apparent American policy not to press for arrests within Pakistan which could lead to embarrassing revelations at the highest levels of a government so closely allied with the United States. Much more serious allegations exist concerning the operation of one or more major heroin syndicates functioning within the Pakistan Army itself. This suspicion has caused severe tension between elements in Pakistani police services who are responsible for suppressing the narcotics trade and a small but powerful element within the Army which appears determined to keep the police completely out of military affairs, especially where it concerns narcotics.

The affair which has sparked the tension between the two forces concerns the arrest of military personnel by police, on two separate occasions. The first was in July 1986 when an Army major, Zahooruddin Afridi, was arrested while driving to Karachi from

Peshawar. Major Afridi was captured with 220 kilos of high-grade heroin. It was the largest consignment ever intercepted in Pakistan. Exactly two months later, police arrested an Air Force officer, Flight Lieutenant Kariur Rahman. This officer was also intercepted with a consignment of 220 kilos of high-grade heroin. Rahman confessed to police that it was his fifth "mission."

Between the two of them, Afridi and Rahman were carrying heroin worth nearly $800 million dollars on arrival in Europe. Once 'cut' or diluted for sale, it would ultimately be worth up to $4 (four) billion, or more than the total merchandise exports of Pakistan in a single year. The sum was absolutely staggering for those who bothered with the arithmetic. Just one shipment equaled the entire covert budget for the Afghan war for eight years.

Both officers were taken from police custody and detained under reputedly high-security conditions at the Army's Malir Cantonment outside Karachi.

An investigation was to be conducted and both officers were to face court martial proceedings. However, before an inquiry even began, both men escaped under what Pakistan's Defence Journal (August 1988) has generously termed "mystifying circumstances." The police service which made the arrest was furious and set out to trap its prey once again. European police sources allege the escape was arranged for nearly $100,000 per head, considered small change to protect a major network.

Allegations involving the Pakistan Army have come closer and closer to that select cadre which had been most intimately involved in the "covert effort" in support of the Afghan war and the arms pipeline which has supplied the resistance in their brave fight against the Soviets. But around the war has grown up an enormous illicit trade in arms and narcotics. The Pakistan press, led by a remarkably courageous English language monthly called The Herald, had repeatedly noted the widely held belief that the principal conduit by which weapons reach the Afghan resistance in the north is in fact one of the main organized routes by which heroin reaches Karachi for trans-shipment to Europe and the United States. "It is really very simple," wrote The Herald January 1987. "If you control the poppy fields, Karachi, and the road which links the two; you will be so rich that you will control Pakistan." The American Central Intelligence Agency's pipeline for the weapons to the Afghan Mujahideen is organized and coordinated by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). It is under ISI direction that weapons and supplies move north by two principal means. One route utilizes Pakistan Air Force transports. But, the main carrier of supplies is an organization called the National Logistic Cell (NLC). It is the largest transport organization in the country and is wholly owned by the Pakistan Army. All drivers and loaders are Pakistan Army personnel and security is tight at its main installations. According to reports which have appeared in The Herald and other newspapers, NLC trucks have been used repeatedly in the shipment of heroin from the frontier province to Karachi port. In its September 1985 issue The Herald gave the following eyewitness report: "The drug is carried in NLC trucks, which come sealed from the NWFP and are never checked by the police. They come down from Peshawar where

they deliver their cargo, sacks of grain, to government go down. Some of these sacks contain packets of heroin... This has been going on for about three and a half years."

The Herald went on to describe an incident, again quoting an eyewitness in support of the allegations against the WLC. According to the report, “A few months ago, an NLC truck was involved in an accident near Thana Bula Khan. The driver was thrown out of the cab and lost consciousness. When he became conscious and found a number of people gathered around him, he became anxious. Not surprisingly - because when the trailer had overturned, a white powder spilled out all over the road.” The figure identified most frequently in the country's press and referred to most often by European police sources as having fostered an environment in the Northwest Frontier Province within which the heroin trade could flourish is the former Governor and current Chief Minister of the Province, Lt. General Fazle Haq. The General, however, has categorically denied the allegations against him. "Would the U.S. have tolerated for eight years a governor involved in drug trafficking?" asked General Haq in an interview last June in the Pakistan press. The Herald, June 1988, General Haq's Pakistani critics, nevertheless, refer to him as 'our own Noriega', and argue that precisely because of his crucial and highly effective role as Governor of the Province from which the main Afghan mujaheddin operations were staged, a blind eye was turned to other activities.

General Haq claims that during his tenure opium production dropped dramatically. According to official statistics, opium output in Pakistan has fallen from 800 metric tons in 1979 to 165 tons in 1987. But, during precisely the same period, the output of opium increased from an estimated 270 tons to 800 tons across the border in Afghanistan.

From an overall perspective of opium and heroin production, the Afghan and Pakistan border regions must be considered as a single confederal unit. Almost the entire production of opium in Afghanistan is now controlled by Pakistan-based syndicates with powerful links to liberated areas of the Afghan countryside, European police sources estimate that, despite several dramatic seizures, only between 5 and 10 of the heroin shipped from Pakistan is actually intercepted.

PATRONAGE, PROTECTION

Of course, the real question is why "the shield of patronage and protection" has not been even dented in Pakistan. "The government which could arrest 20,000 political workers overnight, is unable to lay hands on 100 drug smugglers who are playing with the lives of millions in the world" says Benazir Bhutto of the Pakistan Peoples Party. Similarly, Asghar Khan, the leader of the opposition Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, said in September that Pakistan's new drug mafia was threatening to dominate the country's next elections, if precautions were not taken.

According to European police sources who have worked closely with the American Drug Enforcement Agency, U.S. narcotics agents have identified nearly 40 significant

syndicates functioning in Pakistan. The DEA, when recently approached, declined to be interviewed on the subject.

Yet, by all accounts, the DEA has had a number of highly qualified and intelligent individuals working in its operation in Pakistan. A careful scrutiny of its unsanitized reports reveals a team interested in facts, not propaganda. The question, however, for several of their European and Pakistani colleagues, is why the Americans have not effectively utilized their narcotics intelligence to destroy the syndicates?

"It is very strange that the Americans, with the size of their staff, the scale of their resources, and the political power they possess in Pakistan, have failed to break a single major narcotics case," says a European police officer, a five-year veteran of Pakistan's heroin wars. "The explanation cannot be found in a lack of adequate police work. They have had some excellent men working in Pakistan." (In January 3, 1989 at 10:25 pm, CNN television showed an AIR AMERICA Pilot (with face blackened out) admitting to flying cocaine flights out of South Asia.)

Serious allegations concerning the ISI, the ClA's principal counterpart in Pakistan, were made before the United States Congress in 1987. The Far Eastern Economic Review (5 March 1987) reported that in testimony before the U.S. Senate, Andrew Elva, an American adviser to Afghan Mujahideen groups and an official of the Federation for American Afghan Action (FAAA), had claimed that "Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence, run by Major General Akhtar Abdur Rahman, which oversees the transfer of money and arms to the rebels, is responsible for the theft of millions of dollars in funds and military equipment."

Elva alleged that U.S. $700 million, out of $1.09 billion in aid earmarked by the U.S. Congress for the Afghan rebels between 1980-84, had disappeared.

Elva claimed that some of these resources were clandestinely diverted to the Nicaraguan Contras, but he also alleged that several Pakistani military officers had "become overnight millionaires... and made their money off U.S. aid to the Afghans."

A number of prominent figures in the Afghan resistance have for many years been highly critical of the links which have arisen between the heroin trade, senior figures in the Pakistan government, and the use of Afghan exiles as intermediaries in the narcotics smuggling nexus that exists between Afghanistan, the Frontier Province, and Karachi. The most articulate critic was Dr. Sayed Majroo, Director of the Afghan Information Centre in Peshawar, who was assassinated last February 1988.

On a number of occasions before his death, Dr. Majroo spoke with this correspondent and expressed his dismay over the identification that Afghans were gaining in relation to narcotics smuggling. According to this year's American DEA report, "Much of the opium and heroin originating in Afghanistan is transported to Peshawar via the tribal areas adjacent to the Afghan border... large amounts of opium and heroin are smuggled into

Pakistan across the Afghan border... Some Afghan refugees are involved in the heroin trade as opium poppy growers, opium stockists, manufacturers, middlemen or international traffickers."

The U.S. vice president George Bush has repeatedly asserted that he would never bargain with drug dealers on U.S. or foreign soil. But, in Pakistan in 1984, he did make a bargain with men who were the guardians of Pakistan's heroin kingdom. "I want a drug-free America and this will not be easy to achieve," said Bush on the night of his nomination.

"Tonight I challenge the young people of our country to shut down the drug dealers around the world... My administration will be telling the dealers: "Whatever we have to do, we'll do, but your day is over, you are history."

The evening before, in commenting upon the sudden death of Pakistan's President, Zia-ul-Haq, Mr. George Bush spoke of the "special relationship" between Zia and the United States. Indeed, it was a most "special relationship." But until such relations are honestly scrutinized and genuinely relegated to history's graveyard, representatives of the American government will undoubtedly continue to exacerbate the international narcotics problem, rather than inspiring its demise.

The role of the CIA in Afghanistan is today well-known. I usually had a direct, friendly link with the Director of the CIA which was essential for me to carry out effectively U.S. foreign policy abroad. But at times I found CIA and State Department policy at odds with each other. At other posts, it was CIA and the Pentagon who had conflicting policies toward the country where I was supposed to be the coordinator of U.S. foreign policy in my capacity as ambassador. In CIA and DEA confrontation in the field, I knew that CIA usually had the ear of the President, regardless of party affiliation, because CIA was supposed to act in the overall U.S. national interests abroad, while DEA was a specialized agency devoted to a specific, upright task, but nonetheless had to follow directives from those who spoke for overall U.S. objectives. Perhaps, it was also a question of who had the ear of the President, rather than the righteousness of the cause.

But the drug and arms trade was also used to control foreign officials or advance U.S. overall objectives in certain countries. In the 1980s, the Israeli Intelligence agency - MOSSAD - worked closely with, or at times against, the U.S. government, as described in earlier parts of this testimony. The Iran - Contras deal certainty had a significant MOSSAD involvement. U.S. policy toward Colombia and our efforts to reduce the flow of heroin and cocaine toward the United States came up against Israeli agents protecting the Colombian drug barons. According to Israel Shahak, a retired professor of chemistry at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and a survivor of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, Israeli agents were involved in the laundering of U.S. drug money back to the drug bosses of Colombia and Panama, despite all the well-publicized efforts of U.S. authorities to intercept it. According to Israel Shahak, the single most important source of Israeli income in the 1980s was the export of weapons and so-called "security knowledge" (including, for example, the efficient training of death squads.) The value of such exports

amounted officially to $1.5 billion in 1988 - ("What Israelis know and Americans don't about the Drug Triangle Colombia, the United States, and Israel" by Israel Shahak, in the October 1989 issue of the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs. Similar articles appeared in the International Herald Tribune.).

I made the reference to Israeli involvement in the drug trade and providing arms for anybody who wanted them, regardless of political persuasion, because I tried to understand the role of the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) in U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. You may recall what I said earlier about efforts made to prevent Pakistan from becoming an atomic power. Was MOSSAD or Israel somehow involved in the U.S. clandestine support of Afghans committed to the anti-Soviet and anti-communist struggle in Afghanistan? In the 1980s, MOSSAD had agents in many countries around the world, especially in those areas where Israeli politicians could show to American political leaders in Washington that Israel was helpful in supporting important U.S. foreign policy objectives. And none was more important in those days than opposing Soviet communist expansion into areas heretofore friendly to the West. This was the case of Afghanistan, after the Soviet invasion of 1979. This question became important in my analysis of who killed the President of Pakistan, Zia-ul-Haq on August 12, 1988.

The problem of arms to Pakistan and Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan were very much major subjects in the three-year exchange of letters between President Reagan and Prime Minister Gandhi.

I do not believe that I need to present here the historic details of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. As is well known today, the United States supported efforts to defeat the Soviet military in Afghanistan in a ten-year war which lasted from 1979 to 1989. Specifically, the U.S. supported volunteer fighters from numerous Countries, including from many Arab countries, to defeat the Soviet invaders and their Afghan allies.

Initially, the volunteer fighters were trained as guerilla fighters by U.S. Green Berets and Pakistani ISI (Military Intelligence) personnel, with weapons and funding provided by various sources, including the U.S., Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. (After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, these well-trained veterans, in turn, trained guerilla recruits for insurgency movements in countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Lebanon, the Philippines, Tajikistan, and Yemen.)

But according to Steve Coll writing in the Washington Post, (See International Herald Tribune, July 21, 1992 edition..) secret U.S. support for those fighting the communist regime in Kabul and the Soviet invaders was escalated in 1985. It was CIA Director Casey who saw in the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan a chance to weaken the Soviet Union. As a result of Mr. Casey's trip to Pakistan in October 1984, the Reagan Administration, in a secret decision in March 1985, reflected in National Security Decision Directive 166, approved the escalation of U.S. covert action in Afghanistan by

providing to the Afghan resistance U.S. high technology and military expertise (for example Stinger anti-aircraft missiles). That National Security Directive augmented the original intelligence funding approved by President Carter in 1980. It authorized stepped up covert military aid to the mujahideen and it made it clear that the secret Afghan war had a new goal to defeat Soviet troops in Afghanistan through covert action and bring about Soviet withdrawal. (One detailed explanation on how the Reagan Administration decided to go for victory in the Afghan war between 1984 and 1988 is General Yousaf's book entitled the "Bear Trap" published in June 1992. General Yousaf was a Pakistani General supervising the covert war between 1983 and 1987. - John K. Cooley's book "Band of Brothers" is a basic work to understand the U.S. involvement in the Afghan conflict and its impact on the training of terrorists in many countries of the world.)

I would now wish to focus on how the very active correspondence between President Reagan and Prime Minister Gandhi contributed to bringing about the desired result of the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan: the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. It also brings out how the two leaders differed at the end on who should govern Afghanistan.

While the Soviets did withdraw in 1988-89, it did not lead to the collapse of the communist regime of Najibullah in Afghanistan until a few years later. All during the 1980s, India maintained normal relations with the rulers in Afghanistan. The U.S. supported opposition elements to the communist regime in Kabul during my tenure in India. My messages made it clear that both the United States and India agreed on the need for the Soviet military to withdraw from Afghanistan. But in 1988, Prime Minister Gandhi repeatedly explained to President Reagan that India was not involved in deciding who should govern in Kabul after the Soviet withdrawal. This was not the position of Pakistan or the United States who wanted a "friendly" government. A neutral or non-aligned government, acceptable to New Delhi, was not good enough.

As early as December 1985, hence shortly after my arrival in New Delhi, President Reagan wrote to Prime Minister Gandhi about the deep American desire to see an early negotiated settlement of the tragic conflict in Afghanistan. He stressed that the central issue remained Soviet troop withdrawal and hoped that progress could be made in this direction.

Prime Minister Gandhi did indeed make a public statement in Harare to the effect that he wished an end to intervention and interference in Afghanistan “by all parties.” On November 21, 1986, in a message, President Reagan called Prime Minister Gandhi's attention to the need to set a realistic timetable for Soviet troop withdrawal. He exposed the opinion that a political settlement is within reach, if only Moscow will agree to such a timetable. The current proposal of a three to four-year time frame is "untenable" and appears designed to "legitimize" a prolonged occupation and to achieve a thinly cloaked military solution. President Reagan added that the U.N. sponsored negotiations are stalemated over the length of the Soviet withdrawal timetable, which made Mr. Gandhi's intervention with Secretary General Gorbachev so much more timely.

I was not sure then, nor now, that the following paragraph in the same November 1986 message reflected the unanimous view of the U.S. foreign affairs establishment, nor of the U.S. Congress. "We (the U.S.) do not seek to "bleed" the Soviets in Afghanistan by prolonging the war. We have no designs on Afghan territory and recognize Soviet interests in a secure southern border, just as we recognize Afghan desires for self-determination... Our objective is clear, namely to restore Afghans' non alignment, independence and territorial Integrity through the prompt and complete withdrawal of Soviet forces." Pakistan, and certainly not its President at the time, Zia-ul-haq, would have agreed with this goal. As pointed out later in this chapter. President Zia-ul-haq wanted a government in Kabul closely linked to Islamabad, and considered a non-aligned government in Afghanistan completely unacceptable.

The difference between Pakistan and India over the kind of Afghanistan that should emerge after the Soviet troop withdrawal became clearer by the day. And basically, the United States had more sympathy for the Pakistani vision than the Indian viewpoint.

Prime Minister Gandhi's reply to President Reagan's 21 November message was delivered in Washington by the Indian Ambassador on January 28, 1987. Perhaps no message points up more clearly the emerging differences between the U.S. and India, as far as Afghanistan's future was concerned. One should also keep in mind the covert activities which were taking place at the same time from Pakistan into Afghanistan which certainly were designed to bring about a different denouement from that envisioned by the Prime Minister of India.

Thus, in Mr. Gandhi's reply delivered to Washington on January 28, 1987, the Prime Minister wrote:

"Our position in Afghanistan is, as you know, that the country should be allowed to chart an independent, non-aligned course, free from intervention and interference. I reiterated this to General Secretary Gorbachev. I also conveyed to him the gist of what you had written to me. The General Secretary left me with the impression that the Soviet Union would like to withdraw its forces in a realistic time-frame from an Afghanistan which would be non-aligned and not unfriendly to the Soviet Union. I hope that a peaceful resolution will not elude us for long. Quite apart from other factors, an early settlement would be in India's interest.

Pakistan has been exploiting the situation in Afghanistan to acquire higher levels and types of arms. Most of these have little or no bearing on any possible conflict on the Afghan border. I am glad that you have agreed to keep our concerns in mind on Pakistan's perceived requirement of enhanced early warning capability on its mountainous western border. There were disconcerting reports on the possible supply of AWACS aircraft to Pakistan. This would trigger a qualitative new phase in the arms race in our area and enhance tensions to dangerous levels.

In our letter which Secretary Weinberger carried during his visit to India, you had rightly pointed out that peace required true nuclear restraints. We remain very seriously concerned at Pakistan's nuclear weapon program. Pakistan's military controlled and clandestinely acquired nuclear weapons capability cannot be seen in a bilateral context with India. The risk of nuclear weapons proliferation in our region is posed by Pakistan and that is where it must be addressed. We (India) attach great importance to our relations with the United States. We would like to strengthen our ties by expanding our existing cooperation and moving into new areas of cooperation in high technology and also in defense. After discussions which Secretary Weinberger had in India, it may be possible for us to move further and establish greater linkages in the areas of defense cooperation and technology transfers."

President Reagan's reply hand-delivered to Prime Minister Gandhi on March 25, 1987 focused on bilateral issues designed to foster the improving relationship between the United States and India. The President stated that the state of the art Cray Super-computer requested by the Indian authorities for their meteorology program had been approved. This sale was characterized by Mr. Reagan as a step that will lay a strong foundation for a new era of collaboration, utilizing some of the more modem technology available for advancing India's development. (President Reagan Senior Advisor on Science & Technology at the time was my name-sake: Robert Dean. Most of the credit of making this high technology item available to India goes to him. He realized already at that time that U.S.-Indian cooperation was a two-way street and the U.S. needed to be responsive to Indian science and high technology aspirations if we had certain political aims which we wanted endorsed by New Delhi.) Other actions responsive to Indian requests included the early launching by a U.S. company of an Indian satellite and the possibility of participation by American companies in the construction of the light combat aircraft which India was developing. (The latter project was dropped after the assassination of the Pakistani President Zia-ul-haq in August 1988.) But the letter also repeated a theme on Afghanistan which implied a difference with the Indian position on the future of Afghanistan. According to President Reagan, in 1987, "Peace will come only when there is a government in Kabul that enjoys the authentic support and confidence of the Afghan people." Mr. Reagan continues: "Our skepticism about Soviet intentions is based on the disparity between their actions and their words. The current Soviet scheme for national reconciliation seems to have as its chief purpose the preservation of the Najibullah regime." In short, what the U.S. wants is regime change, and that means a non-aligned coalition government including the communist leader Najibullah, as favored by the Indians, was not acceptable.

On October 20, 1987, Prime Minister Gandhi was the official guest of President Reagan at the White House. I had the honor to be part of the American delegation. The luncheon and the discussions clearly indicated that the two countries had a mutually beneficial dialogue, even if there were significant differences on some basic issues.

But the bilateral relationship had improved. As President Reagan put it: "It was encouraging to note the substantive progress that has been made on issues concerning

relations between India and the United over the past several years," (President Reagan's letter to Prime Minister Gandhi dated Nov. 2, 1987.)

But differences between official U.S. and Indian policies persisted on Afghanistan and nuclear issues. Covertly, we supported the Islamic fundamentalist Gulbuddin Hekmatyar who received the lion share of the arms and funds provided to the Afghan resistance. He was at the time "America's man". He continued in that position until April 29, 1992 when Commandant Massoud, another Afghan resistance fighter, entered Kabul with 10,000 men. Massoud had been a fierce opponent of the Afghan fundamentalist Hekmatyar, who heretofore had been the favorite of the Pakistani military. (In the late 1990s and in the first years of the 21st century, Hekmatyar became America's No. 1 enemy. But that is another story.)

Prime Minister Gandhi's reply to President Reagan's letter of November 2, 1987, which I forwarded to Washington on December 4, 1987, highlighted the real differences between the Indian and American positions. Mr. Gandhi pointed out that Afghanistan is India's close neighbor and that India has a "vital interest in future developments in that country." He also informed President Reagan that the Indian authorities had consulted several concerned parties, including the Afghan leaders in the "present government" (December 1987). The visit of Soviet Prime Minister Ryzhkov to India gave the Indian authorities an opportunity to discuss the Afghanistan problem with him. According to Mr. Gandhi, Premier Ryzhkov was keen to find a way to enable an early withdrawal of Soviet troops. More Importantly, Mr. Gandhi informed President Reagan that "the Soviet Union had shared the Indian assessment that only a realistically balanced and representative coalition government in Afghanistan would contribute to stability in the region." Rajiv Gandhi appeared "optimistic" about progress on the Afghan problem. But the Indian Prime Minister apparently misinterpreted American real intentions when he wrote in that same November 2, 1987 message that: "there is common ground between the United States and the Soviet Union in that both desire an independent, non-aligned, and stable government in Afghanistan." Was Mr. Gandhi sincere when he wrote in that message that "both (the U.S. and the Soviet Union) wish to avoid a situation which would lead to large-scale bloodshed and civil strife?" Mr. Gandhi also stated that the Indians were in the process of contacting various Afghan groups and individuals (within and outside Afghanistan) with the hope of working for the formation of a "broad-based coalition government in Afghanistan which reflects the realities on the ground." Knowing how the situation evolved in the years following the writing of this letter, the following sentences appear to reflect a misunderstanding, or perhaps a misinterpretation, of the American position at that time. "We have to look for an arrangement in which the liberal, moderate and democratic forces are in an influential position. We also think that it is in our interest, as well as yours (American), to avoid a situation where the Fundamentalist elements gain an upper hand in Afghanistan". Well, who was supporting surreptitiously at that time the most ardent Afghan Fundamentalist like Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, if not the United States! Misunderstanding or a diplomatic way for the Indians to make known their differences over Afghanistan to the United States?

Reading these messages today, years later, exchanged between the top leaders of the two countries, one can only ask whether there were two policies toward Afghanistan: One overt, trying to get Mr. Gorbachev to withdraw his troops from Afghanistan as quickly as possible, and one covert, designed to place a pro-Pakistani and pro-American government in Kabul, which would be, above all, anti-communist. Apparently, U.S. policy makers at the time did not worry about placing Afghan Islamic Fundamentalists in control of Kabul.

The Indian leader's message received a swift reply from President Reagan. It further emphasized that the U.S. and Pakistan on the one side, and the Soviet Union and India on the other, had opposing views on who would govern Afghanistan after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. In the President's message I conveyed to Mr. Gandhi on December 23, 1987 (Set forth in detail in the State Department message 39X049), he expressed appreciation for having received the Indian leader's reports just before his meetings with Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev, particularly the comments about Gandhi's discussion of the Afghanistan problem with Soviet Prime Minister Ryzhkov.

Mr. Reagan informed Mr. Gandhi in this letter that Mr. Gorbachev reiterated the Soviet intention to withdraw, but avoided a specific commitment beyond mentioning with favor Najibullah's recent publicized proposal for the withdrawal of Russian troops in no more than 12 months. According to Gandhi, Gorbachev stressed the linkage between the beginning of withdrawal and the end of outside interference. While the U.S. continued to agree that future political arrangements should be left to the Afghans, Mr. Gorbachev seemed wedded to Najibullah's "unrealistic" coalition approach, rather than accept the need for a fresh start which would have the full support of the Afghan people.

President Reagan's letter handed to Prime Minister Gandhi on December 23 received an immediate reply. The next day, December 24, I received from the Prime Minister’s office two letters: One for President Reagan, and a second one addressed to Vice President Bush. Both were from the Indian Prime Minister. The second letter was in Rajiv Gandhi's own handwriting and reflected the very warm personal relationship which existed between Rajiv and George Bush Sr. This relationship between the two leaders went back several years and continued until the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.

I had been a beneficiary of George Bush's personal and close links with Rajiv Gandhi, as the letter of introduction from Vice President Bush to the Indian leader reflects which I cited earlier in this chapter. It certainly made my work much easier in India and I remain grateful to George Bush Sr. for his assistance and friendship.

While previous letters had been addressed to "Dear Mr. President," for the first time this letter was addressed to "Dear Ronald" in Mr. Gandhi's own handwriting. It also included a very personal and long handwritten ending. After congratulating President Reagan on the agreement signed with Mr. Gorbachev on the elimination of short and medium-range nuclear weapons, the Indian Prime Minister reported on his meeting in New Delhi with Najibullah, the communist Afghan Prime Minister who had made a transit halt on his way to Vietnam. According to Mr. Gandhi, Najibullah explained that the commitment made

by the Soviet Union on the withdrawal of their troops had created conditions for a peaceful settlement of the problem. In his view, processes should now be set in motion for ensuring that the forthcoming talks in Geneva result in a settlement that can ensure a non-aligned and independent Afghanistan. Mr. Gandhi gave Najibullah the Indian assessment of the overall situation in Afghanistan and the region, indicating that a broad-based government embracing all sections of opinion was needed for stability and orderly political evolution. Mr. Gandhi opined that Najibullah and his government were showing greater flexibility in approaching the political issues involved. Rajiv also informed that the Indians had contacted King Zahir Shah in Rome and proposed continued discussions with him.

This last information was not well-received by Washington and this was also made known to the Indians. From other diplomatic messages it was also apparent to me that Pakistan differed with the Indian role on the Afghan problem. I also have some doubt that all political players in Washington were happy with what may appear to some as India's close relationship with the Soviet Union and what may be interpreted by some as Indian endorsement of the Gorbachev position on Afghanistan-

One of the major irritants in the U.S.-Indian discussions on Afghanistan was the U.S. agreement to provide sophisticated weapons to Pakistan which clearly were not linked to Pakistan's concerns over Afghanistan. The Indians chose to interpret these weapon purchases by Pakistan as the U.S. making available to Pakistan arms which could only be used by Pakistan against India. Thus, in the late 1987, we received at the Embassy in New Delhi an aide memoire on this subject. It was a rather aggressive document which might suggest that it did not originate with the Prime Minister's office but was drafted by those sections of the Indian bureaucracy which opposed Rajiv Gandhi's rather pro-American policies. Here is the text of the Aide-Memoire:

AIDE MEMOIRE

Government of India have had several occasions to convey its concerns on certain aspects of the current U.S.-Pakistan Security Assistance Programme. A point often reiterated before has concerned the introduction of increasing levels of sophistication of the technology/weapons system being provided to Pakistan.

In the above context, Government of India is deeply concerned to learn about the recent decision of the U.S. Government to supply Copperhead Short-range 155 mm laser-guided anti-armor projectiles to Pakistan.

The induction of Copperhead missiles would act as a force-multiplier introducing a new type of technology into the region.

The Government of India would like to point out that this weapon system is not as suitable for deployment on the Pakistan/Afghan Border as it would be in the plains and that if supplied to Pakistan, it is most likely to be directed against India.

Government of India view this development as detrimental to the regional security balance which would only compel India into taking suitable counter measures.

Government of India would like to impress upon the Government of USA the need for an urgent review of the decision."

Obviously, while I was receiving these blunt messages from the Indians, my colleagues and friends at the American Embassy in Islamabad were receiving appeals from the Pakistani authorities for the approval of even more sophisticated U.S. arms.

But the blowing of hot and cold from the Indians was also duplicated by the U.S. authorities. Sometimes I wondered whether two different government departments in Washington were drafting messages to me without any coordination by the National Security Adviser or the White House. Thus, in February 1988, I received instructions to inform the Prime Minister that the U.S. felt that the Soviets seemed serious about withdrawing, but important questions regarding the withdrawal needed to be resolved." The United States repeated that it had no plan regarding the shape that the Afghan Government should take after the complete withdrawal of the Soviet military from Afghanistan. Nonetheless, the U.S. Government stated that it was convinced that the Najibullah regime could not hold power without the Soviet Army. The American message went on to make a statement which time proved to be completely erroneous. It said that the U.S. understands the Indian concern that no Khomeini-like fundamentalist regime takes over in Kabul. "Afghan historical and cultural experience, along with the fact of a small Shia minority, argue strongly against such a development. The moderate political orientation of the Afghan resistance, as well as its strong ties to conservative Islamic governments and movements should be reassuring.

The sooner the Soviets withdraw and a new regime with genuine popular support (including that of the resistance) assumes power in Kabul, the less will be the Influence of extremist elements."

Were such statements out of Washington pure hypocrisy or just a wrong analysis of the problem? The orientation of the Afghan Government after the withdrawal of the Soviet military forces was about to become a major bone of contention between the U.S./Pakistan on one hand, and Russia and India on the other. This major cleavage was to have an important impact on U.S. relations with the Asian sub-continent, but also more important with the U.S.-Moslem relations as the fundamentalists became more powerful in Afghanistan and in other countries of the Moslem world.

The American Embassy in New Delhi exchanged significant messages with its counterpart in Islamabad. Both embassies analyzed the problem the same way. Both American embassies saw the orientation of the future Kabul Government of importance to both Pakistan and India, but also to the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Since this difference was never overcome by any one of the parties concerned, it contributed, over time, to the clash between the United States and the Moslem world.

On April 27, 1988, Embassy New Delhi alerted the State Department to India's determination to begin reinserting its traditional role in Afghanistan. This meant that: "in

the long run India will not permit exclusive Pakistani influence in Kabul." The Embassy reported that: "the Government of India was deeply concerned over the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism of the Gulbuddin variety and what impact this may have on India's Muslims, on the Pakistani regime and the rest of the region." Therefore, India seeks a more balanced government in Kabul. A similar assessment appeared in the respected TIMES OF INDIA in its April 26, 1988 issue signed by S. Nihal Singh: "India is doing its bit to ensure that the future government of Afghanistan is secular, rather than fundamentalist, in its orientation. Apparently, New Delhi believes that Washington, for its own reasons, is inclined to share Pakistan's desire to see a fundamentalist dispensation in Afghanistan."

Unfortunately, the conclusion of Mr. Singh's article that the U.S. supported the Islamic fundamentalists to take power in Kabul was based on fact. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was "our man" and our covert support for the Afghan resistance based in-Peshawar benefited in the first place the fundamentalists. For those who are interested in the Afghan problem and its impact on Indian-Pakistan relations, and by extension on U.S.-Soviet relations, I urge them to read a message I sent to Washington on June 3, 1988 after an hour-long meeting with Prime Minister Gandhi. It explains in part India's problem with the American policies of Foster Dulles and President Bush, Sr. Both men had little taste for the policies of non-alignment or neutrality exercised by other countries of the world.

My good friend and colleague, Arnie Raphael, the American Ambassador to Pakistan in 1988, agreed with us, in New Delhi, that the question of the future of Afghanistan was of great strategic importance for both India and Pakistan. In his message, two months before his death in President Zia's plane, he wrote that we in the States, too often tend to think of Afghanistan mainly in terms of the Soviet withdrawal. Both Islamabad and New Delhi see the possibility of a major strategic reshuffling with a strong Islamic bloc stretching from Turkey to Pakistan, with Afghanistan a full and supportive member, confronting a Hindu India with a large Muslim minority.

In Ambassador Raphael's analysis, President Zia and other Pakistanis see the chance for a friendly Afghanistan, for the first time in 40 years. Pakistan can have, as President Zia says, "strategic depth so India will know it can never threaten us again while we have to be worried about our back". Ambassador Raphael concludes: "For most Americans, the Soviet withdrawal is the victory. For our South-Asian friends, it is only the first act in a much larger drama.

On July 19, 1988, President Reagan wrote to President Zia of Pakistan. The message ends with a ringing endorsement of Zia's regime and praises Zia for the progress Pakistan made under his leadership "in developing durable broad-based democratic institutions." I am referring to this Presidential letter because it was written only one month before Zia was killed in a plane crash and it reflected the excellent relationship between the White House and the President of Pakistan. I therefore find it difficult to believe that the American Executive Branch was somehow involved in the assassination of Zia four weeks later, as some foreign personalities claimed. But don't let me get ahead of myself.

Just 4 days before his assassination. President Zia gave a lengthy interview to the National Press Trust published on August 13, 1988 in which he touched on the major issues confronting Pakistan. He denied, among other points, that Pakistan had violated the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan by supporting Afghan resistance raids into Afghanistan, from Pakistani soil. Zia claimed that the Soviets had acquiesced at Geneva in the continued resistance of the Mujahideen and therefore their forays into Afghanistan were not against the Geneva agreements. At the same time, President Zia accused India of trying to jump on the Afghanistan bandwagon to secure a leader in Afghanistan who would cooperate with India and the Soviet Union. Zia complained about Indian slogans against a fundamentalist regime in Kabul.

This brings us to the fateful day of August 17, 1988, the day Zia's plane crashed at the Pakistani air base outside of Bahawalpur. Before we get into this explosive subject, I would like to describe my personal relationship with our Embassy in Islamabad. While I personally never visited Pakistan during my tenure in New Delhi, the two embassies exchanged many messages of mutual interest and other members of my Embassy visited their counterparts in Islamabad. Finding ways of working together between the two American embassies, in the interest of helping Washington to chart a course in the long-term interest of our country, was a tradition. After all, Pakistan had been an ally of the United States, going back to 1950, when Pakistan was part of CENTO. As for India, U.S.-Indian links were forged by men like Pandit Nehru who worked with confidence with all American Presidents in the early post-World War II era. This did not mean that India and Pakistan saw the problem the same way. As the Director of Intelligence at the State Department wrote in January 1987: "Both India and Pakistan tend to believe the worst of each other. We (the U.S.) seek to be perceived by both India and Pakistan as pursuing an "even-handed" policy. Obviously, extraordinary events and concerns may intrude on the fundamental goal."

In late June or the first part of July 1988, Ambassador Raphael, accompanied by his charming wife and mother-in-law, were our guests in New Delhi. Their visit was primarily devoted to sightseeing. Since they stayed at our residence, we had ample opportunity to discuss subjects of mutual interest such as the relationship between India and Pakistan, the shape of the future Afghan Government, and the supplying by the U.S. of sophisticated arms to Pakistan. Arnie Raphael enjoyed a close, personal relationship with President Zia. I enjoyed an excellent relationship with Prime Minister Gandhi. Perhaps some scholars will disagree with me, but I thought Zia and Gandhi had a better personal relationship than the press and politicians in these two countries acknowledged. Raphael and I agreed that U.S. policy toward South Asia was driven first and foremost by our relationship with the Soviet Union. The Cold War was still very much part of our world in the mid-nineteen eighties and Afghanistan was seen through the eyes of the containment policy. Raphael and I tried to do our best to make us look even-handed in our policies toward Pakistan and India, although this was not easy. The increasingly important role of Islamic fundamentalism in the policies of Zia in Pakistan, and the determination of India to stick with non-alignment did not make our task any easier. It

must be recalled that America's desire to sell American arms and advanced weapons to Pakistan came up against India's reliance on Russian arms and technology, an orientation staunchly opposed by the United States. Both Raphael and I were professional diplomats who knew that perhaps the only objective we could achieve through diplomacy was to avoid a major tragedy in South Asia and overt U.S.-Soviet confrontations.

The question of selling American arms to Pakistan became an ever more divisive issue between India and Pakistan. Congressman Wilson who visited South Asia in those days quite often was active in promoting the sale of M-1 tanks to Pakistan. But President Zia preferred spending his money on AWACS rather than tanks. On the other hand, India claimed publicly and privately that both weapons - AWACS and tanks - were primarily purchased for use by Pakistan against India rather than for opposing the Soviet threat from Afghanistan.

When Ambassador Raphael reported on June 6, 1988 from Islamabad that President Zia had decided against the purchase of the M-1 tank, it came as quite a surprise to us in New Delhi. The news was not well received In Washington. It was at a small dinner for Congressman Wilson, on June 5, 1988, at Zia's residence, that the Pakistani President told the Congressman that he had decided that the price of the tank had moved beyond Pakistanis means. So the Government of Pakistan would not purchase the M-1. The Government of Pakistan would focus its efforts on the decision to move ahead with the AWACS sale.

But the advocates for the sale of the American M-1 tank to Pakistan had their supporters, both in Washington and in Islamabad. They organized a demonstration of the tank's capabilities in Pakistan in August 1988. It was attendance at that demonstration of the fire-power of the M-1 tank on August 17, 1988 that cost President Zia and most of his Senior Generals their lives.

Zia had reluctantly agreed to fly to Bahawalpur that fateful morning of August 17 to see a lone tank fire off its cannon in the desert because Major General Mahmud Durrani, the Commander of the Pakistani Armored Corps, and his former Military Secretary, was extraordinarily insistent on his attendance. General Durrani argued that the entire army command would be there that day, and implied that if Zia were absent. It might be taken as a slight. As it turned out, the demonstration was a fiasco. The much vaunted M-l tank missed its target.

Before going into detail on the assassination of Zia, I must get slightly ahead of myself to bring out the importance some quarters attached to the acquisition by Pakistan of the M-l tank - and of American weapons in general. One of the few Pakistani generals who survived the August 17 plane crash was Lieutenant General Mirza Aslam Beg, the army's Vice-Chief of Staff. After the crash, General Beg took over on all military questions.

My friend and colleague, Ambassador Robert Oakley, had been dispatched to Islamabad to replace Arnie Raphael shortly after August 17, and on August 31, 1988, two weeks

after Zia's demise, reported on his August 29 meeting with the newly made Chief Army Staff, General Beg. The entire message is a good example of the close relationship existing at the time between the United States and Pakistan. If one reads the quotations set forth below with the eyes of observers of the Asian sub-continent in 2003, one realizes how key players have changed their position as the political and international situation evolved. Thus, General Beg affirmed two weeks after Zia's death that "Pakistan and Afghanistan are now one," two nations but one people. Ambassador Oakley reported that: "General Beg denied the importance of the upsurge in Islamic fundamentalism and said that there would be no fundamentalist government in Afghanistan."

Did General Beg's views coincide with those of the American Administration in Washington in the summer of 1988? Perhaps the late Foster Dulles might have agreed with General Beg when the latter told Ambassador Oakley; "Iran was another emerging reality. Closer relations between Iran and Pakistan would help dilute Iranian fundamentalism. Beg looked forward to a "strategic consensus" of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey, which he called a 'grand design'. No formal pact would be necessary, but such a consensus would create a new regional power equation and provide the United States with new options for dealing with India, the Soviet Union, and the Mid-East." Ambassador Oakley, very wisely, questioned some of the statements made by General Beg.

At the same meeting, Ambassador Oakley's military advisors urged General Beg to make up his mind on the M-1 tank purchase. The U.S. wanted to show its support for Pakistan by action and not mere words, and providing weapons for Pakistan was a concrete way of showing this support. My reading of the message under reference implies that Beg agreed to proceed with the tank purchase. Ambassador Oakley's Military Aide, General Pfister, pointed out that there were a number of other systems, e.g. Cobra helicopters, tow missiles and launchers, that would demonstrate U.S. support for Pakistan and "would probably not encounter Congressional opposition."

But who was part of that Congressional opposition that might oppose the shipment of American arms to Pakistan? Some Pakistanis blamed "pro-Indian lobbies" in the United States. In my opinion, there were Senators and Congressmen in Washington who were concerned over strengthening Pakistan's military potential, including Pakistan's quest for obtaining a nuclear capability. Specifically, all those politicians and legislators who were behind the Pressler Amendment of cutting off aid to Pakistan, if it could be demonstrated that Pakistan was trying to obtain a nuclear bomb, were against the arms offers put forward by the Pentagon representatives. This included some of the active supporters of Israel in Congress, and in Washington in general. I doubt that our legislators were very worried about India's reaction to the sale of American arms to Pakistan, since they knew that India relied exclusively on Russian weapons. Furthermore, India already had exploded its first nuclear bomb in 1974 and used its own know-how and industrial capacity for its nuclear capability. But Pakistan's quest for a nuclear deterrent was seen by some as an effort to build an "Islamic bomb" and hence, not only opposed in the U.S. but also by Israel.

Some of the weaponry we supplied to Pakistan, or via Pakistan to the Afghan resistance, came home to haunt us later. Thus, the very effective Stinger missiles which we provided to the Afghan resistance to shoot down Soviet aircraft in Afghanistan became a political danger to American civilian aircraft in the hands of terrorists after the Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan. Even during my days in South Asia, the American embassies in Islamabad and New Delhi kept close watch on how many Stingers were in the hands of the Afghan resistance, what shape were they in, and what groups actually held them. As long as the Stingers were used against the Soviet military, nobody appeared to have any qualms. But what if the Afghans sold them to others for cold cash once the Soviets had left Afghanistan? This explains an interesting article by two journalists in the LOS ANGELES TIMES Service published in the July 24-25, 1993 edition of the International Herald Tribune. ("Fearing Attacks, U.S. Acts to Rebuy Afghan Missiles" by Robin Wright and John M. Broder in the International Herald Tribune - Page 5 - July 24-25, 1993.). According to this article, the Central Intelligence Agency had requested 55 million dollars to buy back hundreds of Stinger anti-aircraft missiles that the United States had given to Afghan rebels in the 1980s. The sum, which is more than five times a previous allocation for a covert Stinger repurchase program, was sought by the Clinton Administration because of the fierce competition for the missiles on the international black market. U.S. agents have been finding themselves outbid for the shoulder-launched rockets that now fetch as much as 100,000 dollars a piece in the black market. The article goes on to link anti-American terrorist activities to the Afghan resistance movement and concludes that "even if the United States can recover many of the missiles, new versions from other countries are likely to flood into the market." Perhaps the preceding pages will help the reader to understand my reaction to the assassination of General Zia, why I took the unusual step of flying back to Washington to brief top U.S. authorities on my findings, and why I differed with nearly all parties in apportioning blame for the killing. Who did it? What could have been their motives?

The day before August 17, I had received the visit of Ambassador Patricia Burns, an active American Ambassador, who had flown from Islamabad to New Delhi. Pat and I had known each other ever since 1953 when we served together with the American Mission to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. She informed me that an American General had just arrived in Islamabad to brief the Pakistani military on the American military assistance program to Pakistan.

At 4:00 p.m. on August 17, 1988, I received the first of several phone calls from Prime Minister Gandhi's Personal Secretary, Ronen Sen, informing me that apparently the C-130 Hercules transport plane in which President Zia was traveling had crashed on take-off from the military air base, outside of Bahawalpur. Every 15-20 minutes I received update reports from Ronen Sen on the situation in Pakistan. When I alerted my C.I.A. staff and the Intelligence Agencies represented on my staff to the news received from the Indian Prime Minister’s Office on events in Bahawalpur, they were completely uninformed. It was the first news of the tragedy for all of them. As for Ambassador Patricia Burns, she wondered who was the American General in Zia's plane who was killed, since on that day

two American generals were in Pakistan. Was it the resident Head of the Military Assistance Section of the American Embassy in Islamabad, or the visiting General from Washington? After the second or third phone call from Ronen Sen, it was clear that American Ambassador Arnold L. Raphael and General Herbert M. Wassom, the Head of the U.S. military aid Mission to Pakistan also were on the Zia's plane which had crashed. But why were they on Zia's plane? Both officials from the American Embassy had flown up to Bahawalpur on the embassy plane to witness the M-1 tank demonstration. Why had they not returned on their own aircraft to Islamabad? Didn't they travel with body guards? If so, what happened to them?

From 4:00 p.m. until about 10:00 p.m. that same evening of August 17, I received reports from Ronen Sen on what happened at Bahawalpur. After the completion of the demonstration of the American Abrams Tank, President Zia invited both Ambassador Raphael and General Wassom to fly back with him in his specially-equipped C-130 Hercules transport plane. Zia and his two top generals sat in the front, the V.I.P. section of an air-conditioned passenger "capsule" that had been rolled into the body of the C-130. The remaining two seats in the section were given to Zia's American guests: Ambassador Raphael and General Wassom. Behind the VIPs, eight Pakistani generals packed the two benches in the rear section of the capsule. In the cockpit, which was separated from the capsule by a door and three steps, was the four-man flight crew. After Zia's plane - Pak 1 - was airborne, a controller in the tower of Bahawalpur asked the Commander of the plane - Mashhood Hassan - his position. Mashhood radioed back: "Pak one, stand by" but then, there was no further response. Those on the ground became alarmed, and efforts to contact Mashhood quickly grew desperate. Pak One was missing only minutes after it had taken off. Meanwhile, at the river, about nine miles away from the airport, villagers looking up saw a plane lurching in the sky, as if it were on an invisible roller coaster. After its third loop, it plunged directly toward the desert, burying itself in the soil. It exploded and, as its fuel burned, became a ball of fire. All thirty-one people on board Pak One were dead. (The above descriptions are based, and reprinted, from the article by Edward Jay Epstein in his article "How General Zia went down" in the June 1989 issue of VANITY FAIR.). This version was also transmitted to me by phone by Ronen Sen. (Ronen Sen went on to a brilliant career in India's Diplomatic Service and served as Ambassador to Russia, Germany, and the United Kingdom.) In the course of that evening of August 17, 1988, Ronen Sen also mentioned that one of the satellites in space had observed, and perhaps even filmed, the way Zia's plane took off, lurched like on a roller coaster, and then crashed as described above.

I do not think anything is gained by citing every article or classified cable on why certain investigations did not take place, why the FBI did not get involved right away, the differences between the American and Pakistani investigative reports, and the accusations of Zia's son that his father was "assassinated" and that the crash was not an accident nor a mechanical failure of the plane, as originally reported in the media. For those who are addicted to mystery movies or novels and who like to read John Le Carré's thrillers, I suggest you turn to the appendix of this book and read the lengthy investigating report of Mr. Epstein referred to above. Mr. Epstein tried to explain what caused the mysterious

crash of Zia's plane, who could have done it, and why there was a cover up. Based on my conversations with the Indian Prime Minister's personal Secretary, Ronen Sen, I give a lot of credence to Mr. Epstein's article. One of the most credible explanations for the way Zia's plane went down was suggested by Mr. Epstein in his highly documented article: a gas bomb planted in the air vent in the C-130, triggered to go off when pressurized air was fed into the cockpit. This type of gas, manufactured in the U.S.S.R., would have done the trick. But so would a host of other nerve gases. According to a technical expert at the U.S. Army chemical-warfare center in Aberdeen, Maryland, the American-manufactured VX nerve gas is odorless, easily transportable in liquid form and a tiny quantity would be enough, when dispersed by a small explosion and inhaled, to cause paralysis and loss of speech within 30 seconds. According to the scientific expert, the residue it would leave behind would be phosphorous. And, as it turned out, the chemical analysis of debris from the cockpit of Zia's plane showed heavy traces of phosphorous. (All the above is taken from the VANITY FAIR article in the June 1989 issue.).

The article by Mr. Epstein was published 9 months after the crash of Zia's plane. When I telephoned Mr. Epstein after my retirement from the Foreign Service in order to obtain more details on his investigation, he urged me not to pursue it further. He said that since his article appeared in VANITY FAIR, his career had been completely ruined. He was black-listed by his publishers in the United States and neither his books nor articles found any more takers. He advised me not to pursue the matter further. He reiterated, however, that the assassination of the President of Pakistan had given rise to a cover-up, and "one casualty in the crash of Pak One was the truth." Most articles that appeared in the American, Indian, and Pakistani press agreed - sooner or later - that there was a cover-up but as Epstein wrote: "It was not unlike Agatha Christie's thriller 'Murder on the Orient Express' in which everyone aboard the train had a motive for murder." The diplomatic cable traffic of the time did not explain who was behind the assassination.

Until my departure from New Delhi in November, Afghanistan continued to keep my attention. The Soviet Ambassador to Kabul at the time was Mr. Yegorychev with whom I had served together in Denmark in the 1970s. In Kabul, he protested to our Chargé in Kabul - Mr. Glassman - that the reports of Soviet/Afghan air incursions in Pakistan were a "Hollywood production." By that he meant to imply that the reports and evidence were manufactured to support vocal accusations by the Pakistani or Americans to that effect.

In a couple of personal messages Mr. Nikolaï Yegorychev sent to me via the American ChargÉ, he repeated the accusations that the Pakistanis were not living up to the agreement of not harassing Soviet forces withdrawing from Afghanistan, while the Soviets adhered to the agreements. "Manufactured evidence" by the CIA or ISI for the purpose of proving spurious accusations of Soviet bad faith were very much a theme of his brief notes. Soviet Ambassador Yegorychev made the same claims in his meetings with Chargé Glassman.

Accusations and counter-accusations on who was doing what to whom were much in the air in those days. Who killed Zia? The Indians? The dissatisfied Pakistani military? The

Afghan Secret Service? The Russians? The American CIA? When I saw Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on that subject, he first opined that an explosive device had been placed in a fruit basket which was put on board of Zia's plane. This device could have triggered another reaction within the plane, which accounted for the silence of the crew in answering the calls from the control tower and the "rudderless plane falling to the ground."

I also discussed the crash of Zia's plane, and who could have been behind the accident, with General K. Sundarji, who was Chief of Staff of the Indian Army during my tour in India. Sundarji was a very likeable man. He was also a graduate of the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, which gave him a very good understanding of the United States. In his long and distinguished career, he also commanded Indian troops in a U.N. operation in what used to be the Belgian Congo. He served in all the wars and skirmishes between India and Pakistan. Sundarji was known as the "scholar warrior" among his friends. He died in February 1999.

When I first discussed the August 17, 1988 assassination of Zia with him, he linked the event to the situation in Afghanistan. He did not think that the Soviets were behind it. Nor did the Afghan Intelligence Service have the means to orchestrate such an event. In 1986 and 1987, Sundarji had a run-in with Israeli Intelligence when he ordered Indian troops to Sri Lanka to oppose the cession movement of the Tamils in northern Sri Lanka. Indian troops were sent to Sri Lanka in reply to a call for assistance by the President of Sri Lanka. Rajiv Gandhi had been responsive to the Sri Lankan request. In Sri Lanka, Sundarji told me the Indian Intelligence Service came across dozens of MOSSAD officers working with the Sri Lankan forces. Sundarji had a healthy respect for MOSSAD. He felt that the primary function of MOSSAD was to oppose Pakistan, and for that matter any Islamic nation increasing its military potential. Israel was "aligned" with the United States. India was "non-aligned."

I met with General Sundarji and his wife Vani in Paris, after our respective retirement. On June 25, 1993 Sundarji and Vani were our guests at our apartment in Paris. Naturally, the conversation turned to the assassination of President Zia five years earlier. In the meantime, there had been many investigations by intelligence and investigating services from many countries, all trying to prove who was behind the assassination and why there was a cover-up. In front of my wife, Sundarji said to me (on June 25, 1993), in a solemn voice: "You (the Americans) did it." I am not sure that he meant that we had actually been directly involved in carrying out the deed but that the U.S. had somehow been involved behind the scenes in getting Zia's plane sabotaged. Sundarji pointed out that neither the American Ambassador nor the American General were supposed to be on Zia's plane, and their presence was only due to the last-minute invitation by Zia to the two Americans to join him on his plane. Both Americans had flown up to the demonstration at Bahawalpur on the American Embassy plane.

Only about one year ago, I tried to reestablish contact with Mrs. Vani Sundarji. I located her after considerable difficulty in India, but she was unable to shed any additional light

on the fate of Zia's plane crash. Perhaps I am reading something into it, but she said that she had visited Israel a couple of times since her husband's death.

Let me return to late August 1988 when I was trying to make some sense from all the data I was receiving from the Indians, from our Mission in Kabul, from my own staff at the Embassy, from Washington, and from my ambassadorial colleagues in New Delhi. I first went to see my colleague, the British Ambassador, Ambassador Allgood. Prior to his posting in India, he had served in the British cabinet responsible for MI6. We enjoyed a close and personal relationship but when I asked him to help me untangle the different information on Zia's assassination, he became very silent and offered no help whatsoever. My Canadian colleague was also not helpful. Our New Zealand colleague, the conqueror of Mount Everest, Edmund Hillary, was not sufficiently clued in to be of assistance. Ambassador Hillary was a wonderful colleague and a great human being, but on the issue at stake, he had not been sufficiently informed to be helpful. My French colleague, Ambassador Andre Levin listened to all I had to say but only said he would pass on my concern that there was a serious cover-up in order to avoid finding proof of who was behind Zia's assassination. Yes, I already used the word "assassination" and did not confine myself to neutral words such as "crash." I should add that Andre Levin and his erudite and able wife, Catherine Clement, remained our friends until today.

Brooding over the information at hand, and on the basis of what key personalities had told me in New Delhi, I cabled Washington on September 10 asking authorization to return to Washington on consultation. I also had requested appointments with American political leaders, both in the White House and in the State Department, in order to apprise them of my evaluation which indicated that our good relationship with India risked being reversed by what appeared to be a U.S. tilt toward Pakistan and U.S. determination to support the Afghan fundamentalist resistance movement in an effort to install them in Kabul. Authorization was granted and I returned to Washington for what I thought would be a week of consultations. It turned out that I would be absent from New Delhi for more than 6 weeks.

When I left New Delhi, my ticket was reserved under the name of John Gunther and I was assisted to clear police and customs formalities under that name, both in New Delhi and in Washington. DC. Why all these precautions of hiding my identity? Frankly, I had concluded that Zia's assassination was a "contract" let by one of the more important intelligence agencies of the world, and having been twice the target of assassination attempts in my professional career, I did not know who might disapprove of the role I played in New Delhi.

It is important to situate the political atmosphere in which these events took place. Need I recall that the Summer and Autumn of 1988 were the last weeks before the November Presidential elections in the U.S. President Reagan was completing his second term and Vice President Bush was running for the Presidency. His Democratic challenger was Mike Dukakis, former Governor of Massachusetts. Furthermore, I had been alerted that the Reagan Administration was planning to appoint Mr. Hubbard from California as

Ambassador to India, as my replacement. Apparently, the Reagan Administration could not wait and had suggested a recess appointment for Mr. Hubbard, thereby circumventing Senate approval just weeks before the November elections. In numerous messages from New Delhi I had clearly indicated that it would be preferable to await the election in November, so that the new American Ambassador would come to India with the endorsement of the U.S. Senate. Especially after the assassination of Zia, I thought nothing precipitous should be done which might appear as disapproval of our policy toward Pakistan or India. Certainly, I fully agreed in my messages that a new American Ambassador should be sent after the elections in order to deal with the changing situation in South Asia and in Afghanistan.

My reservations on our Afghan policy and our biased policy in the Near East were well known in Washington. I was fully aware that some groups in Washington did not appreciate my sympathy for India's policy of non-alignment for Afghanistan, nor what I perceived was Washington's true policy in South Asia: full support for the most fundamentalist of all Islamic movements to take over political control in Kabul. At the same time I noted that some of the Congressional visitors I had received in New Delhi, as Congressman Solarz and Congressman Lantos, were using the Pressler Amendment and American legislation to counter covert U.S. policies to help Pakistan obtain sophisticated weapons from the United States. These men used their visits to New Delhi to stimulate or endorse Indian opposition to U.S. arms programs for Pakistan. But what was the real motivation of their visits? Was it concern for U.S. long-term interests in South Asia, or preventing Pakistan to acquire military sophisticated weapons, and especially a nuclear capability which would also challenge in the long-run Israel's military superiority in the Moslem world? The "Islamic Bomb" appeared to me at times of greater concern to certain groups in the U.S. than to Mr. Gandhi and the Indians.

It was a combination of these facts which made me ask for authorization to return to Washington for consultation. I had made it clear in numerous messages to the top leadership in the Department of State that I thought our policy toward Afghanistan could lead us into trouble in the long-run, not only toward South Asia, but toward the region, and even toward other major countries in the world. Perhaps I was ahead of my times. Not even a year after my retirement from the Foreign Service, the NEW YORK TIMES wrote a lead editorial in which it severely criticized U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. (Footnote: "WRONG ON AFGHANISTAN" from the NEW YORK TIMES, reprinted as the lead editorial in the International Herald Tribune of February 6, 1990 - Page 4.). I am taking the liberty of reprinting in its entirety this editorial because it does confirm that my warnings to the Reagan Administration in the Autumn of 1988 were later confirmed by other independent sources.

WRONG ON AFGHANISTAN

America's policy triumph in Afghanistan a year ago has turned sour. Washington expected a swift rebel victory when the Soviet Union ended a decade of occupation last February 15. It did not happen. Now the onus for fueling a murderous war falls on the

United States and Pakistan, the main supporters of a quarrelsome rebel coalition. And with the Russians gone, Major General Najib, the leader of the Soviet-installed Kabul regime, presents himself as champion of national sovereignty in a country long hostile to foreign meddling.

This is the essence of a report by John Burns in Sunday's New York Times Magazine. His account should be required reading in the Bush administration, which is finally reviewing its Afghan policy.

With little dissent, Washington has rebuffed Soviet proposals for a mutual arms cutoff and a political settlement, and continues to supply $700 million annually to the Afghan resistance. Standing tough made sense when Russian troops occupied Afghanistan and when Pakistan felt genuinely threatened by an aggressive Soviet Union. These circumstances have changed; the policy hasn't. The results have distorted American purposes and principles.

Civilians by the thousands have been killed by rebels firing U.S.-supplied rockets into city centers. Now it is American reporters, not Russian troops, who are asking in anguish: "Why do you do this to us?" Peter Tomsen, a special envoy sent by President George Bush, told Mr. Burns that the carnage reminded him of atrocities in Vietnam.

Amid the disorders of war, Afghanistan has again become a major source of heroin, with guerilla leaders doubling as drug kingpins. At one point, the U.S. envoy to Pakistan authorized discussions with a rebel commander about poppies. The commander said he would suppress his own traffic for a fee: $2 million a week. The offer was refused.

A year after the Soviet pullout, the 15 rebel groups seem able to unite only against compromise. They have failed to seize a single city and have made Peshawar a by-word for corruption. Their most fiery leaders - notably Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the protégé of Pakistan's military - would turn Afghanistan into a Khomeini-style fundamentalist state. Yet, lower echelon American officials risk their careers if they send negative reports home.

None of this makes Kabul's Soviet-installed regime more attractive, or removes the stains from General Najib's hands. Instead, Moscow is already hinting that his departure is negotiable, if Washington shows some willingness to support a broad-based interim regime. In any case, the Bush administration is right to rethink its Afghan policy. That is the first vital step to peace. What conceivable U.S. interests are served by pouring more arms into this dubious battle?

THE NEW YORK TIMES

When I arrived in Washington in September 1988 "on consultation," I was quickly abused of my impression that I had firm appointments with Secretary Shultz or Vice President Bush. Instead, I saw the Head of the Intelligence and Research Division at State,

Ambassador Mort Abramowitz, and the Director General of the Foreign Service, George Vest. Both were good friends. Nonetheless, I was disappointed that nobody at the top level was interested to hear what my assessment was of the evolving situation in South Asia. Instead, I was asked to see the medical unit of the State Department where my sanity was questioned. Why was I sent to the Medical Unit?

In trying to explain "within government channels" what happened to Zia's plane, I shared with my friends some thoughts which went contrary to the public posture of the U.S. government. Could it be that the real opponents of Islamic fundamentalism's efforts to gain political control of Afghanistan were the unconditional supporters of Israel? Certainly the Israeli lobby was the most active element in Washington in opposing Pakistan's efforts to obtain a nuclear capability - the "Islamic Bomb." (Footnote: See article by Michael R. Gordon in the NEW YORK TIMES, reprinted in the September 25, 1990 issue of the N.Y. TIMES International - page A-8. It reports on Representative Stephen J. Solarz's letter of Sept. 19, 1990 to President Bush urging the cut-off of U.S. aid to Pakistan because Pakistan was trying to obtain a nuclear capability, contrary to the Pressler Amendment. The article cites Mr. Solarz: "For over a decade, there has been a growing temptation to look the other way" when it comes to Pakistani nuclear ambitions. Mr. Solarz was Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs and an influential lawmaker on the issue of aid to Pakistan. The article reports that Mr. Solarz's letter drew criticism from a Senior Administration official who said that "this is not a particularly good time to bash the Pakistanis" noting that "Pakistan is contributing troops to the multinational force in the Persian Gulf region." JGD's comment: There is no doubt that on Pakistan/Afghanistan/India there were differences between Republicans and Democrats. Steven Solarz appeared to have run afoul of the Republican political machine. In the early 1990s his Brooklyn district was "redistricted;" this meant that his predominantly Jewish constituency was replaced by Hispanic-American electors. In his effort to maintain his seat within the new borders of his district, he failed. This put an end to the legislative career of one of the hardest working, intelligent lawmakers.) Was the determined effort to oppose nuclear proliferation by some politicians also a way of protecting Israel against Moslem states building "an Islamic Bomb?" In short, I suggested that pro-Israeli circles might have been in collusion with anti-Zia elements in Pakistan and disgruntled Indian Agents in bringing about the August 17, 1988 crash of Zia's plane. I was convinced that neither the Pentagon nor the State Department was involved in this tragedy.

I also doubted that the CIA was directly involved. But the behavior of the American establishment in covering up the crash and procrastinating on sending investigating teams to Pakistan appeared strange and worrisome to those who wanted America to stand for truth-and-fairness.

The reaction to my concerns about our Afghan policy, the possible linkage of events in South Asia on the imbroglio in the Near East, and the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union on the future of Afghanistan, was quite different from what I had expected from Washington. Perhaps I had forgotten to take into account that this was

a crucial period before the November Presidential Election in the U.S., and that the last thing either political party wanted was a major international scandal which could be exploited by the contenders in T.V. debates. Hence, the decision of the American top authorities was to "get J.G.D. out of the way." By questioning my sanity, backed up by reports from psychiatrists and different medical doctors, (appointments made by the State Department Medical Unit), the Department of State was able to take away my medical clearance. Now it was a question of how to get J.G.D. out of the way until the November Presidential Election was over. By not sending me back to New Delhi, I could not write embarrassing messages. By keeping me out of Washington, I could not speak with inquisitive journalists trying to find issues to make the election debates more meaningful. In short, I was an embarrassment to the administration. At first, I thought I would be sent to an asylum. Fortunately, that idea was discarded and I was sent to Switzerland, to our house in the mountains, for "recuperation." I received orders to stay there until I received word to return to New Delhi to pack up our personal belongings and leave post. In short, I was not allowed to return, from Washington, to my post because "my health" did not permit it! Then and perhaps still today, I equate these kind of procedures with the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union. I could not imagine that these methods could be employed by an American administration to one of its Senior Foreign Service officers. Wouldn't it have been easier just to say to me that I was wrong, both in my analysis of the situation in Afghanistan and in my interpretation of the Zia plane crash?

I flew from Washington to Switzerland, where I reported to the Swiss police. My wife and one of our sons joined me for the "forced rest period." This strange "confinement to quarters" lasted until the end of October, about 6 weeks. Then, I was authorized by telephone to return to New Delhi, pack our personal belongings, and take leave from the Indian authorities. During the 6 weeks in the Swiss mountains, I received periodic phone calls to ascertain that I was still there. An Assistant Secretary of State, with a highly placed State Department Administrative Assistant, even came from Washington to our resort to ascertain that I was really at the chalet and that the house belonged to us. That is a real demonstration of confidence in your ambassador.

What more can I say? We returned to New Delhi in late October to pack up and take leave from the Indian authorities and my ambassadorial colleagues. My Indian contacts, from the President, Vice President and Prime Minister down were all very nice to us. The Indian President sent me as a farewell present an oil painting which I gifted to the American residence in New Delhi. It depicted the five continents of our earth, and in front of each continent were grieving women in tears: Was this a gentle reminder of humanity's suffering, and the need for America to address the problems of the non-aligned world, or criticism of American policy toward Afghanistan? I also received a lovely small Indian silver box from Prime Minister Gandhi, with the following farewell letter:

New Delhi
November 1, 1988

Dear Ambassador Dean,

On the eve of your departure from India, I thought I should let you know how much we appreciate your contribution to Indo-American relations.

You represented your country with distinction. During your tenure as Ambassador in India there has been a welcome improvement in relations between India and the United States. There has been a steady and dynamic growth in our commercial and economic exchanges. The United States is our largest trading partner and promising beginnings have been made in our cooperation in advanced technology.

In recent years we initiated a most useful dialogue on international and regional issues. Our persistent joint efforts to combat the menace of drug trafficking has started showing results.

Your efforts, in the interests of both our countries, contributed in a large measure to these positive developments. We can look forward to building our relationship further on these foundations.

We are glad that in you we will have a friend in the United States who will speak with understanding of the values and aspirations of both India and the United States. My best wishes go with you and Mrs. Dean. I wish you success in our future endeavors and hope that you will continue to build bridges of friendship and closer understanding between our countries and peoples.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) Rajiv Gandhi

His Excellency
Mr. John Gunther Dean
Ambassador of the United States of America
New Delhi

Two years after my departure from New Delhi, I returned for a brief personal visit. The Cabinet Secretary (the highest ranking civil servant) with eight other Permanent Secretaries representing different parts of the Indian administration gave me a very elegant luncheon. I then met Rajiv Gandhi for the last time in his office where he said: "I am your friend." I replied: "And I am your friend." A few months later he was assassinated (1991).

One year later I had the honor to meet with Rajiv's widow, Sonia Gandhi, in New Delhi. On that occasion, I was accompanied by a wealthy businessman from London who

contributed several thousand dollars to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. Rajiv Gandhi was a modern man who was a worthy grandson of India's first Prime Minister: Pandit Nehru.

My wife and I left New Delhi after the November Presidential Election. After a long vacation with my family, I returned to Washington after New Year's where I was given a huge office in the State Department, near the Secretary's office. No secretarial assistance. No specific duties. But many medical appointments with psychiatrists, specialized laboratories to scan my brain, and above all, the State Department's Medical Unit. The latter asked me to take a number of "intelligence tests" as if I had suffered some kind of brain damage at my last posting. Fortunately, a few good Foreign Service friends stood by me. They hinted that perhaps nobody dared to tell me to my face, but the new Administration saw no role for me in the U.S. Foreign Service. Once I made known my desire to leave the Foreign Service, everything went smoothly. The Director General of the Foreign Service, George Vest, presided over a small ceremony at which I was again honored with the highest award the State Department can offer its officers. He also mentioned my outstanding service as Ambassador to India. Telegrams and letters from the staff in India and from various American and foreign personalities honored me by their laudatory messages for my work on behalf of my country and America's good name. What a strange way to leave the Government...

After my resignation from the Foreign Service, my medical clearance and security clearance were restored to me. I was asked to participate in the summer of 1989 in the Global War Games at the Naval War College in Rhode Island. My job during this four-week annual exercise was to act the role of Secretary of State. James Schlesinger and Robert Hunter (later Ambassador to NATO) acted the role of President. Some 400 people participated in this annual exercise, including many admirals, generals, congressmen, senators, and other persons involved in international affairs. The year I participated in this exercise was the 99th time these Global War Games were played. It was the first time in its history that it never came "to war." I suggested in these games that American decisions could not be taken unilaterally and that new personalities needed to be included, as for example the President of France, the Chancellor of Germany, the U.N. Secretary General, the Head of the European Commission, etc... Hence, American decisions would be taken after consultations with other power centers. Multilateral diplomacy, rather than taking position without the green light of other power brokers. My suggestions were accepted and the 1989 Global War Games did not lead to war.

Years later, some of my friends in the Foreign Service - now long retired - told me who was behind the machination to have me declared "mentally deranged" and thereby removed from the Diplomatic Service. Perhaps suffice to say that policies change over time. Perhaps I was ahead of my time, or perhaps different American administrations have different policies as the world changes. It was an immense privilege to serve my country and the American people. I am grateful to all Presidents, Secretaries of State, Secretaries of Defense, CIA Directors, and all my Foreign Service colleagues for having given me the opportunity to do so. I still see the earth as a very small planet where all humanity is in the same boat. America has been the most powerful country in the post-

World War II era, but as I was taught by my parents and by my High School teachers in Kansas City, Missouri, and by my professors at Harvard: "Those who have a lot, owe a lot." I want America to live up to this motto and help our country and humanity to move forward. In looking after U.S. national interests, this calls for multilateral engagement by the United States. And for the Foreign Service. The motto of Harvard should also prevail: "V E R I T A S."

End of interview