

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

PART I
AMBASSADOR A. ELIZABETH JONES

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INTERVIEW

Q: What does the A stand for?

JONES: Anne.

Q: Well, Beth, let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

JONES: I was born in Munich, Germany. I was born of Foreign Service parents, very proudly so. It was a very interesting reason my father was in the Foreign Service, though. He graduated from West Point. He graduated in a class that graduated in three years rather than four because of World War II. So he actually graduated on D-Day 1944. He then went into parachute training with the 82nd Airborne. He never actually parachuted in the war, but came into the war in February 1945, very briefly. Was wounded, lost a leg, trying to stop the Germans from blowing up the Roer River bridges. And there was a program at the time that the Foreign Service had that took military veterans into the Foreign Service. So that's what my dad did. He ended up in Munich, Germany, got there in 1946-47, because, of course, the recuperation for his leg and fitting of a wooden leg in the U.S. took quite a long time.

Q: What was his name?

JONES: William C. Jones III. He retired from the Foreign Service after some 35 years. My mother also joined the Foreign Service. She had graduated from Barnard College, worked at the New York Times briefly, decided she didn't really like writing obituaries for the New York Times and joined the Foreign Service, ended up also in Munich in 1946 and that's where they met and married. My mother worked with the Consul General interviewing displaced persons for visas to the US. I was born there and one of my sisters, who's a year younger, was also born there.

Q: You were born when?

JONES: I was born in May 1948.

Q: Your dad, he went to West Point but what about the Jones side of the family? Do you know much about them or not?

JONES: I know some. The Jones side of the family is from Texas. They were German immigrants. With the name Jones there's also Welsh in the family, but mostly Germans. I didn't appreciate how German until I served later in Germany and saw all the same Christmas traditions that I knew from Texas, such as opening Christmas gifts on Christmas Eve instead of Christmas morning.

Q: Did they live in New Braunfels or something?

JONES: No, they lived in Lubbock. My dad was actually born in Blackwell, Texas but he grew up in Lubbock. His father was an insurance agent. His mother, my grandmother, owned a button shop. So she was an entrepreneurial woman when that wasn't exactly what women did, but she was very well known in the community. It was one of the things I remember. I loved working with her in her button shop making covered buttons and belts whenever we visited there on home leave.

Q: Was she of German extraction?

JONES: She was, yes, she was. Although by then it was so many generations past that it was so hard to recognize, really, other than in the Christmas traditions, as I discovered later.

Q: On your mother's side?

JONES: They were all Irish. My mother was a Ferris and a Collier, from the Collier family, the Collier publishing family, the Collier encyclopedia. She grew up in Nyack, New York. Various of the relatives were involved with NYU. One of her great-uncles was president of NYU, Isaac Ferris. And one of her second cousins is one of the Colliers who gave a flight award.

Q: Oh yes, the Collier Trophy. A very famous trophy, I think it was for speed going around, I don't know. I'm a child of the Thirties and I remember we used to follow those things.

JONES: There's a little Collier Trophy in the Air and Space Museum in Washington, I think a replica of it. The family was always taken to see every year.

Q: And she went to Barnard? When did she graduate?

JONES: She graduated in 1945. So she's having a very important anniversary this year, or reunion which she's going to.

Q: Oh, yes, the 60th. When you say she joined the Foreign Service. The old Foreign Service, they weren't taking many women in as officers.

JONES: She was a staff, they called it staff officer I believe at the time. What her job was in Munich, was to do the preliminary interviews of displaced persons who were applying for displaced person status with the U.S. We talked about it recently. She actually did a lot of the interviewing in the office of the consul general. Tom Bailey was the consul general at the time. They could see him behind her, so they knew that a senior American was there but she actually did most of the paperwork and the interviewing of the people and would pass on the work to Tom Bailey.

Q: Yeah, the DP program, the Displaced Persons program, was a big one. I got involved about five years later in the refugee relief program, cleaning up from the old one. Was your father's first assignment Munich?

JONES: His first assignment was Munich.

Q: What was he doing there, do you know?

JONES: The same thing, the exact same thing. He was a vice consul, so he was doing a different part of the DP program. My sense was that almost everybody there was working on the DP program those days. There were so many people coming out of Austria, Russians and people from Eastern Europe.

Q: Oh, yes, a huge task. As I say, five years later we were still working, I was in Frankfurt, we were still working them over.

JONES: A very, very big program.

Q: So you started in Munich. Where'd your father go after that?

JONES: After that we were posted briefly to the United States, to the State Department and then we went to Monterrey, Mexico, where he was also posted as a vice consul. He ended up in the admin cone, but the early part of his career was all in consular. My third sister was born in Monterrey.

Q: Do you remember Monterrey?

JONES: I do. I remember certain parts of it. I remember going to the tortilla mill with my mother or with the maid to buy tortillas. I remember the maid fighting tarantulas. The beasts, in my memory, are gigantic. And I remember piñata parties, lots of piñata parties.

Q: Were you picking up Spanish at the time?

JONES: My mother says I spoke great Spanish, none of which I remember. I didn't keep any of it, unfortunately.

Q: This happens. My son was great at Serbo-Croatian.

JONES; Oh, such a shame! I think it's a great tragedy for children to lose the language.

Q: Well then, where'd you go after that?

JONES: After that we went to Paris. Paris, France, where my father was in charge of the courier service, the European part of the courier service. And the fourth Jones girl was born there. My youngest sister Diana was born there. What I particularly remember is we lived in a great big house in the country, or it seemed like the country. It had a great big garden, I remember digging in the garden.

Q: Well, were you in school by that time?

JONES: No, not yet. We were in Paris only one year, because the courier service moved to Frankfurt right at that point. My dad moved with the courier service, we all moved and that's where I went to first grade. I ended up not going to kindergarten because of all the moving.

Q: So your father was in, when did he get to Frankfurt?

JONES: He went down to Frankfurt in probably, summer of '54, was when he got to Frankfurt.

Q: How long was he there?

JONES: He was there just a year and a half. I did first grade there and part of second grade.

Q: We probably overlapped then. I came in in '55.

JONES: Oh, really? What job were you in there?

Q: Vice consul. I did refugees.

JONES: Really? By then he wasn't doing that. He was in the courier service.

Q: You recall much about the school now?

JONES: I do, I remember a lot about the school. It was a military school, the U.S. Army school. I remember my first grade teacher very well. I can't remember her name but I remember that she was left-handed and she was very clear about what was right and what was wrong and you either got a gold star at the end of the week or a monkey face. I was devastated to get a monkey face one time. I had lots of friends in the community. We lived in the military housing area.

Q: The Carl Schurz Seidlung?

JONES: Exactly.

Q: Yeah, Carl Schurz Seidlung, we all lived in that then.

JONES: The Brennan family were very good friends of my mother and father and Kevin Brennan, who since has joined the Foreign Service, was a friend of mine at that time, a friend in the first grade.

Q: Well, did your father come home and talk about the courier business?

JONES: Not that I ever took in, not that I remember. He would be gone, working to set up courier work in various places but he didn't talk about much. I remember much more about school and how much I didn't like piano lessons, that sort of thing. I took piano very briefly because it was not my cup of tea, it turned out.

Q: And then where'd you go after that?

JONES: After that we went back to Washington, where my dad for a while was involved in EUR, in the European bureau on the Swiss-Austria desk. He was the desk officer, as I remember him telling me. I don't remember much about it. I remember evening conversations where he was talking about a lot of people that he met through his work. They were in Washington almost three years at that point.

Q: So it would be about '55 to '58, approximately?

JONES: That's right.

Q: Where'd you live?

JONES: We lived in D.C., we lived on Beech Street and Western Avenue. I went to the Lafayette School, which I remember loving. I had a great teacher and made several friends there, one of whom, my best friend, I'm visiting in a month, seeing her. We've been friends from that time.

Q: As you moved sort of in the early classes, how'd you take to school?

JONES: I loved it. In those early days I remember moving being difficult but as soon as I was in school I was fine. I remember that in particular, that's where I made my friends. We were always fortunate to be in schools where the neighborhood was also going to the same school. So there were plenty of friends in the neighborhood. We had a great neighborhood. Beech Street, I don't know if you know, was right across from Rock Creek Park. So there were no houses across the street, it was just a little tiny branch of the park. So all summer long we had a whole gang of kids and we would make boats and play in the park and in the winter we'd sled in the park. It was great, we had wonderful friends in those days.

Q: How about at home? By this time were you getting much of a feel for Washington or politics or international affairs?

JONES: Not really. But when we sailed our home-made boats in the creek across the street we made up stories about their going through the Suez Canal. So, looking back, I was hearing about the Suez Canal Crisis going on at the time.

Q: How about reading? You recall any books early on, other than Dick and Jane that you particularly, were you much of a reader?

JONES: I was a big reader. I remember all the *Little House on the Prairie* books, I just went through one series after another. Nancy Drew, *Little House on the Prairie*, Hardy Boys, Cherry Ames, everything. One after another. I was active in Brownies and Girl Scouts. We had a great Girl Scout group. My mother was sort of, they didn't call it deputy Brownie leader but it was like the deputy. She participated at times. My sister, my youngest sister, was too young then.

Q: Well was your mother, did she continue in the Foreign Service?

JONES: No, she was, of course, forced to leave, as soon as she and my dad married in Munich. That was it for her career, which she had a hard time with for a very long time. Nevertheless, she was very interested in foreign affairs as we moved then back overseas and very active in the community, but very resentful that she was forced out.

Q: And rightly so. Did you get any feel for the politics of your family?

JONES: I knew we were Democrats. That was during the Eisenhower-Stevenson campaign and we were very much for Stevenson, the family was. But I don't remember any of the issues really at all at that point. Other than that, I remember there was a big issue with the Suez Canal because the whole time we were building boats for the creek we were playing Suez Canal games.

Q: It must have been '56, October '56 Suez Canal crisis. Whose side were you on?

JONES: All we knew was there was a canal, it made for a great reason to build more boats.

Q: So now we're moving up to

JONES: Moving up to '59.

Q: '59, so by that time you were about eleven I guess.

JONES: Right and at that point my dad was assigned to Moscow to be the admin counselor but he was given a university year before our Moscow tour. So we moved to

Syracuse, New York at that point, which was a great, great year for us. I was in sixth grade. We had a fantastic neighborhood. It was right across from the university. All of the people up and down the street were with the university in some way. Tons of kids my age, mostly girls and we had a great gang. We built forts and we went on bike rides and we helped decorate the floats at the fraternity houses just because we were free help for all the fraternities, to press all that toilet paper in the chicken wire for “flowers.” We had an absolutely fabulous time. My dad built a, we had a great big narrow backyard and he built the ice rink for the whole block, which took a lot of work. We had to wet it down and shovel it off. Of course Syracuse had more snow that year than ever before. So that was fun. We had tickets, Syracuse was a winning football team at the time, we had tickets to the football games.

Q: Was Jim Brown at the—

JONES: Yes indeed, absolutely. We would sit in the living room and listen on the radio to the football games. My dad had a big board that he had lined out so we could follow all the plays on the board as the radio announced what was going on. It was really fun.

Q: You learned about snow there, didn't you?

JONES: Right and ice skating, which of course came in very handy, going to Moscow. We were very focused on learning to ice skate. We didn't know how to ice skate before then. All my sisters and I learned to ice skate in our backyard.

Q: Well, let's see, you were off to Moscow and you were there from when to when?

JONES: We were there from 1960 to 1962. Something I should have mentioned, already in Washington we took early morning Russian lessons on television. Not every day but several days a week and my mother got several of us, certainly I got up and I think a couple of my sisters did, too, to study Russian at home in anticipation of going to Moscow. So we were already getting ready. My mother was already learning Russian herself, getting us ready for Russian and she had already explained to us that if at all possible we would be going to Russian school in Moscow.

Q: By the way, you were there from—

JONES: Summer of 1960 until summer 1962, two years.

Q: What had you heard about the Soviet Union before you—

JONES: This was before its hardest point but it was definitely the scariest place one could go. When I told my friends that I was going to Moscow, I was going to the moon and I was going to a very dangerous moon, as far as they were concerned. It was really a black hole to a degree but also extremely, it was like going to Baghdad would be today. It wasn't physically dangerous but it was unheard of that anybody would go to Moscow. So it was such a scary place, certainly in my mind and in the minds of my friends.

Q: How'd you go there?

JONES: We went by ship. It was wonderful. We took a ship, we took the *Kungsholm*, a Swedish liner and we happened to be taking it right over Midsummer, so we had a whole Maypole and all of my sisters and I were invited to dance around it, we'd go to the dances and had to wrap the ribbon as you danced around the Maypole and we had the best time. We took it all the way. We took it from New York harbor to Göteborg in Sweden. We took the train across to Stockholm, spent a couple of days there going to all the wonderful sites, there was a museum that is all houses the way they used to be in old Sweden, so we'd visit the farmhouses and the farms and all that kind of thing. Then we flew to Helsinki. My father had a very good friend in Helsinki, a woman officer who we met for dinner a couple of times. I remember thinking at the time that she really seemed to know the business and she and my dad and my mother really got into big, very fun conversations about what was going on, none of which I could take in, it was all kinds of personality kinds of things. I remember thinking what a great thing it was to be able to land in Helsinki and still have a friend and of course that's the hallmark of the Foreign Service, for me. I particularly remember going to a fabulous store there.

Q: Then how did you go? Did you take the train to Leningrad and up to Moscow or how'd you go?

JONES: It seems to me we took the train but I don't have any memory of it. I have no memory of whether it was the train or the plane. We did take the train other times and we'd go out to Helsinki and go shopping. But going in I can't, I think it was the train.

Q: What sort of place did you have to live in in Moscow?

JONES: We lived outside the embassy compound the first year. We lived at Kutuzovsky Prospekt, which is about a mile and a half or so away from the embassy, on Kutuzovsky. There were only four American embassy apartments in a big high rise apartment building. It was a big compound, though, in which a lot of foreign diplomats lived. So my friends in the compound, in the yard, were Egyptian kids and Israeli kids, Romanian kids and all that kind of thing. And right behind us was a beer factory, so it really stunk. And the first year I went to the Anglo-American School, my sisters and I did. My mother taught there. I was at that point in seventh grade and I was basically the oldest kid there. All the other kids my age went to boarding school in Europe and the US. So I was in seventh grade, there were one or two, there were a couple of us, we had a joint fifth, sixth and seventh grade, which my mother taught. I was in seventh grade and one of my sisters was in sixth grade. So my mother had two of us in the same family, it was a very small group of kids at the Anglo-American School, which was fine. Of course, when we got home my mother knew exactly what homework we had.

Q: What was life like in Moscow for you? What'd you do?

JONES: For us it was fun. We had roller skates and we used to roller skate to the bread store, which as you could imagine -- we had those metal wheels on the roller skates -- we made an unholy racket with three of us, my youngest sister didn't go. We'd go to the bread store and we'd stand in line there and everyone had to stand in line and we'd go off to the market on Saturday with my mother. We would play in the back a lot with the other kids. In the summer the embassy had a bus, they would take us out to a river site at Uspenskoye, it was one area that foreign diplomatic families were allowed to go without permission. It was just outside the 25-mile limit but they let us go there. And then the embassy had a dacha as well that you could sign up for. It was a wonderful place. They used to let us go to the dacha for the weekend. Or you could go for the day, also. I had my birthday party out at the dacha, I remember, great fun. We'd ski in the winter, we'd ski out there, mostly cross country skiing.

Q: Were Russian kids sort of kept away from you or you from them or not?

JONES: Yes and no. What happened was, after I'd been there for about six months I started going to the local Russian school so I could get my Russian going better because I was going to be going to Russian school full time the next year. So I walked down to the school on Saturdays and got to know several of the girls in the class. I had one seatmate, because we had those double desks, I had one seatmate called Nina who was wonderful. She was assigned to me but she was still a wonderful person. Her parents were both university professors, both physicists, physics professors. And I was allowed, it was really the second year, when I was there full time, that we got to be better friends and she invited me several times to her apartment. Of course the family lived in one room of a four bedroom apartment, four families together, one of four families and I was invited and we'd play chess or we'd talk or we'd play games, listen to the radio or whatever. She had a younger brother there as well. And I had another friend, Natasha, whose father we knew was a big party member. She was very clear about that so we all knew that and I went to her house a couple of times and she was an only child and she lived in a three bedroom apartment without any other families. So right there it was very clear to me at the age of 12 or 13 that there was a big difference between two very high powered university professors who in the United States would have been a big deal and a party member.

So I would invite them to my house, my apartment when we still lived outside the embassy compound and they would accept and then wouldn't come. So it was clear, they were never allowed to come to my house. And the older I got the more I realized that I was foolish to even have invited them probably because I could have gotten them into a lot of trouble if they had foolishly gone. But they knew enough not to. But we would do things after school. We go downtown or I would meet them to ski on the weekends, or we would go to Lenin Hills skiing.

Q: How did you find you fit in, first academically to the Soviet school and then socially, but first academically?

JONES: Academically I was in seventh grade and then in eighth grade in the American system. When I was in the full time class I was in the sixth grade in the Russian system. So I was actually a year older than the other kids but I went back a year just to be sure I could handle it academically given that it was all taught in Russian. What was great was that I was just right to learn algebra, which I hadn't had yet, biology and chemistry. That was the beginning year for all of those. So I actually learned quite a lot academically, fine. History, Russian literature, geography, geography was good, because the vocabulary was limited enough that I could handle it. But to do history was hard, because to read the book was difficult. I had a tutor every afternoon to help me with this, especially with history and fortunately because it was the Soviet system you only had to read enough to memorize it. But the Russian literature class was hard, because that was reading a lot more and I almost couldn't handle that at all. I did very well in English class, though.

Q: And socially how did it work?

JONES: Socially, like I said the girls were great. The interesting thing was my class and I think the reason I was put in it and maybe was back a year more than I should have been although like I say academically I felt fine, there were other foreign kids in the class. Now the other foreigners, there's one Romanian girl and one Chinese Communist boy that I particularly remember. I think there might have been a Korean guy but I didn't really know him very well. But the Romanian girl was also included in our little group of people, of girls who went and did things on the weekends or after school, whatever. Of course I was out of school at one thirty. We went six days a week. But I was very accepted there. People were very curious about me. One of the things that's typical of a Russian school is that they have a big recess twice during the school day, with a gigantic hall, the whole idea is to promenade around. The girls all promenade arm in arm. So I was always desperate to be included in the arm in arm bit and I was, thank goodness. But we did things like that. I was interesting because I had foreign stamps, I had foreign coins, because there were kids in the class who collected stamps and coins. So I could trade a lot of coins and stamps, my American stamps and American coins. But otherwise we were 13 year old girls and we did what 13 year old girls do. What was so great was that they felt safe enough to include me in in-town kinds of things. So we could go to Gorky Park and go ice skating or we could go to Gorky Park and go on the carousel in summer or whatever it was.

Q: Did you ever find that, was it ever awkward or something, you were all taken out to the Lenin Museum or getting a polemic on the path to socialism?

JONES: That happened a lot, actually, that happened a lot. There were a couple of things that set me apart. I was not a Young Pioneer, so I didn't wear the red bandana, like everybody else did. Even the Rumanian girl was a Young Pioneer and I'd get questions about that. And I'd say, "I'm not a Young Pioneer, I'm a Girl Scout" and I'd bring in my Girl Scout badges and try to explain it that way. I got a lot of questions about God, was I religious. We weren't a particularly religious family but I knew enough to explain it. And I can remember one day I was sitting in gym class and I was sitting hands clasped together as in prayer, under my chin and I noticed all the kids staring at me and I realized

why, like “who is this weirdo? Are we all going to get in trouble if she’s doing that?” Several times visitors would come to the class to be introduced to the class as senior party members or senior local leaders of the party and they would make a big speech to the class about communism this, communism that.

My particular moment came when all of us were given a day to go out and collect metal, scrap metal. And I didn’t really, it was early in my time, I didn’t quite understand what we were doing but Nina said, “Meet me at such and such a place, I’ll take you around and we’ll collect what we need to collect.” We had a minimum we had to collect. So we went door to door and we collected scrap metal in these big burlap bags that we were given and turned it in and didn’t think any more about it. A month later, we had a senior official come to our class at school. He seemed to me to be a Russian Soviet Army general. He had big epaulets and stars and everything. He came in and called several of us to the front of the room, Nina and I included, to be given an award for having collected so much scrap metal to the glory of the Red Army. And I still have this little certificate that I got. I went home to my dad and I said, “Dad, I think you’re going to be fired from the Foreign Service because I think I just helped the Soviet Army.” I was distraught, I was absolutely beside myself that I’d done something terribly wrong. And I said it to my Dad, he laughed and replied, “Sounds like a good cocktail party story.”

Q: You were having to memorize the history, was it a difficult history to swallow?

JONES: It wasn’t that bad because it was like Egyptian history. It wasn’t the Soviet Union kind of stuff. We weren’t yet into, I heard about it outside but it wasn’t bombarded at us in class about, the United States is so racist and they keep down all the Negroes and all of the kinds of things you kind of hear on radio broadcasts and news broadcasts which I was listening to. I didn’t really get that much at the school. This wasn’t the year to study that.

Q: Which brings up a question. You were there during an interesting time. First place, the election of Kennedy. Did that have a resonance within sort of Foreign Service families and all that?

JONES: For us in our family it was very, very exciting, because as Democrats, we were Democrats or our family was. We also, one of the things that we got through the Armed Forces TV were the Kennedy-Nixon debates and we watched them at school and I can remember listening so hard to this debate about these islands

Q: Quemoy and Matsu. Have never been heard of since.

JONES: Yeah and I still remember, knowing that these islands must be terribly important because every debate, I really didn’t know what this was about. And my Russian friends, once he became president, were very interested in how young he was. That was the big thing for them. But that’s all they would comment on, he was very young and he was so handsome and did I know him, because they knew I was from Washington and he lived in Washington and I must know him.

Q: Did you get any feel from your classmates at all about Khrushchev at the time, because he was different, he was a character, a significant character.

JONES: He was a character but it never came up in class. It came up in the family and around the embassy compound, around the community. We, of course, all knew we were being followed. I got very tall in sixth grade. The height I am now is how tall I was in sixth grade. So I looked a lot older than I was. So when I was roller skating around downtown Moscow we were being followed and we knew we were. And the jokes, my sisters and all our friends, were "Is that Khrushchev's brother?" because they were easy to pick out, too, especially when we'd drive sometimes with the family and we knew we were being followed. We made a game of picking out who was following us and which kind of raincoat they had and which car. It was always the same car, always the same car, the same raincoat. That was the discussion.

Q: I'm thinking about a KGB man being told to follow an American girl on roller skates. That's how strange the system is.

JONES: Here's what was going on at the time, which I didn't know at the time but now know. The whole embassy was, many, many people in the embassy were part of the Penkovsky deal.

Q: He was a colonel who was giving out secrets from inside the Kremlin.

JONES: He had been recruited by the British and the British needed help in servicing the dead drops, basically. And my parents were both part of that, because we didn't live on the compound, we lived outside. So for a period of time and at the time I didn't understand why, for a period of time none of my sisters or I was allowed to answer the phone at home. Only my mother or my father were allowed to answer the phone. And I particularly remember one night both of my parents were in bed reading. I was standing at the table, the phone rang and my father said, "Don't answer it" and I was being a smartass. I answered it as a Russian. I answered it and they hung up. And I got in a whole heap of trouble which I couldn't understand at all until much, much later and that was obviously meant to be some kind of a signal that something, whatever, I don't know what it was supposed to be. I never did know that. But that was the period of time when there was and I don't know if we were being followed because everybody was being followed, probably, or because they were already on to him. They actually arrested Penkovsky after we left Moscow. After that, once Dad had left Moscow he was then declared *persona non grata* because of the Penkovsky business.

Q: Who was the ambassador while you were there?

JONES: Llewellyn Thompson was the ambassador the whole time. Jenny Thompson, one of his daughters, also went to a Russian school a little bit after I did, during the time I did and after and we were great pals because we were all in the whole Russian, we all took

ballet lessons at Spaso House from a ballet master from the ballet school, the Bolshoi. I was terrible at it but it was fun. We'd go to the ballet, we did all that kind of thing.

Q: Did the Cuban missile crisis happen, were you there at the time?

JONES: We were in Berlin by then. I remember that extremely well because we were in West Berlin. What happened, one of the things that happened when we were in Moscow was Yuri Gagarin went up in space, a second time or a third time but he was a very, very big hero while I was in Moscow. There were parades and all that kind of thing. That was a very big thing. To the Russian kids, who gravely explained to me how much further ahead they were in the space race than we were.

Q: Yeah, that was a major concern of ours.

JONES: It was big.

Q: Kennedy met Khrushchev in Vienna in '61 at some point and this is where Khrushchev tried to bully Kennedy and Kennedy called up, the Berlin Wall went up, and we were called in the reserves and all. Did this set off anything back in Moscow while you were there?

JONES: I remember it was very tense but what I remember even more, of course, was the trial of the U-2 pilot.

Q: Powers.

JONES: Gary Powers' trial occurred while I was there and the reason I remember it so well is because I was out of school so early, I worked at the embassy lunchroom, in the little cafeteria, as a dishwasher. And the reason the cook needed help is because it was packed to the gills every day with journalists who were covering the Gary Powers trial and they would come in and talk about the trial. So I would listen in on their conversations about all of that and so the edge of tension about these other things was there but the big focus was on the trial. And for me, as a 13 year old then, then going on 14, all of my images of what it would be like to live in Russia that I had when I was in Syracuse were coming true. It was very exciting, very much on the edge. The headlines in the news were happening in front of me. And I remember it just being very exciting all the time. Often in other ways. I was walking down the street one day, one weekend with my mother, we'd gone to see a movie which we almost never did, but there was, *Roman Holiday* was on and there was a huge crowd outside the National Hotel, a huge crowd. My mother couldn't figure out what it was. Great excitement, great excitement. It was Van Cliburn. Van Cliburn had just won the Tchaikovsky championship at an extremely young age. Of course he was extremely handsome and all of these Russian women, girls and women, were, it was a real paparazzi scene, a real rock star scene and I remember that.

Q: You said you were 13, 14 or so, a little social history. Russian girls at that age, when you were there, were you talking about boys? I was wondering whether, in that period did they giggle about boys and all that or was that

JONES: We didn't. Isn't that funny? We didn't. It wasn't much of an issue. In the embassy crowd when the older kids came home for Christmas, older kids meaning kids my age, there were parties around the compound and dance parties and that was all in the very awkward kind of stage. But with the Russian kids, I knew the girls and we just did our thing. It didn't even, it's interesting, actually.

Q: Well it is interesting because it's a matter of socializing. I remember when I was in Germany, what I gathered was that girls and guys didn't, up to about 17 or 18 didn't pay much attention to each other.

JONES: That's the way it was. The American kids, when they came back, were much more into it. I barely remember, obviously there were boys in the class but I don't remember any of them except for the Chinese boy because he was one of the other foreigners in the room.

Q: Did you ever have any incidents or anything like that, by being an American or anything like that?

JONES: Not at school so much. And there was one particular time, too, it was the time of the October Revolution, November 7th parade that went right by the embassy and several of us were gathered in front, right at the parade so the tanks were going by really right where you were sitting and one year the tanks, I was there, all my friends and sisters and the embassy defense attaché and my parents were up there in the embassy with cameras, taking pictures behind us. One of the tanks stopped right in front of us and the tank commander invited me to come up on the tank with them for a ride. And I decided I'd get in a huge heap of trouble. I knew they were taking pictures behind me and I declined it and that was one of my greatest regrets. I asked my dad later and he said, "You could have gotten up, you wouldn't get into trouble." I thought that was, having a ride in a Soviet tank but I was feeling very American and those were the Soviets and I shouldn't do that.

There were times, we traveled twice as a family, once up to Leningrad and once down to Kiev. Up to Leningrad we went by car and spent the night in Novgorod on the way. The only incident I remember is that we had a terrible tire blowout on the way back. Nothing happened in the end but it was one of those very scary things. And when we went to Kiev by train a lot of the stories in the embassy then were of provocations of defense attachés or other embassy officers on trains and I remember being worried about it. I knew about those stories but nothing ever happened to any of us. There were my parents with four girls on the train so the chances were not great of anything happening to us.

Q: Yeah. Did you get any feeling of "We can't talk about that here," bugging and all that?

JONES: Yes. I've forgotten about all that. We were very, very conscious of the apartment being bugged, when we were at Kutuzovsky and also when we moved into the embassy. And there were plenty of times when I heard my parents say, "We can't talk about that here" and there were plenty of times that I would say that to my sisters. "If you want to criticize Khrushchev, we can't talk about that here." My parents never said you can't criticize Khrushchev. You can criticize Khrushchev all you want, no problem. It's if you are revealing embassy secrets that we don't want them to hear about. But there was one time, I was playing Parcheesi with my sisters and so it was quiet in the living room and a conversation we'd had the night before played back at us, just a short bit of it. They screwed up the tape recorder. There were always stories like that.

Q: You left there in, I guess, the summer of '62

JONES: The summer of '62 and we went to West Berlin and because the Wall had just been built. I remember saying to my Dad, "We are going from the frying pan into the fire here." Moscow had been a front line, now Berlin was a front line.

Q: You were up to 14 there, how much were you becoming, just being where you were, did this mean that you were a news buff, were you, you're old enough now to start finding out what's happening in the world. How did that go?

JONES: I focused a lot on what the Russians were doing about jamming Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, focused on a lot of discussions about arms control which I didn't understand very well. I knew it was important but I couldn't begin to tell you exactly what was going on with the arms control negotiations now but I do remember following it as best I could when we were on vacation in Garmisch one time because there were some negotiations under way and I remember there was a breakthrough at one point. I remember feeling so happy about it but I couldn't even begin to say what it was but there was a breakthrough on the arms control negotiations. But by the time we got to Berlin I knew that the Russians were engaged in some very, very nasty practices. Because of the Berlin Wall and all of the other things that had happened in Eastern Europe.

Q: Well when you got to Berlin, what was your father, you were there from '62?

JONES: '62 to '66. My dad was there 'til '67. I left in '66 to go to college.

Q: What was your father doing then?

JONES: He was also the admin counselor, in the U.S. Mission in West Berlin.

Q: And where'd you live?

JONES: We lived very close to the U.S. Mission, just off Clay Allee, in a place called Meisenstrasse 6, which is an important address only because it was the house that later, much later, when I was DCM in Bonn, requested by von Weizsäcker as his house to retire

to. So, the house that I lived in during my high school years is now lived in by the retired president of Germany.

Q: When you got there, again you're 14 or so, how would you describe the situation? The Wall had just gone up.

JONES: The Wall had just gone up. We arrived by train, the duty train from Frankfurt and my first impression was that it was calm and quiet. This was supposed to be a war zone. Where's the war? I knew the tensions were supposed to be so high and I remember commenting on that to my parents, that it was very quiet and to people that picked them up, who said, "Yes, it is until it's not." But most of the excitement, of which we heard about all the time because dad was the duty officer and the Russians would close off the access to Berlin or there'd be problems with the duty train or the autobahn would close, the one we were allowed to use, or truck convoys would be stopped, that kind of thing. So we knew we were in a pretty dicey situation in West Berlin and of course a lot of the people that I knew from high school were sons and daughters of U.S. military officers who were there because it was considered the front lines.

Q: By I guess October the Cuban missile crisis started, which sent alarm bells all over the place. From your perspective, what was the reaction in Berlin?

JONES: For us it was very scary. I remember listening to the radio all the time with my parents about what was going on. My mother particularly I remember going around the house gathering up medical supplies and I remember her saying to me that "I know it's nuts to do this but I feel that's at least what I need to do." I asked her, "Why is it nuts?" She said, "Because if something big happens, what I can collect in medical supplies is not going to help us. If it's nuclear war or if the Soviet Army comes across the Wall in Berlin." I remember, it wasn't that I was scared every day. I remember thinking "We are in the middle of big news here and a big story and I need to pay attention to what's going on around me." The Cuban missile crisis happened only a couple of weeks after we got there. I was going to a German school right away then.

Q: Was it a hochschule already?

JONES: It was a *gymnasium*, the *gymnasium* in the neighborhood and my friends at school, at that point I didn't speak very much German at all but they were able to communicate well enough with me in English and especially my teachers were very effusive about "Thank God the Americans are here. Thank God the Allies are here. Thank God we have, thank God for Kennedy to do the blockade." They were very, very high on Kennedy, all of them. This is something that I remember, my father had been telling the story, I can't remember exactly what had happened but Kennedy, this is before his visit to Berlin, Kennedy had made some kind of a speech and the neighbor, my dad was walking, he walked to work and the neighbor came out to the street and hugged him and thanked him for Kennedy. Germans aren't known for that but the Berliners were that way with the Allies because they were so deeply appreciative of what had been done

during the airlift, of course but even then. Now I also had a professor, a teacher at school, who would start the conversation, this would be in class, not just with me.

Q: This is a German?

JONES: German, my physics teacher, who would go on about “Thank God for the Allies, thank God for the Allies” and then would say, “Should have brought in the tanks and torn down that Wall as it went up.” He was very angry about that. I remember going home to my parents and saying, “What do you think about this? And why didn’t we?” and we had long discussions about what the debate in Washington had been, it was just a point in which Kennedy wasn’t prepared to go to nuclear war. That was the answer early on. And this particular professor, I call him professor because he was a doctor, said, “I don’t believe the Russians would have used nuclear weapons. Should have faced them down.” But that was the big debate, the big discussion.

Q: It’s interesting. I interviewed somebody, a great Berlin specialist who was in Berlin when Kennedy came in and our Foreign Service types were very nervous about the Kennedy Administration because they thought that these people, they came in and some of the people were talking about “Well we can seek accommodations” and all this. And I thought, “This is not a situation where you seek accommodation because it just means that you lose ground.”

JONES: That’s certainly the point of my German physics professor. That was definitely his point of view. Kennedy came of course to Berlin while I was there. The particular thing I remember was the weeks of preparation that my dad was involved in, of course everybody at the mission was involved in getting ready. And among my proudest moments was when they did a motorcade practice before Kennedy came and I asked my dad about it, to describe how they’d done it and how it all worked and I said, “Well, who played Kennedy?” He said, “I did.” I thought that it was very, very cool that my dad got to play Kennedy.

Q: Were you there when, did you get to see the speech and all?

JONES: I saw the speech on television. I didn’t go to the square for the speech itself because I was meant to be, I saw it on TV because as a kid of the American community I was allowed to be on the street in front of the mission when Kennedy was going to go by after the speech. So I got to, I couldn’t be in both places so I got to wave to Kennedy as he went by between here and there, standing up in this open car then.

Q: You went to this German school? How’d you find it? Having come from the Soviet school and all, how’d you find it?

JONES: Fortunately I was pretty good. I was up on the math. The math I could take with me from the Russian school. I had a really hard time with the liberal arts kinds of courses because of the language and again I had afternoon tutors and that kind of thing to get my German up. What I found is that I could do math pretty quickly because its vocabulary is

so limited, geography I could do quickly, the sciences I could do fairly quickly because again the vocabulary is so limited but I had a terrible time with German literature, as you can imagine.

Q: Did you find the class structure, the discipline different, or was it pretty much sort of a European standard?

JONES: It was a European standard. It was still less to read than I remembered from sixth grade, even, in American school. I was very impressed that I had to write no reports. That was always a big thing in American schools was to write research papers or write reports or write a paper on this, write a paper on that. And in my four years in a German high school I wrote a paper one time, only one. It was a research paper, a psychology teacher put in the back "This is a half doctoral dissertation. You wrote way too much." And I thought I was doing what normal high school papers should be.

Q: How about the give and take? One of the things that's often commented on at the university level is that American students are trained to question their teachers.

JONES: And I got none of that. I got no training at all. I was meant, all of us, were meant to learn and repeat. It was not quite as rote as the Russian school but it was pretty close. So by the time I got to an American college and a professor asked me my opinion, I remember thinking, "My opinion? I don't have an opinion. What do you mean, what do I think about the novel? You're supposed to ask me what this famous analyst thinks about the novel. You're not supposed to ask me what I think about it." So I had to learn to think, which I had not learned at all in either the German or the Russian school.

Q: I'm told that Germans often spell out things. There's a pattern of how you do this, looking at something and you come to conclusion after going through a certain drill.

JONES: The only time I remember doing anything close to that was with this physics teacher, who I thought was extremely good. He would take us through a theory in a way that I could follow exactly what he was talking about and he would end up with the most magical results that I hadn't been able to foresee but could always do well on the exams because I understood so well the logic that he used to get there. Same thing with my math teacher, I had a different math teacher. He was extremely good, explaining all these kinds of things, including calculus. The point that I took calculus in college was terrible, much more theoretical, by then.

Q: Again, my question, in German high school, gymnasium, what about the social life then? How'd you find it?

JONES: Probably very much like an American high school by then. It was very social, lots of parties, lots of parties in people's houses, sort of in 9th, 10th grade. By the time we were 16 we could go downtown to the bars and the discos and all that and there was a very big disco scene in Berlin. And we, there were places you went on Thursday night

and places you went on Friday night and I was with a whole gang of German kids and we went out all the time on the Metro.

Q: What was your mutter und vater doing on this sort of thing?

JONES: They, their attitude was, I was with German kids speaking German so it was fine.

Q: What are you going to do? You can huff and puff.

JONES: Right, but the other thing was, there were certain places, you could go to certain places from 16 on and you were carded and the fake ID thing didn't happen and you could only buy certain kinds of alcohol and when you were 18 you could buy certain other kinds of alcohol. And frankly I wasn't a big drinker. I loved to dance, I loved to party but I wasn't a big drinker so it wasn't a big issue.

Q: Did you find yourself singled out in school as the amerikanische fraulein or anything like that? I'm not talking bad or good or what have you.

JONES: Only to a degree. I went to two different German high schools, German *gymnasium*, because the one I started in closed, was made into a practical branch, for a more technical school, so I had to go to a different one later on. But when I first started, the school that I was in had an exchange program with the George School in Pennsylvania. So they had always had an American kid in the class and there was an exchange student, so they were very American kid-friendly. So I was included right away in all kinds of things. They were just really very genuinely nice. But by the time I went to the second school I was in tenth grade and my German was good then and it was a math and sciences focused school, so of a class of 20 or 18 there were only five girls in the class. So we hung out. It was easy to have those friends. And there was one girl in particular I spent a lot of time with and we palled around, did all kinds of great things. But I kept friends from both schools and sometimes we mixed, sometimes we didn't.

Q: Were you sort of embarked on a math, science type curriculum at that point?

JONES: No. The reason I went to that math/science school is because they had Russian and I had been keeping up my Russian through tutoring in the afternoon. There were some elderly Russian sisters who lived not far away and I would go to them a couple of times a week and read novels and try to keep it up because my mother was smart and knew that it would be a very good thing for me to keep Russian. But when the school in my neighborhood closed, she asked me didn't I want to find a school that had Russian as a regular part of the curriculum and we agreed on it. She found one. It was way downtown. It was right next to the Allied Kommandatura. I would take an U-bahn Metro to get there. But what was so interesting about that school, the reason they had Russian was the Berlin school system decided they had to have a school for the East German kids who were refugees, coming across the Wall, to go to, because they weren't learning

French and they weren't learning Spanish and they weren't learning English in their East German schools. They were learning only Russian as their second language.

So I was in Russian class with all the refugee kids and all of a sudden two boys would end up in the class and they would be introduced. They had come across from the East last night and the rule was, we all knew, do not ask how you got here because they couldn't tell us, because it was secret, more people were going to come through whatever the route was. It was a big, big tunnel era, coming across, under the Wall. It happened to be math and science, the school that had the Russian. So that's the only reason I ended up there.

Q: You were there during the assassination of President Kennedy?

JONES: I was.

Q: How did that-- what happened?

JONES: It was a terrible thing. I got a call from the exchange student, his sister, from the George School, called me and she said to me in German, "Kennedy has been hit." And I laughed, because the day before there had been a news story about Nixon being hit by a protester's sign in South America and it was funny. And she said, "No, no, you're not understanding" and put Chip on the phone and he said, "Kennedy's been shot, he hasn't been hit, he's been shot. Turn on the radio." So I went tearing, it was at night, of course, in Berlin. I went tearing down the stairs screaming to my mom and dad, "Kennedy's been shot, Kennedy's been shot, turn on the radio, turn on the radio" just as the announcer said, "Ladies and gentlemen, we are horrified, saddened to say that President Kennedy's been shot and killed." And it was a devastating point in Berlin. It was devastating for all of them. It was devastating for the Germans, devastating for the Berliners. All my friends called me. The schools closed. One of my friends' fathers owned all the movie theaters in Berlin and she called me and she said, "My father says he's going to lose a lot of money. He's closing all the movie theaters. He said 'You can't, can't, keep them open at a time like this.'" And there was a big candlelight parade, candlelight vigil down at the Rathaus, where Kennedy gave his speech. We all went. That's when I did go to where he had given his speech. It was one of the most incredible moments of my life. I remember it like it was yesterday. And I remember thinking the world had come to an end. Being in Berlin, it was worse because Berlin had such a feeling for Kennedy. I couldn't have been in a place that appreciated as much as anybody what Kennedy meant to us. But I thought it was awfully dangerous.

Q: I was in Yugoslavia at the time. Long lines, it was really very emotional. Here's a communist country but the people really responded to 'im. It's the youth and they felt that this is a new era.

JONES: It was the youth that I think that really captured the Berliners.

Q: Yeah, because when you look back on it wasn't that impressive but there was something. You were there during much of the beginning of this whole civil rights business. How did that play out, because the Germans are not noted for being receptive to other races?

JONES: My big memory of the civil rights movement was getting letters from my friends from Syracuse who had gone to Washington to participate in some of the marches. One girl in particular who'd been, she didn't go all the way to Selma but she was on part of that. So I was hearing about it in very long letters from a lot of my friends from grade school, really, who were very, very involved as young teenagers in the whole movement.

It wasn't a big issue in my German school. We didn't talk about it very much at all, other than, it wasn't an issue that I remember talking to my German friends about.

Q: Probably, it was usually used as an issue to tweak us, if you were.

JONES: With one exception. I had one friend, a very good German friend of mine who when we got to be 18 and she was dating, came out of the blue and she said, "Don't you know any Negro soldiers?" And I said, "Well, no, but why?" She said, "I think it would be so cool to date one." I said, "Well, okay, but I don't know any." That was kind of unusual.

Q: Were there excursions and alarms and what have you while you were in Berlin, mobilization of tanks moving around and that sort of thing?

JONES: There were. It happened regularly. I remember my dad was either the duty officer or he'd get a call from the duty officer. The reason I remember it so well is we were, of course teenagers, on the phone a lot and there were certain times when we were told you can't use the phone at all or you can only use the phone for one minute only because the MP's would say there's a rat race. And it would be some kind of alert on the autobahn, usually an alert on the autobahn is what I particularly remember, where a truck convoy had been held up or there were various things going on that his military colleagues were involved in. The thing that is kind of interesting is that because my dad was a West Pointer he was very involved with the American military community. Some of his West Point classmates were there as colonels and that kind of thing. So he stayed very clued in, linked in I should say, with the whole military community. At one point, the one year, when I was a junior, I went to the American school in the afternoon because my mother was worried that I wouldn't get into college without knowing some American history and some American literature, so got to know some more of the American kids in the American community then, too and would hear about these kinds of things. What most of their fathers were doing was trying to make sure that Berlin looked fearsome enough that the Soviets would go around Berlin and not attack the city. That was the whole deal.

Q: Well, you were there until '66. You mentioned getting ready for college. You're basically a foreign student going there. What were you thinking about? Obviously you were primed to go to college but where were you thinking of going to?

JONES: I knew I wanted to go to something very small. I had only been in small schools, really, in a smaller kind of community and I worried that going to anything bigger would be way too scary. One of the summers we were back on home leave my parents took us on, my sister's just a year younger, so both of us went to a whole variety of different places. Middlebury was one that my mother thought might be interesting because of the language issue. I loved to ski, and did a lot of skiing so I thought, "Oh, University of Denver and University of Colorado at Denver." We went out to visit there. But I already knew I would not have a high school certificate because I would not actually go through the 13 years of the *arbitur* as I would finish high school as an American. And they said, "If you don't have a high school certificate you can't go here." So I thought, okay, that's a big university and probably all big universities are going to be that way. So I looked at mostly much smaller colleges. My mother had particularly focused on Swarthmore College because of the honors program and that's where I ended up going, although not to the honors program.

Q: Well then, you went to Swarthmore?

JONES: I did.

Q: And for what, '66 to '70, the full thing. Did you have any problem getting in?

JONES: No, I guess I didn't because I got in. I applied to Wellesley, didn't get in. Applied to Oberlin and Carleton and Swarthmore and did get into those, those three. One of the other things that was going on, you mentioned the years, of course was Vietnam. Many of my friends' fathers were starting to be pulled to Vietnam. They were having to leave Berlin. They didn't stay in Berlin when their fathers were assigned to Vietnam but that was the beginning of all of the Vietnam service that the military was involved in, so I knew it from that angle. I also had stayed in touch with the George School, as each year the new exchange student would come through. The George School of course is a Quaker school and knew many Quaker families at that point who were very involved in the whole pacifism idea and spent a lot of time talking to them about how one is a pacifist. Swarthmore is a Quaker school, too. So I got involved in the antiwar movement from the Quaker perspective, but still because I knew fathers of my friends who were going and eventually my friends, my high school friends went to Vietnam, either because they were drafted or because they joined. Was able to maintain the respect for those who went, who made a different decision, than those of us who were in the antiwar movement.

Q: Swarthmore is a Quaker school. In '66, when you got there, what was the campus like, the spirit and all that?

JONES: It was a hotbed, really a hotbed of the antiwar movement. It was one of the leading antiwar schools, very much associated with Columbia and with Berkeley, that

kind of thing. I went to several of the antiwar protests in Washington and that kind of thing but I didn't like the antiwar crowd much. I thought they were pretty arrogant. And I chose to do my community work, if you will, in the local community. I did a lot of tutoring in the local disadvantaged neighborhoods and that kind of thing. I thought that was a better way to participate in a way that I felt was meaningful.

Q: In a way, coming from this Foreign Service background, being two places where there was a real threat and a real problem, sort of warped your mind, you had a perspective that most kids who came from privileged American backgrounds, it was very easy for them to dismiss any communist problem or anything else.

JONES: It was easy for them to dismiss it but what bothered me the most, though, was the automatic assumption that so and so in the government must be lying, which I knew couldn't be true and it wasn't true about particular individuals. I nevertheless was very disheartened by what was clearly distortion, as nearly as I could tell, by the Nixon Administration, sorry, the Johnson Administration first, of what was really going on there. The failure to call it a war and that kind of thing I thought was dishonest and I thought wasn't appropriate for the United States of America. I thought we could do a lot better in terms of explaining ourselves.

Q: When you got there, this whole thing built up gradually, '66 it was probably as much in the forefront as it became later on.

JONES: It wasn't big in '66. It got bigger in '67.

Q: '68 of course was the election and all that.

JONES: That's the big election. I really remember happening to be in a train station when Johnson made his speech saying he wasn't going to run again and "Wow!" And then Gene McCarthy was very big on campus and McGovern after that. What also was interesting, my parents came back from Berlin in 1967 and I was starting to participate in the antiwar movement. I had many, many, many debates and discussions with my dad about it, if it was appropriate or not. He just thought it was wrong to be in the antiwar movement and that kind of thing. In 1968 he was assigned, he was first in the Inspection Corps and then he was assigned to Vietnam, to Saigon. And he was there six months or so and came back on one of his leaves and sat down with me and said, "Beth, I'm going to join the antiwar movement. I agree with you now. I see the corruption of the Vietnamese Army and I see what goes on in terms of distortion about what's really going on. It is not right."

Q: How long was he there?

JONES: He was there a year and a half. He left Vietnam right, the exact same time I graduated, in 1970. So he probably went in early '69 or late '68 to Vietnam.

Q: Probably, he had the 18-month tour. I went out in February of '69 and came out in June of '70.

JONES: You were there at the same time. He was the admin counselor and there was a minister-counselor above him, who was gone most of the time so he was kind of in charge.

Q: His name is very familiar. I was consul general there.

JONES: I probably have pictures, because he had country team photographs.

Q: Of course in those days, being the consul general sounded fancy but I one time counted up the people and I realized the embassy was huge and I just made the first half of it. Sixty people and I was 29th or something like that.

When you got there, how did you find American college? Swarthmore, they're really trying to draw, the students have a lot of participation and all that. How'd you find that?

JONES: Well I had a couple of first reactions. My first one, I'm convinced I got in basically as a foreign student. So I figured I got in, not by mistake but I was on the edge.

Q: Under false colors.

JONES: Right. I knew that I was certainly the stupidest person on campus. I was convinced of that. I saw that most people that I could see in line buying books were left-handed and I wasn't so I decided, okay, if you're brilliant you're left-handed. I'm not, so I'm not brilliant. I just was completely in awe of everybody around me, as I knew that everybody was brilliant. But I found a couple of things. One was that I was very, very impressed with the questions the students asked the professors and the questions the professor asked of us. I was thinking, like I said earlier, "Why are they asking these questions? I'm not supposed to have an opinion." It took me a good year to get into being able to read critically. It was hard, because I'd never, ever done it before. I'd never done it. It was hard to write papers that weren't just repeating facts of the research and doing analysis. I really had to consciously learn how to do that. I was very bummed by the whole dating thing because I'd always been going with a whole gang of kids my whole life so the whole dating thing was a little weird for me and the drinking thing was weird. In Berlin, yeah, we went to bars and such but nobody had to get so drunk that they were throwing up, ever. I never saw that until I got to an American campus. So those were, my initial impression was "Oh my God!" I flew right in from Berlin and I remember arriving at campus the first night and looking around and thinking, "Oh my God, everybody here speaks English!"

Q: You have the right clothes or not?

JONES: I had, actually I did well in the clothes department because I was way ahead on fashion, because it was very European, it was very Twiggy and London.

Q: Twiggy being a British model, very thin and--

JONES: Exactly and so I had the great big plastic earrings and the very, very short skirts, which hadn't really come in but were right on the edge so I was, I was fine.

Q: Did you find any, either a student or teacher who was in a way acting as a mentor for this poor kid from Europe?

JONES: Not really. I was pretty much on my own. Fortunately, my mother's sister and mother and father lived in Nyack, not that far away and so they'd come over to pick me up just for the weekend or I'd go there for the weekend once every six weeks or so and I was ever so grateful for that. Plus, my friend from the George School was a sophomore, the one that had been there my very first year in Berlin. He was a sophomore at Swarthmore when I was a freshman and he took me under his wing, with his friends. So I had a couple of head starts on campus.

Q: What was your major?

JONES: History, in the end. I started out thinking I wanted to major in political science and didn't really like the discipline, as it turned out. I didn't like the way it was discussed. I thought it was silly, to do all of this modeling, they were very much into modeling.

Q: This is a period where and I don't know if they've gotten out of it but really, they were just learning how to use the computer, I think and they were taking, voting in a district and trying to interpolate history from

JONES: Exactly and there was modeling. I remember taking a course in the politics of Africa and the professor had done a model of a particular time in one place in Africa, in Kenya and kept explaining that one could use this model to explain all kinds of events which you obviously, patently could not do. I remember telling him about it and he said, "Yeah, well, you're right but it's how we're doing it." And most of it was a waste of time. So I quit political science and thought I'd be a psych major for a while and decided I didn't really want to just read books. I wanted to be involved in the world. So I ended up a history major. And I ended up a history major because actually that was the most fun and I was enough of a, I don't know what kind of a student because I thought, if it's fun I shouldn't major in it. It should be harder. But it was great. I had great professors.

Q: Did you find yourself, particularly when current events or even not so current events were brought up, you had the German experience and the Soviet experience, did you find yourself saying, "This is all very nice but that's not the way it seems to me because when I was in some place or something" it just didn't, it seemed to be too theoretical.

JONES: It did, but the first time it really hit me was in my senior sort of major defense. I did a lot of work on Russian and German history and a lot of Far Eastern history and all that kind of thing. And my professors, knowing my background in Germany, went after

me on German reunification. Asked me did I think German reunification was appropriate and I said, "Absolutely" and went through the whole reason why. And they came back at me hammer and tongs about how dangerous this would be, that Germany was a threat to peace and security in the world, that a reunified Germany would be even a greater threat, that the balance of power was appropriate with the Soviet Union, et cetera. I remember really having a raging argument with them about it, because it just was so contrary to everything I had grown up with.

Q: Did you, it goes back to the German experience, were you getting much out of the Hitlerzeit, one way or another?

JONES: We did in the following respect. While I was there in high school, the first Holocaust exhibit opened in Berlin and the high school, all of us were taken to see it and there was a big to-do about it in town. A big assembly was called, with all the parents of the class, to explain what was going to be in the exhibit and what kids were going to see and there was a form that you could fill out as a parent to forbid your child from going. You didn't have to get permission to go, you had to explicitly explain why the psychology of your child would be irretrievably damaged to go see, it was a very horrifying exhibit, no question. And there were one or two kids in the class who had--

Q: The Germans tend to be, when they do something, whatever, they tend to be rather explicit.

JONES: It was a very horrifying exhibit, and always you know. We had many discussions in the class afterwards about what had happened and why and the importance of not forgetting and not permitting that kind of thing to happen again. I very much felt that I needed to just be in with them. It was not my experience. It was their experience. I remember it very well. But the bigger memory, the more pervasive memory, were all of the discussions of all of my friends about how they were, could they go visit their relatives in the East, could they send packages to the relatives in the East, could they visit so and so? And then when the visits started back and forth, the first Christmas visit, the first Easter visit, the first Easter packages, that was really the much bigger discussion. It was all dealing with the East Germans under the Soviets, with the bigger focus, sort of the political focus, of the Sixties.

Q: So when you got to Swarthmore, did you feel that Germany was being malportrayed?

JONES: I didn't at the time. I didn't appreciate the depth of the attitude of what I heard from my professors just during that one session. It didn't really come out in the discussions of history or the discussions of, we didn't have many political discussions or I just didn't appreciate it. I missed that there was this big, big, very strong antipathy or the strain of antipathy among those particular professors.

Q: The anti-Vietnam movement, there are two ways of approaching it. One is being essentially a pacifist or antiwar. And the other is really from the left, Ho Chi Minh is a

great leader and all. How did, looking at it, how did you, were there those two strains within the group, you think, or not?

JONES: There were. There was a bit of the Ho Chi Minh thing, you could hear the chanting “Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh” kind of thing but it was much more the pacifists, much more the pacifist part of the, as well as the worry about the misinterpretation of the United States, misrepresentation of what was really going on. The euphemisms that were being used and that kind of thing. That’s really where the bigger concern was among a lot of people that I was associated with.

Q: What was happening as far as boys who were graduating while you were there? They were ripe for Vietnam.

JONES: Well, two things happened. One, there was a very big discussion of, one of the sort of moral discussions was, “I grew up a Quaker, why is it okay for me to have such an easy time getting a deferment when a black kid next door in Chester didn’t grow up a Quaker and he has to go for me. How is that right?” So there was a lot of soul searching kinds of discussions among us, mostly among the guys. But the other thing that happened was the draft changed to the lottery while I was in college. And of course the night the lottery numbers were drawn was a very big night on campus, everybody watched television. I remember one guy throwing a chair through the TV because he was very early in the draft. I was focused on my friends. My mother was focused on the birthdays of the four of us, all girls and I hadn’t even thought of that. Of course, being a mother, each one of us could very easily have been a boy and we were all in the first twenty. That was where she was focused. The first twenty, first 15, very high numbers.

Q: Was there much of a movement to Canada or something like that?

JONES: A lot of talk about it. There were, friends don’t talk of it, there were one or two that I think I heard went to Canada. A few of my college classmates enlisted or were in ROTC in high school or ended up in ROTC somehow and ended up as officers. Very, very few did, though. Most got deferments by going to graduate school or had high numbers or were Quakers. And by the time I graduated in 1970 there wasn’t that much of a pull anymore.

Q: Vietnamization had started and we were drawing down. Speaking of something, I didn’t raise it, where did you fall religiously, in your family and all?

JONES: My family, they were all Episcopalian, so I was baptized Episcopalian, but we never, both of my parents grew up in families where they were forced to go to church and hated it. So we didn’t go to church really at all. For a brief period we did, when we lived in Washington, we went to All Saints here on Western Avenue.

Q: Did Quakerism have any--

JONES: I went to Quaker meetings several times with Quaker friends, really quite a few times. I was very attracted to it but I hadn't grown up with organized religion and so I didn't really end up in organized religion, really at all.

Q: We're skipping around a bit, but did you find it difficult to learn to write American college style and all that?

JONES: I did, I did. It was hard. I didn't know how to do it. I knew how to research and how to put together a research paper but we had done so much of it in fifth and sixth grade, a little bit in seventh grade, when my mother was my teacher in school in Moscow. And so I fell back on that. How do you take notes and index cards and all that, at least I knew how to do all that. But it wasn't easy. And I certainly never got good grades for analysis, never.

Q: While you were there, did you feel you were struggling to keep up, more or less?

JONES: The kids who wrote their papers late in college and studied by pulling all-nighters, I just couldn't do it that way. I had to plan way in advance, get all ready, do as much as I possibly could ahead of time, because I knew I would flunk out otherwise. I ended up as a good, solid, B student, but it was hard. I had to really work hard.

Q: It was a real B, too, as compared to I think today?

JONES: I guess, yeah, it was.

Q: I take it, being a Quaker school, they weren't things like sororities or that sort of thing?

JONES: There were fraternities but no sororities. Sororities had been outlawed a couple of years before, because one girl committed suicide, she didn't get in one, or that was the story. So there were no sororities, no. There were fraternities. Nobody lived in them. Fraternities were a big deal.

Q: What about '68 and the demonstrations in Chicago and all, you get involved in any of that?

JONES: The '68 convention? We watched it on television, all my friends and I were watching it. I *remember* just thinking, Chicago cops are terrible. How can they be beating all these people? I thought it was embarrassing. I thought it was terrible that foreigners would see us behaving this way to each other. I, even then, had an instinct for how people see us.

Q: This is your foreign training. How about race relations? How was that played there?

JONES: It was a very, very big issue on campus. Swarthmore had a reputation for not having recruited enough African-American students, especially the first year I was there.

The second year I was there, there was a very big set of demonstrations by the black students on campus, complaining that there wasn't enough recruitment of black students, that there wasn't a black student center and that there wasn't enough recognition that there should be a black student life.

Q: Black studies?

JONES: Black studies, women's studies, but more black studies, that kind of thing. The result was that by my junior or senior year, I actually knew a lot of black students on campus and remembered being able to "cross the line" a bit. I couldn't do it in front of everybody, but I could see them later and say, "Okay, tell me, what's really going on with this? What are the issues and what can somebody like me, a white student, what can I do to work with you on this kind of thing?" So we ended up with quite a good relationship.

The reason that's even important is that we had a system of senior residents, where a senior would be the resident on a freshman floor. I hadn't actually applied for it, I still had a bit of a "I'm not as good as everybody else" kind of complex and was asked to apply, actually. It was a very good deal because you got your board free. So I did apply and was appointed the senior resident in the mostly black hall, as it turned out. Apparently, I didn't really realize this but I was known as somebody who knew how to, could lead a group of kids like that, without coming across as "too white" or whatever. That was an interesting progression for me.

Q: Was this a group that was not absorbed by the general campus, or not?

JONES: Two things, the group that did the protesting were protesting that they weren't absorbed enough, to a degree. But it was more that they didn't have the separate, they wanted a black student center, not just to be part of the student center. That's why I kept talking to them. I thought integration was what we were supposed to be doing here.

So they helped me understand what the difference was and why there was a sense that black students needed to feel more proud of their own heritage and understand their history better. So I was able to understand a little bit better.

Q: We're talking about these sorts of cultural things, what about being a woman? This is the beginning, I don't imagine that was much of a subject in German high school or not.

JONES: It wasn't studied at all in the German school and it was only studied to a degree at Swarthmore, because there was no sense that women were not equal, or didn't have the same opportunities. The only time that I got it was when I was a senior, I went to the Dean of Women, who's a very prominent person, in her own right and I said, "These are the kinds of things I am interested in, I'm taking the Foreign Service exam, I'm interested in the Peace Corps, I'm interested in international work of some kind" and she looked at me and said, "Do you type?" I said, "No, I don't type." In fact, my mother had specifically made sure of that. "Do not learn to type. The minute they know you can type, they'll put you in a secretarial job. Don't learn to type!" I still don't know how to type.

Anyway, I said, “No, I don’t. Why?” She said, “Because that’s the best way to get into some good jobs. You start out as a secretary in the psych department and in the end you end up being a professor of psychology.” I said, “I’m not going to do that.” She said, “But that’s the only way to do it.” I said, “No, it’s not. It can’t be.”

But my year I believe was the first year where girls didn’t do that. She was right, the girls that I knew who graduated a year ahead of me, two years ahead of me, a lot of them did that, they became secretaries, knowing that they could move up very quickly if they did a good job.

Q: Yeah, I go back and I remember the Biographic Register became known as the “stud book” and the reason was the officers, the male officers, would be assigned to a post and the secretaries, who had the same education as the guys but they were secretaries, I had an office assistant in the consular section in Belgrade who had a Phi Beta Kappa key. I always thought “stud book” was simply a horsey reference carried over from an earlier, more genteel, version of the Foreign Service.

JONES: That was when it started to change. And of course I’d been brought up as one of four girls. Never an issue, absolutely, going to college, applying or not applying, no question at all. It never occurred to me to wonder if I would go to college. I can remember the first time I met somebody who wasn’t going to go to college. I didn’t think there was such a person in the world.

Q: Were you made aware of, I guess it later became gender studies and everything else, in other words, the burning of the bras, all that stuff, was that going on?

JONES: It was all going on then. Betty Friedan was big and Gloria Steinem. Everybody wore big glasses like Gloria did. So we knew they were doing a lot of great work for us. We knew that it was necessary. But very few of us at Swarthmore had actually experienced that kind of discrimination and that kind of difficulty, other than, like I say, the girls who graduated ahead of me, who, they just as a matter of course would go to Harvard to work as a secretary, rather than to professional entry level jobs. A couple of my classmates got into medical school and it was pretty early. There were girls in medical school then, but it wasn’t so easy.

Q: Law, was this much of?

JONES: Yes, a lot of them entered law school. But I remember one of my classmates, when she was being interviewed for medical school, she was dating somebody and the interviewer said to her, “Well, how are you going to keep studying if your husband or boyfriend wants to have sex?” She said, “I’ll tell him to calm down.”

Another very interesting incident: a Foreign Service Officer came to recruit for the Foreign Service. About ten of us went to meet with him. Every single person who went to meet with him was a woman, every one of us. This was, of course, the height of the

Vietnam War protests. And he was very arrogant. He was very snooty about how tough it was to get into the Foreign Service. He was not recruiting at all, not explaining to us what a great career it was. I kind of entered in a couple of times to say, "Hey, guys, it's really fun out there!" He looked around the room and he said, "It's very tough to be a woman in the Foreign Service, because the big thing that we do is take people to lunch and nobody's going to want a woman to pick up the tab." I thought, "What a jerk! I'm going to get in the Foreign Service just to show that so and so that it's possible!" And there were several girls who said, they had two reactions: "I would never want to join that organization," versus mine: "I'm gettin' in to show that guy!"

Q: I take it that the Foreign Service was something that was a goal from fairly early on or not?

JONES: It wasn't really a goal. It was a fallback. I'll be honest with you. I knew I wanted to be in international work. I loved moving around and I loved being overseas, but I was worried that the Foreign Service might be a little too staid and stuffy. So I wanted to go into the Peace Corps first, but I didn't want to teach English. I wanted to do something more exciting. I had seen a report of how to be a health worker in Afghanistan. That's what I wanted to do. I wanted to be a health worker in Afghanistan and they wouldn't take me, because I had no credentials, no health background, no anything. So the Peace Corps finally called and said, "We'll take you to somewhere in the Caribbean to teach English" and I said, "No" just as I was passing the Foreign Service exam and went to Afghanistan as my first post. So I thought, "Well, if I can't go to Afghanistan in the Peace Corps, at least I got into the Foreign Service."

Q: What prompted you to take the Foreign Service exam? Obviously you knew about it, it was a family disease.

JONES: I took the Foreign Service exam just to open up all my options. I had applied to Vista, I had applied to Peace Corps.

Q: Vista being?

JONES: That was a kind of domestic Peace Corps. I was thinking about applying to the Public Health Service, or getting a masters degree so that I could apply to the Public Health Service. So I was just thinking in terms of opening up my options.

Q: But public service was very much your inspiration?

JONES: It was, mostly because, of course at that time going into business was considered completely the wrong thing to do. Anybody with any kind of social conscience at all would never dream of going into business. The classic movie of the time was *The Graduate* and the classic line in *The Graduate* was, "Go into plastics, go into plastics." [The actual sequence is: "I want to say one word to you, just one word." "Yes, sir." "Are you listening?" "Yes, I am." "Plastics." "Just how do you mean that, sir?"] That was the worst thing one could possibly do, was go into business.

By the way, I also wasn't so sure that the Foreign Service was for me. My recollection of my father's Foreign Service was that it was very conservative, quite staid. I wasn't sure that it was really a good place for me and I wasn't sure that I wanted to make a decision that quickly about an entire career. I had a very telling discussion with my dad when I told him I passed the Foreign Service exam. He was excited that I had passed, just because it opened up that possibility. I said, "But, Dad, I don't know if I want to stay in for as long as you have." And he said, "Well, think about it as the Peace Corps: go in for two years, see what you like, see what you don't like, see if you like it. You can always do something else after two years."

And that, for me, was the ticket. That was the sort of breakthrough in my head, that I could go for a short period of time, that I wasn't making a life decision, necessarily, by joining. And I still tell that story, 35 years later.

Q: If one looks at the statistics, I'm sure you have, too, this is the insidious wedge. "Just one little drink, honey." Because once people get in, the retention rate is phenomenally high, compared to other occupations. So you took the oral exam. When did you take the oral exam?

JONES: I took it in, probably March, April, 1970.

Q: What was it like, in those days?

JONES: The exam was entirely with the three people on the panel and yourself. There was no group part of it, at that point and there was no, I don't recall any paper part of it. I actually took the oral exam twice, because when I first went in, what I remembered, the work that I remembered in particular was done by a colleague of my dad's in Berlin. It turned out it was all public affairs work, it was USIA work. I explained that that was what I was really interested in. They said, "You're at the wrong exam. Come at a different time for a different oral."

I went back and explained to my dad the mistake that I'd made. He said, "Well, it was an honest mistake, because the person who did that work in Berlin was not a USIA officer, he was a State Department officer. It's just that because it was West Berlin, it was a very odd, different kind of job that wasn't normally done."

In any case, I went back and took the oral exam on the basis that I chose to be an admin officer, as my father had been and took the exam on that basis. So all of the discussion was around admin kind of situations. There were two things I remember in particular about it. The first was, when I was first invited into the room, it was a smallish room with a big glass window on one side and I was invited to seat everyone. I thought, "Oh, God, this was so protocol conscious and this was kind of a silly test. Well, I need to be looking out the window, just for my own sanity." So I seated everybody in such a way that I could be looking out the window, which is probably opposite of how I should have been thinking, but in any case, that's what I did.

The other question that I particularly remember, probably I answered the right way, was a question involving, we were in South America and there was a very competent, very senior FSN who was extremely angry and upset about something that had happened, nothing that I had done, but I was the boss of her boss and I needed to sort out what the problem was. And I went through some very mild steps. They kept pushing me and they said, “Well, she’s very angry and she’s jumped up and she’s marched out of the room. What are you going to do?” And I said, “Well, I’m sure this isn’t the answer you want, but I’ll tell you what I would actually do. I would jump up, get ahead of her, slam the door and tell her to sit down and listen.” I’m convinced to this day that that’s what helped me pass the exam, that I stopped sounding lame and said this is what I would actually do. At the time I thought, “Oh, I’ve just flunked the exam by telling them what I would really do.” But it turned out alright.

Q: I was wondering how it was constituted at that time. Was there a woman on the panel?

JONES: Yes, there was.

Q: Because I remember, at one point I was giving the oral exam, ‘75ish, just three and that’s all we had but we always made sure, if a woman was being interviewed, we’d have a woman on the panel.

JONES: There was one woman. I don’t know who any of the people were. I think my father sort of knew one of them.

Q: How long was there between passing the exam and coming in?

JONES: I passed the oral, I think it was sort of Easter break, March, April, in 1970 and during exams, which would have been early June 1970, I got a call asking if I would join the next class, which was very fast, I thought. And I declined to join the next class. I actually had a summer trip planned with a couple of friends. They asked me to join the class in October, which I did. At that point, I’d already had my conversation with my Dad and I knew, okay, come in for two years and that’d be fine and have a great adventure.

Q: Where’d you take the trip?

JONES: To Europe, actually. We hitchhiked around a little bit in Europe, mostly in Ireland and the Scandinavian countries. I remember particularly going to see the embassies in each of the places where I was. Could I work in that building, would that be okay? And I decided it would be great.

Q: Things have changed so much, but how did Ireland strike you in 1970?

JONES: We started in the UK, visiting friends. Went to Belfast and of course that was at the height of some of the really awful things going on in Belfast. Very dangerous and we

sort of got out of there as quickly as we could. But I remember thinking at the time, okay, this is something I could work on. We need to get these people to stop fighting each other, this is something that would be great. That's Northern Ireland.

The Irish Republic was wonderfully fun. It was wet, it was cold and we stayed in youth hostels all along the way and hitchhiked and had a wonderful time.

Q: Did you get the impression that I got, actually, in the mid eighties, that, gee, this place is really behind the times? Today it is wired, but--

JONES: No, it was very rural, very provincial, but it was lovely, from my perspective.

Q: Scandinavia, that intrigued you at all?

JONES: Completely, yes. One of the reasons we went to Scandinavia, a second friend joined us--there were three of us for that trip--who had been an au pair in Denmark and wanted to spend some time up in the rest of the Scandinavian countries. And that, it was just sunny and lovely and people were extremely friendly and kind and generous and I thought it was great.

Q: So what were your friends saying about the Foreign Service?

JONES: At the time, of course, it was all Vietnam War period and everyone was, "Oh, my God, how can you work for the U.S. government?" It was one thing to work for Vista, but quite something else to work for the lying U.S. government. And my attitude at the time was, the only way to fix anything you're unhappy with is to be on the inside, so you can actually influence it, because at that point I didn't think that all of the marches I participated in against the war were necessarily going to do any good. I think in the end they did, actually, but

Q: You father was there, wasn't he?

JONES: He was. He was the number three or four in the embassy, the admin minister or minister/counselor, whatever they called it at the time. He was there, '68 to '70, basically.

Q: I was there '69 to '70.

JONES: Even he became disillusioned during the time he was there. He was very unhappy with me that I was participating in the war protests, although we always had big discussions about it at home. And then when he came back from Vietnam the last time, after leaving, he said, "You know, maybe I should join you on the next march. What's going on there is not right."

Q: You came in when?

JONES: I came in October 1970.

Q: Could you describe a bit the composition, maybe some of the people in the A-100 course and then how the A-100 course struck you?

JONES: We were quite a large class for our time. We were 36, I think it was. It was a period of time when the USIA class joined the State Department class, so there were like 16 or so, quite a number from the USIA group as well. In the six weeks, I think they had only a week of separate training for us, maybe two weeks. There were three women in the class, myself and two others. One was an African-American woman, Joyce Smith, who stayed in for quite a long time, we stayed in touch with each other. The third woman was a USIA officer, she didn't stay in that long. She was a journalist.

One of the things that we were told very early, maybe even the first or second day, was that all of us would be going to be going to Vietnam, that all the previous classes had gone to Vietnam, our class would all go to Vietnam and if anybody didn't want to go, they needed to quit now. Nobody quit, but the anomaly was, as far as I can recall, nobody in our class actually went to Vietnam. We were just at the cusp of where it was changing and all of us went off to various other places. But there were a few people in the class that I was in touch with, quite a bit later, Marc Bass was in the class and Mark Johnson was in the class, both of them were Africa specialists, so I never actually served with them anywhere, but was in touch with Marc Bass, towards the end, when he was working on Africa and then Mark Johnson, we've been in touch since he retired, he is out in a place where there is a big Central Asia program, so I'm in touch with him out there.

Q: Was there much discussion about Vietnam?

JONES: There was, but it was more of a discussion of what are we actually doing there, we, as Foreign Service Officers, what would our jobs actually would be and how do you do it. What is CORDS [the Office of Civil Operations and Rural Development Support] really like? What kinds of things do people do there? I don't remember a lot of discussion about which of us are opposed to the war, as opposed to not.

The training itself was very workmanlike: how do you write a cable, when you go to a factory, what do you look at in a factory and how do you do that. I didn't think it was very intense, actually, the training but I thought it was a pretty good introduction to the Foreign Service, from what I knew of the Foreign Service. And I actually learned things, because I had seen it from another perspective.

Q: Obviously you had been in the service, as anybody who's born in, but did you get a feel for the almost class structure, about how consular officers, administrative officers, political, information officers and economic officers, being in the administrative cone. Did they say, "You're just going to be an administrative officer." Did you get any of that?

JONES: I was expecting that and I didn't get it in the class. There was a degree of it when I got to post, which we can talk about, but I, either my personality is such I didn't choose

to notice it, therefore I didn't notice it, or it just didn't exist, because I felt very much integrated into all the work that everybody else was doing. Any writing that needed to be done, I was right there doing all the writing as well as anybody else. So there was no question about any difference. We later went on into consular training, which I quite liked, practically the whole class went into consular training.

It was a very collegial group. We did a tremendous number of things together socially. I ended up marrying one of my classmates seven years later. But it was a very homogeneous, collegial, fun group.

Q: Were you pointing yourself towards any place or was it the usual wish list or something, April Fools, as we used to call it?

JONES: We had lists. It was not quite a bid list. I think the bid list system didn't come for a couple of more years, but we knew the posts that were available and we, in effect, bid on them, because I knew who else wanted to go to Kabul, I knew what else was out there in terms of some of the other jobs. I remember taking the list home to my dad to say, "Okay, what do you think?" He said, "Oh, my God, stay away from Frankfurt, it's way too big, you'll be lost," something like that. That's what started me on my philosophy of going to the small posts, you'll have more responsibility, more variety and that kind of thing.

One of the things that happened, because I was living with my parents in Washington and so had access to a big house, a lot of the class parties we had at my house. So the end of class party was there, all that kind of thing, so there was a lot of discussion with my dad, too, by all of these guys about, "Okay, what do we think about this and what do we think about that?" Of course, to follow up on your question, they knew perfectly well who was an admin officer, but there didn't seem to be any hesitation to say, "What do you think about this job versus that job, sir?"

Q: So where'd you go?

JONES: So I went to Kabul.

Q: How did you prepare for Kabul?

JONES: Well, the first thing I did, because one of the people who ran the course had worked for my dad, so had taken a special interest in me and at one point, before the assignments were announced, he said, "Beth, I think you should read Michener's book, *Caravans*." I thought, "Ooh, that's about Afghanistan. Oh, okay." So that was the first thing I did.

And then, once I was assigned, I knew that the ambassador was Robert Neumann. I somehow knew that in the previous class had been his son and I got hold of him. I knew he'd been out there to visit his dad, so we spent, he and his wife and I, spent some time together and we talked a lot about what his father thought of Afghanistan, what his

impressions were, the times he'd been out there. He'd already been in the army, so he was a bit older. He'd absorbed a lot more than I would have at my age, because I was among the very youngest in the class, actually. He invited me, for example, to dinner with several other people who'd been recently in Afghanistan, in Kabul. Mike Hornblow was one of them I particularly remember, a couple of other people. So there was quite a, I got right away into the group that knew Afghanistan, knew Kabul. And of course the desk was very helpful.

But it went very fast, actually. I started the training, A-100, on October 15th and left for Kabul in January.

Q: What were your impressions of Afghanistan?

JONES: That it was exactly the Foreign Service adventure that anybody could possibly dream of. I was the envy of several people in my class who had wanted to go there. The reason I got Kabul was because I had no language requirement. I had tested out of the language requirement in both German and Russian, so I didn't have to do any language training in order to pass the threshold and all that sort of thing. It was one of the posts that opened very early, they needed somebody right away and I didn't have to do extra training, so I was able to go right away. So I think I was the first to go to post of my class.

Q: What were you doing in Kabul?

JONES: My job was to be the junior admin officer. That was the way the job was billed, but as soon as I got there, I think it must have been the DCM, looking back, I don't remember a conversation with him, I remember it with my boss, Jim Kelly, who was the admin counselor, admin officer, he said, "We really would like to put you on a rotational training program here, not just keep you the full time in admin. Would that be okay with you?" I said, "Yeah, absolutely."

And they did. I served in each of the four sections during the period of time that I was there. It was a formal program, I had a particular time that I would work in admin, then I went to econ/commercial, then consular, BNDD [counternarcotics] and political. So for the time it was a very advanced post, I think and I don't know exactly who to credit for that, but the DCM was Bruce Laingen. The ambassador was Robert Neumann and I felt extremely comfortable with him, because he was very professorial. I'd just come out of college, so a very familiar kind of way he spoke and thought about things.

The other thing that they did which I thought was extremely good, I was the only junior officer and they invited me to join the country team. I went to every country team meeting. I'm in the country team photographs that were taken when people left post, which I remember now because Ron Neumann found one of those photographs in his father's effects, when his father died many, many years later and gave it to me. So they did a really good job with me, actually, looking back.

Q: What was the situation in Afghanistan?

JONES: The situation was that the king was there, King Zahir Shah, who died last week in Rome. The government was understood to be very corrupt. There was a huge issue of narcotics. There was a big issue of hunger. In fact, particularly in the north, the reporting was that people were getting hooked on heroin because that staved the hunger pangs. Peace Corps was fairly large. There were about a hundred volunteers in Afghanistan at the time. Because a very bad drought had gone on for several years, hunger got worse and worse. People were out of work. People couldn't feed themselves.

Peace Corps and AID, the Peace Corps director and the AID director were sort of ahead of their time and came up with a work for wheat program that was extremely successful. AID brought in the wheat. They brought in extra Peace Corps volunteers so that they were up to 250 volunteers by the time I left and the volunteers were sent out to all kinds of communities to help with projects: dig a well, build a road, build a school, do whatever it was and get paid in wheat. It was really a great program. I don't know how long it lasted, but it was a good one.

I felt, in the work that I did, moving around, that I really had access to a lot of people, I got to know a lot of people right away. It was kind of a small community, as you have in a Third World post like that. People were very kind to me.

However, there was a certain attitude about me, when I arrived. People would say to me, "Oh, you burned your bra?" It was very much the Gloria Steinem period. It was very much the women's lib period. Here I thought, I was the eldest of four girls, I thought I was just coming to do a job that any normal person would do. But there was a bit of an image, apparently, that I realized after I got there, that I must be a real sort of bra-burner, screaming women's libber, et cetera, and all I wanted to do was do a good job. People got over it pretty quick.

Q: It was a time, I recall some of this, kind of a generation before you, the new breed of lady coming out was going to be a bomb thrower. I remember looking askance at Genta Hawkins, because she was known as the bomb thrower, kind of, "don't trust anybody over thirty." So people were typecasting you.

You worked with the Afghan employees, the Foreign Service nationals. How did you find them?

JONES: Well there were two groups, really, of Foreign Service employees. There were the Afghans and there was a very, very large group of third country nationals, mostly all from India. A great number of them were in the administrative section, particularly in more senior positions. They were the accountants, they were the security investigator, that kind of thing. The Afghan employees tended to be in the motor pool, one or two of the low-level positions. But as I moved through the various other sections, the senior FSN in the consular section was an Indian. The senior FSN in the political section was Afghan

and in the economic/commercial section was Afghan, so I got to know them. But they were, they couldn't have been more polite and nice to me.

One story that I think is particularly illustrative of how Western women were viewed then, when I moved into the consular section my boss, Dick Skenck, not too long after I started, said, "Okay, I've just gotten word that an American has been incarcerated in the police station in such and such a part of town. Go down and get him out!" I thought, "Okay!" An FSN came with me and that was in the days when I still made the mistake of thinking that I could, looking ahead at what I thought I was going to do that day, I would dress accordingly. Well, that day I thought I wouldn't have to go out of the embassy, so I had a sleeveless, rather short dress on. I marched myself off to the police station dressed this way, very unhappy with myself that I was dressed that way, knowing perfectly well that I shouldn't be in a sleeveless dress, going out in public.

But I walked into the police station. The captain was sitting there and I introduced myself as the vice consul from the American embassy, said my name, said what I came to do. The FSN translated. He sort of looked back at me and said, "You're the vice consul?" I said, "Yes, I am." He said, "Just a minute." He got up, got the American, brought him out and said, "Here he is. Goodbye!" That lit a big light bulb, then and there. I thought, "I am the vice consul. I'm not male, female, I'm the American vice consul." So that was an extremely good lesson for me, just to state my business, be business-like. But I also never wore a sleeveless dress again to work.

I had a similar lesson later, on a weekend. I was over on the other side of town playing tennis and was in tennis clothes and suddenly somebody said, "Oh my God, somebody's been arrested/been in an accident, go to the police station!" I had to go to the police station in shorts. Again I got the guy out, but that's when I kept this skirt in the car with me, after that.

Q: Let's talk about the consular section. This was still at a period when we had a lot of Americans and Europeans and Australians and others having their wanderjahr. I was consul general in Athens from '70 to '74 and I know this well, because we were one of the places where these people would show up and of course the spirit of the times was you didn't go anywhere without a stash of hashish or something like that. So this must have caused all sorts of problems.

JONES: Absolutely. We were definitely on what we called the hippie route. The route was to be in Kabul in the summer and then move on to Goa for the winter in India because the weather was better there and maybe up to Nepal. But in any case we were on the route through Turkey from Europe. And of course it was mostly heroin. There was plenty of hashish all over the place, but the danger was the heroin, because it was so pure, what was being sold in Kabul and various other places I suppose. So we had quite a few deaths. That was the thing that I particularly remember as being so difficult to deal with, to the point that we had, we and the British and some of the other embassies had to sort of stock up on coffins and I got to know the undertakers quite well, because that was part of my job, to go, when the death of an American was reported, to go be the one to identify

the remains, talk to the undertakers, handle that kind of thing and deal with the fellow travelers or the next of kin, if it was somebody who was married. But we had one death a week at least.

Q: These were also young, weren't they?

JONES: Oh, yes, all very young. The mortuary had no way to keep the remains. So I negotiated space in the commissary freezers and that kind of thing.

Q: If somebody was caught, what happened to them?

JONES: My other beat was to visit Americans in jail. There were two jails, the Kabul jail for Afghans and then there was a jail, a basically impromptu jail at the fire station, that was for the Westerners. So at any one time I had three or four Americans in jail that I would visit every week and take them magazines and take them this and that.

I got to know the fire chief quite well, not least because he'd been trained in East Germany, so he spoke German, which I also spoke. So we would communicate quite readily. I went to his house for dinner. He and his wife invited me to their house one time. So I had quite a good relationship with him, until the end of my time there, when all of a sudden he disappeared after having left the jail open. All the inmates left and clearly he'd taken some very big bribes from a bunch of them. That was my first big scandal.

Q: Did you have any way of notification, all of these kids coming there from America and also from other places, "the heroin is so pure, don't take too much, don't do this, don't do that"? In other words, trying to, somehow or other, at least go through the motions of letting them know what the dangers were?

JONES: We did. There was no sort of notification that was easy to get out, but whenever anybody came to the consular section for, their passport was stolen or a new passport, whatever it was, I would always have a talk with them, "Watch out for this! Be careful about the heroin, the hashish can be very strong. You're likely to be safe, we don't have murders or a few thefts of passports" but not much, really. So we tried to get the word out that way. Plus, I was around town a lot, I knew a lot of the Peace Corps volunteers and spent a lot of time in restaurants or shopping in the Green Door Bazaar, Chicken Street, whatever and as we met Americans I would explain where I worked and say, "You need to watch out about a couple of these things." And some were kind of skeptical and "Oh, yeah, you're the feds" and I would say, "I'm the one who has to pick up the dead bodies."

Q: One of the people I interviewed was Anne Wright, who first time came into Kabul in the back of a truck on the hippie route. The next time she was in Kabul was in 2002 or something, helping to open up the place, after the war.

JONES: In fact, she was the one, the photograph of me with the country team, I had it in my office, I'd just been given it by Ron Neumann, she saw it. She said, "I'm making a copy of that!" She took it to Embassy Kabul and put it on the wall. At that point, I was

assistant secretary for Europe and Eurasia. She affixed some caption, to the effect: "Beth Jones, junior officer, Kabul. You, too, can become an assistant secretary if you work hard as a junior officer," something like that. I'm told it's still there.

Q: Was there much in the way of exchanges? Certainly here in Washington there's a sizable Afghan community. But in those days, I take it--

JONES: There wasn't. The Afghans, if they were traveling much, they traveled more to Europe. I'd get calls from the British embassy sometimes, "I see so and so applied at your embassy for a visa. He's applied here as well. We're not so sure we want to give him a visa. What do you think?" I'd go through what my thinking was. German embassy, same thing. French embassy, same thing. We'd stay in pretty close touch, as to what was the demographic traveling and why.

Q: Was there a problem with automobiles, automobile accidents, selling of automobiles and all that? Was that something you had to straighten out or not?

JONES: No. I don't remember that as an issue at all. Most people who came, came the way Anne Wright did, on the back of a bus or in a taxi. Mostly busses, people took a bus through the country or hitchhiked or whatever it was.

The other issue we had, though, was American women who married Afghans who were in the States studying. There was of course a wealthy group of Afghans who sent their sons to the U.S. to study who married American women and would come back to Afghanistan. Some stayed for quite a long time. Some came and saw the situation and left almost immediately.

But one of the things that we did as part of our consular services, we kept their American passports for them and then we kept the American passports of any of their children who were born there, so that if they ever came back in and said, "Okay, I need to leave now" we would have the passports. We would be able to give them their passports so they could leave.

Q: Often the husbands would take the wife's passport and hold them essentially as hostages.

JONES: And even when they first arrived with the husband, the Afghan authorities would often take the passport. That was one of the things that I did, as soon as we knew about it we would follow up with the Afghan government, the foreign ministry, with a diplomatic note saying that passport's the property of the U.S. government, thank you very much, return it to us now. As far as we knew, we got them all back.

Q: What about the perennial problem, I dealt with it in Dharan, American women, married to foreigners and they have children, the husbands say, "If you want to leave, you can leave but the kids stay."

JONES: There were plenty of children. A couple of times women came in to me to say, "Okay, I'm ready to go" . They were taking their kids with them. We had no custody cases during the period I was there. Now maybe we were just really fortunate and they just didn't have those kinds of fights or their husbands didn't pursue the kids or whatever it was, but, looking back on it, knowing the kinds of custody battles that there are now, having been involved with quite a few at other posts, it's actually astonishing that we didn't have any.

Q: Turning more to the political work, what was the situation vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and China in those days?

JONES: The Soviet Union had the biggest embassy in Kabul. It was over on the other side of town, next to the USAID mission. I stayed in pretty close touch with the Russian consul general, not least because there was a group of consular officers and each month one embassy would host the whole group for lunch and we'd have a discussion of this issue or that issue, whatever we had in common, in terms of discussions we need to have with the Afghan government. Because I still had my Russian, I would speak quite regularly with the Russian consular chief, a very much older man. But at the time, the conversations that we had would be along the lines of "Gee, this country is really backward. Gee, it's really kind of a screwed-up country. We don't want this country. Why would anybody want this country?" I remember specifically the Russians talking this way. I was thinking, "Well, why do they even talk about 'We don't want this country'" other than the Cold War was really still going full bore and that is kind of the way that a Russian might talk, "We don't want it, it's yours!" kind of in a joking way.

Q: And also the legacy of the Great Game.

JONES: To a degree, yeah. There was a bit of that. There was much less discussion of the Great Game then than there is now. It was pretty interesting, although there were plenty of people in the U.S. embassy and other embassies who really knew the history of the Great Game very, very well. For example, the defense attaché and the station chief at the time had studied all of this: the reports of the British campaigns, the last retreat. I actually went with them as we tried to trace the exit route of the last troops, where they figured out that most of them had been killed, where had the ambush been, how had the one doctor gotten through. They were really expert at it. I was invited to go along on several of the adventures.

Q: Was there much in the way of economic development or economic reporting?

JONES: There was. We had a big AID program. There was a lot of discussion, though, with AID and in the embassy about how much of the budget support was actually just going into the agriculture minister's pocket or into the pocket of the head of the faculty of engineering at Kabul University, because in those days we did a lot more budget support than we ever do now. Of course we stopped doing it because the capability for corruption was so obvious. But that was a big discussion, how to provide the kind of assistance that

was obviously necessary and be sure that the money was going to the programs and not into somebody's pocket. At the time there was a lot of talk about corruption.

The other part of the assistance program that I think did go well was on the health side. There, it wasn't money going into the health minister's pocket, it was USAID money paying for various contractors who had set up an eye clinic, or set up a children's clinic or whatever kind of clinic it was. So there were American, Canadian or European doctors doing clinic duty for Afghan kids or for people with horrible eye diseases and that kind of thing.

Q: Were the Chinese at all involved there?

JONES: They weren't so obvious at that point. I don't remember really having much of a sense of any Chinese participation there. At the time, the focus of the Chinese, in my head, was all in India. That was when there was such a confrontation between China and India. There was a little bit of discussion about, how much would the Chinese really be interested in this, because of course the Wakhan Corridor was, that was the only bit that bordered on China. But all the discussion was of the Soviet border and even when we'd do trips to the north and go up to Mazar-e Sharif, or go further north to Balkh, I can remember standing in the desert, sort of staring at the Oxus River, the Amu Dar'ya, thinking, "That's sort of no man's land up there. I'll never get there! That's all the Soviet Union. What does anybody know about it?" Of course, that's just Uzbekistan for us now.

Q: What about India?

JONES: Well, of course, I was there during the time that there was a Pakistan-India war, so India was a big ally of Afghanistan at the time, whereas the Pakistanis and the Afghans were still fighting over Pashtunistan. Every year in the UN General Assembly there was a big political battle over Pashtunistan and Security Council resolutions put forward and General Assembly resolutions put forward and all that kind of thing and the Indians were very helpful to the Afghans politically. But as it became more and more clear that there was such a battle going on between the two parts of Pakistan and India was sort of in the middle of all of that, we were much more in a watching mode and what do we need to do to help our colleagues down in Islamabad and Peshawar to be safe if war breaks out.

And I particularly remember, one of the things we did, go down to Peshawar from Kabul occasionally, just to have a change of scenery and we stayed at the USAID guesthouse right at the Peshawar airport. We were down there at Thanksgiving in November, it would have been 1971, I guess, the windows were all painted in blue paint and there were lots of planes taking off and landing at Peshawar airport. We thought, "This sounds like a war!" I hadn't been very close to any wars but we thought this is kind of warlike. And sure enough, within a week, even days, the war broke out.

Q: Was there any concern that it would impact Afghanistan?

JONES: No, there was no concern at all of impact on Afghanistan. We took all the evacuees, though. That was one of the things I helped with, out of Peshawar and Islamabad, we had lots of families that came up to Kabul for safety.

Q: What was your impression, because obviously everybody gets involved in these things but, how did we handle the families that were brought there?

JONES: I had only a bit of a role after they arrived in Kabul and was one of the ones that helped make sure we knew who was there and did everybody have a room in the Intercontinental Hotel. There was a system for having families for dinner and that kind of thing. I remember having a family or two to dinner. But I don't have any big insights as to whether the families thought they were well treated or not, because I just wasn't on the receiving end of anything, pro or con. I was just sort of one of the cogs.

Q: Were you, obviously as the new girl on the block your ears were bigger than usual, were you picking up any of the dissension between our embassy in Islamabad and our consulate general in Dacca?

JONES: Definitely. I don't know if we heard all of it, but we felt we were hearing quite a lot, in terms of the upset, particularly from the people in Dacca, that their reporting about what was going on was not being cleared by Islamabad and being allowed to be reported to Washington. I don't remember if there was a dissent channel then, but there certainly was that kind of session. One of the reasons I knew as much as I did is one of my classmates was in Dacca at the time. I can't remember when we talked.

Q: Who was that?

JONES: Mark Weisberg, who left the Foreign Service not too long after that, actually works as a lawyer in Washington. I remember him telling me in great detail just how upset they were in Dacca with Islamabad, Islamabad sort of pooh-poohing their reporting that things were as bad as they were, in terms of the way the Bengalis were being treated by the Pakistanis in Islamabad.

Q: This, of course, is the time when Kissinger was national security advisor and had his famous "tilt towards Pakistan." He was pursuing another policy, which is basically our opening to China. Did you get any feeling, more senior officers talking about Kissinger and company?

JONES: Definitely. At first there was huge excitement in the embassy, the day we found out that Kissinger hadn't really had a stomach ache but had used that time to go to China. I happened to be in the embassy on a weekend and the station chief saw me in the hallway, or in the anteroom and sort of waved a piece of paper and said, "Beth, Beth, you're not going to believe it! Henry went to China! You'll see it on the news here pretty soon." So there was big excitement that we were so close to such a historic event. Everybody felt that. We weren't involved in it but we were right next door and that meant a lot to all of us.

I don't actually recall conversations with my various colleagues about the "tilt." There was much more focus on the dynamics in South Asia, about would Bangladesh be a new kind of country and how would that affect India and how would that affect Pakistan and what did that sort of mean for the U.S. I never got the sense that anybody thought it meant anything much for Afghanistan. And that was partly because in those days, with communications being what they were, *i.e.*, non-existent, we really felt like we were in a mountain kingdom, which we were, away from everything, nothing could touch us. We felt very isolated and also therefore very safe. It was kind of a funny dynamic.

Q: Did you get any impression from the country team about the Soviets messing around there?

JONES: No. It was too early for that. At least not anything I picked up and of course I was there, as you said, in the country team meetings. And there was a lot of talk of the U.S. impact, let's make sure that people know about all the assistance programs and the health clinics and what we are doing in Jalalabad and let people know that that's an American eye clinic. But there was also a huge amount of concern about the poppy crop and one of my details was actually to work with the BNDD agent who was there, they were increasing the office, the DEA predecessor, to understand who in Afghanistan, who in Kabul, was involved in the trade and where were the factories and who were the big families that were getting involved in the heroin trade, where was it going in Europe? This was the beginning of a lot of that kind of work.

Q: Was there a pretty strong warlord overlay to the country?

JONES: Not then. There were big families but sort of the militaristic side of Afghanistan that one saw later, with the *mujahideen* and the aftermath of the *mujahideen*, was not existent. It really didn't exist. The weapons that were around were historically wonderful weapons. A lot of my male colleagues in the embassy would buy these fabulous old rifles that were whatever vintage. We all felt safe. There were no guns around that were going to shoot any of us. If anything, you might get your throat slit. Even that didn't happen.

Q: Were there sort of no-go areas or not?

JONES: [Pause.] Not really. The only reason I hesitated is that Nuristan was considered a bit, not exactly off limits, but so remote as to be maybe not the wisest place to go, just because it was so difficult to get into and nobody knew too much about it, so maybe not. We had Peace Corps volunteers all over the place. One of the things I did, I was assigned an embassy house right behind the embassy and I got to know a lot of the Peace Corps volunteers, who were much more my age than anybody in the embassy. I was a good twenty years younger than most people in the embassy. I moved into a house with them. There were about eight of us in a house and one of the things we did, not every weekend but almost every weekend, especially in the summer, we would go visit somebody from their Peace Corps class, in Ghazi, in Mazar-e Sharif, in Kunduz, in wherever. We'd take longer trips up to Bamian. I was the only one allowed to drive, so I was very popular with

the Peace Corps and we'd drive to all these places, completely without a problem and plenty of women in the group, too. Never only women, actually, though.

Q: On the administrative side, what was your impression of the work you were doing there and how the system and the locals responded?

JONES: I decided to resign from the Foreign Service after I had been in Kabul for about a year and a half. I'd taken my dad's words to heart. I thought it was because I wanted to go to law school. I was in the process of applying to law school. I actually sent in the cable saying that I wanted to resign because I didn't think the work was that earth shattering, even though, talking about it now, it was kind of fun. I don't really know what happened with my cable but, looking back on it, knowing how things work in Washington, I'll bet you the DCM got a cable back saying, "Talk her out of it. We're just now bringing women in, don't let her leave." So, long story short, by then the DCM was Sam Lewis and he said, "Please don't resign now. Go back to Washington if you don't want to stay here for a full two years. Go back to Washington, apply to law school there, maybe you can stay in." So I actually only stayed a year and a half. I left in August.

Q: Of '72?

JONES: '72, right. So that said, when I look back at the work I did, it was perfectly fun. For instance, in the political section, the political officer was Arnie Schifferdecker and he asked me to do a study of all the people who'd been elected to the new parliament, what was their demographic, what could we learn from who was being put forward, who was elected, all that kind of thing. That was fun. When I worked for the BNDD guy, he said the same thing, who were all these people that are being arrested, is there any connection? Can you figure out what the connections are? That was fun. The consular work, I loved the consular work.

For the economic/commercial section, they had a huge stack of letters that had been received from people who wanted to do business in Afghanistan. None had been answered for two years. So the secretary said, "Okay, Beth, you're here, why don't you answer all these letters?" So that was kind of fun, to do the research, could you do this kind of business, that kind of business? I worked with the FSN.

But one of the things that happened throughout is that I thought the older officers were kind of slouches. I thought, "Why didn't you guys answer these letters?" The admin counselor was actually a full-blown alcoholic. We knew that. And the interesting thing to me, also, as I think back on it, the people who taught me the most, who made sure that I had work to do that would actually accomplish something, in every case, with one exception, were the secretaries. They were the ones who took me in hand. They were the ones who said, "You need to know this. You need to understand this. This is how you do this kind of work. This is how you do this kind of letter." And I really appreciated it.

The chief of the consular section took me in hand, too. He was great. He made sure I understood everything. And the political officer that I mentioned was also great and he helped me understand how to do the kind of political work that needed to be done.

Q: Granted they weren't the most inspiring people but at the same time the idea of going into law and three years and then on, it seems like such drudgery for somebody of your obvious temperament at the time and I understand it still pertains today. It seems odd that you would have picked law. I would have thought that it might have been something else.

JONES: I don't know why I picked law, to tell you the truth. Partly it was because I could see that a lot of my colleagues had a law degree and, again, it just gave me another option, not that I necessarily wanted to be a lawyer but I thought it would broaden my ability to do some other kind of work, if I decided to do some other kind of work. But, you're right, it was just one of the things that I thought I'd do. Now I had terrible scores on the law board. I can't remember where I took it, but I didn't do well at all on the law boards, thank goodness, because you're right, it would have been a terrible thing for me to do. It would have been completely wrong.

Q: If you're fitting round pieces into square holes, this wouldn't have worked. What happened, though? You left in August of '72.

JONES: I left in August of '72 and I went back to the NEA [Middle East Bureau] public affairs office. I was the number three person there, just sort of doing the press guidance and doing the daily report on what the spokesman said and all that kind of thing. And I learned a couple of things in that experience. The first was that all of my colleagues in NEA, any one of them, I thought every one of them was just fabulous and wonderful. And they were so personable and they were so thoughtful. It was the kind of person that I really wanted to be associated with and I thought, "Some of those guys in Kabul weren't really good representatives of the Foreign Service."

Q: Kabul was sort of, as had been Portugal and some other places, a rest area, wasn't it?

JONES: It was and I didn't understand that at first. What bothered me the most were some anger management issues that a couple of them had but also the lying. There's one particular thing that I really objected to. I was asked, as the junior admin officer, to revise the protocol list. "We got some notes from the foreign ministry. Do the new protocol list." So I researched the whole thing, to understand how you put a good protocol list together and I did a genuine list on the basis of rank and salary and arrival at post and I thought, "This isn't going to work" because it went ambassador, DCM, doctor, public affairs officer, AID director, station chief and then the person I knew should be the number three, which was the political counselor. So I did the real list and then I did the adjusted list and I sent both to the DCM with a big explanation, "This is the way the book tells me to do it but I don't think that the doctor is really who you have in mind to be in charge when there's a crisis and the ambassador and DCM are both gone." And he sent me a very abrupt, kind of nasty, note, "Send this one!" which was the "legal" one, as opposed to the adjusted one. I thought, "That's really weird. Why would he want that?"

But, okay, what do I know, I'm an FSO-8, I'm 22 years old, what do I know? So I sent that one and the ambassador was copied on it. And the ambassador apparently went to the DCM and said, "Are you crazy? Why would you do that?" And Sam Lewis blamed it all on me. He said he'd never seen it and I had sent it without authorization. And I thought, "Oh, ho! Is this how we play the game? Okay, this is not the kind of person I need to be around." So that was the particular incident.

Q: Well, then, coming back, NEA, of course, is the antithesis of, say, the European bureau or something. The European bureau's sort of the marble halls and rather staid stuff. NEA, if you don't have a war, you at least have a coup.

JONES: And that's what I found. Everybody was interesting, everybody was quite prepared to share their stories with me. They were working on stuff that really mattered. They were quite prepared to bring me in. But the other thing I could see, at that point I'd taken the law boards and wasn't doing well on the law boards and I was applying to various law schools and got into none that I wanted, except for something called Golden Gate Law School but I could see that, this is where my future should be, it should be in Middle East affairs, they seemed to have no problem with women here, at least that is what I thought. But I could see that I needed to learn Arabic, in order to stay in it.

So I went down to the personnel people and said, "I want to stay in NEA, this is the bureau for me. Put me on the list to learn Arabic." They said, "Okay." About two or three weeks later I had a call from that same guy, Ray Hunt, later killed in Rome, who said, "Beth, I have a deal for you." I said, "Okay, what's the deal?" He said, "We have a sudden opening in Cairo in the consular section. You go to Cairo now and I'll make sure you learn Arabic at the end of that tour." I said, "It's a deal! I'll do it!" And that's what I did.

Q: You went to Cairo when?

JONES: I went to Cairo in August of '73. So I'd been in NEA for just that one year.

Q: Okay, let's talk a little about that one year. What were you doing?

JONES: I was in public affairs, doing the daily press guidance and taking notes during the press briefing and occasionally I would be involved in briefing Joe Sisco, who was the assistant secretary, on what had the questions been that came up and what were the responses. It was kind of boring, actually, but at least I got to learn the issues and how you talked about the issues.

Q: Obviously we've always had this problem of how you deal with Israel, because it's such a hot issue and you can have the Israeli lobby jump down, not you, but anybody who has to deal with this, you have to often employ weasel words or something. You get any feel for these dynamics?

JONES: Only to a degree. I understood it better later. At that point, I was more in the mechanical part of, “Quick! Get the answer!” I wasn’t too focused on what the answer was, to be honest.

I was much more focused, once I got the guidance, my various colleagues sort of explained to me what is the real issue here. And I can’t say I spent too much time worrying about what the guidance said. I was much more focused on understanding what the real issues were, what do we need to do in order to accomplish that? So I didn’t really take to the public affairs side of it. Answer the press’s questions, but here’s the real work, over here.

Q: Did you get any feel for the press corps?

JONES: I didn’t actually speak to any of the journalists, really, because that was the job of my boss or his deputy, when he wasn’t there. But I did know that there were regulars who called all the time, who my boss felt quite obliged to respond to. There was already, even then, a good sense that we have to be able to, that they’re on deadlines, that we owe them an answer, that if they didn’t get an answer in the noon press briefing we needed to come back to them some more. I can still hear my boss next door saying, “That’s all I can tell you. That’s as far as I can go. That’s all I can tell you. That’s as far as I can go” over and over again. I thought, “Okay, that’s one way to deal with it.”

Q: Well, then, you’re off to Cairo, in ’73 and you were there for how long?

JONES: Two years.

Q: ’73 to ’75. It’s a pretty exciting time.

JONES: Very exciting. I went when there was nothing going on. It was considered a kind of backwater post. It was an interesting section. Diplomatic relations between our two countries had been broken in 1967 by the Egyptians. The interest section flew the Spanish flag. We were seven or eight, I think, total, officers and staff. We had a communicator, two secretaries and five officers, maybe six. And we were all in one little building. Most people lived in that same building. We owned a different building down the way in Garden City where I lived all by myself. Six apartments, I was by myself in this whole building. Because there were so few of us, there was one political officer, one econ officer, who was actually in the station also. The principal officer had just been PNGed, a guy named Green. The admin counselor was the chargé, a guy named Dick Smith. So we were very thin, in terms of our work. I was a consular officer, the only one.

What I loved about it, which is exactly what I thought might happen if I stayed in NEA, was that everybody backed each other up. You knew everything that was going on. We had little staff meetings every morning to make sure everybody knew everybody else’s business. The political officer, Arthur Houghton, was very clear about what he was seeing, what he was hearing from people and would say, “Okay, I’m looking to see what the bridge guards are doing. I might take my kids to school. Anybody sees anything

different with the bridge guards, be sure to tell me.” It was all very, this is fun, this is great stuff!

And of course not long after that, eight weeks after I arrived, the '73 war broke out.

Q: Before we get to the '73 war, what type of consular work were you doing?

JONES: Everything. We had a full-service consular section. I had non-immigrant visas, immigrant visas, American citizens services, Social Security Administration work. I had quite a group of FSN's. They were really professional and quite senior. They knew what they were doing. We were in a situation in which, it was one of those times when I was required to interview every single visa applicant and every day there had to be a cable written that reported every applicant that had been interviewed for clearance in Washington, under terrorist rules.

This was of course not too long after Black September had happened. It was certainly not long after the two planes had been hijacked and taken to eastern Jordan. So there were a lot of similarities to the kinds of things going on now. I've forgotten what the program was called, but I remember these pages and pages of cables that I had to look through and sign off on every single day that one of my FSN's typed with every single visa applicant that we had that day.

Of course I was a fairly junior officer. I hadn't had a lot of consular experience, but my predecessor had relied on his FSN to do all the interviews, which I thought, “No, no, I really need to do these interviews myself.” I knew legally we were required to, but my predecessor actually hadn't done it.

We set up it all in a way so the system worked well. We changed the traffic pattern of people and all that kind of thing in order to be able to do it. That's a time when I had one of my insights into how I was viewed by Egyptians with whom I was working. Egyptians would come into my office and understand that I was not only the vice consul but head of the consular section, there wasn't really much recourse and they would say to me, “Oh, you're so young!” Americans would come in and understand the same thing and say, “Oh, you're a woman!” I thought, “Now, that's interesting.” The Egyptians could care less, male or female. I also began to notice that there were more Egyptian women who owned businesses or in positions of authority around Cairo than I thought I knew in Washington. The chairman of the foreign relations committee of parliament was a woman. The curator of this museum or senior people in this university were women. I really got to know my women FSN's and the women FSN's in other sections, “Tell me about Egyptian women. This is really interesting.”

Q: Sadat was by this time, what was the feeling towards Sadat?

JONES: The feeling, at first, of course was he was very distant, he was very anti-American. We had really gotten nowhere in terms of getting a relationship going. The principal officer had been PNGed for something quite ridiculous. The *Mokhabarat*, the

secret police, were following him and after him. He was PNGed because he loaned a book to an Egyptian at the country club. There was nothing there, but the suspicions were very high. The tone at the time was the Soviets are in charge here, the Russians have this place locked up, we'll have all we can do to have any relationships with any senior Egyptians.

But that, of course, was exactly what Houghton was trying to do. He knew some journalists. He knew a few people in the information ministry. He was kind enough to have me participate in some of the meetings, or would have them for lunch and have me for lunch, also, so I could kind of learn the ropes on how to do this kind of thing. He was a great teacher, Arthur Houghton.

But it was all very Cold War, still. Not too dissimilar to the kind of attitudes I was hearing in Afghanistan, but you were like right there. It all came together in Cairo.

Q: When you arrived, were the Soviets still there?

JONES: Yes.

Q: They hadn't been kicked out?

JONES: No, they were very much still there. I was not allowed to leave the city without permission, couldn't go up to Upper Egypt, south along the Nile, at all. Couldn't go to the Suez Canal, nobody could, no foreigners could, especially not us.

Q: I was just thinking, as a consular officer, Egypt's a major country and one consular officer. I think of the students and all this. You must have been plenty busy.

JONES: We were very busy but I had some really good FSN's. In the course of my time there I actually uncovered a fraudulent scheme that was going on, led by one of my very senior FSN's, but at least I became experienced enough to be able to recognize it when I saw it.

Q: Was there much work with the sort of archaeological mafia there?

JONES: Yes, they were great. Again, there were so few of us that they were quite well known. ACRC, I remember the acronym, their offices were not very far from the U.S. interests section. The head of the group was a wonderful man and his wife who was very kind to me. His kids were my age, so they would invite me over for dinner when his kids were in town, were nice to my sisters when they visited and that kind of thing. The archaeologists who were working at the center, they'd be there for a year or sometimes just six months or sometimes they'd be there longer. They were just part of the group that we all got to know in the very small group of expats who lived in Cairo at the time.

Q: The first event was the expulsion of the Soviets, wasn't it?

JONES: No, the first event was the war. One of the issues at the time was, were the Soviets resupplying the Egyptians. The Soviet advisors must have been gone by then. I think they left the previous spring.

Q: This, I think, was one of the reasons why the Egyptians were able to do their own thing and launch the Yom Kippur War. So how did the war hit you? What were you up to?

JONES: Well, it was extremely interesting. A whole bunch of us had spent the weekend out at one of the pyramids, the Step Pyramid, taken horses, camped out, the whole thing. I remember on the way back, on the Sunday morning, Arthur Houghton, again, saying, "Okay, let's look at the missile emplacements." You could see them up and down the Nile road, "Look how fake they are. You can see that several of them are made of cardboard, because the nose is kind of tipped down. There seems to be somebody moving around. I can't quite figure out why." Our station was picking up movement of missiles, some of the missile emplacements. At one point we could see long convoys of military equipment and Arthur said, "Well, what we're hearing is that it's the fall maneuvers, it is no big thing but there is something different. Fall maneuvers but more fall maneuvers than usual." In other words, he was kind of on to it. He knew there was something.

I remember really paying attention to the indicators that he was looking at for that kind of thing. In those days we worked six days a week, so I was in the interests section on the Saturday morning on October 6th, just sort of finishing up work. I was upstairs, talking to the president of the American University of Cairo (an American). He wanted to come in on Monday for something or other, he wanted to make arrangements for that. I was talking to his head of university administration (an American), who was my neighbor across the street, to make the arrangements. Hung up the phone and Arthur Houghton came tearing in. He said, "There's something going on! There's a Critic that's been sent by Embassy Tel Aviv. Golda Meier says that they're being attacked by the Egyptians. But the bridge guards didn't change! The bridge guards didn't move! There should be bridge guards, if they're going to go to war!" I remember saying, "Arthur, I've got my first tennis lesson at the Maadi Club in a couple of hours. What do you think?" He said, "Let's just stay for an extra half an hour. Let's just see if there's something going on or if this is just the Israelis being nervous. There is this thing about fall maneuvers, but let's just see."

So I said, "Fine" so I stayed. I was actually at the desk of the chargé's secretary, just because the phones were easier. My consular section was quite away away.

The American University fellow called me back. He said, "We are hearing some funny things from some of our students. Some of our students have suddenly not come to class. I think there might be a military call up. This is more than fall maneuvers."

In the meantime, Arthur's sending all this into Washington, saying, "There are a couple of indicators. Maybe something *is* going on." Sure enough, within two hours there was a critical message from Golda Meier to Sadat. I don't think we delivered it, I think it went

direct, because we didn't have that kind of access, I didn't think. Could have been through us, I don't know. There we were, right in the '73 war, right there.

So the first thing that I did, then, war started, American citizens, I need to find out where they all are. So I remember calling various hotels to say, "I'm coming over with a notice. You need to figure out who your American guests are and help me put the notice up." I remember calling my various consular pals at other embassies saying, "We think a war's starting. What about you guys? I'm going over to the hotel and putting notices up in the Hilton." They said, "Oh my God! We'll do the same thing!" So, that's how it started.

Q: So, what did you do?

JONES: At that point I found several of my FSN's and said, "We're going to need to have kind of a task force situation in the consular section, because there are going to be a lot of Americans--

Q: This is a Saturday?

JONES: This is a Saturday, so my FSN's had just gone home for the day. I had one or two who I knew how to reach by phone and I got them and said, "Here's what's going on, we need your help. Come back in, see if you can find some others, because we need to put notices in hotels and we need to be there to answer phones." And sure enough, not only did we have major phone calls from some of the tourists in the hotels where I'd gone over to put notices up, but we were starting to be inundated with telegrams from frantic families. And in the meantime, of course, we had learned that the airport was closed and there's no way for anybody to leave. So one of the things I did with my FSN's was to get hold of the tour group operators, as a way to get to as many Americans as was possible to say, "Okay, here's what we know so far."

You couldn't hear warfare around Cairo, really. You could see SAM missiles being shot off. We thought we could see some Israeli planes going over. But it wasn't like a shoot 'em up war was really in evidence on Saturday-Sunday. By Monday there was a little bit more of that and by Monday the Americans in the various hotels were extremely upset that they couldn't leave. We got one of the hotel ballrooms and I held a big meeting and people basically would not accept the "Please be calm, we're doing everything we can" line. That's all I could say. In the meantime, I was at this point cabling the State Department saying, "I need a way to get these people out!"

Q: By the way, I was consul general in Athens and we were working like mad to get--

JONES: You were at the other end of it, then, absolutely.

Q: Trying to get a cruise ship and this wasn't easy, particularly, it was a weekend, trying to get insurance people--

JONES: It was insurance. That was the issue.

Q: We finally did, but this was--

JONES: We did, but it took quite a long time. I'm going to say a week. It was probably five days. It felt like a week. But there were several elements to it. We finally got a cruise ship to say it would come down, then Lloyds of London cancelled all the insurance, so that was cancelled. In the meantime, I'm renting busses to get all of these tourists up to Alexandria to the cruise ship. I know I can't go on the busses with them, because it is all a military zone up there and no foreigners are allowed. So I recruit several of the most senior, most sensible FSN's to be on the busses, one per bus and we did briefings for them. But what happens is, several times I have to cancel the pickups or the meeting places for all of these Americans.

And of course in the meantime Agnew's resigning and they've had the Saturday Night Massacre and all this stuff. So I'm trying to explain to American tourists, "By the way, can I distract you with this news from Washington?" because they were so angry with me they staged a march on the embassy, too.

Dick Smith was very helpful, he was the man in charge, but it was very difficult to get the ship down. Finally the ship came, we got a ship I think out of Cyprus, in the end and when the crew learned that there was very little insurance, or the ones who insured it were sort of a fly by night Cypriot organization, I finally decided to call the U.S. government, *i.e.*, the Agency, to finally insure the thing, because I was so desperate and there was no crew on the ship. So I did another meeting, I did one almost every day but the last meeting I did I told the Americans, "Okay, I think I've found a ship for you, I've got the busses, I've got the people to go on the busses with you, but you're going to have to do your own cleaning. There's not going to be any big meals, there's not going to be anybody to wait on you in staterooms, it's not going to be fun, but you are going to get out!" And they all said, "Fine! We'll go!" But I had to print up tickets for the cruise ship and charge, I was forced to charge the equivalent of what a cruise ship would cost, which these people were extremely unhappy about. I remember doing that, as well.

Q: I sent an officer from the consular section, Dean Dizikes, to go on there and told him to try to get everybody, go get some responsible people, form a committee to assign jobs and bunks and all this. What you do is, you get the responsible people because you've got all the complainers and it worked.

JONES: It worked in the end, I was so grateful, but I felt so badly, Dick Smith had tried to get me on those busses so I could lead it, but they would not permit an American official on the bus.

Q: It worked, but it was, I think things are obviously better now but when you shut down the airport in a place like Egypt, it's interesting to get the two sides of the thing. Insurance just killed us.

JONES: It was Lloyds of London. I remember specifically seeing a cable. The second or third time I got a cable saying that they cancelled the ship, it was the second cancellation but it was the third time I had arranged the busses.

Q: Did you find with the groups coming to you, the irate Americans, could you find within this a cadre of sensible people who say, "Okay, come on, this is a problem, let's help you" or not?

JONES: There were one or two like that, but it was hard, in the kind of mob scene that I was dealing with at the Hilton Hotel, virtually everybody was at the Hilton, because that was the only decent hotel at the time, it was hard for those responsible people to stand out in the crowd. Occasionally they would come forward to me at the embassy and I would be able to say, "Okay, here's what I need your help with." But there was a certain sort of dozen or so of them that I got to say, "I'll be in charge of this group, I'll be in charge of that group at the hotel" so that when I had to call and send notices and go over to say, "For the second time now, the busses are cancelled" I could get them to help me get word out to people. We got notices on every door, but not everybody would have seen or heard that. So there were certain people that did help, absolutely.

Q: What was happening overhead and all, as the war developed? Was there a feeling of threat?

JONES: Two things happened. One was, as I was making arrangements for the bus convoy to go north to Alexandria to meet the cruise ship, I was of course cabling Embassy Tel Aviv to say, "On this date, at this time, there will be 27 or 17 busses, can you please inform the Israeli military, the Israeli Air Force in particular, that this is a convoy of American citizens and please don't strafe that convoy." The first message I got back was that they needed to know the exact details of every bus and what was the color of the roof and license plate numbers." I said, "I actually can't give you that information, because each time the cruise ship cancels I've got to go out and rent a different set of busses." Embassy Tel Aviv then said "Give me the range of colors. Is it mostly red, is it mostly blue?" So I did the best I could and said, "There's going to be a few reds, most of them are yellow, a few are this, a few are that. The license plates are who knows what but they're all going to have something distinctive on it, Cairo" or whatever it was. So Embassy Tel Aviv went to the Israeli Air Force. You know what the answer was they got back? I was stunned. They said, "Well, we'll try. We'll see. No guarantees." I thought, "I'll be God damned." That was the moment I thought, "These are our friends and allies? These are the people that we're resupplying in the war effort and this is their response to how they're going to protect American citizens?" I was stunned.

Q: I don't think any of us in the American diplomatic trade will forget the Liberty.

JONES: Absolutely.

Q: Basically the Israelis are their own friends.

JONES: Absolutely. But in terms of the war itself, as I was finally getting the tourists out of town, two things happened. First, when day six arrived and I was in a taxi or would talk to any of my FSN's, it was, "We've won, we've won, we've won!" "What do you mean, you've won?" "We're one day more than the Six Day War!" For them, that was victory, that they hadn't been beaten yet was victory. So that was my first impression about the war.

The second was that as the war went on longer, there were more and more Israeli planes coming overhead. I can't say that I ever felt that we were about to be bombed, but you could kind of see the show. We'd go out on balconies and look at the show, but at the same time we also started to burn our classified, right about then, that was day five, day six. I can remember taking the classified over to the building where the burn facility was. We had a big compound, but few of the buildings were open because there were so few of us. But we had to go out in the open with our classified, over to the building where the shredder and the incinerator was and I'm thinking, "This wasn't probably the wisest way to do this, but anyway."

Q: Were you worried, after the Six Day War and severed relations, the United States would be blamed for having destroyed the Egyptian Air Force. Actually, it was the Israelis that destroyed it, but for the Egyptians, it was always a mantra that the Americans somehow were involved in that. Were you worried about mobs coming and attacking you all?

JONES: The only conversations that I remember having were, sort of among ourselves, the irony that it was the American tourists who were going to mob the embassy, not Egyptians. That was the discussion and the attitude among Egyptians that any of us were picking up was, "Your government is of course doing the wrong thing, as your government always does. You guys are so nice. Americans are nice but your government is awful." But I never felt that we were threatened, to tell you the truth. On the street, in taxis, all over, people were completely fine about this.

Q: At sort of the end game is when the Egyptian Third Army was surrounded and Israeli forces had crossed the canal.

JONES: At that point, though, a couple of things had happened. The war was over before that happened, at least we thought it was. There was a point at which there was some kind of a cease fire, or discussion of a cease fire. At that point, for the first time, several of us went out to the pyramids to go riding and we heard the crump, crump, crump, crump, crump and I remember Arthur Houghton saying, "That's shelling! It's not very close, but that must be something to do with the Third Army" which he'd kind of been hearing about. We cut short our horseback riding, went back to the embassy to see what was going on. Sure enough, that was as the Third Army was being surrounded and the Israelis were closing in on them and they were trying to break out. It was the whole breakout at Chinese Farms and that whole thing. That was about two weeks I think into the war, not quite two weeks into the war.

And then at around that time, maybe just after that, I was actually at dinner at the home of Dick Smith and his wife, several of us were, sort of, “Okay, the war’s over and we’re fine and we got everybody out and we can breathe and exercise relief” when a NIACT Immediate [“night action” -- a very high priority message] came in and the communicator brought it over to the house and it was the announcement that Henry Kissinger was coming. That was the beginning of the shuttle diplomacy. We didn’t know it was going to be called shuttle diplomacy then, but Kissinger had just been made Secretary of State a month before or something. He was still the national security advisor. We were all so excited, because Henry Kissinger was a rock star. He was the most important person in the world.

Q: And of course, now secretaries of state in Cairo are really a dime a dozen, but

JONES: It was stunning, it was sort of a major thing. I remember sitting there with Dick Smith, I’m pretty sure Arthur was there saying, “Okay, we need to deliver this information to the Egyptian government.” Arthur planned out who we were going to give it to and would Dick go along or not and the information was being delivered to the Egyptian interests section in Washington as well and he would be here in a week. Whoa, this was extremely cool and it was very exciting, but what we didn’t know was that it was the beginning of dozens and dozens and dozens of Kissinger visits, which really....

Q: During the war, what was the attitude of the Egyptian government, because we were by this time the prime supplier of the Israeli Army and all?

JONES: I don’t have a lot of clear recollections of that, because I was so focused on the Americans. I’m trying to recall conversations I would have had with Arthur and with some of the others, but I don’t remember them very well, to tell you the truth.

Q: Were you aware of the mobilization of the Soviet airborne?

JONES: We were. I think the way it worked was, I think we got a cable, some kind of alert, that the Soviets had gone on high alert. And that’s when I remember thinking and all of us had conversations about this in the interests section, “This could get dangerous. This isn’t good.” Because either the cable said or we knew that meant that nuclear forces would also be on alert. At some point before that, we figured out that the Soviets were resupplying the Egyptians. I don’t know how much we knew but at one point in there the station chief came to me and asked me to listen to some tapes, to see if I could pick out any Russian, because I was the only one in the mission who knew Russian. I listened for quite a long time and I finally heard somebody say, in Russian, “I need a cigarette when we land” or something about a cigarette, but it was very clear, very Moscow accented Russian. That’s one of the ways we knew that they were flying overhead.

Q: Did you feel, most of the time, under real war threat, either the Israelis bombing you or Egyptian mobs, or were you just so involved in your own business?

JONES: It was partly being involved in your own business but also we could also, we could go outside and hear what was going on. It seemed very far away. It's not as though the shells were crashing around us, or anything like that. I must say I thought that the station chief, and his deputy, Arthur Houghton, seemed to be very plugged in and would tell us what was going on. I remember feeling I knew a lot about what was going on and being quite unconcerned about it, except for the time that we knew the Soviets had gone on high alert. I think the news came out about then, too, so it was in public.

Q: There wasn't the sort of the instantaneous, CNN type news

JONES: Oh, there was nothing like that. We listened to the BBC. We'd get the BBC on and we'd hear a lot on the BBC, but Arthur and the station chief were getting quite a bit.

Q: What about your back up? Later you got very much involved in this stuff but what about your back up in the State Department? Were there manuals that told you what to do, or was this

JONES: You mean to take care of the American citizens? I don't remember going to a manual, but I remember, I think it was mostly from the training: "Got to take care of American citizens!" Now of course it was reinforced by the American citizens bombarding me, so it was clear there were people out there that needed to be taken care of, but the idea of how you do it, you need to have a town meeting and all that kind of thing, I can almost always tell you how I learned certain things, but I'm not sure how I learned to do that, although it could have been that Dick Smith said that's what you should do, because that's the kind of role he played. Of course, being an admin officer, he would know perfectly well that that's what you need to do, is call a town meeting.

Q: I remember sort of the key person in Athens was Zack Geaneas, who was our admin officer.

JONES: He probably was in touch with Dick Smith along the way. But in terms of needing to look for people, find people, like I say, we were getting stacks, literally stacks, of telegrams every day: "Find so and so!", "Find so and so!" And I was trying to answer all of them. I would go find so and so and say, "Your mother, your cousin, your son, your father, is looking for you. Here's the phone number. Call them if you can. If you can't, I will say I've met you, I've seen you in this hotel and the State Department is briefing them on what the situation is in terms of trying to get you guys out" and I would do cables back all the time. The funniest one was, it was addressed to Elizabeth Jones, American Embassy and I thought, "I'm Elizabeth Jones, for Pete's sake! How am I going to find this Elizabeth Jones?" And the message was, "There's a war! Get out, get out!" I thought, "Oh, God! Somebody's got a really pathetic mother." But, it was my mother!

It was very difficult to get a call out. You had to claim to be a journalist to get a call through the Egyptian operators. I asked my FSN's how to do it, but I did call my parents, claiming I was a journalist.

Q: The October War was over. So what happened, from your perspective, what were you up to?

JONES: The October War was just over, but only barely and right about that time, just as we were calming down, we'd gotten the American tourists out of the country, we heard that Henry Kissinger was coming. Very exciting, extremely exciting, because he had sort of rock star status at the time. He'd just become Secretary of State, retained his national security advisor hat and it was a very, very big deal for us to have him come. It turned out it was a very big deal for the Egyptians as well. We had a tiny, tiny interests section, but we were of course able to get the appointments and all of the arrangements done right away for Kissinger to come. Because of the time of year, it was November, Sadat was in Aswan, so the first Kissinger visit was to Aswan, where it was quite difficult for us. I think there were seven of us in the interests section, seven Americans and a few FSN's. So we all went down there to try to set this up.

I'm trying to remember this correctly. Now I'm not a hundred percent certain that the first visit was Aswan. I think the first visit actually was Cairo. The second one, right after that, was Aswan.

One of the things of course that was difficult for us was that we didn't have a defense attaché. So here's Henry Kissinger coming in on a military aircraft and the Department of Defense is sending all of these cables in that we can't read because they're all in acronyms and code. We had to arrange all that kind of thing. So it was a very good experience for me as a junior officer because with nobody else there I served as the coordinator for the plane with the Egyptian Air Force, to get the plane into the airport, did all the motorcade work, did all the foreign ministry work, helped write the initial papers, did all the schedule, made all the hotel reservations for the initial visit.

The part of the visit that I remember in particular was first of all the excitement of that plane landing with "United States of America" painted on the fuselage in Cairo, all of us had goosebumps, Kissinger getting off the plane. Fortunately, several of the people getting off with him were people whom I had known in NEA. Of course Assistant Secretary Joe Sisco was there. Roy Atherton was the deputy assistant secretary. Hal Saunders was coming from the NSC. People like that, so I at least knew some of the people.

One of the other people who got off the plane was Hermann Eilts, who was coming to be the prospective ambassador. What was then discussed in that meeting was that the United States and Egypt would exchange ambassadors who already had the ambassadorial title, so we wouldn't have to worry about credentials, they could be called Ambassador So and So. So Ambassador Eilts came to Cairo and Ambassador Ashraf Ghorbal went to Washington. Both were senior ambassadors.

After the first meeting that the team had with Sadat, I saw the group after they got back to the hotel and asked right away of Ambassador Eilts and Roy Atherton, "How did the meeting go?" They said, "Well, they liked each other." I said, "No, how did the meeting

go?” They turned to me and they said, “Beth, you’ve got to understand this, they liked each other. That’s what matters. Everything else is easy after that.” And that was when a big light bulb went on in my head and I remembered that forever in the rest of my Foreign Service career. That was a really strong learning point for me, I remember exactly when I learned it, that the personal relationship is what allows you to have the negotiation, have the discussion. No matter how difficult it is, if you have that personal connection you can get to the next conversation and that’s what I’ve learned is the most important thing in diplomacy is to be able to get to the next conversation from the one that you’re having.

That whole set of meetings that they had for a couple of days of course was the beginning of shuttle diplomacy. Kissinger went on to Jerusalem from there. He rolled in, stopped in Damascus later on, I don’t think he did a stop in Damascus on that first trip. But we had Kissinger coming back, then, at least once a month, if not much more frequently than that. Again, we were a tiny, tiny, interest section, so we had to do all of the work each time.

I found that I had an advantage in Egypt being a woman, because I was easy to recognize. When I went to the Foreign Ministry, they welcomed me and waved me in, whereas my male colleagues all had to show their diplomatic ID cards. Working on the Kissinger shuttles sometimes meant I had to go out to the airport to tape numbers on helicopter windows, so the travelling party would know which helicopter they were assigned to. Again, after the first time, the guards waved me onto the tarmac, no problem. My male colleagues would have been stopped.

Q: I would have thought that NEA would have augmented the staff, put some people on, somebody who could read Defenses, others.

JONES: Well, they did, to a degree. Within a few months we had a defense attaché, a very senior one, Brigadier General Gay, who had been Kissinger’s military assistant negotiator at the Paris Peace Talks for Vietnam. So he obviously paid a lot of attention to this and made sure that he had somebody he really trusted to come in at a very senior level to be the military attaché. It was a while before he came, but on the plane coming in they sent the executive director, who came on the plane with Kissinger with a man named Harvey Buffalo, who was extremely helpful to me, took me in hand and said, “Okay, Beth, make sure you never lose any of the passports, here’s how you do the rooms, here’s how you do this and this.” So he kind of set me up to have a pretty good idea of what to do but then he said, “Now these are the things you really have to pay attention to.” So we had a template really from Harvey right from the beginning of how to do a secretary of state visit.

Q: By the way, was there, tucked away in some officer’s office, a secretary of state visiting standard operating procedure you could reach out and grab?

JONES: No, there wasn’t. But you know how the SecState visits go. They send a lot of information out in advance on this is how we want it set up, this is how many rooms we

need, this is what we need in control rooms and the other thing that we had was we had extremely good FSN's, who didn't really remember having done a secretary of state visit because we hadn't had diplomatic relations for so long, but really got it about "this is what we need in the motorcade, this is what we need in the room set up." So I was able to direct all of this with some extremely good people. So we didn't feel disadvantaged.

We did augment the staff with one person who was in Arabic language training in Beirut at the time, April Glaspie. April came not for the very first visit but we asked her to come for the second one and then she was so fantastic and she and I got along so well and she with the others that we asked for her to be permanently assigned to U.S. Interests Section Cairo and FSI permitted that. So we had an additional political officer, really, to work with us on all the visits and that made all the difference.

Then gradually we were augmenting the embassy staff, so that, for example, John Craig came in then a few months later as the economic/commercial officer. We hadn't had one before that. So we were gradually building up the staff as the shuttle diplomacy became more routine and as we moved towards formal diplomatic relations, which we then established in March of the following year.

Q: What reactions was the interests section picking up in Cairo and from Egyptians? Did things change for you all?

JONES: They changed, absolutely. Even during the war, before the whole Kissinger business started, taxi drivers would say to me, you'd get in the car, "Are you an American?" "Yes." "We love Americans but we don't like American policy. We don't like the American government but Americans are great." So we already had that going for us.

Then with Kissinger coming on a regular basis, that was very exciting to Egyptians as well, because he was such a high-profile person. He treated their president extremely respectfully. All of a sudden Egypt was on the front page of the newspapers in a very positive way. The negotiations were moving along, in terms of shuttle diplomacy to make an agreement about the '73 war. But the Egyptians were also very positively inclined towards President Sadat then anyway, simply because the war went past six days, that was hurdle number one, to overcome the shameful defeat of the Six Day War in 1967 and then, because they'd gotten across the Bar Lev Line and gotten into the Sinai and had recovered Egyptian territory, Egyptians were very proud of the accomplishment and were perfectly willing in general to support the negotiations to end the war and figure out how to have, peace isn't the right word. At that point that wasn't what the goal was, not peace with Israel but at least to have an accommodation with Israel.

Q: What was the reaction towards Israel at the time? Was this sort of a violent one that you get today in the Islamic world? Egyptians have always been so much different, I'm told.

JONES: Yeah, it was hostile, though, towards Israel. There was no question that Israel had been, in their mind, the aggressor, had taken over Arab territory, was being supplied by the United States, so the United States was suspect. There was certainly the sense that Egypt was part of the Cold War in that respect, the confrontation states and Israel were part of the Cold War in that respect, in terms of support from the U.S. and Soviet Union. There was no love lost for the Israelis.

The other thing that was very important at the time was the negotiation that permitted the UN peacekeepers to come in. That happened very quickly and they were very visible on the streets of Cairo right away. I remember, sort of November, December, maybe January, it was cold and the sight of these tall, blond guys in blue berets on the streets of Cairo was very dramatic. Of course they didn't stay there that long, because they went over to Kilometer 101 in the Sinai to do the separation of forces work, but they were very visible and it was sort of a signal to the population that Egypt was back, that Egypt was back in the international community, that Egypt was a player now, whereas before there'd been kind of a feeling that it was shunted off to the side but Egypt now was speaking for itself in a very positive way that the population I remember supported.

Q: Did you have any contact, one way or the other, with some of the other embassies around, was there more life to the area?

JONES: Definitely. Certainly we had had a lot of contact in any case with other embassies when we were all working to get our tourists out. I did a lot of work with the European embassies, with the Canadians, with others, to see if we couldn't make common cause on bringing in ships. So we had that kind of connection. But also when the shuttle diplomacy started, they were beating down the doors of Arthur Houghton, the political officer: "What's going on? Give us a briefing." So we were Action Central, as far as the other embassies in Cairo were concerned. I particularly remember we spent quite a bit of time with the French embassy, certainly the British, the Canadians, the Italians, who were all a group that spent time together. We flew the Spanish flag at the time, so we always were very careful to brief the Spanish ambassador, sort of our main guy. We were very respectful of that and he was very grateful for that, too.

Q: Did the Spanish connection cause any problems in your work at all?

JONES: None. The Spanish ambassador was extremely generous with us. For example, even when I arrived, I was a junior officer, the consular officer, the Spanish ambassador had a dinner to welcome me. I was stunned. I paid a call to him right away. So we were very careful with our relationship with him. Dick Smith was the acting principal officer, the administrative counselor, until Ambassador Eilts came and then he was nominally in charge although he hadn't presented credentials or anything yet, but Dick also worked very hard to make sure that we retained that respectful relationship and weren't in any way casual about the role that the Spanish played for us.

That said, we were regularly called into the foreign ministry to do this or that and we just went. The Spanish ambassador said, "You guys just go, if they want to talk to you, they

should talk to you on whatever the issue was. If you need me, call me.” So it worked extremely well, I must say.

Q: How did you find the Kissinger staff? Sometimes, the secretary of state arrives, as you know, this is equivalent to an earthquake or something in some posts. I suppose in a crisis situation it's a different matter.

JONES: Well, yes. The senior people on the Kissinger team were all people that I knew from Washington, from my previous job. When they came to Cairo or Aswan or Luxor, wherever it was that we did the shuttle, or Alexandria, they couldn't have been nicer. Now these are all well known to be really wonderful people, anyway. Joe Sisco could be a little rough around the edges, but he was so involved in the excitement of the moment that we were all treated extremely well, I must say. We knew we had to work hard and we knew we had to be there and we knew we couldn't make any mistakes.

The only person who was very rough on us was Kissinger, but he had a temper. We knew that and we would just do the best we could and then if we made a mistake, that's one of the first places I learned to say, “I'm so sorry, Mr. Secretary. I made a mistake.” That's the best way to stop the shouting, is to say, “I'm sorry. I made a mistake.” and then there's nothing more that people can say.

Q: Were there people, in a way, Kissinger minders, who, after it's all over would come by and pat you back and say, “Don't take it personally,” something like that?

JONES: I don't really remember that too well but I didn't feel we really needed it. There was one particular visit that was very difficult. It was when Kissinger had made the Kilometer 101 agreement, the separation of forces. After it all worked in the early spring, the Egyptians wanted to have a celebratory trip up to Luxor and I was asked to do the advance from Aswan to Luxor. This was all during the period of time when foreigners were not permitted to go below Cairo to Upper Egypt. So we had to request special permission. We basically got a bus, middle of the night, I went with several FSN's up from Aswan to Luxor to set up at the hotel. We had basically one day to find cars, get a motorcade together, organize with the governor of the area and the mayor to line up at the airport in the right way, et cetera.

We had one near catastrophe. The hotel manager, in his excitement for the Kissinger visit, found an old American flag and hoisted it in front of the hotel. Fortunately, one of the FSN's noticed this and alerted me. I had to go explain to the manager that, since Egypt and the U.S. did not have diplomatic relations, the Egyptian government would be very upset to see the American flag flying in at his hotel in Luxor. He didn't profess to understand, but he did take the flag down.

When Kissinger landed in Luxor with the Egyptian foreign minister, I don't think Sadat was with him at that point, and I was the senior American at the foot of the steps. I had worked extremely hard after riding the bus all night from Aswan. We got it all done, I had great FSN's with me, but it was hard as hell. I remember greeting the Secretary, he

recognized me, and introducing him to the governor. The best car in Luxor was a pink Cadillac, so he rode around in a pink Cadillac that led the motorcade. I remember Dick Smith, he was the principal officer, coming down the steps afterwards and giving me a big hug and saying, "It's okay now, you did a great job! We're here!" I was so relieved to have my senior colleagues there to help out, to make sure everything was being done right.

In the meantime, the Board of Directors of the American University Cairo was in Luxor on a Nile boat cruise. These were very prominent Americans (retired Ambassador Yost among them) and Egyptians. My Cairo neighbor, the AUC executive director, was on the boat and conveyed the Board invitation that Kissinger join them for drinks – and a briefing that evening. Which Kissinger did!

Q: Did things change, with the government, all of a sudden the government was sort of more open

JONES: Much more. It was much more open. Of course, Ambassador Eilts was such a professional. He knew how to establish relationships with the foreign minister, with his senior people. In between the Kissinger shuttles of course Ambassador Eilts was the one getting instructions to check on this point or that point with various people in the Egyptian government.

At the same time, we learned a tremendous amount from Ambassador Eilts. Here he was, he arrived in Cairo and he was staffed by a bunch of junior officers, really and maybe a couple of military officers. April by then was middle grade, John Craig was kind of middle grade. A new public affairs officer came in who was fairly junior, he and I were in the same A-100 class. Ambassador Eilts would take time every day to sit down with us. We'd do a review of the media and then talk about what we were all going to do that day. I really think of him as a fabulously wonderful mentor, very patient with all of us. Very strict, we knew we had to perform, we knew we couldn't make any mistakes. But, looking back on it, I learned a tremendous amount from him about how you do things.

One of the big lessons he taught us, for instance, was, when you write a cable, never raise an issue in a cable that you don't address in the cable in some way. He taught us to read the cable as though we were the recipient, who didn't know very much. So we knew that we should never get a question back from Washington saying, "What did you mean by that?" or "What's the follow up on this?" We should say, if we didn't know what the follow up was you would say, "We don't know what the follow up is and will report back" so they didn't have to check with us on every little thing.

In terms of the atmosphere with the Egyptians, for instance, the day that it was announced the U.S. and Egypt were going to reestablish relations there was one tower in Cairo that had been built sort of with, the story was, extra money from the Aswan Dam. Nasser had been so upset with the United States at the way the Aswan Dam had been built, the delay in getting American money, that he built this stupid tower in the middle of downtown Cairo which went dark the day that he broke diplomatic relations with the

United States. We were sitting in the hotel, because it was during a Kissinger shuttle that the reestablishment of relations was announced. I happened to be looking out the window with several of my colleagues, Dick Smith and Arthur Houghton and we saw the lights go on on that tower, five minutes after the announcement of the reestablishment of diplomatic relations. This was the signal that the U.S. is back.

My recollection is, of course I didn't become a political reporting officer until a little bit later, but the access that the ambassador had, that Arthur Houghton had as political officer, April Glaspie had as political officer, was fantastic. They could get to anybody, on any subject and did a tremendous amount of reporting of attitudes on what was going on and that kind of thing and that was all because of the change in the relationship.

Q: Did the estimate from you all, I'm still talking about the [interest group staff], of Sadat changed, or had it changed by that time?

JONES: My recollection is that we felt we didn't know very much about Sadat and his attitude, on how he might behave in the negotiation at that point, when we first started this, that there was a sense, as I remember, that Sadat was considered a lot like Nasser, although there was a very popular joke that developed at the time in Cairo that depicted the Sadat personality, that goes like this: Sadat's in the car after Nasser died and the driver comes to an intersection and says, "Mr. President, which way should I go, to the left or the right?" And Sadat says to him, "Which way would Nasser have gone?" "Oh, Mr. President, he would have gone left." And Sadat says, "Okay, signal left but turn right."

That was, I thought, very descriptive of the attitude about Sadat's personality, that he would say all the popular, accepted things but then do something that made a lot more sense. So that was what was developing. I can't tell you that I would have predicted, in those days, that Sadat would go to Jerusalem the way he did later but he had in him the making of someone who knew his own mind, would listen to Kissinger, would listen to what it was that the Israelis were saying and make up his mind in a logical way and, as far as I knew at the time, was listening to his advisors, because I had the impression that Ambassador Eilts would go to various Sadat intimates: Ashraf Ghorbal, the prime minister and Osam el-Baz. My recollection is that when he would go to Osam el-Baz, the prime minister, or to the *chef de cabinet* to Sadat and get a view of what the president thought.

At the same time, Sadat was no pushover. He knew his own mind and if the Israelis came back with a proposition that he didn't think he could sell or he thought was way over the top he would say no.

There was one particular incident that I remember very, very well. We were in Aswan. It was in the spring and we'd gotten the whole team off to the barrages, where Sadat's villa was, for the morning negotiation and April and I had gone down to breakfast and we saw Ambassador Eilts sitting by the window by himself and we were horrified that we had somehow left him out of the motorcade. We went rushing over to him, "Mr. Ambassador,

we'll get you to the barrages right away, don't worry!" He said, "Oh, no, I'm not going. I've been disinvited. I'll tell you later about it." And the story, which he told us when we got back to Cairo and were having our morning get together, he said, "Here's what happened. I want you to remember this. I was called by the Secretary and told that the Israelis had made a particular proposal that they wanted presented to the Egyptians. I said to the Secretary that I knew that the Egyptians would turn it down and that they would not only turn it down but they would be very upset by this suggestion, because it was counter to anything that they had ever discussed with the Secretary. The Secretary insisted that I do so, that I make this presentation and I decided that the safest thing all around for me was to insist to the Secretary of State that I have this instruction in writing, that I refused to carry out this instruction unless I had it in writing, because I was concerned that should I make this presentation and the Egyptians react the way I expected them to react, that Kissinger would disavow having given me the instruction. So I insisted on having it in writing. Of course, I never got the instruction in writing and my punishment is not to be included in the meeting that day. And I don't know whether I'll be fired for this. I could, but I believe I've done the right thing. I've done the right thing in terms of the negotiation and I want you all to remember that there comes a time when you want to have an instruction in writing. You can't always take it over the phone, especially if you have reservations about how it's going to be received."

One of my favorite stories, though, from the Kissinger shuttles, happened at the end of the big push to get an agreement in the Sinai. The practice was that we on the Cairo team stayed in Aswan (Sadat lived in Aswan in the winter) whenever Kissinger went to Jerusalem. One afternoon, I was in our make-shift Interests Section office on the sixth floor of the Barrages Hotel in Aswan with Ambassador Eilts and April Glaspie. The phone rang and the hotel operator put Arthur Houghton on the line, who was calling from Cairo. These were antiquated phones that had to be cranked regularly to assure they had enough juice to work. Arthur said he had just received a cable from Kissinger and needed to read it to me, as it contained very important information for Ambassador Eilts to convey to the Egyptians. I could just barely hear him. The hotel operator broke in and explained that there were too many birds on the telephone wires from Cairo, which is why it was hard to hear. In any case, Arthur painstakingly dictated the cable to me, with both of us shouting – he to convey the text, and me to check that I had heard it correctly. The cable was an offer from the Israelis to solve the last point of disagreement on the Sinai disengagement. Eilts heard most of the message as I checked it with Arthur and was all set to walk downstairs to convey the offer to the Egyptian Foreign Minister, who was staying on the third floor of the hotel with his Foreign Ministry team. Just then, there was a knock on the door. I called, come in! In strode Foreign Minister Fahmy and his Chef de Cabinet Omar Siri with arms outstretched and big grins on their faces, saying "We accept!" They had listened in on the entire phone call. But never mind that. Jubilation all around!!

Q: I suppose, by that time, Kissinger had a reputation of not being the most straightforward person.

JONES: Absolutely. He was well known for being imaginative, shall we say, in his negotiating strategies.

Q: How long had you been in the Foreign Service now?

JONES: At that point I'd been in the Foreign Service three years. It was extremely exciting. Of course, I had applied to law school, I thought I would go to law school from Cairo and at that point I dropped the whole idea. I thought, "I'm in the middle of the action here. I'm not going anywhere but here." What's very important, too, about the time that the shuttles were really winding down but we still had a huge amount of work to do is when the State Department came back to me and said, "Remember we promised you Arabic training if you went to Cairo for two years to do this job? We'd like to assign you to Arabic training." So they stuck with their bargain, number one. Number two, the other thing that happened is that Ambassador Eilts had been bugging Washington for more political officers. Arthur Houghton was leaving, they had Arthur replaced by April Glaspie and they didn't have anybody to fill in behind April. He came to me and said, "Beth, would you be the political officer?" And I said, "Yes!" He said, "Don't you want to think about it?" I said, "No!" And the Department said, "Great!" because it's easier to find a consular officer on an urgent basis than a political officer. So that's how I became a political officer for the second year I was in Cairo and I worked, again, for April.

Q: Let's talk just a bit about, we're talking about 1974, here is a very important post in the scheme of things for the United States, it's in the middle of the Arab world and here is April Glaspie and now this kid, Beth Jones, both women. I come from a generation, remember, that you couldn't send Jews to the Arab world, you couldn't send women, all sorts of things you couldn't do in the Arab world. Could you talk about how you and maybe April were seeing this and others were talking about this.

JONES: It was very interesting, actually. I did not know April before she came to Cairo, but as I first started asking people, saying I'd like to learn Arabic, they would say, "You must know April." So I'd heard about her quite a bit. She was, for us, the first woman in the Foreign Service to really push hard for Arabic training and it had been very difficult for her. They didn't believe her, they didn't think she would be any good at it. She was assigned to Jordan, she did a very good job there during Black September, very difficult. She was assigned then I think to Sweden after that, because you cannot have a woman in the Arab world and then she went to Kuwait right after the '67 war. I might not have the sequence right, but anyway she went to Kuwait and had enough Arabic and she rode horseback very, very well and she would go out horseback riding in the desert with all of the sheiks of Kuwait and would do the most spectacular political reporting on the attitudes on the Six Day War. She was one of the very, very few American political officers that any Arab would talk to and got the reporting award as a result of it. So people finally got it: "Okay, women do fine in the Arab world."

So she was a big example for all of us. So there was a whole crew of us that then came behind April. I was one of the first to say, "We want Arabic training" and they said, "Fine." I was in that group and Barbara Bodine came in the group and Mary Ann Casey

was in that group. There were a bunch of other women who came into NEA at the time. NEA, when I first got into the bureau, was very, very welcoming of women, principally, my feeling at the time was because they welcomed anybody who was interested. It wasn't that they especially recruited women. They said, "If you are an American Foreign Service Officer, and you are interested in the Arab world, come join us!" So any gender, religion, ethnicity, it was very open, welcoming. I don't know who to ascribe that to necessarily, but I certainly had the feeling that I was certainly not being discriminated against and was certainly being welcomed. Everything that I was told, *i.e.* go to Cairo for two years and get Arabic training, that all happened the way it was promised.

Q: As a political officer, what were we looking at particularly and what was your slice of the pie?

JONES: Of course there were some very specific things we were looking for, in terms of attitudes about Israel, attitudes about the peace process, which is what we started to call it then, what was going on with Syria, what's the deal with Libya, because they were just coming off of this United Arab Republic business with Syria and Libya, what leadership role was Egypt going to be able to play in the Arab world and with the Arab League. The Arab League of course is based in Cairo.

My slice of it as a political officer was to do a lot of the Arab League work. I kind of learned that from April. I did some of the Libya work, I got to know people in the Libyan embassy then and did some of the other diplomatic work with the Syrian embassy and that kind of thing.

We also were looking at internal attitudes. April did a lot more of that. She was the one who did more of what the journalists were saying and what they were really talking about. We were doing a bit on support for Sadat, how was the public feeling about all of this, not overtures to Israel, it certainly wasn't an overture to Israel, but at least making accommodations with Israel, how did all of that look. So that was the kind of reporting that we were particularly focused on.

Q: When you mentioned Sadat's support in the country, as time went on, he seemed to become more and more the darling of the Western world and not so much in Egypt. But at that point, would you say he was sort of the golden haired boy or something?

JONES: He was. He's the one who brought the country out of obscurity, I think, sort of in the popular view. I did not have the impression, April may tell you a different story, I did not focus at all on the Muslim Brotherhood as a big issue. It appeared that Islamic fundamentalism wasn't a big issue. Poverty was a big issue.

One of the things that happened during that period of time was we brought in an AID director, who was basically by himself. Hard to imagine now, with hundreds of people in the AID mission, but he was by himself. Eventually a couple of other people came in, but Ambassador Eilts was strident on the point of not overwhelming the Egyptians with too

many AID people, wanting to have the money for projects but not wanting all the money to go to American contractors kind of thing.

Q: Let's talk about the Arab League. What did the Arab League, what did it really consist of and what was it doing and how did Egypt fit in?

JONES: I remember the Arab League being Egypt. It was very dominated by Egypt, in my recollection. Historians might look at it in a different way. Certainly I recall having the impression that what Egypt wanted done is what the Arab League would do and it was a question of overwhelming the others in the Arab League with Egyptian leadership. The Syrians, of course, were not so eager to have such strong Egyptian leadership but I don't recall a big discussion about it. I recall that more from when I served in Jordan.

It was much more about how to reduce the anti-Israel declarations out of the Arab League. We did a lot of work on the boycott issue. That was a bad one for Congress. We wanted to find a way that the Arab boycott of American companies who were working in Israel wasn't so bad and try to prevent more companies from getting put on the boycott list. In a way it was more damage limitation than positive advocacy. That's how I remember it.

Q: The boycott, the Arab League, this seemed to be its main function. I ran into this when I was economic officer in Dhahran back in 1959. They were boycotting IBM because IBM had, this goes back aways, an IBM punch card outfit in Israel, so the Arab League was going to boycott IBM, when the Egyptians took a look at this and said, "Wait a minute, our entire mobilization plan is based on IBM punch cards." So that disappeared, but it shows you how intrusive this thing could be.

JONES: There's one little story that we always tell about the Kissinger visits, especially when he married Nancy and she would come with him on the trips and we were always very glad when she came because she was the soft side. When you asked if anybody came behind him to say, "It's okay, it's okay." She would do that. Once she was married to him and would come on the trips he would come storming into the office saying this and that and then she would follow in behind him and take him in hand in front of us and say, "Henry, we're going away now, you don't need to be so mean to these people. They're working very hard. They're very good people" and then she'd sort of smile and give us a big wink over her shoulder and then come back and say, "You guys are really great! Don't pay any attention to him."

Every time she was coming, she would always have somebody contact the embassy and say, "What do you guys need?" We often would say, "Could you bring a case of Coke?" because Coke was on the boycott list, you could only get Pepsi and my drink was bourbon and Coke and she would always bring a case of Coke for us.

At the end of one Aswan visit, I had to rush down from the US delegation sixth floor of the hotel to the lobby for an urgent motorcade issue. I got into the elevator and realized that I had a can of Coke in my hand -- that forbidden beverage on the Arab boycott list. I

immediately hoped fervently that the elevator would not stop on the third floor that housed the Egyptian delegation, so they wouldn't see me with the Coke. But, of course, the elevator stopped on the third floor and none other than Egyptian Foreign Minister Fahmy got on. He looked at my Coke, looked at me and said, "Well, I hope you at least have some bourbon in that can, too." What a relief! I was not to be PNG'd!

Q: From your perspective, what was the role of Saudi Arabia in the Arab League at this time?

JONES: The Egyptians were, as I remember it, very mindful of the leadership role that the Saudis should be playing in the Arab world. Because Ambassador Eilts had spent so much time in Saudi Arabia that was always the big discussion that he had with the head of the Arab League, about making sure that the Saudis were briefed, they were brought in on these kinds of things, how to work with the Saudis on this or that issue. I don't recall how often Kissinger would go to Saudi Arabia during the shuttle diplomacy era but he probably did go on a fairly regular basis, just to keep in touch with them and bring them along on all these issues, I suspect very reluctantly.

One thing that happened, it happened right after we had that one visit to Luxor. Ambassador Eilts and April and I and a couple of other people drove back to Cairo from Luxor. Halfway there I remember getting the news that King Fahd had died and so there was a transition in Saudi Arabia at the time as well that the Egyptians and the U.S. had to deal with.

Q: Was the Egyptian attitude towards the Saudis and maybe the Libyans and all of these that these were country cousins and "We're not really Arabs, we're the oldest civilization going" or something?

JONES: There was certainly the attitude that "we're the oldest civilization going and not really Arabs." That was absolutely there, whether or not we were doing shuttle diplomacy. It was there before all of this happened.

The Libyans were definitely the country cousins. The Egyptians could not have been more deprecating of the Libyans, the way they were around the pyramids, the way they populated the bars around Cairo. It was always, if a bad thing was going on, it was the Libyans. The Saudis got a lot more respect from the Egyptians, I would say. There was much more really working to keep the Saudis alongside, is my recollection.

Q: Of course, when you think about it, the Libyans were probably supplying a lot of the labor, whereas the Saudis, you're ending up with the very wealthy, they were the ones who got out of the country.

JONES: Right, but the other thing, of course, the Egyptians were sending a tremendous amount of labor to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf and there was certainly a lot of Egyptian labor even going to Libya at the time.

Q: Was there any reflection of the Yemeni conflict, in which Egypt had supported the Yemenis against the Saudis?

JONES: There wasn't a lot of evidence of it. The most I knew about, I was not really involved in it, was one of the people at the British embassy who we spent a lot of time with had been one of the senior British officers involved in the whole Yemeni business and would tell stories about it. But it was kind of in the past by then.

Q: Well, in a way, was Nasser really in the past? Were there stirrings of Nasserism or not?

JONES: There was a lot of talk about Nasserism, who was a Nasserist and who wasn't and all that kind of thing. I recall an evolution, really, during the period of time as Sadat came into his own, because of the Kissinger shuttles and because of the negotiations within the confrontation states and the leadership role he took in the Arab League, that he got away from the Nasserist kind of past, that he became his own person to a greater degree and so the Nasserist kind of talk went away, to a degree.

Q: What I gather, Sadat didn't go for the cult of personality as much.

JONES: No, he didn't.

Q: Certainly, when you were observing, there wasn't a Sadatism?

JONES: There was not a cult of personality with Sadat really at all. He was much more modest. He considered himself a military officer and was modest in that respect. One element to the relationship that I should mention is that with General Gay having come in at such a senior level, there was a lot of liaison back and forth with the Egyptian military, which was new for the United States. We hadn't had that in a very long time and that was very attractive for Sadat. He wanted the military to be given the kind of respect that he thought it deserved. So that was a big part of the bilateral relationship that was developing. The assistance side and the military, those two relationships were growing.

Q: I don't want to go into details, obviously, but what was your feeling towards our intelligence apparatus? Were they involved there?

JONES: They were involved. As far as we were concerned, the embassy had an extremely good relationship, agency to agency. Because I still had Russian, I was asked to help a couple of times in listening to things. And then as the relationship developed into a more formal one, we established formal intelligence liaison, with declared people and all that kind of thing, which as far as I know was very productive. As a political section we had a very good relationship with our colleagues and would talk about, "these are the kind of people you might want to pay attention to" as receptions were held that included a lot of the arts people and other people.

Q: One of the problems sometimes is that different agencies want to stake out people and say, "Stay away from there. That's my contact."

JONES: We didn't have that. Partly because it was all new. None of us had a big slug of relationships already. We were all building our relationships. I think it was because of the kind of people who were at a post like that, people sort of self-selected for collaboration. I learned it in Kabul but I also learned it in Cairo, that it was very clear we were all working on the same team, we all had the same goals. I give Ambassador Eilts a lot of credit for that, but also the people from the other agencies, they were good, they were well versed that way and we got along fine.

Q: What about the Libyan connection? Was Gaddafi seen by us and maybe your Egyptian [contacts] as sort of a loose cannon?

JONES: I don't really remember Gaddafi at all as having the reputation he does now. It was more that he was a bit of a maverick. He had thrown out the Peace Corps. A lot of the former Libya Peace Corps volunteers were working in Kabul when I was there. But he wasn't the maverick that he's known as being now. He hadn't started all of that stuff yet.

We still had diplomatic relations with Libya. I paid regular calls on Libyan diplomats who, as part of their discussions with me and with others, would talk about how wacko some of the instructions were that they were getting from Tripoli. They were traditional diplomats, they were used to behaving the way the rest of us behaved. They weren't so happy about the peoples' bureaus being set up and that kind of thing.

Q: Gaddafi began to, embassies became "peoples' bureaus"

JONES: I think that didn't happen until I got to Baghdad, but the transitions were happening and they were not happy. Particularly, I found, Libyan diplomats who were from Benghazi were even more acerbic about Gaddafi. So there was that kind of tribal sense, I guess.

Q: What about the Soviets? Were they at all a presence, after the war, or had they sort of

JONES: They were there, but they had their tail between their legs, around town. They still had a pretty big embassy. We all would troop off to the national day and we knew our various counterparts and all that kind of thing, but they weren't on the top of the heap anymore and didn't mind talking about it. It was kind of interesting.

Q: Anything else?

JONES: The one thing that also happened while I was there was the Nixon visit to Egypt. He did this just before he resigned, as it turned out. Watergate was huge at the time. The Saturday Night Massacre happened, I think I mentioned, at the same time as I was trying

to get all the tourists out of town, trying to deflect their attention by mentioning that. Nobody cared.

But then Nixon decided that he wanted to make a trip to Egypt and of course Sadat was very taken with Nixon. As far as he was concerned, Nixon was the one who had helped bring him back onto the international stage. It was all extremely positive about the American president and there we were, in our tiny little embassy, working with a lot of people who ended up going to jail and we all knew that they should be going to jail, so it was very strange for us to be working with Haldeman and Ehrlichman, Ron Nessen, I think, was the press advisor and of course Nixon himself.

That's where I had my first lesson in White House politics, because the advance team was extremely difficult, the White House advance team, extremely difficult to deal with, very unreasonable in the kinds of things they asked for, extremely rigid. That was the first lesson I had in how important it was to be assigned a bedroom closest to the president. I thought a bedroom's a bedroom, who cares? Kissinger had to have a bedroom in a particular place. Of course I was responsible for the assignments, so I really got my knuckles rapped many times about bedroom assignments.

Q: The Nixon visit was seen as, I was back in Washington but it was seen as "the guy can't stand it here in Washington, things are so bad, he's going out to get some applause." It's a little bit like Bush going to Albania quite recently.

JONES: None of us, of course, knew that Nixon was going to resign, none of us. He didn't know he was going to resign. But it really, even then, looked like a last hurrah kind of trip.

Q: Well, how did it go?

JONES: It went extremely well, actually. The Egyptian crowds were genuinely ecstatic to see him. We had this fabulous train ride from Cairo to Alexandria. They pulled out an old Royal Train car from Raj days or something and there were crowds lining the train tracks all the way between Cairo and Alexandria in a very slow procession. Nixon was very popular, Sadat was very popular. There were various things that happened. We ended up having to build a helicopter pad out at the pyramids for Nixon to land there, all these various administrative, logistical things that were just as wild as they could possibly be. But in terms of substance it was extremely positive, with the result that when Nixon resigned the Egyptian newspapers were rimmed in black, the headline "Nixon Resigns" and the entire newspaper front page bordered in black in sadness and empathy.

Q: During this period, the Watergate time, while you were there, did you have a problem explaining what was going on? I was in Greece with the colonels. "What the hell is this all about?" was the attitude, through most of Europe, not just the dictatorships. A minor eavesdropping thing that everybody does.

JONES: That's right, it was very difficult to explain. I can't say that I ever persuaded an Egyptian of what the problem was or I could just say, "You have to believe me that there's a problem." That's how we kind of ended up explaining it. And we kept it pretty simple: the American people don't like being lied to, rather than going into too much eavesdropping and this guy and that guy and just kept it at that.

Q: On the Nixon visit, do you have any horror stories?

JONES: They were sort of minor horror stories. I remember sitting down with a fellow on the White House staff who was in charge of the hotels and I was his counterpart and he explained to me that I had to put on the radio dial, in every room, what each radio station was and which one was the English language radio station and I explained to him that that wasn't possible. He thought I was being recalcitrant and I explained and explained that there was no regular time, there wasn't actually a program, it was only the one station, it was whatever the Egyptians wanted to put on and he absolutely wouldn't believe me and complained to Dick Smith or somebody that he wanted me off the team because I wasn't being helpful. I finally went to Dick and said, "I've got the solution. I'm going to put labels on all of those. I'm going to make it up. All he wants to see is that there's a label that says 'This is the English station, this is the French station, this is the Arabic station.'" And that's what I did.

And then I had a discussion with him about bacon being served to the principals and I said, "It's a Muslim country. There's no bacon. Forget about it." I kind of persuaded him on a couple of those points, but it was very difficult to get them to understand. I said, "Well, how many foreign trips have you done?" He said, "Oh, I've done a lot of foreign trips, a lot of foreign trips! I did one to Hawaii!" But it was those kinds of "Oh, my God!" sort of moments.

Q: I've often learned that real diplomacy is not with other countries. They've been in the trade, you've been in the trade and all. It's either within your own bureaucracy or with the American citizen.

JONES: Right and the other thing I had to do is, of course, the White House team, understandably, wanted the schedule a week in advance. When was the dinner going to be, when was the meeting with Sadat going to be, when was the train trip going to be, when was this going to be? And the Egyptians didn't have a schedule, they wouldn't decide, they couldn't get it out of Sadat. So, again, the White House team was complaining to my bosses that we were being recalcitrant, that we were being lazy, that we weren't producing a schedule. And I did the same thing. I made it up. I made up a schedule and I did it all up and by that time I knew how to do a schedule because I'd been doing them so much for Kissinger. And then when we finally did get the schedule from the Egyptians the day before, I said, "Oops, it changed!" I just learned to do that kind of thing and it worked.

One of the very interesting things that I got to do from Cairo was to work the Sadat-Ford meeting in Salzburg, Austria in June 1975. Since Sadat had had such a good relationship

with Nixon, it was thought he should meet with President Ford, who was traveling in Europe. One of my colleagues at the Embassy was asked by State to travel to Salzburg to serve as liaison to the Egyptian delegation there. But his parents were visiting Cairo, so I was asked to go instead. The fact that I also spoke German was a plus. By now, I was familiar with the White House advance team, with the Secret Service, and of course, with the Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials. Before the presidents arrived, I worked with the US Consul General in Salzburg and the Secret Service to find a nice place that President and Mrs. Ford could have dinner – a cozy place that had substantial motorcade access – which turned out to be quite difficult to find. Too many very narrow streets in Salzburg! But I go to tour lots of lovely little restaurants in Salzburg. WHCA was very generous with their Egyptian counterpart in adding several phones to the areas that Sadat and the Egyptian team would occupy, as the Egyptian tech had brought only a couple of phones with him.

My job as the visit got underway was to stick with the Egyptian delegation and stay in touch with the US delegation by walkie talkie so we could orchestrate arrivals properly at the various meeting sites over the two day visit. On one ride to one of the palaces for a meeting, one of the police escort motorcycles fell back to the proprocol car in which I was riding (at the very front of Sadat's motorcade) and gestured that I should roll down the window. (It was pouring rain.) He shouted "Where are we going?!" Luckily, he thought to ask, and luckily, I knew – and we could have this crucial exchange in German.

The very last event of the visit was a lunch Sadat was hosting at his assigned palace. I went ahead to make sure all was in order, and to my horror, noticed that there were several extra tables set up in the dining area. I asked the Egyptian Chief of Protocol what these were for. He explained that it was important to appear to be a generous host, ready for any others who might come to lunch. I explained that to the American delegation – and more importantly to the American press who would cover the lunch -- it would appear that several people had been invited who had chosen to snub the two presidents by not showing up. It would be very embarrassing, I explained. The Egyptians graciously agreed to remove the extra tables.

Q: Okay, when did you leave Egypt?

JONES: I left in the summer of 1975.

Q: Where did you go?

JONES: I went to Beirut. The reason I went to Beirut is I had been assigned to Arabic training and I had persuaded FSI that I should do the training starting in Beirut, overseas, at our Arabic training school there, because I had, in that second year in Cairo I'd gone to the American University Cairo in the evenings to start with Arabic, so that I had something underway already, because I didn't want to go back to Washington for Arabic for a year. They agreed to it, unbeknownst to me, because there were two other FSO's who were arguing for the same thing. One was Ned Walker, who had Hebrew coming out of Tel Aviv, so he had a leg up and David Robbins was coming out of Kuwait, who'd

done the same thing I had, had done some evening courses. So the three of us were in kind of a beginning class in Beirut and we got there in September of 1975.

Q: You mentioned Cairo University. A young officer at a major university, this had to be politically interesting.

JONES: Well it was the American University Cairo. It wasn't Cairo University. But still, we had contact.

Q: This is where mobs come from and the intellectual thing. What were you picking up there?

JONES: The most interesting thing to me was how very westernized so many of the students were. Everybody was speaking Arabic, of course, a little bit of English but to me there was a clear sense of wanting to be part of the rest of the world. It wasn't a radical student body at all. Even Cairo University wasn't a radical student body, in particular, in those days. And we did have some contact with them because we would have lectures from some of the professors from Cairo University as we got into more the heavy duty Arabic, they would be brought for once a week very fast Arabic lectures, so that we could kind of hear what that sounded like.

Q: But you didn't see a radicalization or an anti-American attitude?

JONES: Not at that point. No, it was all very positive. Of course, early seventies, before any of the really nasty stuff and because our reputation had been bad and we were kind of redeeming ourselves through these negotiations and really touting Egypt as the leader we were doing okay in those days.

Q: Okay, you were taking Arabic in Beirut from when to when?

JONES: Well, unfortunately in Beirut we only lasted until about early November, because that's when the civil war started in Beirut. So we all got there in September of 1975. There was a whole group that came from Washington, had done a year of Arabic in Washington and then the three of us joined that group, coming from these other three places, so we were, our first Arabic lessons really were in how to say, "Watch out for the roving road block" and how to understand, "Put your hands up! I'm going to shoot!" or "Don't shoot me!" Those were our early phrase lessons. At the time we thought it was just round three of some upset but round three devolved into the actual Lebanon civil war, so by late October, early November we were already negotiating for where we should move the school to and we ended up moving the school to Tunis.

I was one of the students that was left behind, two of us were, to pack up for everybody. Everybody was evacuated to Tunis and then Skip Gnehm and I stayed behind and did all the packing up for everybody, their household effects and air freight and cars and all that kind of thing. Skip was one of the senior students and then the other senior students, one

of whom was Ned, went ahead to Tunis to set up the school in the Amilcar Hotel. We took our Lebanese teachers with us, who just set the school up in Tunis in November.

Q: How did you, the very short time you were in Lebanon, what were you getting, from say from your colleagues, about what was going on in Lebanon? What was sparking this conflict?

JONES: Well, it was a civil war between the Maronites and the others, with the Druze coming in in one way or another. The Palestinians of course were very heavily involved. Most of the war was in Beirut itself. The first month I was there I actually lived up in the mountains, up in the Chouf, renting a house. It was gorgeous, but I had to make my way down every day to the embassy for the Arabic lessons. Because I did that, I was the only one who could actually get out to the market, so I'd bring down lettuce and tomatoes and everything for everybody, because I could come through the Druze markets on the way down. Nobody in Beirut could get to any of the markets, because the shooting was so bad right downtown. Eventually the RSO forced me to move into downtown, which I tried to persuade him was more dangerous. I moved in right next to the embassy and could watch the firefights out my window rather than be safe and sound up in the Chouf. But very quickly it was decided that it was just too unsafe. They evacuated the embassy and the first people evacuated was the school.

Q: You were only there a short time, but did we have any particular dog in the civil war, in that fight or whatever?

JONES: We didn't. As I remember it, we'd get involved a bit through the embassy but we were pretty isolated from them. But the discussion was basically how to get the sides to talk to each other and how to get the fighting stopped. I don't recall then, I was Lebanon desk officer later, so I got into this in much greater detail, I don't recall then or didn't know then how much discussion we had with the French, for instance, who of course would have had a lot of influence on the Lebanese or how much discussion was there with our embassy in Damascus on the Syrians to try to weigh in to calm things down. We had a prohibition on talking to the PLO at the time, but there were some cutouts that we could use to work on some of that.

Q: Then you went to Tunis. How long were you in Tunis?

JONES: I was in Tunis from November '75 until the following summer, when the three of us, the special group, persuaded FSI that we should do our last year at American University Cairo, since I had had such a good experience in the language school and they agreed, because we were a little bit anomalous at FSI Tunis. So I was only there for eight months or so.

Q: Okay, let's talk a bit about Tunis at the time. This was really quite different from any other place you'd been.

JONES: It was completely different. Peter Sutherland was the political counselor and he was very solicitous of all of us at FSI. I remember him constantly talking about Bourguiba and that nothing ever happened and every political officer who ever served in Tunis wanted to be the one to be there when Bourguiba finally died, so that there'd be something to report on. It was extremely quiet. There was a little bit going on with trade unions, a tiny bit and that was what the embassy was trying to report on, was there any opposition to Bourguiba, was any allowed, what were people talking about?

Q: Anything happening Libya-wise or Algeria-wise?

JONES: Nothing really that I recall with Algeria. Libya, we were always paying attention to what was going on there, was the border open or not, because in the end Ned Walker and I ended up driving across Libya to get to Cairo, to American University Cairo, which was a very fun trip. We really worked at getting around Tunisia, that was one of the things that a lot of us at FSI were particularly focused on. Several of us went horseback riding on a regular basis. Several of us went down into the salt flats, to drive along there to see what was going on with the Berbers. We'd go to Hammamet, we'd go to Sfax, we'd go to the cork forests, to all of the Roman ruins all over the place, which were fabulous, to practice our Arabic. The hardest part was getting Tunisians to understand that, yes, we were Western but we didn't speak French, we wanted to speak Arabic. That was very, very startling to them.

Q: Where did Tunis fit in the Maghrebic Arabic versus the Levantine Arabic?

JONES: It was very Maghrebic, to the point that at one point, we'd been going riding at this riding stable for quite a while and got to where we understood the instruction, but we didn't know if they were giving us instruction in French or Berber, several of us didn't speak French, or was it in Arabic that we just weren't understanding? So we brought a couple of our instructors with us to say, "What language are we learning here?" It turned out it was a mixture of Berber and Arabic, in terms of the way the riding instructions were given.

It was that sort of experience. We had a great time and we worked hard at the Arabic and it was a fun time. I even participated in jumping competitions! It was a great experience.

Q: Well then, off to Cairo again?

JONES: Then we went to Cairo. We set up this program at American University Cairo. We added one person, Al Dagleish, and Dave Robbins went away. I think he had another assignment. Anyway, Ned Walker and I and then Al Dagleish and one other person, we ended up being the American group at American University Cairo but we were embedded in a class. So we had three Japanese classmates and a British classmate for most of our courses.

Q: Were they also diplomatic?

JONES: No, the Japanese were commercial and the British woman was sort of an NGO kind of person. We were all pretty much at the same level, we were second year Arabic students. The course was very rigorous. It was a good course. Even though we were seven in the class, we felt we really had to hop to. We had some very tough instructors. At one point we had a lecture every week from the mosque to talk about Muslim issues, just to hear that kind of Arabic, as well. We'd have a lecturer come from the family planning association, we'd have a whole lecture on family planning that we'd have to then discuss.

One of the things that one of our instructors had us do right away was, we were assigned to go to a movie, an Egyptian movie and report back on it. We discovered two things: because it was downtown, we had to walk there, so we figured out very quickly that it was easier to navigate downtown by walking than by taxi and we got so we just made it a habit, every week, just the Americans in the group did this, three of us, each week a different person was assigned to pick the movie, pick the place, figure out how to get there and then we'd come back and report on it.

And we got so we knew all of the Egyptian movie stars and Egyptian directors. I then married a colleague in Cairo who was the cultural affairs officer. He had a movie program of American films and I said, "Why don't we invite all of these movie actors that we've seen and the directors?" And we did and it was wonderful and very exciting, very exciting for the other Egyptian guests. The Egyptian actors and directors were stunned. They were stunned that these three Americans had seen any of their films, let alone knew any of them. It was fun.

Q: What was your impression of Egyptian movies?

JONES: They were very formulaic. There were very few stars, which is why we could invite ten and we knew them all from lots of different movies. It seemed to us that most of them were cribbed from or copied from various Western movies, because there would be scenes with rain in it. There's no rain in Cairo. That kind of thing. But we sure learned a lot of Arabic that way.

Q: Had the obligatory belly dance or not?

JONES: Sure and the singing and the dancing, oh, yeah. A lot of them, they weren't as fout there as Bollywood and a lot of them were murder mysteries, so it was kind of fun. So there was actually a story you could get into.

Q: Obviously you were working very hard and sort of in a closed group, but were you getting any feel for the university and what was happening?

JONES: One of the things that happened while we were there, in that year, was that there was a lot of talk about the food subsidies. Of course Egypt was having to begin to comply with some of the IMF/World Bank requirements and this and that and AID was putting

requirements on. One of them was to eliminate some of the food subsidies and that led to food riots. The university closed when the riots started.

Q: Actually, Shepheard's Hotel was burned, wasn't it, or not? Or maybe that was a different time?

JONES: I think that was later. I can't remember. There was an issue with Shepheard's, though, now that you mention it.

Because the university was closed, because of the riots, I called up the political section and said, "You guys need us to do anything? Classes are closed, et cetera." And they said, "Yeah, just tell us what the hell's going on." So we did, because we knew, from all of our going to the movies, we knew all of the streets and we knew where the university gates were and all that kind of thing. We were able to then say, "Okay, there's tear gas here and the police are there and the students are there." At that point there were students from even American University of Cairo in the streets, but there were a lot more from some of these other parts of town that were very poor.

Q: Was it that they were being affected or was this a chance to riot?

JONES: It wasn't so much that it was a chance to riot but it was more the development of a social conscience among students, that maybe they weren't the ones being affected but there sure were a lot of other people who were and that if the Egyptian government was going to reduce the subsidies on bread that there needed to be better pensions or there needed to be better pay or there needed to be some kind of humanitarian provision of assistance to the people who were most affected. It was more that kind of idea.

Q: The peasants and the city folks, was there a greater divide?

JONES: Not really, because there were so many people from the country who were living in the city. Bulak was one of the very poorest areas of Cairo, where a lot of the country people, the *fellahin*, had come in and were living there, living hand to mouth, an extremely poor area of Cairo, where people were in bad shape.

Q: Was Madame Sadat doing her thing in trying to reduce the birth rate?

JONES: Madame Sadat was not in front yet, that happened a little bit later, but there were organizations who were starting, one of the lectures we had was from Egyptian women's groups, very interestingly, who were working Al-Azhar, with the main mosque and the leaders of the mosque, to explain that the teachings of the Koran were that you should take good care of the children you have and not have too many children, that kind of thing. So it was a very interesting lecture. Then we got to know, the kind of thing, we had the relationship established, I went to meet the lecturer, she was really out front on these things and as far as I remember they established a relationship with her and her organization. So there was a lot of collaboration between us and the embassy, because we knew the embassy so well.

Q: You finished your training when?

JONES: In 1977, June, 1977.

Q: At Cairo?

JONES: At the American University of Cairo, right.

Q: How'd you feel when you got out of that?

JONES: Well, I felt we had a fabulous education in Arabic. I ended up with a 4/4 in Arabic, tested by Margaret Omar, who came in from FSI to do the testing with one of the instructors. Because we were hearing Arabic all the time, were speaking Arabic in all these different kinds of situations, I actually felt that our Arabic was probably better for conversation than a more formal FSI kind of Arabic, because with the movies and with making our way around town all the time, having these lectures on family planning or on whatever it was, that we had a much broader vocabulary, a much greater insight into how to use the language. So I felt very strong in Arabic coming out of that experience.

Q: Now you mentioned you got married. Whom did you marry?

JONES: Tom Homan. He was in my entering class, actually and he was assigned to Cairo after I was assigned there. We were married in Egypt, at the pyramids, actually in April 1977.

Q: Looking at this, here you've got Arabic and you're married to a Foreign Service Officer and this was still in the late-ish seventies. How did both of you feel this would work for a career?

JONES: We were married in 1975. We had a pretty good sense then, because things had changed enough, with tandem couples, that if we stayed in the Arab world we'd be fine, that there were always enough jobs. He was a USIS officer, so we knew we would never compete for a job. So we knew it would be fine.

We went to Jordan from there. I knew I was already being assigned to Jordan from FSI and Tom was able to talk USIS into assigning him there as well, next job available, et cetera. And he had had six months of Arabic, before going to his first job in Beirut. I believe he went to Beirut first and then Kuwait. I can't quite remember, now.

Q: So then in '77, was it, you went to Jordan?

JONES: I went to Jordan for two years. I was the junior political officer in a two-person political section. Tom was the cultural affairs officer in a two-person USIS operation. My job was to report on internal politics in Jordan. The head of the political section, Mac

Deford, was an Arabist and was responsible for the international stuff. He didn't stay very long. He left the Foreign Service and he went to work for Merrill Lynch. And then a man came in called Philip Mayhew, who was a wonderful boss. He wasn't an Arabist, so I had to take on a little bit more of that part of the work. My ambassador was Tom Pickering, when I first got there. He was a fabulous ambassador.

Q: I was interviewing Tom. We've only done thirty hours so far and I just finished Russia.

JONES: Jordan was his first ambassadorship. He was very active. He spent a tremendous amount of time with King Hussein. One of my jobs was, he would type up on these green telegram forms his conversations with King Hussein and hand them to me to write the summary for him, which was not so easy, because he would always write in a stream of conscious way, but it was a good lesson for me on how to do that kind of thing.

Q: Let's talk about Jordan, now. You were in Jordan from '75 to '77?

JONES: I've got the dates wrong. '75 to '77 was Arabic. You were right the first time around.

Q: '77 to '79.

JONES: Right.

Q: What was going on in Jordan when you arrived there? How would you describe the situation from an American diplomat's viewpoint?

JONES: The situation was that there had been no progress made at all, as far as the Jordanians were concerned, on the peace process. King Hussein had tried to get something out of Kissinger about getting the West Bank back and Jerusalem. It hadn't worked. There was bitterness about whatever it was that Kissinger had promised that hadn't worked out. The memory of Black September was fairly strong.

Q: That was 1970?

JONES: That was 1970 and there was a big division which you could really feel in Jordan between the West Bankers and East Bankers, the West Bankers of course being the Palestinians. I learned extremely quickly to ask immediately with any Jordanian with whom I was speaking, "Where are you from?" And I would immediately get the dissertation about, "My grandfather had twelve olive orchards in Haifa" or wherever it was. Because I needed to know immediately whether I was talking to a Palestinian or an East Banker, to understand where they were coming from, where the attitudes were coming from.

There was a lot of discussion at the time about how much support did King Hussein have from the Palestinians, how much support did he have from the East Bankers? What kind

of support was it? Was it support to pursue any kind of a peace with Israel or an arrangement with Israel? How upset were they about the Palestinians?

And even more so, what was the split between the East Bankers and the West Bankers? What was the divide there? How much jealousy was there? Was King Hussein being too nice to the Palestinians? Were there too many West Bankers or Palestinians in the cabinet? Were the West Bankers “taking over” from the East Bankers, in terms of governance in Jordan?

So there was a lot of domestic turmoil and discussion that affected foreign policy directly, because it affected King Hussein’s attitude towards the peace process.

That was how it started and of course the period of time when I was there was when Sadat went to Jerusalem, there was a lot of further discussion about the peace negotiations. There was a tremendous effort to bring King Hussein into the peace discussion, getting him to go and then of course Camp David I happened while I was there, trying to get King Hussein to go to Camp David, to broaden the peace process and none of it really worked.

Q: From your perspective, the people you were talking to, were we pushing or seeing that a solution would be for Jordan to really once again exercise sovereignty over the West Bank and turn it into a Greater Jordan? Or what were we looking at?

JONES: As I recall, we were looking at a way to find some kind of arrangement on the West Bank that would satisfy everybody, knowing that the Palestinians would never stand for the West Bank going back to Jordan, but knowing that King Hussein couldn’t officially, out loud, say that, as far as the East Bankers were concerned and for his own sake. He also laid claim to East Jerusalem, as did the Palestinians, so there was a big to-ing and fro-ing there. So there was always, I tried to really know who I was talking to, was it a Palestinian or an East Banker, to understand the attitudes and how far would they go.

As we got into Camp, David I and tried to bring the Jordanians into it and met with a stone wall on getting their agreement to participate without knowing what the final result was going to be. That was the struggle that we had, over and over and over again. The Jordanians, East or West Bank, wanted to know, before they started, what that result was going to be. And we kept saying, “But that’s not how a negotiation works.”

I was one of the ones arguing this. Of course Tom Pickering was. Then he was replaced by Nick Veliotis, as one of those two ambassadors during the two years I was there. We stressed: “You have strong personalities. We have faith in your ability to start a negotiation with Israel, that could involve Egypt or not, or Syria or not and come out with something that is a good result and we will help you do that.”

I remember the minister of information, who was a Palestinian, explaining to me at the time, his name was Odeh, he said that, “What you’re asking us to do is to go down a very

steep, very dry ravine without any water and tell us that you know that there's water at the bottom, but you aren't able to prove to me that there's water at the bottom and that we will not die of thirst when we get to the bottom and we'll be able to climb back out. I can't make that leap of faith."

Q: So, we're really talking, at that time, as we saw it, that the problem was an internal Jordanian problem, East Banker-West Banker, not an Israeli problem.

JONES: Less so.

Q: That was obviously going to come up, but it was basically one that, the East Bankers, were they willing, did you run across people saying, "For God's sake, let those Palestinians go"?

JONES: There were. It was kind of a split personality, because they couldn't stand the Palestinians. They thought the Palestinians were the ones that had gotten them into this heap of trouble, but they also didn't want to give up on the West Bank. They wanted to rule the Palestinians, a lot of them did. There wasn't so much of an attitude that I remember of wanting to get rid of the Palestinians like happened in Black September.

One of my jobs was to stay in touch with all the sheiks around the country, because I was the one who had the Arabic and we would have regular meetings with them. Pickering would come and I would actually do the translation for him, although his Arabic was getting better. And that was always a discussion. Where was I during Black September? What did I and my tribal people do and how many Palestinians did I kill? How much had I helped King Hussein get rid of the Palestinians? And then how terrible it was that they're still around. Very tough talk, even then.

Q: Really this was, again, it was much more an intramural problem?

JONES: A very serious intramural problem that affected King Hussein's ability to negotiate with the Israelis. Now, of course, what I didn't know at the time and now know is that there were secret meetings with Golda Meir at the time.

Q: But wasn't there the feeling that they must be talking, or not?

JONES: I didn't think so. I didn't know, but I didn't think so. For instance, various NGO kind of people or think tank kind of people would come and they would say, "Well, why don't you just have a think tank event where we invite the Israeli minister of information and the Jordanian minister of information?" I said, "That's impossible. If he agreed to do it he'd be assassinated. It's not like Kashmir, where the Indians and Pakistanis are talking to each other. It's not what goes on here. There is a very strict red line in terms of contact between the two." It's very hard to get some Americans to understand just how electric contact was.

Q: I can remember meeting King Hussein, again, in Dhahran, this would be about '58 or so, he was just a young man. I shook hands with him and thought I'd give him three or four years at most. Assassinations were going around. I suppose all the time you were there the real threat of assassination.

JONES: That was always real. The other thing that was going on at the time was his Jordanian wife had been killed in a helicopter crash before I got there and he turned out to be dating Lisa Halaby. We all knew Lisa Halaby around town, just because she was Lisa Halaby. So that all was going on on the personal side of things, too. So there was this other American connection. All of us wondered, "How is this all going to play out? It kind of complicates things." Of course one of the first things he did is, he said none of the children with this American will ever be heirs to the throne. Well, we know that that's no longer the case.

Q: Was the king, in the circles that you were dealing with, held responsible for getting into the '67 war and the disaster that came from it?

JONES: No, not really. They didn't ascribe too much blame to him. The blame was all on the Israelis and the U.S. It was considered a bad thing, no question about that, but it was all, "We were done in by the Israelis." It was really easy to point fingers elsewhere.

Q: Well, how were the Americans viewed? Were we considered so much in bed with the Israelis that no good could come from it?

JONES: No. We had huge access. The American ambassador could see the king any time he wanted. Of course we had a huge liaison relationship between the Agency and the king. That was kind of known. We had terrific access to the military. We had a big military relationship, in terms of assistance and training and all that kind of thing. We had a good aid program, particularly in the Jordan Valley. There was a lot of work being done there. So we had a lot of access and it was the same kind of thing that I'd experienced in Egypt, where Jordanians would say, "You guys are all great. We love all you guys. The U.S. government stinks, has all the wrong policies, but we love talking to you guys." So it was this funny kind of thing again.

Q: Well when you were there, how did you all, I'm speaking of the embassy staff and all, react to the Sadat visit, he went to Jerusalem, how did that play out?

JONES: First of all, all of us were stunned and ecstatic. It was incredibly exciting, since it was right across the bridge and of course we had ways to get back and forth across the bridge. We wanted very much to help and my husband at the time was one of the ones who was asked to go, but he actually couldn't get across the bridge because it was closed the one day he needed to get across. So he was asked to go and help in Jerusalem with the visit and then he couldn't go, a huge disappointment.

But all over Jordan television was on full time. Everybody could get the Israeli channels. They were kind of blocked but not so badly and everybody watched the whole thing. So

even though it was “Oh my God! Why did he do it?” it was still huge excitement, in a positive way, I would say.

Q: Then how did this play out, Camp David and all this, while you were there?

JONES: While Camp David was going on, we got as much information as we could out of Camp David to keep briefing the Jordanians. This was something that, by then it was Nick Veliotos, probably, wanted to keep the king as briefed as fully as possible, because of course part of the goal was to get him involved and not have it be just Egypt and Israel making this agreement but get the Jordanians in there as well. In the end Hussein didn't want to do it, but I remember Roy Atherton, assistant secretary at the time, he and Hal Saunders came all the time. They were constantly coming to talk to the Jordanians and we would have a big session with the Palestinians whom I knew to try to talk them into understanding why it was appropriate to support the possibility of Hussein going and having, sort of piling on, as another confrontation state, to negotiations with Israel. He didn't want to do it.

I think part of it was that the Saudis were so opposed and he felt nervous about them.

Q: How, in your contacts beyond the royal court, what were you getting about developments?

JONES: Quite a bit. One of the things I was responsible for was counter-narcotics work and other things that junior political officers take on, so I was constantly out with the police, seeing the police, people in the military, people in various other ministries, journalists, that kind of thing. People were very curious. They felt very strongly about their position, that the U.S. hadn't been helpful and the U.S. wasn't voting the right way in the UN.

There was one veto that we did in the UN on something or other, it was just a disaster as far as the Jordanians were concerned, very difficult for us to explain. It was one of those condemnations of Israel, Israel as a racist state or whatever it was and I can remember East Bankers and West Bankers stopping me in supermarkets, whenever I went to any party, hiking out in the desert, wherever it was, I'd see friends and “Why are you doing this? You guys are crazy! You're not supporting us and you're not doing this right and it's too much on the Israeli side. We really want to get this right and you guys just don't get it!”

But they were talking to us. It was a constant, very intense, conversation. So it wasn't the sort of lack of conversation that one gets now.

Q: Were you able, in talking to Jordanians, to talk about the political realities of the United States, the importance of the Jewish vote and Jewish money in election campaigns?

JONES: The problem was that they of course overdid it on that. They would say that the Jews control all of Washington and it was my job, our job, to say, "The Jews don't control all of Washington. It's that they are able to make arguments in a much more effective way than you're able to make. You guys need to get your act together and come up with better arguments about why you want Jerusalem back or why the West Bank belongs to the Palestinians, because the only voice heard in Washington or around the country is the Israeli voice, because they're extremely effective. Where's your PR firm out there? We can do a pretty good job of it, we know what the arguments are, but we're not that credible when you go before Congress, to say, 'This is what the Arab world needs,' because you're an Arabist, of course you believe that."

Q: Was there an issue at that time about Arab money going in to help the Palestinians, or were they trying to keep the Palestinians barefoot and pregnant, or the equivalent, to keep them as an unrestful element?

JONES: There was a big issue about the Saudis buying off Arafat and putting a lot of money into the PLO to keep Arafat from undertaking any actions in Saudi Arabia. At that point of course Palestinians were mostly in Lebanon and civil war was part of that whole thing, which was underway.

So it wasn't quite the discussion we have now. It was, though, because there were plenty of terrorist acts. We had all kinds of colleagues, had already been killed. There had been the two hijackings, where the planes ended up in eastern Jordan. Of course the embassy in Khartoum had already been attacked, the ambassador killed. I think the kidnappings in Lebanon came later. But there was plenty of terrorism going around. So we were already launched on counterterrorism work.

Q: Well the feeling was that Arafat was being, at that point, supported by the Saudis to keep Arafat from using his Palestinian colleagues from screwing up Saudi Arabia?

JONES: Saudi Arabia, absolutely. And of course the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon were well known by then, which group had taken over which. Hamas and Hezbollah weren't big then at all. It was all PLO, PLA, PFLP, those were the radical organizations then and PFLPGC, all of that.

Q: Were any of them seen as trying to do something for the plight of their people, or were they kept in poor conditions in order to keep them radical?

JONES: It was all political. I can't say that they were kept in poor situations to keep them radical, but certainly all of the funding was going towards radical acts, to fund radical acts. One of the things I did, whenever we had a Congressional delegation (CODEL) come to Jordan, is take them to visit the refugee camps, the Palestinian refugee camps and see the work that UNRWA (UN Relief and Works Agency) was doing there and all that kind of thing. I can't honestly say that we had the sense that things were being done to radicalize the camps or radicalize people in the camps, but we could certainly see that,

in terms of the schooling, that there was a very big push to see that the PLO was the top thing, PLO flags and Arafat head scarf kind of deals was what was going on.

Q: Were we trying to do anything about these camps, in other words to make the Palestinians into good Jordanian citizens?

JONES: Well, there was a very big effort. We were very involved in UNRWA. We had an American who was always the deputy in UNRWA, even then. We tried to do assistance programs in the camps, on education, health and all that kind of thing. And one of the big discussions with the Jordanians was, "Don't you want to close the refugee camps? You need to have an agreement with Israel about Palestinians and West Bank and all this kind of thing, so that we can close the Palestinian camps, so that these people can be integrated, wherever." Of course, we're still discussing the right of return, we're still discussing Palestinian nationality.

That was one of the big issues. Palestinians would say to me, "All we want is a flag and a passport. I'm not going to do anything different. I just want to have that identity. I'm not going to go anywhere different. It's not going to be more radical. I just want to know that I'm a citizen of Palestine."

Q: What were you getting from the Egyptian embassy? I imagine you had relations

JONES: Yeah, that was one of my beats, the Arab embassies. They were always explaining how Egypt was in charge and Egypt was in the lead and they Jordanians, especially the East Bankers, were just sort of dumb cousins and they didn't really know what was going on and they weren't educated and we're really the ones in charge. But at that point, Sadat and the Egyptians were being drummed out of the Arab League, because Sadat was going to Jerusalem and the Egyptian embassy was having a pretty hard time there. But the Jordanians and King Hussein toed the line in public utterances about staying with the Arab League and toeing the line with the Saudis.

But he still kept the lines of communication open with the Egyptians. He was pretty clever that way. But he was heading in the direction where he ended up, which is supporting Saddam Hussein and Iraq, because of the internal situation. He was worried about his own situation.

Q: Did Iraq play much of a role and Syria?

JONES: Not much. First of all Bakr was in charge in Iraq at that point. Saddam took over in mid-1977. They were considered fairly radical, particularly on the Palestinian issue. That was one of the theories that I developed, was that Palestinians and Arabs, the further they got away from Jerusalem the more radical they became. So if you talked to Palestinians in Jerusalem, they all went to Israeli doctors and they knew how to talk to Israelis, went to the same schools and all that kind of thing. You went into the West Bank and it was a little bit more radical. You got to Jordan, it was even more radical. By the time you got to Iraq it was beyond belief radical.

Jordanians had a very healthy respect for the Iraqis in the negative sense. They saw them as brutal, they saw them as uncompromising. They were nervous about traveling there, nervous about doing business there, some of which I really understood when I got to Baghdad, later. Hussein would kind of stay briefed with those guys, but he didn't really trust them and the same thing with the Syrians.

There the issue was and this is when I first began to really start reporting on the Muslim Brotherhood, because King Hussein's brother was considered the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Crown Prince, in Jordan and so I spent a lot of time working on what are Muslim Brotherhood connections and who else, I found some Jordanians who were members of the Muslim Brotherhood who could talk to me about their relations with the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria and back and forth, all that kind of thing.

Q: What was the feeling towards Carter?

JONES: The problem with Carter for the Jordanians and the Egyptians was that Kissinger was such a strong presence that Carter kind of paled after that. And Ford, we had the Ford interregnum. One thing that helped in Cairo was Sadat going to Europe to meet with Ford, a story I forgot about.

And then Carter's big splash was of course Camp David. So the Jordanians were nervous about him. They thought he was kind of bought by the Israelis and then by Sadat. So they didn't really trust him.

Q: He wasn't the guy they wanted to go down the dry gully with?

JONES: No, they didn't really think he was going to do what they needed.

Q: When people in Jordan became aware of Camp David, the results, what was the feeling? They'd been sold out by the Egyptians?

JONES: Yeah, it was pretty negative. It was very negative, actually. Sadat made a separate peace. We all agreed in the Arab League we would never make a separate peace. Sadat is a heretic and he deserves to be isolated. It was bad, actually.

Q: Well, today, looking at that, the fact that we left out the West Bank settlements and all that, out of the thing, which should have been done, it seems a fatal error.

JONES: I'll be interested in seeing what will be written in history, has been written and why that happened. Was it that the U.S. didn't try hard enough, or that we tried very hard and we just couldn't talk Hussein into it?

And to a degree and I don't know the full story, one of the reasons that Hussein didn't do it was he thought he'd been double crossed by Kissinger earlier on, during the one-on-ones after the '73 war. I don't know the whole story of that one.

I think that pretty well covers it for Jordan. It was two years. I went to Baghdad from there. I did a little bit of work about Baghdad before I left, which helped me out a lot.

Interview resumes October 19, 2007.

If I'm on my way to Baghdad, it's August of 1979.

Q: Okay, how did one feel about being an Arabist at that time? Was there still the mud clinging to Arabists of being anti-Semitic or whatever? This was very much in the air.

JONES: There was still a bit of that. If you were an Arabist there was an assumption that you were anti-Israeli. There was no longer an assumption that you were anti-Jewish, because there were by that time Arabists who were Jewish. That would be the negative. There were others who saw Arabists as the few who understood that the Palestinians had a problem that had to be dealt with and were the ones who were constantly reminding people that this was an issue that was going to cause a lot of trouble if it wasn't dealt with. But internally there was a lot of pride in being an Arabist. It was certainly a club that was a sought after club. People didn't shy away from identifying themselves as Arabists. It was very much a positive thing, for those of us who were.

Q: Okay, you're off to Baghdad. You were in Baghdad from when to when?

JONES: I got to Baghdad in August of 1979 and I left in late November of 1980.

Q: What was the situation vis-à-vis Iraq in those days, when you went there?

JONES: The situation was that Saddam Hussein had just taken over from Bakr about a year earlier. I actually did quite a bit of work with Baathists in Jordan whom I knew to find out what was the nature of the Baath Party, what did they know about Saddam Hussein. I talked to several who knew him as a Baath Party sort of thug-enforcer in Damascus in his early days.

But, Saddam, at that point, as I got there in early August, the word was just filtering out about how he had assassinated most of his technocrat cabinet, the second cabinet he had appointed. They were considered very competent but by him they were considered to be so competent as to be disloyal. There was a film, a videotape that was being circulated, of the cabinet going through an inquisition, with cameras going through the side of the room, I guess. As I remember the film, Saddam actually pulled the trigger and shot some of them as they sat there, possibly with others outside who were shooting them, but they were sitting there being shot. And the tape was around as a big warning to everybody, watch out, the same thing can happen to you.

Q: What was our feeling towards relations with Iraq?

JONES: At that point, we had an interests section. We had had an interests section since 1967, at least, if not before. We flew the Belgian flag in Baghdad. They were the protector of our interests. We were in our own building, however, right on the Tigris River. We actually had two buildings.

The issue at the time was, is there a way to connect with this guy, is there a way to connect with the Iraqis? Is there some way to bring them out of their isolation, so that they are a more positive force in the Middle East?

There weren't a lot of illusions about our ability to do that. There were very few of us at the interests section. It was run by Ed Peck at the time. Ryan Crocker was the economic officer. Marisa Lino was the commercial officer, a State officer. This was still when State did the commercial work. I was the political officer and deputy principal officer. My then husband was the first public affairs officer that we had assigned to Baghdad since we had brought the interests section back in, as a sign of okay, let's see if we can engage with university people, civil society, somebody, to try to get at some of the people and some of the structures in Iraq.

Q: How was Ed Peck as principal officer? Ed is sort of a character. I interviewed Ed a long time ago, but he's in some ways bigger than life. As his deputy, how did you find him?

JONES: He was a very odd person to work for, because he was actually very proud of the fact that he had never met with a minister. He seemed to revel in his not having met with a minister, whereas for all of us it was trying to get to a minister, to the point that we actually had a CODEL, we had one codel the entire time I was there, Senator Bradley came to town and was invited to meet with the minister of oil and I was very excited that finally somebody, that Ed was going to meet with a minister. And just before he was leaving, he told me he wasn't going, that I should go. I said, "But, why? Do you have something else that's conflicting on your schedule?" Oh, no. He wanted to make sure he could maintain the story that he'd never met with a minister, which I thought was a dereliction of duty, frankly.

Q: To me, it sounds like a very minor bragging right. That's what diplomats do, they meet people.

JONES: Yeah. As I say, it was the only time that we had been invited to participate in a meeting with a minister. It was at a time when there was quite a bit of upheaval, moving around between the Regional Command Council, the RCC leadership and the cabinet, a lot of back and forth about which was up and which was down. So we were trying to read all these tea leaves and figure out what was going on and it was ever so important for us to meet, get a first hand sense of how they operate, what is his office like and how did he behave and all of that. Of course I was very fortunate to be able to go and produce the kind of analysis that I wanted to do but I was struck by the shallowness of that response by the principal officer.

Q: What was your reading of, first place the Iraq Baath Party and were you getting anything from the Syrian Baath Party?

JONES: At that time there was a tremendous rivalry, to the point of hostility, between the Syrian and the Iraqi Baath Parties. There was no collaboration. They were completely separate. They were screaming at each other in headlines. So they were completely split, very much along the lines of the personality of Saddam Hussein.

The Iraqi Baath Party was strictly Saddam Hussein's bailiwick. There was no separate real party. During the period of time I was there there were several things going on with Saddam. He was consolidating his position as a terrorizing leader, with this videotape being sent around. He was just beginning his cult of personality, so as I was there the posters got bigger and bigger, the megalomania that one could see on television was, with different military uniforms being worn by Saddam, large military parades being held more and more often, every night on television children crowding around him. It was just a constant and increasing development of a cult of personality.

There was no question that he was also cultivating terror within the entire community, to the point that it was very well known by all of us that if any of us tried to contact an Iraqi neighbor, an Iraqi official of any kind, without permission, we might think of ourselves as being clever to reach out to an Iraqi and get some kind of response but we knew that each time we did that we were putting them in a terrible situation, terrible position, to the point that they would be arrested, beaten or worse if we did anything like that. So we understood very quickly that we had to be extremely careful about that, if we didn't want to contribute to Saddam committing this kind of thing to people.

Q: Okay, here you are, sitting in the middle of Baghdad, where you're not supposed to have any contact with people. What was your husband doing as a USIS officer? It negates the whole business.

JONES: Here's how it worked: he, as a public affairs officer, of course was doing the classic things, trying to get appointments with the heads of the museums, the heads of the universities, the various technical colleges, et cetera, to have conversations to see about exchanges, to see about maybe a lecture, et cetera. All of this had to be arranged through the foreign ministry.

This was the period of time that there was a lot of talk about mustard gas. That kind of thing hadn't quite happened yet, but it was going to. Moving the Kurds around and then there were going to be Kurdish elections, et cetera. The Turks were very good at assessing this issue. I got to know all of the Arab diplomats and they were quite good at telling me what was going on bilaterally between Iraq and their countries. The Libyans, for example, were very interesting. The Jordanians were very interesting.

In terms of the Europeans, the French had very good access. The Germans, to a degree, did and the East Germans to a degree did. So I'd stay in touch with all of them to try to understand what they thought was going on.

Q: How come, I can understand why the Turks, because they're bordered on and they've got the Kurdish problem to deal with, but what about the French or the Germans? Why would they have contact?

JONES: There were several things that were different for them. They had formal diplomatic relations, we didn't. So right there we have a difference. Second, they had commercial relations to a far greater degree than we did. We had some. We had sold some Boeings to Iraq and so we had big Boeing teams there doing the training and the maintenance and that kind of thing, Americans.

Q: These are civilian airliners?

JONES: Civilian airliners, exactly. So we had a few there who were doing that kind of thing and I would talk to them about what they thought was going on.

The Australians had some technical assistance people there, particularly in irrigation. So they had access to a different part of the society than others did, so they were very interesting on the agriculture ministry and the land ministry, the water ministry, areas like that, to get an idea what was really going on in this country, where you could see that there was, when we went downtown, in downtown Baghdad, to try to buy food, to buy butter, to buy sugar, to buy anything, it was almost impossible to get it, because the central supply system was so restrictive and extremely difficult and we weren't alone in that.

The Indian diplomats were very good on the military, because they had good military relations, good training back and forth. So that's how I did my collection of reporting.

Q: What about the Soviets? You're a red diaper kid, practically.

JONES: That's right. I talked to the Russian diplomats all the time. They had pretty good access. Not as good as one might think. The Iraqis were a bit nervous about them, too, although they did do military sales to Iraq and so they had that relationship. So I was able to learn at least something about what was going on militarily from the French, the Indians and the Russians, the Soviets.

The Germans had big sales, but theirs were commercial sales, in manufacturing. We actually had a big issue with the Germans, because we thought that they had sold inappropriately an insect repellent manufacturing company, where we thought it was probably a bio- or chem-warfare factory. And we had a big issue with the Germans, trying to get them to either shut down the sale or sanction the company that had done the selling. Got absolutely nowhere. They refused to interfere in a commercial sale, no matter how much evidence we gave them.

Q: I would think that the Germans after, what's it, Zyklon B from World War II, that they would be very sensitive to that.

JONES: The German embassy, the German ambassador, was very sensitive. They completely agreed and they were constantly pounding back to Bonn to shut this down and Bonn constantly said, the German government, “No, commercial sale, can’t prosecute, won’t prosecute, won’t shut it down, not happening.”

Q: Were we going back to Washington, I’m sure you were reporting on this but were there stories coming out, there they go again, the Germans are in the poison gas business?

JONES: There was a degree of that, sure. That was the word, absolutely. But from my perspective, I thought and it was the case, that the heavy lifting had to be done between Washington and Bonn. Because I said, “I’ve persuaded my guys, here. Over to you to turn this off and they were unable to do so.” And to a degree it probably wasn’t a high enough priority on the U.S.-German agenda at that point.

Q: Were we concerned about the army of Saddam? Were we seeing him as a threat, or was this just an obscure tin pot dictator being nasty to his people?

JONES: To a degree we saw Saddam as a threat. There was a lot of discussion, I used to do some reporting on this, of what is the Baath Party, really, what are the goals of the Baath Party under Saddam Hussein. My argument was that it wasn’t really anything to do with the renaissance of Arab thought, which were the tenets of the Baath Party, it was a way for Saddam to threaten the overthrow of monarchies in the Gulf. That was the primary goal, monarchies in the Gulf and of course in Iran, as things developed.

Q: As you look at it, that was all monarchical.

JONES: That’s right and that’s one of the reasons I stayed in such close touch with some of the Arab diplomats, because I could get from them how Saddam’s statement about monarchies were reverberating in their monarchies in terms of what is a threat and they felt very, very threatened by Saddam, there’s no question about it.

However, I got there in August of ’79. By the spring of 1980 there were several things going on internally that we became aware of. One was the Iraqi security services were collecting and expelling anyone who was considered to be of Iranian descent. One of the things we would do, of course, was go downtown, buy rugs, talk to all the bazaaris and more and more we were understanding that several of them, even though they’d been there for generations, were being considered Iranian and were being expelled from the country back to Iran. Bill Eagleton, who replaced Ed Peck as Principal Officer, was really good at this. He, Tom and I visited the bazaar several times a week “to go rug shopping,” but we actually found this a terrific way to have an excuse to talk to people.

It wasn’t too clear what the purpose of that was. We suspected that it had to do with feeling the threat from, I shouldn’t say suspected, we knew from the way they had been talking that there was some concern about war between Iraq and Iran at that point,

because one of the treaties had come up for renewal and further discussion about the border between Iraq and Iran.

So we knew there was a big folderol coming up about the Kurds and the Shia and who was Iranian and all that, but it looked to us like if there were to be some kind of military action between Iraq and Iran that any potential fifth column of Iranian sympathizers in Iraq would be gone by the time anything happened.

At that point, in the spring, when we were reporting on this, picking this up and getting a sense of it, we didn't have any sense of when anything might happen. At the same time we were constantly getting these stories from the bazaaris and then from people's cooks, people's household staff, "Oh, so and so lost his cook because it turns out his father or grandfather had immigrated from Iran two centuries earlier" and suddenly he and his family were gone. So clearly this was happening.

And at the same time there was a very aggressive identification and round up of people who were considered to be in the Muslim Brotherhood in Iraq. Of course the movement was centered in Karbala and Najaf, down in the south, around the religious centers. Anybody who appeared on the street, male, especially younger ones, in a full beard was automatically assumed to be a member of the Muslim Brotherhood and was picked up and never seen again.

I remember this in particular because my very young consular officer had a very dark beard. As this developed further and further and further, I called him in and said, "Ordinarily I would never do this, but I really need you to shave your beard, because I don't want to have to be worrying about whether you're going to get picked up." And he did, he understood completely. He was later arrested and jailed for producing LSD in his home in Washington.

Q: Life and love in the Foreign Service! Tell me, when you arrived there the Shah had already left Iran, hadn't he?

JONES: When I arrived there, the Shah had left Iran. I arrived in August. The hostages were taken in November, the American hostages. So for almost the entire time I was there the American hostages were held in the embassy in Teheran and this was of course very relevant to what we were picking up, in terms of a potential Iranian fifth column being sent back. What's going on with this? Is there going to be warfare, et cetera? One of the things that was under discussion in Washington, at least we would pick up these little statements, was a discussion of, in order to get the hostages out we would send F-16's to Iran that had been contracted for under the Shah, we would send spare parts to Iran that had been contracted for, whatever, whatever.

And because of the saber rattling that was going on between Iraq and Iran on the border issue, I kept going back to Washington saying, "Could you please tell us what's going on with this? Are we in trouble here? Are you really going to send these planes to Iran? If

you are going to, could we have a little notice, because we have some safety issues” if the Iraqis got thoroughly upset about this and I never got an answer.

Now, we had no secure phones. We had no decent communications, so I couldn't actually call them.

Q: Were you particularly concerned about, I would assume, after what you've described, that it was Saddam Hussein that you were concerned about and not essentially the Iraqi street mob.

JONES: There was no question that the city, the country was under extremely tight control by Saddam Hussein. Nothing was going to happen there that Saddam didn't want to have happen. So, yes, the only threat to us was from Saddam. So if he got upset about F-16's being sent to Iran by the U.S., it wasn't any mob that came unless he ordered it to. However, it was our judgment that he would not order a mob to do anything, that he would just take direct action, because he wanted to be in control at all times and mobs are notoriously out of control.

So we always felt very safe there. We knew we would be very safe, there would be no street crime, there would be no terrorist attacks, there would be no anything against any of us until he ordered it.

Q: Any feelings about the Sunni-Shia, particularly Khomeini, having been there and gone away, was anything going on?

JONES: This was actually a very big issue connected with the round up of the Muslim Brotherhood. Several people who had stayed behind in Najaf, who'd been with Khomeini in Najaf and Karbala and had gone to Paris or hadn't yet gone to Paris. There was a lot of discussion within the diplomatic community as to what had happened to those guys, would their association with Khomeini be honored, what would happen to them? I actually can't remember any of the details about what happened but it was a big focus of attention of all of us political officers.

At the same time, I don't recall that the Iraqis, that Saddam was overly supportive of Khomeini, in terms of his opposition to the Shah, not least because his concern about the Muslim Brotherhood was very focused on the Shia. He was very mindful of the dangers that could be presented to him as a minority Sunni leader from the Iraqi Shia all through the south and, of course, the Kurds all through the north.

Q: How could you take the temperature of the Shia, from your position, or could you?

JONES: We couldn't, other than to understand who was being arrested, how many were being arrested, were there street sweeps in Karbala and Najaf. We'd kind of hear about them from all kinds of people, like you do in a very closed society. You do still hear things. It was very much like what I recall being described as how you do political reporting in the Soviet Union.

For me, the interesting thing was, I had gone from being political reporting officer in Jordan, where my difficulty was I heard so much, what was it that really mattered and how to answer what question, in terms of what I reported and competing with a lot of public sources. I had to be very discriminating in reporting from Jordan. Compare that to going to Baghdad where there were zero public sources and very few direct sources, so that anything I reported was quite valuable. It was really a total difference in how you do the reporting.

Q: I don't want to get into details, but did you find, in this sparse territory, intelligence-wise, were you getting anything at your level from the CIA, analysis or anything like that, that made any difference?

JONES: We were getting a lot of questions and the fellow who was my station colleague and I were very good colleagues and we shared everything we got in order to try to understand what was going on, but we didn't know a lot.

Q: This is one of the things I have found, that it may hit at a different level of the government, but a working officer in the field doesn't seem to get much.

JONES: I don't remember getting very much but the other thing was, I'm not sure I expected to, because of the classification restrictions we had in this interests section. So highly classified things probably wouldn't have come to us in any case.

The other thing that was very important at that time is commercial work we were able to do. We had, each year there was a big industrial fair and show, trade fair and big American companies would come in. We had a commercial officer, Marisa Lino, who spent a huge amount of time on this and all these companies came in and they were mobbed by all of the people, including just any old Iraqi who wanted to go to the trade fair.

The other really strange thing that happened is all of a sudden one day we get a cable that says that Iraq is hosting the international military wrestling championships and an American wrestling team from the U.S. Army was coming to participate and would we please make arrangements. We thought we didn't have diplomatic relations, especially on military matters and here's this team coming. So we got hold of the organizers and they said, "Oh, my God, we're so glad that you've contacted us, because we were afraid to contact you as we're not quite allowed to, but we really, really, need an American flag and we really, really, need a tape of the *Star Spangled Banner*, just in case the American team wins and they're on the podium, we have to play the *Star Spangled Banner*. Well, we had quite a sweat, because we didn't have an American flag. We could get the *Star Spangled Banner*, the PAO, fortunately, had that. But we had to quickly contact the embassy down in Kuwait: "Quick, quick, send us an American flag that can be raised at this thing." And the wrestling team came and they won, they won the whole tournament and I think the second most successful team was the Iranian team. We had a great time

between the tournaments with the American team members. We hosted them for dinners at Bill Eagleton's Residence.

Q: When you think of wrestling, you think of Turkey and Iran.

JONES: Turkey did really well, but the American team did really well and the Iranians did very well. So I went over and sat with the Iranian ambassador and we had a big chat. This was all during the time of the hostage business.

Q: On the commercial side, were there any caveats or problems, were you selling business people, "Don't sell widgets that have a military significance?"

JONES: Oh, yes. They had to get export permits for everything they sent in. Most of the stuff that they were showing was office equipment, medical equipment, very civilian oriented kind of stuff. But anything that even came to the show they had to get an export permit for, if it was anywhere on those lists of dual use items.

Q: But, still, would you say it was a solid trade?

JONES: It was just opening up, you see, so I can't say that there were major contracts signed. But there was this sense that on the commercial level things could warm up a bit. On the political level, forget about it. The political level then changed to be warmer when the Iraq-Iran War started.

Q: Let's talk about the Iran situation. In February of '79, Valentines Day, February 14th, our embassy had been taken over for a rather short time. In a way, it seemed to be setting a pattern. You just kind of shrugged and got back in business again. How did the takeover hit you all?

JONES: We were terribly concerned about it. Of course, we were very focused on it, being right next door. There was a lot of back and forth, in terms of reporting about the Kurdish issue and the border issue and all that, with our colleagues in Embassy Teheran. They were colleagues. I had even gone to a regional DCM meeting that the bureau had hosted in Karachi, I was deputy principal officer, so they let me go and spent a lot of time with the acting DCM from Embassy Teheran, et cetera, because of the reporting, because we needed to understand what was going on. So they were our colleagues, very close by and one of the things I did when I got there as deputy principal officer, I got out the evacuation plan, which is one thing you're supposed to do and said, "Is this relevant?" Well all of the evacuation routes for U.S. Interests Section Baghdad were across the border into Iran, all of them, with maybe one, a backup down to Kuwait.

By the time the fifth column was being picked up and that sort of thing, we then revised the whole thing and that's when we started surveying the road to Jordan and the road down to Kuwait.

Q: When the takeover came, it was November, I believe, wasn't it?

JONES: November was when the takeover happened, that's right.

Q: How did you see it? "Well, this is just a repeat of the February takeover" or

JONES: At first, yes. At first that's exactly what we thought. I remember being at a reception, talking with the Soviets about how long would this last. It had already gone on for about two weeks and the European diplomats were very nervous and concerned about it. I was very gratified that they were as nervous and concerned about it, on behalf of my colleagues. I remember my Soviet colleague saying, "Oh, don't worry, it's only going to be for another couple weeks. Don't worry about it. They'll let 'em go." Of course we know what happened. But it was a very big concern for a lot of us, in terms of what would happen should anything be launched between the Iraqis and Iranians.

Q: What was the reading on Khomeini and his ilk there? I would think we would have been paying relatively close attention to that movement, because you were close in.

JONES: Very close by and of course the thing that our colleagues in Tehran were ever so interested in was what we understood from his tenure in Karbala and Najaf, what were the remnants? That was one of the big issues we would discuss back and forth in cables and official-informals, what we had been able to discover. And as I said earlier, the Iraqi official government attitude was, "We're glad we hosted him. We're glad he's not there anymore. We're glad that he is mounting opposition to the Shah, because after all the Shah is the one that we fought with over the border." But, nevertheless, quite a bit of concern about this Shia leader and what might that mean for the Shia majority, downtrodden majority, in the south of Iraq.

Q: Did you feel that Saddam had such tight control that this disease of fundamentalist Shiism wasn't going to hit Iraq?

JONES: Yes, we definitely had the view that he had very tight control, but we were nevertheless very interested that he felt that he had to take extraordinary measures to exert even more control. So the rounding up of the Muslim Brotherhood, the getting rid of the fifth column of Iranian expats from generations before, indicated to us a greater fear on Saddam's part about the Shia minority than we had really expected, because we could see that he had such tight control. But it seemed to us that he didn't think he had such tight control, which was just an interesting factor that we kept looking at. "What does this mean?"

Q: I guess this is true of every dictator. You can't have enough security.

From your experience with your family in Moscow and all, were you seeing a stylistic copy?

JONES: Absolutely and the thing that struck me the most quickly was the 25 kilometer limit from the center of Baghdad beyond which diplomats could not go without special

permission. I thought, "I've been here before. This is what it was like in Moscow." So it was a copycat situation in that respect.

But otherwise, I didn't live through the Stalin time, so I can't say that the feel was the same in terms of the terror. For example, one time my phone didn't work at home. But I knew I couldn't go next door to the neighbor and ask to use his phone to call the interests section to get a repairman out, because I knew the guy would be terribly disadvantaged.

I happened to go out to the car to go to work every morning almost at the same time as the police chief, who lived across the street, did. I one time dared to wave to him, just because he seemed to be looking kind of friendly and he scurried away like I had been pointing a gun at him. Okay, I'm not going to do that again. So it was that kind of really desperate feeling.

That said, we could go to the bazaars, we could have a chat with people, sit down and have a coffee with the bazaaris and that was okay, that was allowed.

Q: Could you go south, near Kuwait, Shia territory, could you get there or not? You had this limitation, but could you

JONES: Yes, to a degree. We did our pouch run, our classified pouch we got by driving to Kuwait every two weeks, so we had a roster of who got to go to Kuwait, because we did all our shopping for food down there as well. The drive to Kuwait, of course, went past the marshes, through Basra and then on to Kuwait and through Karbala and Najaf. So you could get a sense, at least see what was going on and all that kind of thing. You couldn't get out and talk to people. That would have just, as I said, gotten people in a lot of trouble but at least we could see things and we could get a feel.

Separately, you could ask for permission to go to various places on a particular date. Often we weren't given that permission or we got the permission after the weekend we could have gone. But, for instance, at one point we got permission to go visit and camp out at the ancient city of Ur, which was in the south and went through Karbala and Najaf on the way back. So we could do a few things like that.

We never got permission, I tried and tried and tried to get permission, to go to the Kurdish areas, never could get permission to go north, never could go to Kirkuk. Ryan Crocker and I, we figured out that we could get on a train in downtown Baghdad and they didn't have the watchers on the train and so we thought we'd make it a day trip and go to Ba'qubah, which we did. I talked to Ryan Crocker about when we ran into each other just before his Hill testimony a couple of weeks ago -- the difference between sneaking off to Ba'qubah and what he has to do in Ba'qubah now.

Q: By the way, was Tariq Aziz at all a figure while you were?

JONES: Big time. I don't recall his precise position at that time, but he was very big, absolutely.

Q: How did we read him?

JONES: We read him as intellectually plugged into the ruling group and the Regional Command Council. He had managed to present himself as not a personal threat to Saddam Hussein but still able to contribute to the foreign policy discussion to a degree. Beyond that I didn't have much of a sense of him but he was considered the international face of Iraq, even then.

Q: Sadr City, which is a division of Baghdad,

JONES: Sadr City was kind of known then, but really all of that whole issue was all around Karbala and Najaf. There was an issue about the father and son [current Iraqi religious and politico-military personality Muqtada al-Sadr and his father, the late Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadq al-Sadr and one of the brothers] and where were they and had they been jailed and would we ever see them again, had they been tortured, absolutely. But the personalities weren't as pronounced then as they're known now in the Shia community.

Q: Did we have an FSN staff?

JONES: We had an FSN staff. They were clearly permitted to work for us. I used to meet with them fairly regularly and I used to tell them that they should not be concerned about being called in to report on us. I told them I knew that that was happening, they shouldn't be embarrassed about that. I told them I could guarantee them that they knew nothing about us that would in any way hurt us, that they should feel free to report anything they wanted to that was the truth. I wanted to take away from them the worry that they would somehow, if they said anything they would be hurting us. I wanted them to not to refuse to divulge information they had, for fear of what might happen to them. So that was the position we took.

Q: That's a safe way to do it. Were you concerned at all, in this atmosphere, about the staff? I'm thinking particularly the younger officers and others, involvement with somebody from the opposite sex or just friendships or something of this nature?

JONES: We had extremely careful guidelines about that kind of thing. I basically said, "You are prohibited, prohibited, from having any kind of relationship with any Iraqi, I don't care what it is," for the very reason that I mentioned, that any outreach to an Iraqi was likely to get them killed, if not tortured. So that was a very clear prohibition, without question and we never had a problem with that.

Q: I remember talking to somebody who said that the KGB would assign young ladies to

JONES: That didn't really happen there, no. It was a freer place in terms of Islam. They had beer joints all over. We could go to restaurants and beer joints and drink wine, when

you could get it. So there was no issue about the Islamic part of that. Women were not covered, except maybe in the countryside. Everybody wore Western dress.

One of the things that I thought was very interesting is that Iraqi women tended to be in much more senior positions in the society and in the government than I've seen anywhere else in the Arab world. So the director of the museum was a woman, the president of the university was a woman, my obstetrician was a very senior, well connected woman, et cetera. So it was interesting from that perspective. That was one of the positives of the Baath Party.

Q: Did you find that you were careful of your dress, or not? I remember my wife, in Dhahran, had to be long sleeved when she went out and all that sort of thing.

JONES: I didn't have to be nearly as careful in Baghdad as I had had to be even in Jordan and to a degree in Egypt. It just wasn't an issue. I was careful. You didn't wear sleeveless dresses. You didn't wear short skirts. But it was not an issue. It was amazing.

Q: Were we looking at the Iraqi Army and developments there?

JONES: We were, as much as we could, but as I mentioned, the only way we could figure out what was going on with them was to talk to the French, the Indians and to a degree the Soviets. Those were our best insights into what was going on with the military.

Q: I know much of the equipment was Soviet. Were there Soviet advisors? How did this work?

JONES: My recollection was there were Soviet advisors. There were also Indian advisors and that's how we heard a few of the stories we heard. There were no French advisors but there were French trainers. So, for example, the French were selling Exocet missiles to the Iraqis and they were sending training teams down there to teach them to shoot them, et cetera. But especially when the Iraqis started the Iraq-Iran War in September of 1980, that's when we started hearing stories of how well the training had or hadn't taken on some of these systems.

So, for example, the Indian military attaché told me he had been with one of the surface to air missile batteries under a bridge after the Iraqis first attacked and the Iranian Phantoms were coming over Baghdad strafing and dropping bombs. The SAM's were programmed to discover when the Phantoms were coming, lock onto them and then shoot at whatever moment was appropriate in order to get them, but the Iraqi soldiers manning them could see that it meant that the barrel of the weapon automatically went way to one side, well before he could see that the plane was there and decided that this was all a big mistake and it was all completely stupid and so they undid the automatic targeting feature of it because they thought it wasn't hitting the planes. That's what saved the Iranian Phantom fleet.

Q: Whereas they were making allowances for speed.

JONES: In order that the munitions would hit the plane when it got there. So that was one of the main stories I remember sending back, is the Iraqi military may have a lot of weapons, but they're not doing very well with them.

Q: You left when?

JONES: I left in late November of 1980, just before Thanksgiving.

Q: Were we seeing a war developing and how did we feel about this? By this time, we're talking about a year in, aren't we, of the hostage crisis?

JONES: Not quite a year in. By late August we were starting to get quite concerned that from the statements, more the statements that the Iraqis were making, that were really rattling their sabers about this border agreement, to the point that I actually took a trip down to see a big American business group outside Basra, not too far from the Kuwaiti border. They were managing a gas collection and transportation center. I was concerned enough about what might happen that I made all the arrangements to talk to their leadership about their evacuation plan, what could happen, gave them a whole briefing about what our concerns were, that there was a lot of war talk in the air, to have vehicles available, gas in them, that they had air raid protocols for their staff, that they'd done some practices and all that kind of thing.

As it happened, I did that trip a week before the war actually started, which was extremely fortunate. But it also meant that I had up to the minute contact information for them, because that's exactly how the war started. The Iraqis attacked the Iranians and the Iranians counterattacked at this American facility and several Americans were actually killed. But the survivors were able to evacuate; they were very close to Kuwait and that was the plan, to get them out.

So we certainly figured something was happening. I had had my consular officer do a lot of work on making sure he knew how to reach every hotel in Baghdad, to go to all the hotels saying, "If you have any Americans here, here's how to reach us and here's what we're going to do" and all of that.

As it happened and we did know this, there was a very large group of American dancers at the Moulin Rouge, a topless dance club. We knew they were there when the war started. So we already had a very good sense of how many Americans there were in the country that might need to be evacuated should a war start.

Q: Despite our strained or truncated relations, actually there was quite a bit of American travel, an odd situation.

JONES: It was odd. So long as it was kind of commercial. We also had a very impressive team of archaeologists there from the University of Pennsylvania who were on a big archaeological dig somewhere northeast, I guess it was, of Baghdad. But we knew how to

reach them, too, to make sure that they were safe or stayed put or whatever it was that they needed to do should there be any kind of a military event.

Q: What were you getting from your colleagues in the [various other] embassies?

JONES: We all agreed that something was happening, that it looked quite ominous. One of the most interesting conversations I've ever had in my entire Foreign Service career happened about two weeks into the war, when I got a call from Saddam Hussein's interpreter, somebody that I knew because he was one of the few Iraqis who was allowed to appear at various of the national day receptions, he was permitted to go to the Australian embassy happy hours on Thursday evenings that I used to go to. Anyway, he called two weeks into the war and asked me to have lunch with him. First time ever that had happened. I, of course, said yes.

He sat me down at lunch and said, "We don't understand." I said, "What don't you understand?" "We don't understand why the war is continuing. It was our information that there were only x number of Phantoms that the Iranians had, that after Khomeini came, all of the Phantom pilots had all left or been forced to leave, that there were no spare parts left, that basically the military couldn't really function because Khomeini had gotten rid of anybody who was anywhere senior in the military."

I said to them, "Why would you think that? All you had to do was open *Janes All the World's Aircraft* and you would see that yes, maybe there were a lot of pilots who left but there were a whole heck of a lot more." He said, "We've taken overhead photography. We can't see any planes." I said, "Yeah, but *Janes* shows all the underground hangers that the Iranians had built and it has a story about all of the spare parts the Shah had bought, because that is how he got his kickbacks. So there are tons of spare parts. So even though you might damage a Phantom, they just pull a wing off this one and they've got ten more wings to go."

He said, "Oh, this is classified information, I'm certain. Is there any way at all that we can share this chapter of this intelligence document."

I said, "I'll tell you what. You have an embassy in London, don't you?" He said, "Oh, yes." I said, "Tell the embassy to go to Foyle's bookstore and buy this book and read it and right there you will know one heck of a lot more than you know now." Something I forgot to mention, we had actually offered the Iraqis intelligence liaison, which they'd turned down. We'd offered it within the past year. I said, "Had you accepted our offer, you might have known some of these things. This is the kind of thing that might have come up in discussion, in terms of a liaison relationship."

But it was very indicative in terms of the way Saddam ruled. And very quickly it became clear, first of all there were announcements that the head of military intelligence had been executed, that the senior general who was responsible for the front had been executed, et cetera. There were all kinds of stories that the commanding officers had sent all of their troops, who were of course all Shia, across the border into all these minefields. That was

how they were going to clear the minefields; the officers were coming back stunned because so many of these young Shia recruits would go happily into the minefields with a little Koran in their hand, talking about which level of martyrdom they were going to get and how proud they were to contribute to the Shia faith by doing this. Iranian soldiers they captured said, "We're so surprised that this piece of paper didn't work. We had this piece of paper that was sort of magic, to make us invisible."

So the stories started circulating that, "These guys are really nuts. We have opened a can of worms that we kind of wish that we hadn't opened. There's a Shia fervor there, on both sides, that we've unleashed that we really didn't want to unleash." So, a very interesting misjudgment about what was going to happen if they did attack Iran. Of course, we've seen what happened, how long it went on.

Q: Misjudgments on the part of Saddam. This is a problem when you get a dictatorship. You can't really trust your intelligence. I've interviewed Wayne White, who was an intelligence analyst, talking about when Saddam went into Kuwait and he's convinced that Saddam spontaneously said, "Oh, go ahead in," because the Iraqi troops came into little Kuwait and they had to get road maps. They weren't really prepared. It wasn't planned, or at least not very well.

JONES: I think Wayne's completely right and the pattern was established with the assassination of that first cabinet. I even heard this, to a degree, from the Iraqi interpreter who I had this lunch with. When I started asking him, "Why is this happening?" in terms of the senior military people being executed, he basically acknowledged that they were all telling Saddam what they knew he wanted to hear in terms of low Iranian capabilities and high Iraqi capability. They knew that Saddam wanted to attack, so they downplayed any of the defenses or any offensive capability that the Iranians had at that point.

Q: Shares of our involvement in Iraq.

JONES: Also.

Q: Twenty years later or something.

While you were in Iraq, were you picking up any feeling about the fragility of Iraqi society? We're now talking about our very strong involvement in Iraq in 2007 and how the place kind of fell apart. There doesn't seem to be a cohesive society on which to build much. Were you getting any feel for this?

JONES: Here's what happened during that period of time. I was involved with Iraq much later as well, so I saw the antecedents there better. During this period of time there was no question that Saddam was terrorizing and keeping down the Shia majority. There's no question about that. The Shia were very disadvantaged. They were not promoted above the level of raw recruits in the military. They didn't get the best jobs, certainly weren't in the officer corps and were very much restricted to the southern area.

The same thing was going on with the Kurds. They were restricted to the northern area, but with the Kurds it was a little bit more open, in the sense that he had at least one if not two Kurds in his government and there was little more back and forth, but there was still a very strong sense that the Kurds had to be contained in that area or even and this started happening while I was there, as I recall, that some Kurdish villages were basically closed and people were moved out of them, to keep them all unbalanced about what was going on. That was one of the reasons I wanted to go up to Kirkuk so badly and never could.

The other thing that happened, though, one of the things that was very evident during the period of time up to the war, as I mentioned earlier, was the unavailability of food, unavailability of fresh fruit, even though you knew that people were growing this stuff. But the centralized collection system, the collective farm kind of system, again, very Soviet, that was going on and the very controlled distribution system beyond that made it impossible for these things to be distributed in the market, or at least they just weren't available. So you couldn't get eggs. You couldn't get fresh fruit. You couldn't get anything, much.

Q: You've got this bazaari class, these are merchants of top quality.

JONES: Right, but the bazaaris that I was talking about were the ones that have the rugs. The ones when you're trying to get food, that was what was so tightly controlled by the distribution system.

Q: Well, if I recall, Saddam, up to the time we invaded, had this system where everybody got so many pounds of ghee or what have you, of rice or something. Was this what was going on, or what?

JONES: I don't recall that there was a ration system then. The ration system that you're talking about I believe was instituted by the UN, after the invasion of Kuwait, when the UN came in and took over some of the distribution of foodstuffs, to prevent Saddam from bringing in imports.

But what happened, the minute the war started, within days, the markets were flooded with fresh fruit, with vegetables, with eggs, with butter. You could get anything all of a sudden and it was very clear, I shouldn't say the minute, it was within a week or two, because when the war started, Saddam proclaimed "We're going to knock them over" and "Iran will fall like a house of cards" and it won't be any problem. When that didn't happen, when two weeks went by and there was still this resistance, not to mention warplanes coming over Baghdad, that is when the market started to be flooded with all of these, for the time they were luxury goods, but literally bananas and tomatoes and eggs and butter. At that time, it became clear to us that they were nervous about continuing support for the government, for this adventure, misadventure into Iran. I saw that as further evidence of the kind of control that Saddam had, that he was able to flood the market with those kinds of goods as quickly as he did. So the anomaly is that.

Then part two of this is that as the stories filtered back from all of the officers, Iraqi officers, Sunnis, who were with the Shia recruits going across and the ones who guarded the Iranian prisoners of war, all of these stories about Shia martyrdom and “Oh, I had this little piece of paper that’s supposed to make me invisible. How could you see me?” They came back with these stories, saying, “By God, these guys are really nuts. Maybe it is a good thing that we went after them.”

So the war, strangely, created more support for Saddam because of these two things than one might have guessed.

Q: When the war started, what was the conventional wisdom among the foreign diplomatic corps?

JONES: Well, the conventional wisdom was, “How quickly is Saddam going to have his clock cleaned?” Because we knew perfectly well how many Phantoms the Iranians still had and we could see them coming overhead every morning, air raid sirens and hitting the deck and all of this nonsense. I had a couple of junior officers, I had to explain, “When the air raid sirens go off, that does not mean go to the roof and watch the action, ever.”

The other interesting thing that happened is, yes, we, as the U.S. Interests Section, evacuated, we got all these buses and got all these Americans out of the country by highway into Jordan. But because we stayed, the diplomatic mission, we got big points from the Iraqis. I can’t honestly say how much, but all of a sudden the chief of protocol and head of the Americas desk invited me to dinner. Never happened before.

We talked about what was going on and about the relationship and what was possible in the relationship and one of them said to me, “You Americans are very clever.” I said, “What do you mean?” He said, “Very clever to send you to this position as the number two in the U.S. Interests Section.” I said, “Oh, thank you very much. Why do you say that?” He said, “We can take the tough talk from you. We couldn’t have taken it from a man. We understand what you are saying. You are a woman, so we can hear you without having the testosterone flow.” They said something literally like that.

Q: Was there any feeling on your part, or the interest section’s part, or did you get it from elsewhere within the U.S. government, “Hey, these damned Iranians are keeping our people and maybe they deserve this or something”? In other words, why don’t you two guys fight, but at the same time, we’re a little more on the side of the Iraqis?

JONES: It was more of a sense, as I remember, of “a pox on both their houses” from Washington. But, this is an insight I had when I went back to Washington after this, as it looked like the Iranians were going to be able to take over Basra, make their way into the marshes, there was a sense that this should not be permitted and there was some discussion of “Is there anything we can do to shore up the Iraqis, so that we can go back to pox on both their houses and not worry that one’s going to take over from the other?” Because we didn’t want to have Khomeini further into Iraq at that point.

Q: Very obviously, at that point Khomeini was the enemy and the Iranians, every Friday they'd go "Death to America," which is not exactly an accolade as far as we were concerned.

JONES: The other thing that happened, in terms of the U.S. situation, is Ed Peck was gone by the summer before all of this happened and Bill Eagleton came in as the principal officer. He had Arabic, his Arabic was good. He had served in Iraq previously. He'd been principal officer in Kirkuk. So he knew the scene extremely well and was a very good observer of what was going on, very different from Ed Peck. So he was able to really contribute substantially to the understanding and reporting and the sense of what was going on there.

I mention that because I was replaced by Barbara Bodine then and he was replaced by April Glaspie. One of the reasons April was sent in for this posting, as an extremely good Arabist known to be politically aggressive, her writ, her instruction, from Washington was to try to figure out some way to have a relationship with this guy Saddam.

Q: We've mentioned, prior to the war, that we'd made an offer to exchange intelligence information. I would have thought, once the war started, that they'd come and say, "Hey, what about that information?"

JONES: I would have, too, but one of the traits of Saddam Hussein was severe personal isolation, including from most of the Arab countries. The Jordanians would tell me stories of what it was like to have Saddam say he was going to visit Jordan, right next door and all of the tasters and the anti-poison people and all of this sort of nonsense that went on.

The other thing I did a little research on to be sure I was right was to check and see where Saddam had ever traveled, outside of a couple of countries in the Arab world and the answer was zero places. So he had no appreciation of what an intelligence liaison situation might gain him. As far as he was concerned, he knew all he needed to know, because people were telling him what he wanted to know, what they thought he wanted to know, so there wasn't anything that he was lacking. And he kept being told there wasn't anything he was lacking, because any sense that someone else could help was detrimental to his senior people. They would never have admitted that.

Q: At that time, was the Tikrit mafia a real presence or did that develop later?

JONES: No, that was a big discussion. Saddam was from Tikrit, his guys were from Tikrit, who was a Tikriti, who wasn't? That was all front and center and the judgments about who was in and who was out, either in the RCC, the Regional Command Council, or the cabinet. So that was very big. That was, right from the beginning, the Tikritis were it. Even then, the strongly held theory was that and there were stories about assassination attempts against Saddam, was that that's how he was going to go, that there wasn't going

to be any overthrowing by the Iranians or anybody else, that somebody on the inside, a Tikriti, would assassinate him.

Q: Was there any evaluation of how American planes were doing against, I guess they were, what were they, French planes or

JONES: No, they were MiG's. They were Soviet planes. I don't remember that there were any dogfights. No, it was the threat from SAM's, which then wasn't a threat, right away.

Q: While you were there, was our stance towards Israel thrown in our face at all, or was it not really of major focus?

JONES: The Iraqis didn't have a view on it. It wasn't an issue for them, particularly. Their focus was on how much they hated Damascus, how much they wanted to overthrow the monarchies of the Gulf, how concerned and overbearing they were to the Shia in their own country and how worried they were about the Kurds, including Kurds from Iran. So Iran, it was not only the border but Shia in the south, Kurds in the north, on both sides, in both cases.

Q: What about Jordan, King Hussein?

JONES: Of course King Hussein was a monarch and he was variously under threat, he believed, by Saddam, not least because of statements that Saddam would make about him, also but he was enough further away that he really didn't seem to be the target that the Gulf monarchies were for Baathism. There was kind of a discussion at the time, sort of rumors around, how much did Crown Prince Hassan, who was known to be a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, how did that hurt or help King Hussein, what was that whole dynamic about with the Muslim Brotherhood? It was just one of those things that political officers like to talk about.

Q: As a Foreign Service Officer, it must have been a hell of a lot of fun.

JONES: Huge, it was fabulous. I loved every minute of it. People say what was your favorite post and I say I loved doing the political reporting from Iraq. I didn't love living there, just because in the end I didn't know any Iraqis, really. But I had some of my most clear Foreign Service experiences there, as I had during the Kissinger shuttles in Egypt.

Q: The war is raging and it's not going the way the Iraqis thought it would. Where did you go?

JONES: The war was raging. There was some talk now of, some of the electric power stations might be hit. There was a sense that there might be reduced electricity, most electricity out during the day, on at night. There was a lot of talk about this.

And in the meantime, by the end of November I was seven, eight months pregnant. I had it all planned out, had permission from MED to have the baby in Iraq. But as the negotiations over the hostages in Tehran got more heavy duty, I knew nothing about them, just that they were going on. I was instructed by Washington to get out of Baghdad. And I was offered either to go temporarily to Jordan and go back with the baby or to come back to Washington.

I opted to go back to Washington, because I figured, with all of the talk about maybe no electricity and war continuing, that the chances that I could go back with an infant were zero and that I didn't want to be hanging around in temporary quarters in Amman with a new baby when I could go to Washington, go back to work, get a house and all that. So that's what I did.

Q: So that was in 1980?

JONES: That was in late November 1980, got back just in time for Thanksgiving and I started working on the Bangladesh desk. We left by driving across Iraq to Jordan (with our Schnauzer hidden from view at the border crossing) and flying to the US from there.

Q: So here you are, a new baby and the Bangladesh desk.

JONES: Well, here's what happened. I worked on the Bangladesh desk for a month and then Todd was born. He was born earlier than I expected but he was actually full term. It's just that I screwed it up, in terms of what his due date was.

Q: Math has never been a strong point of Foreign Service Officers.

JONES: Right. He was due in late January and he came in late December. So I took maternity leave. So my one month on the Bangladesh desk, that's all it was. I don't remember a single issue that we were dealing with then. It was very quiet on the Bangladesh desk at that point. So I took time off until about June of 1981, when I took over as the Lebanon desk officer.

Q: Okay and you were Lebanon desk officer from when to when?

JONES: From June 1981 through the summer of 1983 and then I took over as the deputy director for the same office, Arab Region North, stayed involved in all that.

Q: June 1981, what was the situation in Lebanon?

JONES: Right then it wasn't too difficult. I can't actually remember what was going on right then. But we very quickly got into the whole issue of who had the Lebanese permitted to enter Lebanon, who were the Saudis generating support for in Lebanon. And it all related, of course, to the Israelis and it all resulted, all of this back and forth, in the Israeli invasion of Lebanon two years later.

Q: Let's talk about that, what was the Saudi role?

JONES: There was a lot of controversy about what the Saudi role was. The Israelis accused the Saudis of funneling weapons to various groups in Lebanon, particularly the PLO, various Palestinian groups. I don't know that the intelligence was so clear at the time. I don't recall that it was particularly clear that that was the case. It didn't corroborate all of the Israeli suspicions. But there's no question that there was a big question about who was really in control in Lebanon, because there were so many groups, including Lebanese confessional groups with their various militias, who were in control of various parts of Beirut, who were in control of various parts of Lebanon, et cetera.

And of course we also had the Syrians, who were in the Bekaa Valley. The controversy there was where did they control and what were the Lebanese going to be able to do about it.

Q: This is before the Syrians came in full scale.

JONES: That's right, before they came in full scale but the quasi control over the Bekaa Valley was certainly in place.

Q: The Bekaa Valley, wasn't there an issue of SAM missiles and this sort of thing?

JONES: That's right.

Q: When you're doing this, this is good military intelligence stuff. What were you getting? Was it any good, do you think? I think you could overfly and take pictures.

JONES: We had a pretty good idea about the presence of the SAM's. We knew that they were there. I spent quite a bit of my time on what were the Palestinians doing there and was there a way for the Palestinians and the Lebanese to have any kind of discussion, accommodation, what about the Druze, et cetera. One of the big issues that was underway were elections. Elections were coming up. One of the big questions for the U.S. that the Lebanese kept posing was who is the U.S. going to support in the various elections, parliamentary elections and presidential election.

My job was to make certain that it was clear that the U.S. didn't have a candidate, we were supporting free and fair elections, the usual thing. Lebanese politicians all wanted to come to Washington to have meetings at a very high level, to demonstrate that they had been endorsed by the U.S. There was fairly early-on a decision made that the most senior person that any of them would see was me. Maybe, if there was a substantive issue, beyond what I could handle, they would see Nat Howell, who was the country director at the time. David Mack was the deputy country director. So it was the two of them and myself who were the ones trying to figure out how to manage this. But it was very clear that they should not meet with anyone in the front office.

Q: What was reading of the people, the Lebanese who came to see you?

JONES: Well, it was all the same families, Walid Jumblatt and Bashir Jumayyil and Tony Franjeh and some of the others. So it was all the same families that had been in place in Lebanon all these years, all these decades, almost through the century and they were incapable, unable, to see beyond their own interests and to find a way to reach out to each other, to try to make some kind of accommodation on various issues, whether it was about the Palestinians or about the Syrians and the Saudis, or whatever it was. They were interested in power for their own sake, for their family's sake, power and control. And it was very frustrating to discuss with them ways that they might reach out and areas of common interest where they might accommodate.

Q: Our inhibitions regarding talking to the PLO, this must have been kind of frustrating, wasn't it?

JONES: It was very frustrating on a substantive level. I was dealing much more on a tactical level, where Embassy Beirut was in fact permitted to talk to the local PLO commander around the embassy for security purposes. So to a degree we had a slightly better situation in terms of the PLO. We couldn't negotiate with them later on, when the Israelis went into southern Lebanon and the PLO moved up north to Tripoli. And then I was involved in the whole negotiation with the Israelis not to shell their ships as they left Tripoli and escaped to Tunis, their leadership escaped to Tunis, which we helped broker. That was later in my time.

Q: Did you get any feel for Arafat at the time?

JONES: I can't say I had much of a feel for Arafat myself. The reporting that we got was mostly debriefing the Australian diplomats in Damascus about their conversations with the PLO, which was very fruitful and I mean they were very good. They were our go-to guys as far as the Palestinians, the PLO, was concerned.

My frustration at the time was, again, how difficult it was to get the Palestinians, or any of them, to focus on something that was bigger than their current, immediate power situation. Now, later on, probably after the Israeli invasion in, it must have been the summer of '83, that Phil Habib got so involved, as Under Secretary, to negotiate with the Israelis and the Lebanese and the Saudis, to a degree. And the problem there was of course the Israelis didn't honor it at all and that was a big discussion, a difficult challenge, between Habib and [Ariel] Sharon at the time.

Q: Did the Jordanians have any particular role at this point?

JONES: Not especially, no. Not really at all. Marc Grossman was the Jordan desk officer and I knew what he was doing, but only as it pertained to Jordan. There was very little interaction in terms of what was going on in Lebanon. There was much more back and forth with Egypt about what was going on in Lebanon, Egypt and the Saudis. I suppose that was probably because King Hussein just didn't want to have that much to do with Palestinians and it was a big Palestinian issue.

Q: From our point of view, what were the Palestinians really after?

JONES: As I remember it, of course there was the PLO and there were the PFLGC and some of these other, much more radical, groups. The more radical groups were the ones that were shelling northern Israel from the south, from Marjayun and places like that and their goal was to cause as much trouble as possible for Israel. Whether they really wanted the Israelis to take over Lebanon, I don't believe that that's what they wanted. It was the Rejectionist Front. They just didn't want to have anything to do with the Israelis.

The Palestinians, Arafat and some of the then more moderate ones, they just needed space for a lot of people. There were so many Palestinians living there, Palestinian refugee camps all over the place. The invasion ended with the Sabra-Shatila massacres, which were horrific. For them it was an issue of, "We need some place to go and this is a perfectly good place for us to be and so let us stay."

And the Lebanese government was so weak, not least because of the confessional arrangement, that it couldn't manage to make any kind of accommodation with the Palestinians other than to be pushed out of the way by them and that was very unsatisfactory to the Lebanese militias, particularly the Maronite militias. That's how you ended up with Sabra-Shatila.

Q: Here you are, on the Lebanese desk. Did you have the ideal plan for settling the Palestinian problem? I've talked to generation after generation of Foreign Service Officers about this problem, of what do you do with this unsettled mass? Seems like the Arab states are not willing to try to do something about it, except to keep 'em "barefoot and pregnant," kind of.

JONES: That's right. The Palestinians were difficult for all the Arabs, there's no question about it and they threatened all of the Arabs. That was some explanation for why the Saudis behaved as they did. There's plenty of information about how much the Saudis tried to buy their safety by supporting Arafat and for some of the other groups.

The plan I think is the same one that is on the table now: right of return, even though a lot of Palestinians won't take them up on it, a passport, a flag, some semblance of Jerusalem, somehow. All of the things that were on the table for Camp David II were on the table then. Through the decades, now, the willingness of the Israelis to negotiate for those things has receded. At that point there was not much willingness at all on the part of the Palestinians to negotiate this with the Israelis. They wanted everything back and were not prepared to go through those issues. But those were the issues, even then.

Q: Was there a feeling that Arafat was riding the tiger, that he had these radical groups and if he made any concessions he was going to be out?

JONES: That wasn't so much the sense then. It became the sense after that, particularly after he went to Tunis, that clearly he wasn't really in charge of all of them. But at the

time it wasn't so obvious that he was riding something he couldn't control. That was not obvious then.

Q: Did you feel in the NEA bureau the sense that the Israeli lobby domestically was not just the Jewish lobby, that there were fundamentalist Christians on board in that lobby?

JONES: They weren't really on board then, but I watched the transition happen. I believe that's when it started. The first I saw of this transition was when there was a ship offshore broadcasting Christian right kind of messages that was supported by the Israelis and supported by the Christian right in the United States. But that was the first that I saw any evidence at all that more than the Jewish lobby, the Israeli lobby, in Washington was interested in the Middle East at all. That was the very first evidence. I've forgotten the name, but it was very much a Christian message.

Q: Did you find yourself having to check out to make sure we weren't upsetting the Israelis on anything we did in Lebanon?

JONES: It didn't quite go that way, particularly after the Israeli invasion. That's when Haig was Secretary of State and Sharon had come to see him ahead of time and there's a whole issue of did he get a green light for the invasion? I was in the room for that conversation in Haig's office. If there was any kind of light given, I can picture the two men, they were at the other end of the room and I was the note taker as the desk officer and I did not hear the conversation. They were off by themselves. I watched them, but I couldn't tell what they were talking about. Then when this whole issue of green light, yellow light came up, I thought, "Whatever it was, that's when Sharon thought he'd gotten it."

Q: How could you take notes if you couldn't hear them?

JONES: Exactly. When I wrote the notes and took them back up for clearance, I noted "There was a part of the conversation I wasn't privy to. Please add that in." And it came back, something to the effect of, "nothing to add."

Q: Was it deliberate, did they say, "Okay, we're moving over here and you stay there" or

JONES: I don't know, honestly, what happened in that conversation. From what I know from Phil Habib and Morrie Draper, who was the deputy assistant secretary who worked with Phil Habib on this very closely, they did the negotiating together on a lot of this afterwards, my sense was that they were very unhappy about the Israeli invasion, that just complicated things to a terrible extent and there was a tremendous amount of push-back by Habib and Draper on the Israelis, on Sharon in particular, for the way they were behaving, for instance once the ceasefire was announced.

The U.S. helped to broker the cease fire after the Israeli invasion, and the next thing we knew, we would get reports that the cease fire had been called at x point on x road, whatever it was, from the south to the north and the Israelis were someplace else, were

much further north. So we would call them to task on it and they would say, “Yes, it’s a cease fire but nobody ever said that it was ceasefire in place.” So that’s how the term “rolling cease fire” came into use and Phil Habib was extremely upset about it and in order to detail to Washington just how close the Israelis were to Beirut, because the Israelis kept saying, “Oh, we’re not anywhere near Beirut,” at one point Phil Habib sent a cable back, because he was in Beirut at the time, saying, “To say the Israelis are not close to Beirut is to say that an invading army is not close to Washington if it is in Bethesda.” I remember that very clearly. That’s what it said.

Q: I’ve interviewed Bob Dillon, he and Habib both, they were both saying, “Listen to the artillery fire. It’s right outside my house.”

JONES: And I was on the phone with them all the time, in fact I would run up and down the stairs to the Ops Center, seemed like every twenty minutes, to get on the secure phone, that’s the only place we had it. I used to joke that my second child (I was pregnant then) would be born on the steps between the 6th floor at the Ops Center on the 7th floor, because I had to run up and down those stairs so many times a day. Courtney was born on October 7 – five minutes after midnight. I was determined that she not be born on October 6, the anniversary of Sadat’s assassination and the start of the October War.

I would use the SAT phone in the Ops Center, to get those reports from them, including the artillery fire and all that, that I could hear. I’d go back down and report it to, at that time, Charlie Hill who was the acting deputy assistant secretary, he was head of the Israel desk and he would write his notes and say “Thank you” and I never knew what happened.

Q: A little before the Israeli invasion, you still had the Lebanese desk at that time?

JONES: Yes.

Q: Did you have the feeling that the Israelis were looking for an excuse? Was this sort of the undercurrent?

JONES: Definitely, yeah. We knew that they wanted to invade and everything that we were doing, we thought, was to say, “Don’t invade, don’t invade, don’t invade!” At the same time, we were beating on the Lebanese and, as much as we could, on the other Arabs to beat on the Palestinians to stop firing across the border.

Q: The firing, was this really more harassment fire?

JONES: There were people being killed. There were Israelis being killed.

Q: This was serious stuff?

JONES: This was serious. This wasn’t playtime.

Q: I take it the Lebanese military power was just not in the area. Was that it?

JONES: It wasn't in the area, but also even if it had been it would have been extremely ineffective. That's one of the big issues that was my task, was to figure out the training for the army and the training for the police that would be effective enough to bring the police and the military into some semblance of inter-confessional order and to give it some teeth. But because of the confessional nature of both organizations, it was very difficult to push for either.

We worked harder on the police, just because we saw that there was maybe more traction with the police in getting that together, getting a more non-confessional police together. And we would work directly with Jumblatt, with the Druze and with others, to try to get them to promote their people going into the police, for instance. We would say, "You can't complain that the police are against your group if you won't let any of them join the police."

Q: Did we have any lever with the people firing the artillery into Israel?

JONES: We had no direct lever. We thought that the other Arabs would, the Saudis, the Egyptians, maybe even the Syrians. So we kept going to them to say, "Get them to stop, get them to stop! This is not in your interest, it's not in Lebanon's interest, it's not in the PLO's interest."

Q: What sort of reply were you getting?

JONES: I'm not sure I can remember any specifics. My recollection was: "Yes, yes, we're trying." Did we have evidence that they tried very hard? Not really.

Q: Was it in anyone's interest to have a full-scale invasion of Lebanon? At the time, did we see anybody gaining by this?

JONES: No, not at all. From my perspective, I thought it was a bad mistake for the Israelis. It was even not in their own interests to do this. Now Sharon was a particular kind of person and we know what kind that was and Phil Habib had conversation after conversation with him, especially down on his farm, trying to get him to understand, Sharon's farm in southern Israel.

Q: He was minister of defense.

JONES: He was minister of defense then, yes, trying to get him to understand just how much this was contrary to Israel's long-term interests, that there was no way that this was good for Israel or the Israelis long-term and of course, the result, or one of the awful things that happened, of course, with Sharon's connivance in the Sabra-Shatila massacres that were done by the Maronites.

Q: As we move up to the invasion, there obviously was a major Israeli build up. It was like watching a pistol being cocked, wasn't it?

JONES: I can't remember if there was that much of a build up. You don't need that much of a build up in order to cross the border, because there's plenty of people up there already. But I don't remember details on that, to tell you the truth. I don't remember that there was a sudden surge or anything like that. Just like the most recent, the invasion a year ago or whenever it was, I'm sure that we saw a big surge. I think there were people there and they simply walked across the border.

Q: So it could just happen. The Israeli ambassador in London was badly hurt in an assassination attempt, but this was seemed a distant occurrence.

JONES: Yeah, but it was the excuse that they used, of course, to do the invasion, they said there has to be a link and so we're going to go after the nest of those who perpetrated this and they did it within days. He was hurt on Thursday and they invaded on Saturday, something like that.

Q: You're sitting in the office, or did you get a telephone call at home or what happened?

JONES: What happened was I was actually on vacation, at a house that the family owns on the New Jersey shore that doesn't have a phone. I'd been listening to the radio, but all I could get was news about Millicent Fenwick smoking a pipe.

Q: Millicent Fenwick was a congresswoman from New Jersey.

JONES: I did know that the Israeli ambassador, there'd been an assassination attempt. I had heard that on the news, but had not heard anything further until the Brant Beach police knocked on the door of the house where I was staying, with a note from Jim Collins, who had taken over as the country director, saying, "Please call me urgently" and it wasn't his phone number. I thought, "Oh, my God, that sounds like it's the Ops Center. Why is he having me call the Ops Center?" This was late on Friday night.

He told me what had happened, said I had to come back instantly to run the task force. I said I would, but was it okay if we left at five in the morning, instead of driving in the dark and he said yes. They'd already started the task force and I got back and chaired the task force then for weeks and weeks and weeks and weeks.

Q: So, among your group of people dealing with it, what was the initial reaction?

JONES: The initial reaction was, pardon me, "Oh, shucks" was the initial reaction. Not a big surprise, but, still, "Oh, God, this overcomplicates everything and does terrible things to an awful lot of innocent people, civilians, et cetera." But then we launched very quickly into, as I remember now, it was over the Fourth of July weekend that this all started, just before Fourth of July and we launched very quickly into the negotiations,

getting Phil Habib out there, what should our position be, what are all the elements of what the U.S. should be trying to do here?

This is something that Eagleburger felt very strongly about and he was right, was to get the French involved in working on a solution. So the initial outside forces that came in to try to calm things down were the French, French troops. Somebody else went in, too. It could be the Italians. That sounds about right. I have a recollection of meetings with the French ambassador, but not with the Italian ambassador and they were always in Eagleburger's office, constantly talking with these guys.

And then of course there was a big discussion with the Pentagon about getting U.S. troops in there as well to participate. The French and, if it was the Italians, the Italians went in and took up positions all over Beirut, in very strategic places, appropriately so. But it was very important to the Pentagon, Cap Weinberger at the time, he was very reluctant to have U.S. troops go in, but when they did go in they had to be in a "safe place." So they ended up going in only to the port, whereas I think the French had the airport and a few other places.

And then eventually we had this big Marine barracks on the way to the airport which, of course, was then blown up later, in that huge tragedy. This was, of course, after the embassy had already been blown up.

Q: As this thing was developing, was the feeling that they're going to move in to create what amounts to a neutral zone?

JONES: Yeah, a "separation zone" type of thing is what they were talking about and that was at least our initial understanding. And so when the ceasefire went into place, we said, "Okay, now we can start negotiating." Well, when the cease fire became a "rolling ceasefire" and they were obviously moving closer and closer to Beirut, it seemed to us that the purpose of the Israeli invasion had changed to not just creating a sort of buffer zone to keep the Katyushas and other ordnance from being able to be launched onto northern Israel to but it was to get rid of the Palestinians altogether. And that's when Arafat and company moved up to Tripoli and you had the whole effort to get them out to Tunis.

Q: Was it becoming clear, was there a discrepancy, say, in the reporting from, say, Tel Aviv and Lebanon about who was doing what to whom, at our embassies there?

JONES: I don't remember being upset with Embassy Tel Aviv for not reporting completely. My recollection is that they were doing the best they could. A lot of it was in Sharon's mind. It wasn't something that was under a big discussion in the Israeli body politic. Certainly, we had no warning that the Israeli tactic was going to be to keep moving after a ceasefire. All of us were thunderstruck by that. A lot of my recollection of the time was just trying to understand what was going on on the ground, because it was moving very fast and trying to find ways to keep it from getting worse with every passing two hours, which was what seemed to be going on.

Now Phil Habib was out there for a lot of this time, Phil and Morrie Draper, including when the embassy was blown up. They weren't in the embassy, but they were there in Beirut. They spent a tremendous amount of time on the phone with Embassy Tel Aviv, trying to see what was going on and doing talking points on the fly, here's what we're trying to get the Lebanese to do, here's what we need you to get the Israelis to do.

Q: Was it beginning to dawn on us that we were talking about an unchained bulldog?

JONES: Really, very clear to us, very clear.

Q: That, in a way, Begin, who was prime minister, was not really controlling events?

JONES: That's correct. We knew that Sharon was in charge of this. That's why Phil Habib spent so much time with Sharon in the south. And he would get an okay statement out of [Menachem] Begin, go see Begin in Jerusalem and then go see Sharon for long lunches at his farm to try to talk some sense into him. It was very difficult. He was very, very aggressive, very uncompromising. I still remember Phil Habib being very upset with a lot of conversations with Sharon.

Q: Was this having any effect on the normal American-Israeli friendship circles?

JONES: My recollection is that it did, because I would go with Habib regularly, whenever he came back he would do a briefing on the Hill, usually in closed session and he would be very clear about just how difficult it was to get the Israelis to be reasonable, Sharon in particular, about this and that. I had the very clear sense that the members that he briefed, it would be the Democrats one time and the Republicans sometimes the same day, House, Senate, et cetera, that they were very sympathetic to Phil Habib. They understood what a tough job he had, understood he was doing everything he possibly could to get the carnage stopped, and were sympathetic to his efforts to get the Israelis to pull back. I don't recall at all that there was any concern that we were being overly hard on Sharon, not at all, on the contrary. Of course the other thing is that the Peace Now movement was very big in Israel and there was a lot of support in Congress for the Peace Now movement.

Q: Which was opposed to the?

JONES: Which was opposed to the invasion, it was opposed to the kind of hard line that Begin and Sharon had been taking on a variety of issues, not just this. And there was not much love lost for Begin, either, in the Congress. There was a sense that the Israelis had overstepped a bit here.

Q: What was the reaction you were getting about the Lebanese themselves during this? Were they just ineffective and out of it, or?

JONES: Yeah. There was a lot of sympathy and support for the U.S. effort to build up the police, to try to work out better confessional arrangements, to get the Lebanese to step up for themselves and take control of their territory and take responsibility for their territory, not just constantly point the finger at “Oh, the Syrians are doing this, the Israelis are doing that, the Palestinians are doing this.” We constantly said to them, “Take charge of your territory. You can’t just keep pointing fingers and have it be somebody else’s fault.” There was a time the Israeli media propagated, and to a degree you still see that, “Oh, it’s the Fifth Hand!” The mysterious Fifth Hand was the one that was always responsible.

Q: What’s the Fifth?

JONES: Sort of the mysterious somebody else. It was always somebody else responsible for whatever was going wrong for the poor Lebanese. And the argument we kept making is, “You’re not collecting taxes. You’re not paying your police. You’re not giving the police instructions. You’re not doing the kinds of things that a normal state would do in order to take control of their destiny. You can’t keep blaming everybody else for your lack of action.”

Q: I don’t think the term was alive at that point, but it sounds like Lebanon was basically a failed state.

JONES: Yes, definitely, it wasn’t a term at the time, but it was on the edge of being a failed state. In Egypt, Sadat was assassinated in ’81. In Lebanon, Jumayyil was assassinated a year later, I think, just in the course of the election campaign and it was unclear at the time, before the Israeli invasion, which didn’t help matters, in terms of who was in charge, because Bashir Jumayyil was, he wasn’t a marvelous solution for Lebanon, but at least he had a lot more support than his brother ended up having, when he took over after. I think Bashir was president-elect when he was assassinated and then of course there was a lot of controversy about who was the real assassin, was it really the Syrians or who was it? It probably was. That’s my view, anyway.

Q: The Syrians got in the way of the Israelis, got quite a bloody nose, didn’t they?

JONES: No, the Syrians, they never had a direct confrontation with the Israelis. The Syrians went down to a particular line and the Israelis went not all the way up to that line. But there was a bit of discussion as well about separation of forces, to make sure the Syrians and the Israelis didn’t come face to face with each other at that time. And of course one of the issues that blew up on the screen was that as American troops went into the port, there were also American carriers offshore in the Mediterranean, shelling parts of the mountains, where some of these sort of holdouts, bad guys, supposedly were.

Q: Who were the bad guys?

JONES: The various groups that had been shelling the Israelis who were holed up in the mountains up there. The news at the time, as the American carriers were shelling these

areas to try to stop the fighting or whatever it was supposed to do, was that the American carriers were launching little Volkswagens and killing a few sheep in the mountains.

Q: I think we had the New Jersey there or something. It wasn't a carrier. It was one of our World War II battleships.

JONES: We had planes coming off those ships, too, so would planes be on a battleship or on a carrier?

Q: On a carrier, but also, they were talking about, the last time I guess that the 16 inch guns, which were the biggest we made, on the battleships, they were using shells the size of a Volkswagen or something.

JONES: The reason I remember the planes is that one of them was shot down over the Bekaa Valley and the pilot was picked up, taken to Damascus by the Syrians and Jesse Jackson negotiated him out.

Q: There reached a point when the Israelis came to Beirut and according to Bob Dillon and others, the Israelis announced the exchange of artillery, which would be: Palestinians would launch an RPG-7, which was a small little rocket thing, and then they would respond with a 155 millimeter.

JONES: Pound the hell out of Beirut.

Q: This was pretty awful. Was this having any effect?

JONES: It was. It was considered very bad behavior on the part of the Israelis and that's something that Phil Habib would brief on when he got to Washington, is just how unbalanced the response was, how non-reciprocal.

Q: Was there any movement within the State Department, people dissenting or being unhappy or were we really trying to do something

JONES: I don't recall any of that. There was a very big effort to get the fighting stopped, get the Israelis to pull back, the agreement that Phil Habib negotiated between the Israelis and the Lebanese, to a degree with the Syrians and the Saudis, was to discuss the buffer zone, reduce the buffer zone down to a particular area, talk about how many Israelis could be in the buffer zone and get some Lebanese into the buffer zone, on the edge, I don't remember the details now and to try to develop a way for the Lebanese to get control of their territory down to the edge of the buffer zone. Now the Syrians of course were still in control of the Bekaa Valley and there wasn't really any way to manage that, but in the meantime it was hard enough to get the Lebanese to take control of the area they were supposed to have control over in the south. That was already quite difficult.

The other thing that went on throughout that entire period of time was the issue of kidnapped Americans in Lebanon. The one who was kidnapped for the longest time and

who finally was released of course was David Dodge, the president of American University Beirut. I talked every single day to his wife, Doris Dodge, in Princeton, about what it was that we were finding out, who we were putting pressure on, where to make the appeal. That was something I talked to Ryan Crocker about almost every day, because he was the one who was going out to any Lebanese, any friend of the Palestinians, that we could get to to find out where he was and try to get him released.

Q: What was the particular point to that kidnapping and other kidnappings?

JONES: The point was, as we put it together, is that it was a bad thing for there to be Americans or Westerners around who were so sympathetic to the Arab cause or to the Muslim cause, either one, and people who like David Dodge, who spoke Arabic and had a wonderful library of fabulous works, were dangerous for the radical Palestinian cause, because they were capable of demonstrating that the West wasn't the enemy of Islam and wasn't the enemy of the Arabs and they wanted them out, they wanted to get rid of them.

Q: Islam was not a particular issue, it was Arab.

JONES: Mostly Arab, not least because all these groups, the Palestinian groups, were Christian. Some of the most radical were Christians.

Q: Did the Lebanese Embassy amount to anything here in Washington?

JONES: The Lebanese Embassy was quite active. Bouhabib was the ambassador for a good part of the time. He tried hard to represent his country well. He understood that he needed to discuss the importance of getting the confessional problem resolved. He gave a lot of interviews. He was on the Hill regularly. I stayed in close touch with him. Phil Habib talked to him all the time. So there was an effort to collaborate and to help make them more effective. I'd see him quite often, actually.

Q: But there wasn't anything back in Lebanon to work with, was there, in a way?

JONES: It was tough. People like Bob Dillon would have a better sense of just what they were able to do, but he had to, as I remember and Ryan Crocker, who was head of the political section, had to spend a huge amount of time going from group to group to group, then go back to group to group to group, every single one, over and over again, to the Frangiehs, to the Jumayyils, to the Jumblatts, to Nabih Berri was another one, constantly trying to talk them into being reasonable, constantly.

Q: As you move towards the settlement, was there a point when we were seeing part of the problem is let's get the Palestinian leadership out of here? Were we seeing this early on?

JONES: We didn't see it early on, but when the Israelis pushed up to Beirut and were shelling so much, the Palestinians all went up to Tripoli and there was a big enclave of them there. The leaders in Tripoli didn't want them there, they wanted them the hell out

of there. There was some sense that the Israelis were going to bomb them up there and we thought, “This is a disaster. We don’t need any more bombing of any places in Lebanon. We don’t need any bombing of Palestinians.”

So we worked up a big plan to get ships for them and get them out of there. The Arab League at that point was in Tunis, which was why they went to Tunis, it was out of Cairo at that point. So that was a big diplomatic effort on our part that I remember extremely clearly, as really making extremely strong representations to the Israelis, right up to the very top, to say, “Okay, the ships are going to board in Tripoli on x and x date and these are the people that are going to be on them and don’t you dare shell them. They get to go to Tunis. You don’t get to wipe them out on the Mediterranean” and they didn’t, but it was tough.

Q: Did we have an aircraft carrier standing by to cover the ships?

JONES: I don’t remember that we did that. We might have. I just don’t remember that specifically. First we had to get agreement in the U.S. government this was the policy, because it wasn’t so easy to get that agreement, either.

Q: Where was the opposition?

JONES: From Weinberger.

Q: Weinberger was well known for, he didn’t want to use his troops. It became known as the Powell Doctrine. It was really the Weinberger Doctrine, don’t use the troops.

JONES: There was a certain sense that Arafat didn’t deserve to be saved. And our view was, very strongly held, was he might not deserve to be saved, but he’s the chosen leader of the Palestinian people. We didn’t choose him, they chose him, that’s their choice. We may or may not like it, but we’re not going to get anywhere by negotiating with the Palestinians if we don’t have Arafat leading the negotiations.

Q: Was Tunis seen as a fairly benign area?

JONES: Yeah.

Q: I’d think the Tunisians would be very unhappy to have this viper’s nest to be tossed into their midst.

JONES: The U.S. ambassador in Tunis at the time did a very good job of basically explaining to the chairman of the Arab League, went to him to say, “You need to explain to the Tunisians that you’re inviting Arafat here and they’re host of the Arab League and it’s an Arab League decision to have them come.” Of course I’m sure he went to the Tunisians themselves, but he made it a very big Arab League deal that they should go there. That’s how I remember it, anyway.

Q: Well, were there any warning flags going up about the Palestinian camps, Shatila and Sabra, but others, at the time?

JONES: Warning in what sense?

Q: "We're leaving these things open, we've got these nasty Christian militias out there."

JONES: I don't remember ever thinking that something like that would happen, to be honest. We knew that some of the militias were as horrific as they turned out to be. We knew they were bad, bad customers. But I can't remember ever thinking that they would do what they did.

Q: What was the genesis of these militias? Were these sort of protective groups or were they aggressive groups?

JONES: They started out as protective groups for the various families and then they began to rival each other, as well. But there were some who just were uncompromising, in terms of some of the other groups, uncompromising in terms of the Druze, uncompromising in terms of Nabih Berri and the Shia, uncompromising in terms of the Sunnis and they just wanted to take over. They wanted to get back the glory of the Maronites and were not prepared to engage in any kind of compromise or whatever.

Q: These would be Shia, were they, in Sabra and Shatila, or were these mostly Sunni?

JONES: I think they were mostly Sunni. I'll bet they were. There aren't that many Palestinian Shia. Nabih Berri was responsible for the Shia and he had no big love lost for the Palestinians.

Q: Was there Sunni representation that we could deal with, or not?

JONES: There was, definitely, because the Sunnis, in the confessional division, they had the prime ministership, I guess. I can't remember much about the prime minister, who it was, even.

Q: It wasn't much of a factor, then?

JONES: It wasn't a distinctive factor, put it that way, but it was something that needed to be taken into account, in terms of the number of Sunnis that there were in the country.

Q: Were we watching the Israelis? Were they making deals, territorial deals, with the various militias?

JONES: I don't remember that they were. By this time, as I remember, Phil Habib was negotiating on the buffer zone and there, my recollection is, the Israelis wanted to be in charge of it. They weren't prepared to let this group or that group be particularly active there. One of the things that Phil was extremely interested in was to get the Lebanese

police down there, so that they would be the counterpart or they would be the Lebanese go-to group, which didn't work that well, but that was the effort.

Q: Was there a feeling, by the time we were beginning to negotiate getting the Palestinian leadership out, that Sharon had run his course, as far as his support back home and all?

JONES: I don't remember that he was losing position much at home. There was the Peace Now movement, but I never had the impression that that stopped him much or caused him to look over his shoulder or think twice. He just did what he was going to do. And we saw that with Sabra-Shatila, too, where he permitted it to go forward.

Q: Sabra-Shatila, how did you find out about that and how did it impact you?

JONES: I found out about it first in a phone call from Ryan Crocker, as I remember, who said, "We're hearing that some awful things are going on in the camps. Whatever the group was is in there. We're hearing that people are being murdered, Palestinians are being murdered indiscriminately. I'm going down there" taking other people, which he did. Now that was before cell phones and all that kind of thing, but he was able, I think he and the DATT probably went down there. I remember getting the word that he was in the hospital where people had been executed and he called the embassy, who called me, to say, "It really is bad. Here's what happened."

When we had the first call, I don't remember if I called Embassy Tel Aviv or called the Israel desk to call Embassy Tel Aviv to say, "Watch out, we think something awful is really going on. Get the Israelis to get the Christians to stop." And of course the guys in Beirut were doing the same thing.

And then when the second call came in saying it really is awful and we were just beginning to get news reports about it as well, as Ryan was hearing about it journalists were hearing about it also and that's when we launched all kinds of people from the Seventh Floor to say, "Stop! Stop! Stop! This is awful! This is unacceptable! This is despicable!" Very strong statements were made. I made calls to the Hill, because I had staffers I talked to all the time about anything to do with Lebanon and told them what we thought was going on. But, frankly, even with Ryan's second call saying, "I'm in the hospital and it really is bad," neither one of us had any idea it was as bad as it turned out to be, in terms of the numbers of people and the horrific scenes that were then recorded.

Q: Was blame immediately accorded to, obviously to the Christian militia, but to the Israelis?

JONES: Yes, pretty quickly, just because we knew, everybody knew, just how close those militias were to Sharon.

Q: Did you sense, in NEA, I won't say a sea change, a major change, during this relatively short time of looking towards Israel as no longer a benign, defensive, nice little country, into a nasty one, at least under nasty people's control, or not?

JONES: Well, I think there had been a view along those lines from the time Begin came in, because of statements he made about the settlements, because of a variety of other, very unhelpful, uncompromising actions that the Israelis had taken. Very aggressive about the U.S. as well, in a not very nice way, aggressive about whether our assistance was sufficient and all that kind of thing. So I would say it was not that it changed then but there was quite an attitude throughout the State Department, not just in NEA, that the Begin-led Israeli government was not good for Israel and the Peace Now movement just reinforced that and the things that Sharon did just sort of solidified the attitude, what a bad guy this was and Begin was permitting it to happen and that this wasn't the Israel we support.

Q: Well, after the news came out about the massacres, what happened, from your perspective?

JONES: There was a lot of effort in the first days to find out the extent of it, to try to understand how it had happened, how was it possible for that number of fighters to get into the camps? That's when it became clear that the Israelis had permitted it to happen, because the Israelis were all around, the Israeli troops, so they could easily have prevented it, there was no question about that and that very quickly came out.

The U.S. was careful, as I remember, about not pointing fingers at the Israelis but talking about the importance of an investigation. And I think, there was probably a UN Security Council resolution at the time that we worked on to make sure that it was horrified, didn't point too many fingers at Israel, probably. I don't remember it specifically, but that's the kind of thing we would have done. There might even have been some kind of international investigation. I have a vague recollection of that, that the French, or the EU (actually, the EC, as it then was), that kind of thing, would have been involved in.

And then it would have reinforced the need for support for the Lebanese police. The Lebanese have got to get control of their areas.

Q: You keep talking about the Lebanese police, but police are police and if you've got a major army sitting there, what does this mean?

JONES: Part of the problem was that so long as the Israelis could say it's lawless here, that gave them cover to stay and the more we could say, or get the Lebanese to say, "We've got police who are going to take over security, to prevent common crimes from happening, the more we were going to get the Israelis to pull back."

Of course at the same time there was a big effort with the military as well, but the army had been very Maronite, so it was much tougher to integrate, put it that way, in a quick way, effectively. So that's why there was so much emphasis on the police, because the

police had been controlled by the Sunnis, so there was a sense you could do more with that more quickly.

Q: We'd put troops in, initially, to help get the Palestinian leadership out. What about putting the troops back in?

JONES: I think they went back in after that.

Q: Oh, yes, they did. Was there the sense of putting the marines back in, it's a little unclear what the purpose was, except we were feeling almost guilty, or not?

JONES: Right, we were feeling guilty. There was a sense that U.S. forces could do some patrolling. They could, just by being there, could keep the Israelis from being too outrageous. One of the things that a lot of the troops did, they did all kinds of community projects. They built schools and playgrounds and had dental clinics here, there and other places several times a week, that kind of thing. The effort was to use them to get everybody to calm down and get a semblance of normality into various neighborhoods, to build confidence, the usual thing and give the Lebanese some space to try to get their act together.

Q: When they went back in, was there any concern on your part, you meaning the NEA people dealing with this, about how do we get them out, or was this just going to be a good thing, to calm things down?

JONES: I didn't think that that was such a big issue. That was where the Pentagon kept coming from, we didn't have a way to get them out. My view was it was perfectly simple to say, "Okay, we think the task is over. They're coming out!" I didn't see the quagmire danger that was being discussed, particularly given the very limited ROE that they had.

Q: Did you get any feel for George Shultz during this time?

JONES: Yeah, very determined, very straightforward. He and Eagleburger, I found very easy to work with, as did Phil Habib and Morrie Draper. He was very businesslike in the way he went about working with the various parties, because occasionally Phil would come in and say, "Okay, I've gone as far as I can go. I need you to bring it in with the Israelis" or the Lebanese or whoever it was, the Saudis.

The one thing that I remember about Secretary Shultz is that he put a tremendous amount of effort, for example, in negotiating the May 17th agreement I guess is what we called it, a lot of effort went into that.

Q: Which is a Saudi-sponsored one, wasn't it?

JONES: Right, the Saudi-sponsored one, but it's the one that Phil Habib negotiated. I was surprised by how little he thought his involvement was needed to implement it, because it was never really implemented. It was one of the early insights I had in the difference

between diplomacy and business. In business everything goes into negotiating the contract and once the contract is signed it is easy to implement it. In diplomacy, it is very difficult to negotiate the agreement and it is even more difficult to implement it in diplomacy. That's often the beginning of the big struggle, which all of us knew, we didn't have any question that implementation was going to be hell, but Shultz kind of washed his hands of it after that, much to my surprise.

Q: One of the things that strikes me over the years that I've been looking at the Middle East, particularly these interviews and all, when you talk about the Middle East and this includes the Israelis, these are very slippery people. Agreements aren't worth the paper they're written on, almost.

JONES: Yeah, but that doesn't just happen in the Middle East. There are plenty of agreements that I've seen the EU sign that were, Kyoto for instance, that they never had any intention of implementing. So I wouldn't just say it happens there.

That's one of the things we used to talk about, is how important it was to have Arabists involved, to have some idea of what "Yes, yes" really meant. "Yes, yes" could mean "Yes, I'm listening," it could mean "Yes, I understand what you're saying, but I have no intention of following up," it could mean "Yes, I agree with you," it could mean "Yes, I'm sick of listening to you, get out of here." All it is is "uh huh." It's not "Yes." That's why all of us felt that we had jobs forever in the Middle East, because you had to understand what was behind what was said, where were people really coming from.

Q: Sounds like, I've talked to people who've dealt with Japan and having a terrible time getting people who had come out from Washington and say, "Well, we've made a good agreement" to understand we haven't made an agreement at all, they've just said they were listening, which probably means no.

JONES: It's always a struggle.

Q: When did you have the northern Arab portfolio?

JONES: That would have been in the summer of 1983. I did that for a year.

Q: So a lot of this was going on at that time?

JONES: That's right.

Q: How about Assad? Did you get any feel for his role in this?

JONES: Yes. He clearly believed that Lebanon really belonged to Syria, that the French had been completely wrong to give it away the century before, that he would do whatever it took to keep control over as much of Lebanon as possible for Syria's best interests and that was sort of the end of the discussion.

Now, the interesting thing to me was when David Dodge, we realized through intelligence that David Dodge had moved from Lebanon through Syria to Iran. We knew that from some interesting intelligence. We then went very quietly to Assad's brother, to Rifaat al-Assad, for help. This was Bob Paganelli and I worked on that, April Glaspie, the three of us, with Eagleburger. This was Bob Paganelli's suggestion, because Rifaat Assad had been very impressed with David Dodge, he had been invited to see him at one point, and was very impressed with his library, especially the Arab works in his library. So we went to him to say, "Your sovereignty had been maligned by Iran. You control the area where David Dodge was in Lebanon and they, without reference to you, without permission from you, have demonstrated that you're not really in control of that area, number one and number two, you're even in control of the airport in Damascus, because they brought him through Damascus." We knew that they had weekly flights that landed in Damascus, went to Lebanon and back to Iran. "And you need to do something about this. This should be unacceptable to you that Iran is treating you in such a cavalier fashion."

Long story short, it worked. Rifaat Assad went to the Revolutionary Command Council in Tehran, forced a decision and we got David Dodge out, got him taken back to Damascus and handed over to Bob Paganelli. He'd been kidnapped for well over a year, a year plus. But we did it very secretly. We sent no cables. We didn't want any leaks. We didn't want anybody to know Rifaat's role in it. I wrote out talking points on yellow paper and would hand them to Eagleburger to read and he would say, "Yes, yes" and I'd dictate them over the secure phone to April Glaspie for Paganelli to use. So that was the other side of Syria's role in the region.

Q: It sounds like you were able to keep this within the hands of the professionals. This is, the Ollie North operation hadn't started at that point?

JONES: No. That was later. That was when Jim Kelly was in Beirut.

Q: So you weren't concerned about, I don't want to use the term amateurs, but political types who were trying to take charge of things?

JONES: Yeah, Eagleburger was adamant about this. The assistant secretary was traveling through a lot of this period, so they just said, "Go to Eagleburger." Eagleburger was very involved in this, to the point that he had me call at three in the morning when David Dodge was finally released. There was a time when we thought he was going to be released and they had a misstep and so it took another week. It was all very fraught, but he was finally out.

Q: Did you get the feeling that you were pretty well served by intelligence at this point?

JONES: Yes. That's how we knew that there was a chance that he'd gone through Damascus. We had intelligence that I think it was that a strange box had gotten on the plane, they'd seen a plane coming from Lebanon land in Damascus and some other kind of strange box had been, an unusual sized box, had been transferred at the time and

because I was reading a lot of the intelligence I saw that, said, “Oh my God! I wonder if that’s David Dodge?” And that’s when I called Paganelli and April and said, “What do you think?” I got them that piece of intelligence and Rifaat was actually in Geneva at that point and Paganelli got on a plane to go see him privately, so that nobody in Damascus would see that and we all worked up the talking points that would work, et cetera. So, yeah, that was all intelligence.

Q: It sounds very interesting and like a very close knit group of people who kind of knew the territory and all.

JONES: Definitely.

Q: I’ve heard stories about this, about when Shultz came with a peace plan. Every secretary of state has their peace plan. I think Rice has got hers, but it’s sort of undefined, according to the paper. But anyway, everything was set up except Paganelli was saying it’s not going to fly and he got rather adamant about it because he said Assad won’t buy this and Shultz got quite mad at him. Were you around during that?

JONES: I was around during that time. Bob Paganelli had a way of being rather dramatically direct. Not only did this happen, but there was a chief of mission meeting that Secretary Shultz hosted, I think in Cairo, in which Bob was equally adamant that there were certain things that were going to work and certain things that weren’t going to work. As I remember, his argument was we have to get the Israelis to do X and Y before we could entice the Syrians and others into a further discussion and Shultz and Charlie Hill said not going to happen.

Q: Did you feel, in your position, pretty well served by our embassies abroad?

JONES: Absolutely. That was one of the things that I valued so much in being the desk officer and then later on being deputy director. One of the jobs of being deputy director was managing the whole Palestinian account, particularly visas for the UN and all that kind of thing, which is why I stayed in touch so much on the Palestinian issue in Lebanon. David Welch at that point was the Lebanon desk officer but I was, either through phone calls or cables, constantly in touch with Ryan Crocker, who was the political counselor in Beirut at the time and various people. April Glaspie was the DCM in Damascus, we had all been pals for a hundred years, so we all had very good contacts with each other, trusted each other, trusted each other’s judgment, would tell each other the truth about what was possible and wasn’t possible in terms of Washington or would this talking point fly or that talking point. It was good, very collegial.

Q: This is somewhat in contrast to what happened later on, where the Arab-Israeli account ended up in the hands of domestic experts, often of Jewish background without an Arab input, as I recall, during the Clinton Administration. At least that’s what was purported to have happened.

JONES: The first that we saw that there was something that was changing was when Kelly was appointed assistant secretary.

Q: John Kelly.

JONES: John Kelly, right and the rumor that we heard was that the Seventh Floor wanted somebody who wasn't an Arabist, because they were tired of all of that NEA "bullshit" was what the rumor was that had been said on the Seventh Floor. We all thought, "Well that tells us what our position is in life now." That was sort of the beginning of that kind of stuff.

Q: This is one of the problems. If you're explaining foreigners, which is what the Foreign Service does, to people who are at the head of things in the Department of State often you're saying, "Oh, no, that won't work" and the political masters kind of like to think they're in charge.

JONES: Right and there was certainly a sense that you have to do more than say, "That won't work." You have to be positive, you can't just be negative. If you're going to participate in the policy councils you have to respond in a different way, to say, "That's an idea but this might work better" and so do it that way rather than just be grumpy and say, "That won't work. You're an idiot." The question is "can you be as effective that way." I argue if you can come up with positive proposals that aren't all saying what we have to do with Israel, get Israel to do this, get Israel to do that, which is mostly what we thought that the deal was, then we had a better chance of participating in the policy.

Q: Was there any feel, while you were doing this, that Assad could be brought around. Did it have to mean all concessions on the part of Israel? Were there things that could be done with Assad?

JONES: Then, I don't know if there was much of a sense of that. Much later, when I was in NEA, there was much more of a sense of Assad wants his epitaph to be to a degree that he helped solve the problem, so now's the time to go for it. But at that time, in the eighties, I didn't have that sense.

Q: What about the role of Iran during this time? They were at war, weren't they, so they were pretty much out of the game?

JONES: Well, but in Lebanon the Iranians were very active, the Iraqis were very active and there was a sense that the Iranians and the Iraqis were competing with each other in Lebanon. We were getting a lot of reporting about the fighting between the two embassies in Beirut and who was doing what to whom.

Q: What things could they be doing?

JONES: They were supporting groups who were fighting each other, issuing statements that were condemnatory of each other in Lebanon, all kinds of very nasty stuff. There

was a lot of reporting on the money that each was bringing in and funneling to this group or that group that were their surrogates. So there was an additional Iraq-Iran fight going on in Lebanon.

Q: Were we at all tipping towards the Iraqis in this, in Lebanon?

JONES: Not at the time. There was much more of an attitude that neither one of those guys is good for Lebanon.

Q: When did we invite Syria to come in, or basically allow Syria to move in? During your time?

JONES: It wasn't during my time and as I remember we were very, very unhappy with the role that Syria was playing in Lebanon, that they shouldn't be there, they shouldn't have the influence that they do, that they are a bad actor for Lebanon but also for Israel. It was against our policy vis-à-vis Israel as well that Syria had so much to say and do in Lebanon.

Q: You left that area when

JONES: '84, summer of '84.

Q: By that time, looking over your shoulder, how stood things?

JONES: At that time Lebanon was a little bit quieter. The buffer zone was a buffer zone. As I remember we were working very hard on trying to get the cities in southern Lebanon, get reconstruction in, restore some of the monuments, find a way to reduce the Israeli presence in the buffer zone, to get a full withdrawal from Lebanon. There was a workmanlike effort underway, I guess that's the best way to put it. The Palestinian leadership was out.

Q: Well, we had two things that happened. I guess one was our embassy getting blown up and then the marine barracks blown up. Which happened first?

JONES: The embassy was blown up first. That was horrific. It was probably Ryan who called first. He'd been blown across his office but he at least was not injured. But we lost several people, a lot of people, in that embassy, Bob Ames being the most prominent one because he had very recently briefed Shultz and a whole group of us as the NIO for the Middle East and was out there. So the immediate effort was to get help out there for them, just dig through the rubble and figure out who was where, in which hospital. We immediately formed a task force. I remember being on the phone with the head of the consular section all the time, keeping a list going.

Q: Diane Dillard, wasn't it?

JONES: Diane Dillard.

Q: I've interviewed Diane.

JONES: She was fabulous. She was so in charge. She was really very methodical and understood completely the kind of pressure we were under for lists of names and who was injured and who was fine and all of that kind of thing.

Q: Did we have a handle on who did it and why?

JONES: I don't remember enough about it. I assumed at the time and I don't know if it's just faulty memory or what, that it was one of the Palestinian rejectionist groups that did it. There have been a number of reports that Imad Mughniyeh, the Hezbollah terrorist who was assassinated in Damascus, was responsible for the bombings of the embassy and marine barracks, most if not all of the kidnappings of Westerners in Beirut in the eighties and maybe the disappearance of Judge Crater as well. But I can't remember any details. I don't remember thinking at the time that it was the Christian militias.

Q: Were we beginning to get restive about getting the marines out or not, or had that sort of settled into a routine?

JONES: I think it was pretty routine by then. They were out there, they were doing their dental clinics. I'd get involved when there would be a dust-up or a confrontation between the marines and the Israelis. That was often what would happen. It was usually the marines complaining the Israelis had put a machine gun nest near their place, where it wasn't supposed to be, it was outside of their territory.

But I remember being stunned, just horrified, by what happened to the Marines. We set up a task force then as well to try to understand all that and again keep track of it. There it took a lot more coordination, of course, with the military to keep track of who and what and everything.

But I also remember very well the accountability review board interview that I participated in with Bob Dillon and his DCM and I remember the general officer in charge of the accountability review board asking what were the rules of engagement for the Marines and how much protection did they give the embassy and Bob Dillon explained that they had this amount around the embassy and this is what they did and here are all the different things that he insisted that his embassy officers do in terms of their own protection and closing the barriers and this and that. And then the general officer said, "Well, did you review their security at their base?" I remember Bob Dillon looked at him and said, "It never crossed my mind that I as a Foreign Service Officer should go tell a Marine commander how to protect his troops." That was the end of that line of questioning.

Q: I think Bob actually had been in the marines.

JONES: I think he might have been. I can't remember. He or his DCM had been in the marines.

Q: Was it Bob Pugh?

JONES: Yes.

Q: Bob Pugh was his DCM.

JONES: Right. His wife, Bonnie, was then killed in the UTA bombing that the Libyans perpetrated over Africa. Awful.

Q: In a way, did we see, after both bombings and all that, did we see things in disarray, or how did we see things by the time you were leaving there?

JONES: I can't say that we saw things in disarray. We saw that dangerous things happen. You have to protect yourself. Embassies had to protect themselves. These were horrific bombings, but it wasn't the first time that Americans had been attacked in Beirut or, in Jordan we'd had the hijackings, we had the Khartoum incident where the ambassador and the DCM being murdered there. It's not that we considered it routine or par for the course but was something that we knew was a possibility for our service.

Q: Well then, where did you go?

JONES: That's when we asked for a time out of the Middle East and we went to Berlin, we went to West Berlin and one of the reasons that we asked for Berlin was because I already had German. My husband at the time was assigned as cultural affairs officer in Berlin. I actually went on a year's leave without pay, because I didn't have a job then and there was no particular job necessarily opening up. But I had talked with John Kornblum, who was head of the German desk at the time, who didn't know me from Eve, other than from the Middle East, because I had to get things cleared through him at various times. I explained that I had 4/4 German, so I was a pretty good candidate for one of his jobs out there, so at least he wasn't opposed to my bidding on some of the jobs. I actually then worked part time under the occupation costs budget and did a few projects for the political section when I was there in Berlin the first year.

And then the second year I took over the economic/commercial section. That was the only job that was open at my level.

Q: You did that from, what

JONES: '85 to '88, three years. It was great.

O: In a way it sounds great, being back in a more comfortable place with a small child.

JONES: Two, at that point. My daughter was born right in the middle of all the Lebanon disasters. So I had to take a few weeks off right in the middle.

Q: Nobody said, “I’m sorry, you can’t have a child”?

JONES: No.

Q: Force majeure.

JONES: Right. The main job I had as economic/commercial officer was to promote American investment in Berlin, which is the opposite of what usually an economic/commercial officer would do. But because we had the occupation of West Berlin and we were trying to keep the city from dying. It was a major American policy goal that the city not die and that American investment go in there as much as possible.

So we did all kinds of projects. John Kornblum was the mission director and he was great to work with. We would do computer contests, promote Hewlett-Packard to bring things into the schools and we’d promote small and medium sized enterprises and promote the establishment of incubation for small businesses in the old Siemens manufacturing area. All of those big German companies had left Berlin, so the jobless rate was huge.

Q: I would have thought this would have been up to the German government to work on it.

JONES: It was definitely up to the German government, but there was also a sense that the three occupation forces in the West, the French, the British and the U.S., needed to help, because the Germans just couldn’t do it all on their own and it was as much in our interest as it was in the German government’s interest, was our view at the time.

Q: How successful were you all?

JONES: I think really quite successful, in the sense that we were able to attract American businesses and German businesses to do start-ups in this incubator area we helped set up. We really promoted the German government to have tax assisters in there, so that small and medium sized enterprises would know how to deal with taxes and financial stuff, so that if you had a brilliant idea you could actually put it into practice in business, it wouldn’t just languish because you didn’t know what to do.

But the other task that we had as allies is we had our various groups to preserve the integrity of West Berlin. So one of my jobs as head of the economic/commercial group with the British and the French was to make sure that the food stockpiles and the coal stockpiles were kept up, so that we would never again have to bring in that many supplies in the airlift.

And another job of mine was to make sure that the West Berlin government didn’t pull up the street car tracks and the underground tracks that dead-ended in East Germany or East

Berlin. They considered all of these lines to be defunct, which they of course were at the time, mostly. But we kept saying, “No, no, we maintain the policy that the city will be reunited. We have to keep the tracks here. We have to keep the canals dredged, even though there’s no barge traffic that goes through. We’ve got to keep it all alive, so that if the city’s reunited tomorrow everything can function.”

And the Germans thought we were nuts. They thought that we were as antiquated and as unrealistic as we could possibly be. For me, that’s one of my proudest accomplishments, is to have been absolutely adamant with the Berlin government. Of course, we all know now that all those underground tracks and street car tracks are all very much alive today, thanks, I would say to a lot of work we did to keep the Germans from tearing them up.

Q: You were there from, what?

JONES: ’84 to ’88. My job was ’85 to ’88. So a year before the Wall came down I left.

Q: You’d been there before. Was there a different feeling? Was Berlin kind of languishing?

JONES: Yeah. It was a very different scene. Berlin was very much languishing by the time I got there in the eighties. In the sixties, I got there just after the Wall went up, so there was a lot of focus and attention, a lot of young people, et cetera. But Berlin had become a city of old people, a city of pensioners. It was exacerbated because the East Germans were allowing their pensioners to come to the West, so that the West would pay for them. There was a lot of budget support for young people to have families, you got a stipend to get married. There was no draft if you lived in Berlin, no German draft if you lived in Berlin. So there were a lot of young people who came there just to avoid the draft. But unemployment was very high at the same time, so it was a bad combination.

It was a very avant-garde city at the same time, lots of art, lots of very out there sorts of theater and dance and that kind of thing. So it was very exciting to be there in the eighties in that respect as well. But there was still a sense that the city was dying.

Q: Did the fact that we had an embassy in East Berlin make any difference?

JONES: It made a difference for me, because we were always in touch with them. I knew my counterpart very well. They came over to the West a lot. Roz Ridgway was the ambassador and she was wonderful to work with. She and John Kornblum and then Harry Gilmore after that would have conversations all the time. We would collaborate on different things, to try to make things better. It was a great relationship, but we didn’t in the end have that much we could do together.

Q: Was there any sense of impending something or other? You weren’t predicting “Well, within a year, when I leave, the Wall will come down”?

JONES: Quite the contrary, in fact, to my embarrassment. The other thing I should mention, though, is Mission Berlin was independent of Embassy Bonn. We did not have to report through them, although we stayed in very close touch with them. But there was a very clear sense at the embassy in Bonn, particularly from the DCM, who was Jim Dobbins at the time, that the work we were doing in Berlin was ridiculously full of nonsense.

For example, when I took Jim Dobbins into East Berlin at one point, he came over to visit. We had to do the “flash procedure” at Checkpoint Charlie, where we drove through showing only our ID cards to the Russians at the checkpoint. He was scornful at how antiquated this all was. He thought it ridiculous that we were still insisting on working only with the Soviets. So it was kind of an interesting insight into all of that.

But I had no sense at all, none of us did, that anything much was changing in terms of the East, the Wall coming down or change on the part of the Soviet Union. Of course Gorbachev was there. There was a lot of stuff going on in Poland. Gdansk was a big issue and all of that kind of thing. But I actually thought that maybe Poland would liberalize, Hungary might liberalize, but Germany would be the last of the barriers to fall. In fact in a way it was the reverse, but that all happened after I left, with the trains and the jumping over embassy walls.

There’s one more story I should tell here. The speech writer for Berlin Governing Mayor Diegen was a South African, Steve Laufer, whom we all knew well. He was often at our house for dinners and eventually joined us for family events. Todd and Courtney also thought he was great fun. He tired of his job in the mayor’s office and applied for a job at the US Mission. Tom hired him in the Cultural Affairs Section. Steve was not popular with Tom’s long-time FSN staff, older women who maintained there was something not quite right about him. We thought they were simply being anti-Semitic.

Steve visited us in Pakistan in the fall of 1990. We had gone on a weekend escape to a hilltop cottage in the mountains outside Islamabad. We woke up one morning to news that the Berlin Wall had fallen. It was a momentous day for all of us. Steve’s classic comment was: “This is the most crucial day of my life and here I am stuck on top of a Pakistani mountain!” While he was visiting us, we arranged for him to stay with friends of ours in the New Delhi Embassy before he went back to Berlin.

In January, while in my office in Islamabad, I heard a BBC news report that a former employee of the US government in Berlin, Steven Laufer, had been arrested as a longtime KGB spy. I was so shocked, I nearly threw up. I immediately called Tom, and we both called the RSO to ask him to take down our statement about how well we knew Laufer, that he had recently visited us, et cetera. We realized that his story of needing to have his mother travel through East Berlin from Austria to visit him in Berlin (cheaper fares, he said) was a lie – that she actually lived in East Berlin. When we visited Berlin on vacation the next summer, both Todd and Courtney campaigned to visit Steve in jail. We didn’t.

Q: What was happening in Czechoslovakia and Hungary? Yeah, you got the last glimpse of how it was. Well, Beth, in 1988, where'd you go then?

JONES: Went to Pakistan as DCM.

Q: You were there from '88 to when?

JONES: I was there from 1988 to '92. I got there on the first of August of 1988. I was asked by Arnie Raphel, who was ambassador, to come as his DCM. I was extremely proud and pleased to have been asked to work with him. I had known him when he was the principal deputy assistant secretary in NEA. We were both working on Lebanon, years before. I got there and Arnie as the ambassador was relentless about making sure that I knew everybody immediately that I would have to work with, whether it was Zia and Zia's--

Q: Zia being the president.

JONES: President Zia-ul-Haq and his top military assistant, who I ended up working with quite a bit later, various of the chief ministers, of Punjab and Northwest Frontier Province, various of the foreign embassy ambassadors, lots of members of parliament, several members of the general staff, all kinds of people that it turned out it was very, very fortuitous that I would know.

One of the things that happened very quickly after I arrived, within about ten days, was there was a very tragic murder of a nun, an American nun, in southeast Pakistan, near Multan. At the same time we were scheduling tank trials in Bahawalpur near Multan, because we were hoping to sell some American tanks to the Pakistanis under our military assistance program. So there was a bit of a back and forth about demonstrating these tanks to Zia, President Zia and of course the ambassador would be there, all the military assistance people would be there and that was scheduled for the middle of August.

There was a lot of discussion back and forth about whether Arnie would stay after the tank trials and play golf with Zia, Zia was going to play golf. There was a lot of discussion about whether Arnie should go on Zia's plane down there for the tank trials. I went to Peshawar for the day, we decided it was okay for both of us to be gone from the embassy for one day, since I'd be back at the end of the day. I was trying to visit all the consulates, so I went to Peshawar for the day, where we were doing so much work with the Afghan resistance.

I got back about six o'clock and I had a call from the political/military officer, Greg Suchan, who said, "Beth, it's kind of funny, I haven't heard from the ambassador. Has he been in touch with you? He's not back yet."

I said no I hadn't heard anything but I would try to reach his wife, Nancy Ely-Raphel and see if she had heard anything. Within about five minutes I had a call from the army attaché, who had gone down to the tank trials, of course, since these were US Army

tanks, a colonel and he called me to say, “Beth, there’s been a terrible tragedy. The plane that Zia was on” and that, in the end, the ambassador joined him, because in the end Zia didn’t play golf, “has crashed. We have a report that the plane has crashed and I am on my way to the site to see for myself. I don’t know to report something that I don’t know to be true without witnessing it myself, but I talked to people I trust who are at the site and they tell that the plane’s gone down and they definitely know that the ambassador and Zia and” the chief of the military assistance program, “General Wassom were on the plane.”

I was, of course, totally, completely, stunned and shocked by the idea that first that my friend Arnie had been killed and the second wave was, “Oh my God, the ambassador’s been killed! That means I’m in charge! I’ve got to get cracking here.” And the third wave was, “If Zia’s been killed in a plane crash, Arnie was with him, that means I have to consider that this was a coup attempt of some kind. Are there tanks in the streets? Is the community safe?” I think that thought process probably took a lot less time than it just took me to describe it just now, but I still remember it as a physical reaction, almost, to the news.

I was at home, I’d gone straight home from the airport.

Q: You’d been at post for how long?

JONES: Less than two weeks. And I first called my driver to say, “Come back,” because I didn’t have my car there yet, “Come back, I need to go to the embassy immediately.” The station chief called me, Milt Bearden, who’s a very good guy and said, “I’m in the embassy. I’ll send a critic” and I said, “Go do it.” (A critic is an extremely rapid cable to high level authorities in Washington).

While I was waiting for my driver to arrive, I called the Operations Center. I got right through to the Operations Center in the State Department to tell them what the report was. I told them that my army attaché was going to double check. I had a hard time getting the Operations Center to understand how to spell the town where this had happened but, long story short, they understood it, alerted everybody that they needed to alert at the State Department. I’ll tell you part of that story later.

In the meantime, my driver came and I went to the embassy. It’s about 6:30 in the evening. A few people were still there. I had already asked that the embassy operator and the marine guard start calling the emergency action committee members to come back to the embassy for an urgent EAC meeting. In the meantime the station chief had sent the critic. When I got back to the embassy I kept an open line to the Operations Center.

And I started calling some of these people to whom Arnie had introduced me. In the end, in the two weeks that we worked together, he made sure that I knew absolutely everybody that I needed to know in order to step in for him. So I called the foreign minister. I called the military advisor to President Zia. I called a variety of other people: the chief minister of Punjab (the province where the plane had gone down), whom I had

met, to just be in touch with them. In the meantime, a lot of these people were calling me. The British ambassador, others, were calling me to say, “Oh my God, oh, my God, what can we do to help? We’ve just heard the news.”

So people were absolutely terrific. In the meantime, the word got out. About seven o’clock in the evening we convened the emergency action committee meeting. I remember being in my office, the emergency action committee meeting was in a conference room fifty steps from my door and I remember thinking, “These people don’t know me. Why are they going to accept my leadership, my authority now? I’ve only been here for two weeks.”

In the meantime, I’d made a lot of lists of what we needed to do for Arnie’s family, for the community, for the whole issue of succession in Pakistan, what kind of cables did we need, if the Secretary of State was going to come to the funeral. Didn’t know that yet, it turns out that’s what happened. So I had these five lists going of all the things we needed to do.

And on the way to the conference room I thought: “I know what the key is here. The key is they know that Arnie chose me to be his DCM and that will give me the authority that I need, in order to lead this group, who will be devastated over the ambassador’s death, because he was beloved, in the entire Foreign Service and certainly at this post.”

And that’s, of course, exactly what happened. The room was jammed. It wasn’t just the members of the emergency action committee, but basically everybody, every officer of the embassy, came and we went through every single category of issues that we needed to go through, made assignments right there as to who was going to be in charge of contacting the school, contacting the community, getting the warden system going, all of the things one does in an emergency, all of the things one does when you have a political crisis. Nancy Powell was the ranking political officer. The head of the section was on leave, Ed Abington. And everybody went back to their desks and started doing absolutely everything that needed to be done.

We had cable after cable that went out that night on what had happened, on the succession politics, on what did the constitution call for, on the personalities of the people who might be involved, on what did the constitution call for when new elections have to be called, et cetera. The warden system got going, to contact American citizens. I was on the phone full time with the Operations Center, at which point they said, “Okay, the Secretary of State’s coming out.” In the meantime, I found out when Zia’s funeral was going to be. The Secretary was arriving the next night, basically. And they said, “In the meantime we’ve also chosen an ambassador to replace Ambassador Raphel. No rap against you, but we want a senior person there.” I said, “Absolutely, I shouldn’t be chargé for a very long time.” And that’s when they picked Bob Oakley, who was right there at the National Security Council, who came out with Secretary Shultz, arriving the next night.

As soon as I knew the Secretary was coming, we had another quick meeting of a fewer number of people. Lots of new people at the embassy, too, many of whom I had known in previous jobs. Joe Limprecht, for example, was the narcotics officer, and various other people like that. I knew they knew what to do. They just needed somebody who knew where these sites were. So I was able to pair a senior decision making kind of person with somebody who actually knew where the site was, a teacher or a spouse or whatever, so that we had the whole place completely organized very, very quickly for the visit of the secretary of state: papers written, we had the advance teams coming out from S/S, somebody came from Istanbul to be there quickly and that kind of thing.

In the meantime, this is the first night after Arnie's death, trying to find his wife, now a widow. It turned out she was in Karachi. I called up the consul general, Joe Melrose and said, "Get Nancy to your residence, tell her what has happened, because they need to know that she knows and that she's calling the kids. This is really urgent." They didn't have kids together, but Arnie had children from a previous marriage, as did Nancy. "She's got to call them before this is on the news." He basically hesitated to tell her, wouldn't tell her. I would call down again. "Oh, waiting for the nurse to come." "She'll be fine, she's strong, but you cannot let the kids find out over the air what has happened to their dad, or their step-dad." So finally Joe Melrose basically refused to tell Nancy what had happened. And I finally said, "Joe, is she there?" "Yes." "I want her on the phone. Put her on the phone, let me talk to her."

I thought that maybe she'd been told he'd been injured, or something. And I got on the phone and I said, "Nancy, I have really, really terrible news." And she said, "Really? What?" And I told her what had happened. And she said, "Well, I kept thinking something was wrong, because people were behaving very strangely but you're the only person that I will believe that this has happened. Now you've told me and now I believe it." So we talked about the importance of notifying the kids immediately, which she did. She was very matter of fact about it.

Q: This is Nancy or Robin?

JONES: This is Nancy Ely Raphael. This is Arnie's third wife, the one he was married to at the time. They'd been married for a year, maybe a year and a half.

Nancy came back that evening, came back from Karachi to Islamabad. I went out to the airport to meet her. The airport staff was fantastic. They of course knew exactly what had happened. They allowed me on the plane to get her from the first class section, they put her right in the front. There was TV all over the place and everything. I was able to get her and walk her down the stairs right into a car that they let us have on the tarmac. There were a few of their very senior Pakistani colleagues and friends who were there to express condolences immediately on the tarmac that evening and we went back to the residence.

There was a lot of controversy, of course, over what had really happened. Was it sabotage of the airplane? Was it an accident? What was it? And there was a lot of suspicion

about the chief of army staff who, for reasons that seemed to be unclear to everybody, wasn't on the plane. So there was some sense that Chief of Army Staff General Beg had orchestrated this in some way.

The next morning we had a call from the presidential protocol people that the president of Pakistan, Ghulam Ishaq Khan and General Beg wanted to pay a condolence call on Nancy. She asked me to be there with her. I didn't blame her, because of the controversy, because there would be TV cameras and because she wanted to make sure that whatever was said was something that could be reported in a political reporting cable if that was necessary. So they paid their condolences.

That happened on Friday and Secretary Shultz arrived Friday night.

Q: What were you picking up, you might say, from the street? The concern was a coup. How was Pakistan, in this first day

JONES: The street was quiet. We weren't sure what was going to happen in the street. The street was completely quiet. There were no tanks rumbling in the streets. The army attaché, my pol/mil officer, Greg Suchan, was fantastic, Nancy Powell was fantastic and we had extremely senior and extremely good Foreign Service Nationals who had their fingers and ears everywhere. And they all reported back things were quiet. There was a lot of churn within the Pakistani government about the constitution, what did the constitution call for? They were really going for a constitutional change in power. I was on the phone with and went to see President Zia's chief of staff really right away to understand how that was going, because of all the different political trends. In the meantime, of course, Benazir Bhutto had already come back to Pakistan to campaign.

Q: This is prior to the plane crash?

JONES: She'd come back the year before. So, there was already a lot of politicking going on and the political section was already in touch with her and her people and all of that. Our guys were in touch with absolutely everybody who was a political actor in Pakistan to understand what was going on.

The interesting thing to me, it was clear that they were convinced that somehow the Indians had been involved, the Indians and the Soviets. Somehow they were the ones who were responsible for the assassination of Zia. We launched an investigation right away which I'll talk about in a minute, but other than the rumors about the conspiracy and the Indians and the Soviets, of course related to Afghanistan and the fact the Soviets were still there and leaving and upset with Zia for having forced them out and all of that kind of thing, everything was very quiet. And that was confirmed in the meetings that Secretary Shultz had then, on, I guess it must have been Saturday, when he came. I of course went with him to all of these meetings as the chargé, to the meeting with the president and the foreign minister and various of the senior political people and of course attended the funeral with him and participated with him in the wreath laying for Zia's funeral bier at the big mosque.

And it was an opportunity at the funeral to talk to an awful lot of people. A lot of the *mujahideen* leaders had come, of course. Various other foreign officials had come. There were a variety of very interesting people who'd come from the State Department and other U.S. agencies, representing various aspects of the U.S. government, given the history we had with Zia in supporting the *mujahideen*.

But it was all quite calm and very matter of fact, in terms of what should happen next. There wasn't a big fear about demonstrations in the streets. There wasn't a fear that somebody else was going to be assassinated. A lot of rumors, a lot of rumor mongering, but a much more organized reaction than one might have otherwise expected, I think partly because of the shock.

One of things that was very poignant and extremely well done by Secretary Shultz, not only of course would there be a funeral in Washington, but then before he left he participated in an embassy farewell ceremony for Arnie and Gen. Wassom as they loaded the caskets into the motorcade as they left for the airport. This gave the embassy American and Pakistani staff a chance to speak of their love and respect for them and afforded all of us a bit of closure. Fortunately, we'd had a chance to spend time with Nancy over dinner at my house with Marc Grossman. Liz Verville and the country team the night before.

Nancy and Mrs. Wassom were asked to travel back to the U.S. on the Secretary's plan with the caskets. It was tough for them to think about how to suddenly leave their post in the midst of this tragedy. It was very distracting and disturbing for us to have them leave so quickly, but we eventually were able to make arrangements for Nancy to come back to pack out.

Q: This is always a major problem. This is not unusual.

JONES: That's right.

Q: In a way, they yank the widow out and

JONES: It makes it more disturbing and more distressing than it might otherwise be. She of course went to Zia's funeral. She was fabulous. She was wonderful. Mrs. Wassom as well. The two, they were poised, they were collected. They were horribly sad, of course, but they played the role in exactly the way you would want them to: very dignified, able to reach out to every part of the Pakistani political society that they'd known well. It was a very strong connection. It was really extremely well done.

One of the things that was also very well done is that in a situation like this the widows are asked, "Is there somebody you would especially like to have come out to be with you?" And Nancy Ely Raphael asked for two, suggested two people: Liz Verville, a very close friend, she asked to have come out with Secretary Shultz and Marc Grossman she asked to have come out with Secretary Shultz. So they were both there and they were

extremely helpful to her, really helping her pack and do the kinds of things that I couldn't help as well with. They both came.

Marc Grossman tells the story of being in the morning meeting, he was the special assistant, the senior executive assistant, to Deputy Secretary Whitehead and he was in the morning meeting and one of the secretaries came in to hand him a note. He said, "You know, people hand me notes all the time at meetings and I held it for a minute so it wouldn't be too abrupt and then I read it" expecting the note to be "Please call so and so when the meeting's done." Instead, it said, "Beth Jones has just called the Ops Center from Islamabad to report that Arnie's dead and Zia's dead and General Wassom is dead." The way he described his reaction is almost the same as mine, almost a physical reaction and broke into the meeting and said, "This is what has happened." And he went into action, as only Marc can, to organize for himself to go.

I, of course, knew pretty quickly that I needed to get Nancy to say which two people she'd like to have come and very quickly was able to get the word out that Marc should plan to come and Liz Verville.

The other person who came who was very close to Arnie, appropriately so, was the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mike Armacost. I knew from Arnie that he and Mike talked every night on the phone, basically. This was terribly important through all of the period of time of negotiating the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, because of course the Pakistanis were so closely involved. There was a lot of back and forth about that.

Ironically, there was very serious disagreement. Arnie and Mike Armacost agreed on how to proceed on this. There was very serious disagreement with Bob Oakley at the NSC about all of this. So it was a bit difficult for Nancy to hear that Bob Oakley was the one coming to replace her husband. He arrived with Secretary Shultz. He stayed behind when Secretary Shultz left, with Nancy, with Mrs. Wassom, with the two coffins, even though he wasn't the ambassador. Of course he was the putative ambassador. I was still the chargé. I was still formally in charge of the embassy. But you can imagine, it was a bit of an odd situation.

I sat down with Bob Oakley Sunday morning, the first day of our work week and I said, "Okay, Bob. I've been a DCM for two weeks out of my whole life now and chargé for a couple of those days. You've been an ambassador many times over. You tell me how you'd like me to relate to you. I knew from Arnie how he wanted me to work with him. I will put all of that aside. You tell me how you want it done. I now work for you. We're all very sad. We're horrified about what happened to Arnie. But I work for you now and so does the rest of this embassy."

And he said, "Oh, well, it'll all work out in the end." I still remember that conversation very clearly.

Q: Had Bob had any on the ground experience in Pakistan? Had he served there, or not?

JONES: He'd never served there, no. Had he come out maybe in an NSC role once or twice, maybe, but he'd never served there. Arnie, of course, had served there twice. And one of the reasons that he believed it would work well for me to come was, although I had no previous experience in Pakistan, but I had previous experience in Afghanistan. It was because he knew Pakistan so well, he said he wanted me to come because I was known as a good manager and could be a good *alter ego* for him on being an inside person at the embassy. And of course that balance went away when Arnie was killed, because neither Bob Oakley nor I knew Pakistan particularly well, although, frankly, I had been so well introduced by Arnie that I knew a tremendous number of people immediately and set to work right away to make sure that Bob met all of these people, just the way Arnie had.

Q: Who in the embassy would you find you turned to, who had Pakistan down, understood

JONES: Nancy Powell was the political officer. She was assigned to do internal political affairs but when Arnie was killed she was acting in charge of the office, because Ed Abington, who was the political counselor, was on R&R. Ed came back early. So I would turn to Ed Abington, I would turn to Nancy Powell. Greg Suchan was the pol/mil officer, he'd been there for quite a while, was extremely good at all the political/military topics. That was my brain trust on Pakistan. In January Larry Benedict came as the economic counselor. He knew Pakistan extremely well. He'd been posted in Pakistan, been posted in Bangladesh. He was a real South Asia hand. So that was very useful. One of the more junior economic officers was Carol Thompson, who'd been there; she was married to Ed Abington. So we had a huge amount of experience in Pakistan. As I mentioned earlier our Foreign Service Nationals were very senior, extremely well plugged in and were really fantastic.

Q: How was Bob Oakley received? I would think that, your beloved ambassador is killed and a new guy who had not, who'd been known to disagree on how to deal with matters in the area arrives. This sounds like a difficult mix.

JONES: He was not known to the Pakistanis as having disagreed. This was known internally. So that wasn't any issue. He was very well received. It was very much appreciated that the United States thought enough of Pakistan to send a senior ambassador out to replace Arnie, in recognition of their status. There was no issue whatsoever. Every single person, anybody who was anybody wanted to meet with him, so it was not difficult to get him properly introduced right away. He reached out to Benazir Bhutto, he reached out to all of the political people, General Beg.

The issue that was coming up right away was the elections. I think they were in October. So immediately we had a very big push for free and fair elections. We pressed to assure that there would not be rigging at the polling stations, that there would be international

observers, to get permission for the observers to come. So there was a tremendous amount of that kind of work that we did throughout the embassy, including with our very good colleagues in USAID, who could help fund some of the things that needed to be funded on election observers and whatever was needed.

We had regular meetings, Mike Malinowski, who was the consul in Peshawar, would come once every two weeks I think it was. We had been doing this under Arnie as well, to have a little Afghan group meeting, including with the British ambassador and British embassy to make sure we were all clear on what we were doing. We kept that up with Bob Oakley as well.

Q: I might point out for anybody looking at this later: we did not have an embassy in Kabul at the time.

JONES: That's right.

Q: For some years.

JONES: All of the Afghanistan assistance was run out of Embassy Islamabad. We had an AID office for Pakistan. We had a separate AID office for Afghanistan in Embassy Islamabad, because we had to do everything crossborder. It was not permitted to have Americans in Afghanistan because of the dangers with kidnappings and various threats against Americans under the Soviet-supported puppet who was the leader of Afghanistan.

One thing I did want to talk about was the investigation into the plane crash, because there's been a lot of controversy over that over the years. What we did right away was agreed with the Pakistanis that we would have a joint investigation. The U.S. Air Force sent in a team right away and the reason that was important, it was a C-130, an American built C-130, that crashed.

So the U.S. Air Force sent in an investigation team. We linked them up right away with the Pakistani Air Force team that was doing the investigation. They agreed on equal access to the site, interviews of people involved, interviews of witnesses on the ground. All of that worked extremely well and I was briefed by the air force team leader every day, every afternoon, as to their findings.

There was an element to this whole issue that was probably not very well handled. There was a law in the United States that the FBI must investigate a suspicious death, a death possibly by terrorism, of any American official. The FBI contacted me, as chargé, from the legal attaché in Athens asking for permission to come. I said, "Yes, absolutely, permission to come."

To be courteous, I contacted my colleague, the fellow who took over for General Wassom in the military assistance group, to say I was authorizing the FBI to come in. And he said, "Oh, I need to check with Central Command to make sure they agree," because Pakistan came under Central Command then. And for reasons that are unclear to

me the general in charge of Central Command said no, he didn't want the FBI to come in, the air force was going to do the investigation.

I referred the question to Washington. I said, "There is a U.S. law that says we have to allow the FBI in. I'm prepared to let the FBI come and I'm being told by somebody in Tampa who really doesn't have authority to say no." The people in NEA did not make a decision. They let it go. I talked to Ambassador Oakley about it. He said, "Well, if Centcom says no, then we'll say no."

That turned out to be a very, very controversial decision. Ambassador Oakley was asked about it by Congress, much later, why did we refuse to let the FBI in? Luckily I had all my cables that said I had authorized them to come in and then was told no. Long story short, the FBI finally did come, they came maybe a month later and by then the investigation was over, there was not much to look at, there wasn't much of a trace left. So that part of the investigation was not well handled and to this day I wish I hadn't been polite to my military colleague and just said, "They're coming, end of story. You don't have a say in this."

Q: This was before the business in Aden when our destroyer was--

JONES: Oh, yes, well before.

Q: Because that turned out to be sort of a disaster, because you had about six or seven different agencies getting in and getting in each others' way. So that wasn't a model to be avoided at the time. This was really just jurisdistic.

JONES: Exactly, jurisdiction, it was who's in charge. Centcom said, "We're in charge because the air force has its investigation" and I kept arguing that the FBI has a separate role to play here. In any case, the air force head of the team briefed me every afternoon and it became clear that in the end there were several reasons that the U.S. team decided was the reason for the accident that the Pakistani team could not accept. And there were two main things that the U.S. team found.

Number one, in the U.S. Air Force, when pilots are assigned to fly VIPs, they only fly the kind of plane that the VIP flies, only one kind of plane that the VIP flies in. So if you are a pilot for Air Force One in the U.S., you never fly any kind of plane but Air Force One. You practice on it, you fly it.

The Pakistani pilots, who were, no question, very, very good, flew Zia whether it was on a C-130, on a helicopter, on whatever kind of plane Zia was getting on, he had the same pilots. The reason that's an issue is that your split second reaction is slower if you have to think, "OK, which aircraft am I in?" I'm just quoting the air force, now. So they said, "It's possible that there was a split second delay that could have mattered."

The second thing is that they found that in the hydraulic fluid of the foot pedal that adjusts the flight level of the plane there were found to be microscopic brass shavings. In

other words, the maintenance on the hydraulic fluid was not a hundred percent perfect. There had been instances when C-130s in the United States had been known to buck, the way observers on the ground watched Zia's C-130 buck. It went way up and way down, way up and way down very quickly but it happened right after takeoff, so on the third or fourth gyration like this it flew into the ground. The times that it happened with U.S. C-130s the same phenomenon had been observed in two or three, three or four C-130s but it had been at 30,000 feet and the pilots had been able to recover and land. They had found the same microscopic brass shavings in the hydraulic fluid. So they believed that those two elements contributed to the plane crash.

The Pakistanis absolutely, fundamentally refused to accept that there could have been pilot error or maintenance error, which is of course the two U.S. findings. They insisted on believing and maintained thoroughly, that the reason the plane had crashed is there had been a case of mangos put on the plane at the last minute, which was true, there had been a crate of mangoes put on the plane and in that crate of mangoes was a grenade or some other kind of explosive device. And the evidence that they had for this explosive device was that in the chemical residue on the ground where the plane augged in there were combinations of chemicals found that could be found in explosive materials.

The U.S. Air Force explanation for that is that the plane was very low when it augged in and had a full tank of fuel. It burned everything in the plane completely. When you have such high temperatures with such a combination, an unknown combination of materials, you get all kinds of chemical residue on the ground. That's how they said you can explain the fact that these various chemicals found on the ground were present. But they said there was no evidence of an explosion. If there had been an explosion there would be metal pieces curled out, there would be various other pieces of evidence on the plane itself, which were absent, there was nothing like that. They said they could not accept that conclusion.

In the end, we had to negotiate this quite heavily, as you can imagine, because it had originally been agreed there would only be one report. In the end we had to agree to disagree and we issued two separate reports as to what happened to the plane. That is still a question to this day and I still tell that story to Pakistanis, Americans and others, who still think that there was a conspiracy.

Q: Have the Pakistanis pursued this other thing, to go after local people or Indian agents or what?

JONES: They believed there were Indian agents. As far as I remember I don't think anybody was ever arrested for it. Indian and Soviet agents, they maintained, were at fault. There was never any result, other than the report being issued.

Q: Going to the political situation when you arrived, before the crash, just to get a feel, what was the legitimacy of the Zia government and how had it come about and so what did this upcoming election mean?

JONES: Well of course Zia had come in through a coup and had executed Benazir's father subsequent to his taking over. Her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, had been the prime minister. Thanks to a lot of pressure from the UK and the U.S., we had persuaded Zia to allow Benazir back in the country. She'd been in exile, basically, in the UK all this time. She'd come a year plus, a year and few months, earlier.

We had persuaded Zia to schedule elections. I think there wasn't really a date. It was going to be sometime in the fall. That was already our big task, finish the negotiation to leave Afghanistan, which was just finishing in August and the first set of troops were going to be leaving fairly soon, starting in January and getting these free and fair elections in Pakistan underway.

After Zia was killed, a date was set. I went to see the government as I did on a fairly regular basis after Zia was killed to say, "This free and fair business is really important. We really mean it." I'd go to ISI, the intelligence services and other places to make the same presentation. And they said, "We had a plan for how to make sure that Benazir didn't win." I said, "Oh, what was the plan?" The plan was to announce that she had to have over five per cent of the vote in every single province. "We knew that she couldn't get over five per cent in Baluchistan, so we knew that we could prevent her from becoming the prime minister. She would get plenty of seats in parliament but she wouldn't have enough in Baluchistan. Now that Zia's killed, it probably is going to be a free and fair election."

Of course it's known now that Benazir won the election. It was monitored internationally. Pakistan got a tremendous amount of international support and praise for the way it ran the election, for allowing Benazir to take office. I still remember walking down the hall in the foreign ministry on the day after the election and being over at military headquarters the same day or the day after and having so many senior Pakistanis say to me, "We didn't vote for Benazir and we didn't really want her to be prime minister, but we are so proud of ourselves. We have done it the right way. We're part of the world that people accept. We really are joining the international community as a very responsible country and we like it this way." I still remember that extremely clearly.

Ambassador Oakley took very much to heart the fact that Benazir didn't have a lot of experience in government and her people didn't have a lot of experience in government and spent quite a bit of time with her senior advisor and others in the Benazir government as it was being named. He would have the embassy, the political section, Ed Abington and Greg Suchan and Nancy Powell, write papers for him to give to Benazir. He asked the AID people and Larry Benedict and some of the others, what should her economic policy be, what should her finance policy be, what should her Afghanistan policy be. Every issue you can imagine, we wrote policy papers for her at Ambassador Oakley's behest.

I worked very hard with Ambassador Oakley and with the section chiefs to make sure that we were giving good advice and to try to reduce our fingerprints on these kinds of papers. It wasn't so easy, because Ambassador Oakley had a different view of how we

should be perceived. He wanted to be known as the one giving this much close advice. He wanted to be known as having a very close role with her. And when newspapers started picking up on this and calling him “the viceroy” he quite liked it, actually and he would talk about himself in speeches as well, “I’m the viceroy here.”

Q: In any country, this is not very, I would say diplomatic and I’m using the term.

JONES: I didn’t have a problem with giving her advice. I did have a problem with it being so public.

Q: When you were there, starting from the beginning and going on, how did you feel about the role of the United States? Were we the first among many or were we really the leader? Were you uncomfortable with the situation or not?

JONES: I was not uncomfortable with the situation in terms of the assistance programs that we provided, the kind of advice and counsel, the technical assistance that I thought we could provide. I really liked our crossborder program in Afghanistan, because it was mostly focused on education, especially for girls, education and health. It was completely appropriate.

We were definitely the lead embassy in terms of influence with the Pakistani government, not least because we still had so much going on with the *mujahideen* in Afghanistan. So the station chief, Milt Bearden and ISI were in constant communication about the cross border assistance and the Stinger missiles, we were still getting Stingers across to the *mujahideen* by mule train. We still had big C-141s coming in, actually it was 747s, just full of Tennessee mules. There’s nothing like the sight of a 747 full of mules. It’s quite a sight. We had a very close relationship with ISI in order to get not only the Stinger missiles into Afghanistan but also all the textbooks. We did a lot of outdoor schools, everything that was needed for outdoor schools and for outdoor clinics and that kind of thing. So that didn’t bother me.

What I worried about was the overly close association with Benazir, particularly as it became clear and it was clear pretty early, that many of the ministers she’d appointed and some of the advisers around her were as corrupt as they could possibly be and they were corrupt in a very public way. I was standing at a dinner party when one minister explained to the Canadian ambassador, who was hosting the dinner, which Swiss bank account he needed to put money in for a Canadian company to get an oil concession in Pakistan. I watched him write down the Swiss bank account number.

When I would talk to Benazir or some of her ministers whom I knew better and say, “Your reputation is really being damaged by this. It’s not appropriate at all for your ministers to be out soliciting bribes this way.” And one of the ministers said to me, “Oh, well, don’t worry about it. We have to do it now, because we’re not going to be in office very long. We’ve been out of office for 11 years. We need to make up for lost time very fast, because we’re not so sure how long we’re going to be in office.”

Q: Would you say this bribery, this corruption, was endemic in Pakistan, or was it the political class or was it the Bhutto group or what?

JONES: It was endemic, there's no question about it. There was not a lot of legislation to prevent it. Some of the technical assistance we did was exactly that, to try to draft legislation to close down the loopholes that allowed this kind of thing to continue. And there was controversy, there was public controversy over how much public money was going into ministers' pockets, or how much money for oil concessions was going into ministers' pockets, rather than to the development of the country. There were members of parliament who were probably more honest than others or came across as being more honest, because they weren't on the take nearly as much as some of the Pakistan Peoples Party, Benazir's party, was. But I can't honestly say that they were worse than the other parties. Corruption was part of the deal.

Q: How about, when you had a military coup and part of the impetus for the coup, Zia's coup, was because of the corruption, or was this just the military wanting to get their hands on the money?

JONES: It was to a degree because of corruption and because of bad decisions and malfeasance and bad governance. Some of it was just that the military was just more comfortable being in charge in Pakistan.

Q: How did you view the military there?

JONES: It was a very difficult relationship between Benazir and the military. The military at that point, of course, was being run by General Beg, who was the controversial fellow who didn't get on Zia's plane and there was a question about that. There was quite a bit of question about was the military running certain of the programs, like the nuclear program, without reference to Benazir and we were quite convinced that they were. And that was part of Ambassador Oakley's impetus, to make sure that Benazir knew what was going on on the nuclear program that her own military was keeping from her and various other programs like that, whether it was the Afghanistan program with the *mujahideen*, whatever it was.

Was the military corrupt? Sure. There were always stories about generals who had fabulous villas, but I wouldn't say that every general was corrupt and I developed a tremendous respect for the civil service, especially the senior civil service, of Pakistan, whether in the defense ministry, foreign ministry, water ministry. Wherever they were, they were virtually uniformly very professional, very confident. Some had a political axe to grind one way or the other, but mostly they were good for Pakistan and they were the ones that we worked with most effectively.

Q: What about the Pakistani Army's

JONES: ISI, intelligence service?

Q: ISI, this has been pointed to as being a force unto itself. At the time, how did we view it?

JONES: As a force unto itself. The general who ran it at the time, when I first got there, has become very controversial because he's very closely associated with the Taliban now. Of course the CIA, the U.S. government, had a very close association with ISI because it was through the ISI that we did all of the provision of food and material support, everything, to the *mujahideen*.

The question of course becomes when it was time to buy back the Stingers from the *mujahideen*, when the Soviet troops had left and it was time for the *mujahideen* to come together and get rid of Najib and form an Afghan government we found it very difficult for ISI to pull back its extremely aggressive involvement in *mujahideen* politics. So ISI aligned itself with certain of the *mujahideen* and were very much opposed to the others. So we had a very, very difficult situation, where the station was working very effectively with us on the embassy side to reduce ISI's influence with certain of the *mujahideen* and try to promote some kind of collaboration among the *mujahideen*.

At that point there was a move afoot in Congress to appoint a senior envoy to the *mujahideen*. Because we had so much going on in Embassy Islamabad anyway involving the *mujahideen*, we argued back to Washington we didn't need somebody very, very senior. We were certainly happy to have a senior working level kind of person to lead the involvement with the *mujahideen* in Pakistan. So that was agreed and they named Ed McWilliams to come do that.

Ed McWilliams was well known in the White House, in the NSC. He was very much aligned with the very right wing of the Republican Party and he had his favorites in the *mujahideen* and he had people he hated. And he hated anybody who was aligned with ISI and by definition hated anybody who had gotten any real support from the CIA.

So what developed with this special envoy was a battle royal in Embassy Islamabad. My role was to try to sort out the battle and insist that Ed McWilliams' reporting would be factual, non-emotional and not one-sided and unbalanced. It was very difficult. He was very much on the side of the Gailanis and would not do any reporting of any contacts that the Gailanis might have had with some of the ISI kind of supporters, even though we knew perfectly well that that was going on. So we had a big fight about unbalanced reporting and inaccurate reporting on the Afghanistan support side and at the same time I was beginning to have a disagreement with Ambassador Oakley over reporting some of the facts about the malfeasance and corruption of Benazir and her party.

He was very uncomfortable with any reporting that was negative about Benazir. We made an accommodation, finally. I also made sure that Washington, because I talked with the desk every single evening on the secure phone, I made sure they knew even before I finally got our cables cleared, that there were very, very serious problems going on with Benazir. I made sure they knew that there was every chance that the president, Ghulham

Ishaq Khan, was going to throw her out of office, which he eventually did, for exactly the reasons that we were finally allowed to report.

Q: There's always the problem of reporting on corruption, because this sort of thing, it's obviously a major factor, but at the same time, given Washington is Washington, if you start, these cables will leak and they'll end up, if Congress gets reports of real corruption, that'll turn them off. We have a couple of agendas.

JONES: No question.

Q: There's a dilemma on the reporting. It's not just "Just the facts, ma'am" but you really have to worry about Congress.

JONES: The argument that I made is that we owed Washington the sense that Benazir was in trouble and that she was not going to remain prime minister necessarily for a very long time and that it would be inappropriate for Washington to be surprised by her being thrown out. And we couched it in terms of not so much straight facts but perception of Benazir. "This is what the president thinks of Benazir," "This is what even her party rank and file think of Benazir." And it wasn't so much, to a degree it was Benazir but it was mostly her husband, because he was the one who was so roundly corrupt. I argued that we owed it to the policy crowd, that we needed to be thinking about what we were going to do when Benazir was thrown out, that we couldn't just leave them hanging.

Q: As we're talking today, Benazir Bhutto came back, was assassinated and her husband, the same guy, I guess,

JONES: Same guy.

Q: Has picked up the mantle of her party.

JONES: He's picked up the mantle of her party, which was a thoroughly horrifying piece of news when I read it, I must say, because he's only gotten worse, he hasn't gotten better since my day there. Fortunately, the rank and file also saw that his reputation was such that he really couldn't pursue this with any kind of credibility and they gave the leadership to Bilawal, to their first born son, who can't take over the party until he finishes university and rightly so. So presumably there are others who are kind of orchestrating the party in the meantime. Asif Zardari, Benazir's widower, is very well known as not having a political bone in his body and the idea that he would take over the PPP is frankly ludicrous.

Q: While you were there, what was the role of India and particularly Kashmir. Was this an issue that you had to deal with?

JONES: It was actually a very big issue. What was interesting is that Benazir and Gandhi found a way, this is before he was assassinated, Rajiv Gandhi, found a way to have conversations. That was something that we promoted very heavily using our embassy in

Delhi for help and were able to persuade them to open a hot line. I believe we got going and pressed for a variety of other conversations to reduce the tensions between Pakistan and India. However, there was a period of time after Benazir was no longer in government that tensions really ramped up again, as I remember, starting with some shelling that happened way up, 14-15,000 feet, way up on the Siachen glacier. We watched planes and troop movements on the Pakistani side and the Indian side to the point we could see that Pakistanis were moving planes forward, the Indians were moving pilots forward and they're moving planes forward, trains were being moved out of the way, passenger trains, so that military trains could get through. It was so tense, this was in the summer, it was so tense. I remember spending a Saturday afternoon planning in my head how to evacuate the embassy, starting with the consulate in Lahore, because I was convinced that war was going to break out. Within a couple of days another meeting took place and tensions receded again, but it was very, very close and of course there was a tremendous amount of talk about completing the construction of the nuclear weapon on the Pakistani side and the Indian side.

We had determined that the Pakistanis had not yet put together a nuclear bomb, although it was getting closer and closer and closer. This was part of Bob Oakley's effort with Benazir, to insist the military not put together the weapon, insist to A.Q. Khan, the godfather or grandfather, whatever it is, of the Pakistani nuclear weapon program, insisted to him not to complete the construction of the weapon, not to build new silos for use of the weapon and that kind of thing. We went to Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the president, over and over and over again, saying, "Don't you dare put it together" because it was the biggest issue that we had with Pakistan at the time. One of the reasons it was the biggest issue was not only because of the danger involved, but because of the Pressler Amendment, which stated that when the United States made a determination that Pakistan had the bomb then all of our assistance programs would end. I was terribly concerned about that, because our military assistance programs were fundamental to our good relationship with the Pakistani military. Senior Pakistani general after senior Pakistani general referred to the good relationship they had with American general officers from having been at staff and command college training and all different levels of U.S. military training and that would end with the Pressler Amendment, as would our assistance programs.

The time came in '91, '92, when the Pakistanis finally did put together the weapon and the Pressler Amendment did kick in and we were having to do the really awful thing of slowing down and closing out our military assistance programs, the narcotics programs were exempted, but not technical assistance programs. This did not affect our programs in Afghanistan, but it was a very difficult time for all of us to work through what it took to close down these huge programs that we'd had with Pakistan, because it really reduced the influence that we had, it reduced the ability of Pakistan to get over corruption, it reduced our ability to work on education. It was just a travesty.

I believe that is the beginning of the, I know it's the beginning of the reason that Pakistan's military is now considered to be so Islamist. It would not have happened had

the Pressler Amendment not kicked in. To a degree, I think, it is also responsible for the start of Pakistani support of the Taliban in the early days.

Q: Why would that be? I mean—

JONES: If you have more and more Islamists in the Pakistani military who are going to be religiously and philosophically supportive of a very fundamentalist organization in Afghanistan, you end up with Pakistani military support for the Taliban and that's of course exactly what happened.

Q: In other words, if we'd kept our program going, we would have been having people going through Leavenworth and all.

JONES: Absolutely.

Q: So they would have had a Western outlook.

JONES: That's right. And instead, the only training they had was in an increasingly Islamicized country. Now Zia had started a lot of the madrasahs or allowed a lot of madrasahs to start, thinking he could buy them off that way. It turned out to be a bad calculation and they really got going after that, because he was not there to be in control of them.

Q: Well while you were there, were we seeing the madrasahs and the influence of the Saudis in funding this, these schools, fundamentalist schools, which were teaching an extreme Islam? Were we concerned about that or looking at that very closely?

JONES: We were much more focused on Saudi conservative influence in Afghanistan. There was always talk of the Arabs who were supporting the *mujahideen* and concern about who these people were, the second, third, fourth, fifth sons, because they were seen to be quite a bad influence on the *mujahideen* and in Afghan society. That of course bled over into the huge, gigantic refugee camps of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and that bled off into some of the, especially down in the Karachi area and places like that, where poverty was quite endemic and where their influence was much more attractive.

But it wasn't so much Saudi influence that people were concerned about, but Iranian.

Q: What were the Iranians doing?

JONES: Well, there was Iranian money in the madrasahs. There was Iranian money in some of the camps. There was Iranian money in some of the mosques. And in various villages there would be raging battles between the Shi'a and the Sunnis, the pro-Iranians in the group. Some Saudi money.

Q: The Iranians are Shi'a.

JONES: They were Shi'a, right, to the point that some of the senior Pakistanis in parliament whom I knew who were Shi'a were terribly worried about this and trying to figure out how to reduce the Iranian influence.

Q: How were we able, from the embassy side, to monitor what was going on in the refugee camps and also is it sort of the Northwestern Provinces?

JONES: Northwest Frontier Province, yeah. We had a very good ability to monitor it, for two reasons. One, we had a refugee officer who spent a tremendous amount of time in refugee camps and working on refugee programs, particularly on refugee resettlement kinds of programs. Second, a lot of the cross-border work for Afghanistan was done with Afghans in the refugee camps.

Phyllis Oakley, she's a Foreign Service Officer, so she, in order to have a cut-out, so she wouldn't work for her husband the ambassador, she worked in the Afghanistan AID program and her main responsibility was to work with the refugees and with the *mujahideen* on various of these programs. So she was extremely well known, very well liked by the refugees, by the *mujahideen*. She talked to them on a very regular basis in Peshawar, as did our various colleagues at the consulate in Peshawar, and had constant conversations with them. So we knew a lot and were able to influence them.

Q: Were we looking at development of the Taliban, because the Taliban started out as, the Taliban hadn't been there before.

JONES: No, the Taliban wasn't known then. I left in '92 and I don't remember ever hearing about the Taliban at all by the time I left. There was not an issue. The entire issue in Afghanistan was getting the *muj* to cooperate a bit and get Najib out. Now Najib, in the end, on his way out, was captured by the *muj* and was eventually hung, I believe. But there was an effort by the UN to get him out, appropriate, I thought, to get him out.

The other thing that was going on with some of the camps, some of the Islamist camps, was training for Kashmir, training fighters for Kashmir and that was a constant conversation we had with Benazir then with Nawaz Sharif was to close down some of these training camps that were training fighters that were being infiltrated across the line of control into Kashmir. The Indians were constantly coming up with evidence that the Pakistanis were doing this, the Pakistani response was deny it, we'd get overhead photography and prove that the Pakistanis were doing it, we would find out which guy it was that was running the camps and go after him with the prime minister, with whoever it was, the tribes. They'd say, "Okay, we'll close it down" and nothing would happen for a couple months and then it would start back up again. It was a constant problem.

Q: What about the Indian representatives, were they high commissioners or—

JONES: They had a high commission.

Q: It's equivalent to ambassador. What was your impression of what he or she was doing and the relationship?

JONES: They assigned very good people to the high commission. The Indian high commissioner, the one I particularly remember, ended up being foreign minister or secretary for foreign affairs in India and eventually was ambassador in Washington as well. And the Pakistanis did the same. They would assign a very senior, very professional diplomat to their high commission in New Delhi. And their job was to try to negotiate some of this, tamp down issues when they got too heated over the line of control, over Siachen glacier, over the military confrontation in the Punjab. And then occasionally something would happen and one or the other would be PNGed.

I knew one diplomat really quite well because his son and my son were in second grade together. I've seen him since many times. He was posted to Washington. Very good diplomat, very good expert in nuclear affairs. They were well known around town. We all knew them and spent time with them.

Q: I would imagine that in many ways there was a meeting of minds and policy, because essentially the Indians were, I don't know if you want to call it a defensive posture, but they wanted the Pakistanis to stop messing around in Kashmir, didn't they?

JONES: They wanted the Pakistanis to stop messing around in Kashmir and the Pakistanis, for their part, wanted the Indians to stop being so draconian in Kashmir, as well. There were issues. There were issues on both sides. It wasn't a one-sided thing, by any means. The other issue that the Pakistanis had with the Indians was how much the Indians were meddling in Afghanistan: were the Indians really supporting Najib against the *mujahideen*? There was a lot of evidence that they were, which was completely unhelpful.

When an American journalist was kidnapped in Afghanistan, the U.S. embassy in Delhi was responsible for working with the Indians to try to negotiate him out and the UN representative for Afghanistan at the time was a man named Benon Sevan, a wonderful man, got in trouble later over Oil for Food but he was an absolutely wonderful colleague at the time, was going into Afghanistan and offered to see if he could see the prisoner, to see the kidnapped American. He called me from Kabul, which he did every so often, to say, "I'm here and I'm okay!" He called me at this point and said, "Beth, about the rug you wanted me to take a look at for you." Of course I could not imagine what he was talking about and I thought, "Well, okay, I'm just going to stick with him," because he was kind of a flamboyant Cypriot.

And he said, "About the rug. I'm not sure if you remember. You asked me to look at a rug for you." And I was thinking, "I wonder if he's talking about the hostage?" Of course, sure enough, he was and he said, "I looked at the rug. The nap on the rug isn't too thin. I know you wanted to make sure it was kind of a thick nap and it's not bad, not bad, a little thin but looking good, the color's great, you'll really like the color and I'm not sure if I can bring it out for you this time. They're not asking for a lot of money for it.

There's not a lot of compensation needed for this. I'm hoping maybe, I'll go back in a week and maybe I can bring the rug out for you in a week."

So I write all this down and I call up Janet Bogue, who was the Afghanistan reporting officer, and I said, "I think he's talking about the hostage. What do you think?" And she said, "I think so." So we wrote a cable that said, "We've got a report, we think the hostage is doing okay. Would you tell his wife that he's not too thin and that his color looks good?"

He also said "And I've had a second opinion come in, somebody who really knows all the details about how a rug is made," meaning a doctor, I took him to mean, has visited him and agreed that the color's good and then that meant the physical condition of the hostage was appropriate or something like that.

Q: Sounds like your friend must have had a wonderful time putting this together. Did you get him out?

JONES: He got out, yes, he got out, thanks to the UN. Benon's the one who negotiated him back out.

Q: As we're talking, the last few months there's been a very good and very well received movie called Charlie Wilson's War, about a congressman who was instrumental in getting Stingers [a surface to air missile], sort of a very flamboyant, character. Did Charlie Wilson come up in your orbit at all?

JONES: Absolutely. Charlie Wilson visited all the time. Charlie Wilson always had a wonderful, gorgeous lady with him, not always the same one. But he of course was very respected in *muj* circles, very respected in Pakistani circles. He always had all the "right" appointments. He and Ed Abington were from the same town in Texas, so they got on extremely well. But Charlie Wilson came very regularly and we took very good care of him.

Q: About this time you're really at the point where Bob Oakley has taken over. Now you're back to the DCM mode.

JONES: Why don't we start with Afghanistan, because that was an early issue when Ambassador Oakley first arrived? The theme was that the Soviets and the Afghans, with a lot of American help, had negotiated the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. Some of the withdrawal had taken place. The rest of the withdrawal, as I remember, was to take place in early 1989 from Afghanistan. So the scene that we expected to encounter as the Soviets left was competition, that's probably the nicest way to put it, competition among the *muj* and with the stay-behind Soviet-supported Najib government, Najibullah government, over power and control of Afghanistan.

We already had very regular meetings about Afghanistan in which we included the British ambassador and we would invite Mike Malinowski, our consul in Peshawar, to

come join us about every two weeks. And the goal of this group was to make sure we knew what was going on, number one, among the *muj*, to coordinate as much as we could with the Pakistani government, because, of course the station still had very good relations with the Pakistani government through ISI on anything to do with Afghanistan.

We had a separate Afghanistan assistance program that was run by Larry Crandall, run extremely well by Larry Crandall and it was to this program that Phyllis Oakley, Mrs. Oakley, was seconded, because she couldn't work directly, obviously, in the embassy because her husband was the ambassador but we made an agreement that she would work there and to make sure it all worked, I supervised her supervisor, so there was no thought that there was any pressure.

Q: I've interviewed Phyllis and she was a regular Foreign Service Officer.

JONES: Phyllis was a regular Foreign Service Officer. She was coming off a very high profile job, she was the deputy spokesman, mostly spokesman, at the State Department, so she was very, very well known by all kinds of people and when the *mujahideen*, for example, heard that Phyllis was coming to work with them they were extremely happy. They knew all about her, they were very happy, didn't bother them one second that she was a woman. So that was a very good thing.

The reason I mention all of this set-up is that at the same time there was a very big push in Washington, in the Congress, to have a special representative to the *mujahideen*. To a degree it was pushed by Charlie Wilson but there were others in Congress who were very eager to have some sort of an ambassador to the *mujahideen*. We thought that wasn't particularly necessary. We had such an aggressive aid program, led by Larry Crandall and helped immeasurably by Phyllis, that we had very good contacts with the *mujahideen*. Mike Malinowski did. We had an Afghan affairs officer at the embassy, it was Terry Pflaumer at the time, later replaced by Janet Bogue, Janet did an excellent job on that. So, we felt that we had very, very good coordination and contacts.

However, in the meantime it was decided that there should be some kind of a representative to the *mujahideen*. He was an interesting fellow because he'd come from Embassy Kabul, which of course was closed about this time because it was considered too difficult to maintain the embassy while this potential fighting among the *muj* and the Najibullah people was going on. Ed McWilliams was his name. The issue of Afghanistan continued to be rather difficult in the embassy, because when Ed McWilliams came he made it very clear that he hated the Agency, despised anything they might stand for, despised their connections with any of the *mujahideen*, except for one group that he particularly favored, the Gailanis. So there was a rather difficult management issue within the embassy on how to work on all of this kind of thing.

Q: Do you have any idea of what was the source of this? Was this just Ed McWilliams, or had there been a situation or not?

JONES: My belief was that it was pretty much Ed McWilliams, that he brought with him great suspicion of the Agency. I don't know what the source of the suspicion was, to be honest, and it contrasted rather dramatically with the extremely good relationship that all of us had had, between State and the Agency at Embassy Islamabad.

Q: This was a particularly good team, wasn't it?

JONES: It was an extremely good team.

Q: Because, many places, there's cross purposes, but on this one

JONES: It was an extremely good team. We all understood and agreed on what the goals were. The support for the *mujahideen* had been very important, had been critical to the pressure on the Soviets to withdraw. The Stinger missile program was run out of the station in Islamabad. We were very involved in how that was all managed. The other thing that was very interesting was that the relationship between Larry Crandall, between the AID Afghanistan office and the station, was extremely good, not least because, for instance, there was an AID connection in bringing in the mules, 747s full of mules from Tennessee were brought in.

Q: One thinks of World War II and the Italian campaign. Mules were absolutely vital.

JONES: That's right, mules were vital to this effort, as well. Mules had been coming in for quite some time, because that was the only way the Stingers could be transported into Afghanistan, because the teeny, tiny, treacherous mountain paths on the edge of cliffs were the only way to get the Stingers in and eventually it was the only way to get a lot of the assistance materials in, whether it was flour or books or whatever. So not only was Larry bringing in mules to help with the Stinger business, but he was setting up what were called outdoors, under the trees, classrooms, so that we could get some education restarted in Afghanistan at the time as well.

And Ed McWilliams, on the other side, was battling everybody in the embassy, whether it was the USAID people for Afghanistan, the station or the rest of us in State about how we did the reporting, who we were in touch with and all that kind of thing. As the DCM, I was the arbiter, I was the mediator of all of this. I supervised Ed McWilliams directly and I basically just made sure that it was clear in his cables, that I found very biased, what the bias was. I would add the "bias note" in.

Q: Talking about the supervision, you've got somebody who you're concerned with, who was one of your principal officers. How'd you deal with this? There's always a problem of trying to get somebody to get with the program, but then there's the other side of, maybe they're right and you're wrong, the conventional wisdom versus an oddball who takes a different view.

JONES: Right. Here were the issues. First of all, Ed McWilliams was extremely hard working. He was very prolific. He met all kinds of people and he wrote it up in great detail. He knew the issue. He was a very, very good political officer in that respect. The issue that I had with him, that I discussed with him repeatedly, over and over again, was that he was meant to be a reporting officer, not an advocate for one side. If he was going to play the role of an advocate, it all had to be clear in his reporting cables, so that he couldn't, my argument with him was, that he couldn't have a meeting with the Gailanis and refuse to report also that there were suspicions that the Gailanis had an under the table relationship with ISI.

Q: ISI being

JONES: ISI being the intelligence directorate of Pakistan, because he maintained that the Gailanis were the only ones who were pure because they didn't have a relationship and we knew quite well that they did. So it was that kind of slanted, biased reporting that I objected to.

The converse of that he vilified in cable after cable those who clearly were in the pay of ISI, without putting any balance in. Now sometimes you can say "Well, the Foreign Service is notorious for 'on the one hand, on the other hand' sort of reporting," but in this situation, particularly when there was so much interest in Washington about what was going on with the *muj* and were they going to be able to make any kind of agreement and who would take over, who was sort of the top dog among the *mujahideen* to take over once we could get Najibullah out, that it was actually very important to be fair in the reporting and in meetings. There certainly is advocacy involved in all of this, because we were trying to advocate for them to come together and make an agreement, whereas Ed McWilliams in his meetings was advocating only for the Gailanis to be in charge and for the others to go to jail.

Q: What was the perceived or actual problem with the ISI?

JONES: The perceived problem with ISI was that they also had picked sides, which was true and nobody tried to maintain that that wasn't the case. We knew they'd picked sides. We didn't agree with the side they'd picked and there was a lot of work going on to influence ISI as well, to try to pull them back and let the Afghans come to agreement among themselves. But I felt strongly that we shouldn't also be so in the mix on this, that we should be advocating for a good solution, not picking sides as to what the result should be. The result should be a good, strong Afghan government, not a good, strong Afghan government led by this *muj* or that *muj*. It had to be something that they came to, because I thought that that was the only way this government would be credible, or the structure would be credible among the Afghans.

Q: Was it sort of assumed that Najibullah was going to go down?

JONES: We knew he was going to go down. The question was how. And that was another whole set of issues that we worked on with the UN representative to Afghanistan,

whose name was Benon Sevan, who was an Armenian Cypriot whom we all loved and respected, who as you will remember later got crosswise with the Oil for Food program and was accused of taking kickbacks but that was quite a bit later.

Benon was based out of Pakistan. He was there for probably about three years. I can't remember exactly when he came, but it was probably about this time and he would go regularly into Kabul on the UN plane and talk to the *muj*, talk to Najibullah, talk to the Russians, talk to us, talk to everybody who was there, to try to find a way to end the Najibullah regime and get him and his family out safely. He thought that, especially as the UN representative, he shouldn't be the one that somehow left Najibullah to his fate among the *muj*, because the fate would have been a drastic one.

Part of that, just an interesting sidelight, he came back and said once the Soviets left, Najibullah and his wife and two children were basically prisoners in the presidential palace and protected by the UN. And he came back to us, to Janet Bogue and said, "The kids need coloring books, they don't have books, they need some toys," they were four and six or something like that and the wife seemed very isolated. So basically, every time he went back we'd put together a little care package of coloring books and toys and books and this and that for the kids and then I bought lipstick and this and that for the wife. I thought however awful a person Najibullah was that his wife and children don't need to suffer unduly. So that was just one little sideline on the whole thing.

There was an arrangement that Benon was eventually able to make to get Najibullah out, but it required that he be basically spirited through some roadblocks. In the end, the first effort didn't work. He was turned back from the roadblock and in a second effort, in the end he was captured by the *muj* and he was killed.

Q: What about his wife and children?

JONES: I think they were killed, too. I don't actually remember all that part as well as I probably should. But that was one little sidelight to this whole Afghanistan business.

Q: In this equation, mainly because the movie and book have come out on Charlie Wilson's war, did Charlie Wilson pick a favorite in this thing? Was he pushing for somebody?

JONES: No, he did not pick a favorite. He was pushing for the *muj* to get it together. Most of his work with the *muj* was of course before the Soviets were forced out. That was his big success, really, that he legitimately played a great part in, I think. He came plenty of times after that, as I already mentioned, but the issues weren't as extreme. It was much more, we would take him to ISI; we would take him to Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the president; we would take him to whoever the prime minister was and he'd have his meetings and he would advocate, properly, for support for the *muj* to get it together and to try to reduce the support from ISI to one particular person over another.

The infamous leader of ISI at the time was a man named General Hameed Gul, who was a Pakistani general. He wasn't infamous at the time. He was known to be particularly supportive of one faction of the *mujahideen*. He has since repudiated, in public, repudiated ISI, repudiated Pakistan and has become even more rabid in support of some very radical elements among the *mujahideen*. So you still hear his name around, but he's not formally and officially recognized or accepted by the ISI. There is still some talk about, is he still really associated with them.

Q: Were the Saudis and the Wahhabis and all that, were they a factor at this time?

JONES: They were a factor to a degree. There was always discussion of "the Arabs."

Q: These were basically Saudis?

JONES: They were basically Saudis, maybe a few Yemenis, maybe a Jordanian or two here and there. But it was commonly believed and I think we saw the evidence for this, that these were the second sons or were called the "second sons." These were the ones who weren't going to get the father's main money, they needed to go off and find their fortune. They tended to be very religious and so they were going off on kind of a jihad type of deal and Afghanistan was the perfect place for them to go.

Well, we all know now that they were the precursor and to a degree, for the Taliban, in terms of their associations with Afghans who were as conservative Muslims as they were. I'm not going to call them extremists, yet but they were very anti-Western, they were to a degree anti-American, although they had to hide it to a great extent during that period, because the *mujahideen* was so pro-American, thanks to the Stingers and the other support that the U.S. provided. So that was an issue, but it wasn't a big issue. It was one that people kind of said, "Oh, yes, let's do a little bit of reporting of what's going on with 'the Arabs' in Afghanistan."

Ironically, Afghanistan was considered even more dangerous for Americans after the Soviets left, maybe I should say equally dangerous. As I mentioned, the embassy was closed about the time the last of the Soviet troops left. The embassy closed in January, February, it was very cold, I remember, in 1989, it would have been. We of course left our FSNs there to keep charge of the building and Embassy Delhi was responsible for the connection with them, because the UN plane was going from Delhi most frequently to Kabul, because there was still this suspicion that Pakistan had supported the *muj* and who were they really supporting. There was still this suspicion about Pakistani intentions in Afghanistan, so the UN decided just to go with the Indians, who were a little bit more neutral, which was questionable but in any case that's how it developed.

The reason I mention this is that the danger is that there were of course American journalists who went in regularly, had been going in, there were missionaries who went in and of course they were kidnapped. One of the stories I remember in particular was an American, I believe it was a journalist in this case, who'd gone in and was kidnapped. And this was the case I mentioned earlier, in which Benon Savan during a visit to Kabul

helped us check on his status, told us about it by talking about a “rug” and eventually helped him get released.

Q: This brings up a point of communicating around. When something is hot, like somebody is kidnapped and all, but the issue is problematic, will it get out or not, if you report it, sure as hell somebody somewhere will blab the news.

JONES: Well, I did two things. I’d report it in a very restricted channel and I caveated eight ways from Sunday to make sure that that didn’t happen, because that was absolutely the concern, absolutely. We didn’t want anybody to know that he’d been seen, we didn’t want anybody to know that we knew who was holding him, we didn’t want any of that out, completely, absolutely right. And we were able to maintain that. There was a very clear sense of how important this was to keep this totally, totally close hold, so that it wouldn’t endanger the person.

But in terms of communication, there’s another great story that I like to tell. This was with Janet Bogue, who took over from Terry Pflaumer in the summer of 1989 as the Afghanistan watcher and she went down, one of her first trips to Quetta, where there were a lot of *muj* who came in from southern Afghanistan, she went down there and had a series of extremely interesting meetings with various of the *mujahideen* leaders and called me one Saturday morning in my office in Islamabad and she said, “Beth, I’ve got to dictate a cable to you. Were you a Girl Scout?” And I said, “Yes, why?” And Janet said, “It-say able-cay ecret-say.” I thought, “Okay, we’re going to pig Latin” which I hadn’t used since Girl Scout camp. Janet Bogue dictated a four or five page cable to me in pig Latin. I wrote it all down and got it all in and just did it that way!

Then one last thing on Afghanistan, Ed McWilliams, stayed for only about a year, I guess it was, because there was still very strong pressure in Washington to have a higher-level envoy to the *mujahideen*. Ed McWilliams, I think was an FS-2 at the time, second secretary, so he couldn’t be considered senior, although he had the title of special envoy. But in any case, he left after about a year or so and Peter Thompson was named as the special envoy to the *mujahideen*, with the title of ambassador, a title Ed McWilliams had not had.

He, Thompson, was not based in Islamabad, as Ed McWilliams had been. He was based in Washington, but came out on a very regular basis. And because of security issues, there was still concern that there were all kinds of people roaming around Pakistan that might take a potshot at him, because the *mujahideen*, because of various issues still bubbling up in Afghanistan, the deal was that he would always stay at the Ambassador’s residence, at the Oakley residence. He would never stay in a hotel and whoever came with him would stay at the residence.

But Phyllis Oakley and I made a deal, that, yes, it was perfectly appropriate, he was very welcome to stay at the residence, but under no circumstances should she, as she wanted help in hosting him. So if he was there over the weekend, we had to program him, get him out of there for most of the day if not every evening if he didn’t have an official

program. She really didn't want to be responsible for entertaining him every time he came, which was once every three or four weeks. Even your best friend you might not want to have to entertain for that length of time. So that was something that several of us took on as something important to do for the Oakleys and that's what we did.

When Peter Thompson first arrived, Janet Bogue, the Afghanistan Political Officer, took him to meet with the mujahideen leaders in Peshawar. They gathered in a large circle, hunkered down on the ground. Peter launched into a lengthy explanation of his role and his goals – he went on for almost an hour. At the end of his remarks he asked if there were any questions. Silence. Then one wizened muj leader finally stood up. He looked at Peter and asked, “When is Phyllis coming back?” There were no other questions.

Q: Question about the Stingers. This got everybody very nervous, because of thinking about the wrong person going after an American airliner or something like that. How did you feel about the controls over the Stingers?

JONES: There were a lot of controls over Stingers, in the following respects: we knew what the serial numbers were of each one that had gone in. About the time that the Soviets were leaving of course we began, the Agency began, we worked with them to come up with a Stinger buy-back program or a retrieval program, so that we could get back any that hadn't been used. And I should say that in the meantime each time a Stinger was fired, the *mujahideen* were under orders to report back the serial number of what was fired and they were actually pretty good at it. Kind of interesting, not least because there were often ISI officers with the *mujahideen* in Afghanistan in various places, so they could also take the serial number down and report it back.

Okay, so you could say, “Well, maybe they didn't fire it and they kept it” and that was of course something that we all realized was possible but we did our best to have a log of the serial numbers. There was a lot of back and forth about did we have the correct log. Big issue, very big issue.

Q: Was there a time thing with the Stingers, that they wouldn't be good after so long?

JONES: I don't think so. I think that would be the case probably anyway, but I doubt that it was a very short time. It might be ten years or something and I'm not sure we really knew whether they worked or not, or could they be jimmy-rigged to work. But there was no automatic infrared button that you could push and disable all of them, all over the world.

So that was a very big issue and I went a few times with a visiting codee or a visiting senior person from Washington or with Ambassador Oakley or with the station chief, Milt Bearden and then with his replacement, two replacements, to discuss the serial numbers and which ones we knew about and which ones were question marks. Now, the question you asked is, were we concerned that they would get in the wrong hands? Sure, absolutely. That was the whole reason there was such a push to get these things back.

Q: This is the reason why we didn't want to hand them out in the first place.

JONES: That was part of it. The bigger reason why we didn't want to hand them out in the first place is we didn't want the Soviets to know we were doing it, we wanted deniability.

Q: If somebody appears with a Stinger missile, which is an American thing, gee whiz, where did they get it?

JONES: Absolutely, there was no question that they came from the United States. But that's why there was resistance to Charlie Wilson in the first place, because we didn't want to give them weapons that were clearly American to start with.

Q: Those SAM missiles that shot down John McCain weren't made in Hanoi.

JONES: One of those funny Cold War kind of issues that—

Q: You mentioned an ambassador to the mujahideen. Where does one go? I think, as somebody once said to Henry Kissinger, "We've got to check with Europe." He said, "What's the telephone number of Europe?"

JONES: That's a very good question, because the *mujahideen* were all of these different groups, all of these different *mujahideen* leaders who had done fabulous work in terms of fighting the Soviets in various places all over the country and here they were with their followings and they were all vying for power. We didn't actually call it a rank order. We knew them well. Particularly the station knew them, they dealt with them all the time and people like Janet knew them well because she dealt with them all the time and people like Phyllis Oakley, on a different level, dealt with them all the time.

I can't remember why the number seven sticks in my mind, as the major leaders. I think there was like a *mujahideen* council or something like that. But we tried very hard not to have favorites among the leaders. We were just pushing them to get their act together and to come up with who should be in charge and who's going to take over Najibullah and who's going to be the president and who's going to be the vice president and how are you going to organize yourselves? So that was the goal. Kind of frustrating at the time, but that's what the effort was.

Q: Was there at all a disconnect between the people in Pakistan, the mujahideen and the troops in Afghanistan?

JONES: No, I wouldn't say that, because the *mujahideen* leaders with whom we met in Peshawar and Quetta would just come out of Afghanistan. So they were going back and forth all the time. So it wasn't as though they were leaders in exile or anything like that. They were in Afghanistan for all practical purposes. So that I don't remember ever being an issue.

Q: How about the man who's called the "Lion of the North" who was killed?

JONES: He was one of the seven, Ahmad Shah Massoud.

Q: Were these groups territorial or ideological or how—

JONES: To a degree they were territorial, as I remember. They had attitudes about various issues. They weren't ideological the way the Taliban is or Hamas or those kinds of organizations. They weren't like that. But they did have sort of political colorings, shall we say. So Hekmatyar was known to be very closely associated with Hameed Gul and with the Inter Services Intelligence Directorate of Pakistan, with ISI. The Gailanis were thought to be much more pro-Western and were very much the sweethearts of Ed McWilliams. Rabbani was kind of his own guy and in my recollection he was much more "Afghanistan for Afghans," no big ideological push one way or the other. Then there was Abdul Haq, who was sometimes called "Hollywood Haq" because he was so showy, he had a peg leg, who was very pro-Western but maybe not quite so serious as the others. So they all had personalities. To a degree it was a political personality, but it wasn't as stark as you might find with the Taliban and with the others now.

Q: What about Iran? What role was Iran playing in this, as we saw it?

JONES: I recall there were worries about what Iran was doing in the western part of Afghanistan. There was no question that they had a strong influence there. There was no question that they were, I don't know if you could say in control of that part of the country, but they certainly had a lot of influence there. So it was an issue, but it wasn't an immediate issue. It didn't really impinge on the discussion "Who's going to be in charge in Kabul?" because it was still considered to be kind of far away.

Q: I was wondering whether we were seeing Iran in a sense as an "ally" of some sort?

JONES: Not really, because at the same time Iran was playing games in Pakistan with the Shi'a. So there'd be Shi'a-Sunnis battles in various of the villages around Gilgit or various villages in the Punjab and there was a lot of concern about the Iranians kind of stirring up trouble in Pakistan. So there was always a bit of discussion about how to deal with Iran.

The foreign minister for part of this time was a very scholarly elderly gentleman who developed a theory about the "Islamic arc" I think he called it, which included Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, in a positive sense, if we could only get all of these countries to be modern Islamic countries, "Islamic crescent" I think he called it, that Pakistan was somehow the anchor of the "Islamic crescent" and could be properly influential in Islamic matters with this "Islamic crescent."

So there was a lot of discussion about how to manage Iran, how to manage the relationship with Iran. I won't say that there was an overwhelming fear of Iran but it was known that you needed to watch out, you needed to be careful about it. In a way, it's the

way people now talk about Russia or China: “Got to find a way to work with them. It’s not going to be easy. Let’s be skeptical. Agree but verify” type of situation. But it wasn’t dramatically bad.

Q: Were the Pakistanis, I think of Baluchistan and all, areas that abutted Iran, was that a problem for the Pakistanis?

JONES: Not down there, because that’s all desert down there, but the issue that was of greater concern to the Pakistanis was what was going on in western Afghanistan and then what the Iranians were doing, coming into Gilgit or any of these other places, or influencing them.

Q: I’m told by people who served in Herat that basically the whole line of communication was with Iran.

JONES: That’s right and that continued for quite some time. Even to this day, refugees are going back and forth, there are whole big issues with Iran and refugees. Just when I served in Afghanistan, it was easy as pie to go from Herat into Iran.

Q: Then, let’s turn, I guess the nuclear issue was—

JONES: The nuclear issue was a fundamental issue for the United States, because of the Pressler Amendment. The Pressler Amendment required that if Pakistan built a nuclear weapon that it triggered an aid cut-off, all aid, military assistance, economic assistance, whatever it was. In any case, even without the Pressler Amendment, obviously we had a tremendous amount of interest in whether Pakistan was developing the bomb, what was going on with A.Q. Khan, Abdul Qadeer Khan, who we now know was a very bad guy.

He was well known to be a bad guy at the time. We didn’t know what he was sending to Korea and Libya, but there was a lot of discussion, there was a lot of effort to collect intelligence on that. There was a lot of concern about his relationships in Europe, especially with the Netherlands, where his wife was from and where he started a lot of his nuclear business. Constant reporting, intelligence reporting, other reporting, on what was he up to with the nuclear program in Pakistan.

So as Benazir Bhutto came in, was elected prime minister in October of 1988, one of the very, very first conversations that Ambassador Oakley had with her, in which I participated, was “You need to be in charge of what’s going on with your nuclear program. The military’s in charge of it. Zia was in charge of it with the military before that. You need to get yourself in there and make sure that they know that you’re in charge of this.” And Oakley promised her, rightly so, to try to help her out that way and make sure that she knew what was going on.

Well we, through the months, of course knew that the military had no intention whatsoever of letting her in on anything to do with the nuclear program, that they might take her for a little tour of Kahuta, the name of the site was, the nuclear site just outside

of Islamabad and they would sort of pretend to give her briefings, but it was clear to us from our various intelligence sources that it was kind of nonsense, that was she was by no means in the loop.

Q: Were we informing her of this?

JONES: We were letting her know as much as we possibly could that what she was being told was not the full story and she should press harder for the full story. I don't know that Ambassador Oakley ever went much further than that. Now the difficulty for us, of course, on the intelligence side was we didn't want to tip our hand to the military and to A.Q. Khan about how we knew what we knew and the more we told her that she wasn't getting the full story the more of course it clued them in that we knew we knew a lot more than they might have thought that we knew. So it was kind of a dicey situation to balance all that out.

But we constantly reminded both the prime minister, Benazir Bhutto and the president, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, about the Pressler Amendment and about, yes, we know you have the components and we're clear that you haven't put them together. If you combine them, we're done! The Pressler Amendment kicks in. Now at the same time we were also advocating back to Washington, trying to, that the Pressler Amendment was really contrary to U.S. interests, that even if Pakistan did put together the bomb, we're going to do everything we could to prevent them from doing that, that cutting off all U.S. assistance to them was really very counterproductive, because we gained a tremendous amount of influence within the military and we had great friends within the Pakistani military, from all the command and staff colleges that all of these guys had been to.

So when we had the military assistance officers who were based in Islamabad there and the defense attachés at various levels come, they already had good relationships with a whole range of Pakistani military officers, from colonels, the lower ranks and middle ranks, all the way up to the general ranks. And it was extremely important to us to be able to have those relationships, especially as things developed, either on the nuclear program or on Afghanistan and on Kashmir, which was also a big issue during those four years.

During that time, this is over the course of the four years, now, one of the things that I worried about, that several of us worried about, was the Pakistanis would somehow claim to us that they didn't understand the effect of the Pressler Amendment. So I actually, I didn't start it right away but pretty quickly after I got there, after I'd been to a few meetings with the ambassador and Ghulam Ishaq Khan, in particular, the president, because we knew he was involved and knew the military and could reach into the military, that I kept a very, very detailed account. I kept a log of all of the meetings with any Pakistani official, with little notes about what was said in meetings and of course we did full reporting. And that was one of the few things that I kept as a reporting officer, because I was so concerned about being able to put the Pakistanis back on the hook for, "We told you this, over and over again, this was what was going to happen."

Of course that's exactly what happened, what I ended up having to do, is to take in, when the Pakistanis finally did put the weapon together and the Pressler Amendment did kick in in 1991, I guess it was, I was able to go with Oakley and sometimes by myself to Ghulam Ishaq Khan and say, "Mr. President, here's the list of times that I met with you or Oakley met with you, with or without various people from Washington and these are all the times that we said 'This is what Pressler does if you do this' over and over again," so that they could not claim and I said, "If need be, we can explain this the press. So don't go to the press and say, 'Oh my God, what a shock' and 'Oh my God, the Americans didn't tell us anything.'" Not that it did much good. It just reinforced our concerns.

Q: Was the feeling that the Indian problem was so overriding that anything else, including the Pressler Amendment, would just be overwhelmed?

JONES: That was exactly the problem. The Pakistanis were terrified, I think genuinely so, that the Indians would be able to win over them militarily. During this period of time, during these four years, there were various scares of war between Pakistan and India. I remember two in particular, one less bad than the other.

What would happen was that there'd some incident somewhere, usually on the glacier, the Siachen glacier, which was right in Kashmir, or the Indians would, usually for domestic political reasons, say, "Oh, too many fighters crossing the line from "Free Kashmir" into India being trained in Pakistani military bases." Then we would see through satellites the Indian military moving closer and closer to the border and then we would see Pakistani aircraft being moved to airfields closer to the Pakistani-Indians.

There were two issues that were important here. One was that we had a very strong feeling in Pakistan and I believe shared by our colleagues in Delhi, that neither the Pakistanis nor the Indians understood the dangers of a nuclear weapon. They did not understand fallout. They didn't understand what was going to happen to their societies and to the countryside if either one of them used a nuclear weapon. And I believe to this day that one of the things that reinforced the view that these were just good tactical weapons was when the Gulf War broke out in late January of 1991 and CNN was new and it was seen all over Pakistan, including the footage of cruise missiles cruising through Baghdad and they would hit a building and the building would collapse and that would be it. And we had the very strong view that the Pakistanis thought that's what a nuclear missile would do as well, that it would just destroy buildings and it was absolutely necessary for their prestige to have these things.

So one of the things that we did in both Pakistan and India, although I think we were the ones who instigated it, was we set up a series of seminars and talks and private meetings with people from Los Alamos or people from the Tennessee lab to come out and explain and have graphs and photographs of what would happen in Pakistan and for them, in Delhi, with a nuclear explosion, how many people would die, how large would the concentric circles be, what would happen 14 miles outside of, whatever, to try to get

some sense to them, to the decision makers, of just how dramatic and drastic using a nuclear weapon might be.

So as we had the one scare, like I said, twice, of opposing troops moving closer together on the border and I think there was another one as well, there were times when I was ready to evacuate the mission, especially Lahore, because I was so convinced that a war was going to start between Pakistan and India, sort in 1991 and '92.

The interesting thing was that when Benazir came in and Rajiv Gandhi was the prime minister in India, there was a very strong, good, positive effort for them to get together and discuss these issues and try to reduce the tension. They had their red phones and all this kind of thing to try to work it out. They got quite away, but neither one of them was strong enough within their own bureaucracies to tamp down all of the warmonger kind of talk among the military or among some of the more radical political groups.

And particularly on the Pakistani side, Benazir was never able and frankly Nawaz Sharif after her was never able to close or control the various camps where these Kashmir fighters were being trained in Pakistan and that was an issue. We were constantly going to her and to Nawaz Sharif after her to say. "Okay, here's a camp, here's who's running it. Shut it down!" And when we gave them that kind of evidence they would shut down and then frankly would just move someplace else. So all the time we were dealing with all the *mujahideen* in Afghanistan we had all this jazz with India-Pakistan and all the other bits and with Kashmir.

Q: Well, by this time the Indians had a weapon and it was known. Is that right?

JONES: Well, as I remember they had tested a weapon quite a few years before. So it was known that they had a weapon. That's why the Pressler Amendment only related to Pakistan. The idea was don't have an arms race in South Asia, keep the Pakistanis from having one.

Q: But was there the feeling of, you have this balance of terror, if the Pakistanis get it, it means that the two can't really go to war or at least they can't go nuclear? The thinking wasn't of that nature?

JONES: It wasn't, partly because of the way the Nonproliferation Treaty is written, partly because of the way IAEA requirements are written, based on the NPT, Nonproliferation Treaty. It was considered that any increase in possession of nuclear weapons anywhere in the world was automatically, flat, a bad thing. So the possibility of striking a better balance in South Asia was never considered a positive result.

And to a degree it was because there were these other flash points. If Kashmir hadn't been an issue maybe you could have gotten to something like that. But so long as Kashmir was an issue and so long as frankly there was still a bit of competition between Pakistan and India in Afghanistan there was a sense that both governments were

unreasonable and therefore not to be trusted on the issue of would they or would they not test or use a nuclear weapon.

Q: Well, within the Pakistani political complex or the army, did anyone ever look at their various wars with India and the relative size and all that and figure they couldn't win any war?

JONES: Oh, yeah, they had a total inferiority complex, still do, vis-à-vis India and there were plenty of people who would argue to me directly, "The only way we can hold them off is to have the threat of a nuclear weapon."

Q: Well, in a way, it makes a certain amount of sense.

JONES: In a way it does, but I thought there was another issue involved here, because one of the things that bothered me very much about the NPT regime, the nonproliferation regime, was that because neither Pakistan nor India were complying with the NPT they were denied IAEA safeguards. And my argument at the time was, sort of, that that's the wrong way to go, that you should by any means have IAEA safeguards on any nuclear facility, because there were nuclear facilities for energy in Pakistan, there was one in Karachi in particular. And all of us were terribly concerned that it was completely unguarded, there were no controls over it and therefore vulnerable to terrorists or other kinds of bad guys.

So at the time I developed a bit of a theory, I never got very far with it, frankly, that the NPT had served its purpose, I still actually believe this, the NPT has served its purpose to a degree but it is no longer workable, it is no longer useful to prevent countries from getting a nuclear weapon, so we should say, "Okay, thank you, NPT, you've done your job. Let's think of a new way to control nuclear weapons that are in the possession of people who are not signatories of the Nonproliferation Treaty and just kind of draw a line and start over."

Well, the arms control people freak when they hear me say this, but it seems to me that there has to be a way that smart people who are very good at arms control, which I'm not, can figure out a way to talk countries like India, like Pakistan, like Brazil, like Israel, like all of these other countries, Iran, into a regime that they can agree to, which doesn't make them necessarily quite the second class citizens that the NPT does, which is one of the big counterarguments, recognizes that they are nuclear weapons states but puts them under some kind of control regime where they can get the IAEA safeguards.

Q: Turning to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, when you got there, was Iraq at all, in NEA, was it much of an issue or not?

JONES: Well we (Pakistan) were still in NEA then. Iraq was not much of an issue. We of course saw the reporting and kind of kept a watch on it, but were much more involved with the Afghanistan, India, Kashmir, new prime minister every x number of months in Pakistan kinds of issues.

When Saddam invaded Kuwait it became a very, very big issue in Pakistan, because the Islamists, who had slowly, slowly, they didn't have a lot of power, but Zia had given them enough, he tried to buy them off, they had a few things going for them and there was quite a big protest among the Islamist parties, which were small but all over the country, when Pakistan agreed to send troops to the coalition. It was an important foreign policy decision as far as the U.S. was concerned for Pakistan to agree to do that. We made an arrangement with them, an agreement with them, through Centcom, that their troops would not be right in Kuwait, they would be assigned to guarding the holy places so that that would be a good thing as far as the Islamists were concerned.

But because there was such an uproar over all of this we actually evacuated the embassy, evacuated dependents and non-essential personnel from Pakistan, about the time the war started.

Q: Go back before, Somalia, was that before, because I know that Pakistani troops were very much a factor, got beaten up badly.

JONES: No, Somalia was later, because that happened when I was executive assistant to Christopher and that was under Clinton. That was '92, '93. This is just before that. The only thing that happened was, the attack on Mecca happened while we were in Pakistan.

Q: Did we see Pakistan as a source of soldiers for peacekeeping? They had a pretty good army, disciplined and all that.

JONES: I do not recall that being much of an issue. I don't remember talking about that at all and that's the kind of thing that I would certainly have been involved in.

It was much more when we were reaching out to all kinds of friends and allies to build the coalition after Saddam invaded Kuwait we certainly went to Pakistan and General Beg, who was chief of army staff, immediately agreed to send troops and the president, it was a Beg-Ghulam Ishaq Khan decision. It wasn't a lot of troops, 600, or something like that and they were careful like I said about how they talked about it and we tried to help them out like I said about not having them right in the war zone.

But like I said, we evacuated dependent Americans and non-essential personnel when the war started. We had planned to evacuate them on a particular date, which was all negotiated with Washington and had planes coming in to take them out and all that kind of thing. We were registering everybody, registering missionaries and all the other Americans who wanted a way out, because it was so clear that war was building up. There was so much going on, because Baker was meeting with Tariq Aziz in Geneva. So there was certainly a buildup in a sense, we know that things were going to hell in a handbasket, in terms of what was developing from the time that Saddam invaded Kuwait.

But the reason I mention it is that we had everybody organized, they were all in buses ready to go to the airport when I got the call that, oh, by the way, the commercial airplane

that we had leased to take out American citizens and the embassy people was quite a bit delayed. It was delayed by, I don't know, eight, ten hours, because the airspace was closed over the route that it would have to take and we said, "It must be closed because the war's starting."

So the plane was very, very late. In the meantime, we already had everybody all collected, they were basically on their way to the airport. So, we just had everybody go ahead to the airport, rather than have them go home and recollect, because we decided that that was very difficult. A lot of people had come in from other parts of the country, the missionaries, various dependents from Lahore, Karachi. We had them all come up to Islamabad. It was just the easiest way to keep everything organized. So we did it that way.

One of the ironies of all of this is that the space that we were given at the airport was actually in the *haj* terminal, the *haj* terminal being the place where all of the pilgrims go to collect to go to Mecca once a year. So there we had all of these American families, kids, nuns, all kinds of people, all over this *haj* terminal. And I went out there to keep track of everybody and keep everybody happy, because my kids, my husband, were out there as well. They were leaving, too. But I called up the embassy snack bar and I said, "Okay, can you put together 150-200 sandwiches for us, please?" I called them very early in the morning, "They're going to be here through lunch. We'll need this many drinks, this many sandwiches, brownies, cupcakes, whatever." And put the word out in the community: anybody who can bake cookies, can they please start baking cookies so we can get them all out to the *haj* terminal. So the sandwiches arrive and here we are in the *haj* terminal, the most Muslim place and the snack bar has sent ham sandwiches! But we kept it quiet, everybody ate their ham sandwiches without breathing a word to any of the officials around. And sure enough, the plane came in late, came in four o'clock in the afternoon, whatever it was, everybody got on the plane.

Meantime, the way these evacuations work is we basically, the embassy got the seating chart from the airplane and assigned seats, gave everybody a little ticket with their seat number, so we wouldn't have a free-for-all on the airplane getting on. We needed to have it as organized as possible. And of course the big issue was, who was going to get the first class seats and who was going to get the business class seats and who was going to get the not so great seats. But I left it to other embassy staff to figure out. I thought, "I don't want to know what criteria they're using." But they had their own rules about how to figure this out and everybody got on the plane and were just told, "That's the way it's going to be, period, end of story."

We basically said, "You can't even switch when you get on the plane, because we need to take off quickly" because we didn't want to leave it open, have people standing and I quietly assigned some of the senior officers who had to leave anyway or were considered non-essential, "Okay, you're in charge of this section, you're in charge of that section" in the plane, so that there could be group leaders, in case things got out of hand in any kind of way. They didn't get out of hand. Everybody behaved extremely well.

Q: The decision to draw down is always a difficult one. There are people who want to get the hell out and people who want to stay. Did you have problems reaching that decision and how did that work?

JONES: It's a very good question. It was a very, very difficult situation. In the first place, there were certainly people who wanted to leave. The issue that I wanted to make sure people understood is that once they left, they didn't get to pick when they came back. That's always one of the issues with an evacuation, having done so many, that getting permission from the State Department for people to come back is always very problematic. So I had to make sure people understood that. That was number one.

Number two, the State Department senior leadership, and I don't know where it was exactly, was adamant about the number of people who had to leave and they were very tough with me about who all these people were that I had on the list, because it turned out we had, with AID, for instance, we had institutional contractors, which I actually hadn't really focused on, but these were in main U.S. government officials who were actually seconded to various of the ministries. I actually didn't really know very much about them, but who were on AID's rolls and so therefore they had to leave as well. So even though I had a list of "these are the number of official Americans in country," in fact that list swelled with these institutional contractors who had to be considered official Americans in ways that I hadn't quite understood. So it was kind of a funny situation that way and I learned a lot about what kinds of questions to ask next time I was in that kind of situation.

It was easy to get the first hundred people, including spouses and children, to get on the list to leave. But then the State Department got kind of stroppy with me. No, no, no, I had to have x many more people. So I had to kind of go around to various of the leaders of the agencies and say, "Okay, I need your advice. You give me the list of who else you want to have leave" because once you get down to "also, non-essential personnel have to leave" it gets much, much more difficult, because nobody wants to be called non-essential, nobody. So that was part of the problem. And I had to go, in the end, to various embassy officers, the State Department officers and say, "Guess what? You're on the list. You can't stay." And that was not fun and people were very, very unhappy with me for telling them they had to go.

I'd be on the phone with the desk, with Ed Abington, all the time, saying, "Okay, the list is now x number of people." The number he always wanted to have is, "Okay, how many people are staying?" And I got so I knew what that number was. Well, I got it down to 121. "Oh, that's still too many!" And I said, "Well, what do you mean, it's too many?"

One of the issues I had was the Pressler Amendment had kicked in and I needed a lot of the senior AID people there to help me close the accounts. I said, "This cannot be done by FSNs. It's got to be done by Americans who have been running these programs, because it has to be negotiated with the Pakistani government."

No, no, no, I had to get the number below one hundred. I said, "Who says?" Oh, whoever it was in M, the Under Secretary for Management's office. And at that point finally I got smart and I said, "Send me a cable that tells me that. Send me a formal instruction. I'm not going any further. I have done everything you guys have asked me to do over a week. I have bled to death and had each of the agencies bleed to death over this. So send me a cable." And they never did. Another extremely important lesson for me to learn is don't take instruction over the phone, if you don't want to.

Q: What about the Pakistani government and all? When you evacuate your people, it's a black eye to the country, because you're saying, "We think you're unsafe."

JONES: You're absolutely right and one of the things we did is, the minute I got the instruction to begin to think about evacuating we went to the foreign ministry and we went to the interior ministry and the military and said, "This is what's going on, this is why we're doing it, this is the deal." And they didn't like it but they understood it and I constantly made the very big point about who was staying and why, that the embassy would still be completely open, we would still function in every category, there wasn't any function that we were closing, would still have the consular section, still have the refugee program, still have AID, et cetera.

The institution that was most heavily impacted of course was the school, because of all the kids leaving the school. Now it was an international school, so there were still UN kids and various other nationality kids, Pakistani kids. But it really took the guts out of the school, which was where I heard the biggest complaints about what we were doing, much bigger than from the Pakistani government.

Q: Were other embassies doing the same?

JONES: I don't recall that any other embassy did that. I remember specifically the director of the UN and his wife being very deprecating of us for evacuating, "How can we be so chicken?" type of thing.

Q: We have the example of Islamabad getting burned and all that.

JONES: Exactly. We have the ball field named after the two fellows who were killed in that.

Q: On the nuclear issue and other things, what about the other embassies there and other governments? Was there much cooperation on Afghanistan, the whole thing, or were we doing our thing and others either following us or doing their thing or how did it work?

JONES: On Afghanistan, we were in very close touch with the British embassy, really a lot, because they were very involved with us, to a degree even with the negotiations although I don't remember that specifically. But in terms of influencing the *mujahideen*, working on ISI, working with the Pakistani government, we really kept the British in the loop on the whole thing.

I worked hard to stay in touch with the other embassies as it mattered. So, for instance, embassies who had aid workers working in Afghanistan, embassies who had nationals working with the UN or UNDP in Afghanistan, we would stay in close touch with all of them, just because it was important. Occasionally Benon Sevan as the UN representative for Afghanistan would hold a meeting of interested embassies and we would always, often Janet and I would both go to that to demonstrate our willingness and interest in staying in touch with people. But the fact is that we had so much going on in Afghanistan on a bilateral basis or even trilateral, with the Pakistanis, that we were very much in the lead and a lot of embassies would kind of try to keep up with us, just in terms of knowing what we were doing. So it was that kind of situation more often than not.

Now the other embassy that I spent a tremendous amount of time with was the Indian High Commission, again because I wanted to make sure I knew what they were thinking, what they were hearing, what their situation was like, because of the whole Kashmir issue. So that was very important. And then we had the business community. Now a lot of the American business community was in Karachi, but we had a few people, Occidental Petroleum was based up in Islamabad, for example. So we stayed in very close touch with them.

Q: Talk about the community there, how about, well, the business community first, were they in any particular problem? Was it difficult to be an American business person?

JONES: It wasn't difficult in a security way. It was challenging just because your level playing field issues are always challenging, in any country, I don't care where it is and they kept in very close touch with the economic-commercial section, with Larry Benedict, who was the commercial officer, did a great job and with his staff. Like I say, most of them were in Karachi, so most of them were in touch with Joe Melrose, who was the consul general down there. Whenever I went to Karachi I'd always meet with the American business community as a group to make sure I knew what they were thinking about, what their issues were, all those kinds of things.

It was more personal security issues in Karachi at the time. It wasn't terrorism or that kind of thing.

Q: How about the missionaries? You've got a very orthodox Muslim community and having missionaries there, I assume they were Christian missionaries, I think that must be quite a problem.

JONES: Well, it wasn't a problem, actually, which is kind of interesting. There was a tradition of missionaries because of the British. There were missionary communities or missionary schools in various places, in Lahore or up in the Murree Hills or Karachi or Rawalpindi, outside of Islamabad. Either we at the embassy or our consulates would stay in close touch with them to be sure they were okay and that kind of thing. And of course there is a Pakistani Christian community as well, so there's plenty of people for them to be in touch with.

Christian schools, they had a good reputation. Plenty of elite Pakistani students went to the missionary schools, because many of them were considered really quite good.

Q: And English of course was at a premium.

JONES: They were English language schools. They were considered to be good stepping stones for students to go to Oxford, Cambridge and good universities in the United States. I at the time was interviewing, was an alumni interviewer for my college and I regularly had Pakistani students come see me who were in this school or that school in Lahore or wherever and who applied to Swarthmore College and several got in.

Q: Going back to the Gulf War, I assume that CNN, was everybody watching the war, the way, it was almost around the world, it was sort of like, it really didn't bring out the horrors of war, it seemed to be a tech war.

JONES: That's right and that, like I said earlier, that was one of my problems with CNN broadcasting the way it did. It was in every office, virtually every home, that I ever was in in Pakistan. The interesting thing was CNN was not very widely seen in Washington. I would talk to the desk every single night and I'd talk to Ed Abington and say, "Oh, I saw such and such on CNN" and he'd respond, "Oh, I hadn't seen that. Did that really happen?" So I was constantly better informed in a funny way than Washington was on the latest up to the minute military event in the war, whether it was cruise missiles over Baghdad or the Iraqis shooting missiles into Israel or Israel having air raid drills.

Q: Well, how would you say that the aftermath of this war was seen to show the prowess of the American military and other militaries, but particularly American. Did this change anything in Pakistan, your relations, or not?

JONES: No, it didn't. I don't think there was any question about it beforehand. There was no doubt that the United States was a formidable military power. So all this did was confirm it, confirm it in rather dramatic ways. But, just as you said, it made war look less frightening and less awful for the civilian population. Now there were at the time, there were a couple of incidents during the Gulf War when missiles hit a school or a baby milk factory. This was not Sudan, this was in downtown Baghdad.

Q: And also there was a shelter which we thought was Hussein's government shelter but it may have been designed for that, but we hit it and it turned out to be full of—

JONES: Of schoolchildren, families, yeah. So those kinds of things were of course very difficult for us to deal with in Pakistan, but that was one of the things that happened.

Q: Well then, are there any other issues we should talk about?

JONES: I can't think of any, but there is one aspect of all of this that I wanted to be sure to mention and that is the personal aspect of it, or the non-work aspect of it. And that is

that partly because we had a fabulous group in Pakistan and partly because it was the kind of place that it was, there was a tremendous amount of hiking that was possible in the Margalla Hills right outside of Islamabad and you could drive an hour up into the Murree Hills, where the embassy had a little weekend house. There were a lot of people, including myself, who would go hiking up to Swat and do hiking up there. We'd go up to Gilgit and hike basically in the Himalayas. Trips across glaciers, trips to 13,000 feet. About eight of us with kids did a bike trip. We drove all the way up to the Chinese border and biked back down through a variety of villages. So a lot of hiking, backpacking, overnight camping, outdoor cooking, it was a fabulously fun place.

We hiked probably every weekend if we possibly could and did it in a relatively organized way. We would organize ourselves, but then regularly one of us would put in the embassy newsletter "meet at" such and such a place "at ten o'clock on Saturday morning to hike in the Margalla Hills" to such and such, because we knew so many of the trails and we wanted to be sure to get new people involved and bring the kids, I led the Girl Scouts or the Boy Scouts one time, to the point that in the end Janet and I wrote a hiking guide that we published, just on mimeograph paper, basically and passed around, just because it was so easy to do, so easy to get to any of these places and to take advantage of them. We were out hiking, we'd see monkeys, we saw parrots, we saw parakeets. It was a great place. Very photogenic, fabulous snow-covered mountains, when you would fly up to the north to do that kind of hiking.

There were other expeditions, I did this a couple of times, you could do white water rafting. There was some extreme rafting that some of the extreme folks could do. I didn't do that but there was inner tubing and all that kind of thing. And the interesting thing was it was mostly Westerners who participated in sports in Pakistan. It was very hard to get our Pakistani friends and colleagues interested, taking advantage of the beauties of their own country. But it was a spectacular country to live in from that perspective, as well.

Q: Again, on a personal note, how about being DCM of an extremely busy embassy and being a mother and a wife and all that? How did that play out?

JONES: Well, it actually worked very well, for a couple of reasons. One is when you're at an overseas post and you have children, you have instant, especially as DCM, I took it as a great advantage because that instant entry to all kinds of groups through my children. I knew the school well, of course it was a grade school. I knew the Brownies well. I knew the Boy Scouts well, the Cub Scouts. The various soccer teams that the kids were on. So it allowed me to get out and around to a lot more people in the community than I might otherwise have been able to.

I still remember the first day I was there and walked into the swimming pool area at the embassy with my kids and I was suddenly aware that ahead of me I could hear whispers, "new DCM, new DCM, new DCM, new DCM." I thought, "Oh, God, I don't think I can stand this," the glare of all this. But it was pretty easy to get people to see me as Beth, not as DCM. Now when I was in the office it was pretty clear I was DCM. There was no

question about that. But it worked very well in a community like that to be able to be both.

And there's amazing things you pick up when you're hiking alongside an AID colleague you might not otherwise know. You learn all kinds of things about what's going on in various parts of the community that need to be taken care of. You learn about supervisors who aren't that great or you learn about people who are ill that you wouldn't otherwise know or have some other kind of problem. It just lets you be a better DCM.

Q: How would you say your relationship with Bob Oakley as ambassador developed over this time?

JONES: I thought it developed well, from my perspective. We were there together for three years. I can't remember if I already told you the story of when he first arrived, I sat down with him and said, "Bob, I've been a DCM for two weeks." This was just after Arnie Raphael was killed. "You've been an ambassador several times, so you tell me how you want me to relate to you." He was not comfortable with that, to put it mildly. But the method I worked out with him is that I would tell him absolutely everything that was going on until he told me to stop, that I wasn't going to try to keep anything from him, I wasn't going to try to manage things without him knowing about it and all that kind of thing. He was not so interested, really, in some of these things. That's a measure of that.

Phyllis Oakley was wonderful and terrific. Bob is a person who's very focused on his work, and when he's so focused, he can come across as rude to the staff. He's so focused that he doesn't hear that somebody's just been talking to him and will turn away. He doesn't mean it to be rude but he doesn't hear that the person's talking to him. We all got used to that. The one thing that I particularly remember, though, was that, a couple of things. I really worked hard at being in charge of security for the staff and for the compound and for everybody, because, obviously, first of all, it was part of the job.

But also, there were issues that came up, Salman Rushdie being a particular one which we haven't talked about. When the *fatwa* was issued about him and one of his books was published in London and the Iranians were extremely angry. It got to be quite a big issue in Pakistan, to the extent that the Islamic parties marched on the embassy and marched on the American Center. My husband at the time was the senior officer at the American Center, he was the cultural affairs officer. He was calling me about what was going on. The day this happened I was calling the additional secretary at the ministry of interior, who was very cooperative about all of this and the RSO, he was in touch with all of the militia and the police.

To shorten the story at bit, we were able to get the demonstrators stopped before they got too close to the embassy but they got very close to the American Center and were able to get across the fence and started setting the place on fire, climbing up the roof, with a lot of people, Pakistanis and Americans, inside. And two things happened: when I heard that

the demonstration had been called, Ambassador Oakley was downtown in Rawalpindi meeting with the military chiefs, and I couldn't reach him.

So I took the decision to close the embassy. I wanted everybody out of there. And I personally went through the embassy and shooed people out and made them leave, made them go home. Oakley was brought back by the military by helicopter and landed in our compound, a gigantic compound, so it was easy. And he was unhappy with me that I'd closed the embassy. He just said, "It was the wrong decision." I said, "Well, I'm sorry you think it was the wrong decision. I disagree. You were gone and not calling me back."

But in the meantime, the American Center was being set on fire. They, too, had sent most of their people home but there were still some inside, my husband included. I was in touch with the additional secretary of the interior ministry and at one point, I was able to describe to him on a minute by minute basis what was going on, what was on fire, how close were they getting, how many windows had broken, how many people were getting through the windows at that point and getting inside the building and setting the curtains inside the building on fire, so it was extremely dangerous for these people. And at that point he, i.e., the Pakistani official, issued the order to open fire on the demonstrators and that ended the demonstration. It did kill several demonstrators but it did save the lives of people in the American Center. It was one of those—

Q: I would think that the Pakistani military would have been particularly sensitive, considering the precedent of Islamabad '79.

JONES: That's right, but it was more the police who took action than the military. I was trying to get the military there. I was in fact on the phone with the president's office asking for the military, as the additional secretary had asked me to do. He said, "You need to double track this, to help me triangulate this, because I need to get the instruction so I can issue the order." I actually don't remember, if I even knew at the time, if he was authorized to give the order to open fire. My belief was that he did it on his own and survived it publicly by doing that, but he certainly did save quite a few people with that.

Q: You left in—

JONES: I left in '92, the summer of '92.

Q: And where'd you go?

JONES: The summer of '92 I went to embassy Bonn, to work for Bob Kimmitt, who was ambassador.

Q: Beth, you said you had a couple of additional things you wanted to talk about Pakistan before we move to Bonn.

JONES: Yes, a couple of incidents came to mind, that I was reminded of in particular in talking with colleagues when Benazir was assassinated very recently, Benazir Bhutto,

who at the time was prime minister. It was a very exciting election that brought her into the prime ministership.

Ambassador Oakley was away so I was chargé and I had a call late one night in August from one of Benazir's assistants and he said that it was extremely urgent that I come see the prime minister about an hour later. So I got there around midnight and I particularly remember the lesson that I told myself that I had learned from the experience of April Glaspie in Baghdad, that I should absolutely have a notetaker with me, that this was something that I needed to have. So Ed Abington, who was the political counselor, agreed to join me and we met up at the prime minister's residence, up on the hillside in Islamabad and we went in together.

Benazir was in her living room of this grand palace with quite a number of her various associates and we didn't have any idea of what we'd been called for. She sat us down and said that she'd had a call from President Bush, from his special assistant, to report that President Bush would be coming to see her the next day. I did a quick calculation in my head and I thought, "If President Bush is actually arriving the next day, that means he's already in the air, because it takes that long to get here" and I knew from CNN that he was at Kennebunkport, it was August, he was on vacation in Maine. I also knew that I as the chargé certainly would have been told that the president of the United States was about to arrive at my post. And I very politely said things along those lines to the prime minister. I said I was very surprised to hear this, that it seemed unlikely that the president of the United States would be already en route without my knowing about it.

And she assured me that of course this was a secret visit, that was her assumption. She said he was coming to lend his support to her because she was in quite a big battle with the chief of army staff, General Beg, concerning under whose authority a variety of things could be done. There had been some very strong statements made. She requested a phone call from the president of the United States, in order to demonstrate that she had the support of the United States, not General Beg.

So I said that I would certainly check with the State Department. She said it absolutely had to be done on a classified phone, this was such a secret visit that I couldn't just use my regular phone. So I went back to the embassy and dialed up the secure phone, it takes quite a while to unlock it. By this time it's one o'clock in the morning. I called up the State Department Operations Center and I said I wanted to talk to the senior watch officer, not just somebody that happened to be there and answering the phone. I wanted to have the most senior person there.

I explained who I was and I said, "I have the following question: this is a little bit sensitive. I think it's a little weird, but please take this as a serious question and I really need to have a serious answer and I really need you to check on this for me to be absolutely certain that there isn't some odd thing going on here." So I told him what the question was. I don't remember who the senior watch officer was. He said, "Wait a minute, I'm going to put you on speaker phone and I want you to say this again, because this is just too hilarious." I repeated it. I said "Okay, it's not just me that thinks this is

weird, but I really, really, do need you to call the White House sit room and find out for certain that President Bush is actually still in Kennebunkport and not getting on an airplane or in an airplane on his way to Pakistan.” He said, “Okay.”

So I said, “I’m going to wait here by the phone. You call me back on the secure phone.” I knew the Pakistanis could eavesdrop if I didn’t do it on the secure phone. So sure enough he called me back in half an hour and he said, after he got through all guffaws at the the White House Situation Room, they assured him that the president of the United States of America was actually where he was supposed to be in Kennebunkport and he was absolutely not on his way to Pakistan.

And of course Benazir and all of her people had asked that I report back in person, so I trekked back up the mountain and by this time it’s about three in the morning. (Ed went home when I went to the embassy.) Not only is Benazir up there but General Beg is now up there, all the rest of the chiefs of the military staff are up there, the foreign minister’s there, the defense minister’s there, just this huge gaggle of very, very senior Pakistanis there ever was in one place. I ran in and I explained in great detail, how I had been very careful to use the secure phone, et cetera, but that I had been assured through the White House that the president of the United States was not on his way to Pakistan.

And she basically said, “Oh, I guess it was a crank call.” How can you run a country this way? I said, “Well, maybe it would be worthwhile to follow up as to who made the call, if they could check and this was the kind of thing that was a little odd for the prime minister and all of these assembled people had to pursue with such great detail and seriousness in the middle of the night.”

But I also used the occasion to pursue the question of, okay, how they were doing in their dispute? You had both of the disputants right there: “I hope you have been able to resolve your issues and what’s the outcome?” We had a little mediation session right there at three o’clock in the morning over their various issues, at which point they answered our questions. I left about four in the morning, went home, went to bed. And both Ed Abington and I, as we got to work the next day, said, “I had the weirdest dream last night. I dreamt that the prime minister of Pakistan invited us to her residence to say the president of the United States was about to come.” And we both agreed it was one of the strangest things that either one of us had experienced in our diplomatic careers.

Q: Did you ever get any reflections of what this was about?

JONES: No. As somebody said, it was a crank call and the thing that puzzles me almost as much as them calling us up in the middle of the night to pursue this was that they took it so casually, at which point they said “crank call” and I said, “Okay, how about, let’s really organize a phone call, then, with the president, so that the purpose that you had hoped to achieve through a visit could be pursued through a phone call.” I must say all of our colleagues at the State Department, the White House sit room, were very accommodating and very understanding and said, “Yes, of course, it’s best to arrange a phone call, given all this folderol,” and that’s what happened.

Q: I spent nine years in the Balkans. You think this was Benazir Bhutto coming up with this thing as a power play?

JONES: It could have been. That's something that Ed and I considered, as a way to get one up on Beg. Part of the result was, of course, they ended up with the senior person at the U.S. Embassy helping to mediate their dispute. I don't know that it necessarily did that much good. It did end the talk that there was going to be an army coup. That was sort of what was being rumored. Whether it really impacted Beg to the point that he was planning a coup and decided not to, I kind of doubt it. I actually don't think he was planning a coup. I think it would have been silly in those kinds of circumstances. But I tell the story because it illustrates the kind of wacky thinking that could go on.

The other very brief story that I wanted to tell came to me as there was so much discussion about Benazir's widower, Asif Zardari. They married just before she became prime minister. When they married, he was considered to be a very bad influence on her leadership. He was known to be very corrupt, he was called "Mr. Ten Per Cent" and that kind of thing. To a great extent he gets the blame for the reason that the president fired Benazir not too long later, the next spring.

At one point one of her very close associates, who was at the time the minister of education, stopped me at a big reception. She pulled me aside and said, "Beth, I really, really need your help with something." I said, "Of course, I'm always happy to help. What is it?" Again, I was chargé. The ambassador was away. And she said, "I really need you to talk to the prime minister about something very seriously." I said, "Of course, I'm happy to help. What is it?" She said, "You need to tell the prime minister to divorce her husband." And I said, "Well, I can understand why you have concerns about him. I hear the same stories you do." I got her to talk a little bit more about why she thought this. I told her "actually that isn't the kind of conversation that an American chargé should have with any prime minister under any circumstance. You're a close friend of hers. You need to have that conversation, not I." She was disappointed but said, "Okay, I guess you're right."

Q: I never really asked you about the political situation in Pakistan after the death of Zia-ul-Haq. You were there about three more years, weren't you?

JONES: I was there for four years. He was killed two weeks after I arrived.

Q: So let's talk a bit about Pakistani politics, developments and all that.

JONES: The situation in Pakistan was considered to be very unstable, even before Zia was killed, because he had promised fresh elections, he had promised free and fair elections, as a condition for U.S. support and of course U.S. support was huge because of the Soviets in Afghanistan (the whole Taliban issue hadn't started yet) and because of very, very strong U.S. support, of course, for the *mujahideen*, the Afghans who were fighting the Soviets, to get them out of Afghanistan.

And Benazir's return to Pakistan was a scene of huge, gigantic, millions of people would turn out to cheer her on and the news of deaths that resulted from some of these mob scenes, really, was almost an everyday occurrence, not to say that people were blasé about a death, they always made the headlines and it was always considered a terrible thing, but it was a relatively routine part of politics in Pakistan that things were at minimum rambunctious.

Q: Were these deaths because people got trampled by the mobs?

JONES: Exactly.

Q: Or was this, people were going at each other?

JONES: No, because they were trampled by mobs. The police at the time exercised actually fairly good restraint. The army was the bigger concern, were they going to permit this? And to their credit and to Zia's credit, the army did stay calm, they did permit the kinds of gigantic demonstrations that greeted Benazir wherever she went. There were equally, not quite equally, not as exuberant, demonstrations, for the Awami League, for the party in power at the time.

Then when Benazir was elected there was, as I think I mentioned, great joy around the country, even among people who hadn't voted for her and thought she'd be a terrible thing for the country, because they were very proud that they had actually participated in what was considered a free and fair election, that they had graduated to a country where this kind of thing could be done.

But because of the kind of corruption that I mentioned in connection with Benazir's husband then, with quite a number of the ministers whom she appointed, the ministers were considered to have been appointed on the basis of who had been in jail the longest because of her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was hanged, of course, by Zia.

The very bad management of government, all that kind of thing, there was a constant controversy about what Benazir was really doing, could she make progress, even though there was a lot of good will towards her. There was a lot of effort on the part of the West, the American ambassador, Bob Oakley, plenty of other ambassadors, the European Union, USAID, the UN development agency, everybody wanted Pakistan to succeed under Benazir's leadership or under whoever's leadership. But they really, really wanted Pakistan to succeed, particularly as the Soviets left Afghanistan and it looked like that whole war zone could be calmed down.

When Benazir was fired by the president, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, about a year and a half later, there was another election and there was a caretaker prime minister, there was another election, Nawaz Sharif came back and he's still here now. The kinds of corruption charges were a little bit different but it was almost the same level of charges of corruption and it wasn't too long before he was thrown out as well.

So in the four years that I was there I counted six prime ministers that I worked with, either because they'd been elected or because they were caretaker prime ministers. The interesting thing is that all that time there were several basic elements of Pakistani politics.

The first was constant controversy, not too much progress, in solving the problems of the people. So poverty was still a very big issue. Development of small and medium sized enterprises was a goal, but it was difficult for these inefficient governments to get that kind of program and project off the ground.

There was a lot of controversy within the parliament as to who was on whose side, who was voting for whom. There were a lot of accusations, a lot of them true, about sequestering, kidnapping members of parliament, holding them up in one of the hill stations so they couldn't vote on this and that. There were all kinds of shenanigans at all times between the political parties, to the great disgust of the military, through all this time. They were the bedrock of the stability of the country. A lot of the work that we did and other embassies did was to constantly go to the military leadership, to the ministry of interior and to others, to say, "Stay calm, stay calm, let the political process work, we're trying to influence it to be more responsible, you should be doing the same. This is not a time for coups or countercoups."

The other mainstay of the issues at the time was the whole question of was Pakistan or was Pakistan not putting together nuclear weapons. That was a very big issue. Big issue for the U.S., big issue for the international community. So that was another theme in all of the work that we were doing with the Pakistani government.

The next theme was all of the issues between Pakistan and India over Kashmir. As I mentioned, you got very close to going to war, I think, between Pakistan and India at least twice in the four years that I was there over skirmishes over Siachen glacier and warplanes moving closer and closer, trains carrying military materiel getting closer and closer to the border. Very, very tense situations between Pakistan and India over the Kashmir issue, which we managed to allay.

But those were the basic themes through that whole period and of course Afghanistan, Afghan refugees, that was always a theme, particularly because there were millions of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the influence they lent to the Islamic fundamentalists, who were growing in strength in Pakistan, even then, was a serious issue of concern to the international community.

Q: On, say, the corruption and political issues, was this essentially tribal or was this just greed, or what was it?

JONES: It was greed. It was not tribal. It was political in the sense that I, personally, had some of Benazir's cabinet ministers say to me, "The reason I'm trying to get a kickback on the Shell Oil deal is because I don't think we're going to be in office that long and

I've got to get all of my money up front." I was there when one of the Pakistani ministers told the Canadian ambassador what his Swiss bank account number was for the kickback on a deal that a Canadian oil company wanted, in terms of getting them oil concessions in Pakistan. It was very up front.

Q: Within, what was it, a chamber of deputies or parliament

JONES: Parliament, yes.

Q: Parliament, were there strong voices saying, "Cut out this crap!" and trying to clean up things, or was it so accepted?

JONES: There were very strong voices decrying the excessive corruption of some of the cabinet ministers and, in this case, of Benazir's husband. And the same thing happened when Nawaz Sharif came in and there were accusations of excessive corruption on the part of one of his brothers and a few of his close associates. It was accepted that there was low-level corruption, but the excessive corruption was absolutely a subject of conversation, it was in the media. One wouldn't say the media was somehow circumscribed about reporting this kind of thing. The military was very concerned about it. People would raise questions about it, "They're stealing it from the Pakistani people and the reason we can't get our water projects going or our health projects going or whatever is that so and so has stolen so much money from the health ministry or from the agriculture ministry or" from whatever.

But as a result of that, a lot of the assistance programs, which in the earlier years had been cash grants to the ministry of agriculture or the ministry of education, was then in terms of technical assistance and no funds, no money, was turned over. So we would say, this is USAID now, would say to the minister of whatever, "We are going to provide assistance to schools along these lines," whatever it was, "and we'll fund it, but we'll hire the experts, we'll pay them. It's up to you to help us decide how you want to use it," but no cash ever went into their hands, for exactly those kinds of reasons. We had to report to Congress that we had the safeguards in place that U.S. taxpayer money wasn't going into somebody's pocket.

Q: This is a pattern that we've had to use in a lot of countries.

JONES: Absolutely. It's an absolute standard to do it that way.

Q: Was there sort of the feeling, you, as the DCM, did you have to gin up your officers and all, keep them from saying, "This place is not going anywhere and it's essentially a failed state."? This term comes up today.

JONES: It does come up today. The term wasn't much in use in the late Eighties and early Nineties, "failed state." There was certainly discussion of how to get Pakistan moving in the right direction, that kind of thing. But we were blessed, during the four years I was there, with embassy officers and USAID officers who totally got it about the

challenges. So even though we could all say, “Oh, my God, you’re not going to believe what happened last night with the prime minister,” but all of us were very energized. “Okay, that’s what happened today or yesterday. Now what are we going to do today? Who can we get to? Who can we talk to? What are the arguments, the best arguments, to use with the water minister to make sure that, to try to persuade him that the richest people in the country, who own the most land, shouldn’t be the ones to get free water, that maybe they should pay for water, so that the poor villagers can dig wells, so they can get some water for their little teeny vegetable plots. And how do we make those kinds of arguments?”

And we had constant discussions among ourselves, we had very quick structured meetings every morning, for example, to make sure we were constantly on the move. That was my sense of this embassy.

And of course we had two sets of countries, really, we were working on, because we had all of our Pakistan programs but because the embassy in Kabul was closed we had all of the USAID Afghanistan programs at U.S. Embassy Islamabad as well. So we had two sets of projects and two sets of concerns and how do we deal with the refugees, all the Afghan refugees, what are the refugee programs we should have, et cetera.

So all four years it was extremely energized and it was very forward-looking and how do we get these programs done, part one. But part two was how do we prevent the Pakistanis from putting together nuclear weapons, because that would cut off all the assistance. In the end it did. That was a tragedy.

Q: If I were a Pakistani, I would think that a nuclear weapon would neutralize the Indian nuclear weapon and therefore it made good sense.

JONES: That’s of course what their argument was, that they had to have it in order to demonstrate that they couldn’t be overrun by the Indians, that the Indians were going to put one together and they had to be able to defend themselves.

But there were a couple of things that we tried to get them to understand. One was that a nuclear weapon wasn’t just like a cruise missile. And the reason I say that was at the time of the Gulf War, on CNN you could see these cruise missiles sashaying through Baghdad and it would explode at the ministry of defense and that’s all that would happen. And the image, we believed, that the Pakistanis had of a nuclear weapon is that that’s what would happen with a nuclear weapon also. So we actually brought in experts from some of the big nuclear facilities in the U.S. to do some kind of training session, little seminars, for the military, for the intelligence people, for some of the Pakistani think tanks and the parliament, people like that, to show them this is what a cruise missile does and this is what a nuclear weapon does, so they could see that there is a vast difference. By the way, we did the same thing with the Indians, because we had the impression that they, also, had the same misconception. So we did that. That was part of it.

The other part of it was, we tried to persuade the Pakistanis that they could win a huge international public affairs battle with the Indians if they were the first to sign the Nonproliferation Treaty, the NPT. They both refused to sign it and we said, "If you do that, you will be considered so advanced and so internationally minded that the benefits that will come your way will be huge, compared to the Indians. First of all, you'll get all kind of assistance that you need, by the way. And secondly, the Indians will go down as super bad guys in this whole battle and you'll come out as the enlightened good guys.

And, obviously, we failed, on both counts. We won in the sense that they never used the weapon and they didn't talk about it quite as casually as they had, but we completely failed to persuade them that the international recognition that they would get was worth not putting together the bomb.

Q: Going back to the corruption issue, I think one of the hardest things in any American foreign service post is dealing with junior officers, people coming out of basically the academic experience and all and bright eyed and starry eyed. As a consular officer I always had problems getting the young officers to loosen up when they were lied to by people applying for visas, saying this wasn't the end of the world, because they weren't used to blatant lies. And also, coming in particular out of academia you're not used to blatant corruption and this can be so traumatic that it can make the officer cynical, anti-the local populace. Did you find yourself dealing with this particular reflex?

JONES: Yes, definitely, but I also knew that that would happen, we all did, those of us who had been around for awhile, I'd served at places where that kind of thing happened, as well. So I did and the consuls general did, regular visits to specifically talk to the junior officers in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and of course Islamabad, where I was, anyway, to draw the context in which all of us were working, that we were working in a country that had endemic poverty, that even the "middle class" was not really middle class the way we would understand it, they were still desperate, that they had the same aspirations that we do, wanting a better life for themselves, better life for their families, better education for their kids, better jobs, et cetera and that those kinds of goals justified, in the minds of these applicants, about why it is they wanted a U.S. visa, that it was done out of desperation, not out of a fault in their character.

And we did regular discussions with our junior officers about that kind of thing, that lying was still a reason not to issue the visa but that it should not somehow so badly color peoples' attitudes about Pakistan that it soured them on Pakistan, but rather should increase the empathy for what it was that these applicants and Pakistanis in general were dealing with every single day in order to try to get ahead in a perfectly normal context.

Now if it was a police chief who was corrupt and bringing in all of his buddies to get visas by offering to get discounts for rugs for the consul general, that was a rather matter. He was putting money in his own pocket that way and that guy not only couldn't get a visa but there should be a conversation with the ministry of interior about what this guy was doing, that we wouldn't let go by. So there were gradations.

But I found and I think all of us did that the sense of cynicism, I wouldn't say was absent altogether, but it certainly was very tempered by a real appreciation of what Pakistan was all about and where it had come from and sort of the ideals of Jinna.

But the other thing, to be fair, is that dealing with Pakistanis was considered so much more pleasant and so much more fun than dealing with Indians, because all of these junior officers would hear from their colleagues in Delhi, who were having a much, much, much, much harder time with all of this than they ever did.

Q: This grinding poverty, particularly as it impacted on young people. Were we able to focus at all on that?

JONES: Yes, absolutely. It was a very interesting subject, in fact. We of course had to write the human rights report every year and child labor is an element of the human rights report.

The other very, very interesting thing, which I should have mentioned, is that there were extremely good and very active, very committed, human rights activists in Pakistan, Pakistani human rights activists, who had a good handle on the child labor issues, on women being mistreated by their husbands, particularly women who were infertile or hadn't produced a male heir, who had oven tragedies or that kind of thing, was endemic in various parts of Pakistan and we were able through very good contacts with the human rights groups and human rights leaders to get a very good sense of not only how bad the problems were, but how we might help these local groups to address these problems, how to get money or assistance into the hands of local human rights to get these kids out of shipbreakers' hands and get them some education.

Rug weavers were another big area of child labor that Pakistani human rights groups made a big effort on. And as we worked with the Pakistani human rights groups, then we would also go to the ministry of labor, the ministry of justice and others and say, "Okay, here's some model legislation that comes from the International Labor Organization or from this UN group or that UN group that you might want to consider putting in place and prosecuting people for child labor and all that kind of thing."

So in that respect it was a very gratifying relationship that we had. The problems were awful. We could see the child laborers, in the gun manufacturers up in the Northwest Frontier Province, in the various forms that we've already mentioned. But the fact that there were such committed Pakistanis trying to solve these problems made it that much easier and energizing for us to be involved in addressing these problems as well.

And that, as far as I know, continues to this day. For example, one of the young human rights activists that we were very much in touch with is one of the leaders of the lawyers' group in Pakistan right now and we see her name regularly now.

Q: The lawyers' group is very influential in recent political events in Pakistan.

JONES: Exactly.

Q: What about the media? What was your impression of the media?

JONES: The media was very rambunctious. There were some extremely good journalists who wrote fabulously well. It was fun to read their columns because they were first of all well written. I only could read the ones in English, of course. Fabulous English, much better than mine, much more articulate than mine. Very tongue in cheek sometimes about the political parties or the political leaders or the issues that needed to be addressed. And some of it was just kind of silly, unsubstantiated accusations, not very professional reporting, that kind of thing. But it was a very lively media operation.

We knew a lot of the journalists. We'd take them on journalists' trips sponsored by the then United States Information Agency (USIA) to the U.S. to understand how to get a little bit better at substantiating their stories, having several sources for the same accusation, that kind of thing.

Q: It sounds like they took more after the British press, which, quite frankly, is not an example to hold up.

JONES: You're right about that, but the media was very appreciated by the Pakistani public. I don't know how many newspapers there were, but many dozens and they were read all over the country, or those who were literate would read them aloud in the coffee shops at tea time and people would gather around, a very political kind of atmosphere.

Q: In your mind, whither Pakistan?

JONES: Now?

Q: At that time.

JONES: At that time, actually we were just in the period or about to be in the period when there was a caretaker prime minister who was really good. He'd come out of the World Bank and because he didn't have any political ties, really, he was a Bank professional, he brought in all kinds of regulations and even legislation to regulate the 22 Families, to spread the water bills around a little bit more equitably and do a lot of the things that had been politically very difficult to do and all of us said, "Okay, this proves that the Pakistanis can do it, proves that they know how to do it."

So when I left it was rather in an upbeat kind of idea that the country, with the right leadership, could make very, very good progress and frankly I still believe that, especially seeing, as you mentioned earlier, just now, the lawyers' group. They are very professional people that know exactly what to do.

Q: The judiciary, how was that?

JONES: It was mixed. There were some extremely professional lawyers, a tremendous amount of integrity and some who were just shysters. But the premise, the operating premise, was that the judiciary could be trusted, basically, if you got to the right one. There was always the accusation that this judge or that judge, or this Supreme Court judge or the other, was in the pocket of this or that political leader.

Q: You mentioned, before we move on, the “22 Families.” What are we talking about and what was their influence?

JONES: The “22 Families” were considered to be the wealthiest families in the country, the families whose names everybody knew, that had very big political connections. They weren’t necessarily ever the prime minister, but they were the ones who were the biggest landowners and owned the biggest factories and that kind of thing. So they were extremely wealthy and through their wealth had huge political influence, which meant that they could dominate or certainly influence parliament to the extent that the kinds of laws that they didn’t want to have passed didn’t get passed.

Q: Okay, ’92, you went to Bonn. As what?

JONES: As deputy chief of mission again.

Q: And you were there from ’92 ‘til when?

JONES: ’93. I was there only six months as DCM. Todd and Courtney were very sad to leave Islamabad. They had had a wonderful time there. They rode their bikes with the nanny (a wonderful British woman) to the neighboring shopping areas, we went on wonderful trips all over Pakistan and on the Palace on Wheels in India. When I explained to them that we would be staying with the DCM Ken Brill in Delhi at the start of our trip, Courtney looked at me quizzically and said, “You mean a man can be a DCM?!” We always had them each bring along a friend, so they would have fun with a pal on the trip. The school was wonderful. They were going into fourth and sixth grade when we left.

Q: How would you describe what was happening in Germany when you got there?

JONES: At the time, in Germany, it was a period of quite a big transition for the U.S. We were significantly reducing the number of military bases we had in Germany, which was what I call a “boo/yay” kind of situation. “Yay” in the sense that the German government and some political parties had been asking for the U.S. to reduce its presence in Germany, because after all the Berlin Wall was down and there was no longer the confrontation with the Soviet Union.

But it was “boo” because as the bases reduced the jobs for a lot of Germans in a lot of towns and villages went away. So it was an economic hardship for a lot of communities for these bases to close. So that was part of the issue.

The other part of the issue was the remediation of the bases, the ecological remediation of the land that had been used for shooting ranges, tank shooting ranges, all this kind of thing, because of the expended and unexploded ordnance that was lying all over. So there were a lot of negotiations between the U.S. government and the German government over remediation, ultimately how much money was going to be paid for that. As the DCM, that was one of my biggest jobs was to basically chair, with a foreign ministry representative, meetings between the German military and the American military and the German mayor, or governor, sometimes, of the host community of whatever the base was.

In addition to that, one of the other base issues was noise. So we had to constantly negotiate when would the shooting ranges be open that were still there, when would the helicopters fly over. It would be very carefully done, because they'd say, "Okay, the nursery schools have rest periods between 11:20 and 12:10 and so no helicopters can fly over this 7.3 kilometer area for that 23 minute period." So it was very detailed and I chaired these meetings all over the country. That was number one.

Number two was the whole issue of Berlin, of East Germany, of reunification, which had happened, but reunification in practice hadn't really happened yet. So there was still a very big effort on the part of the German government, which the U.S. helped with, as to how to really unify east and west.

And the reason the U.S. was so heavily involved is because we were one of occupying powers, of course, of Berlin, so we were of course still very heavily involved in Berlin, but also because the U.S., the French and the British had been the occupiers of all of Germany and so we retained a very close association with the German government on how to adjudicate some of the issues that came up. For example, the highway, the autobahn, between West Germany and into East Germany, how should that be managed? What should we do with the U.S. Army facilities that were at the border? What about the British Army facilities? What about the British duty train? What about the American duty train? How should those assets be turned over to the German government? What about all the occupation cost housing that the U.S., the British and the French had in Berlin? How should we do all of that? Where should the new U.S. Embassy be? How should the land that the U.S. Embassy had had in what was then East Berlin, how should that be used? So it was constant, those kinds of negotiations, that I mostly chaired a lot of that as the deputy chief of mission, would bring the ambassador in occasionally, but not very often.

For example, one of the things the ambassador did get involved in, very much so, was putting a cornerstone, shall we say, on the property and the piece of land that was actually right at the Brandenburg Gate, inside East Berlin, that the U.S. had owned from the time before the war and had failed in negotiations to be able to trade for a "better" piece of land further away from the Wall. Couldn't use the one near the Wall. But, fortunately, all those negotiations failed. Fortunately, because we still, when the Wall went down, retained a choice piece of property where the new U.S. Embassy is right now, right at the Brandenburg Gate, a spectacular site. Ambassador Kimmitt was very eager to make sure

that there was recognition that this was U.S. property and he put a little plaque there, had a big ceremony, a very big deal.

Q: Yeah, I was just thinking, I was in the Foreign Service from '55 to '85. One of the great issues was a peace treaty and at that time the real issue was, if there was a peace treaty this could mean opening up Berlin to East Germans. Was there a peace treaty, or were we even talking about a peace treaty after World War II? Has this sort of died away or is it

JONES: There was an agreement reached, I think the closest we came was the agreement reached with the Russians, the Soviets, at the time, over Germany and the prisoners of war and that was reached in 1955. The other allies, the British and French, weren't too happy about this. But that's what permitted a lot of the German prisoners of war who were held in Soviet camps to return to Germany. One of the things that I particularly remember during my time in Germany is people my age who were talking about when their fathers had finally returned from the war in 1955. The war had been over for ten years at that point. So that was one of the things I particularly remember.

But there was no discussion in '92, after the Berlin Wall came down, of a peace treaty, but there was a lot of discussion about how to bring East Germany into the West in an appropriate way. So the issue of the currency became an issue, how to exchange East marks for West marks and it was done I think in the end on a one-to-one basis, which was considered ridiculous, because the exchange rate was one to ten, or one to twelve, the real exchange rate. But that helped East Germans, obviously, to be able to get the West marks that cheaply.

There was a lot of discussion of West German businesses, banks, other institutions, putting branches in the East, fixing facilities or buying facilities in the East, training people for jobs for their facilities in the East. And a lot of disappointment on both sides in the following respect: disappointment on the part of the West that the East Germans weren't just beating down their doors for jobs and a lot of disappointment from the East that they were being treated like second class citizens by their Western colleagues. And from my perspective they were basically both right, in the sense that there was no question that the West Germans thought that they really had all the answers and that the East had been a bunch of, as one East German said to me, "You're treating us like donkeys in a stall."

And they were treated like that. They were treated like they couldn't possibly know how to do real work, they couldn't possibly know how to have a work ethic, how to do anything that involved profit. And to a degree that was true, but they were treated so badly in the training programs that a lot of them kind of went on strike and said, "You don't think we're smart? Okay, I'm not smart. I'm not coming." or "You don't trust me to come to work on time? Okay, I'm not going to come to work on time." and just kind of perpetuated this bad feeling between the East and the West. Even when you go to Berlin, you still see a bit of separation or I still see a bit of separation between the East

and the West. And Germans, Berliners, still talk about, "I'm going to the East today" and it's just down the street.

Q: Helmut Kohl was the chancellor at the time. How did we view him at that point?

JONES: The relationship was truly excellent with Kohl. He was very positive, aggressive, about getting the things done between the East and the West that needed to be done. He very much appreciated U.S. support and U.S. support had been much more positive for German unification than European support had been. And that appreciation carried over into the years after the Wall came down, because, particularly the British and the French were kind of nervous about German reunification.

There was still a bit of discussion about where should the German capital be, should it really be in Berlin, that had bad connotations, but the U.S. was very supportive of it going back to Berlin. Of course that didn't happen for quite a long time before the move to Berlin was completed by the German government, because of course it was a huge administration to move, but it got done.

The other issue between the U.S. and Germany and the one that I particularly remember was under discussion, not so much with Kohl but with his ministers, were all of the issues involving the EU and agricultural subsidies, how did the negotiation go on the Common Agricultural Policy on corn, on bananas, on whatever it was. So I would say that there was almost as much, when we were talking about what kind of reporting should the embassy be doing, there was a very big focus on reporting on what was the German attitude about these agricultural subsidies or what was Germany's position going to be inside the EU on negotiating it, what were ways that would influence that so it would be not quite so difficult for the U.S. once the EU made its decision, that kind of thing.

Q: From the perspective of our embassy, it was in Bonn, of course, at that time?

JONES: The embassy was in Bonn all through this.

Q: Did we see, on the Common Agricultural Policy, that the German political movement and the French political movement were seeing eye to eye, which is basically to protect these so-called cottage industries, really to the detriment of our attempts to export?

JONES: That's right. There was a lot of discussion about how much collaboration was there really, or how much mutual protectionism of their own farmers was there on the part of the French and the part of the Germans. There was a particular incident, at least once, if not twice, of German farmers having a big demonstration with their tractors outside the U.S. Embassy because they didn't like the U.S. policies on various agricultural issues.

But a lot of the reporting was to try to figure out the differences between German policy and French policy, for obvious reasons, to try to drive a bigger wedge between them, to

see if we couldn't take advantage of it one way or the other, to hammer for a better deal for the American point of view and this kind of thing.

That was the situation in which I was on the phone with my colleague at the National Security Council almost every day. What had we learned overnight? What kinds of meetings were going on in the U.S. on the economic side that day? I would talk to him very early in his day, which was mid-afternoon my time and then we'd have an internal embassy meeting, okay, what did we need to try to find out that afternoon or evening at various receptions and meetings, et cetera, that we would have about this. Almost an everyday conversation with Washington to make sure we were focused on getting the information that Washington especially needed in order to influence the Germans, influence the French, influence Brussels, in ways that were of interest to the U.S.

Q: You'd been in Germany before, or actually two times before. Did you sense a real almost earth change in the attitude of the Germans, no longer being sort of recovering from World War II and its consequences, a new generation had come up, a new sense of confidence and all that?

JONES: Not yet. That came later. This was still, I believe, too soon after the Wall had gone down. The memories were still extremely fresh about the Soviets being so close to Bonn or to the rest of Germany and all of the German military people that I was dealing with in these negotiations, even though they were tough negotiations, could not have been more appreciative of the U.S. military role, bases, et cetera.

Same thing when I went to Berlin, which I did on a very regular basis. The Berlin government was still extremely grateful to the allies for having stood by them all those years and prevented the takeover by the Soviets of West Berlin.

I was able then to go to Leipzig, where we had a consulate in the eastern part of Germany and the various Germans that I met there were also very appreciative of the very strong role that the U.S. had played in supporting the dissidents. The pastor who had led the candlelight vigils in the churches and all that kind of thing, I met all of those people and they were uniformly grateful for the very, very strong support they had from the U.S. and from the West, not just the U.S., but they were highly appreciative of that and I was invited back to represent the U.S. at various first anniversary and second anniversary candlelight vigils and would walk in the streets in these processions arm and arm with pastors and other dissident leaders who'd led this who were now big in government in Leipzig.

That was well before the disenchantment with the U.S. set in, quite a bit later.

Q: Your negotiations with the Germans on military matters, in all these things there's always one big enemy that looms up there and those are the Pentagon lawyers. And I would think that, particularly with communications getting fancier and fancier, even at this time, my feeling is if the Pentagon lawyers had had their way we'd still have Fort Apache. What about—

JONES: Well, the Pentagon lawyers didn't feature in this particularly strongly and I believe it was because of the leadership at the Pentagon at the time. I'm not sure I know who it was. It could have been Colin Powell. It didn't really figure in my considerations, because the negotiations that I was involved in were led by two and three star generals on the U.S. side and the same on the German side, who could reach in well over any Pentagon lawyer to say, "This is the right thing to do." And they were not pushovers for the Germans in terms of how much money would be paid in remediation or how it would be done, but they had a pretty strong say: "Okay, we've gotten the best deal we're going to get. We have walked the line between what we need to give them in terms of money and the good will we need to retain in order to do" X and Y in this area, X and Y in that area, whatever it might be, because we still had some bases there. We still wanted to get things done in Germany with our military and our military people.

So, their word was taken very much to heart and I was able to go back through the Political-Military Bureau at the State Department and the German desk and say, I had my instructions, too, I was able to say, "Politically, this is how it looks. This is my judgment about what the defense minister can accept. This seems to be the political situation in this township or this state of Germany," whatever it was, that we were dealing with. "And this is the deal and we've agreed with the U.S. military to make it happen." And they would.

Q: While you were there, was there much discussion of what NATO was all about?

JONES: No. That was before there was very much discussion about what NATO was all about. The discussion was just starting, literally just starting. It started really after I left Bonn and got back to Washington for my next job. It was still too early after the breakup of the Soviet Union to get down to it too much. There wasn't a lot of worry about it, but there was just beginning to be a discussion.

At that point Germany thought NATO was absolutely the most important thing besides the U.S. to it. NATO had been, as far as the Germans were concerned, the primary, premier force that had preserved and protected Germany and the rest of Europe throughout this extremely difficult period since the Second World War and NATO was the best of the best.

Q: Russian troops, were they gone from Germany at this point?

JONES: The Russian troops were leaving. I don't think they had all gone yet. I think they were on the way out.

The Russians now consider that they left precipitously, but I think they left over the course of a year or year and a half. So they were just leaving as I was there. And remediation for those bases, there was a little bit of discussion of the Russians paying for remediating those bases and basically everybody gave up, because the Russians just said, "No!"

Q: I think you've pretty well explained what you were doing, but could you talk about working for Bob Kimmitt and how he was as ambassador?

JONES: Bob Kimmitt had been there for two years or three years already by the time I got there. I had known him in the Department when he was Under Secretary and he had called me several times when I was in Pakistan to ask if I would be his DCM, but he had to go through the whole process. So I was extremely pleased to be chosen as DCM for Bonn, because I had never served, except for the one time in Berlin, in Europe. I'd always served just in the Middle East and South Asia.

And one interesting sidelight is that I heard through the grapevine that when I was announced as his choice for deputy chief of mission for Bonn the "German club" said, "Who the hell is she?" I heard this from a few of my friends. I said, "Well, I guess they'll find out." So I figured there was going to be a little bit of "what the hell does she know?" coming. There was then a certain attitude in the German club and among the Europe group that anybody who spent as much time as I had in the Middle East and South Asia can't be up to much, that only the best of the best worked in Europe and that anybody else can't be accepted. So it was kind of fun for me to go there and show something else.

Bob Kimmitt is a very intense person, that's well known. One of the things he felt extremely strongly about was that he should give as many speeches as possible in German. He studied German every single day. He was very dedicated to it. His German wasn't that great but he certainly could give speeches in German. He would not answer questions in German, but he did not have the advantage that so many of the others of us did who'd learned German as kids. So I really must say I very much appreciated that aspect of his ambassadorship.

He wanted very much to spend as much time traveling around the country as possible to make sure the embassy was represented. He wanted to make sure that he as ambassador was represented everywhere, which also was very, very appreciated by the Germans. It was a lot of work for the embassy. He was very demanding as an ambassador, in terms of making sure absolutely everything was organized within an inch of its life, but that was how he preferred to operate. He wanted everything set ahead of time and that's his prerogative. So I spent a lot of time working with the staff, to make sure that that was the case.

He was quite prepared to and actually wanted me as DCM to manage the embassy. It was a huge embassy. Coming from a huge embassy in Islamabad I was very used to that and very much appreciated that. I spent a lot of time working with each of the sections, each of the agencies and each of the consulates and consuls generals, to make sure that they felt tied in with the embassy, tied in with the front office and felt that they were getting the information they needed and the leadership they needed in order to do their jobs. Even though the ambassador was traveling a lot I made sure that they knew that they could get a lot of information and guidance from me and from Washington whenever they needed it.

When I first got to Bonn, I was taken aback by the hostility between State and the Agency over contacts. Milt Bearden, whom I had known very well in Islamabad, was the new Chief. He and I agreed right away that we could fix this. We called a meeting of the senior reporting officers and outlined two things: if the information could be obtained for free, the contact was State's. If it had to be paid for, the contact was the station's. We also agreed that I would meet every afternoon with the Reports Officer and go through what the information was that he and State needed, who was going to which events that evening. We divided up who from the Embassy would be in touch with which German official. That seemed to solve the problem.

The interesting thing to me was that Ambassador Kimmitt was very much a Republican, he was appointed by a Republican president. Bill Clinton was elected in '92 and I assumed, everybody assumed, that Ambassador Kimmitt would leave pretty quickly after the inauguration. But he asked to stay because he had several children in school, young children in school. The new administration coming in was extremely thoughtful about ambassadors like Ambassador Kimmitt and permitted them to stay longer. He stayed I think until August.

The interesting thing to me was, however, that in meetings that he had with German officials after the election he explained just how bad he thought President Clinton would be. I thought, "Well, how does this square with wanting to stay another six months?" Anyway, it worked. But I thought to myself, "Maybe that's not the best thing to do."

Q: How did you find the role of the consulates and consulates general there? How useful were they? Were we trying to shut them slowly down or what? What was going on?

JONES: There was a trend in Washington to reduce the number of consulates and consulates general, constituent posts, particularly in a place like Germany, where we had six at the time. I, however, found them extremely useful because, particularly in a place like Germany, where the different states are so independent and they operate on a federal basis, very much like the United States. Some of the leaders of the states were very strong political leaders. And I found it particularly useful to have very good eyes and ears, reporting capability, in Munich, in Stuttgart, in of course Berlin, in Hamburg, in Leipzig and of course Frankfurt was a gigantic consulate general.

Because several of them were so big, especially Frankfurt and Berlin, we were very careful to pick very senior people as consuls general, as the leaders of these places. The argument I made to Washington as I worked with them to select the right people, these people were managing offices much bigger than embassies managed by a lot of our ambassadors. So we had to pick people who were very professional, very proficient, very senior. And we did so. We selected people on the basis of good management skills and seniority.

The other particular issue was that different U.S. government agencies had their senior people not just at embassy Bonn but, for example, Treasury had its most senior

representative in Frankfurt, because that's where the German national bank was situated. So it was a bit of a challenge to make sure that the Treasury representative in Frankfurt understood that he was reporting to the ambassador and then to Treasury. And the same thing with some of the military representatives posted in various places in the country, to make sure that they understood this. And that's one of the roles that I played, "Okay, let's talk about how you're going to do this reporting."

Different people assigned at the time had different skills. The smaller consulates had a harder time operating as well as they should have. Hamburg was a particularly difficult place, because it's such a tiny consulate, as I remember. It has been closed now, in the meantime, which I think is right. There isn't too much going on at the port of Hamburg that needs to be reported on that can't be done out of embassy Berlin, for instance.

Stuttgart's been closed in the meantime. One of the main reasons we had Stuttgart open was that's the EUCOM headquarters, but it no longer has the large resident American military population it once had.

Q: Was there a difference in our relations with the CDU and SPD (Social Democratic Party of Germany)? Were we pretty comfortable with both?

JONES: I want to say we were very comfortable with both. We, particularly our consulate general in Munich, was charged with being in very close touch with the CSU. Bavaria is so big and so important politically, so that was a very big portfolio that our consul general in Munich was to stay in very close touch with the CSU there.

But our political section really did a great job and managed the political reporting officers at the consulates to be sure we were getting a balanced view of what was going on with each of the parties and in each of the *länder*, the different states of Germany, to make sure we understood what the balance was, because Bonn itself is a teeny village, there's nothing going on in Bonn other than the federal government kind of thing.

So our political officers were constantly over at the Bundestag, the parliament, to make sure they understood what they were up to in the federal sense, but we really counted on particularly Frankfurt, Leipzig, Munich, to a degree Stuttgart and to a degree Hamburg to do reporting on the balance, what was going on with those two political parties, but also the FDP, the Free Democrats, because they were always kind of the balance, the swing party.

Q: I was going to ask, was Genscher foreign minister while you were there?

JONES: No, Genscher was not the foreign minister.

Q: At one point Genscher was considered by many of us sort of a fly in the ointment, particularly where the Balkans were concerned. But he was not somebody that particularly comes to mind, during your time?

JONES: Not really, no. One of the more interesting things was that we were back in business with people like Rudi the Red, some of the radicals who led the antiwar movement, was a big political leader in Frankfurt at the time. I loved meeting with him, hanging out with him. I marched against the Pentagon the same time he was leading demonstrations in Frankfurt. But he was wonderful to talk to. We didn't reminisce all the time, because I wanted to find out what he was doing now. But that made it kind of fun to have those kinds of conversations.

Q: While you were there, were the Balkans, Yugoslavia, rearing their head and was this still—

JONES: Not quite yet. It was still pretty early. I shouldn't say that. It was an issue for the U.S. It wasn't a big issue between the U.S. and Germany, yet. It became an issue pretty quickly when Clinton became president. Let me put it this way: it should have been a bigger issue for the U.S. than it was, but it had been made clear by President Reagan and by others that he just wasn't interested in pursuing it and having the U.S., particularly after—

Q: President Bush.

JONES: Excuse me, Bush, of the U.S. be active, even though there were awful things going on in the Balkans. One thing I particularly remember is the State Department asking various embassies to have Serb speakers, Croat speakers, people who had the languages of the region, to go on detail to interview rape victims in former Yugoslavia and one of my officers from embassy Bonn was asked to go to work on this. She was gone for two months at least and when she came back I had her do a seminar for the embassy. It was awful, devastating, the kinds of things that were going on in terms of ethnic cleansing. And even then I knew that there was building a very strong sense in the State Department among the Balkans experts, which I was not, that the U.S. was at fault, really, for not participating in a much more aggressive way to end the ethnic cleansing. Or at least the US should have led the Europeans, either in NATO or with the EU to end the kind of depredations that were being visited upon communities, especially women, in the former Yugoslavia. That would be the fall of '92.

And of course during the election campaign Clinton had said a lot of things about how he was going to change policy and he was going to do this and going to do that. So when he was elected there was a lot of hope about that kind of thing.

Q: Were we watching with concern about, okay, Germany's now united. Pretty soon the Germans will start putting their business and tentacles into the former Warsaw Pact countries and all and it's going to once again gain tremendous power by being the 800 pound gorilla in the—

JONES: I can't speak, really, to concerns in Europe about that. I think those concerns were there.

I had the opposite concern and it was partly from having worked so hard to try to get the Germans involved in a positive way in the Middle East and South Asia and having failed, repeatedly, to get them to kind of step out and take the lead and play at their weight in international politics.

And I found the same thing in my time in Bonn, that the Germans were extremely diffident about stepping out and taking the lead, or even participating in an active way in trying to address some of the problems, whether it was with regard to Kashmir, the nuclear issue in Pakistan, Middle East issues with the Bar-Lev Line and the Israel-Palestinian problem.

In the Balkans, it had taken a lead a bit in recognizing Croatia a bit early, we thought, because of its old relationship, the old Nazi relationship, really, with the Croats. But it wasn't really taking an active role at all in trying to address the problems which were right at its doorstep with the ethnic cleansing that was going on.

And people like me were taking the opposite of the fear raised in the question, which was to say, "Germany, you need to participate. You have political weight. Use it for the greater good. You have economic weight. You have commercial weight. Use it in these countries of the former Soviet Union, in the Balkans, to help bring about the economic reforms that will lead to market economies, to end corruption these former Soviet states, to start the process to integrate them into Europe, both economically, in terms of jobs, in terms of anticorruption, in terms of free and fair elections, in terms of democratic principles. Whatever it is, step up and participate in a way that we know you can and stop being so diffident about your Nazi past. You've got plenty of laws in place to prevent undue action." For example, the German military has to have a vote in parliament every time it's deployed anywhere outside of Germany. So we're not asking for that. "We know you've got the safeguards in place. Step and do something. Make yourselves proud."

Q: How did you view the European Union at that time and Germany's role in it?

JONES: I confess that my entire focus at the time on the European Union was all focused on these agricultural subsidies issues. That was really the big issue. I don't remember that much of the conversation, other than, okay, is the European Union going to work with USAID as a way we can collaborate on some of the economic reform, political reform, social reforms, in these countries of the former Soviet Union, whether in Poland, the Baltic States, certainly former Yugoslavia, some of these other places. There was a little bit of that but I was much more focused on the Common Agricultural Policy issues.

Q: How did you view the problem of the integration of the "guest workers" from other places, particularly Turkey and the Balkans and maybe from North Africa, I don't know?

JONES: At the time, the issue was mostly Turkish guest workers. There was an effort underway by the German government to actually negotiate with the Turks for the return of some of the guest workers, because they didn't really need them anymore in Germany, as much as they had previously, because they were getting so many coming in from, not

just the Balkans but from eastern Germany. So there were plenty of jobs to go around for people in Germany. They didn't really need or want the Turkish guest workers.

And, to be fair, a lot of the Turkish guest workers had been there for a career and were quite prepared to go back to Turkey and quite welcome. The Turkish government realized this and welcomed the financial assistance that the German government was prepared to provide to transfer them back to Turkey.

I don't recall North African immigrants being an issue at the time. They became an issue later.

At the time there was a little bit of discussion of guest workers coming from the German pockets, the German populations of the former Soviet Union, like Kazakhstan in particular, but it wasn't that big an issue at the time. There weren't that many of them coming in, the Volga Germans coming in.

But at the time, it was talking the Turks into going back and also in Berlin, much more than anyplace else, Polish guest workers. There was a tremendous number of Poles who were coming across the border into what was now Germany for work, because even though it was still depressed economically in eastern Germany, it was still better than Poland, in terms of jobs.

Q: In '93, what happened? I think an election happened. Did that have anything to do with

JONES: Well, the election in the U.S. had occurred and right after inauguration day I had a call asking me to come back to Washington, to be interviewed for a job being Secretary Christopher's senior special assistant. And I said okay, I'll come back for the interview, I'll just bring an overnight bag. They said, "No, actually, when you get interviewed, you'll be hired. So just bring everything and be prepared to move!"

And I thought, "Ooh, gosh, working for the new president, that would be very cool!" I had a talk with my family and they said, "Okay, we'll go!" So I was only in Bonn, then, for six months, in the end.

Q: What happened with your husband, now?

JONES: He was a Foreign Service Officer as well, but his job in Bonn wasn't supposed to start for another six months. His new job in the U.S. Information Service wasn't planned until the summer of '93, so he basically contacted them and said, "Can you replace me in this job?" They said, "Yes, absolutely." He talked to USIA in Washington and they said, "Oh, we would love to have you back!" So he was transferred back as well. So we were fine.

Q: When did you leave Bonn?

JONES: I left Bonn at the very end of January, just after the inauguration of 1993.

Todd was in the Bonn American School in 6th grade and was doing well, with some great friends. Courtney had started in a local German school, and was not too happy yet, although her German was coming along. When I went to Washington, Courtney travelled with me, and immediately started school at Wood Acres in Bethesda – where she had been for a couple of months when she was evacuated from Pakistan in the Gulf War. We stayed with my Dad in Bethesda until we bought a house not far away. Tom and Todd came a few weeks later.

Q: You had talked to Secretary-designate Christopher, so you'd had some contact with him before?

JONES: I had had no contact with him before. I had a call from Marc Grossman, who was the new executive secretary of the State Department, who said that he had recommended me to the new Secretary as executive assistant and would I come back for an interview. And I said, "Yes, I would be glad to come back for an interview." But I had not met Christopher, talked to him, up until then, until that point.

Q: So, first place, you're sitting here in Bonn and all, the U.S. election takes place. What were your thoughts and what were you getting from the Germans and all? Was there anticipation, nervousness, or what, about that?

JONES: It was actually very interesting, the German reaction. I spent a lot of time talking to a lot of Germans, first at the election party that we had in November. Germans had been very nervous about who was going to be the president, because it was so important to their wellbeing, in terms of the division of Germany for instance. But this time around, the attitude was "We're going to be fine, no matter who the new American president's going to be." U.S. policy's been so steady for so long and Germany had been reunified at that point, Berlin was reunified and everything was on the right track, as far as Germany was concerned, vis-à-vis the United States. So they weren't the least bit nervous. There was a considerable amount of anticipation about Clinton. He wasn't particularly well known. People really wanted to understand his point of view.

One of the first things that Clinton announced after his inauguration resulted in the "Don't ask, don't tell" policy.

Q: Could you explain what that was?

JONES: This had to do with gay service members and whether they should be allowed to continue in the U.S. military, should it become known what their sexual orientation was. The Germans were a little bemused by this as an American issue. They couldn't really understand it, were watching all of this, but were nevertheless very interested that Clinton, having the reputation as being anti-military, or not pro-military enough, was just amused and bemused by the discussion in the United States.

It was a discussion in Germany as well, because there were still so many American troops in Germany. So it was an issue in the embassy with the defense attachés office and various other military groups who were based in Germany and at the embassy. The attitude among the American colonels and generals with whom I was dealing was they were not at all pleased with Clinton and with the “Don’t ask, don’t tell” policy. They were prepared to go along with it, obviously, but many of them would say, “Oh, we know perfectly well how many gay soldiers we have. It doesn’t bother us in the least. We don’t want to have to acknowledge this and have a big discussion about it. We want to go along in the idiosyncratic way that it had gone along. We didn’t want it regularized in this odd way.”

Q: Well, then, you came back. Talk about your meeting with Christopher before that, on your preparatory things. You talk to anybody that you knew who dealt with Christopher before, when he’d been Deputy Secretary of State?

JONES: I did. My handicap was that I really hadn’t worked very much in the State Department up until then, so I didn’t know Washington particularly well. But I did have plenty of friends who had either worked with Christopher, particularly with the negotiations through Algeria for the release of the hostages. I contacted friends who’d been in Algeria, Chris Ross is one of them, people who had dealt with him regularly, to see what their view of him was. Universally the view was he is a very, very nice man, very shy. There was nobody who had a different view.

Q: How did your interview go?

JONES: It went well. It was a little bit herky-jerky. I was scheduled to have the interview on either a Thursday or a Friday and his schedule didn’t work, he was called to the White House, something I totally understood. So I was asked to come see him on Saturday, which I did.

The interview was quite short. I could immediately see what people meant when they said he was very shy. He didn’t really seem to know what he wanted to talk to me about. Fortunately I had thought of a few things to ask him about, so that we actually did have quite a good conversation, about the kind of things that he wanted me to do. I asked why it was that he wanted to replace somebody that had been temporarily in the job and thought he was going to have the job. So there were some rather sensitive personnel issues that went along with my being offered the position.

He offered me the position in the course of the interview, which Marc Grossman had told me was very likely to happen. He said I should be prepared to be at the office at six in the morning on Monday, this was Saturday, which I was prepared to do. So that worked fine.

Q: Was the position described to you, either by Christopher or Grossman or anybody else, what it would mean?

JONES: It wasn't particularly well described at all. I knew from the way other people had done the job that the ones that I thought had done it most successfully were the ones who had had a lot of contact with the building. They did so to know what all the issues were and to have a good enough relationship with the Secretary to understand how the papers being prepared by the building were helping or not helping the Secretary do his job. So that was my concept of what I needed to be able to do. I filled out aspects of it as I went along. But in the first instance, the immediate part of the job was to gently let down the person who thought he had the job, who came from the outside, a very young man who came from the National Democratic Institute. Several people had come from NDI. It turned out that the Secretary was not too happy that so many of his immediate staff had come from NDI.

Q: It's a bad idea.

JONES: He told me he wanted to have more people from the Foreign Service and possibly the civil service be in the job, so that they would have a quicker start, would know the building, would know the issues and all that sort of thing. But that was one of the dicey things, to work with the fellow who thought he had the job and find a role for him that was a face-saver for him.

Q: In a way it's dangerous when somebody comes in to lead a complicated bureaucracy to bring basically political appointees in who don't bring much with them outside of loyalty. This isn't the issue in the State Department.

JONES: That's right and he was a very smart man. He didn't stay very long in the end, because he could see that there wasn't much of a role for him, which was true.

The irony of the situation was that I had had a call a couple of weeks earlier from a young officer who had worked with me in Islamabad, Peggy McGuinness. She was in the Ops Center at that point and had called me and said, "Oh, I've just been put forward to work on the Secretary's staff. Somebody's going to call you for a recommendation about my work and I really would like the job. It would be very exciting to work for the new president, the new Secretary of State." I remember saying, "Peggy, I'm delighted to do this for you, absolutely. You know your life is over when you work on the Secretary's staff, your life is completely over." So two weeks later when Marc Grossman had called me, I then called Peggy and said, "Remember what I said about your life being over? Well, I think my life's going to be over, now, too. We're going to be in this together."

So that was very fortunate. Someone I knew well and respected completely, an extremely hard worker, had already started. And so I had a bit of an insight into what was going on, staffing-wise, too.

Q: Did the Secretary bring a secretary or two, sort of an executive secretary, somebody who often is a key figure in doing—

JONES: Well, two things happened. He kept the Secretary's secretary, the person who sat in his office who was the one who organized the schedule, organized the security, organized him to work the meetings with the White House, knew exactly how to get people on the phone for him on the Hill, every foreign minister, that sort of thing, Liz Lineberry. She's an institution in the State Department. She'd worked, at that point, for several secretaries of state. She'd worked for Baker, I've forgotten who all she worked for.

Christopher also brought with him his personal secretary, personal assistant, really, not really a secretary, who sat in the office next to Liz and did his personal work, with his friends, his personal correspondence that really didn't relate to the State Department or foreign policy, and she did that work. And as it developed, one of the things I worked with her on was, because she knew the family very well, when Mrs. Christopher traveled with us, she would organize that schedule and would go with her on her various trips. It didn't happen too often, but that's the kind of thing that she did.

Q: How did you learn who did what to whom and where things went in the Department, because, as you said, you'd spent most of your time abroad and so many of the people who are rising stars in the Department spend most of their time in the Secretariat, they come with that silver spoon in their mouth, practically from the beginning. I'm interviewing Nick Burns now. He had that whole thing. But how about you?

JONES: Well, the biggest asset I brought to the job was that everybody knew that I wasn't a Washington person. So I feel, I believed at the time, I think it was true, that I had an instant connection, the assumption was that I wasn't just one of those Seventh Floor staffers, that I was somebody like them that they really could talk to. It was the same in the bureaus and in a lot of the embassies, too, because occasionally there'd be a DCM or ambassador who'd need to speak to the Secretary about something and I was the avenue to do that.

I had several huge assets. First of all, Liz Lineberry knew how important it was that she keep me informed of everything that was going on, so that I could immediately task things to the building ahead of formal taskings. For example, she would know the Secretary was probably going to be going to a meeting on X issue and I would call the desks ahead and say, "Okay, Balkans principals committee coming up, tasking coming I don't know when, but get ready." So Liz was invaluable to me that way.

The other big asset I had was Marc Grossman, who was the executive secretary. I sat down with him right away and with his deputy exec secs, to make sure I understood how they interacted with each other and how they interacted with the line, with S/S/S, the tasking mechanism and the paper producers, to make sure I understood what they were requiring of the desks in a formal tasking, so that I would know, did I want to change it, what sort of time line were they working on, how could I make sure that I understood enough about our own bureaucracy on the Seventh Floor to make it fit what Secretary Christopher needed and wanted.

It was a constant conversation. Marc and I had known each other for a hundred years, so I could constantly have a conversation with him about how to make things work better. One of the things that Marc and I collaborated on very early was getting Secretary Christopher to have staff meetings. He had staff meetings three days a week, I believe it was, with the under secretaries.

Q: Who was the Under Secretary? Wharton, wasn't it?

JONES: Cliff Wharton was the Deputy Secretary. So it was with Cliff Wharton. Then the under secretaries were: Peter Tarnoff was the Under Secretary for Political Affairs; Lynn Davis was the Under Secretary, T, for nonproliferation, political/military, et cetera; Brian Atwood started out as the Under Secretary for Management, but he quickly then was appointed to be director of USAID and Dick Moose became Under Secretary for Management; Tim Wirth was Under Secretary for Global Issues; Joan Spero was Economic Under Secretary.

The Secretary would meet with them three days a week and it would be an interesting discussion, but Marc and I quickly realized that nobody took ownership of any of the issues and the conversation was kind of all over the map. So at Marc's suggestion we did an agenda for every single one of them. He and I would just do it up, because we knew the issues that were coming up and needed to be addressed. And then we were the only non-under secretaries, non-political appointees, in these meetings and we would insert ourselves and say, "That's been a very good discussion. Lynn Davis, will you take charge of this issue, or Peter, we are assuming that you, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, you're going to work that with the geographic bureaus?" and make sure issues were followed up on.

Q: This often is a kind of a problem. I'm told that the Clinton White House was very much this way, too, lots of discussion.

JONES: Well, they were all so used to being in think tanks. The discussions reminded me of a think tank discussion, to the point that I would actually go to them and say, "That was a good think tank discussion. Okay, where's the action here?" The person who would occasionally join those meetings, Madeleine Albright, who was the ambassador to the UN at the time and, interestingly enough, there were plenty of times where she would say, "This has been an interesting discussion. I need instructions. What do you want me to do? This is nice, but it doesn't get me very far." So I found her a good inspiration, really, to push for closure and decisions on "Who's in charge?"

Q: How long did you do this?

JONES: 18 months.

Q: Did you find there was a good learning curve, not on your part but on the part of the principals?

JONES: Yes. It didn't take long for especially people like Lynn Davis and Joan Spero to really take hold and be in charge of their areas without any question. The interesting thing to me were the issues that cropped up immediately were crisis issues, the Balkans being one of the main ones. Haiti was another really bad one. Lebanon got to be pretty bad pretty quickly. The unfortunate thing, to my mind, is that Peter Tarnoff, the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, wasn't very good at taking charge of his issues. So we had a lot of turmoil and indecision and spinning of wheels on the Balkans issue for quite a long time.

I should mention Tom Donilon. Tom Donilon was called the chief of staff for Secretary Christopher. It was the first time a secretary of state had had anyone labeled the chief of staff. He sat in the office behind the Secretary's and he and I collaborated quite a bit. It was a little frustrating for me, because I got there so early, so I had a lot of things going with Secretary Christopher very early in the morning. My first meeting with him was at quarter to seven every morning, to go through action memos and appointment requests, all that kind of thing. Donilon tended to focus on the public affairs side of Secretary Christopher's schedule, which I quickly realized I needed to collaborate with him on a little bit more. For instance, the first day I was there, that first Monday, I was told that the Secretary meant to have a press conference about the new strategy on the Balkans.

I thought that was important, because of the terrible ethnic cleansing, mass rapes, that kind of thing. So I called Janet Bogue, now working on the Balkans at the time, and said, "Gee, you didn't tell me over the weekend that we have a brand new Balkans policy. What's the new Balkans policy?" They said, "We have no idea. We haven't been working on a new policy. We've been trying to get some attention to Balkans policy." And unfortunately, the Secretary went out and said we have a new Balkans policy, but there actually wasn't a new Balkans policy, he was just announcing a new Balkans policy.

That happened on Haiti as well. That's when I realized I needed to really get with Donilon early and say, "Okay, I know there's a problem with Haiti, I know there's a problem with the Balkans, I know there's a problem with Somalia, Lebanon. Let's sit down, let's have a brainstorming session with the desks, with the Pentagon. Let me task the bureaus to come up with the ideas, so that we've got a policy before we have the Secretary going out to announce things, rather than playing catch-up all the time." Which only sort of worked.

Q: I don't like to get into the gender situation, but what you said rings a little bell with me. In your experience, particularly this experience, you mentioned Madeleine Albright. There's a common male perception that women talk a lot but they don't do much. But from what I've gathered, women, for the most part, there seems to be more of a "What are we going to do?" as opposed to talking about something. Am I way off base?

JONES: You're not. That was certainly my perception and I didn't come to it until I was having a conversation with my father, who was a retired Foreign Service Officer at the time. I was telling him how great Joan Spero was as Under Secretary; Lynn Davis, very

decisive; Wendy Sherman, who was assistant secretary for congressional affairs, very decisive, had a plan, knew to look ahead, look around corners. And I named a few other people that I thought were particularly good in the State Department and my father said, “Beth, that’s very interesting. You’ve named only women.” I said, “Oh, yes, as a matter of fact I have.” I hadn’t thought about it exactly in those terms but that was the situation. Now whether you could generalize to all women from that, or just the women in the Clinton Administration at that point—

Q: I think we’re talking about a highly selective group of people who have gone up and I think there is more of a, I don’t know whether it’s caution or what happens, but, anyway, there seems to be something there.

JONES: It was certainly the case with that group of people, there’s no question about that. And it perpetuated itself. The Deputy Secretary of State was a bit of a fish out of water.

Q: This was Cliff Wharton?

JONES: This was Cliff Wharton. Secretary Christopher really wanted him to take hold on the budget side, which is traditionally the task of the deputy secretary. He wanted him to really understand and make decisions on budget, especially when there were budget fights and that kind of thing. He was very reluctant to do that, to adjudicate the natural battles between the various departments and agencies in the State Department. So there were a lot of the kinds of things that Marc and I would try to sort out between ourselves and try to figure out how else we might get some of these decisions made.

Q: Well, is there something, we’re talking about the State bureaucracy, but maybe other bureaucracies, you have people who are reluctant at the top to seize initiatives, control and all, that the underlings who are doing this say, “To hell with this! Let’s do it!” In other words, did you feel you were taking over some of the functions that were maybe a little over your pay grade?

JONES: I didn’t, only because I did my best to have conversations with each of the people who would otherwise have been involved, including the Secretary of State, to say, “It would be a good idea if we could have a plan on X or Y” and I’d get an okay from various of these people, who’d say, “Yeah, go ahead.” I didn’t think it was worthwhile, in the end, to go full steam ahead without having a little bit of backing or at least having the various bosses understand. It would have been awful for the rest of the building.

Let’s say I had tasked a big paper on NATO enlargement without having a conversation with Lynn Davis and Strobe Talbott, who were the ones having big controversial discussions about it. It would have wasted a lot of people’s time if I had tasked the building to do a big set of papers on this and not have the buy-in of either of those that this needed to be done.

So that was a lot of what I tried to do is to have these kinds of conversations with people. That's the part that I liked about the job. The job is otherwise not always everyone's cup of tea, because it is a lot of reviewing papers. You don't do a lot of your work, what I would call my own work. But I felt that I was helping the Secretary and the building by staying in touch with them on a regular basis. So even though I didn't know the East Asia Pacific really at all, I got to know them. I would call up the principal deputy assistant secretary, the assistant secretary, on a regular basis: "Gee, I haven't heard from you guys. Just give me a rundown on what's going on with various issues."

Lynn Pascoe was the one I tried to talk to. I didn't know him at all before. If I thought things were bubbling on China but I didn't really know whether was it something that was going to come to the Secretary, I would call up the head of the China desk, the country director, and say, "Give me a rundown on what you guys are working on and do you see things bubbling up? Are you going to put forward that the Secretary should travel there? What are you guys thinking about?"

And I'd do it around the building and not every day, obviously. But if I hadn't heard from the South American people for a while, I would ask "What's going on with you guys?"

And then, the other part of it is, if I knew the Secretary had a Hill hearing coming up or Wendy Sherman from Congressional Relations sat down with me to say, "Okay, there are whole bunch of hearings coming up," I'd alert all these guys around the building, saying, "Okay, you guys are going to get a tasker in a couple of weeks, but why don't you start thinking with your guys now about, are there some initiatives you want to be thinking about here? Are there some things you want to have bubble up? Do you want to have some policy coordinating committee meetings with your guys around Washington on" whatever the issue was "so that you're ready for when the Secretary is going to do" whatever he was going to do on this issue or that issue. So, for me, that was the fun of the job, was to really work with the building in that way.

Q: We'll come to some issues in a minute, but let's talk about the White House. This is a brand new White House and I'm told by some people coming out of particularly the early part of the Clinton Administration, Clinton was great in that he would listen to things and all that, but the problem was whoever talked to him last seemed to spur him on. Somebody said, "It resembled a nice, friendly fraternity house." Were you seeing this, because this is early days?

JONES: To a degree. The way the White House manifested itself to us at the State Department was the very strong interest that Tony Lake, the national security advisor and Sandy Berger, the deputy national security advisor, had about Haiti. So there would be fairly regular meetings where sometimes both of them would come over and meet with Secretary Christopher with a few people to hash out what are we going to do about Aristide. Then there'd be discussion about what was Aristide's mental state, maybe it wasn't so great, but he was our guy and we have to figure out what to do with him. So it was idiosyncratic that way. I would get involved on the Haiti issue or on Northern Ireland. Tony Lake was very involved in Northern Ireland.

The other thing that was interesting was that Tony Lake and Secretary Christopher had a very good personal relationship. They were on the phone with each other all the time about something they read in the intelligence and they'd have a little conversation back and forth. There was also Tom Donilon would take charge of this, who was going to appear on the talk shows on Sunday: "Tony Lake had been on far too many of them, it's time for Secretary Christopher -- he should be the one to appear in public on this." There was that back and forth.

The other very clear message, specific message, we had from the White House was that the President of the United States of America really didn't want to get bogged down in foreign policy. The perception, the very clear perception, of the Clinton White House in those early months was that one of the main reasons George Bush had lost was because he was too involved in foreign policy.

So we had an impossible time getting the White House to agree to meetings with foreign leaders, impossible. It was completely not going to happen, we were told, in no uncertain terms, that the president would ever host a black tie dinner for a foreign leader, just forget about it. State dinners, forget about it. Foreign trips, forget about it. So it was a real uphill climb. That was one of the most anguished phone calls I would have from our various ambassadors around the world, U.S. ambassadors, saying, "Oh, so and so really needs" this kind of a visit or that kind of a visit and I'd just say, "It's just not going to happen."

Q: At the White House, you have people who were familiar with how things work. This is all very cute to say, "It's the economy, stupid" and don't worry about foreign policy, but at the same time it doesn't go away and anybody who's been in Washington for a while knows foreign policy eventually takes over.

JONES: Well, of course.

Q: Weren't there, Lake or Berger or others saying, "Let's—

JONES: Yes, absolutely.

Q: "put our foot in this water?"

JONES: My perception was that neither Lake nor Berger was prepared to buck the attitude about meetings with foreign leaders and dinners with foreign leaders and even travel. They just weren't prepared in that first year to push hard on that.

However, the Balkans, Haiti, Somalia, that all took over the administration very, very quickly, because of U.S. inaction and because of the expectation that there should be more action. And because Secretary Christopher had gone out in public, to the press and said "This administration has a new Balkans policy," "This administration has a new Haiti policy," it wasn't long before they said "What is it? Where is it?" And that led to

the lift and strike policy, lift the sanctions against arms sales to the countries in the Balkans who were being hammered by the Serbs.

Q: Particularly the Bosnians.

JONES: Particularly the Bosnians.

Q: But also the Croatians.

JONES: You're right, the Croatians, to a lesser degree, because they had some support from Germany, that they didn't need quite so much from us. But, absolutely, Bosnia was where really horrific things were happening to the population at the hands of the Serbs. So it was in early May that the policy group at the NSC decided on what we called "lift and strike": lift the sanctions and get agreement among the senior NATO members for an air strike in Serbia, to end the kind of depredations and battling that was going on.

It was not the first trip Christopher went on, the first trip was to the Middle East, that was obviously a big push on the part of the administration. But the lift and strike trip went to the UK, Germany, France and Brussels. Secretary Christopher had very strong talking points to push the lift and strike policy, but my perception was he was quite taken aback by the pushback he had from especially the British and the French on the policy. They didn't want anything to do with it. They didn't want to get involved in the Balkans. They didn't want to have the lift and strike policy. Unfortunately, poor Secretary Christopher said, "Oh, okay." His British counterpart said to him later, months later, "We were very surprised that you just said okay." He said, "The role of the U.S. is to push hard for its policies. The role of London and some of the others is to complain about it. And the role of the U.S. is to say, 'We're doing it anyway, get on board.' But then we say okay." It was just Foreign Minister Kinkel in Germany who was supportive of, "Yes, we've got to do something about this."

So it was an awfully slow start for the administration in foreign policy and the same thing on Haiti, really difficult trying to figure out what to do with Aristide and not very aggressive in terms of the military. And, of course, on Somalia we also know what happened.

So Secretary Christopher had some very bad press at the beginning of the administration for inaction, not pushing hard enough and that kind of thing. He wasn't helped by the Secretary of Defense, who was considered a bit too—

Q: This is Les Aspin.

JONES: Les Aspin, who was way too laid back about some of these very tough issues and then was forced to resign over the way that Somalia had gone.

Q: Well, let's first talk about Haiti and then we'll move to the other issues. What were you getting about Haiti? I've heard there were great supporters of Aristide, he was fine

and other ones are saying, "This guy is both mentally unstable and dangerous, he has killers on his payroll."

JONES: Well, at the time Aristide was in the U.S., he hadn't been able to go back to Haiti, as I remember all of this. And in discussions, we had perfectly good intelligence about Aristide's mental state, his behavior. There wasn't any question among the top group that he had a difficult personality issue and maybe some instability, mental instability, issues. But, as several US officials said in these meetings, "He's ours. He may be a little crazy, but he's our crazy guy and so we've got to pursue this and find a way to get him back in" and to do it sooner rather than later, which then happened.

Dennis Ross was so good at being what was called then the pile driver on the Middle East, really pushing, going out and being the face and the voice and the negotiator, really, for the administration. Secretary Christopher took that as a good model. He wanted a "pile driver" on Haiti and somebody like that on Somalia. And so that became one of the action items when an issue became difficult, "Oh, well, we have to appoint somebody to be the special negotiator on" whatever it was. And for Somalia it was Bob Oakley, he was appointed to that.

Q: Christopher, it has been the complaint that he was far too much the lawyer/promoter, extremely well qualified, tremendous reputation as a good lawyer, reaching common ground and this is not necessarily a good attribute for a secretary of state.

JONES: That's right and he recognized this, too. The practice had been for me to give him homework, give him a stack of documents to take home with him to read and go through and mark up and make his decisions on when he went home. We did this for about maybe a month. But I could see that he was just taking way too much time on some of these *pro forma* documents like the bilateral investment treaties, which he was asked to approve for signature. They were all the same. And he finally said, "Beth, I'm too much of a lawyer. Don't give me these documents."

So we made a deal, as follows: I said, "Look, I know the building well enough and I know who to trust in the building," which was a lot of people. "Let me do more work on these papers for you and make sure I know the issue and make a recommendation to you every morning in our 6:45 meeting about these various issues. If I think it's something you need to read, I'm going to give it to you for homework. But if it's like a bilateral investment treaty or it is a scheduling request, you and I are going to have a meeting and we're going to go through these documents one by one very quickly and I'm going to explain to you what the issues are and you're going to say yes or no and you're going to initial it right then."

And that's what we did. That was the arrangement we made. It worked much better and the documents came out much more quickly. The building was much happier, because things went very, very quickly.

The one area where we had to have a further conversation was on appointments. He really, really was not eager to see so many foreign ministers. Of course, the entire world wanted to come and meet the new secretary of state. He found it overwhelming to spend so much time preparing for all of these meetings. So we made an agreement, after I talked to Marc Grossman about it for ideas and a few other friends: what's the balance here that I should go for? And we made an agreement that I would ask him, I'd sort out all the appointment requests and I would recommend that he meet with one foreign minister a day, only one, so five a week and he could prepare for each of those.

We'd keep the meetings to twenty minutes, plus a little photo op, so a half hour was all that I would ask of his physical presence with each foreign minister. On the prep work, I would go through with him orally the talking points, so he shouldn't try to memorize them or he shouldn't spend all evening on them. I would do a little brief with him, with the desk officer, with the under secretary, whoever was the appropriate person for the meeting with whoever the foreign minister was.

He at first wanted a lot of the ministers to meet with his deputy, Cliff Wharton. I said, "They're just going to cancel their trip. Their politics requires that they meet with you, Mr. Secretary. They cannot meet with the Deputy Secretary. That's just too much of a face loser for them." So that's when we made the agreement that it would be one a day. But we also made a deal that if there was a crisis and a foreign minister was coming, on top of somebody who had been scheduled for a while, that we wouldn't cancel the one who'd been scheduled, that there would be times when he'd have to meet with two or three a day, depending on what the circumstances were.

And he stuck with the deal, he was very good about it.

Q: Did you find that he developed particularly close relations with the British foreign secretary, or the German or the French? You're beginning to laugh and smile as I say that.

JONES: The reason I did is because that was an issue that several of us identified right away, that he was perfectly prepared to meet with his various counterparts on the deal basis that I came up with. But on trips or when they came to Washington they wanted to have meals with him and he would always say no, he didn't want to spend his evenings that way, didn't want to spend lunches that way.

Pamela Harriman was the one I consulted on this. She had just been named ambassador to France. She was one of the most serious of all the ambassadors that I dealt with. I really appreciated her.

Q: Everybody who worked with her was terribly impressed.

JONES: I loved working with her. She was so serious and so focused.

The relationship with Europe and his European counterparts was not going well, partly because of the Balkans, partly because of Haiti, a lot of issues and partly because he just didn't want to meet with anybody, particularly. On one of his trips to Europe, in the summer of '93, I don't know if it was his idea or mine, but in any case, we agreed that he should meet with, the senior U.S. ambassadors in Europe, in Brussels, because he wanted to have their ideas and go through with them what he should change, what were the issues, how should he change, how should the U.S. change, what was going on with the problem of Europe. He met with the ambassador to the UK, Ray Seitz, the ambassador to Germany, Dick Holbrooke, the ambassador to Rome, Reggie Bartholomew, Pamela Harriman as the ambassador to France, Stu Eisenstat, who was the ambassador to the EU and maybe one other, but it was the real top ones. Ray Seitz was the only career person in that group.

They had asked me ahead of time, "What should we be prepared for?" I gave them really quite a list, in writing, also, "These are the questions, these are the issues. Make a little presentation, but be prepared for discussion." The Secretary turned first to Pamela Harriman: "You're the lady in the room." And she said, "Mr. Secretary, you wonder why you have difficulty with your colleagues, why the U.S. has a bad reputation. You need to spend more time with your colleagues. I know you don't like dinners, but you have to do dinners."

And she said, "I know everybody in the room's going to laugh because it's coming from me, the Washington hostess, but I promise you that I know how to do this in a way that will not be painful, doesn't have to be a huge room full of people, it can be four people around the table, it can be six people around the table, however you want to do it. But you cannot do diplomacy by telephone all the time. You can do diplomacy by telephone once you have a personal relationship with these people, where they feel that they know you and trust you, because now they don't trust you, they don't trust the U.S. They don't know what we're talking about. And I can't do it by myself."

And everybody in the room was nodding, yes, yes, yes, Pamela, thank you for saying this. And from then on Secretary Christopher would, if it was well controlled and well organized, he would do meals with the foreign minister colleagues he thought he needed to know better.

And others had similar kinds of things to recommend, but it was all along the lines of "Yes, you speak for the United States, but you're also a person and these are also people. They have to know you and understand you and trust you if they're going to take a phone call from you and have you tell them that you really need them to do something that they really don't want to do, or that their parliaments won't let them do, or that their prime ministers don't want to do. You've got to give them a reason to trust you and to trust that the U.S. is going to stick with whatever it is that you're proposing."

Q: Speaking of relationships, how would you describe, during this period, the relationship between Christopher and Clinton, because they weren't old buddies?

JONES: They weren't old buddies, they didn't pretend to be old buddies. The Secretary would occasionally see the president, it was always with Tony Lake, as I remember. The Secretary, my impression was, didn't really feel he needed to have that much of a personal relationship with the president. He trusted Tony, he trusted Sandy. He would sit down with the president to go through issues with him, that wasn't a problem. But he didn't feel the need to promote himself with the president.

It all seemed appropriate. It wasn't that he was shirking in any way. But he thought he could do what he needed to do.

Q: There would be a difference between dealing with George H.W. Bush and his secretary of state, because George H.W. Bush knew the world and you just couldn't, if you're secretary of state, you were going to the font of wisdom, almost. With Clinton, frankly, particularly at this point, you weren't. So you weren't getting that much from him.

JONES: No, but my perception was as President Clinton became more comfortable with the idea that he should be more involved in foreign policy and began doing some foreign trips. He very quickly could see how much he liked it and how good he was at it. And that opened up the field for Secretary Christopher to have more of a say in what he should do and where he should go and how he should say it, although, like I say, he and Tony trusted each other quite a bit.

One of the interesting things was that, of course, he'd worked for President Carter, he'd been the deputy secretary of state in those days. President Carter felt that he should have quite a big role in the Clinton Administration in dictating to the new president how he should behave in foreign policy. This was, I think I'm not oversaying it by saying it was very much resented by the Clinton White House, to the point that Secretary Christopher was basically tasked with "Carter duty." He was the one who was to keep Carter off Clinton's back and he did, he did the best he could. There were plenty of times where I was talking to President Carter himself or one of his senior people, to either pave the way or calm things down or whatever it may be, whether it was Haiti or Somalia or the Middle East. Whatever the issues were, I would have the conversations, or I'd get Joan Spero or Lynn Davis or one of the others to help me out, to have conversations with Atlanta.

Q: How about with Congress, because you did have Jesse Helms sitting there?

JONES: Yes, congressional issues were handled by Wendy Sherman and Tom Donilon together. Wendy had that portfolio. Tom had a lot of say in how things went.

Jesse Helms was very difficult on a variety of issues, but I honestly didn't spend that much time on congressional issues, other than to prepare the Secretary for hearings. The one that I remember in particular was the Somalia hearing, where he appeared with Les Aspin. We had prepared Secretary Christopher to within an inch of his life, he had a big

briefing book, we'd had a murder board with him, we had talked him through all the issues

Q: You might explain what a murder board is.

JONES: A murder board was a hearing prep meeting. We invited the people who who knew a lot about the issues, in this case it would have been a couple of the under secretaries, Peter Tarnoff and the assistant secretary responsible for the region, AF, African affairs, to pretend that they were obstreperous members of Congress, to play the role of Jesse Helms, to play the role of anybody else who was going to be very, very tough with him. Then the Secretary would practice his answers.

One of the things that was very difficult for Les Aspin was that Secretary Christopher had a very fat briefing book on the table in front of him. He didn't refer to it, which is appropriate, you don't really want to be leafing through the briefing book, but he was there with a fat briefing book. Les Aspin was there with an envelope, on the back of which he'd written a couple of notes, literally. The members of Congress, seeing the contrast, were highly incensed that Secretary Aspin thought so little of them that he didn't even bother to prepare, which was so visually obvious to them. So that didn't help poor Les Aspin, either.

Q: Let's finish up with Haiti. Haiti, of course, we might explain, briefly, what the situation was in Haiti which we were having to deal with and then what was the reaction that you were getting as we dealt with it?

JONES: The situation in Haiti, as I remember it, was, it was pretty much war in the streets, the anti-Aristide and the pro-Aristide people. The question was, would there be elections. If Aristide was elected, would he be permitted to come back? The international community pushed for elections. Long story short, Aristide won and we and the international community, with UN backing, as I remember it we had a UN Security Council resolution for Aristide to return.

He was returned, there was a U.S. military, naval force associated with that, very reluctantly in the administration, but, nevertheless, it was agreed that it would be done that way. The question then became how to keep Aristide safe, how to keep his family safe, how to train the police so that the police could take over so that the thugs in the street were no longer in charge. It worked to a degree, that was one whole set of issues.

The other whole set of issues were the boat people. Haitians were landing in droves in Florida and all over the Gulf coast and the question was what to do with them and how to take care of them, how to make sure we knew who was coming in, in case there were too many criminals and unfortunately, they ended up in what looked like concentration camps in various parts of Florida. I think we ended up with them in Guantanamo, too. It was a big issue for the consular affairs people, for Mary Ryan, who was the assistant secretary at the time, as well as Janet Reno at Justice, the Attorney General, as to how to

manage this whole issue, adjudicating all of these refugee cases and asylum cases of the Haitian refugees.

Q: Well then we had the Somali issue, where at the very end of his administration President Bush had inserted troops in to relieve the appalling situation in Somalia as a humanitarian thing, but it began to morph into a change of government. How did we feel about that, at first?

JONES: Somalia was considered an extremely difficult humanitarian issue. The Clinton Administration at the beginning, as I remember it, wanted to keep it to the level of a humanitarian issue, as opposed to anything more than that. The administration wasn't too happy about the number of American troops there, and was inclined to restrict the activities of the troops, the mission of the troops, until the now famous incident in which it was decided to go after the rebel leader.

Q: It was known later as "mission creep."

JONES: Exactly, the whole discussion of mission creep, what should be done, et cetera. There was a decision to go after—

Q: A clan leader.

JONES: Which resulted in what we now know as the whole "Blackhawk Down" incident. It was absolutely horrifying to see the footage of the downed pilot being dragged through the streets of Somalia, so many killed, a few captured.

It was at that point that this hearing took place that I mentioned earlier over the decision what should the U.S. do, how do you handle the humanitarian crisis, what do you do about U.S. troops in there. The decision was made basically to pull them out and not participate in any really effective way in the military situation that was developing and at the same time to put Ambassador Bob Oakley in as the special envoy to try to negotiate with these guys and get the UN to be more involved. Kofi Annan I believe was in charge of the peacekeeping kinds of issues. Madeleine Albright was very involved as the ambassador to the UN.

When Secretary Christopher came back from a White House meeting at which Oakley had been selected to lead a Somalia effort, he told me with considerable upset that he was concerned that Oakley would think he should report only to the White House, when Christopher was adamant that Oakley report through him. I told him I knew Oakley quite well and would have a word with him, which seemed to surprise Christopher. In any case, I called Bob, explained that he would need help from the Africa Bureau, which we would provide. I also said that it was critical that Secretary Christopher be kept in the loop on everything Bob was doing in Somalia, either through AF or through me. Bob agreed readily, and kept his promise.

Q: Well this is still early days, but the Clinton Administration, which came in wanting to stay out of foreign affairs, they got dragged into something which was not their doing, Bush I had inserted the troops and how do you get them out? And after it turned sour, did you get a feeling that the White House and others were saying, "Never again!" because this had a lot of effect later on in Rwanda, on Bosnia and all, "Let's just stay out of this whole thing?"

JONES: Well, in fairness, it wasn't just the White House that was concerned about this. The U.S. military was also in all of the National Security Council meetings saying the military should be used for military purposes, when there is a military mission and the military mission must be clear, it can't be open ended and political for the military to be used effectively. The military should be used for military purposes when there is a political plan and somebody working the plan.

And he, Colin Powell, was very effective, from my perspective, in pushing that through in the early part of the Clinton Administration. He was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs at least until August, during the first part of the Clinton Administration, with a tremendous amount of respect and a very big say in the Balkans issue and the Somalia issue and the Haiti issue, in terms of the U.S. military involvement in it.

Q: Were you there when Rwanda blew up?

JONES: I was. It had started to blow up. It was one of the conversations that I had regularly with the African affairs people. Prudence Bushnell was the deputy assistant secretary who was mostly responsible for that region and spent a lot of time on it. George Moose was the assistant secretary.

There was a lot of discussion and effort on the diplomacy side of this, how to talk to all the right people involved in Rwanda, if possible, how to get the Europeans more engaged in this kind of thing, all of those kinds of conversations. I remember having countless conversations with Pru Bushnell and George Moose about how to pursue it, but the atmosphere, just as you point out, the atmosphere was such that there was not going to be a proposal that U.S. troops be involved in this.

Q: We move more to your area of knowledge and that's the Balkans.

JONES: I didn't know anything about the Balkans at the time. I'd never been involved in the Balkans, at that point.

Q: I spent nine years, including Greece, in the Balkans. It's a little hard to understand who did what in 1458 or something like that or the line of demarcation of 800. What was the feeling while you were there about the Balkans?

JONES: The issue of the Balkans was very, very fraught in the building, because there had been the sense at the end of the Bush Administration that the U.S. hadn't done nearly enough, although it could have, to stop the ethnic cleansing, even to the point that there

were some people saying that it was virtual genocide what the Serbs were doing in various parts of the Balkans, particularly in Bosnia.

There was quite a bit of hope that the new administration, it had been a campaign issue, that the new administration would do something more. American values would come to the fore and the kind of awful things that were going on in this edge of Europe would not be permitted to continue.

When it became clear, by April, that the new administration really wasn't inclined to do anything at all in the Balkans, that also this "new policy" had been announced at the end of January but there was nothing behind it. This was when a group of Foreign Service Officers in the State Department sent a personal, private, classified letter to the Secretary of State outlining their severe disappointment with policy so far and making suggestions for the role that they felt that the U.S. should play in order to carry out the values of the United States.

This letter I knew about, because I knew a lot of people on the Balkans desk at that point. They brought it to me. It was not a dissent channel letter. It was a personal letter to the Secretary. The reason they did it that way was that they felt that their bosses in EUR, the European bureau, had toned down, changed, eliminated their information going to the Seventh Floor about how bad things were for people in the Balkans.

So I took the letter in to the Secretary, explained first of all that I knew a lot of these people, that these were serious people, that they would not do something like this frivolously at all. He read the letter and asked to meet with them. He said he would want to meet with them. I conveyed that back and he had a very good meeting with what people now know as the Bosnia Twelve, a good meeting in the sense that there was a good exchange, he listened, they felt that they'd been listened to, it was the kind of thing that should be done that way.

The thing that was very unfortunate about the whole Bosnia Twelve business is that somehow the letter leaked to the press. It was never the intention of the twelve signers that it would go to the press. To this day the ones that I know don't know how it got to the press. I don't know how it got to the press. But it was a very big issue for a few days. It was on the front page of the New York Times and there was not a lot of discussion, but there was some discussion on the Seventh Floor. What to do, what to do?

Secretary Christopher was quite adamant: these people are professionals, they came to me, they didn't go public, I don't know how it got to the press, but the issue is, number one, they're not going to be punished; number two, I've already met with them, I've listened to them, I can't tell you that we're going to change our policy, but I appreciate the strength of their point of view and we'll keep working on this. Obviously, this is an issue.

The fact that this happened was not a feather in the cap of the assistant secretary for European affairs or the head of the Balkans desk, the country director, who were the

problem. Several of the people moved on to other jobs. They just had had it with this whole policy and with the way they were treated. They were treated badly, in the sense that they didn't get enough help, they were working ninety million hours a day. But the interesting thing is one of the people who was working on the Balkans desk, her new job was working for the Secretary as a speechwriter.

Q: Who was that?

JONES: Janet Bogue, whom you know well. But that gave further evidence, it was a signal in the building, that not only was the Secretary not going to punish people but they weren't blackballed, either, in any way. Here was Janet, who's a fabulous writer, known to be a fabulous writer, working in the Secretary's office as a speechwriter.

That was just to say that what happened was one particular incident in the Balkans. Finally we went into the lift and strike policy. It didn't work quite so well, but we pushed into a better policy on the Balkans, eventually.

Q: Looking at how this was dealt with, someone I've interviewed, who was consul general in Zagreb and then chargé, very bitter, because he was getting instructions essentially to find more Croatians raping Serbian women. In other words, he had the feeling, I'm not quite sure exactly when but it was early on, of trying to get a moral equivalency, a plague on both houses.

JONES: Oh, my lord! As the excuse for the U.S. to stay out?

Q: The Serbs were basically in control. Sure, the Croatians weren't nice people, but it was about maybe ten to one. Very bitter.

I'm wondering, was some of this generated by the assistant secretary for European affairs? Were they trying to reflect "Let's not get involved here." There was an awful lot of this equivalency business.

JONES: My perception at the time was that the assistant secretary for Europe, who was a political appointee, was entirely over his head. He also had, to my mind, a very strange idea of what his job was. He thought his job was to try to suss out what the president wanted and what the Secretary wanted and do that and send papers forward that mirrored what he thought they wanted to hear, rather than for him to give good advice, give good policy advice. He was very specific and explicit that he would hear what they thought the policy should be and he would carry it out without question and without taking responsibility for assuring that the policy was a good policy.

He didn't stay very long, as a result.

Q: Who was that?

JONES: Steve Oxman. He really didn't understand his job at all. I spent quite a bit of time, therefore, with the people in the European bureau working up ideas on what to do about Bosnia and what to do about a variety of NATO enlargement, all of these issues that were roiling around in Europe, because he didn't understand his job. The bureau would send papers, his deputies would sign papers that were a little bit more appropriate, except on the Balkans.

But he would see a speech that he liked and he would send it to me, he had underlined certain parts and written little comments on it. And I finally called him and said, "You're not the Secretary's staff assistant. We have people here who are junior officers, if there's a speech that we think the Secretary should see that could do that. I'm looking to you for policy guidance."

He had been a staff assistant to Christopher when Christopher was deputy secretary, so he continued to think that was his job. It was a very sad situation, actually.

Q: It would be, because it did have tragic consequences.

JONES: It had tragic consequences, it was terrible for the bureau. When we would be in Europe briefing, it was embarrassing for him. He didn't know what to do. Secretary Christopher would turn to him and say, "Steve, what do you think about this and this?" and he really wouldn't have anything to say.

The first time that happened, after that I would go to him and say, "Steve, the Secretary's going to turn to you and ask you what you think. Your bureau has sent papers forward suggesting that he use these five themes in the meetings he's going to have today. This is what you need to tell him."

Q: It does, again, point out to readers of this thing how at a certain point the professional staff learns how to bypass you might say inept leadership. There are other times when the professional staff may just be on a different policy tack than the leadership and that's up to the leadership to exert its control. But when you have a leadership or at least a sub-leadership that's not doing its job, then the professionals start leading.

JONES: As I mentioned earlier, I was very fortunate to have so many good ambassadors in Europe whom I could rely on. I mentioned earlier that Ray Seitz was the only career officer, that's wrong. Reggie Bartholomew obviously was also career. And I would regularly, as things happened here, whether or not it had something to do with Rome or the EU or London, I'd call these guys up and say, "Okay, Ray, what do you think? We've got this going. What are your ideas on it?" They'd all been around longer than I had. Let's see what we can come up with.

Q: I'll come to the Middle East, sometimes we have a problem in the Middle East. It doesn't happen very often. But what about Asia? Was there anything, now, with China, Japan, during the time you were there?

JONES: Yes, the very big issue with China was human rights. The new administration had made China's human rights a very big issue in the campaign and it made most favored nation treatment for China a very big issue in the campaign. So that was a big issue in the building with the new people and with the career people.

Secretary Christopher went to China during the time I worked for him. I remember a particularly difficult set of conversations, because it was very, very important that a particular political prisoner be released, as far as the U.S. human rights community was concerned and as far as President Clinton was concerned. Secretary Christopher was meant to put pressure on the Chinese to get this guy released.

Stapleton Roy was the U.S. ambassador to China, none better, he was really, really good. When we arrived in Beijing and had our little briefing with the ambassador and his top team, Secretary Christopher and Tom Donilon said, "So, are we going to get this guy released?"

And Stape said, "I don't know. It depends on what we hear tomorrow. It depends on how they react to what you have to say, Mr. Secretary. Let's talk through some of the themes. Here are I believe some of the ways to argue the case and we'll see how it turns out."

Long story short, the next day, they had all the meetings and the fellow was not released. So we left China, Secretary Christopher left China, without getting the one accomplishment, the one plus, that we'd gone there to get.

Tom Donilon was livid with fury and on the plane on the way to Vladivostok to meet the Russians. He wanted to get Stape Roy fired. He said it was absolutely inexcusable that we didn't know ahead of time that they weren't going to release him. He was really, really angry. I remember sitting him down and saying, "Tom, one of the things about foreign policy and one of the reasons we have such professionals working on these issues is that we actually don't know ahead of time what's going to happen. That's why you have experts, so we can judge, on a moment's notice, what might happen and tack and weave and make the arguments and have the conversations and do the follow-up, to see if there isn't some way that these kinds of things can be pushed along. Secretary Christopher probably pushed it along a good bit on this trip. But consider this, the Chinese might want to give this to Clinton, not to the Secretary of State. They might think that their face saving mechanisms and culture requires this. We've made it clear that this is a very big deal to us. To a degree, we upped the ante by making it such a big deal so they're thinking, 'We're going to give this to Clinton.' So maybe that should be the next step. Let's talk with Stape"

"I don't trust Stape."

"No, no, we'll talk to Stape, we'll talk to the assistant secretary," who was Winston Lord, "to see if we can't set this up so that this could be a big benefit for Clinton when he goes."

“He shouldn’t go without a guarantee.”

Anyway, we had a big long talk about it. But it was a very interesting time for me to say, “This is what our tradecraft is, this is why we are what we are and do what we do and you need to just understand that there’s no guarantees in foreign policy.”

Q: This is one of the themes that runs throughout my interviews, often, the disconnect between the policy people in Washington and abroad. And sometimes this infects even the professionals, because mostly people that come from outside, they think if they get everything together and they’ve got the White House and they’ve got the State Department, Defense Department and the whole thing together, that it will happen. And then they go out and they find a foreign power, Bob Paganelli, Shultz came out with the Shultz Plan for the Middle East and Paganelli said Assad won’t go with this and Shultz got mad as hell at him. But the point was that it didn’t go. This is what you’re there for. You have to say, “It might work, it might not work, but you can’t guarantee it.”

JONES: Right and of course in this situation Winston Lord, who was the assistant secretary, knew as well as Stape Roy what the chances were that this would work and was completely with the program, in terms of “Okay, well, we made this such a big issue” he said in retrospect, “I can see why the Chinese are waiting to give it to the big boy, to the big guy” and was very helpful in making sure that poor Stape Roy didn’t get fired over this.

Q: Of course, it also emphasizes a certain amount of the arrogance of Americans. We’re big and so if I’ve got this cleared, this is going to happen.

JONES: That’s right. It’s arrogance, we certainly see it in this administration. It’s arrogance, it’s lack of appreciation.

One of the most telling moments I had with Tom Donilon came in the Middle East, in preparation for the Secretary’s first trip to the Middle East and many subsequent trips. I had really worked, with the Near East bureau’s initiative, to get Tom Donilon to agree that the Secretary should sit down with the Middle East correspondents, not just the American correspondents, ahead of time. “No, no, no, there’s no audience out there!” And I said, “Actually, there’s a gigantic audience out there.” I had a lot of talking points I had gotten my colleagues to help me with. “No, no, no!” So there were no interviews ahead of time.

So I’m driving in the car, in the motorcade, with Tom Donilon when we arrive in Cairo. This was just a week into the administration and he’s looking around. We arrived in the daytime on a Friday, so there isn’t much traffic, actually. But he still looks around and he said, “I see that there were a hell of a lot of people in Egypt.” I said, “Actually, there are millions, in Cairo, never mind Egypt, in Cairo. Tom, this is why I wanted the Secretary to meet with the media, because look at all the people reading newspapers and listening to the radio.”

And from then on he had a little bit more sympathy for having the Secretary meeting foreign journalists, not just American journalists. But it was that inability to comprehend how many people, what does 23 million people in Cairo look like when you're driving through the streets of Cairo.

Q: What was Donilon's background?

JONES: Donilon was a lawyer. He had come straight from O'Melveny and Myers, the law firm that was Christopher's. He came from the Washington office. He and Secretary Christopher were close on a lot of legal issues and he had always been interested in foreign policy, he said. He said he considered working as Christopher's chief of staff to be the best time of his life.

He'd get very nervous and upset about things, but he saw his job as protecting Christopher's reputation, Secretary Christopher's reputation, in the media and on the Hill. That was where he put his expertise. And as much as everything the State Department did impacted that, he would be interested, but not so much.

So we had a pretty good division of responsibility, in terms of how we managed the Secretary's time and this sort of thing.

Q: And of course this relationship with Congress is vital of course to the success of any administration.

JONES: Absolutely.

Q: But sometimes foreign policy, almost everybody thinks they know what to do. It's very attractive. Administrations come in, they're not going to touch it and by the end of an administration you find this is practically all the president does.

JONES: We had another very interesting example of this in October of '93, when the Secretary did a little tour of Moscow and the nuclear successor states, to get them to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We stopped in Moscow first and had a big conversation with the Russians, that wasn't a very big difficulty.

The next stop was Almaty, to talk with President Nazarbayev about Kazakhstan, where there'd been a huge nuclear arsenal from the Soviet period. We knew from the ambassador, Bill Courtney, that President Nazarbayev was desperate for a White House visit, desperate. And we also knew that Secretary Christopher had not gotten the White House to give him a date for a White House visit. And we also knew from Bill Courtney, the ambassador, that President Nazarbayev was very unlikely to say yes to signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty during Christopher's trip, unless he had a White House meeting scheduled. So the most that Secretary Christopher had been able to get out of Tony Lake was that the White House would welcome him at some point, something very anodyne

and not the least bit specific. And long story short, President Nazarbayev would not say yes, that he would sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The problem with this was that in the plane on the way between Moscow and Kazakhstan, Tom Donilon briefed the press. He said this was going to be a piece of cake and that we would walk in and then Secretary Christopher would get a yes right away from President Nazarbayev and it was all going to be wonderful.

Well, of course, he learned a couple lessons, something we'd been trying to tell him all along, Strobe Talbott included: don't tell the press what's going to happen until you get it, because you cannot make assumptions about what people are going to say, particularly when we knew from the ambassador and from everything the rest of us knew that Nazarbayev was just going to say no until he got what he wanted.

Tom Donilon was extremely angry. We knew the same thing was going to happen in Ukraine, that the Ukrainian president was going to say yes to signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty only if he had that White House meeting, to the point that Donilon wanted to cancel the Ukraine stop. In the meantime, poor Lynn Davis is already there negotiating with the Ukrainians, sending messages back saying "Be ready with a White House visit!"

We can talk in a minute if you like about how those meetings went and how difficult it was and the role that the interpreter played in that particular instance. Secretary Christopher took the command decision, "Try to get Tony Lake to agree to a meeting." He called Lake up on the phone, took a command decision and just told Nazarbayev the next day, before he left, that he would have a White House meeting in January. He just decided that getting him to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty was important enough, that he just was going to stake his reputation on getting him that White House visit in January. Which is what he did. Very, very interesting. It saved the trip to Kiev. We went to Ukraine as well and had to do almost the same thing there, but at that point Tony Lake was on the hot seat. The White House schedulers were the ones giving him a hard time about it. He was perfectly sympathetic to Secretary Christopher, but couldn't get these visits out of the White House, either. It was a very interesting lesson in what the Secretary of State has to do sometimes.

Q: You want to talk about the meeting?

JONES: What happened in the meeting was, it was a very small meeting with President Nazarbayev in the morning. It was Secretary Christopher, the ambassador, Strobe Talbott, who was the assistant secretary equivalent, he was the special advisor for the newly independent states and Tom Donilon. They were the only ones in the meeting. Secretary Christopher could not get Nazarbayev to agree to sign the NPT. The meeting went on and on and on. We were slated to have a lunch afterwards, with President Nazarbayev and an expanded set of ministers and the rest of us; I was there as well.

Secretary Christopher came out of the meeting with President Nazarbayev very upset that he hadn't been able to get Nazarbayev to say yes. He decided that he should press Nazarbayev at the lunch. Bill Courtney and probably Strobe Talbott advised him not to, that he wasn't going to get "yes" in a larger meeting if he hadn't gotten it in a smaller meeting and he would just force him to dig his heels in more.

I don't know why he did it. I didn't know him well enough. But he didn't take that advice, did push at the expanded lunch, for him in a kind of aggressive way about how important it was to the president and he should say yes and it was unconscionable why he didn't. But my Russian was pretty good, so I could hear what Nazarbayev was saying back, which was very, very aggressive.

In both situations, it was Peter Asafanenko, who was the State Department interpreter, who toned down what Secretary Christopher was saying and toned down what President Nazarbayev was saying, so that they didn't basically come to blows over lunch. He didn't change it. Each knew that there was a sting in what each was saying, but he found ways to make it a little bit more palatable, the words each of them was using. And of course Strobe's Russian was very good, too, so both he and I knew what was going on, Bill Courtney did, too, but Tom Donilon didn't know, for instance, just how upset Narazbayev was with the way he was being pressed. It was almost to the point of "Who do you think you are to say no to me?"

Q: Sounds very un-Christopherish.

JONES: Well, it was, but it was a measure of how much pressure he was under to get this. And frankly, I thought more pressure came from Tom Donilon and the media than from the president of the United States, because Donilon was so upset. The way to look at it was that Tom Donilon put the Secretary of State in an untenable position by announcing to the press what he was going to get before he got it. Instead, Christopher thought of it as embarrassing the president, rather than embarrassing himself.

On that one trip, just on that one stop, I made a pretty good list in my head of all the ways you shouldn't do things, all the things not to do in these kinds of diplomatic situations.

Q: You had, obviously, been in the Soviet Union before. Were you picking up any impressions of how things were going?

JONES: With Russia, or with Kazakhstan?

Q: The various places that you went: Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Russia itself.

JONES: There are a couple of things. In Russia, at that stage, there was a great sense of almost euphoria among people about how well they'd managed the transition, even though economically it was not good, but there was a lot of assistance coming in and Russia had a place at the table for the first time, they'd been invited to join, to participate in the G-8 for the first time, even though it was sort of *pro forma* participation.

So it was all still quite positive and all the discussion about Russia was how much money can we give them, does the number sound big enough and there was not yet the sense on the part of the Russians that they shouldn't be in the situation of receiving assistance, that this was somehow beneath them. They needed it, they knew they needed it and they were glad for it, from the U.S. and from the Europeans.

The interesting thing to me in a place like Kazakhstan, where I'd never been before and Ukraine, where I had been but as a kid, was the sense of independence, that, yes, they were former Soviet states but what happened in Moscow, Moscow could sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty, or already had, but it didn't mean that they had to. Yes, they were nuclear successor states, but, by golly, they were going to negotiate this any way they liked.

I was very impressed with how independent they were and how much they talked about their identity. They didn't have an issue with their identity, they just had an identity. They were perfectly happy to explain it to us, to the point that we were to have horsemeat sausage and all of the Kazakh "delicacies" at lunch and that kind of thing, just to demonstrate how different they were from Russians.

What wasn't different from the Russians was how much vodka got poured, too, not drunk but poured. The same thing in Ukraine.

Q: How did Christopher, he doesn't strike me as a man that likes his liquor.

JONES: No, he just didn't drink it. He was perfectly comfortable saying, "I'm sorry, I don't drink." I don't think he even actually said it. I think he just said, "No, thank you" and didn't.

Q: How about the Middle East?

JONES: The Middle East was the biggest issue on the agenda going in, as the administration started. Secretary Christopher's very first trip was to the Middle East. I was very comfortable with that, because that was the entire area I came from. We left just after Christopher went to the State of the Union address, so we left quite late from Andrews Air Force Base.

Because I'd served in the Middle East so many times I was quite prepared for all the work that needed to be done. I knew Dennis Ross well and Aaron Miller and all of the people who were working on Middle East issues, as well as the Middle East bureau. Every one of the ambassadors we visited were all old friends of mine. So the Middle East issues were the ones I was the most comfortable with, substantively.

The first trip was really a get acquainted trip. It went very well, but I did learn an interesting thing right away about Secretary Christopher, in terms of his discomfort with being in public. We had planned the first day, his idea, it was a Friday, to demonstrate his

sympathy for, interest in, the history and culture of the Middle East. He really wanted to have that notion come across, completely appropriate and wonderful.

So we planned the first day, it was a Friday, we weren't going to meet with any Egyptians, to go to the pyramids, to see the Sphinx, to demonstrate his interest in Egyptian history and the media was going to be there. And he said, "Beth, write me my talking points." I said, "I'm sorry, Mr. Secretary? Write you your talking points for visiting the pyramids?" And he said, "Yes, I don't know what to say." I said, "Well, they're just looking for your spontaneous comments about what you think." "Write them for me, please."

Okay, that was my introduction to how uncomfortable he really was in public and in spontaneous discussion.

Q: Did you crib from Napoleon, or something like that?

JONES; Luckily I loved the pyramids and had spent all kinds of time out there. So I had all kinds of things I gave him to say about them. But it was a measure of his personality, that he didn't want to run the risk of being spontaneous.

Q: Well, how did he deal with, particularly Egyptian, Israeli and other leaders there?

JONES: He depended a tremendous amount on Dennis Ross. He depended on his various ambassadors out there. Sam Lewis was the director of policy planning and made it clear that he wanted to be involved in all these Middle East trips, which he was.

The Secretary was quite comfortable meeting with various leaders, but he really didn't expect to have to think up the negotiating ideas and all that kind of thing. He really depended on Dennis for that. But he was serious about prepping, he was serious about understanding the issues, he was serious about asking the next questions.

But my observation about Secretary Christopher is that he didn't really get a lot out of meetings. They didn't generate ideas for what should happen in the next meeting. He really, really depended upon his pile drivers for that kind of thing. So even though as a lawyer he might be very interested in certain aspects of the negotiations, he saw these meetings as something to get through, more than as a way to generate ideas on how to solve the problem.

Q: And also, I suppose that this early in the administration there wasn't coming out of Clinton or anyone else a plan for dealing with the Middle East.

JONES: No, there wasn't, but the themes that Dennis came up with were all agreed in the administration, as to how to proceed. So nobody disagreed with Dennis. There wasn't a big fight over what to do about the Middle East, like there is now.

Q: Was there a feel for the, it's now a pejorative term, but we used to use it, the illegal settlements?

JONES: There was severe opposition to the illegal settlements in the administration. The question was how to wrap into the negotiation in a way that they could be addressed properly. Dennis was on the side of being more cautious about pressing the Israelis on the settlements, as I remember, at the time.

But in the early days of the Clinton Administration, it was not only to deal with Gaza and Sinai and all of that, but to deal with the Syrians as well, to see if there couldn't be some sort of a negotiation that could get going with the Syrians. So a tremendous amount of effort was spent on Damascus. That was a very big push at the time. We went to Damascus a lot.

Q: Did you get any feel for the influence of the Israeli lobby, AIPAC or any of the other groups?

JONES; Yes, there was a lot of criticism of the administration by the Israeli lobby, if it looked like the pressure on Israel was too high, but at the time, remember, we had some very good Israeli negotiators as well, people who really were committed to the peace process and really wanted to address the kinds of issues that needed to be addressed.

And the question was, was there a way to formulate the talking points so that you could actually get some of these things done. How do you deal with Arafat? What do you do about Assad? What are the talking points with Assad before he goes away, just because of his long life, so we can try to address the Golan Heights?

You mentioned the lobbying. The thing I particularly remember are various members of the negotiating team who were Jewish, who were derided by the Israeli lobby: How can you, as a Jew, participate in this? Aaron Miller in particular would tell stories of talking to Jewish groups in Washington and around the United States, having to take a lot of flak from them because we were pushing so hard on compromise.

Q: Looking at it from slightly outside, one couldn't help but notice that those dealing with Israeli-Arab affairs are almost exclusively Jewish and you wonder, what are the pressures, sometimes this is good, sometimes it's bad. Also I heard from people who were involved in the State Department saying, this group excluded the Arab specialists and all, sort of did it on its own. I don't know if you felt that at the time.

JONES: Well, there are a couple things. The assistant secretary at the time was Ed Djerejian, not Jewish. The ambassador in Israel had been Sam Lewis, not Jewish. The leader of the negotiating team, Dennis Ross, Jewish. One of his colleagues, cohorts, was Aaron Miller, Jewish. Dan Kurtzer was involved as well, I think at the time from Washington, Jewish; he was a DAS (deputy assistant secretary), maybe, in the Middle East bureau.

But don't forget at the time there was a tremendous amount of progress made on the Middle East. So, yes, it's true that there were quite a number of American Jews involved, but there were also plenty of us who weren't Jewish who were involved.

Was there concern that Dennis was too soft and wasn't pushing hard enough? To a degree there was, but this was a period of time in which there was a lot of progress on a lot of the very, very, very difficult issues such as what to do about Arafat, such as Assad, such as trying to get the Syrians in, what to do about the Palestinians in Jordan. This worked up, just in the 18 months I was there, into the agreement with Jordan, whereby there was a transit point opened between Israel and Jordan down by Aqaba and that kind of thing.

And then eventually we ended up in Camp David II. But just in the 18 months I was there there was a lot of progress and a lot of hope and I didn't think we were going to go back to the situation we're in now, with the Palestinians in particular.

Q: I wonder if you could comment a bit, I know him, but Sam Lewis, who'd been ambassador forever in Israel, became head of policy planning. He wasn't there very long and this didn't seem to be a good fit, or something. How did that work, from your perspective?

JONES: Sam came in right away as head of policy planning. I had known him. He'd been my second DCM in the Foreign Service, in Kabul, so I knew him quite well. He came to this policy planning group only, as nearly as I could tell, to participate in the Middle East negotiations. He did not lead policy planning to do the work that a lot of us thought was appropriate for policy planning, the long range thinking. There were people in policy planning who did that kind of work, but Sam was not involved in it, didn't lead it.

He was very aggressive about being in on meetings and very aggressive with me about being in on meetings. There were times when the meetings with Assad were going to be the Secretary of State and the American ambassador, Chris Ross at the time and Dennis Ross, that was going to be it. And Sam was very, very angry with me for not getting him in, but frankly I didn't even try, because I knew there was no reason he should be in those meetings and I knew there was no history of a fourth person sitting in on the Assad meetings. I just said, "Sam, I'm sorry, you're just not going to be in on this."

He didn't work very hard. All he wanted to do was be in senior level meetings and talk policy without doing the real work, from my perspective. And he didn't last long, as a result.

Q: Anything else we should cover? Latin America, anything there, particularly?

JONES; Nothing, really. It was all Haiti, for anything to do with that part of the world.

There was a bit on Vietnam, working with the various groups on missing POWs, but there wasn't too much going on, really. Africa was an issue. Tony Lake was very big on Africa. I planned several trips for the Secretary to Africa and he never went.

Q: What was your feeling about this issue about POWs and missing in action? To me, I served 18 months in Vietnam, so I had a feel for Vietnam, but this seemed like such a spurious issue.

JONES: Well, it was a very big issue at the time. It was such a big issue that on one trip to Asia we stopped in Hawaii for the normal rest stop that we almost always did and on one of them I had worked up a way for the Secretary to visit the unit that did all of the forensics, on the bones and the remains that were found. I thought it would be interesting, which it was, but I also wanted to demonstrate that the Secretary of State of the United States of America cared enough about this issue enough to be briefed by the experts on this whole issue.

One of the saddest parts of it were the stories that some of the forensics experts told, when they knew they had identified the bones of a missing service member, went to the family to say, "We have identified the remains of your loved one" and they wouldn't be believed, even though it might have brought the family peace. There was a lingering feeling from the Vietnam War era that you cannot believe your own government. This I found very sad, that some of these families had not been able to move on from the Vietnam War era to understand that nobody was going to try to lie to them about this.

But it was a very big issue. The Secretary met regularly with the woman who was head of the POW/MIA group, the lobbying group, who was a very reasonable person, I thought, in the meetings that I participated in. I completely understand why she needed to be seen as meeting with the Secretary of State. I would advocate, "Please let her meet with you, so she can go back and this is a way to get them off your back, to be sympathetic, meet with her and show interest" all that kind of thing.

Q: Well, you left this job when?

JONES: I left this job in August of 1994, because I had been asked by Strobe Talbott and Jim Collins, who had taken his place, to become ambassador to Kazakhstan. And after having done that one trip with the Secretary to Kazakhstan and looking around at all the gorgeous mountains, I thought, "Ooh, this is a place I'd love to serve." They came and asked me if I would put my name forward and I did. I was confirmed for the job, but I needed Russian, I needed to upgrade my Russian, my Russian was very, very bad, after all those years of Arabic.

Q: Probably it was still childish Russian, wasn't it?

JONES: It was still childish Russian and I had the overlay of all those years of Arabic as well, so I needed to bring it back. So I left that job to do some Russian training before having to go to Kazakhstan.

Q: How did you find “adult” Russian?

JONES: Well, I was very fortunate when I got to India to find two instructors. FSI, because my husband, former husband, now, was posted to Delhi, FSI said, “Go ahead and go to Delhi with him, see if you can’t set up some Russian training for yourself there, rather than be separated from your family and especially the children, who were still quite young.”

And I did. They offered me a little bit of a budget to pay for an instructor and the first thing that happened was I found a Fulbrighter who was there who was a Tibetologist whose wife was French and she had taught Russian grammar at MIT. She wasn’t occupied in particular, she was planning on translating a couple of books from Czech. So I hired her to teach me all the grammar parts of the instruction. I knew how to set it up from having studied Arabic at FSI.

Then I called the Nehru University, JNU, to talk to the head of the Russian literature department and I told him why I needed to do some reading and conversation in Russian and did he have one of his graduate students he could possibly recommend to me? And he said, “Well, actually, I’m on sabbatical this year. I’ll teach you.”

This was an Indian gentleman, an Indian professor, who had learned Russian when his father had worked for Radio Moscow in the Hindi service in Moscow. So he had lived in Moscow as a kid and as a young adult, gone to the university there and his Russian was excellent, of course, but with a bit of an Indian accent.

But in the meantime I had gotten a couple of colleagues in Embassy Moscow to send me a collection of newspapers every week. So they were a little bit old by the time I got them in Delhi, but we always had a fresh supply of newspapers. I asked them especially to look out for ones that had articles about Central Asia to read.

So every day I had two hours with one instructor and two hours with the other instructor, just as I would have had at FSI, lots of homework. Especially the JNU professor would assign me a discussion topic for the next day and I’d have to research it and come up with a little presentation every day and we’d discuss it and all that sort of thing. And my grammar teacher, whose Russian was excellent but with a bit of a French accent, we did a lot of talking but she also was really a genuine expert in Russian grammar and we went through the text of *Russian As We Speak It*, which is an excellent text.

So I did that in Delhi at home. They came to my house every day. From the time I got there, I guess I set up probably in October-November and when I went back to Washington to be tested in March and came up with a 3/3. So I was extremely pleased with them and myself. It worked extremely well. It was just a perfect thing and I am forever grateful to FSI for their latitude and thoughtfulness in making sure that I could be there in Delhi with my children. The school in Delhi was excellent and they had a very

good experience there. So I was able to learn Russian and coach the softball team, too, the kid's baseball team, Little League.

Q: I'm a guy and so I don't usually get into family matters, but you mentioned your former husband. Was the Foreign Service a factor in your marriage or not, or did you find that—

JONES: It was, in two ways. First, it worked very well for us to be posted together, because we both wanted to be posted to the Arab world and there was no problem with that whatsoever. There were plenty of jobs for us, because he was with USIA, so we never competed for the same jobs, different agencies and all that sort of thing. So it was a very collaborative, very positive relationship for a very long time.

The difficulty really arose when I became more senior than he, in terms of the function. When I was DCM in Islamabad, things started not working quite so well. And in the end that was the factor. So it wasn't really the Foreign Service that was the problem, because we did fine overseas and fine in all these funny cultures and the children, we did well with the kids overseas and all of that, but it was the seniority that was the problem.

Q: Seniority, sometimes in the Foreign Service, since everybody has their own bag, you don't have as much of a feeling of pecking order as I think in many other organizations.

JONES: That's right. I found the Foreign Service especially in embassies overseas and in Washington very collaborative. It's not hierarchical in the sense that the military is. It can be hierarchical in some places but that didn't happen to be my style, especially as I got into the DCM jobs and then as ambassador.

And we were fortunate to have hardship posts. I love hardship posts, because that's where people really look out for each other, they take care of each other, they're much more fun. We had a ball every place we went and we still have great friends from all of those posts. And when I talk to junior officers I strongly recommend they go to hardship posts. The only time I've seen people unhappy was in the Western European posts, because they didn't have friends, people didn't look out for each other as much as they do in hardship posts.

Q: Okay, you went to Kazakhstan from when to when?

JONES; I got there in October of 1995 and stayed until 1998. I was a little bit delayed getting there. I was meant to, I had my hearing in June of 1995, but Jesse Helms, Senator Helms, was very unhappy with Secretary Albright at the time and the U.S. government, the Executive Branch, because the amalgamation of ACDA and USIA into the State Department was not happening as quickly as he wanted it to happen. He was insisting that they be pulled together, which of course eventually happened but in the meantime he held up the vote, the confirmation vote, on quite a number of us. I was held up until the very end of September and I was in a group of 36, I think we were, by the time finally we

were all voted out of committee but then voted from the floor. So I didn't actually go to Kazakhstan until the first week of October.

In the meantime, Courtney had decided she didn't really want to deal with the cliques at an American middle school, and asked to go back to the school in Delhi until I could go to Kazakhstan. We made arrangements for her to go there and stay with her best friend, whose parents were good friends of ours from Embassy Delhi. Todd had enrolled at Mt. Hermon and I had a great last weekend with him in the Fall colors before I went to Kazakhstan. It was there that I asked him how he was liking his new school. I reminded him that he always hated the new place and loved the old place. Todd said, "I decided to skip the hating it part this time!"

Q: I want to go back. You mentioned Jesse Helms hurrying this amalgamation up. Personally, I've always felt the amalgamation was a disaster, not a disaster, but it was a wrong move. I was wondering, was this Jesse Helms trying to be mean or was there real thought behind it?

JONES: I can't speak about ACDA, because I don't know the arms control world well enough to be able to speak knowledgeably about it. I do know the USIA world very well, since I was married to a USIS officer.

I actually thought it was very necessary and I still do. The reason was that the leadership in USIA in Washington was kind of hit or miss. It was very passive leadership.

Q: They had a man who was president of some university or something like that.

JONES: I can't remember the names anymore.

Q: He really didn't care about the thing.

JONES: Yeah and I value tremendously the cultural affairs work, the press and information work, that was done at embassies, but I really believe that with greater collaboration, with great integration, that the public diplomacy work, the public affairs work, of the U.S. government overseas could be done better.

I don't think we're there yet, in terms of the way it's developed, partly because of the resentment of some former USIS officers about all of this, but the ones who understand the importance of combining public diplomacy with policy, especially overseas but also in Washington, are the ones that do it particularly well and I was very fortunate to have quite a number of those around me as advisors and as collaborators and just really good colleagues, about how to bring those disciplines together in a very, very effective way.

Q: My concern is, you have people at the top, particularly in this administration, who are very interested in pushing the president, rather than what I'd call generic foreign policy. So they become more salespeople for whatever the administration policy is, where USIA

really should be dealing on a much longer-term basis. Exchange visits of course are probably the most powerful arrow in our quiver.

JONES: Yes, I completely agree. The difficulty, of course, was that under, I guess his name was Duffy

Q: Yeah, Duffy.

JONES: The USIA money became less and less, so the kind of exchange programs that you're talking about and other programs that would have been a good way to promote American values and culture and all that kind of thing really had, I wouldn't say disappeared, but it was considerably less than it should have been.

I really thought that bringing it into the State Department would pack some energy behind it. That's exactly what did happen under Colin Powell. I'm getting ahead of myself a little bit here, but under Secretary Powell there was a very aggressive effort to get funding for this kind of thing.

I think that the integration of USIA into the State Department is not what caused public diplomacy to become an arm of the White House. I think it would have happened if USIA had still been a stand-alone agency. I think it was a function of this particular administration.

So I think the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy should be someone who is imaginative, aggressive, policy oriented and understands how to bring together those functions. When we get into my being assistant secretary for Europe and Eurasia, I can talk about some of my frustrations with the way the amalgamation happened and the kinds of people they chose to lead some of this, where it was just sort of silliness that happened.

Q: I have to say that I've interviewed hundreds, probably, of USIA officers, overseas they probably had some of the more fascinating careers. In Washington, it's nothing. There's no real Washington role. And these are some of the brightest, best-connected people.

JONES: Right, but here's my argument about that. So long as it's USIA in Washington it was a zero. It had no policy function whatsoever. However, when USIA was brought into the State Department, it could have a policy function and would have a policy function whenever the public diplomacy officers were brought into the policy discussion.

I argued that there never should be a policy meeting without a PD officer there, because whatever policy you were working on, it always has a PD component, even if the PD component is silence and no comment. You need to have that advice and that expertise in the discussion right from the very beginning, including ideas of ways to promote the policy beyond just a few talking points for the press spokesman, or talking points for the ambassador, whatever it is. Are there ways that you could program, are there speakers, AMPARTS, all this kind of thing?

My disappointment was that because of some of the resentments of some of the more senior USIS officers, they were very reluctant to participate in those kinds of policy discussions. The good ones did participate and good ones were brought in. I think that'll happen increasingly now, but it's been a difficult transition for a lot of them and the more that there's integration, genuine integration, the more that PD officers feel that they're just another branch of an integrated Foreign Service, then I think the function will work a lot better. I also think the function will work a lot better when there is some decent policy to be public about.

Q: Okay, Kazakhstan. You're going out there, this is '95. Obviously you've been reading up and all. How stood Kazakhstan? What was happening internally in Kazakhstan before you got there, as you saw it and then what were American interests there?

JONES: Kazakhstan had been an independent country for only four years. The U.S. embassy had been established barely four years previously. I replaced Bill Courtney, who was the first American ambassador to Kazakhstan, so I was the second.

Our initial interests in Kazakhstan were focused largely on the fact that Kazakhstan was one of the post-nuclear Soviet states, one of the four and Bill Courtney, very fortunately, was an arms controller, he understood arms control issues from beginning to end. He was the one who really played a significant role in negotiating the various agreements for removal of highly enriched uranium, for the various deals under the Nunn-Lugar program to close down the nuclear testing tunnels, to break apart the Bearcat bombers, to close down the SS-2 missile silos.

So all of those arms control type agreements had already been negotiated by the time I got there. There were a few programs that carried on, which was very exciting for me to participate in the successful part of it, so I've always been very grateful to Bill Courtney for the work he did on this.

But by the time I arrived there was a lot more focus on business, American business. Especially the oil and gas companies, the energy companies, were very interested in Kazakhstan. Chevron, especially, had just negotiated an agreement with the Kazakhstan government for drilling and production in Tengiz, way out by the Caspian, under a production sharing agreement, a PSA, with the Kazakhs.

So I became much more of the business expert and spent a tremendous amount of time working on ways to level the playing field for American companies, to remove the various business impediments, to remove the various investment obstacles for American companies and got into quite a number of programs that were good not only for American business but for all business, through a variety of programs that we developed, that I think worked extremely well. I promote them as models for how you might do this kind of thing in other places.

Q: Well, let's talk about the government and the economy of Kazakhstan.

JONES: President Nursultan Nazabayev had been the Communist Party chief of the Kazakh Republic before the breakup of the Soviet Union. He was a sort of successor to the president of Kazakhstan.

When the United States established its relationship with Kazakhstan, I've mentioned the nuclear issue, but in fact the United States established the relationship based on five sets of interests and five sets of reforms, if we can put it that way. One was political reform, democracy, and human rights. The second was economic reform, investment promotion, the kinds of things I've already mentioned. The third was military reform, to transform the Kazakh military, such as it was, because so many of the Russians had left, into a defensive organization that could participate actively in Partners for Peace, the new NATO association for these kinds of countries. And then we worked on a whole set of social reforms as well, that got into the health area, the environment; social reforms and scientific collaboration, cooperation, if you will.

The U.S. established these sets of reforms with each of the countries of the former Soviet Union, each on an identical basis. But by the time I got there each of these countries was developing in its own way. So Kazakhstan had already launched a very effective program, thanks in great measure to USAID and some of the economic and financial experts that we had in the region. USAID had already launched some very good banking reforms, finance reforms, economic reforms and were already doing quite well in terms of reforms.

The country, however, was still poverty stricken, really. The standard of living was very low. It had gone down since the breakup of the Soviet Union. The budget was tiny for those kinds of services that a population might expect. The population had gone down since the breakup of the Soviet Union. It had gone down from 18 million or so. It was down to about 16 million, even a little bit lower now, largely because of the exodus of so many ethnic Russians, who just didn't feel like they could stay there anymore.

Q: Also, weren't they the technical class, for the most part?

JONES: A lot of them were the technical class. They were the military, a large number were military.

The interesting thing to me was that although the ethnic Russians were thought to be mostly the technical class, there were a tremendous number of ethnic Kazakhs and ethnic everything else, because Kazakhstan is made up of about a hundred different ethnic groups. They're very proud of that, because so many different ethnic groups live together very well, actually. You could go into any technical sector, whether it was electricity production, oil and gas, coal, whatever and there were ethnic Kazakh engineers all over the place, because Kazakhstan had been one of the places that had the technical universities. This is where Russian students had come to learn oil and gas. Plenty of ethnic Kazakh students had done the same thing.

Under the Soviet Union, though, the ethnic Kazakhs hadn't risen to the management levels that the ethnic Russians had, so they frankly were kept kind of down. As soon as the ethnic Russians left, a lot of the ethnic Kazakhs took a lot of these positions. So there wasn't the sort of inability to function that you might find in some of the other Central Asian countries.

One of the things that I thought was very interesting, because I spent a lot of time of course with the American engineers that would come in and buy an electricity company or buy a coal mine or take part in oil and gas production, is they found the engineering skills excellent, the medical skills excellent of the people that were on the staff when they bought the company. What they had to teach them was how to function in a way that there was some sense of what it cost to use or do anything. So whereas before they would not reuse, if a machine didn't work they'd just throw it out rather than repair it. But they learned to think in terms of what did it cost to not do maintenance of this at an appropriate time, because as the command economy turned into a market economy they had to be thinking in terms of profit and loss. So the Westerners coming into these various companies found that they had technical expertise everywhere but they really, really had to teach the technical experts about what their time cost, what the machines cost, what the supplies cost and that they had to think ahead in terms of preventative maintenance, that hadn't been done. There was shoddy workmanship in a lot of places, not because they couldn't do it, but because it hadn't been valued and they learned to put a value on this kind of thing.

The other thing that Western companies found, I was talking mostly to the Americans, is how many women were involved in high technical skills. Easily half the engineers in an electricity company that AES from right here in Virginia took over, over half, were women and worked very well. They were surprised by it, very gratified by it, there's nothing wrong with it, they just noted that that was an interesting phenomenon.

The service sector companies that came in and the embassies found that they were hiring initially a tremendous number of women as part of their local staff, because after all it had been the women who learned the foreign languages, a great preponderance of them. There were more women learning foreign languages than were doing the other technical work, the lawyers and everything else. They found very quickly that not only were the women good at English or Spanish or Polish or whatever language they needed in their embassy, but they were actually extremely proficient at skilled work beyond just being the interpreter for the ambassador.

So the women that were hired by embassies were very quickly promoted into a broad range of embassy jobs, whether it's personnel or the budget or the political reporting or commercial work or whatever it was, to the point that as an embassy manager we made a conscious effort to recruit ethnic Kazakh men in our embassy as well, because we realized we had a tremendous number of women, both ethnic Russian and ethnic Kazakh. If we had men in the guard force, it was mostly the guard force in a place like that, they were mostly ethnic Russians.

The other thing we found is that, for instance in our guard force, that one of our guards was a neurosurgeon. We said, “Why do you want to work here when you’re a neurosurgeon?” He said. “Well, I’m still on staff at the hospital, but they can’t pay me and I’ve got a family, I’ve got small children and I know you’ll pay me every two weeks and I’ll have the benefits and the health care and all the things that come along with a steady job.” I still remember one time he came to work late, with great apologies, because he just had to finish some brain surgery, literally, at the hospital. We said, “That’s fine. That’s quite okay. If you need to do brain surgery, that’s fine with us and we’re very grateful to have you on our staff, but we respect your need to participate in helping to keep the hospital going and developing.”

Q: Often your first view, you’ve been away from the Soviet Union for a long time and came back, what sort of struck you about Kazakhstan?

JONES: The very first thing that struck me was looking at all of these wonderful faces, you’d see what looked like Genghis Khan’s son walking down the street, or Genghis Khan’s sister. So there was the Mongolian look. There was the Korean look, because a lot of North Koreans had been moved to what became Kazakhstan. There were all kinds of ethnic Tajiks, Uighurs from China, blond Russians that looked like they came straight out of Moscow, Ukrainians. There were a hundred ethnic groups, you could see them on the street. Everybody was speaking Moscow Russian. That was the first thing that struck me, is all of these exotic looks and everybody’s speaking as though I was still at school in Moscow.

One of my favorite memories, to illustrate just how well all these ethnic groups did together: I was walking on one of the boulevards in one of the shopping districts and two young girls, two teenage girls, came toward me, one as blonde as she could be, with a completely Aryan look and the other as ethnic Kazakh as she possibly could, very black hair, very straight black hair, big, high cheekbones, gorgeous eyes and they were sharing an I-pod or something. One had an earbud in one ear and the other had the other earbud and they were walking along singing together. I thought, “Man, if only I had a camera! It would be the perfect vision, for me, of Kazakhstan. Very Russian, very Kazakh, no problem.”

Q: Were you picking up the feeling that ethnic Russians were being sort of edged out? There had been this exodus and I guess it was still going on by the time you were there?

JONES: There was an exodus. You could see it outside the German embassy, especially what were known as the Volga Germans, the Volga *Deutsch*, lining up to get their visas to go to Germany. One heard about it, especially in the north of the country, less so in Almaty, which was way, way in the south, the Russians were still leaving. But the largest part of the exodus had already happened, especially from the military.

So the military in all the discussions I had with them were very focused on building up the skills, recruiting more people into the military and especially learning how to develop what they called the sergeants’ corps. They didn’t have one, of course, in the Soviet

military. But the minister of defense was extremely conscious, not least from trips to the United States and participating in NATO Partnership for Peace exercises, of the need to take care of the troops. That was a new concept to the Kazakhstanis. So he worked very hard, not only at recruiting soldiers into the military, but recruiting leadership among those, in order to take care of them.

And he would tell stories of how hard he worked to inculcate the sense of taking care of your troops among the officers' corps and among the developing sergeants' corps, which the U.S. did a lot of the training for. He told the story of seeing some recruits out digging a ditch in the pouring rain. They had no boots on, they had no rain gear on, it was just pouring rain and a couple of officers were sitting in a car completely dry. And he really took the officers to task, had them go out digging the ditch also and then brought them in and said, "I never want to see you treating your soldiers this way. You either make sure that they've got the right gear or you don't assign them duty that is so detrimental to their health."

You'd hear a lot of stories at the time about soldiers, particularly going off to the Chechen War, Russian soldiers, mothers couldn't find them and families didn't know where they were. This minister of defense was very focused on making sure that parents knew where their son was, that there was good communication between them, so that they wouldn't have this dilemma of the mothers not knowing where their children were.

The overall atmosphere at the time was extremely interesting to me and I describe it this way: the Kazakhstanis had no idea about the United States, really. All they knew was that the United States was the other great power. They knew the Soviet Union was the great power and they'd heard of the United States as being the other great power. The United States had been demonized by the Soviets all these many years. They had no other experience with Americans.

They did, however, have a lot of experience with the Soviets, with the Russians, who were very condescending to them, would treat them as a younger brother, that Slavic concept, didn't expect that they could do very much, didn't treat them well.

When the U.S. came along, especially with our assistance programs, we would sit down with various of the Kazakhstani ministers, whether it was the economics minister or the finance minister or the health minister or the press minister and say, on economic reforms, "We're going to describe for you a palette of options that you could take. If you take this kind of banking reform, that would be associated with this kind of tax reform and this kind of stock exchange and this kind of pension system and the result would be this sort of system. Or you could pick a different kind of banking, tax, stock exchange, et cetera and you'd end up with this."

And our experts would draw up various options. One would be the one used in Sweden. Another would be the one used in Chile. The one in the United States, the one in France, whatever it was. We were very careful to make sure that we weren't being American-centric in the kind of advice we were giving. Then the experts would say, "But you all

know where you want to end up, so you decide which result you'd like and then we'll help you work through each of the sets of reforms that you need to do in order to get there."

This stark difference between the way the American experts treated them from the way the Russian experts treated them meant that we were extremely well received. We treated them like they knew something, we treated them like they were in charge of their own country, which they were and we treated them as equals.

This was, in the end, by the time I got there, a huge responsibility, I believed, on the American team there. I had long discussions with our AID director, who was fabulous, who was replaced by another fabulous AID director and each of the team leaders in each of the sectors: social, political, human rights, democracy, economic reform, social, et cetera, that we had to be very careful and very thoughtful about what we suggested, because they were going to take our advice and take it wholesale.

So we had to be sure that we looked ahead, looked around the corners, made sure the kind of advice we were giving them would end up with the results that the Kazakhstani were looking for and was coordinated not only among the U.S. experts there but with the UN, the World Health Organization, the Asian Development Bank and the others.

Our AID director was very much in the lead with the UNDP (UN Development Program) director in having a monthly coordination meeting among the international assistance agencies, to be sure we weren't stepping on each other and doing things in a coordinated way.

Q: Was there a hard core of old line planners and all that? The Soviet system and people had had sixty or more years of putting this together and there were a lot of rice bowls that were going to be broken.

JONES: Well, here's what the interesting thing was: President Nazarbayev was very much in favor of these dramatic economic reforms and he had been advised initially by a Korean-American called Dr. Bang, who had helped him set up the Kazakhstan Institute for Management and Economics, KIMEC. He came from one of the California universities, had brought in quite a few other experts and there were several senior Kazakhstani, by that time, who had in the meantime had some sort of top-up training in various finance issues and banking and everything in Europe. Grigoriy Marchenko was the best known of those.

So by the time I got there the chairman of the central bank, the minister of finance, the minister of economy, these various people and the prime minister were all absolutely free market guys and occasionally, yes, you'd find one of the old line, stick in the mud, got to plan everything, if you don't have a five year plan you can't move one step forward, but they were rare and I think they still are. There's a bit, now, of retrenching, the way there is in Russia, on some of the energy properties that were put up for sale, especially to Western companies, a little bit of retrenching on that.

But, on the whole, Kazakhstan made the transition from command economy to market economy as easily as any of them did and maybe even more easily than Russia, in a funny way. There's still corruption, there's still bad things that happen, but it was very, very progressive and very energizing for the various experts who were there.

Q: I'm sure it was helpful that the real apparatchiks had left, or a good number of them.

JONES: That's right. The real apparatchiks had left. There were still ethnic Russians around in the government, but they were believers in the change. They were in their forties, mostly, not real old guys. One or two were kind of stuck in the muds. I would spend hours talking with them, with the AID director or the finance chief or the pension reform expert or the family planning expert, because they had the expertise and I could just keep the conversation going with whichever minister it was who we needed to bring around.

Q: And the nuclear issue was pretty well solved, by that time, as far as nuclear weapons?

JONES: It was quite solved. There were several programs that were just finishing up. When I first got there, the highly enriched uranium and there'd been tons of it, had been basically given to the United States to dispose of. So big teams came in from Los Alamos and from Oak Ridge and they had done all this incredibly expert work to get all the highly enriched uranium out. In exchange the United States gave Kazakhstan all kinds of medical equipment and hospital upgrades, especially in the areas where there was a tremendous amount of health damage because of the nuclear testing that had taken place in Semipalatinsk, in what's still called the Polygon that was closed off.

The governor of that Semipalatinsk area, that's one of the places I went to visit very early in my time there, with the AID director, mostly to celebrate the turnover of a lot of this medical equipment and the end of the nuclear era. There was a big celebration in town and we spent quite a bit of time talking with the governor about various programs that we were trying to start in some of the other *oblasts*, for example, to privatize pharmacies or to put in water meters so that private people would have to pay for their water consumption.

He said, "That's what I need here!" He went to his bookcase and pulled a book off a shelf and said, "I've been researching this. In 1905 there was this book written about why it was important for people to pay for their own water. We had a pay as you go water system by consumers in the early part of the century. There is no reason we can't institute that kind of a program here. Would you help me?"

The beauty of the way the AID program was set up in Central Asia, the Caucasus and Eastern Europe, it was done by Congress in a way that made the program extremely flexible, so that the AID director, who was in this meeting with me, turned to me and said, "Let's do it!" and within weeks, literally, we were able to move a program that

wasn't working in one *oblast*, a pharmaceutical privatization program and a water program up to the Semipalatinsk *oblast* and it was a wild success.

That, then, became, each of these programs became models. The U.S. funding wasn't extensive enough to provide for the entire country. But then the World Health Organization said, "That's a great model" and spread it around the country or some other international organization, the UN or whatever, would come in and say, "Great model, we'll enlarge it." So this was one of the most energizing times for us, because we could do so much with really quite little and do it very, very quickly.

Q: One of the things that's always been apparent in so many of the communist countries, I had my five years in Yugoslavia. You go outside the major cities and all of a sudden you're back in the 14th century, everything's ox-drawn and all that. And I'm told this is true in the Soviet Union, or was true.

How is this change transmitted to the country?

JONES: It was not easy. It was very dependent on who the governor of each of the states was, each of the *oblasts* was, depending on how progressive and personally involved that *oblast* governor, the *akim*, was. So we knew that and worked directly with the *oblast akims* to institute the programs or just decide that we had to wait until there was a more progressive *akim* there. That part of the work we did was not at all centralized. Of course we'd coordinate with the ministry of health if we're going to do X or Y in this *oblast* or that *oblast*, but it was very, very dependent on the individual *oblast*.

The other thing that was very interesting to me and gave me a lot of insights into how the *oblasts* worked was we had a very extensive Peace Corps program already, that Bill Courtney brought in. We had over a hundred Peace Corps volunteers all around the country and that gave me an excuse, of course I'd visit a lot of the *oblasts* anyway. But having Peace Corps volunteers gave me an excuse to go talk to people who were living the life way out in the provinces on a daily basis. I always insisted on meeting with them myself, without the *akim* there or any of the watchers, so that the Peace Corps volunteers didn't feel inhibited about talking about what was really going on.

That was important because, because of what happened on one trip I went way, way up in the north. During this period there wasn't a lot of money, as I've already mentioned. Cities were cold. There was not a lot of heat. There was not a lot of electricity. AES was just coming in, AES is the American company from Virginia that bought a couple of the electricity producing facilities and brought heat and light to a lot of these cities, thanks to their expertise.

But I went up to Petropavlovsk in the middle of winter and went to see the Peace Corps volunteers and they said, "Oh, thank God you came to visit! This is the first time we've had hot water and heat and light in months up here. Because you were coming, they wanted to make sure that you could see" and I'm the American ambassador, I'm not a senior official, but I was senior enough for them that they felt they had to demonstrate to

me that they had heat and light. And the Peace Corps volunteers said, “Please come again, so we can wash our clothes and take another hot bath!”

So those were the conditions, even in a major city. That was the way it was around the country. That’s no longer the case today. The country has made a lot of money in oil and gas now, so it has beefed up all of these services all over the country.

Q: Did we have issues with the government, or how did you deal with the government?

JONES: At first I was very worried, because of things that people who knew Kazakhstan well had said, “Oh, they’re going to treat you badly because you’re a woman.” I thought, “Well, okay, we’ll see.” Having been all over the Middle East, I thought, “Well, I doubt that they’re going to treat me badly because I’m a woman.”

Q: It’s the old thing, whoever is the American ambassador is the 300 pound gorilla sitting—

JONES: That, of course, is exactly what it turned out to be. Plus, I had the Russian, so I could talk to anybody I wanted to. I learned very quickly, when I presented my credentials to President Nazarbayev, which I did within the week, they were extremely gracious and welcoming. I took one of my colleagues with me, the press officer, who had fabulous Russian, as an interpreter, just in case. I was a little unsure of myself, because of course I’d never spoken with the president. I thought, “Oh my God, what if he has an accent and I can’t understand him” or whatever.

Not only did we have a little courtesy call, but it went on for an hour and a half and we discussed every subject. I realized it was better for me to do it myself. She was great, Tanya was wonderful, but to establish the relationship I needed to have the conversation directly, I was able to have the conversation directly. So I always took somebody with me as a note taker, I would call that the April Glaspie role, but I really worked at always having the conversation myself.

What that meant was the various ministers I knew well, they knew me well, they felt they could call me at any time for a meeting. I got so I knew the kinds of things they might ask me to do, so I kept folders on my desk for each of the ministers, including the prime minister, who might call me and say, “Come in an hour!” So I would have issues that I knew I needed to bring up with him if I hadn’t actually asked for the meeting.

One thing I learned very quickly to do is that when I asked my AID colleagues, especially they, or my military colleagues, they’d say, “Okay, next time you see the minister of defense you can talk about this” or “The next time you see the minister of finance.” “Okay, explain the issue to me.” I would have my translators from the embassy put it into Russian for me, so I had the vocabulary in Russian, too, so that I could study my Russian talking points. I realized pretty quickly that if I didn’t really understand the issue well it was going to be hard enough to explain it in English but I really had to learn the Russian in order to be able to do that.

Almaty was a relatively small city, it's only a million people and the embassy was literally next door to the foreign ministry and the other ministries were right around the corner. People were around all the time, I saw them at the ice rink on weekends, I saw them at the ski slopes on weekends in winter, at restaurants all over town, I had to have my subjects ready at all times because of chance encounters or because I'd get a call to come see somebody about whatever it was.

The other thing I really practiced hard, I always took a note taker but I always wanted to take somebody who really knew the subject. So I regularly had my AID colleagues or my military colleagues, whatever, to be the note taker, but I also had to train them how to be note takers.

Q: How do you train somebody to be a note taker?

JONES: First you have to teach them to take a pad of paper and a pen with them, that's number one. They really have to take notes on everything that's said, they can't try to remember it, because often a turn of phrase is what I'm looking for, not the substance, I know what the substance was. But how did he put that, because sometimes it might be an interesting insight into personality, or into a relationship or whatever it was. So I really worked with them to write down what was said, not just over summarize.

A couple of my Kazakhstani counterparts spoke so quickly, though, that a couple of my colleagues, Janet in particular, learned to just listen.

Q: You're talking about Janet Bogue?

JONES: Janet Bogue.

Q: She was what?

JONES: She was first my head of political section, the first year and the second year she was my DCM.

Q: I've interviewed Janet. Just for the record here.

JONES: But we quickly realized, Janet especially, that the only way to take in what this deputy foreign minister said, because he spoke Russian so fast, was just to listen and try to get it and with both of us listening hard, we would then write the notes in the car on the way back, because he was so difficult to take notes on, because he just went so fast. He was a great guy, too.

But the bottom line was that I felt that not only was I treated with great respect, but my embassy colleagues were treated with great respect. They were all welcomed. Their expertise was valued. We had access all over the place.

For instance, I was so surprised when my British colleague said to me, “I’m so upset. I can’t see this minister, can’t see that minister. They’re insisting on having diplomatic notes sent to the foreign ministry. I refuse to send a note to the foreign ministry to get a meeting with the economics minister.”

And I said, “Well, why don’t you just call him up and go see him?”

“Oh, they’re insisting.”

“Well, still, send the note and call him up and go see him.”

Well he stood up and said he didn’t want to do that. But that’s what we did. Of course we would do a diplomatic note, it’s not hard to do. And then the minister of economy or the minister of health, minister of education, would be covered, in terms of his own bureaucracy, which is kind of a holdover from the Soviet era, but they were perfectly happy to see us.

Now, there were all kinds of issues that were not so easy. We had a bad debt, the Kazakhstanis had not repaid a sovereign debt that they owed and I really had to work hard to get them to do that, they finally did.

Q: What kind of a debt was this?

JONES: The Kazakhstani government had guaranteed, they provided a sovereign debt guarantee, on—

Q: Sovereign debt means?

JONES: It means that the country itself, the government of the country, guaranteed repayment of a commercial loan, if the signatory defaulted on paying back the loan. I can’t remember now if it was a loan to a Kazakh business by OPIC, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, or if it was the Trade and Development Agency, TDA, one of the two and the result of this default was that Kazakhstan couldn’t get any further loans and there was a lot of interest, of course, in establishing a relationship with Kazakhstani businesses and with others through these various very good U.S. government mechanisms.

The State Department would send me the talking points, which were impossible to use, because they were so demanding and demeaning. I had very good senior colleagues who taught me to make sure, since you’re the one on the line, making the points, to make sure you’re delivering them in a way that you’re going to keep the people listening, number one, they won’t throw you out of the office, but incorporate their interests into the points that you’re making, so that they can see why it’s in their interest to do whatever it is that you want them to do.

I talked and talked and talked and talked with all these guys. I finally had the minister of finance, the minister of economics and a couple of the real naysayers to lunch and went through it all at lunch and finally they said, "Okay, now we get it" and they paid it, because they could see, I was able to show them, how many companies were coming and wanting to have this further and how much it would help their image, help their budget, et cetera, et cetera. It worked well.

Q: How would you evaluate, at the time, Nazarbayev?

JONES: In the following way: when I first got there, Kazakhstan had just rewritten its constitution. This rewriting of the constitution was considered to be antidemocratic, by any measure, really. It was a step backwards from the principles that Kazakhstan had signed up for in becoming a member of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, so Nazarbayev was in the doghouse, really on political reform issues.

We had quite a few NGOs there, non-governmental organizations and AID contractors from these kinds of organizations who were very opposed to further participation, further collaboration, with Kazakhstan on a lot of programs, because they were so unhappy over the constitution.

In the meantime, the Kazakhstanis were getting ready for parliamentary elections that fall and wanted the U.S. government to say that we would send observers. Our initial U.S. government position was that we wouldn't promote the OSCE to send observers, that the EU shouldn't send observers and we shouldn't in any way respect these elections, because they were based on a faulty constitution.

The attitude I took was: we have all these different tracks of assistance, we've got economic assistance, political reforms, social reform, military reforms and that each of these tracks should operate independently of the others, because the economic reform track was going along nicely, the military reform track was going over very nicely, social reforms, health reforms, that kind of thing, were going well. Political reforms, not so well.

But I thought it didn't make sense to allow the fact they were falling back on the political reform to stop the other reforms in their tracks by somehow ending those programs or diminishing those programs. So I took the attitude that we should separate the tracks, think of them each as separate, they'd move ahead at their own pace and that I should work with the hand we'd been dealt, in terms of political reforms. And then just keep using what I call positive-aggressive arguments with Nazarbayev and the people around him to try to get him to understand that it was much more in his interest to go forward with political reforms, because that would feed economic reforms, economic stability, economic prosperity -- if his voters, his constituents, the people of Kazakhstan felt that they had a bit of choice in how they were being governed.

To a degree it worked. We at least went forward with the kind of election observer work that we wanted to do. The OSCE came, the EU came and we were able to make gradual

improvements in, for example, getting the Kazakhstanis to allow the UN rapporteur on torture to come and visit some of the pre-detention centers where there many allegations of torture or really bad treatment of detainees in these pre-detention centers. And then once the UN rapporteur on torture published his report, the first thing the Kazakhstanis said was, “Gee, it’s not as bad a report as we thought it was going to be.”

But there were very specific recommendations for improvements and training that went with those improvements and we said, “We’ll help you, the EU will help you, the UN will help you do some of these things, because there’s no reason that you should have this kind of a reputation, which you don’t deserve. If you’re not doing these things, why allow this reputation to stand? Start working on some of these reforms, start working on some of these improvements and these improvements will feed upon themselves. You’ll end up with a much happier population and you’ll be able to prevent the kind of extremism that we see in some other countries” which basically didn’t exist in Kazakhstan then. “And you’ll be able to move forward in a very stable, progressive political situation and economic prosperity.”

It worked to a degree. There were setbacks, there always are. There have been setbacks since then. But it was the kind of situation in which I felt I could see anybody I wanted to. Some people were more recalcitrant than others, but we really worked hard at being welcoming, being accepting. We did a variety of things that were particularly well received.

For instance, there was a terrible blizzard in the north and the center of the country and many, many people died, cars were blown off the road, hospitals, especially children’s hospitals, didn’t have electricity for a long time. And the administrator of emergency situations, when I went to visit him after this, I said, “It’s a terrible thing. Tell me what we can do.” He said, “I need snow plows and I need generators.” So I got hold of the U.S. military excess equipment people, who worked out of the assistance coordinator’s office in the European bureau and got them to finance generators, one for one main children’s hospital in every *oblast*, plus one in Almaty. Then we got a huge number of snowplows, like 150 snow plows. And we got them, that was the amazing thing, my fabulous colleagues in Washington called up the military in Alaska and said, “We need snow plows and generators” and they said, “Okay.” And sure enough they were delivered, snowplows all over the place and it was a very positive experience for us in the country.

Q: Back to Nazarbayev, how did you find dealing with him personally? Was the government situation one of these things where nothing happened unless he put his approval on? Was he a suspicious person?

JONES: He was a strongman, in the following respect: he was absolutely the boss. However, his prime minister at the time, Kazhegeldin, was also very strong, very progressive and ran the government very capably, to the degree that Nazarbayev always thought of himself and talked about himself as separate from the government. So, for example, if there was an uproar in the press about corruption, or an uproar in the press

about no electricity in schools or the pensions hadn't been paid, Nazarbayev would get on television or make a national speech and say, "I have told the government that this is absolutely unacceptable and I have instructed the government to take care of you, because I am the father of this country and I know that the pensioners need to be paid and the school teachers need to be paid, et cetera."

So it was a very deft way, he still does that, of dealing with these kinds of problems. So he was always immensely popular. The argument I made at the time and still made to him, after I left as ambassador and came back in other capacities, is, "Mr. President, you are personally very popular. You don't need to have your officials steal the election and move votes in your direction. You'll win by 65 per cent." Of course, in that kind of society, 65 percent is nothing. It has to be 95 per cent. We never succeeded in getting that idea across. But he would have won a free and fair election, no problem.

But he did have this habit of, if there's anything going wrong, the government was to blame. He and Kazhegeldin, in the end, Kazhegeldin was the prime minister, somebody I saw regularly and his son was in my daughter's class in school, so I'd go to the prime minister's residence, pick his son up to go skiing with the kids on weekends and all that, so we had a very good personal relationship as well, had family dinners together and all that sort of thing. I always tell people that story, that's why it's great to have kids in the Foreign Service, because you never know who their schoolmates are going to be, it could be the prime minister's son. But in the end Kazhegeldin got to be quite well respected and Nazarbayev saw him as a threat, threw him out as prime minister about six months before I left and began to accuse him of corruption and other things to the point that Kazhegeldin thought he had to leave the country and he's still out of the country, afraid to come back. There are rumors about discussions through the years of negotiating his way back in. He's probably a bit forgotten by now.

But Nazarbayev, there was what I consider a political group in Kazakhstan. They're not very many: the people who are the *akims*, the governors of the provinces, the government ministers, the people who run the banks. It's always the same group. They all move around, Nazarbayev moves them around, so nobody ever gets too big for his britches, or if you see that somebody is getting too big for their britches they're moved to a different *oblast* as the *akim*, or they're moved out to be an ambassador somewhere. If you were really on the outs, you got to be an ambassador somewhere, we always laughed about that. So he maintains his own very firm position by keeping everybody just a tiny bit off balance.

The other issue with Nazarbayev is his family. He has three daughters. The sons-in-law are the ones who have been rather rapacious, in terms of corruption. I knew them fairly well at the time, two of the sons-in-law. The third son-in-law, the youngest daughter, married the son of the president of Kyrgyzstan just after I left. That marriage broke up pretty quickly, that marriage didn't last. But the two sons-in-law who were Kazakhstani, one, at the time I was there, was the customs director and he was known to be horribly corrupt and especially wanted the customs job because that was always the most lucrative of the government positions. That said, we were able to do a lot of cooperative programs,

in terms of standardizing the customs service, making sure that, for instance, the duties that were charged in Almaty were the same as the duties charged for goods entering in some place, so that American businesses were treated well. But the payoffs that others had to pay were pretty hefty to this son-in-law.

The other son-in-law was smarter in an intellectual sense and he was trained in the oil and gas business and came up through the ranks in the oil and gas business. They're both on the outs now. The one who was the customs director is now basically exiled to Austria, can't get back in the country. And the other one was fired. So the family is no longer quite the political juggernaut that it was.

But it's a very interesting country, in the sense that the politics that I knew when I was there haven't changed all that much in the ten years since I left.

Q: I have a little insight into this. I spent three weeks in Bishkek, I think around '94. I was sent there, I'd been long retired from the Foreign Service, as a consular expert by USIA to pass on about establishing a consular service and all that.

So I have some feel for that area and I was struck by the number of non-governmental organization people who were swarming over the country. I kind of wondered, they all had their own point of view but I'd think they would be kind of intrusive. How did you find them?

JONES: The AID director and the various substantive heads of social reform, the ones I mentioned, were all based in Almaty, so I knew them very well, but they had regional responsibility, so they were responsible for the programs in all five of the former Soviet Central Asian countries. So they were responsible also for the teams in Kyrgyzstan and the NGOs were often the contractors that AID hired to pursue the political reform program or the press reform program or health reform, whatever it was, were all people that worked out of Almaty, so I knew a lot of them.

Were they intrusive? I thought they tended not to be, because especially the good ones, the ones who spent any amount of time there, were extremely good at collaboration with their Kyrgyz, in that case, Kazakh in my case, counterparts and really learned how to talk with their counterparts, make sure that their counterparts knew what they were doing, brought them into it, because the philosophy of the Central Asian programs was to be very short-term. It was very much technical assistance, as opposed to what I call the traditional USAID programs, which I label the "oral rehydration programs," where you just constantly do oral rehydration, you never fix anything.

But the Central Asia programs under USAID were all meant to be very short-term. They were short-term training to bring these highly educated Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Turkmen whoever they were, up from their already excellent level of education up to whatever the technical level was that they needed in order to privatize pharmacies, do preventative health programs, start a stock exchange, start newspapers that understood

about advertising, become a journalist who understood about investigative journalism, that you can't just publish handouts from governments.

So each of them had these rather short-term programs and they were all meant to put themselves out of a job after a certain period of time and many did, depending on which country they were in and which country was better at economic reform. Uzbekistan was a disaster, basically, on economic reforms, did better on the social, health kind of reforms, not badly on the political reforms, up to a degree.

Kyrgyzstan did extremely well on economic reforms, to the point that they're in the World Trade Organization. They're the only one of the Central Asians, that is, at this point. They eventually did very well on political reforms as well, they had their own little revolution there, not so well on military reforms.

So each one had its own capabilities and like I say the successful ones worked themselves out of a job and the ones that didn't work themselves out of a job, who were intrusive or were too expensive or took advantage of USAID were basically fired, most of them, not least because the AID director who was there when I first got there was well known to be really good, he was taken from Central Asia to run the Poland program or the Russia program and then ended up in Afghanistan and Iraq, because he was so good, when things got very difficult there. His successor was the same kind, very positive, aggressive, very flexible, got to have results, if this contractor isn't producing results, we'll find somebody who will and very counterpart-friendly, that was the whole point, was to get as many counterparts as possible trained up, so they could take over a lot of the training function.

Q: Was there much of a short-term training program, sending counterparts to the United States to take a look and see how things are going?

JONES: Yes, there were a lot of programs like that. Sometimes they'd go to the U.S. Lots of times they'd go to Turkey, they'd go to Europe, they'd go to Chile, depending on where the best program was. So, for example, for pension reform we'd send people to Chile, because that was the pension program that Kazakhstan chose as the best one for them. If it was environmental cleanup on the Caspian, we sent them to Norway, because they have the best program. Some of the health reform, pharmaceutical, family planning programs, they took the people to Turkey. Some of the judicial reform work was done in the Hague, where there's a very well known European judicial reform center.

So it was that kind of flexibility that I loved to brag about to the Kazakhstanis. "We're not trying to make you all Americans. We want to get you the best programs that you've picked for yourselves, whether it's in Norway or the Netherlands or Chile or wherever."

Q: What about another factor that, again, I noted and that was the Christian missionaries. They seemed to be all over Kyrgyzstan. I was wondering whether they were a problem?

JONES: There were some in Kazakhstan. I knew them principally because one of the things that we did, thanks to Chevron, is we developed a Little League for Kazakhstani kids who didn't have anything else to do in the summer. Once the Soviet Union left, there were no longer the pioneer camps and all that kind of thing. Then all of us participated as Little League coaches, got kids out of orphanages, basically and then the neighborhood kids would see and then they would all join up, so we had these wonderful Little League teams and sometimes the American missionaries would come and their kids would play on the teams and they would help coach. But there were not that many. My daughter played first base on my team and she was really good at bat.

Q: So it wasn't an intrusive force or something?

JONES: No, but Kazakhstan is a gigantic country, compared to Kyrgyzstan. Kazakhstan is the ninth largest country in the world. It's the size of Western Europe in terms of area, with a tiny population. Think of a country that size, with only 16 million people spread all over the country. Kyrgyzstan is tiny by comparison, with five, six million people. So Westerners in Kyrgyzstan would be a little bit more noticeable than they were in Kazakhstan, probably.

Q: Talk a little about, when you got there, the role and your dealing with the other embassies in the European Union and whatever was going on there, sort of particularly from the European side.

JONES: When I got there, I believe we had only 16 foreign embassies altogether in Kazakhstan. Of course the Russians had a big embassy, the Chinese had a big embassy. The Europeans had a building in which they had three embassies in a single building: the French, the Germans and the British were all in the same building.

What I thought was so interesting is that most of the European ambassadors spoke excellent Russian. In other words, the European countries had taken as much care as we had to make sure that they all had ambassadors who could communicate easily with their Kazakhstani counterparts, because very, very, very few Kazakhstanis, especially the senior levels, spoke English. The foreign minister spoke English and that was about it. He was the only one I could speak English with the entire time I was there.

So it was a small group of ambassadors. I spent a certain amount of time with them. Because they were experts, I found them very interesting to speak with. Everybody had different insights into the country. Several countries were doing a bit of assistance programs. The EU had a combined assistance program that wasn't nearly as extensive as ours and I used to really promote and advocate among my European colleagues that even if they didn't have big programs, that they still should go in and advocate, regionally or on their own, on some of the human rights issues, anti-torture issues, democracy issues, health issues, whatever it was. And they would. They were very active that way.

Once or twice, you would hear, "Oh, I don't have instructions." I'd say, "They have us out here because we know what to do. You don't need an instruction to go into the

government and complain because a newspaper's been closed down. What does Paris care about that? They don't care. We care. We're here because we know these things." So that was kind of my line.

They were a very good group, on the whole. I didn't spend a huge amount of time with them, but I did appreciate knowing them well enough that I could go in and see them and get their insights to add to my own. The EU met regularly among themselves and there was always an EU spokesman, but we also had a NATO group, because Kazakhstan was a Partnership for Peace country.

The U.S. was the NATO lead embassy, so we collaborated with our European colleagues on NATO matters as well, particularly as we were setting up what we called the Central Asia battalion under the auspices of Partnership for Peace. We had developed a Central Asia battalion with the Kyrgyz and the Uzbek militaries. We had a trilateral military group and did a joint exercise one spring when I was there that was a very elaborate exercise under Partnership for Peace, that brought in plane loads, literally, of Russian paratroopers, American paratroopers, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Uzbek paratroopers from MacDill Air Force Base, aerial refueling, with the Central Command commander being the lead jumper as they arrived at this Central Asia battalion exercise area in southern Kazakhstan.

All three U.S. ambassadors were there, the other European and Russian ambassadors. We invited the Chinese to come, everybody to come, so that they could see what kind of exercises we were doing. So they did this major jump and I must say I just sat there in the stands, as you could see the first bodies falling out of airplanes, thinking about their parachutes, "Please open, please open, please open, please open!"

It was extremely successful, and typical of the kind of training that NATO, through Partnership for Peace, did. The scenario for the training in this joint exercise was how to take care of prisoners of war, how to escort a convoy of medical supplies, the Red Cross, in, how to do all of these sort of peacekeeping and peace enforcement kinds of operations with the Uzbek, Kyrgyz and Kazakh troops, along with the Russian paratroopers, American paratroopers, there was some French and Norwegians and others, with the appropriate lunches and dinners and all that sort of thing among the military. We were there in Chimkent [Shymkent] a couple of days doing all of these exercises. It was really heartening, I must say. There was also a Kazakh-organized visit to Turkestan, which included a 9am sheep's head carving for which I had the honors. It makes for a good story--

Q: At that time, I imagine these things change over time, but at that time, what did the Partnership for Peace, this is part of NATO, as I understand it, designed to make other countries that probably shouldn't be in NATO feel happy and part of the process?

JONES: That's to a degree right, but the initial concept was, here's NATO after the breakup of the Soviet Union. There was a very big debate in Washington that I participated in when I was working for Secretary Christopher over should NATO

disband, since the Warsaw Pact had disbanded? And the decision was, no, NATO shouldn't disband, because so many countries, particularly in Eastern Europe and Central Europe, wanted to join NATO, they really, really wanted to join NATO. So the solution was to develop this organization associated with NATO called Partnership for Peace. And the whole idea of Partnership for Peace was simply to have an organization that these countries could join to participate in training exercises and upgrade their capabilities, so that they could be associated with NATO in peacekeeping operations or whatever it might be.

Well, gradually, the demand was so high among the Central Europeans and some of the Eastern Europeans that NATO gradually developed these various hoops, really, for these countries to jump through, in order to qualify, to standardize the qualifications that were going to be required for NATO membership, whether it was a membership action plan, there were various hoops that we developed at NATO for these countries to jump through in order to become qualified.

And that was what happened with the Baltic states, the Eastern Europeans states, so most of the countries who were in Partnership for Peace thought of it as a track to join NATO. The other countries, starting with the Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and then all the Central Asians, the idea was that they would never want to join NATO, that they were too far away, they weren't really Atlantic countries.

But they loved the idea of having a way to join the rest of the world, of having a way to participate in these international organizations that only the big kids were allowed to join and now they were in the big kid category and they could join the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, they could join Partnership for Peace and be associated with NATO, they could aspire to join the World Trade Organization, they could join the Council of Europe if they qualified.

All of these organizations were very, very important to these countries. It's something that I must say a lot of us took on as a fundament of U.S. policy in these countries, including in Central Asia, that the U.S. should encourage this kind of membership or association, because the more these countries are associated and engaged in, if you sign up to the principles of the OSCE, it gave us an extra hook to use, to say, "You've signed up for all these principles on democracy, you've signed up for Partnership for Peace, which requires this kind of collaboration on the Geneva Conventions."

So it became an extra lever that we could use to promote our own bilateral reform agenda, so we could say, "But you joined the OSCE, we didn't force you to join the OSCE and you signed up for these principles. So let's see where the free and fair elections are, or where is your invitation for OSCE observers for your election? You signed up for the principles, the principles have to be implemented here." And it was a great set of talking points to be able to use, because of these organizations.

Q: How did you find the Russian influence there? This had to be a certain amount of anathema to the Russians, this is “their” territory and all of a sudden here NATO and the United States, everybody was getting involved and things were moving along fairly well.

JONES: They’re moving along fairly well. It’s an excellent question, because it was something that we talked about and thought about a lot, we the United States but also the Europeans who were there and involved with OSCE or Partnership for Peace.

The Russians were still in the mode to think of the Kazakhstanis and the other Central Asians as the little brothers that needed their guidance, that needed their leadership, they couldn’t possibly get anything right on their own. And they were quite taken aback and very unhappy about the stronger and stronger role that the United States was playing in these countries and the stronger role that the Europeans were playing, although the United States at that point was way ahead of the Europeans, in terms of assistance programs and that kind of thing.

I made a point of knowing the Russian ambassador, of calling on him right away and going up to him at receptions. I did the same with the Chinese ambassador, for the same reason, because both countries had clear, strong interests in Kazakhstan. And the posture I took and U.S. policy was, absolutely, Russia and China have important interests in Kazakhstan, they have important interests in Central Asia and the United States is not trying to get in the way of those interests. But the United States does have an interest, as does Russia and China, in assuring that there is stability in these regions and that our view is that stability comes best through economic prosperity and through political reforms that bring stability and economic prosperity and, oh, by the way, social reforms and military reforms all conspire to provide the underpinning for this set of reforms. That was the set of talking points I used with them: nothing the United States was doing here is anathema to Russia. A lot of the programs we’re doing in Kazakhstan are the same as the programs in Russia, which they were.

I especially invited the Russian ambassador, the Chinese ambassador, to detailed Central Asia battalion briefings when the U.S. trainers would come in, before we had the big jump, to invite them to the briefing with all of the slides and all of the charts and all of that. And of course they just thought it was a show for them and that the secret stuff was going on behind the door, that we couldn’t possibly be that transparent.

But that was my goal, to be as absolutely transparent as possible and to talk to the Russians and Chinese about why it was important that they participate in the counter drug smuggling effort, or the effort to end trafficking in persons, or at least reduce it, all of these things, because I said, “These are all threats for Russia, too. You don’t want HIV/AIDS going across Kazakhstan into Russia. Why would you want that? So let’s collaborate on an HIV/AIDS program in Karaganda” or wherever it was.

They never really got into it. The Kazakhstanis had the following attitude about Russia and China: for the Kazakhstanis the Russians were easy to know. Most of the

Kazakhstanis had gone to school with their Russian counterparts, they knew them really well. They weren't seen really as a big threat, with one exception.

That was that the Kazakhstanis thought because there were so many ethnic Russians still living in the north, there was still the fear that the Russians could decide at some point to just hop across the border and lop off northern Kazakhstan if they felt like it, if they felt that there were so many ethnic Russians up there that they deserved it.

Which meant, the way I cottoned on to this, was that the prime minister, Kazhegeldin at the time, was adamant that U.S. oil companies win the bids for contracts for production sharing agreements for oil properties along the northern border of Kazakhstan, because they wanted them to be there, with their American engineers, to be the tripwire, basically, they described it in almost those terms to me, to be the tripwire should the Russian troops ever come across the border.

And of course I kept saying, "We're delighted to have Amoco win the bid on the production sharing agreement, but please understand that the U.S., the 82nd Airborne isn't coming here if the Russians come across the border. We'll help negotiate, we'll do all kinds of other things, but the U.S. military isn't coming here if the Russians come across the border."

It never came up, really, that way, but there was still that kind of concern. So the Kazakhstanis, the posture that they took, Nazarbayev took and Kazhegeldin took, was that they picked their fights with the Russians. They really felt the equal of the Russians, even if the Russians didn't treat them as equals and they wouldn't let them get away with murder and stealing properties, the way the Russians would have liked to and were very tough with them. If an American company put in the better deal on a coal mine, then by God the American company got the coal mine, not the Russian company. The same thing with AES as an American company getting some of the electricity properties in the north and the west.

But there were three areas that the Kazakhstanis were cautious about with the Russians. One was Baikonur, this is the space launch station that the Soviets had had on Kazakhstani territory that the Russians still owned, near Karaganda. And the Russians were adamant about the Kazakhstanis paying them back for rehabilitation of the area. So it was a very big negotiation with the Kazakhstanis, about how much they had to pay the Russians for upkeep of Baikonur. They always tread a bit lightly on the whole Baikonur issue.

The other issue the Kazakhstanis were cautious about with the Russians was demarcation of the Caspian. In Soviet days the Iranians had a good chunk of the Caspian and the Soviets had the rest. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, there then became five riparian states to the Caspian. There was a huge intellectual, diplomatic discussion: was it a sea or was it a lake, because the riparian rights obtained differently under international law if it was a sea or a lake. So the Russians wanted a lot more of the Caspian, they didn't

want to give up so many rights on the Caspian and the Kazakhstanis and the Azeris, to a degree the Turkmen, came to the U.S and said, "Help us, help us figure this out!"

And we basically took the posture, through people who were big experts in this, that it should be divided right down the middle and there were ways that you could see where the middle was, depending on where the land was and all that sort of thing.

And as soon as the United States made public statements along these lines -- in '95 was the first time Jim Collins made a statement like that, that that's the way the Caspian should be divided, the Kazakhstanis worked extremely hard to negotiate this with the Russians and worked hard on how to divide up the oil rights, because there were big structures that were being exploited.

Nobody knew how much oil there was there. Now we know, but at the time nobody knew how much oil there was, but there was suspicion, or hope, that there was a tremendous amount, so that division of the Caspian became a very big issue. So that was another area the Kazakhstanis were quite nervous about the Russians and didn't want to rile them.

And the third was a gas property, way on the northern border, north of Petropavlovsk, that the Kazakhstanis were very concerned about making sure they let the Russians pay less for the gas that they exported to Russia, because they just wanted to be very cautious about that.

So it was those three things that the Kazakhstanis really negotiated cautiously with the Russians on. But otherwise they felt very comfortable and the Russian ambassador used to lament to me that he never knew who in the world from Moscow was going to be coming, that they all felt that they could come to Kazakhstan any time. I was telling him I knew exactly if the Secretary of State was coming, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Agriculture. He said, "How do you know that?" I said, "Well, because they wouldn't dream of coming here without talking to me about it first and we'll make all the arrangements." He said, "Oh, you're so lucky, because I never know what the heck is going on!"

The Kazakhstanis had a different view altogether about the Chinese. They were scared to death of the Chinese. These were, after all, former Soviet apparatchiks and it sounds like they had internalized the standard issue Soviet paranoia about the Chinese.

Q: I know the Kyrgyz were, too. When you've got six million people, on a border with a billion and a half.

JONES: I thought it was a holdover from the Soviet era, the kind of "yellow peril" sort of era, where there was constant fighting along the Sino-Soviet border, as you remember and the Kazakhstanis, the way they first worked on their fear of the Chinese, was that they took it upon themselves to negotiate every single border disagreement or border uncertainty with the Chinese.

The foreign minister of Kazakhstan at the time was a man named Tokayev, who was a China hand. Many of the Kazakhstani diplomats had been relegated to the Third World postings in the Soviet foreign ministry and he happened to be a China expert, knew the Chinese very well and just made it a practice of negotiating every single border agreement and succeeded in doing that. And the visual image I have of that is that they wanted to establish an impermeable sort of glass boundary around Kazakhstan. And they were extremely careful about the Uighurs, who are Chinese Muslims, who had a bit of a population in Kazakhstan. They would not permit them to do anything political. They made sure there was nothing that the Chinese could ever complain about politically in Kazakhstan, so they had a glass wall that the Chinese could never get a handhold on to climb over that wall and get across the border.

But the Kazakhstani, when American military officials would come or even sometimes political officials and give them a military briefing and say that they knew that the secret Chinese plan was in 25 years or 20 years or whatever is to say, "Look at all the Chinese that have crossed the border. Eastern Kazakhstan really is Chinese, so we'll just take it."

They were completely convinced that this was the Chinese plan, so they also, the Kazakhstani, were very, very careful not to allow ownership of land, they didn't want foreigners to own land, so that the Chinese couldn't. They were very careful about the border trade back and forth, Kazakhstani going to China to pick up cheap items to bring back to sell, they were very suspicious of that. And I imagine the Kyrgyz had a lot of the same fears and concerns.

Q: Just the same problem we have with the Mexican border, except completely overwhelming.

JONES: And a lot of the borders are 14,000 feet high or higher, especially in Kyrgyzstan. For quite a long time the Kyrgyz had Russian border guards along the Chinese border. They didn't try to even guard it themselves.

Q: The Russians still have troops, I think, in some of those places.

JONES: They have some in Tajikistan. I think they're gone from Kyrgyzstan, I'm pretty sure.

Q: Was Turkey making any more of "greater Turkey?" I'm not talking about annexation, but Turkish influence and all. When this all happened, the lights really went on in Ankara.

JONES: Turkey was a very, very big influence in Kazakhstan. The physical image I have is, Turkey was quite away and so therefore could be seen as a very friendly, very allied, kind of country. The Turks established a federation of Turkic states, something like that of course the Kazakhstani belonged to.

Their influence there was very positive. It was collaborative in terms of the military. Of course with NATO and the Partnership for Peace, the Turks were right in there with us.

And the biggest reflection of the Turks in Kazakhstan were the Turkish construction companies. They were all over the place. They were hired to basically build the new capital in Astana. If a new hotel went up, it was Turkish-built, almost without exception.

The other group that was fairly big in the same way the Turks were were Israelis. There was a very good relationship with Israelis. Of course a lot of them were Russian Jews. There were all kinds of joint ventures with Israeli companies and Kazakh companies. There were some three-way ventures, Israeli, U.S., Kazakh companies, especially in food and dairy kinds of production. But especially after all my years in the Middle East, it was sort of interesting to be able to appear somewhere with the Israeli ambassador and have it be a positive thing.

Q: Beth, what about Iran and Islam? Particularly, let's talk about Iran, first, because the Iranians were on a roll at that time, weren't they?

JONES: The Iranians were on a roll. The Iranians actually thought they could influence the Kazakhstanis to a greater degree than they succeeded in doing. They sent a lot of proselytizers, Shi'a proselytizers, of course, into Kazakhstan, but they were singularly unsuccessful, for two reasons.

The first is the Soviet Union had basically wiped out the Muslim religion in Kazakhstan. There were no Islamic centers of learning in Kazakhstan, the way there were in Uzbekistan. There were no traditional Islamic centers, no traditional mosques, through the centuries, in Kazakhstan, because it was such a nomadic culture through the centuries, even before Genghis Khan. That meant that there was no place for Islam to take hold, really, in Kazakhstan, in an intellectual sense and the few mosques that remained, the few Kazakhstanis who kind of remembered Islam, were Sunni, they weren't Shi'a.

So the Iranians were singularly unsuccessful in recruiting allies in Kazakhstan. We did have intelligence, however, that Iranian agents were around. We had at various points intelligence that they were targeting the U.S. embassy or they were targeting this oil company, that oil company. Of course, the minute we knew of that kind of threat we'd sit down with the oil company executives there and work up the threat prevention and help them out and all that sort of thing.

So we had a few incidents like that through the three years that I was there, where we had to work hard to conduct counterintelligence on Iranian operatives in Kazakhstan. We also had, with the Kazakhstanis, a good intelligence liaison. We had a station. The station chief was declared. It was a bit of a competition with the KGB, frankly, because a lot of the Kazakhstani intelligence personnel were still very beholden to the KGB.

But, again, our station people were very positive with them and very collaborative: “We’d like to share this intelligence with you. We know you’re collecting good intelligence. Will you share it with us?”

So the Kazakstanis weren’t being treated, again, the intel people, were not being treated as second class citizens, the way the Russians treated them. So we were able to do quite a good job, our station, on establishing a good liaison cooperation, especially where the Iranians were concerned and those kinds of threats.

Q: I imagine the Kazakhs sure as hell didn’t want to have the Iranians stage something on their soil?

JONES: Absolutely not. They were highly suspicious, as they rightly should have been, of the Iranians in that respect. So we had no worries, really, about cooperation from Kazakhstan on the intelligence side, or sort of working on counterterrorism kinds of issues and that was an issue, even then.

We also were very interested in the bin Laden family in Kazakhstan. I knew about Al Qaeda already from having come from the Near East bureau and was very interested to see that one of the big construction companies in Kazakhstan was a bin Laden brother, not associated with Osama bin Laden, as it turns out, but we were always, his gifts were in the presidential palace, along with everybody else’s gifts. This was before bin Laden was a household name in the United States, but we all knew all about the bin Ladens.

Q: I lived in a bin Laden house in Dhahran.

JONES: There you go! So it was very, very well known there.

The other Iran issue with the Kazakstanis, they were having a terrible time with the Russians, getting the oil out. Whenever the Kazakstanis seemed a little too independent, collaborating too much with Turkey or the U.S., the Russians would just close the pipelines and that was a disaster for the Kazakstanis at the time, because that was how they made any revenues whatsoever. So their budget depended on oil being able to transit these pipelines that all went through Russia.

So the United States did two things at the time, because of this very political use of the pipelines as a threat to Kazakhstan. That’s when we launched the multiple pipelines policy, which meant that the United States would support politically the development of an alternative pipeline that did not go through Russia and that didn’t empty the oil out into tankers in the Black Sea, because we knew from Turkey that oil tankers going through the Turkish straits were so threatened, not least because they were mostly single hull tankers and so they were easily damaged and there could be oil spills, but just transiting, the navigation of the Turkish straits was extremely difficult. Storms could come up. And so there was a tremendous Turkish fear of spoiling these fabulous Turkish beaches.

So the U.S. developed this multiple pipeline policy and started working with the Azeris and the Georgians and the Turks on what became the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, which is now functioning. And as the United States announced this multiple pipeline policy which resulted in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, one of the other things the United States did is we at the same time had this policy under the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act of not permitting any business with Iran and Libya.

The Kazakhstanis in the meantime very much wanted, since they couldn't get their oil out reliably through Russia, they wanted to start of negotiate with the Iranians to get oil out through Iran, because they could of course tanker it down to Neka on the Iranian coast and get it down into the Persian Gulf. This was, of course, totally contrary to ILSA, to the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, but one of the things I worked on, successfully, was to get a cutout for the Kazakhstanis, to say until the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline was built, that the Kazakhstanis could do a swap operation with the Iranians to sell oil in Iran and the Iranians would pay them with oil that was shipped then out of an Iranian port.

And the Kazakhstanis were very happy with us for doing this. They shipped their first oil to Neka. The Iranians said, "Thank you very much. We'll pay you when we sell the oil from Khorramshahr." And the Iranians managed to not pay the Kazakhstanis until the price of oil had dropped very significantly, between '96 and '97 it went way, way down.

So even though the Iranians were politically very supportive of Kazakhstan and very much wanted to bring these countries into their orbit, when it got down to a commercial deal they were extremely avaricious and the good feelings about Kazakhstan didn't translate into any kind of a trade relationship that gave the Kazakhstanis any comfort whatsoever. So that one cutout that we got politically for the Kazakhstanis they actually never used again, because they were so badly screwed by the Iranians on the sale of oil.

Q: What about presidential, cabinet visits? Did you get many of those?

JONES: I don't think I had one cabinet visit while I was there. The most senior person who visited was Hillary Clinton. She had an excellent visit. She was very well briefed. She did a great job, I must say. She had a whole tour of Central Asia. She gave all the right speeches, did the health work, talked to women lawyers and did a big sort of public policy, judicial ethics speech.

We had a couple of congressional delegations come.

Q: Were you there when President Clinton started to go through his troubles? First there was Whitewater and then there was Monica Lewinski and all that. Were you there then?

JONES: Yes, I was there, especially, Whitewater was not a big deal. Monica Lewinsky, I remember watching his speech on television in my office.

Q: It's bad enough to be the ambassador, but to be a woman ambassador. There are a lot of little cracks going on. How'd you find this?

JONES: Well, to be honest, the Kazakhstanis mostly said, "He's a man! What do you expect? Why are you making such a big deal of this?" And then they would just go about their business. I actually felt no degradation of the relationship at all. He was a long way away, felt that way, too, to me and felt that way to the Kazakhstanis. So as far as they were concerned, President Clinton and Washington were a big deal.

President Nazarbayev had one trip to Washington while I was there and I went with him, fabulous Oval Office meeting with President Clinton. It was no problem whatsoever, as far as any of them was concerned. Jim Collins was the assistant secretary equivalent at the State Department, he came at least once or twice. Steve Sestanovich then took over from Jim, he came once. So those were the senior visits they had from the area experts, shall we say.

Q: Well, talk a bit about the visit to Washington.

JONES: President Nazarbayev was extremely eager for the visit. I of course remembered the back and forth about Nazarbayev getting his first visit to Washington, when poor Secretary Christopher had to go way out on a limb to say, "Yes, you'll have a visit to the White House" in order to get him to sort of say positive things about signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The thing that I found most interesting about Nazarbayev's visit, I went ahead, I met him at the airport, I rode with him from Andrews into Blair House, where he was staying and I had met with him on a regular basis and he was the big cheese in Kazakhstan and very self-confident and constantly telling me what he thought about this or that, with one exception, I need to tell you that story.

But when I was riding with him from Andrews to Blair House, he was very nervous. He knew his schedule by heart and he said, "How should I talk to President Clinton? How should I talk to" whoever else he was meeting with, Gore. He knew Gore well. Gore had been there before I got there and they had a great relationship.

And I actually didn't expect him to ask me that question. I was ready to chit chat with him. I thought, "Okay, he's asked me a question. I'm going to be honest with him." I said, "Mr. President, you have a tendency to give all your talking points at once and then you say, 'I'm listening' and you expect your counterparts to give all of his talking points at once. It's not really the American style to do it that way. Since you're in Washington, I would suggest that you raise one subject at a time and ask for the president's response each time, so it comes across as more of a conversation the way you and I are having right now in the car."

He looked at me like "Oh, wow, okay" and he did it that way. He really was good about that.

The other aspect of the visit that I was very prepared for and had prepared the way for was that this American advisor Nazarbayev was very close to a guy named Jim Giffen, who had worked on arranging the private parts of the visit. We had arranged all of the U.S. government parts, appropriately so. But one of the things I was worried about was that Giffen would try to join the Kazakhstani delegation to the White House and everything else and I just took Giffen aside and said, “Jim, I know you think you ought to be in the Kazakhstani delegation” because he was constantly talking about “my president,” meaning Nazarbayev. I said, “You’re not in. You’re not coming into any of the meetings. You’re not a Kazakhstani, you’re not a Kazakhstani official. So just don’t embarrass yourself about all this.”

And of course in the meantime Jim Giffen was very well known as being sort of the bagman for Nazarbayev. The American oil companies couldn’t stand him. And, as we now know, he’s under indictment in the Southern District Federal Court of New York for a lot of the kinds of things that we all knew he was doing and I’d been reporting on all this time. So that was one aspect of it.

Part of the Nazarbayev visit then, we did all the Washington work, which came off well enough. We went to Houston and that had all been arranged by Giffen. I flew on President Nazarbayev’s plane, which was very nice and Giffen had made all the reservations in the hotel and was paying for all of the hotel rooms and I had to make quite a big stink to pay my own hotel bill, to make sure that there was never any question that this person that I thought should probably be in jail was paying my hotel bill.

There’s one story I want to tell about Nazarbayev, when Yeltsin came to visit. This was at the time that the Taliban had just started to take over in Afghanistan and were moving from the south, where they’d been based, in Kandahar, to the north. They’d gotten up to Mazar-e Sharif and there was tremendous nervousness all through Central Asia and in Moscow about what this meant. Of course Washington was very nervous as well.

What was fortunate, of course, is I had served in Afghanistan, so I knew the terrain really well. And there were a lot of rumors in town that the Russians were coming because they wanted to persuade the Central Asians that Russian troops should come back, certainly to Uzbekistan and maybe even to Kazakhstan to defend against the Taliban. And that was something that we, the United States, thought was not in our interests, to have Russian troops back in there. It was all well and good to have this friendly rivalry, but these countries didn’t need Russian troops to come back in.

We were pretty sure that the Kazakhstanis were equally unhappy about the idea that Russian troops should come, but we weren’t really sure if they felt they could hold them off. But we knew that Yeltsin was coming to Almaty and all of the other Central Asians were coming to Almaty for this conference. And I’d been talking to the foreign minister, I’d been talking to the prime minister, with our talking points and I got out one of my maps of Afghanistan, was talking about the terrain and the fact that I thought the Central Asian battalion was up and running and maybe they could do the defensive posture and

maybe the Taliban wouldn't try to come across the border anyway and this kind of collaboration would be a better way to do it, rather than for Russian troops to come in, because who knew when the Russian troops would be gone?

All of a sudden, I get a call from the president's office to please come to see the president in 45 minutes. But I also knew that Yeltsin was arriving, this was at ten o'clock in the morning, was arriving at one o'clock. And I had all kinds of issues that I needed to talk to the president about anyway, I'd been asking for an appointment. "Come in 45 minutes." So I did and I had my whole list of questions.

And Nazarbayev only wanted to talk about Afghanistan. He didn't know I'd been posted there but I had brought my map with me and so we had the map. It was just the two of us. It was one of the few times I didn't take a note taker with me, because I wasn't sure enough about what the subject was. We talked about the Taliban and what it was about, what were the Pakistanis were doing with the *mujahideen* and what were all the *muj* groups doing. Of course I knew all that from Pakistan.

And he said, "You know, I'm really nervous about what the Russians are going to do here. I didn't really want Yeltsin to come. I don't think we need this meeting. But I really, really don't want Russian troops to come to Uzbekistan. I'm very worried that Karimov is going to cave and he's going to let them in, but Karimov doesn't really like the Russians, either. I'm going to push against this. What is the U.S. posture?"

And I told him. I said, "We think that you all are capable of this, you don't need to have Russian troops there."

He said, "Great! Okay!"

Whenever I met with Nazarbayev and I met with him once every six weeks or so, I would leave his office and I would go out by myself or with the foreign minister, if he was in the meeting and there would be a little press gaggle there and there'd be questions about what was the meeting about and always before I left Nazarbayev I would say, "I know the press is out there. This is what I think I should say. Is it okay with you, Mr. President?" to be sure we were coordinated.

And I did it again this time. I said, "Okay, what should I say?"

And he said, "Let's just see what happens." And he walked out with me, for the first time he'd done that and of course all the journalists talked to him first, obviously. "I'm really happy that my colleague, Elizabeth Jones, was able to be with me today. She brings warm, strong greetings from President Clinton in Washington. We recalled this very successful trip I made. We recalled the upcoming visit of Ambassador Jim Collins."

It was all a very big affirmation that "the U.S. is with me" to the press and it was a couple of hours before Yeltsin was arriving and I thought, "Okay, this has been quite a lesson in world politics." I didn't have to say anything, really. But he had thought this through and

he thought, “That’s the way I’m going to send the signal to Moscow that he better not screw with me.”

Q: You left when?

JONES: I left in October of ’98.

Q: How did you use your embassy and what did you think of the people there?

JONES: I had a great embassy. Ironically, the staff at the embassy, there were several members of the embassy staff whom I had known at previous posts. And the way that developed, it developed for a couple of reasons.

One is that the first staffing of all of the Central Asian and probably Caucasus embassies was done by Soviet hands, Russia hands, because it seemed obvious that they were the people who would be the most suited. It turned out that quite a number of them really objected to the high level of corruption and the very Middle Eastern, South Asian hospitality kind of way of doing business and so the second wave, the second set of staffing that went to these embassies, was mostly from the Middle East and South Asia, especially people who already had some Russian or wanted to learn Russian or there was time to learn Russian, whatever.

So I, who had no intention whatsoever and no thought that I might end up in Central Asia, had been encouraging various of my colleagues from Pakistan days to take jobs in Almaty. One was the head of the political section, Janet Bogue and the other was a more junior person, the other political officer, Kent Logsdon and his wife were going out as the public affairs officer. So when it came time for me to be asked if I would like to go to Kazakhstan, of course I wanted to go to Kazakhstan but then I thought, “Oh, my gosh, I have great people in the embassy whom I know already.” So that was already a great start for me at the embassy.

The other thing to know about the embassy in Almaty was that it was the regional office for AID, regional for all of the five Central Asian countries. So we had a very large AID mission there and my predecessor, Bill Courtney, his wife had worked at the AID mission, so there was already sort of a connection there.

When I got to Almaty in October, it also turned out that the noncommissioned officer in charge at the Defense Attaché’s office was also a former colleague from Pakistan. So I had a really wonderful welcome when I got there, with people who knew me and knew the situation out there.

Q: Did you feel there was sort of a fit between having dealt with Pakistan and its government, corruption, the whole thing and Kazakhstan?

JONES: Definitely. There wasn’t so much a connection with Pakistan, but the way things worked was familiar, in the following respect: those of us who’d worked in these kinds of

societies were not instantly outraged by corruption, by various ways of telling the truth which weren't necessarily the way that you and I might tell the truth. So I felt that we had a very flexible reaction to how to do business out there and had a way that we could talk among ourselves, what was the best way to approach this person, what was the best way to approach that person, in that kind of a situation.

The other thing I found was that, very quickly found, particularly in my initial calls on various ministers and other senior Kazakhstani officials is that they really appreciated the way the U.S. government had come in to offer advice on political reform, economic reform, social reform and military reform and the way we did it turned out to be so different from their experience with the Soviet Union that our advice was taken really very readily.

In other words, the U.S. experts who went in could see that the Kazakhstanis were extremely well educated, had a very good idea of where they wanted to take the country, but lacked the technical expertise. And so, for instance, a man who's extremely good at economic reform basically offered them a pallet of solutions, or ways that they might undertake economic reform, so that they could pick a certain kind of banking reform, would lead to this kind of tax reform, would lead to that kind of customs regulations. Or they could do a different kind of banking reform that would lead to a different kind of tax reform, et cetera.

And the practice of the American experts was to go in and say, "Here's some ideas for you. You know the direction you want to take your country. You decide which of these you want to pick and we'll help you implement this." In other words, we didn't try to tell them what to do. We made suggestions to them and we therefore came across as vastly different from the Soviets, who had been and still were very condescending, very much in the mode of patting the Kazakhstanis on the head and saying, "There, there, we'll tell you what to do, you poor things, you don't know what to do."

Q: Sort of barbarians out there.

JONES: Exactly right. And I could see it even in my Russian colleague, the Russian ambassador. There were 16 foreign ambassadors in Almaty when I got there, the Russians and the Chinese and the Americans being the main ones. And the Russian ambassador was terribly condescending at all times to the Kazakhstanis, in ways that were perfectly obvious to the rest of us.

Q: It's interesting that you say this, because I've been interviewing Nick Burns and he was telling a story, he was I think with the NSC at the time, but when Boris Yeltsin, I think the Vancouver conference, early on,

JONES: Yes, I was there, actually.

Q: And Clinton was sitting next to Yeltsin and the rest of the G-8 were being very condescending to the Russians and all and Yeltsin, according to Burns, grabbed

Clinton's hand and squeezed it and Clinton moved in support Yeltsin. This is something that's forgotten. These personal things linger on and how you deal with this, this of course is the theme of The Quiet American, Graham Greene's book about Vietnam.

Did you get any feel for the oil people there, how they came in and were they sort of, again, because we're up against the same thing, here is a rich field, people who are after big bucks are moving in there?

JONES: Right, we knew the oil people very well, because it was all very new territory for them, too. I had met the head of Chevron when I came in with Secretary Christopher in late '93, so we had a little bit of a grounding, but Chevron was very big of course in Kazakhstan at that time. Mobil came in, Exxon was separate, then. Amoco was there.

We had a very collegial group of oil company representatives in Almaty. At that early point there was a very big fight between the Kazakhstani government, the oil minister, whose name was Balgymbayev and Chevron, because the contract that Chevron and the Kazakhstanis had, they had a PSA, a production sharing agreement, with the Kazakhstanis way in western Kazakhstan, in Tengiz.

And that agreement allowed the Kazakhstanis to ship oil to the "far abroad," as opposed to the "near abroad." However, there was really no way to get it to the far abroad, number one and number two the Kazakhstanis were extremely eager to ship to the near abroad, because they knew they could be paid by the Russians and by others very easily and they needed to be paid, they had nothing coming into their treasury.

Well, the Chevron representative stood on principle, very much to the displeasure and anger of Balgimbayev, which meant that I couldn't get an appointment with Balgymbayev for quite a long time. He was the oil minister and I really needed to talk to him. And I kept asking and asking and asking. I finally sent a message that Strobe Talbott had asked me to speak to him, which was true, because I told Strobe I was having this difficult time. Wasn't too sure it was all because of Chevron, but it turned out it was. So when I first sat down with Balgymbayev, he said, "So what message do you have for me from Chevron?"

I said, "Mr. Minister, I have no message from Chevron. I can't imagine why you'd think I would. I have a message from President Clinton for you. Would you like to hear the message from President Clinton?"

And he sat back, almost slack jawed, shocked, that I wasn't the Chevron representative and I was speaking on behalf of the president of the United States. And from then on we did fine, in terms of the discussions. But it was an interesting insight, for me, into how quickly the American ambassador could be identified with one particular American company if you weren't careful. And there was nothing that Bill Courtney had done to make him think that, but that wasn't the point. For all I know, the Chevron representative was saying, "The American ambassador agrees with me" or the American government, whatever, I don't know what he was saying. In any case, we got through that difficulty.

There were a couple of other things that I thought were very interesting at the time. There were several issues that were difficult for the oil companies. There was difficulty getting insurance. They were having difficulty with importing large equipment tax free, which was what their agreements called for.

And I was constantly going in to the oil minister or to the prime minister or to the economics ministry or to the head of customs on various issues that various of the oil companies had. The Amoco representative, who was a Canadian, actually, wonderful man, came and suggested to me at one point, fairly early on, he said, “Beth, wouldn’t it be a good idea if we got together all of the oil companies, not just the American oil companies and their respective ambassadors and formed a little group to discuss these issues, because I’m pretty sure that the problems that we’re having with customs and we’re having with insurance are industry-wide, it’s not just Americans.”

And I thought it was a grand idea. We pulled together a list of ten companies. It turned out to be six countries involved. I called each of my five counterparts and suggested that we meet on a monthly basis and we called it the oil and gas working group. Every month we would have the six ambassadors and their respective oil companies and I invited the technical assistance experts in each of the fields that we thought we needed to cover from USAID and from any of the others, the Japanese or the British or the EU, whoever had experts on the ground.

And we would meet for almost two hours once a month, with a preset agenda, presentations by either the oil companies or the technical assistance people on what were the problems that they were having and what might the solutions be, the generic solutions that we could propose to Nazarbayev, the oil minister, the prime minister, whatever. It worked extremely well. I, frankly, was usually the one who did the talking on behalf of the ambassadors. But by being able to go in and say, “These six ambassadors agree that this is the kind of insurance program that would make sense for Kazakhstan, here’s the way this law needs to be rewritten,” we got through the whole thing. And we made huge progress as far as the oil companies were concerned; frankly, as far as the government of Kazakhstan was concerned, on these issues.

And we used that as a model for other groups. For example, we found that a lot of the retail companies, Proctor and Gamble, were having all kinds of customs difficulties. Their goods would come in fine in the Almaty customs office but they wouldn’t come in fine through other customs offices. In other words, customs rules were being implemented separately. So the commercial counselor formed a similar, they called it the customs working group and we invited all of the international retail companies to come and he did it with the respective commercial officers and the technical assistance people. And the same thing, we went to the customs people and said, “Okay, you want all of these foreign companies to be here. Here are some ways to assure that they’ll stay, in terms of customs revisions and that kind of regulatory provision.” It was a model that has become a best practice.

Q: It makes very good sense.

JONES: Just one quick thing about the embassy. The first year I had a DCM that didn't work out very well. Actually, she just couldn't quite become active enough in the way I needed it done. And so Janet Bogue became my DCM, she moved up from the political section and a new man came in as the head of the political section.

And in the meantime the AID director with whom we had done fabulous work, AID in Central Asia is run quite differently from AID elsewhere, because the policy arm of USAID sits in the State Department now, under the Freedom Support Act. So we found ourselves able to move programs around incredibly flexibly, much more quickly and with complete unanimity of policy ideas between me and the

Q: I suppose, if they were separate, if you had the head of an AID mission who was a forestry expert and all of a sudden you've got a lot of trees being planted.

JONES: That's right and he was very policy oriented, he was acknowledged to be extremely good and very quickly was pulled out, really good. His deputy was Patti Buckles, who was equally good and she became the AID director and a new deputy director came in. We had Michelle Logsdon as the public affairs officer, I was the ambassador, Janet Bogue was the DCM and the head of the consular section was also a woman and the doctor was a woman. So the story I'm heading for is that there were a tremendous number of senior women at Embassy Almaty and we got along extremely well. We were, I think, a real juggernaut for action and change and I thought we were a real example of how it can work well, no matter which gender is in charge.

The Kazakhstani government didn't bat an eye about dealing with women more than men and ironically or interestingly enough, all of my defense attachés were men, but just as I was leaving the new defense attaché who came in was a woman, also.

Q: Which brings me to sort of a generic question. Were you able to play sort of the female card from time to time, not necessarily among your embassy official group, but in government circles, either the wives of or ministers or sub-ministers or something like this, because my impression, watching my wife, I've been married for 52 years, what goes on on the telephone is just incredible, the information that gets passed on, it's mostly medical information, but this is obviously a wonderful intelligence source. Did you find that?

JONES: I did. It worked very well in a couple of places. It worked extremely well in Pakistan, where I could be on both sides of the room, the women's side and the men's side and the women gossiped as much, or more, on political issues as the men did and so I was able to get just as much, if not more, political intelligence from the women as from the men. Of course part of the time there Benazir Bhutto was prime minister, so that also helped, frankly.

A few other times, Egypt I would say that was to some degree the case. But, there, Egyptian women were right in the middle of politics with the men. There wasn't quite the separation of the room as you found in Pakistan.

In Central Asia, the Soviet heritage was very gender neutral, I thought, to a certain degree, so there were plenty of women lawyers, women engineers, women doctors, all that sort of thing. The only way that it really manifested itself is as I went out to the regions to meet with the *akims*, with the governors. The *akims* were all men and the deputy *akims* were all women, just about, it was very interesting. The other thing that I thought was particularly interesting about women in Central Asia and I think this is true, it was certainly true in Kazakhstan and it was true throughout Central Asia and that is that one of the ways that gender differences did work in the Soviet Union is that a lot more women learned foreign languages than men did. A lot more women were teachers. So there was some bias that way.

But what it meant with the breakup of the Soviet Union was that the women who spoke English or French or Spanish or whatever were the ones that were hired first by the foreign companies and they were hired first as translators or relatively junior staff, but because they were all so well educated, virtually all so well educated, they were very quickly worked their way up to being the local rep. So by the time I got there and I got there in '95, so only four years after independence, the Motorola rep was not an American expat, but was a Kazakhstani woman who had started as their interpreter and she now ran the office. Chevron and the other oil companies found this, too. The people that they'd hired as translators turned out to be excellent and they became the head of HR or head of this, head of that. So that was a very interesting phenomenon.

We found in our embassy that we had to consciously, really work, to recruit Kazakhstani men for the embassy, because there was a vast preponderance in the embassy of women. When we had men, it was ethnic Russian men. Mostly they were in the guard force, as opposed to in any of the senior level professional positions. And we had to really work hard to recruit an ethnic Kazakh man to be one of our political/economic FSN's, which we really wanted.

Q: Why was this?

JONES: To generalize, which is always a bit unfair, the men had a much harder time dealing with the breakup of the Soviet Union. They lost status, started drinking. If they weren't drinking, they went to the tea shops. They weren't making money. Most of the women, the Kazakhstani women in the embassy, were divorced, most of them were single mothers. And it's just now that the ethnic Russian men and Kazakh men are recovering and indeed the younger generation is very dynamic and moving all over the place, but the ones who were sort of fortysomething at the time of the breakup, most of them fell apart.

Q: I know about that time when I went to Bishkek, the pattern seemed to be, I talked to a couple of our women officers and they didn't like to go out, particularly, because you'd

go and a man would order a bottle of vodka and all night just sit and drink vodka, an awful lot of drinking.

JONES: There was a tremendous amount of drinking and at every official event, lunch or dinner, there were always the vodka toasts. I quickly made it a little personal policy that whenever I was out in an official situation like that I just said I didn't drink. I do drink, but that was the only way I could avoid the vodka shots and I knew that in my position I had to be able to do the toasts, because everybody has to make a toast, it goes around the table, et cetera. It all had to be done in Russian and there was no way after a vodka shot or two. I could have done anything that was remotely respectable and not embarrassing had I been downing the vodka.

And that was one of the things that I could get away with as a woman. The male ambassadors who came after me and before me had a really hard time with that, but I could get away with it and I was always grateful that my Kazakhstani counterparts didn't expect me to be a big vodka drinker, fortunately.

Q: I ran across this in Yugoslavia.

JONES: I'm sure.

Q: It was not fun.

JONES: It got so we called it "terroristic hospitality."

Q: You were mentioning something, Beth, that I've experienced and I think most supervisors in the Foreign Service have experienced and that is the people who come into the Foreign Service are not used to being lied to. It's kind of American. Obviously, we have lawyers, politicians, so stretching the truth is not something that is un-American, but the point is that blatant lying, or people not being embarrassed to be caught in a lie, it sets a well educated American off and sometimes this causes a real problem. For me, as a consular officer, of course, this is a particular case, because you're asking questions and you were getting the answer they thought you wanted and often untrue. But the point being that for an educated American it's sort of almost a loss of virginity, you go out to these places and say, "Okay, this is the way they do it" and you understand it and understand how to deal with it and not take this as being a moral test that will set your relationship in a certain way for the rest of time.

JONES: To be fair, I was very fortunate that Jim Collins had a chiefs of mission conference just before all of us, the second wave of ambassadors to the former Soviet republics went out, and included all of the ones leaving and all of the new ones. And it was the ones leaving who were the ones saying to various of us, "Oh, I can't stand it. Oh, my God, so much lying." And they were the old Soviet hands, who just couldn't handle the sort of freewheeling kind of atmosphere in Central Asia.

I actually didn't find lying to be an issue in Kazakhstan, nothing like trying to deal with the nuclear issue in Pakistan, nothing like that. So I wasn't too sure where that whole thing came from. In fact, I found the Kazakhstani refreshingly direct and very straightforward about what they would and wouldn't accept. It was very easy to deal with them that way. It was very relaxed, at least in terms of the hospitality issue and all of that. It wasn't particularly Russian. It was much more Central Asian or Asian or Middle Eastern.

Q: There is a tribal thing there

JONES: A bit.

Q: Well, then, is there anything we should we talk about, any visits or any—

JONES: A couple things. One was, the prime minister for most of the time I was there was a man named Kazhegeldin, who was very much an activist, very much wanted to have a big U.S. presence, meaning a U.S. business presence and the embassy was fine, too. We were able to do a tremendous amount of work with him on upgrading our military-to-military relationship. We started the Central Asia battalion with him and Nazarbayev's defense minister. It was an extremely active period, where almost anything we suggested was going to happen.

I would sit down with the section chiefs and the agency heads in the embassy quite regularly and say, "Whatever it is that we suggest, we've got to make sure we know what we're doing, because we know they're going to accept it and we've got to be responsible in the kinds of things we propose." So it was very, very energizing and a tremendous amount of fun.

The reason I mention Kazhegeldin in particular is that he eventually ended up in a very big fight with the president, with President Nazarbayev and to a degree the U.S. was in the middle of it, because Kazhegeldin was known to be pro-U.S. But one of the people who fueled the fight between Kazhegeldin and Nazarbayev was an American businessman called Jim Giffen, who worked for Nazarbayev. He had worked in the oil business in the Soviet Union and came over to Nazarbayev at the breakup of the Soviet Union with the Chevron deal and was very influential with Nazarbayev and with the oil deals.

The American oil company representatives used to come up to me all the time to explain how much Jim Giffen was influencing or skewing the deals, how much tougher he was making it for them to negotiate, he was jacking up the price all the time from the Kazakhstani side on various of the arrangements and was believed, throughout the period of time that I was there, to be seriously corrupt and to be Nazarbayev's bagman.

And many of the American oil company representatives who came in to see me came to plead with me to tell Washington about Giffen and make sure the FBI and Department of Justice had the goods on him and I would say, "I don't have the goods on him. I know

what the rumors are, but you guys have to bring in the goods. If you know how much he's asked in terms of a kickback or whatever on your oil deals, you're going to have to tell me or have the documents sent by your representatives in Washington to the Department of Justice."

And I mention this because of course Giffen has now been indicted under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and hasn't gone to trial, yet. He was very much around town. I made it a practice to stay in touch with him, so I knew what kind of nonsense he was purveying to the government and would be able to counter it if I needed to. I wanted to know what he was saying about oil deals and would report it quite regularly to Washington, in very highly classified channels, which I mention now because all of that's been declassified in connection with the court case.

What's interesting to me is that the rumor around town was that Giffen was still very connected to the U.S. government. People believed this and he maintained this. He would pretend that he was really speaking for the CIA or he was really the unanointed American ambassador in Almaty, which was of course perfectly ridiculous, because barely anybody in Washington would see him, because he was so well known to be such a shyster.

But it was those challenges that I hadn't expected as an ambassador to have, with an American citizen, of all people. And the legacy of Giffen lives on, because of this

Q: How did you deal with this, both internally with your embassy and also externally with the Nazarbayev government?

JONES: Two ways, with one theme. There was no question in my mind or in the mind of a single person in the U.S. embassy that Giffen was a corrupt individual who was a bad influence on Nazarbayev and the Kazakhstani government. He was also very well known to be quite a drunkard and a womanizer.

There are all kinds of stories, some of which I witnessed, of him saying outrageous things in a restaurant to a table full of American high school kids, that kind of thing: "Don't you know who I am? I could buy and sell you! I could have your father killed!" Just outrageous, outrageous stuff. And the kids all knew about him, because it's a pretty small community, "that Giffen guy." Every so often I would run into him at a hotel at the end of some event and he would be completely plastered and go on and on and on in a drunken monologue about whatever he was going on about.

The rule in the embassy was that I would see him on a one on one basis if he wanted to and then I would report absolutely everything, almost as verbatim as I could, about what he was saying and report it to Washington, so there was a record, so that even though I was meeting with him it would be in terms of finding out what this corrupt individual was up to, so that there was no worry that somehow I was on his side.

That was within the embassy and within the U.S. government.

Q: Why would you do it one on one? Why not have Janet or somebody else sitting in?

JONES: Because he wouldn't talk. He wouldn't go on and on about all of his nonsense. My practice was always to have a note taker with me whenever possible, but with him, because I did take a note taker once or twice and he just wouldn't say anything. And I thought, "Much better that I know what kind of nonsense he's purveying, so I can counter it, purveying to the Kazakhstani government."

Q: What was telling you?

JONES: He was basically bragging about all of the great deals he was getting for Nazarbayev, from this oil company or that oil company. That was part one.

Part two was, he was very wealthy at this point, he was sending off various senior members of the Kazakhstani government to the Kennedy School for training. Fine, but I needed to know that.

And, third, he was developing a plan for Nazarbayev on completely revamping the national security apparatus of the government along the lines of the U.S. government, to have a presidential form of government, not parliamentary, two have two houses of parliament, which there are anyway, et cetera. It was all this kind of "I'm God" kind of nonsense.

Q: But also, I assume that the fact he was seeing you could be touted, saying "I see the ambassador."

JONES: That's right. I was there for three years and I saw him maybe twice a year, at the most. He didn't live there. He came every so often.

But what I would do with the Kazakhstani government, with Nazarbayev, with Kazhegeldin, with various of the ministers is, I wasn't overly aggressive about him but when I could see that there was some question about is he really in with the U.S. government, I would be extremely clear and categorical about his status, which was he had no status in the U.S. government, he was getting no secret information, no classified information.

At one point and the reason this was important, he came back from Washington at one point after having met with the director of INR and told everybody around town that he had seen the file on Kazhegeldin, on the prime minister, the U.S. files, the CIA files and Department of Justice files and was telling everybody that we had files that showed how corrupt Kazhegeldin was.

Kazhegeldin heard about this and asked me about it. I said, "First of all, it's nonsense, number one. Number two, there is no way, even if he did meet with the head of INR, that she would have shown him any files whatsoever. It's completely illegal. She'd go to jail for it. I'm sure she didn't do it. There's no way that she would have told him that kind of

information, because she would have known better than to get involved in any kind of fight between you and the president.”

And then I went around and I told Nazarbayev this and I told a variety of other people. And I talked to Jim, too. I said, “There’s no way you saw those files. There’s no way.” He said, “Oh, well, I’m not telling people that.” I said, “Well, somebody’s telling people that. You’ve got to knock it off.”

At which point I sent a cable back to Washington saying, “For God’s sake, nobody should see this guy. The mere fact of a meeting in Washington is increasing his stature in Almaty.”

The other thing, though, is I never saw him in the embassy. I never let him come to the embassy, so he could never say, “I met at the embassy with so and so.” I’d see him at a restaurant or something like that.

Q: Did you ever run across any dealings with the oligarchs in Russia, some of whom are in jail? This was the era of the oligarchs, like robber barons and all that.

JONES: The Russian oligarchs were not around Kazakhstan so much, then. We knew about the oligarchs, of course, there was a lot of reporting, intelligence reporting, on them, with the various groups, particularly those related to Israel. And the reason for that is some of those had branches, if you will, in Kazakhstan.

There were one or two Kazakhstanis who were known to be very corrupt and in the oligarch kind of category and I absolutely refused to have anything to do with them. I would not meet with them, I wouldn’t permit them in the embassy, I wouldn’t permit anybody to meet with them and we would tell people why not, why not this particular person, that particular person. And the word got around.

Q: Were you ever called in some way, “Why are you sending out bad news about—

JONES: No, because, we used this kind of thing very sparingly and it was on people that everybody knew was as corrupt as hell. So we were just sort of one of the crowd that believed that so and so was involved in this or that.

Once or twice, there was one fellow who was very difficult to deal with, let’s put it that way, the head of the electricity company. We had an American company very involved in the electricity sector. So I was constantly having to go to the prime minister, really, to say, “So and so is really getting in our way and that’s not what the agreement says and he’s taking money on the side for this, et cetera.” There were a few times in public fora, I would be asked to speak and I would speak up about the importance of not being corrupt and having transparency and I wouldn’t use his name, everybody knew that’s who I was talking about and then he would make a comment back and that would all be in the press.

Q: I was wondering, the corrupt practices act was well in place by that time?

JONES: The corrupt practices act was very well in place, the American company representatives were very versed in it, they spoke about it all the time. I encouraged them to speak about it all the time and explain to Kazakhstani government officials, which all of us did, that it was American law that they could not provide bribes under the table, over the table, couldn't pay for the ministers' children to go to the universities, couldn't do this or that.

And the result was what I call a positive aggressive policy on anti corruption, actually worked pretty well. There were very, very few reports that I ever got and I think I would have gotten any, of American companies that were solicited for a bribe, because they knew that they couldn't.

And they still got the deals, that was the important thing. So many companies say, "Oh, my God, we can't give bribes, therefore we can't get the deals." They still got the deals. One of the reasons they got the deals was that the prime minister, Kazhegeldin, as I said, wanted to have a lot of Americans around, because he actually explained to me that he thought of the American companies, particularly around the northern part of Kazakhstan, where there was a lot of oil and gas fields, they would be the tripwire if the Russians ever tried to invade Kazakhstan.

And I said, "Well, we're very happy to have Amoco and Chevron and other American companies get these contracts, but please understand that the 82nd Airborne is not going to land necessarily if the Russians come across your border. It's not going to happen."

"Oh, well, I'm sure you'll think of something!"

Q: Of course the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait wasn't that far away and we had—

JONES: Well and the Taliban move up to northern Afghanistan had just happened, too.

The one thing to mention in that context, yes, American companies were getting some very nice contracts around the north, they had some in the west. But Nazarbayev was very clever, as was his foreign minister at the time, who was a China hand, about balancing the Russians, the Americans and the Chinese. So at one point Amoco really, really, really wanted to have a bid in western Kazakhstan, but it went to the Chinese, because the Chinese were desperate to have something in Kazakhstan. The Kazakhstanis wanted to have that sort of political balance, so they contracted with the Chinese to do this and the Chinese had to turn around and subcontract with the Americans to do it, because it was a very complicated, old oil field that needed some remediation that only the Americans could do, but it was big power politics in Central Asia in that way. Nazarbayev was very astute about it.

Q: He had to be! It was a rough neighborhood.

JONES: Absolutely. At the same time, he was quite happy to participate in the Central Asia battalion, which was part of the Partnership for Peace. The Central Asia battalion was an element of Partnership for Peace, which was the association with NATO. It was formed from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and it modeled after the Baltic battalion that had been formed after the Baltic states were freed. The Baltic battalion was sponsored by the Danes and several of the other Scandinavian countries, as a way to mentor the Baltic states in military reforms that would make them eligible for NATO membership.

The Central Asians were not interested in joining NATO, but they did want to be part of Partnership for Peace, they did want to upgrade their military capabilities so that they could participate in peacekeeping for the UN, so that they could participate in military exercises and other kinds of exercises with NATO and Partnership for Peace.

We did a Central Asia battalion joint exercise that involved the three Central Asians, involved the U.S., involved the Russians, we invited the Chinese to participate, involved several other NATO countries and the exercise involved the longest [distance] ever parachute drop ever in NATO history and probably in military history, where all of these planes, it was like fifty, were loaded up in Georgia in the United States with Russian troops, American troops, other NATO troops, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Uzbek troops, flew all the way over to southern Kazakhstan, refueling along the way.

All of us, the ambassadors, defense ministers, we were all gathered at these reviewing stands in southern Kazakhstan, waiting for the planes to come. The drop was supposed to be at a particular time and the drop was led by the Centcom (Central Command) commander at the time, a marine general. Not only was he going to jump with the troops, he was going to be the first one to jump and it was the day before his retirement from the U.S. military.

So there we all are in the stands and you see these bodies dropping out of the planes. And I remember sitting in the stands just thinking to myself, "Please open, please open, please open, please open" each time I saw a parachute.

And in the meantime we had a huge deployment of U.S. troops, NATO troops, et cetera, all based temporarily around this whole area, with medical units and civil affairs units, everything. Anyway, the jump went fabulously well. The exercise, then, that went on for several days was a very elaborate exercise involving taking of prisoners, understanding how to treat prisoners in accordance with the Geneva Conventions, and how to do a convoy of civilians with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

In other words, it was a military exercise but it was all related to peacekeeping. Every part of it was related to some form of peacekeeping or peace enforcement or peace enhancement, which I thought was a wonderful hallmark for the kind of military forms that were appropriate for all the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union.

Q: It's also the world. We're going to have Soviet tanks coming across the Fulda Gap. And anybody who's looking at the military side would have to think about, "Well, we've got unruly places and this is what military force is going to be doing," with maybe an eye on the Chinese, although not quite sure what they'd do, try to bring them in.

JONES: As we prepared for these exercises, there were of course a lot of preparatory meetings and I asked the Centcom people and the Kazakhstani military to come together and present briefings to which I could invite all the other NATO ambassadors, the Russian ambassador, all Partnership for Peace ambassadors, the Chinese ambassador and regularly briefed them on the full extent of the exercise, the goal of the exercise, what was Partnership for Peace, et cetera, because I wanted to make this a big transparency point with these ambassadors, because they were of course all reporting back that the United States Army was about to take over Kazakhstan and I wanted to do as much as possible to tamp that down.

Of course, what happened, the Chinese ambassador came to everything, the Russian ambassador and sort of *sotto voce* after each one of these briefings they said, "Where's the real briefing?" So it only worked to a degree, but they heard the briefing, they came to the exercise, we had them invited as observers to the exercise, so they could see that everything that had been briefed was what happened. They had the full run of all of the encampment in southern Kazakhstan, really, except for where it was dangerous, on the rifle range or something, so that they could see that's what we were doing. But they still weren't quite prepared to believe it. But the transparency was there, in spades.

Q: Did you get any reflections later on from the Kazakh military about this? Were they enthusiastic? Was it eye opening?

JONES: The Kazakhstani military was very enthusiastic. The Kazakhstani military was decimated after the breakup of the Soviet Union, because a high percentage of the officers were ethnic Russians and they had gone back to Russia. Of course a high percentage of the enlisted men were Kazakhstanis.

The defense minister, there were several of them with whom I worked. Each one of them was very aggressively working to upgrade the military and particularly to form what they called the sergeants' corps, which the Soviet Army hadn't had. They had been on counterpart visits in the U.S., they'd seen the huge responsibility that was given to the sergeants, noncommissioned officers and they really wanted to emulate that.

So that was one of the very big programs that we instituted in Kazakhstan was the development of a noncommissioned officer corps, starting with English language training so they could go to training, identifying recruits whom they could train to be more senior and inculcating in them the sense of responsibility for their troops, so that at one point the defense minister, who was very onboard with how important it was to take care of the troops, was driving down the street, saw a couple of officers sitting in a car during a huge rainstorm, rain and snow, it was very cold. All the troops were out digging a ditch or something, with no rain gear, bad shoes, bad uniforms, hardly any equipment and he

raised a stink with the officers, forced them to go out and dig with the troops and made them an example for how not to treat troops. That really stuck in peoples' minds, okay, this guy really means business about the NCO corps.

Q: Were they working on the persecution of recruits by the older soldiers? It was endemic in the Soviet Army.

JONES: It was and it was, still, in the Kazkhstani Army, although that was part of what they tried to get at, is to try to reduce the hazing and that was one of the responsibilities that they gave to the sergeants as they brought them up.

One of the big issues, also, of course during the Chechnya War with the Russians was inability of parents, especially mothers, to get hold of their kids who had been conscripted and that was one of the big issues with the Kazakhstanis was well, is that there was a sort of a big deal about, "You will always know where your son is."

One of the things we did is we had a Little League, a huge Little League, in Almaty.

Q: This is baseball.

JONES: Baseball Little League, that was started by Chevron, because the Chevron rep was very interested in this, he had two sons in Little League and he got the Little League in San Ramon, where Chevron is headquartered, to send out all of their old uniforms and gloves and shoes and everything. Started out outfitting I think six teams. By the time I left, we had 36 teams in the Little League. We had two leagues, a junior league and an older kids' league. All of us were coaches, everybody in the embassy, a lot of the oil company people, the other American business people and all the kids in the leagues were all Kazakhstani kids, because they had nothing to do in the summer.

When they first started they recruited kids from the orphanages around town as the obvious place to get kids and the league worked well except when all of a sudden the orphanages went on summer break and all of a sudden the league didn't exist. But from those early days with just orphanage kids, of course the neighborhood kids then could see us. We'd get the ministry of agriculture to loan us their field, we'd get the university to loan us another field. So we had plenty of fields to play on. We'd have regular practices and we all lived how to give our instructions in Russian to "Go to first base" and—

Q: How do you say "slide" in Russian?

JONES: I forget, but there's a way to do it, there's a way to say it and we taught them to slide. It was a great thing that we did

Q: Were girls in the thing?

JONES: Girls were in the league as well. My daughter played in the league. She played first base on one team one summer, couple of summers, actually. There weren't too many

girls but there were Kazakhstani girls on the teams. Some of them were really good. They were very athletic and weren't quite the hot dogs that some of the boys were, showing off. But the big difference for a lot of us in coaching Kazakhstani Little League is we had no parents telling us what to do.

We had the games, then we had the championships, we had the playoffs and all that. One of the coaches was telling the story that his team was in the finals and one of the kids' fathers came and sat down, these were ten year old kids, it was the last game, they were either going to win the championship or not and he said, "Boys, you win this championship, I'll buy you a case of vodka!"

We made a habit, whenever the kids had a good practice or won or if they lost well, whatever, we'd take them for ice cream. We thought that was a better way to reward them.

Q: Going back to the petroleum business, the stories I've heard, there's always been the suspicion that the French are quite willing to play a different game than we are and the Germans, too and maybe others. We're a little bit holier than thou. Was that element in play?

JONES: To a degree it was. There was always discussion of "Well, Total can pay bribes and we can't, so they might get the deal." But even the oil company people, the Americans, would have agreed that they weren't worse off than the European companies. Total got a few bids now and then, but not more than the American companies did. The American companies did extremely well.

One of the things that was interesting at the time, Chevron had its deal out in Tengiz and a couple of other companies, Amoco had a couple of sites. But there was a very big seismic research effort underway in the Caspian in what they hoped was a big structure and hoped was full of oil. But at that time nobody knew if there was any oil in there. Of course everybody knows now that it is full of oil, but at the time it was very, very risky, in terms of political risk and economic risk.

Q: Why political risk?

JONES: The country was five, six years old. Who knew if Nazarbayev was going to stay? Who knew what kind of rules were going to be in place and for how long? Who knew if the Russians were going to come across the border? It was all very new and nobody really knew what was in store for these countries. And, remember the Kazakhstanis now are saying, "Oh, all these oil companies negotiated deals that were way too beneficial to them ten years ago and we want to redo the contracts."

Well, the point even I keep making to them is: these deals were made when nobody knew if there was oil. These all could easily have been dry holes. Yes, these were advantageous to the companies, because they were taking a huge political and economic risk. You and they won, in the sense that there is oil in all of these places, but it could have been a bust,

too, at the same time. So that's a constant discussion but you see in the papers now some of the issues that we dealt with back then are still there: sanctity of contract, corruption. Transportation out is still quite a big issue.

Q: You mention the Caspian Sea. What about the whole issue of dealing with the horrendous effects of Soviet policy of overproduction, not looking towards the future of resources and just general pollution?

JONES: It was a very serious issue. There were two competing kinds of concerns at the time. One was that the Caspian was rising and nobody really knew why, but what it meant was that the cities along the Caspian were in danger of flooding, so there big structures having to be built around Attir Island and a few other places, particularly around the ports where the oil was pumped onto barges to be barged across the Caspian to Baku and then into the pipeline system.

The Aral Sea, by contrast, was shrinking, because of incredibly bad water policies on the part of the Soviets in Uzbekistan, where they basically siphoned off the water from the rivers flowing into the Aral Sea for cotton production in Uzbekistan, basically in a desert where there's no business cotton being grown. But I visited the Aral Sea once, if not twice and it is genuinely a desert. It dried up so quickly that ships got caught there. You see these ships just sitting there in the sand, with camels parading around them. The cities that were on the shore of the sea are miles from any water. You still see the sort of seaside casinos and the seaside wharves and that kind of thing just sitting in the sand. And the diseases that are endemic in that area now, like gallstones, kidney stones, bronchial infections, are because the dirt and sand is so saline from all of the runoff from the irrigation, bad irrigation ditches, that health issues are really, really difficult in that area. And of course fresh water is very difficult to come by as well.

What's so interesting now and it was talked about at the time, the Aral Sea, the way it dried, it had a tiny little waist, it was narrower in the middle. There were a lot of engineers who thought, "Maybe we can close that waist and fill up part of the Aral Sea again and bring the fish back" and that kind of thing. And the UN Development Program did a project where they did close that narrow waist and, by golly, the Aral Sea is filling again, the northern half of the Aral Sea and fish are being reintroduced, some of the boats are floating, the sea is moving closer and closer to some of these villages and the economy of the region is reviving a bit. Health issues are still a problem, but it's a seemingly successful bit of engineering.

The lower part of the sea will never be repaired. The World Bank, I know, is also very heavily involved in this.

Q: Did we have much of a stake in this?

JONES: We did, or do. USAID, through a contractor called CH2M Hill, which is an environmental expert company, did a lot of fresh water recovery and fresh water piping kind of work in that part of the country. That was a very big USAID program.

Q: Is there anything else we should talk about?

JONES: I guess the other thing to mention is the embassy in Bishkek, in Kyrgyzstan, was about a three-hour drive or three and a half-hour drive from Almaty and we made it a practice of being very collegial with our colleagues in Bishkek, a much smaller embassy and we could help them out with a few things occasionally. For example, their diplomatic mail pouches came to us and we would get them down. But we also would do two community things. So we'd pick a place part way along the highway in the summer and do joint picnics or joint baseball games or whatever with Embassy Bishkek during that period, which I thought was very nice. I loved doing it. It was a very collegial thing to do with our sister embassy in Kyrgyzstan.

Now it can't go on, because the embassy in Kazakhstan moved to Astana, which is several thousand miles away, but it was a good practice, I thought.

Q: How about horses? Did horses play much of a role?

JONES: A lot of people rode horseback for recreation. I did a few times. Of course Kazakhstan is sort of nomad territory and riding horses is considered the national pastime. There was a hippodrome, a riding stable, just on the edge of Almaty that had gorgeous horses, beautiful horses, where a lot of my friends and colleagues rode regularly. I couldn't get out there regularly enough to do it very often. We'd have a few stables that we'd go to and take the horses out and go way up into the mountains and have picnics and all that kind of thing.

But you'd be driving along to one of the lakes near the Chinese border or up on the steppe in the spring to see the spring flowers or whatever and you'd see a horseman riding across the steppe and you would swear you were seeing Genghis Khan's great grandson, the whole scene with the dress and the look and all that kind of thing.

It was a very athletic embassy, I must say. We all went skiing. Skiing was half an hour away, in the winter. It was very inexpensive to ski. The ski resort we went to was the area that had been used by the Soviet Union as the training ground for the Soviet ski team. There was a world class ice rink that was twenty minutes away from my house that we went to on a regular basis and there were so many of us who liked to go ice skating that we made an arrangement with the director of the rink, who would let us go in at eight o'clock on Saturday and Sunday mornings, that is before it formally opened, which was the same time that the president and the prime minister and the cabinet ministers were allowed to go. So I went almost every Saturday and Sunday morning with talking points in my head, for when I did a round on the ice rink with the president or a round on the ice rink with the prime minister, a round on the ice rink with the oil minister, that kind of thing.

It was a very small town, that way. You'd go out to dinner and the finance minister would be at the next table. So I got in the habit very quickly of really working at having

talking points ready for the chair lift on the ski slope, if I happened to be riding up with the defense minister, who skied a lot. The science and technology minister skied a lot. So I knew there'd be every chance I'd see them up there. The *chef de cabinet* for the president skied a lot. So I had to be at the ready.

But it was a great place for that and one of things we used to do in the embassy a lot is Thursday afternoon, would send a note around to the whole embassy: "Okay, meet at my house, the ambassador's residence, Sunday, ten o'clock for a six-hour hike. Bring water, bring food, bring these kinds of shoes." And people would show up and I would have agreed ahead of time with a couple of people to make sure there were enough of us to lead the hike and figured out a neat hike to go on and took a lot of people hiking, because we had a lot of TDYers at various points and would take them hiking. If there weren't too many of us, we'd go bike riding. We rode regularly up in the mountains and a lot of people were big mountain bikers. And sometimes we did overnight camping, too and that was fun because it was safe, you could do it.

Q: You left there when?

JONES: October '98.

Q: And where'd you go?

JONES: I had been asked by Martin Indyk, assistant secretary for the Near East, to come back to be his principal deputy, which I was very eager to do. I'd grown up, obviously, in NEA. I'd actually tried to stay in Kazakhstan a fourth year and at first Jim Collins had said that I could stay a fourth year but then he left and went to Embassy Moscow and Steve Sestanovich came in and said, "No, no, we've got lots of people lined up. It's obviously a great embassy. You're having too much fun."

Someone was actually selected pretty early and I was a good kid and I took pictures of the president and pictures around town and everything and I was back on a trip and showed it all to him and he then, in fact, didn't go to Kazakhstan. He suddenly got an offer, because he suddenly got an offer to head the International Energy Agency in Paris instead, he was a big oil guy.

And not too long after that Dick Jones was selected to be my replacement. The Kazakhstanis of course were very interested that we both had the same name. And I developed this line that, "This is so well known to be such a great embassy and such a wonderful country that I'm keeping it in the family. I want to make sure a family member comes to such a great place." They actually believed me, of course, that Dick and I were related, which we're not. It was a good, easy transition, I think.

But in May Martin had called and asked if I would come back and do that job. I had considered staying out. There was a possibility of going as ambassador to Georgia. But I really wanted to go back to Washington. I'd been out for a while. My kids were in school, they'd gone back to the States by this point.

Q: Where'd they go to school?

JONES: Well they had started at the Embassy Almaty school, the Almaty International School, but it turned out to be not a good school in high school. It is run by an organization called Quality Schools International which turned out to have a religious foundation and what really set me off, shall we say, was that my son's science teacher was a creationist. I thought, "That's probably not what I need for my kids at this point."

Q: A creationist is somebody who basically denies evolution, who believes God created the world in seven days and all, which doesn't make for the best science.

JONES: That's right and my son even said, "I'm not really learning very much." He started at Northfield-Mount Hermon and then things didn't work out there for him and came to Almaty for the school there. We realized it really wasn't very good for him. My husband then went to work at a school in India, so my son then went down to a hill station school in India called the Woodstock School for a year or two.

My daughter, when I first went to Kazakhstan, because I went so late, I went in October. She had to start school of course in early September. I was held up because of Jesse Helms and she didn't want to go to school in Bethesda, which is where I was staying, waiting to be confirmed, because she decided that school would be too full of cliques and she wouldn't fit in. Her best friend was going back to India, where she'd been and I worked a deal with the friend's parents that Ambassador Jones' daughter would go with them to India for school, at least for the semester, which is what she did.

She came from Delhi in January to go to the Almaty International School. She was in that school for three months when she went back to Delhi on Easter vacation to see her friends. She could see how far behind she was already, just in those three months. She asked to go to boarding school and applied to a couple of them. She was accepted at the Madeira School here in Washington. So that's what she did. She came back for ninth grade and ended up at the Madeira School for the remainder of the three years I was in Kazakhstan and then graduated from there in 1999, after I came back to the Department.

Came back in October of '98. I came back with Don Ruschman, an American who lived and worked in Almaty. He had arrived in early 1994 on a short term assignment from the Futures Group to fix a languishing regional USAID program in family planning, and ended up staying almost five years. In the meantime, my husband, Tom Homan, had retired from USIA and had taken a job as a teacher at the Woodstock School in an Indian hill station. We had by then decided on a divorce. Our son, Todd, had left Northfield-Mt. Hermon and went to the Woodstock School, which he loved. He visited me in Almaty a few times from India – I once picked him up in Bishkek, because the flights from India flew there and not into Almaty.

Q: And how long did you do that job?

JONES: I did that job for two years.

Q: This is the principal deputy in NEA?

JONES: That's right.

Q: What did the job consist of?

JONES: It was a couple of things. David Welch was my predecessor and I did very much the same job that he had done. He was responsible for Iraq policy, Iran policy and Libya policy. There were two other DASes. One was Ron Neumann, one was Toni Verstanding. Toni Verstanding was responsible for the peace process, she was a political appointee DAS and Ron Neumann was responsible for policy for the Arabian Gulf and North Africa. They basically were in charge of all of the policy for places where we had embassies and I was in charge of policy for places where we didn't have embassies, basically. I called my portfolio the "bad boys."

Q: When you say we didn't have embassies, this was because, for political reasons, we were not recognizing the country.

JONES: Right, we had no relations with Libya, no relations with Iran, no relations with Iraq.

On my first day on the job, I got a call from Tom Pickering's office (he was Under Secretary for Political Affairs, the #3 in the State Department) to come to a 6:30pm meeting in his office. I went. David Welch, who was now Assistant Secretary for International Organizations, was also there. Tom launched into a detailed explanation of what he wanted us to do in the Security Council on an Iraq issue. I took detailed notes, as I really didn't know what he was talking about. I figured when I read them later, it would become clear. It didn't. I went home and told Don that I was clearly not up to the responsibilities of this job. I was in quite a funk. Don suggested that I just call David in the morning, as he would certainly be able to explain it to me. Great idea, I said. I called David in the morning, confessed that I had no idea what Tom was talking about or what to do, and could he clue me in? David said, "I have no idea what he was talking about either!" Tom Pickering is super smart, obviously, but even those fully steeped in the issues, like David Welch was, couldn't always follow his logic.

The other part of my job was the internal management of the bureau and management, not in a policy sense, management of the 16 NEA embassies. So I dealt on a daily basis, almost daily basis, with the ambassadors, with the desks, with the interagency.

Martin Indyk, as the assistant secretary, also a political appointee, was very active on the peace process side of things. That's where he spent most of his time. Of course, Dennis Ross was also very involved, as a special assistant to the Secretary, very involved in the peace process. So Martin Indyk, Dennis Ross and Toni Verstanding spent a tremendous amount of time together on peace process issues.

One of the first things that happened, as soon as I started, took over from David Welch, was the Wye Plantation Middle East talks that were underway virtually as soon as I came back. I remember thinking, “Okay, those guys can do the peace process. I don’t have to worry about it that much,” until I went to represent NEA at the morning staff meeting and everybody said, “So what’s going on at Wye?” Of course everybody who knew anything about Wye and the Middle East peace process was at Wye. I thought, “I guess I better find out what the hell’s going on over there!” So I did.

Q: In your own mind, was there any concern, I must say, as an outsider who was looking, almost aghast, at the fact that Martin Indyk, who had been until very recently an Australian citizen and had been the head of AIPAC, American-Israeli Political Action Committee—

JONES: I don’t think he was head of AIPAC. He was head of the Institute of Peace. He was very involved with AIPAC, there’s no question about that, but he wasn’t head of it.

Q: But he was very much part of the group that supported Israel, even on developing settlements.

JONES: It’s a little hard for me to judge, in the following respect: I thought there was still quite a good effort to keep the Palestinians in the game and that was done principally by someone who worked for Dennis. You’re right, there was a concern about bias and were we being tough enough on the Israelis and what about the settlements. But at the same time with the Wye Plantation talks and then the follow-on ones that were to involve the Syrians in Shepherdstown a few months later, there was a very big effort really championed by Toni Verstanding to keep the Palestinians in the game and really upgrade their expertise so that we could really negotiate at a better level.

At the time, NEA, with Martin as its lead, was considered a bit more pro-Palestinian, to balance off Dennis, who was considered to be too accommodating to the Israeli side in the negotiations, the way it seemed at the time. Dan Kurtzer was involved in the peace process at the same time and he also understood the Israeli side very well, but was very clear that the only way to get any kind of agreement that was going to stick was to make sure that the Arab side was represented well enough.

Was it done perfectly? Absolutely not, but I wasn’t in the camp of all those who thought that NEA somehow had dropped the ball completely. I don’t think it had.

Q: There was the perception, at this period, this is just a perception, that the whole process had been moved over, that all the people involved were Jewish, or almost all and many of them were somewhat biased towards Israel and all.

JONES: That’s right, but in that early period that wasn’t quite so much the problem. I see the more serious part of the problem as having developed in the last years of the Clinton

Administration, toward the end of my time in NEA, when President Clinton was so anxious, to the point of being overanxious, to have Middle East peace.

So the pressure to pull together what ended up being the second Camp David talks in July and August of 2000, just before the election, was where the problem became extremely serious. I see that as the genesis of all the problems that we're having now, in the following respect: it was clear that President Clinton wanted to have a summit. Madeleine Albright was Secretary of State at the time and she was pushing all of the sides very hard to come to a summit.

Arafat was extremely clear that he did not have agreement from the Palestinians, from the other Arabs, to make any kind of agreement and he said, "No point in having a summit. I can't come. I'm not ready."

Along the way it was made clear to me that I needed to go to Camp David to be the manager of the process, not so much substantively. There was just so much that needed to be done, they wanted a senior person to do it. At that point Martin Indyk had since gone to Israel as ambassador and Ned Walker, who had been the Ambassador to Israel, came back to be assistant secretary. That's when anybody who was on the side of the Palestinians was cut out of the process. That's when Toni Verstanding wasn't allowed to go to Camp David. That's when Ned Walker wasn't invited to Camp David, except to pop his head in every so often. I was clearly sent because I was considered to be "unbiased," because I hadn't been involved in the peace process one way or the other all this time. I'd been beating on the Iraqis and the Iranians and the Libyans.

To get back to why we went to Camp David, Arafat had sent a message that made me believe that Camp David wasn't going to happen. I basically unpacked my bags. I wasn't going to go. None of us was going to go to Camp David, because he was so adamant that he wasn't ready. At which point Bill Clinton, President Clinton, called him, used his personal relationship with him and said, "Yasser, friend, come to Camp David. It's just a talk. There'll be no pressure. You don't have to make any deals. I know you're not ready. I'm not going to force you to do anything. Just talk. No deals."

At which point Arafat still said no. But by the end of the conversation Arafat finally said, "Okay, since you promised me it's just talk, promised me I won't be forced to make a deal, you know I'm not ready. I'll come because of my trust in you, my friend Bill."

And I read this and I thought, "Uh-oh, uh-oh, uh-oh." (We had access to the transcripts of presidential phone calls, when they touched on our area of responsibility.)

The history books don't say much about that conversation. There are few people who've had the guts to write about this part of it, Rob Malley being one of them. But what happened later, to my mind, is a travesty, given what President Clinton said to Arafat: "We're not going to ask you to make a deal."

In the meantime, the Israeli prime minister, just before he arrives at Camp David,

Q: That's Barak?

JONES: That's Barak, he is not thrown out, exactly, but there's just been a big vote of no confidence in the Israeli Knesset. So he arrives with no mandate, or not much of a mandate.

Now the other part of Camp David, the part of it I was meant to be the enforcer on, is that it was decided, which I agree with, that the only way to have a real negotiation was that there couldn't be any reporting to the media about what was happening. We believed that as much as the negotiation played out in the media, the decision was that the negotiations would fail, which was probably correct.

We were able to find a way to do a cell phone blackout of just Camp David, so people couldn't use their cell phones from there, either. I was responsible for basically shutting down all the phones and working with the Camp David switchboard operators, WHCA, the White House Communications Agency, to make sure that only one phone in each leader's cabin could be used and only in a very restricted way. So that was a big issue with Camp David II, the whole blocking communications thing.

But the whole setup for Camp David was the opposite of what the rap on Arafat is. The rap on Arafat coming out of Camp David was he didn't have the guts to make a deal.

Q: That's what I've heard.

JONES: Quote unquote. "You were offered something that was the best deal you're ever going to get."

Partway through Camp David, when the deal had been put on the table, the instruction went out to all of us to get a message out to each of our ambassadors in the Middle East, saying "Please go to your counterparts, heads of state or government and ask them to issue a statement in support of Arafat and in support of whatever Arafat decides." But because of the secrecy of the deal, we wouldn't tell any of our ambassadors what the deal was. We were asking them to go to heads of state or government to say "Support the deal" not knowing what it was. Well, you can imagine, every single one of them came back to us and said, "What the hell is this? How can I go in to" the Saudis or whoever "to say support something but we don't know what it is?"

And of course that fell flat, which means that Arafat, who was saying, "I don't have support for this. It might be a good deal, but I need to do work on this. I can't just accept a deal and expect the Arabs and the Palestinians to accept it without my doing any spadework whatsoever."

So, we all know what happened. He was blamed for not making a deal and the result was there was no deal coming out of Camp David.

The last night of Camp David, there was a final dinner in the main lodge, where all the main delegation participants had dinner every night. I got there not exactly on time, maybe five minutes late and I thought, “Oh, God, this is going to be just awful. Everybody’s going to be so upset. Everybody’s going to have their backs turned to each other.”

Well, I walked in, the Palestinian delegation, the Israeli delegation members, had all gotten there early, they all had their wine glasses in their hands, they were in subgroups and each of them, I walked up each one of them, was talking in very excited terms about where they were going to meet next. Where was the Jerusalem committee going to meet next? Where was the security committee going to meet? Where was the settlements committee? Where was the right of return committee? Each one was making a plan for, “Okay, I’m going to see you in Copenhagen,” “I’ll see you in Ramallah,” “I’ll see you in Italy,” wherever it was. It was a very happy crowd. They were all looking forward to the future. They all knew exactly what they needed to do next. They were all talking about which one was working for the tougher boss. It was, frankly, a joyous occasion.

What made it not joyous was the next day. Dennis Ross went out to the hotel in Frederick, a small city in western Maryland, near Camp David and made a statement about how the summit had failed because it was all Arafat’s fault, which was not at all the tone of that dinner. Now the reason, the political reason, that that was done was because Barak needed support. He needed to have the president of the United States say, “Oh, he was wonderful and he was fabulous and don’t vote him out of office, oh, Israel” was what the goal was.

Q: The elections in the United States were also—

JONES: Well, the whole reason for all the pressure, of course, was that Bill Clinton wanted to have, before he left office, Middle East peace as his legacy. He was desperate for the Nobel Peace Prize. That’s my view of it. And his way of being angry about it was to blame Arafat and promote Barak. And what he did, in the process of that, is he screwed up the negotiation that he started and very soon thereafter, what really screwed it up was Sharon going to the Temple Mount and you know what happened then. That’s when the whole *intifada* started.

Q: We’ll move on to other things and we’ll come back to this later, I think, but in the American delegation, were they picking up, you might say, the group think that stemmed from Clinton, damning Arafat. Why were we damning Arafat?

JONES: It came from parts of the American delegation, definitely. It wasn’t so much that it was anti-Arafat, it was pro-Barak. It was “Let’s save Barak. He’s the one who’s offered this deal. What other Israeli leader’s going to offer a similar deal? It’s a good deal. He’s about to be thrown out of office. We’ll have to start all over again.” Not realizing, somehow, I don’t know why, I remember at the time thinking “God, this is awful! We can’t let this kind of statement be done.” But there wasn’t anybody else in there who could help turn this around.

So I thought it was really a disaster, actually, a disaster for the U.S., a disaster for Clinton. And the thing that I'll never understand is why they perpetuated this myth that it was all Arafat's fault. They briefed Colin Powell that way when he came in. He started telling me the story and I said, "Mr. Secretary, I was actually there. That's not what happened." I never could change his mind.

Q: My understanding is that basically Clinton told George W. Bush, "Arafat's the problem. You can't trust him."

JONES: That's right.

Q: And that more or less set our policy going into the

JONES: That's exactly right.

Q: Next six years or something like that. In other words,

JONES: That's right.

Q: Bush said, "I'm not going to touch that thing, if Arafat's the problem."

JONES: And as much as Secretary Powell kept trying to negotiate with Arafat, kept trying to bring him along. Then he had the rug pulled back from under him by Bush and Cheney.

Q: Very interesting view. Beth, okay, you're in NEA, you're the principal deputy assistant secretary, the "PDAS," what a wonderful title?

Okay, you want to talk about some of the things you were involved with?

JONES: At the time the PDAS job was defined as being responsible for Iraq policy for the bureau, Iran policy and Libya policy. I called them being responsible for the "bad boys." The other anomaly of being responsible for those three issues was that there were no embassies attached to any of them, with the exception, to a degree, of the Swiss embassy, who represented our interests in Iran, so we had a lot of dealings with them.

The Belgians represented us in Tripoli, but there was less of an issue, less contact with the Belgians over all of that. And the Poles, with Iraq.

Why don't I start with Iraq, since that was where we, in terms of the timing, that's where things started? I arrived on the scene replacing David Welch, who was going over to IO as assistant secretary. Just at the time that Saddam Hussein had thrown out the UN inspectors, he threw them out, I believe, in August, there was a lot of back and forth with Butler, with the chief UN inspector, an Australian, about what to do about this.

When I arrived on the scene we were working with the UN, with the Security Council, to try to come up with a set of resolutions that we could make stick, that would bring the international community with us, to sanction Saddam in some way to allow the inspectors back in, or to keep moving on the UN effort and the international effort to get rid of all of the nuclear weapons, biological weapons, chemical weapons that we believed him to have.

I'm not sure I can remember every single detail about how it all worked, I know I can't remember every single detail, but it was a very intense period. Tom Pickering ran the policy part of this for the Department, so I was talking to him every day, many times a day.

Peter Burleigh was at the UN, he was the acting UN ambassador, the chargé, really, for the U.S. I remember in particular, because we were on conference calls every single day with Peter very early in the morning and then we had a series of secure video teleconferences with other foreign affairs agencies, to make sure we knew what was going on with the inspectors, with possible weapons, with palaces, to try to come up with policy.

At the same time, of course, we had the no fly zones going in Iraq, that had been put in place after the Gulf War and every day, almost, there was some incident or another in the no fly zones, particularly in the north, over the Kurdish areas.

Q: When you say "incidents," what do you mean?

JONES: The U.S. and some allies patrolled the no fly zones. It was true that Saddam was unable to fly anything north of the particular line in the Kurdish areas where the no fly zone began. We had planes out of Incirlik in Turkey that flew over the no fly zone several times a day, to patrol, to demonstrate a presence, to photograph, to try to make sure we knew where Saddam's weapons were, were they being moved around, were weapons being moved next to schools, so that if that if they did try to fire on the coalition aircraft, that it would be difficult to fire back, because we would be threatening schools or hospitals.

So the incidents were generally that there'd been some firing or an Iraqi weapon had lit up, in other words was prepared to fire on an American or a coalition plane.

I am pretty sure there were only Americans at the time. The French flew with us for a while, but I'm not sure they flew, they flew in the southern no fly zone, but they didn't fly in the north, as I recall. It was mostly just Americans in the north.

So that was the kind of incident that we were constantly having to deal with in some way and "by deal with," give permission to fire back, don't give permission to fire back. There was a big interagency process to give permission or not and then there was all the press guidance and how do we deal with this publicly and all that kind of thing.

Q: Two things: first, were our planes flying either very high over Iraq or not, in other words, were we covering more of Iraq than just the no fly

JONES: We were covering more of Iraq, to the degree that the AWACS that flew way high over the no fly zones could see into other parts of Iraq. So, yes and there were other highflying intelligence kinds of thing

Q: Like U-2's

JONES: U-2's and that kind of thing. But the actual flights that flew out of Incirlik to patrol the no fly zones did not fly out of the no fly zones into Iraq proper.

Q: Okay, an American plane flies over, you say the radar lights up, which means Iraqi radar is trying to acquire a target. Without firing, in this case, what do you do? It has to be fairly standard operating procedure. It's not going to change.

JONES: Well there was a controversy at the time and there was always a big debate about how to respond, because the SOP, the standard operating procedure, was "if lit up, fire back." In other words, being lit up is a sufficient enough threat to warrant taking out the radar site, or the missile site, whatever. But if it was clear that it was embedded next to a school or next to a hospital, the pilots rightly had instructions to check, so that the U.S. and the coalition didn't get very bad press for having blown up a school or a hospital.

The situation at the time, the public affairs situation at the time, was already pretty bad, because the UN requirements were that only certain kinds of goods and a certain amount of goods could go into Iraq under the UN authorized Oil for Food Program.

The accusations coming out of Iraq and elsewhere that the U.S. and others were causing deaths of children from malnutrition, because there wasn't enough food going in under the Oil for Food Program, et cetera, were really gaining traction.

So we had a very difficult public relations problem internationally over was enough food going in, were the Oil for Food requirements too restrictive, what was going on in the no fly zones, were we being too aggressive in the no fly zones, were we killing children when we fired back at Iraqi radar sites, et cetera.

So there was a very big effort at the time to think through whether there was any part of this equation that we could change, sort of change up so that we could get at the Iraqi talking points, which as I say were gaining traction among European public opinion and even to a degree in the U.S. Congress.

One of the things that we decided to do at the time was to expand the Oil for Food Program quite considerably. There was a monetary limit on it, a financial limit on it. Of course, the difficulty was that the Iraqis would buy up to the limit, but they wouldn't distribute it. So as much as we could we demonstrated that there were warehouses full of

all kinds of things that the Iraqis just hadn't distributed to people and that was one of the reasons that people were going hungry, number one.

Q: Was this to make the people hungry for political reasons, or was just they wanted to keep the food?

JONES: It was a couple of things. It was to make the people hungry for political reasons to a degree. So, for example, they didn't buy the kinds of supplies that they should have bought for infants and for nursing mothers, lactating mothers and pregnant women. There were a whole set of nutritional requirements that the UN had that the Iraqis just didn't order and the unfortunate thing is that the UN members couldn't tell the Iraqis what to order. We could tell them they could order up to this limit, et cetera, but we couldn't force them to order it.

There was an interesting comparison that we could use, though, because 13½ percent, I've forgotten the exact figure, of the total Oil for Food Program was set aside for the Kurdish areas. The Kurds bought all kinds of things that everybody needed, so you could make a very clear comparison that nobody was starving in the Kurdish areas, no children were dying in the Kurdish areas, medical supplies were getting to hospitals in the Kurdish areas. They were amazingly well organized and were able to demonstrate that without Saddam and his henchmen looking over the distribution of the food that the Oil for Food Program could work extremely well.

And the whole point of the Oil for Food Program was to limit what Saddam and his henchmen could bring in in terms of luxury items, luxury items and weaponry or things that they could use to put together weapons.

So what we did, in order to change up the equation, was basically to expand tremendously the Oil for Food Program. We basically opened it up and put no monetary limit, no financial limit, on the amount of things that the Iraqis could buy and we expanded considerably the kind of things they could buy. We basically made it a list of what not to buy, rather than a list of what they could buy, so that as contracts were let, there was a review process that was in the UN that the U.S was very involved in.

We were basically the only ones that ever said no to anything and the others knew that, our allies on the Security Council knew that and depended on us for that. But it meant that it opened it up for construction materials, it opened it up for school books, it opened it up for pencils, because there were all kinds of accusations the Americans wouldn't even let lead pencils in, because of the lead in them, even though there's no lead in lead pencils, it was all nonsense. But by changing up the requirements and the limits, we were able to have much more positive talking points, especially for Congress and for the Europeans.

Q: Did you find sort of, on your staff and throughout the Department, an increasing admiration for the Kurds and a lessening towards the Arab side of the Iraqis, the point being, when you're dealing with the humanitarian scene and if you see one group of

people behaving admirably and the other one, albeit under a dictator, doing a horrible job?

JONES: No, the attitude was, yes, the Kurds are doing a great job and the Iraqis, the Arab Iraqis, Sunnis, Shi'ia, whoever, could do a great job if they weren't under the dictates of Saddam and his henchmen. We had enough intelligence and we had enough on the ground reporting, from the UN, from the Poles, who were representing our interests there, from other embassies who were there, to know that the instructions were coming very much from the close-in Saddam group and that there was considerable unhappiness among the Iraqi UN staff, or distribution contractors, et cetera, that they didn't have access to the warehouses where all this stuff was.

So the attitude was if you could only get Saddam out of there, then, under control of reasonable people and there are reasonable people, then it'll work better for everybody.

Q: Could you turn it on Saddam, by everyday saying "Saddam is not releasing food," "he's not doing this,"

JONES: That's exactly, those were the talking points, "not releasing food." We had a lot of information about how many warehouses, how much was in the warehouses, how much he was buying instead in terms of luxury items, he and his sons and uncles and cousins. We had a lot of overhead photography which we got declassified of the palaces, how many palaces had been built, before the Oil for Food Program and here are all the palaces now. It was all pretty dramatic and we had all the information.

It was hard to overcome the "but all the children are dying" talking point. I appeared before Congress any number of times to try to refute some of these things and to make these kinds of points. It helped a bit, I must say. We called it "Smart Sanctions." That was in fact the policy that Colin Powell embraced when he came into office, which is a different story, we'll get onto that later. But that was very much the effort. So, it was turn the Oil for Food Program into Smart Sanctions.

We also really pushed hard for a quicker turnaround on the approval of contracts in the committee that reviewed all of the contractors. This something that could be authorized, or was this a dual use item and it took a very long time. But we added more people to the group reviewing contracts. We put a big push on it. I put several NEA people on the committee. They had instructions from Tom Pickering and the D Committee to work much more quickly.

Q: The contracts, were they a problem?

JONES: The contracts could be a big problem, which we now know because of the scandal with the Oil for Food Program. So they really needed to be scrutinized for who was the contract with, what were the goods that were coming in under the contract, were they dual use items? So, for instance, planes being brought in to spray crops for disease, could they be used as transport for chemical weapons, what's the dynamic of that?

We had a big controversy over some vans, which we heard about later. Vans were being brought in, mobile units for incubating eggs to hatch chickens. Could they be used in biowarfare?

Q: Colin Powell I think made reference to these.

JONES: That's exactly right. We would go round and round in the committee and we had U.S. intelligence people on the staff supporting the committee. We had several of my desk officers, in the end. We finally brought in somebody who was quite senior to run it from the State Department side, to really push through and as much as possible approve the contracts that were easy to approve. We wanted to get a much quicker turnaround and speak to the talking point that the U.S. was slowly walking all of the contracts and thereby causing people to be ill and not get food and construction not to happen and children not get books and all that.

Q: Were you getting whiffs of the problem that later became apparent, I think Kofi Annan's son and others who were involved in some of these UN things?

JONES: We were worried about it, but we didn't have any direct information. There was intelligence about kickbacks, but it wasn't a big issue at the time. A bigger issue at the time was what sort of a cutout is there for Jordanians and Turks to transport goods in and out of Iraq, because of the accusation by the Jordanians and the Turks that they were being badly damaged economically by having part of their borders closed to commerce because of the Oil for Food Program.

I ended up with a lot more of a negotiation later when I was in EUR on this, but nevertheless it was quite a big issue. We ended up having to reconfirm to the Turks and the Jordanians that their special status was valid and that they were exempt to a degree from some of the restrictions on going in and out of Iraq under the sanctions committee. That was all agreed among not just the State Department but among all of the Security Council members as well.

Q: Did you have the feeling at this particular time that the Russians, Germans and French were sort of hovering around, trying to make deals? One gets that feeling from the outside, but—

JONES: To a degree, yes, the Russians, not so much the Germans, but, yes, the French. But the French issue with us was a little bit different. At the same time all this was going on, what I just talked about, the UN inspectors were trying to review all of the nuclear holdings, the chemical weapons holdings and the bioweapons holdings of Iraq, to try to determine whether they had complied with the UN Security Council resolutions that required that they end of all of the programs.

Butler had basically just about agreed, if he hadn't already agreed,

Q: Butler being

JONES: Butler was the head UN inspector, the Australian, who was in there. He basically had decided to close the book on the nuclear issue; they could find no further evidence of a nuclear weapons program in Iraq. And, interestingly, that was the easiest of the three to close. He felt that they had enough evidence on that. There was some U.S. skepticism, but he was able to address all of the intelligence information that we had on this and so that was pretty well agreed.

There was a big controversy with the French over the chemical weapons program, I think it was chemical, over an interpretation of the testing results of a sample that was brought out of Iraq. The U.S. testing folks believed that x and y chemicals were in this thing which were definitely evidence of chemical weapons and the French disputing that that same sample actually had those chemical elements in it.

So there was a huge fight with the French over how to interpret that sample. Butler was very much on the side of the U.S., that these were definitely weapons and the French just being very adamant that they weren't. And our interpretation was it was all because the French had things they wanted to sell to Iraq, they wanted all of the books to be closed, so that the sanctions would be lifted, so that they could begin to sell all these other things.

That ended up being the big controversy between the U.S. and other members of the Security Council, where the U.S. basically, under Albright and President Clinton, that, to a degree, no matter how much Saddam did and how much the UN said "We could find no evidence of this," the U.S. would never vote to lift sanctions on Saddam. In other words, this was an internal, if not a stated and I'm pretty sure it was stated, decision by the Clinton Administration well before the Bush crowd came in.

Q: In a way, you're pointing at something which is a theme that comes up again and again and again and that is, this is strictly from the American perspective and I'd like to hear the French perspective, but the American perspective is that the French would sell their grandmother if it would further their economic ties. This is rather stark in what you were doing but in other cases French foreign policy is essentially very much a commercial one and ours takes a different standard, not that we don't have our own quirks and commercial interests, too, but this is very apparent in this case?

JONES: That's right, it was very apparent. It was very upsetting, because none of us at the State Department could have said, "Yes, we know that it's this in the sample or that." But we absolutely believed in the integrity of the U.S. labs that had looked at this and had said, "Yes, this is the strain and yes, this is what it can do and yes, it could be weaponized."

So even then we had a bad disconnect within the alliance, within the Security Council, about what to do about Iraq. It's kind of interesting, given what happens later, to keep that in mind. The other thing to keep in mind at this point is that it's a big part of U.S.

policy to get the two Kurdish groups, who were basically at each other's throat most of the time and had—

Q: Barzani and Talabani.

JONES: Barzani and Talabani.

Q: These are names that have gone down through the decades.

JONES: That's right, through their fathers and grandfathers and uncles and everybody. The KDP, Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party and Talabani's PUK, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, a big part of my job was to generate negotiations between the two, to come up with a single constitution and elections to a Kurdish parliament. The goal there was to build a bigger Iraqi coalition against Saddam Hussein.

So I went into the Kurdish areas at least once. David Welsh had been a couple of times before me. I went in from Ankara, flew to Incirlik. The Turks were very unhappy about this effort.

Q: You were creating a Kurdistan.

JONES: That's right and that's the way they saw it, even though they intellectually could understand and accept that it was important to develop an anti-Saddam coalition among Iraqis. If the Kurds could get together, maybe other Iraqis would coalesce around them, et cetera.

So what I agreed to do when I went in, January of '99, I think it was, I agreed to have a Turkish diplomat go with me, to demonstrate that there was nothing that the U.S. was promoting that was in any way going to be contrary to Turkish interests, that there was no way that the U.S. would do that with a NATO ally, et cetera. So I had a very good Turkish colleague go in with me and two other Americans, one came with me from Washington and one came from Ankara. We flew in by helicopter from Incirlik.

We went in on Turkish Blackhawks, a very exciting helicopter ride, as I remember. We were, I swear, three feet off the ground the entire way and I was fascinated by it. We were swishing in and out of this valley and that valley and for whatever reason, maybe because I was at the door, I did not get airsick. Everybody else got seriously airsick. I felt very sorry for them.

But the only reason I mention that is that when I came back, I learned from Mark Parris, who was the ambassador in Ankara, (I was staying with him on the way in and on the way out, going with him to meetings to discuss all of this) apparently the Turks had neglected to notify the helicopter flight to the American AWACS. So we were an unidentified flight and the AWACS actually targeted us to knock us out. Somewhere along the way, as they had the back and forth about two unidentified helicopters, because we were all in one and there was another following us, somewhere along the line they

said, “Oops, no, we think that there are American and Turkish diplomats in that, don’t fire until we can identify!” When I came back Mark Parris gave me the cable that had all this, framed.

Q: We’d already lost—

JONES: We’d already lost Barbara Schell.

Q: Who was our consul general in

JONES: In Adana, I think she was.

Q: Shot down by an American fighter. It was a helicopter, I think, wasn’t it?

JONES: It was a helicopter, the same situation, unidentified.

Q: Oh boy! What was your impression and what happened when you and the Turk and all were in Kurdistan and how did the Turk respond?

JONES: Well, first of all we were very much welcomed by both Barzani and Talabani. I went to see both of them in each of their redoubts and we had a joint meeting of various of the negotiators. I was there for almost a week, I think.

They were very welcoming of the effort. They all said they wanted to make the effort work. They could understand why it was important to have a single constitution, the usual thing, very much wanted to have elections, but only on their terms.

So it was a very, very difficult negotiation. We made some headway in dealing with some of the controversial issues. We had many, many, many negotiations after that and as we know we never got there, never made the agreement. But at least we were able to generate the impression, the correct impression, that this was an effort being worked on. It did make an impression on Saddam, because there were all kinds of excoriating comments made about the effort, my mission, all this kind of thing.

The Turks were satisfied, to the extent that they at least accepted that they knew what was going on. There was no accusation that I was doing things behind anybody’s back, or, yes, we were there, but I really had extra meetings. There was nothing like that. But they absolutely could not stand the idea that the term “federal” would ever be used in any sort of agreement involving the Kurds, federally administered or a federal agreement or a federation of Iraqi nationalities or anything like that.

Q: In a way, was it that the Turks were taking the stand that any idea of a federation would mean there would be a Kurdish entity under the Iraqi [polity] and that could act as a unifier?

JONES: That's right. That was absolutely their concern. The one thing they really insisted on was that I meet with the Turkish minority in the northern areas, which was fine, I was happy to do that. I met with the Islamic groups. So there were a variety of smaller groups that I met with, all of their representatives.

Q: Were the Kurds on their best behavior with these groups?

JONES: On and off they were. First of all, the Kurds had to be on their best behavior with Turkish groups, because the Turkish military was all over the Kurdish areas, anyway. And they were fine with the Islamic groups, too, so it really wasn't an issue.

When I left, we were unable to fly out by helicopter, because it was so foggy. It was actually kind of interesting, because we drove the whole way out and there were *peshmerga* (Kurdish force) guards all the way along.

The Kurdish areas of Iraq really look very biblical. They have very much the West Bank look to them. One of my favorite mental images of being there was the third or fourth day. I had come back to talk to Barzani and was walking into his big office area in his redoubt, striding along with him and all of his phalanx of people. We turned a corner, the hallway was completely empty, except for one *peshmerga* soldier, in his big, baggy, Kurdish pantaloons, his big shirt, the fancy hat with the big plume on it, big bandoleer strapped across his chest, weapons in every direction, on a cell phone. For me, that was the New Kurdistan.

Q: Did the PKK come up? And you might explain what the PKK is.

JONES: The PKK is the group that's considered the terrorist group, the Kurdish group. It came up all the time. It was a big subject of discussion, throughout the time I was there, throughout the whole period I was working on Iraq. We attached considerable importance to making sure that the Barzani group and the Talabani group were doing nothing to support them. We wanted to make sure that they were doing everything they could to wrap them up. Every time I knew of or we heard of a PKK office in this city or that city or that town, going to either Barzani or Talabani saying, "Okay, this is our intel, go shut it down! Not allowed!"

It was a difficult situation. They were, frankly, perfectly happy to have the PKK around. They hadn't given up on having a Kurdish area. They talked the talk, because they knew they had to with the Turks around and with us around, but it was a fairly constant discussion with them about all that.

One of the other things, just to paint the picture of how much we were involved with the two Kurdish groups, we actually gave Barzani and Talabani each a State Department secure telephone, so that I could call them on a regular basis on a secure line from Washington to their headquarters.

We had regular phone calls. We would call them back and forth, or email or send faxes or whatever to set up times for me to talk to Barzani and Talabani, or any of their associates. We had interpreters on the line if we needed them, to talk through what's the latest on negotiations, what about this PKK office, what's going to happen next with Saddam, what's going to happen with the Security Council resolution, whatever it was.

So we had a very active, a very engaged policy with the Kurds. I had an officer on the Iraq desk who was my full time Kurdish affairs officer. We had somebody at Embassy Ankara who was a full time Kurdish affairs officer as well, just because it was an important part of the policy.

Q: Was there any connection to the Iranian Kurds, because our history with Iranian Kurds is kind of nasty. We supported them up to a point, until we no longer, this is I think under Kissinger and then at least the impression is we abandoned them when it was no longer convenient for us. That might not be fair, but—

JONES: Yeah, we didn't have a relationship with the Iranian Kurds, directly, but Talabani was in touch with them all the time and so we used him, we just talked through him to them when we needed to.

Because of the various relationships of the groups -- Barzani had quite a good relationship with the Turks at the time, Talabani had a terrible relationship with the Turks and was basically not welcome to travel out of Iraq through Turkey. He traveled out of Iraq through Iran and we just let it go, we didn't worry about that aspect of things and it never really came up politically. It could have, but it didn't, in the end. It's interesting, because of course the sides have switched now, they're associated and aligned in different ways.

But it was a very, very, close, detailed engagement that we had and as I said we had all kinds of negotiations with them. We had both teams come to Washington at regular intervals to negotiate. We had them see the Secretary at regular intervals. So you'll see, the record will show all kinds of meetings and appointments and that kind of thing with the Kurds.

Q: Were we making the point at the time that we're glad to have these relations with you but we want to see a Greater Iraq and we are not going to support a Kurdistan?

JONES: We were at great pains to make that point, every single time. There was not the word "Kurd" or "Kurdish" or "Kurdish areas" mentioned without saying, "Iraq will be a sovereign and integral country and these areas will be part of that Iraq." So we tried to be very, very careful about that, for basic policy reasons, but also because of the Turks.

Q: Well was anybody looking at this thing on Kurdistan, but on the whole Iraq thing and saying, "This is America trying to put back together a post-World War I creation." In other words, is Iraq real?

JONES: Here was my very, very strong perception at the time and it was born of basically that first trip -- that first trip that I took, in which I was talking with I don't know how many Kurds all the time, many of whom had served in the Iraqi government, as minister of agriculture, minister of this, minister of that. Very many of them, not the younger ones so much, but very many of them, talked in terms of a whole Iraq. They also talked about how many Sunnis in Baghdad they were still in touch with and which military officers they were still in touch with, surreptitiously and all that kind of thing.

So they in fact made the case for me about how much it was possible for there to be a federal or an integrated or a unified Iraq, because there was still a memory, a very strong memory, of how well it could work, with Baghdad as the capital, with a certain amount of independence on some issues.

When I was doing the negotiations I'd keep the states rights kinds of issues from the U.S. in mind; "Okay, these are the kinds of issues that the local areas should manage and these are the kinds of issues that the federal government in Baghdad should manage, eventually."

So, to answer your question, there was no discussion at all about trying to redo Iraq or say that it was inevitable that Iraq fall apart. The evidence that we had was to the contrary.

One of the people who'd been an Iraqi minister was one of the ones who drove out with me out of Northern Iraq. For all those hours we had many, many hours of conversation about how it worked and would it work again and all that kind of thing. Plus, he was one of those who was, a lot of them were very clear about what Smart Sanctions might look like. We didn't just negotiate the Kurdish issues, but what would be better for all of Iraq in terms of Smart Sanctions or relations with Jordan or relations with Turkey and what are some ideas that you all have for all of this.

I recalled it, too, from my time serving in Baghdad, the few conversations I was able to have with various Iraqis of all kinds about how it might work better if Saddam weren't in charge.

Q: Was there a group out of Iraq, I'm thinking of Chalabi, but any other group, did we have an Iraqi group that we could talk to and use ideas from and see as maybe a government in exile or something like that?

JONES: There were a large number, of course, of Iraqis who were in exile, the Iraqi diaspora. One of the things that happened about the time I started was that Congress had passed, at the behest, really, of the Republicans, the bill that authorized a budget for the opposition. All of us at State were very opposed to this, because there was no unified Iraqi opposition in exile. Chalabi had already made inroads with all of the U.S. neocons and it was they who had sponsored this legislation.

Q: "Neocons" being

JONES: The neocons being Wolfowitz, Feith, Rumsfeld, who wasn't quite so much part of it, although his name was often mentioned in this connection, Bolton, former CIA Director Woolsey. That was one of the big controversies that we had all the time, was how to deal with this legislation. The State Department had pressed the White House to have the president veto it, because we thought it was so completely stupid and inappropriate. But we failed, and he signed it.

But what we did get done in the legislation is an agreement that there not be cash given to any group, that the nine hundred million dollars, whatever it was, would be given in kind, in other words training for an exile group or a conference or whatever.

One of the things that I had to do is meet with this Chalabi all of the time, because he and his cohorts were constantly coming in to try to get the money. They would send us proposals for how much money they should have to pay rent for their office in London and how much money they should have to pay rent for their mansions in London and their vacations here, there and the other place.

It was really completely outrageous. We were able to turn them down, on the basis that, "No, you show us something that is going to help the Iraqi diaspora and fight Saddam Hussein in some political way or military way and we'll fund that, but only with receipts. We won't give you cash to do it, but we will reimburse you from receipts."

This is the way the State Department figured out how to work it. We had full cooperation from the CIA. The Pentagon at the time was even more anti-Chalabi than we were and was even less inclined to even provide training. So I'd go to my Pentagon colleagues and say, "Okay, can you come up with some kind of a training program?" and they'd come up with "How to sharpen a pencil" training. It was ridiculous.

"I'm the one on the hook to report to Congress that we are doing what the Congress said and I can't constantly come to them with "How to set up an office" kinds of training programs. I've got to come with something that's a little more substantive."

But I can't remember now, I think we didn't have to provide lethal training. I think it could be anything but lethal training. Plus they were offering training programs that were months and months and months away.

Q: Who were to be trained?

JONES: Oh, all these Iraqi exiles.

Q: Where, in London or

JONES: They were supposedly in London, they were all over Europe. They would gather them together. Well, a couple of times we said, "Okay, here's this kind of training. Give us the names of all of the people you want to have trained in this." Well, they couldn't

come up with any names. They'd come up with three. And so we'd do a little training program here, we'd do a little training program there.

One of the things they came up with was a big conference in New York

Q: When in doubt, hold a conference.

JONES: Exactly.

Q: And it's a great way to spend money, by the way.

JONES: It's a great way to spend money. Of course the Chalabi crowd wanted to have the cash for the conference. We said, "No, you set up the conference, we'll help you set up the conference and we'll pay the hotel bills when they come due, we'll pay for the food, when it comes due."

I think maybe we gave them a little bit of *per diem*, I can't quite remember, but we were very, very parsimonious about all of this, to the gigantic complaints of Chalabi and various of the folks around him.

But that was the other thing that kept going on at the same time.

Q: Could they go back to Congress and to Bolten and company

JONES: Sure, they did all the time. There were constant complaints about the State Department. There were even op-ed pieces naming particular people at the State Department for not having approved the grant for this or the grant for that. We'd all frame the op-ed, say, "Yes, that's right, we didn't approve it! Thank God!"

Q: But, just to get the attitude, there was unanimity within the government that these people were at best ineffective and at worst amounting to petty conmen or something?

JONES: Well, we already knew that Chalabi had this indictment against him. He'd skipped town from Jordan for embezzlement and we had plenty of other circumstantial evidence that whatever cash we gave him was going to be used for his personal aggrandizement, it was not going to be used in any way against Saddam Hussein.

So we were all in the loop, we were all in agreement that he was a very bad guy and we should stay away from him.

Now, at the same time, there were various other leaders of Iraqi exile groups, all different kinds. One of the things that we did in that period, in order to stay in better touch with them, to be organized with them and partly because there was big interest in this in Congress, is we appointed someone to be the liaison, the ambassador to the Iraqi opposition.

That was Frank Ricciardone. He'd been the Iraq desk officer, we'd known each other when I was the Lebanon desk officer, et cetera. He had a fairly small but separate office to work with the Iraqi opposition in some way and to go from opposition leader to opposition leader to opposition leader, one was sort of a royalist and one was this kind of a guy and one was that kind of a guy, to see if he couldn't get them, one, to agree with each other on anything. Two, to mount some kind of a genuine opposition, political opposition, to Saddam Hussein. Three, one of the things we were also dealing with was to publicize to a greater degree the results of the poisoning of the Kurdish areas previously, to put on exhibitions of the damage that had been done to land and people, to translate and publish a lot of the documents that had come out of that period.

End of Part I