

DONALD M. ANDERSON

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Q: Today is July 8th, 1992. This is an interview with Donald M. Anderson. We're doing this on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies, and I am Charles Stuart Kennedy.

I wonder if you could give me a bit about your background, where you came from, where educated?

ANDERSON: I was born in Sioux City, Iowa and went through the public school system there, through high school, went to Louisiana State University for undergraduate school.

Q: What were you majoring in?

ANDERSON: I majored in government, and at that time LSU had a small, but I thought a very good government department. I ended up getting a fellowship and spending an extra year working on a master's degree. When I went into the Army...

Q: You went in when?

ANDERSON: That was 1955. I had gotten a ROTC commission, and I was called to active duty so I spent the next two years in the Army, first in El Paso, Texas, and then outside of Providence, Rhode Island in a surface to air missile unit. While I was in the Army, I guess it must have been 1956 or '57, I took the Foreign Service exam, and passed it and was supposed to go into the Foreign Service immediately upon leaving the military. As usual, the State Department, when the time came, had had a budget cut and there was a hiring freeze so I waited for about six months and ended up actually coming on board in the Foreign Service in April of 1958.

Q: Were you with a class at that time, a basic officer's class?

ANDERSON: Yes. There were 25 in the basic officer's class.

Q: Because these things change, what was the outlook? Was this going to be a career, or something to try on for size, would you say, for this group?

ANDERSON: Within the group there was a great variety. For me, I think I always did consider it a career. In fact, when I was in high school in Sioux City, Iowa I was thinking about the Foreign Service. I barely knew what it was but it was something I wanted to do, and I must say I was discouraged by my teachers in high school who told me that only people who went to the Ivy League schools could aspire to a career in the Foreign Service. I think for others it was very much a trial. My recollection is that of the 25 who joined in our basic class, within two or three years at least 40% had dropped out.

Q: Because these things are changing rapidly, I addressed the last junior officer class of 32 and 16 of them, 50%, were women.

ANDERSON: When I joined, there was one woman, and I think by today's standards we were generally a younger group of people. In fact, I think that at the time I joined you couldn't be over 31 because then you didn't make it into whatever it was you had to do. One of the 25 was very near the edge of being too old to be hired. But the rest of us were mostly anywhere from 22 to 26 or 27.

Q: Your first job was in the State Department for two years. What were you doing?

ANDERSON: I came into the Foreign Service in the wake of the Wriston program, after the Wriston Report integrated the State Department civil service and the Foreign Service. The State Department hiring rate was up, and basically I think they were looking for jobs for people. People were not going overseas immediately on their first assignment. It was more normal to be assigned in Washington, and I was assigned to the International Education Service-IES as it was known, which was the forerunner of the Bureau of Cultural Affairs, which then got spun off to USIA. I was staff assistant to a division chief and we handled all of the senior academic exchanges, the Fulbright Program, and Smith Nundt. These were professorial exchanges, high school teachers and research scholars.

Q: Where were these from? All over or...

ANDERSON: All over.

Q: The Soviet Union too, or not?

ANDERSON: No, I don't think there was any Soviet program at all at that point.

Q: What was your impression within the State Department of this exchange program? Was it a good thing? Was it working? Were there problems?

ANDERSON: Oh, I think it was an excellent program. Its now administered out of USIA where it probably should have been to begin with. For someone who had gone into the Foreign Service, dreaming of being a diplomat, it was not exactly what I had envisioned as my first job, but it was true of a lot of people at that time. They were in a way creating jobs that probably weren't necessary.

Q: How did the Chinese connection which, of course, ran through your entire career but how did this start? Coming from Sioux City...

ANDERSON: I've been asked that many, many times. About the only answer I can think of is that when I was in the third grade, I believe, my third grade school teacher was a former Chinese missionary. She used to read us stories about China, and take us over to her house and show us all of the things that she had brought back from China. Then when I was at LSU obviously there wasn't much of a China program, but they did have a course in Chinese political history, and I took that. And in my graduate year at LSU I started working on a master's thesis on the 1945-47 period of U.S.-China relations, the Marshall Mission, etc. So I had an interest in China, and the April Fool's sheet that you fill out...

Q: This was the post preference report that came around and due on the first of April, hence the name April Fools Sheet.

ANDERSON: From the very beginning I requested Chinese language training. I remember quite clearly that I got a phone call from Personnel...actually I had been assigned to Munich and was quite pleased with the assignment. I was going to the Consular Section in the Consulate General in Munich. And I got a phone call from Personnel saying that they had noted my application for Chinese language training and that the Chinese program was very overcrowded but they could get me into Cambodian right away. I told them, thank you, but no thank you, and sort of made up my mind that I was going to go on to Munich. It wasn't more than two or three days later that they called back and said that I had indeed been accepted for Chinese language training, which meant another year in Washington which just about broke my wife's heart because at that time we had one daughter two years old, and one daughter six months old, and she was very much looking forward to sailing to Munich. But we did the year in Washington and then went off to Taiwan for the second year of Chinese language training.

Q: The school was not in Taipei was it?

ANDERSON: No, it was down in Taichung.

Q: How was the course conducted there?

ANDERSON: Well, it was a very informal place. Taichung at that time was, I guess, a city of 500,000 people, but by Chinese standards it was a very small town. It reminded me in terms of size of something akin to Sioux City, Iowa. The school was in a large what had been I imagine a single home. There were about 20- 25 students from USIA, CIA, State. That was pretty much it at that time. The classes were basically tutorials. One would have some classes with two or three students in it, but as you progressed into more advanced Chinese it was usually a one on one situation. The latter part of the course was really basically devoted to newspaper reading because reading Chinese is the time consuming part. We gave speeches, and we had lectures, and area studies lectures in Chinese. It was quite a well run program, I think.

Q: Did you feel that you were absorbing the Nationalist Chinese point of view? Or was it relatively apolitical?

ANDERSON: Well, inevitably...being in Taiwan, you were exposed much more to the Nationalist point of view. And most of the teachers had come from Beijing, or from the northeast.

Q: You were being taught Mandarin?

ANDERSON: We were taught Mandarin. The dialects vary so much in China that they sought teachers from the Beijing area which was the most standard Chinese. Our teachers were entirely Mainlanders who had fled the Mainland when the communists took over so you did have a rather staunchly anti-communist viewpoint. We did get the People's Daily, and Chinese communist publications because it was necessary to not only learn the standard Chinese characters, that is, the old-fashioned more complex characters which we used in Taiwan, but also you had to learn the simplified characters which the Chinese communists had introduced if you were going to read the Chinese communist press.

Q: Did you find that a lot of ideographs had been made up? Sort of communist type words, or not?

ANDERSON: Not the characters themselves, no. That was a pretty straightforward process of simplification based on the logic of the characters. In fact, I think had the Nationalists not lost the war and evacuated to Taiwan, they would have probably introduced a similar expanded simplification system. The language itself, the jargon obviously was influenced by the communists ideology. Like any language it evolves and I did find that when I once became involved with Mainland Chinese, that the language that was spoken on Taiwan-the Mandarin that was spoken on Taiwan-was progressively getting more out of date with what they were using on the Mainland. It was, generally speaking, more formal, not classical. A much more old-fashioned kind of Chinese.

Q: What were you picking up from your fellow students, and any connections you might have with the embassy about the political situation? We're talking about 1961-'62. The Kennedy administration had come in. Was there a feeling that the Nationalists might actually make a try for the Mainland? Or did we think this was a pipe dream? How did we feel?

ANDERSON: Well, the period I was in Taichung the first time was really sort of the depths of the results of the Great Leap Forward, there was widespread famine on the Mainland, and the Mainland was really in terrible shape economically. It was probably the one time following Chiang Kai-shek's withdrawal to Taiwan that there was some serious consideration given to the possibility of launching some kind of an attack against the Mainland. I don't think it ever came to anything. I went back for further training in 1965 and one of my teachers at that time was a sort of semi-retired Nationalist general, and he and I used to talk about it. He said that he had been designated in 1962 as the Commander of the Nationalist forces on the Mainland should the invasion take place. Obviously it never did.

Q: Again, among your group, the recognition of Communist China was a bone of contention that went on from 1948 until really 1977, or something like that.

ANDERSON: '79.

Q: What was the feeling there? I was a Foreign Service officer but never dealt with it but the feeling, it's just a political thing, why don't we just get on with it, and recognize them.

ANDERSON: I think among the group that I was with and certainly my own feeling was that we ought to be moving in that direction. It was not a simple matter of simply switching recognition at that point. It probably would have produced chaos on Taiwan, but a lot of the fiction that we maintained for many, many years really gradually became rather silly. I remember when I went back to the Department-it would have been the mid-'60s- you still really couldn't talk about it. If you used the word "China" without "communist" in front of it, there were people who would question what you were talking about. There was a long time, for example, that you couldn't use the word "Peking", you had to use the word "Peiping" which was the Nationalist name for the former capital of China. It was a very emotional issue, and the China lobby was still at that time fairly strong. People still remembered what had happened during the McCarthy period, and the whole issue that we lost China, etc.

Q: The China hands, John Stewart Service, and others really suffered from that.

ANDERSON: I had friends who said, "Why do you want to study Chinese?"

Q: Again, I'm trying to get back to the time...what was the feeling about a career in Chinese? After all, you had this one not overly significant island where we had posts, and then you had this huge Mainland with many millions of people on it where we had no recognition, and you're starting on a career of this. What was the feeling?

ANDERSON: I guess I took the long view. I figured that I had probably another 20 or 25 years in the Foreign Service and that things would inevitably change. And then in addition to the view that at sometime we would get to the Mainland, it really wasn't quite as restricted as it might sound, because the embassy in Taipei was quite large. And then we had the Consulate General in Hong Kong which was the premier China watching post for the U.S. Government and was larger than most embassies. At that time there was also a practice of assigning Chinese language officers to a number of our southeast Asian posts because places like Bangkok, for example, had very large overseas Chinese communities, and it was felt that it was desirable to have a Chinese speaking officer to follow that sector of the community. So in terms of career possibilities it was not a bad deal.

Q: Indonesia, Burma...well then you did go to Hong Kong where you served from '62 to '65. What were you doing there?

ANDERSON: Well, the conventional wisdom when we were finishing up language school was that the career-wise thing to do was to go to Taipei because that would help you solidify and consolidate your language. I decided not to do that, and I tried to get assigned to Hong Kong because I did want to work on the Mainland. I did not want to get locked into being a Taiwan specialist. So I went to Hong Kong first as a consular officer, which is the way everybody went from language school to Hong Kong...in the consular section. I did a year in the American citizen services...actually the passport section, which was a very educational experience because passport fraud in Hong Kong was a major enterprise.

Q: How did you deal with it?

ANDERSON: It was a fascinating thing.

Q: Could you describe how the fraud developed, and how you dealt with it?

ANDERSON: Basically, the origins of the passport fraud was in the late 19th century, early 20th century. There was a tremendous amount of, not immigration, but travel by people from Guangdong Province just across the border from Hong Kong, to the United States, largely working on the railroads as laborers. This group of people actually came almost entirely from two or three counties, just across the border. And when the San Francisco earthquake occurred, for example, all the birth records were lost, and all one had to do to be certified as a citizen living in San Francisco was to have two people come in and swear that you were born in San Francisco. A lot of Chinese became American citizens that way. Someone did a study once of the population of San Francisco at that time and determined that if every Chinese male in San Francisco had actually been born in San Francisco, knowing the number of Chinese females in San Francisco, that each woman would have had to give birth to 600 children. Their practice was generally to leave the wife back in the village, and go earn enough money that they were prosperous by Chinese standards; then they would come home and maybe spend a year, and then go back and work some more. During that time would sire children. And, of course, the desirable thing to have was boys, because they would then grow up and as soon as they were eligible they would go to the United States and work to continue this process of sending money back to the village. Daughters were an inconvenience, and so what would happen would be that if your brother who had stayed back in China had a son, and you came back and your wife produced a daughter, your brother's son would become your son for immigration purposes.

They developed an intricate network of fraud and in response the Consulate General in Hong Kong set up a fraud unit which was really quite an elaborate organization. The Chinese traditionally have what is called three generation papers. These are papers on usually red tissue paper, and they have the names of all of the relatives for three generations written on them. These are exchanged at wedding ceremonies. The fraud unit started studying these things, and developed an extensive file and collection of familial relations for these three counties, particularly Toishan county which was the biggest. It reached the point where people would come in...nobody had a birth certificate or any document so you relied on secondary evidence such as photographs taken with a person, work permits, or whatever it was. They would come in and claim to be so-and-so, and the son of so-and-so. We could send the application to the fraud unit, and they would research the names and come back and say, "He is not so-and-so's son. He is his nephew, and this is his father." We would present this to the applicant and they were usually so stunned that we knew that much, that they would immediately throw up their hands. And then there was blood testing also. Blood testing became quite sophisticated, it wasn't a positive identification, but it was a negative identification. So it was a real job of sleuthing. There was very little legal work or traditional consular passport work. It was trying to figure out the family heritage of somebody.

Q: I'm sure it gave you a much greater appreciation of the social intricacies of Chinese life too.

ANDERSON: Indeed. Not perhaps for Chinese life in the big picture, but certainly for southern Guangdong. Cantonese life is frequently quite different than say north or other parts of China. It's very traditional, sort of old-fashioned.

Q: How about with the language? I've always understood that there's Mandarin and Cantonese, and then a multitude of other dialects. How about Cantonese? Could you get along with it, or were you learning?

ANDERSON: No. I must confess that for spoken work in the consular section, my Mandarin was virtually useless. They all spoke Cantonese, and in fact, many of them spoke Toishan which is a dialect of Cantonese. I could read the documents because Chinese is standard all over China. I did not interview people in the language, I used an interpreter. In fact my principal interpreter and assistant knew more about U.S. citizenship law than I ever would.

Q: This is so often the case. Then you moved to the political section?

ANDERSON: In those days the political and economic functions were divided differently in the Consulate General because of the peculiar nature of the Consulate. We had a Hong Kong-Macau section, and a Mainland China section, and within each of those two sections we had an economic and political unit. So I was assigned for a time in the commercial section of the Hong Kong- Macau section where one of my major functions was what they called Economic Defense Officer, which was enforcing our embargo on the Mainland. It sort of meant chasing Hong Kong companies around that did business with China, and trying to prevent them from buying American products.

Q: This was a major effort on our part.

ANDERSON: Oh, it was one of the silliest I've ever seen. The Consul General himself got in trouble because he had a love for Chinese export porcelain, and thought that was perfectly acceptable to buy. And we had a Treasury agent in the Consulate who warned him that he was breaking the law. That job only lasted for about six or eight months, and then the State Department contacted me and asked me if I wanted to be the next interpreter for our meetings at the ambassadorial level with the Chinese in Warsaw, Poland. It's something that I had given some thought to because I did fairly well in the basic Chinese language course. I came out of it with an S-4, R-4.

Q: I might for the record say S-4, R-4, is speaking-4, reading- 4, is extremely high in our business. You really have to be born to get the 5-5, which is the highest.

ANDERSON: The job rather appealed to me because at the time the officer who was doing it was posted in London in the political section, and used to fly over from London to Warsaw to do the talks. So I readily agreed that I would like to do it...it involved going back to Taiwan for an additional year of interpreter training, and then on to, I thought, London. And as a result I should add they pulled me out of the commercial section, and put me into the Mainland China political section, reporting on Mainland China's foreign relations. So I did move over to the political section for about the last year and a half that I was in Hong Kong. My stint in the political section in Hong Kong ended up really being devoted in very large part to reporting on the probability of China's entering the Vietnam war. While we were in Hong Kong the Tonkin Gulf incident happened, which produced mass rallies in Beijing and a number of very threatening editorials and speeches about the U.S. aggression against Vietnam. There were a lot of people, particularly back in Washington, who still had very fresh memories of the Chinese entry into the Korean war, and there was serious concern as to what the Chinese were going to do, and, I think basically, how far we could pursue the war in Vietnam without provoking Chinese intervention. I was sitting out in Hong Kong reading everything we could get, and trying to provide an analysis of the probability of a Chinese intervention.

Q: I've heard people say this obvious centuries-long antipathy between the Vietnamese and the Chinese and saying you never could really expect these two to get together.

ANDERSON: It was pretty well obscured during the war, though. They were talking about being as close as lips and teeth and all of that stuff.

Q: Just to get a feel for this. Here you are sitting in Hong Kong reading newspapers, and listening to broadcasts, and this type of thing. How could you get any feel for what's going on? It's a controlled press...

ANDERSON: It very definitely was an inexact science. It was almost entirely from content analysis. Looking at the terminology they were using, talking to Chinese about, "What are the implications of this type of language coming from a Chinese source?" Really just gauging whether they were drawing a line and saying, "At this point we will react," or leaving things fuzzy. It appeared to me quite clear that they were trying to leave things fairly fuzzy. And I pretty well concluded that the United States could bomb, could conduct an aerial warfare against North Vietnam, but if the United States were to cross the 17th parallel, and start driving...

Q: This is just above Hui.

ANDERSON: Yes, and start driving toward the Chinese border, then I think we probably would have gone too far.

Q: As you went into these analyses, were you using as sort of a test the words that the Chinese were using during 1950 essentially in Korea, and saying, "OK, they were saying this, and we did this..." and using this as the model to look at?

ANDERSON: To the degree we could, but we didn't have that much. Alan Whiting wrote the book on China's entry into the Korean war, but that was later. We really didn't have the ability to do that careful an analysis. We probably should have.

Q: You say you talked to Chinese to find out the nuances. Who were the Chinese you'd get the nuances from?

ANDERSON: Well, I talked to the Chinese language teachers that we had. We had a Chinese local staff who assisted us with the content analysis, a very bright bunch of people that had an institutional memory of events and pronouncements by the Chinese going back sometimes 15-20 years. In fact, some of the locals that we had at the Consulate back in those days had actually come out of China with us when we left China. So they were a tremendous help. I remember one phrase, xiu xiu pang guan; quite literally it means "stand aside and watch," and I was trying to figure out whether this was a serious threat or what, and one of the Chinese said, "Well, literally, I think it probably amounts to your saying, 'If you get in a fight, I'll hold your coat.'"

Q: Who was the Consul General at that time?

ANDERSON: Marshall Green was Consul General when I arrived. By the time I was in the political section, it was Ed Rice.

Q: You were coming out with a sort of a conclusion. This is a very important thing, and there was a lot resting on what the Chinese were going to do, and obviously you were down the line so it wasn't all on you. But still did you feel any pressure as far as how you should call things, or not? What was the atmosphere?

ANDERSON: No, not really. Obviously I was pretty far down the line, and my analyses weren't going out under my signature. It was being vetted by at least two more layers, and sometimes three, and this was only one input into the decision-making in Washington. INR had an input, and CIA had an input to the decision-makers in Washington. But we were looking at it from the Hong Kong perspective, and as I say, largely based on content analysis. I don't know how much impact that had, but obviously the decisions were made to go ahead.

Q: Did you get any feel about, from where you were, about the CIA operations? Were you getting information, and how did that meld in with your activities?

ANDERSON: The CIA operation was very important. At that point less so for Vietnam, and for the Vietnam conflict, at least as far as inputs to me. It was important in terms of conditions inside Mainland China. There was a very extensive interview program, and the agency worked very closely with the British who obviously had a much bigger presence and were screening people coming across the border, etc. So it was a very important operation. I remember there were one or two guys that showed up who had just come out of North Vietnam, and we chased them around Hong Kong like they were gold miners, and usually they wouldn't talk to us anyway.

Q: What was your impression of events in China at the time? The Great Leap Forward had...

ANDERSON: It really collapsed, and economic conditions were in terrible shape. This was a period when Hong Kong was just being swamped by refugees coming across the border. I can remember our apartment looked out over the harbor, and then on to the hills of Kowloon. There was a terrible drought during this period, and we got down to water for four hours every fourth day. The brush fires on the hills you could see at night, burning up the hills. The refugees were streaming across the river that separates China from Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong government was having to cope with these thousands of refugees and began a massive housing program. We were very much involved in that as well because some of them did have claims to go to the United States. So it was a very difficult time, and we were focusing largely on the issues of the day. We were also trying to do China watching in the sense of what was happening in Beijing.

By the time I left to go back to language training in late '65, we were beginning to see some signs that something wasn't right in China, and that there were some new figures beginning to appear. But up until that time the Chinese had been able to maintain a facade of unity. I think people realized rather late that there was a tremendous power struggle going on.

Q: You went back to Taichung from '65 to '66? What was that all about?

ANDERSON: That was interpreter training. They had no formal interpreter training program, since they only trained one every four years so I had to sort of make it up myself. I worked with two or three of the senior teachers to design an interpreters' course. We built up a glossary of terms. I would read newspapers and interpret orally what I was reading, and if I saw words that sounded like they might be words that would be useful in the context of the ambassadorial talks in Warsaw I'd pull them out and we worked on a glossary of interpreting terms. Then my wife and I worked on going the other direction from English to Chinese-sort of standard government jargon that one might be confronted with. Then I had my instructors put that into what they would consider proper Chinese.

Q: Was your wife learning Chinese?

ANDERSON: Yes. At one point about that time she was 2+.

Q: What happened? I notice you didn't go to London for the Warsaw talks after all this.

ANDERSON: What happened was, the European Bureau in a burst of economy said, "We're sick and tired of funding this position in London for a guy who doesn't do anything for us, and is working for the East Asia Bureau. So unless we can make him more productive, we're cancelling the position." And the first reaction was to transfer the interpreter to Warsaw itself, where he became chief of the consular section. When they told me that that was what they were going to do, I decided I didn't want to be chief of the consular section in Warsaw. I basically said, "You can take my name out of the running," and got back a very quick reply saying, "We have been re-thinking the whole thing, and beginning with you we're going to move the position to Washington to the China desk, and that way you can be part of the drafting of the instructions, and the preparations for the talks..."

Q: I don't know what instigated it, but I remember there was a Congressional hearing where all of a sudden someone said...somebody on the Congressional side just to poke at the State Department, made a big fuss about, "What are you keeping a Chinese specialist doing in London?" "Ho-ho-ho," you know. I don't think the Department of State at that point, whoever was doing it, had a good answer for it.

ANDERSON: That's absolutely right. It was one of the poorer showings. I think what he said was, "Well, he uses his Chinese occasionally when he goes to Chinese restaurants." He was our interpreter. So anyway, I ended up going to Washington, and working on the China desk.

Q: You were there for four years from '66 to '70. What were you doing? Was this pretty much with the Warsaw talks?

ANDERSON: Oh, no. Maybe I should begin at the beginning. I ended up actually doing three jobs in the four years. I started off as the junior officer, the number two officer, in the China Mainland section. The office at that time was called the Office of Asian Communist Affairs, and theoretically covered Communist China, North Vietnam, and North Korea, all the communist countries in Asia. We spent about 98% of our time on China, and 2% on North Vietnam and North Korea. But I was the number two guy for China, in addition to doing the Warsaw talks, which were becoming at that point less and less frequent because China was going into the Cultural Revolution, and they were in total chaos.

Q: I think you might explain what the Warsaw talks were.

ANDERSON: The Warsaw talks were the ambassadorial level talks between United States and China. It was our point of contact with Communist China that went back to 1955. In the Geneva Conference in 1955 John Foster Dulles and Zhou En-lai agreed to begin these talks in Geneva. They started in Geneva. There were only two agenda items. One was the return of citizens detained by the other side. And the second item was other matters of mutual concern. They resolved the first item, reached an agreement in principal, I would say in about six weeks to two months of discussions in Geneva. And then they began a sort of general dialogue that went on literally from 1955 up through early 1970. The talks went through various periods. There were long periods when they were really pretty sterile, pro forma kind of things, and other periods when there were some real contributions made.

In 1958 they moved the talks from Geneva to Warsaw. While they were in Geneva the Chinese ambassador representative was Wang Ping-nan, who used to have to come down from Warsaw. Our representative was U. Alexis Johnson, who used to come over from Prague. So they moved the talks to Warsaw, and Wang continued for the Chinese, and Jake Beam did the talks for the U.S. side.

In addition to that I did Chinese Mainland analysis, and then after a year or so our Hong Kong-Macau officer left, so I became officer in charge of Hong Kong and Macau Affairs for about a year. Then the officer in charge of Mainland China Affairs, the senior position, got promoted to Deputy Director of the Office of Asian Communist Affairs, so he moved me up to his job. I ended up as the officer in charge of Mainland China Affairs.

Q: On the Warsaw thing, did you go to any of these talks?

ANDERSON: Oh, yes.

Q: What was your impression in the context of the period you were doing it? From '66 to '70.

ANDERSON: As I said, in many ways they were quite sterile. At that point China was in no mood, nor in any position, to entertain very many initiatives, or to take any initiatives. The talks were held in an old Polish palace, a hunting lodge actually of a Polish prince, called Myslevitzky Palace, which was set in a park in a very picturesque setting. The building was thoroughly bugged so we all were conscious of the fact that we were not just talking to each other, but we were also talking to the Poles, and through the Poles to the Soviets. The arrangements for the talks were that each side had four members. There was the ambassador on each side, a political adviser, an interpreter, and a scribe, as he was called-the note taker. We would meet in this meeting room in the palace and we alternated on who spoke first, and each side would deliver a prepared statement running about 15 or 20 minutes. In fact, I used to participate in drafting it, and once it was drafted and approved back in Washington I could sit down with my dictionary and translate it into Chinese. I interpreted from English to Chinese, and their guy interpreted from Chinese to English which is the reverse of normal interpreting situations. And then after the two prepared statements there was sort of a give and take back and forth, oftentimes working from prepared position papers because we pretty well knew what the Chinese were going to say.

At the conclusion of the meeting-the press almost always came to Warsaw for the meetings, American press, the wire services, etc.-we'd meet briefly with the press, and usually say nothing more than, "We had a useful and productive exchange of views. No further comment."

Then the following day, we had an informal arrangement where the political adviser and the interpreter would meet with their counterparts, usually at the Chinese embassy, and we would give them an English text of our opening statement, they would give us a Chinese text of theirs, and if there was any confusion about terminology, or what we meant by something, we would try and straighten it out during this informal meeting.

I don't know how the Chinese felt about it, but the American side felt it was a useful sort of informal contact where we could talk without the constraints of a formal negotiating session.

It also turned out to be useful in other ways. At the first meeting I attended in '66, we went over to the Chinese embassy- my predecessor actually did the interpreting, I was there...

Q: Who was the predecessor?

ANDERSON: Al Harding. The Chinese gave him a little farewell—they had soft drinks and beer, which Al said normally they didn't do. They normally had tea. But it was rather interesting because we noted that in the meeting room where they received us on the wall over the sofa there had obviously been two portraits, there were two light spots on the wall. When we got there there was one portrait of Mao Zedong in the middle, and it was one of the really first conclusive bits of evidence that Lin Hsiao-chi, the former head of state, had indeed been purged, and was no longer a person. Then as we left the building, on the walls in the halls of the embassy, there were pieces of paper with hand-written slogans which was the beginning of the big character posters of the Cultural Revolution.

Q: You say a prepared statement, was this just two people talking past each other?

ANDERSON: In large part. In the early days we had a number of concerns that we had to address. One thing we talked about was pilots who were flying against North Vietnam but who strayed and went over into Chinese territory and were lost. We were trying to get an accounting for them. Vietnam was a major factor for meeting all the way up toward the end. But at that first meeting in '66, we did use a phrase which was intended, and I think interpreted by the Chinese, as an assurance that we did not intend to invade North Vietnam and told the Chinese in that meeting that, "we seek no wider war in Vietnam."

Q: This often was a bone of contention saying we should just go in. Was it your feeling, and those with you, that this could really tip things if we landed at Haiphong or something like this. This could bring the Chinese in?

ANDERSON: Yes. And that's what we were trying to prevent. On the U.S. side we were trying to promote some sort of informal non-official contact. We were trying to get journalists into China for business, and a variety of what we saw as concrete practical steps that one could take to improve the atmosphere in relations and perhaps lower the tension levels between the two countries. The Chinese were not having any of that. It was a very sterile period. They were primarily berating us on Vietnam. For example, we picked up a Chinese boat that had gotten in trouble in the Tonkin Gulf. It had been in distress and one of our ships picked it up, towed it into port. We gave them food and fixed their ship up, and sent them back. And we mentioned this as something we had done as a humanitarian gesture, and they, of course, denounced us for it.

During the Cultural Revolution period, most of their people got pulled back to Beijing. This was a period when all of their diplomats were being called back to China to take part in the Cultural Revolution, so that the senior official on the Chinese side was usually a charg ½ d'affaires, not the ambassador, and their interpreter would come back and forth. As I say, the talks were really pretty dull at that point. The Chinese obviously had instructions that they had to have the last word, so our ambassador would respond to a charge by the Chinese, and the Chinese then felt obliged to answer again. Therefore, the talks sometimes would drag on for three hours or more. I can remember one time the political adviser on the Chinese side, who was really not a political adviser, their interpreter was far and away the more influential and the brightest of any of the group. The charg ½ turned to the interpreter after the talk had gone on for about two and a half hours, and said, "Can I stop now?" The interpreter said, "No." So he made another charge about something. So we would usually decide this had gone on long enough, we'd let them have the last word, and then decide on the next meeting.

But the rather humorous thing about it was, the reporters didn't get anything substantive because we would come out and give them a bland statement. In 1970, toward the end of the talks, we really did make some significant progress. In fact, the two opening statements were sufficiently substantive and significant, and meshed in such a way that neither side felt that they could go beyond that particular point without getting further instructions. So the meeting lasted for about a half an hour, maybe 40 minutes, and the press, of course, interpreted it as indicating that our relations had reached the lowest point ever. But it was finally, a significant and substantive meeting.

Q: ...looked at each other and said, "What do we do now?"

ANDERSON: That's exactly right. So anyway, the talks proceeded through the Cultural Revolution through a very, very difficult period, and then there was a gap of a full year between talks. Basically after Nixon came into office-he had already written an article indicating that he thought the United States should move toward improving relations with China, and there began to be some movement to see what could be done. The Chinese at the same time, I think, were becoming interested in improving relations with us. This was the period of the Brezhnev doctrine and a real concern on the part of the Chinese about what the Soviet intentions were.

Q: Did you have any feeling that the Chinese...I mean obviously the Polish intelligence service was passing everything on to the Soviets at that time, that the Chinese were using these meetings to stick it to the Russians, or anything like that from time to time, or not?

ANDERSON: Not so much to stick it to the Russians, I don't think, but it was obviously an inhibiting factor. One thing I didn't mention was, well, we haven't gotten to it yet, but when we decided to try and resume the talks in 1970, we decided we would have to discuss the issue of Taiwan, and some of the fundamentals of the relationship, and that we couldn't do that in the Myslevitzky Palace with the Poles and the Russians listening, so we proposed to the Chinese that we change the venue of the talks. We considered several possibilities, one being a third country less under the thumb of the Russians. And the other one that the Chinese finally agreed on was to move the talks to our two embassies. So the meeting that resumed the talks after about a year's hiatus in January of 1970 was held in the Chinese embassy.

Q: Was it sort of the feeling that we were ready and willing to do a lot of things, but was really waiting until the Chinese were ready to make some moves? Was this more or less how things were going? Or were we as disinterested observers say, we were also stalling and not wanting to get anything going?

ANDERSON: We were stalling to a degree, and particularly we were not prepared to do much in terms of recognizing the legitimacy of the Chinese government of the People's Republic of China. What we wanted to do was more, as I said, the concrete practical level of exchanges, and solving problems. They wanted to talk about fundamentals, and that's why we decided toward the end of '69 that if we were to resume the talks we ought to try and address some of these questions. At that point I think Nixon and Kissinger were in favor of that, and we were able to do things for the first time in terms of formulations on political relationships that we couldn't have done under Johnson, and particularly under Dean Rusk.

Q: Was the feeling this was Dean Rusk who was calling the shots on China policy? Or was this basically the Democrats having been burned on China once weren't going to get themselves caught again?

ANDERSON: Dean Rusk played a major role. He had been Assistant Secretary for Asia, he had been in China, he considered himself a China expert. He was very conservative on China issues. It was very difficult to get any flexibility as far as the seventh floor...

Q: The seventh floor being where the Secretary of State dwells.

ANDERSON: And then when the Nixon administration came in and Walter Stoessel, who was then the ambassador in Poland, was instructed to contact the Chinese, and indicate that we would like to resume the talks. Paul Kreisberg was the Office Director. By that time it had become the Office of Chinese Affairs, it was no longer Asian Communist Affairs. We shed North Vietnam and North Korea. Paul Kreisberg was also the political adviser to the talks so he and I worked very closely together on this. We were told to start drafting a new set of instructions for Stoessel for a meeting with the Chinese. As I said, that's where we basically agreed, the two of us who had been working on it, that we should talk about Taiwan and some of the more fundamental issues between the two countries.

I remember some of the earlier drafts of the instructions that we did. I was quite surprised to find that the feeling was that we hadn't gone far enough.

Q: Was it a surprise, or not, when the Nixon administration came in...obviously Nixon had earned his name as being one of the most vehement anti-communist early on. Was there a feeling there, "Oh my God, here we're moving farther to the right on this." How did you feel about this?

ANDERSON: No, there wasn't because while Nixon had made his political reputation, as you say, as a vehement anti-communist, he was also recognized as a very savvy and pragmatic international thinker. He had already announced the so-called Nixon Doctrine of limited U.S. involvement. And he had written in one of the journals saying we had to find a way to improve our relationship with China. So we knew he was inclined in that direction. So there wasn't any worry about the ideological aspect of that particular Nixon anti-communist position.

Q: Again, the '66 to '70 period, what was our view of the Cultural Revolution? Because I suppose in many ways this was your main preoccupation, wasn't it?

ANDERSON: It was. Well, it was very clearly an unmitigated disaster for China. By that time we were getting a lot of intelligence, mostly through Hong Kong, of what was happening in the provinces. There were a number of places in China where it was nothing short of civil war. They were using artillery, and the two factions were engaged in pitched battles. Bodies would come floating into Hong Kong harbor that had been executed. Sometimes multiple bodies all tied together would float into Hong Kong from these factional fights that took place just up in Guangdong province. And, of course, it was a tremendous guessing game as to who was doing what to whom in the upper reaches of the government in Beijing. It was sort of an analyst dream...play the game because so much of the indications of where things were going was done in the press, largely through historical allegories and this kind of stuff. It was great fun to play the game, but it was very, very hard to read.

We did have very good intelligence on the degree of chaos that was going on in China. I remember Bill Bundy during the '60s-during the height of the Cultural Revolution-set up sort of a Wise Men's Group of some academic scholars. They were the best in the United States...

Q: Fairbanks and...

ANDERSON: Fairbanks, Bob Scalapino, Barnett. They would come to Washington periodically to discuss "whither China." One of them finally told me, he said, "You know, we're getting more out of this than you are." Because we were assiduously collecting everything we could get by way of intelligence from the provinces, and probably knew about as much as anybody, which wasn't certainly enough, but we did have a very good...

Q: How did we feel? I mean was this Mao Zedong going off in a rampage? Or was this a breakdown in authority? What was causing this as far as we saw it?

ANDERSON: The Cultural Revolution?

Q: Yes.

ANDERSON: I think it was the combination of things. It was a power struggle first and foremost. Mao felt that after the Great Leap Forward had failed certain elements of the leadership- Liu Xiaochi was then head of state, Deng Xiaoping, and a number of others were leading China in a direction of revisionism, or capitalism if you want to put it that way, which they were. They were trying to put the country back together economically from a very dangerous point. And Mao felt he was being shunted aside. He had his own vision of what revolutionary China should be and he decided to mobilize the masses, essentially destroy the system, and then put it back together again. And then obviously there were many people who, for their own purely selfish personal reasons, joined into this struggle for their own personal aggrandizements, or power position, etc., notably his wife, and the people around her.

Q: Later the Gang of Four. What was our estimate of Mao Zedong? Was he a canny political thing? Or was he sort of a bull elephant in a china shop?

ANDERSON: Oh, no. I think Mao was a major political thinker, an ideologue, and a truly great leader. Even despite everything he'd done he's still revered by the people of China. He's probably a leader that should have died about 1951.

Q: Which happens so often. Again, and again you run on these people who outlast, outlive their time.

ANDERSON: But he brought the revolution to a successful conclusion for the communists, introduced a system which brought a certain amount of hope. There were a lot of excesses, but there was also some hope and a feeling that China was making progress in the early '50s.

Q: It was beginning to feed itself, and clothe itself, which it had not been able to do under previous regimes.

ANDERSON: But really from '57-'58 on, it was just one series of disasters. There was the Hundred Flowers campaign, and then the anti-rightist campaign, and then the Great Leap Forward, then the Cultural Revolution. Basically the Cultural Revolution wasn't really over until Mao died in 1976.

Q: How did we view Zhou En-lai? He always seemed to be a very practical person, but yet he survived under Mao. How were we viewing him at this time?

ANDERSON: I think he's a remarkable individual in that...I really can almost literally say, I've yet to find anyone who doesn't admire the guy. He obviously had to be a magnificent opportunist in the sense of knowing where to land, and when to give and when to attack. But he was universally revered. I was in Hong Kong when he died, and in Hong Kong the lines stretched down the street to pay their respects at the memorial service. It was just tremendous, and genuine. I know Chinese today that have fled China, have been persecuted by the Chinese, and who hate the communist system, but one person they can't say anything bad about is Zhou En-lai. It's amazing.

Q: Did we see him...I'm talking about, of course, at that time, as somebody we should keep an eye on because he represented hope? Or did we see him as another one of the boys?

ANDERSON: I think he was always recognized as a pragmatist, and someone who, if there was anybody we could do business with, it was probably assumed it would be Zhou En-lai.

Q: Did you get any feel for Kissinger? Was he involved? Did you have any contact? Or were you feeling the hand of the National Security Council at this time up until 1970? Nixon came in '69, so it really wasn't much time, but did you have any feel for Kissinger?

ANDERSON: Oh, yes. Well, as I say, we had two meetings in Warsaw that were very significant. One was in January of 1970, and the second was in February of 1970. In fact, it was during those two meetings that some of the formulations we put together in terms of describing our views of the relationship between the People's Republic of China, our relationship with Taiwan, and our acceptance of the idea of the unity of China were drafted. Eventually very similar formulations found their way into the Shanghai Communiqué^{1/2}. So in many ways I feel that Paul Kreisberg, who was the principal drafter in most cases, and myself, made a real contribution to the Shanghai Communiqué^{1/2} that emerged in February of 1972. In fact, at that point after the February meeting, we were planning to send a delegation to China which would have been headed by a Presidential emissary. I was working on costing it, how we would do it, and what kind of communications we would require. We were planning for a meeting with the Chinese in Warsaw in April, but the President in the interim had decided to go into Cambodia with American forces and...

Q: This is the spring of 1970. I was in Saigon when they went in so I remember it vividly.

ANDERSON: And the Chinese cancelled the talks.

Q: Was our planning kept very hush-hush? Or was this just sort of a normal diplomatic progression that you were working on? I mean the idea of costing-out a Presidential delegation.

ANDERSON: This was usually done in secret, NODIS. Its all been declassified now.

Q: I was just trying to get the feel of how we were...

ANDERSON: No, it was very, very limited. The Chinese cancelled the talks. Paul Kreisberg and I returned to the United States, both of us terribly disillusioned because we thought we were really on the edge of a breakthrough. I decided there wasn't any future in messing around with China for the time being and asked for, and got, an assignment to New Delhi. Paul Kreisberg went off as DCM to Tanzania. Henry Kissinger immediately recommenced the talks with the Chinese in an even more clandestine operation in Paris.

Q: Then you went to New Delhi where you were for two years, '70 to '72. What were you doing?

ANDERSON: I was in the external section of the political section. Back in those days...in the bad old days...I think it was Galbraith back in the early '60s decided he needed a China specialist and a Soviet specialist in his political section. So there was a Chinese language officer position in the embassy in Delhi, and I went out as the China specialist, which would have kept me busy about 5% of my time. Actually, my bailiwick, as it turned out, was India's relations with Asia, and the communist world-Soviet-India relations, Indian-Chinese, Vietnam, and Eastern Europe.

Q: This harks back to some time before because you are looking at India. How did we figure...was it '62 the war between China and India where the Chinese gave the Indians a bloody nose for a while and we stepped in and helped with supplies? As a China watcher, but let's say by the time you got to India, what was the feeling? Why did this war take place? It was relatively minor, but it was a little war.

ANDERSON: Oh, it was.

Q: Why did it take place? And what was behind it?

ANDERSON: It's a very complex subject, and it's also a very emotional subject. I mean, you could only have one view if you talk to Indians, and you could get in great trouble if you didn't. My own view is that India was basically...it's a very strategic area. It's a very high mountain area, and the British for many years used to probe up into that area. McMahon was up in that area. It's sort of the roof of the world where you are looking down into the other side. And I think the Indians were in a sense carrying on the British tradition of pushing forward into areas for strategic advantage, and the Chinese reacted. The Chinese were much better prepared, and the Indians were really badly prepared. They got a bloody nose and lost some territory- the Aksai Chin. It was quite strategic to China. You have to look at a map, but it connects two parts of China. And they also lost some territory over in the eastern part as well.

Q: In the first place, Kenneth Keating was the ambassador at the time. What was your impression of him, and of the embassy?

ANDERSON: Keating was a nice fellow, a good New York...

Q: He'd been senator from New York.

ANDERSON: I would not rate him as a good ambassador. Like many political ambassadors, particularly an ex-Congressman who becomes ambassador, it's a very personal thing, and the relationship is a very personal relationship. But I mean, he didn't do any great harm, and as I say, he was a pleasant individual. I got along with him quite well. The embassy itself was huge, but it's a huge country. I must say, the two years I spent in Delhi were not among the two happiest years in my life.

Q: In dealing with the Indians, they in some ways mirror us. They get very moralistic, and preach. Was this a problem as far as dealing with them?

ANDERSON: Yes, it was. They are a very prickly people, and have a very strong sense of national dignity. They would get very huffy about what we would often times consider minor things. I found that frequently hard to deal with. I was denounced from the floor of parliament. I was sitting up in the diplomatic gallery at one of their parliament question and answer sessions, and was wearing white pants which is sort of traditional, but it was a very boring day and I was slumped down and the seats were rather small and I'm long-legged, so it appeared that I had my knees on the back of the chair in front of me. And whoever the parliamentarian was that was speaking turned around and pointed at me, and denounced me because the American had no sense of respect for the Indian parliament, etc., etc.

Q: Caused you to sit up anyway.

ANDERSON: I sat up a bit, but I didn't move because I did not have my knees on the back of the chair, and they sent someone around to remonstrate with me.

Q: In the first place, what was India's relations with the Asian world that you were dealing with? And also, how did you go about and collect information?

ANDERSON: It was a very difficult time for American diplomats at that time. The whole Bangladesh thing was developing, and the United States, particularly Henry Kissinger, was tilting very heavily toward Pakistan.

Q: The phrase, I don't know where it started, but that we were tilting toward Pakistan.

ANDERSON: The Indians were furious, and when the Indians are furious they can be in their own glorious pompous self. And Indira Gandhi was rising in power, so it was a very abrasive type of relationship. India was neutral but leaning quite heavily toward the north in the Vietnam situation. They had a Consulate General from North Vietnam, and a Consulate General from South Vietnam. The North Vietnamese consulate eventually became an embassy. I used to talk to the South Vietnamese about India's Vietnam policy, and they were trying to involve themselves in some sort of peace process. I used to fool around with the Russians just to try and...I mean they wanted to talk to me because they thought I was a China expert, and I wanted to talk to them just to see what they were doing with the Indians because they were very, very heavily involved. It was interesting, I ascertained who their China specialist was, who, I think a legitimate Soviet Foreign Ministry type who had served in China, but dull as dishwater, and I was very quickly passed off to another, much livelier individual. He was not a China specialist, but he was with the KGB and then with the Indo-Pak war, the Christmas War in December, I also was involved to a degree with Indo- Pakistani relations, and to a degree with Pakistan because curiously the Minister of the Pakistani High Commission was a friend of mine whom I had known in Washington.

Q: They kept their missions open, didn't they, during this war?

ANDERSON: Yes, they did. But the diplomats were under house arrest. Once or twice we went over and played bridge with the Pakistani Minister in his house. It wasn't a terribly strenuous job. A lot of social life, and a lot of exchanging scuttlebutt.

Q: Did you get any feel for the, I won't say tensions, but the varying points of view between our embassy in New Delhi, and our embassy in...where was it, in Rawalpindi at that time?

ANDERSON: Islamabad.

Q: There was also a political appointee in Pakistan, wasn't there at the time?

ANDERSON: I can't remember.

Q: Did you get a feel that New Delhi was sending in its thing, and Rawalpindi was sending in its thing to Washington and they're looking at the local, rather than you might say the American interests?

ANDERSON: Actually, serving in the embassy in Delhi you began to take on the color of India. Islamabad was writing back to an essentially receptive audience. They were objective in terms of what was happening, and there's no question Pakistan started the war. It was a very difficult time on both sides, and our relations with Pakistan in many respects were strained as well. But basically their support for an independent Bangladesh was viewed favorably...I mean not their support for India, but Bangladesh. Whereas India saw itself as supporting the independence of Bangladesh, and they were taking in literally millions of refugees from Bangladesh and trying to feed them. We did help. We did have C-130 flights come in with tents and stuff, but it was getting the Indian perspective on the whole conflict. It was very difficult to get much vibration back to Washington. They didn't want to hear much about India. And, of course at that time, the Indians were saying a lot of very nasty things about us.

Q: What about the very controversial move of putting the nuclear carrier Enterprise into the Bay of Bengal, or something like that? How did that play at our embassy? Were we saying, go away, go away, or something like that?

ANDERSON: Yes, exactly. The unanimous embassy view in Delhi was it was really dumb.

Q: What's a carrier going to do, except to stir up emotions. This was Kissinger, wasn't it?

ANDERSON: Yes, Kissinger.

Q: Kissinger wasn't Secretary of State at that time, was he?

ANDERSON: I think he was still just NSC.

Q: Yes, but very much calling the shots as far as this one.

ANDERSON: Yes.

Q: What was your impression of the Indian Foreign Ministry, and the people there?

ANDERSON: The Indian Foreign Ministry is basically quite a good professional corps, and in many of the posts where I have served I've had a good contact, a good friend frequently, among Indian diplomats. They're generally quite professional.

It's rather interesting...I don't know, maybe this happens to Americans too, but I found that I frequently had very good relations and rather good personal relations with Indian diplomats in third country posts. If I met the same guy back in New Delhi when he was in the Foreign Ministry, he became a pain in the ass.

Q: Well, we all pick up the coloration of...

ANDERSON: But they're good.

Q: Did you get any feel for the Indian view of China? Were they still wary? How did they feel, because the Cultural Revolution was in full swing.

ANDERSON: The worst part of the violence had pretty well stopped. The Gang of Four was still very much in the saddle.

Q: Yes, little red books waving.

ANDERSON: The Indians, I think, view China with a mixture of awe, envy, and contempt. There are some very good China scholars in India, and obviously it's a country that's very poor. So they feel a sense of competition. These are the two huge land masses in Asia, the two great population bases. And I think I mentioned, there's a feeling that China gets treated better than India. That the West, and in particular the United States, doesn't recognize the importance of India and accept India's logical hegemonic position in South Asia, which doesn't make India very popular with its neighbors. The '62 war at that time in '72, still was a very sore point. For example, Taiwan used to launch propaganda balloons from Quemoy and Matsu off the China coast, and the propaganda balloons would sometimes get picked up in the upper air currents and would sail clear across China, and across the Himalayas, and drop in India. Some guy would find one of these propaganda balloons and every time some Indian parliamentarian would get up and give a speech about, "these terrible Chinese are delivering these propaganda balloons to us, and what is the government going to do to stop this?" So it's just a very minor thing.

In the '62 war all the Chinese restaurants in New Delhi changed their names to Japanese. The first page of the menu would have about five Japanese dishes and the rest of the menu was all Chinese.

Q: Just one last thing, and then we can call it for today. You mentioned this fascination, or the Indians felt we gave more attention to China, I talk as a Foreign Service officer serving around, and no particular speciality, but I've always been intrigued by this fascination we have with China, which goes back to really one of our first consuls where we weren't sending consuls to anywhere else, we sent them to China. There has been this fascination about, and great things are going to happen, which have never happened as far as great trade, etc., etc. Did you feel this? That there's a special China interest in the United States which isn't justified by practicality?

ANDERSON: I obviously think China is an important place. More important, I think, is an almost unique problem we have with China, and it sort of goes both ways with a similar problem in China. There is this love-hate relationship. When things are going well with China, and China is being good, Americans think China is wonderful. It's all panda bears, and rosy-cheeked kindergarten children, and people going to banquets, and delivering stupid speeches. And then when China does something bad, like Tiananmen, then China can do no right. There is this overwhelming desire on the part of the United States people to somehow punish and correct China, which we're going through right now.

Q: This must have been an overlying theme all the time, this reversal back and forth all the time in the United States where we don't really have that much of a problem in relations with other countries.

ANDERSON: That's true.

Q: As a China hand were you aware of this, and thinking, "Oh God, here we go again," or something like this?

ANDERSON: Harold Isaacs wrote a book quite a long time ago called "Scratches on the Mind", where he makes this very clear. We have this problem, partially on the part of Americans because there is this affinity to sort of change China, to make it over into what we think should be the image of China.

Q: We had finished your time in New Delhi. You were in Paris from '72 to '73. What were you doing there?

ANDERSON: I don't know where we finished, but I was in Delhi and got a cable from Washington saying that they wanted me in Paris in two weeks. This was right after the Nixon trip. Actually, the lead-up to the Nixon trip, and the continuing contacts had been conducted in Paris through General Walters...

Q: Vernon Walters.

ANDERSON: ...who was the Military Attaché, and the Chinese ambassador, and after the Nixon trip the contact in Paris sort of went public and the President announced that this would be the point of contact between the Chinese and ourselves, and that Ambassador Arthur K. Watson would represent the U.S. side. It became rather urgent at the time because Ambassador Watson was flying back to the United States on one of his fairly frequent trips and according to the story that appeared in the press, he got rather intoxicated and by way of apologizing to the stewardesses attempted to stuff \$10.00 bills in their blouses which one of the stewardesses duly reported to the press. Of course, the press was all over...the State Department and the White House asking, "Is this the guy that's going to be handling our contacts?" "Yes, he's going to do it, but we'll have somebody there with him who is a China specialist." That is why I was suddenly transferred to Paris.

Q: I assume under strict instructions to keep your hands off the stewardesses.

ANDERSON: We got there in May of '72, and as usual in the State Department after turning my family upside down and disrupting their lives, making everybody miserable, we got to Paris and they basically said, "What are you doing here? And we don't really know what to do with you." Pat Byrne was the Asia officer in the political section and she sort of took me under her wing and took me down to meet the ambassador. I remember that quite vividly because we were walking down the hall and Jack Kubisch, who was the DCM, appeared in the hall on our way down to the ambassador's office, and said in an absolute remarkable way, "Whatever he says, agree." It was sort of a panicky advice that I should be terribly cautious. I went down and met with the ambassador and he was an absolutely charming man. We had a session, just the two of us, and he said he considered the China contacts one of the most important jobs that he had in Paris, that I was his man for those contacts, and I had access to him anytime I wanted to. If anybody in the front office gave me a bad time just to come right into his office, etc. So I left thinking this was going to be great.

And then Allen Holmes, who was the Political Counselor, and was very close to the Ambassador-the Ambassador trusted him implicitly, and the Ambassador did not trust most Foreign Service people-spoke to me and said there was a question as to whether I would be Special Assistant to the Ambassador and work directly for him, or whether I would be in the Political Section. And Allen advised me, and I think in many ways saved my hide, that it would be much safer if I were in the Political Section because I would have this buffer between myself and the Ambassador.

Q: Because at certain points efficiency reports are written, and if you're Special Assistant it depends on the Ambassador. Whereas Holmes being in the Foreign Service among other things...

ANDERSON: It was even more serious than that in this case. Anyway, that's the way we worked it out. The job really didn't amount to a great deal. The Ambassador didn't take part in many of the routine things that we did, but I saw the Chinese maybe a couple of times a week, and basically didn't have that much to do otherwise.

Q: What sort of things were you dealing with?

ANDERSON: Largely very routine stuff. At this point there were delegations going back and forth between China and the United States. The Chinese delegations almost all came through Paris. They would usually neglect to get their visas arranged and would come into Paris and would have to have a visa by 8:00 the following morning in order to get to whatever appointment they had in the United States. The first Boeing sale was made, and the Boeing people came through to meet the Chinese who were en route to Seattle and didn't know how to do it, so I took care of that. A lot of that kind of routine stuff.

The big thing that we were waiting for was two packages, one educational exchanges and the overall umbrella arrangement that we were trying to set up to begin educational and cultural exchanges; and a business package to set up a similar kind of relationship and a structure for beginning business relationships, remembering that at that point we had no representatives in Beijing. We had no diplomatic relations so this was the only way we could do these things in a non-official type relationship. This was the point at which the organization I'm now with, as matter of fact, the U.S.-China Business Council which was then called the National Council for U.S.-China Trade, was designated as the umbrella organization for trade. The National Committee on U.S.-China Relations and the Committee on Scholarly Communications with the People's Republic of China were designated as the educational and cultural umbrella organizations. We were expecting to get these two packages to present to the Chinese, that was probably into around early August and the Ambassador was going home on vacation so I was pushing Washington to get these things. They finally got them out to us, two lengthy cables, and when I came into the embassy that morning the two cables were waiting, and it just happened that the Ambassador was calling on the Chinese Ambassador because he was going on vacation the following day. It was a rather extraordinary meeting because the Ambassador had been out the night before, and was nowhere to be found in the embassy. I spoke to his staff assistant, who was very wise in the ways of the Ambassador, and said, "We've got to wake this guy up, and get him ready. We've got these two things." He said, "Leave it to me, Don. Don't call the residence."

Q: I take it this was a very ticklish situation.

ANDERSON: He was a very volatile individual, he could be absolutely charming at times, but he could fire you on the spot as well. So he went over to the residence, and I got the car and met him over there. He brought the Ambassador down and I handed him the two papers. Each were about, I would say, maybe ten pages long-one on educational exchanges, and one on the commercial relationship. He glanced at them, and tossed them back in my lap and I believe his words were, "This is crap. I'm not going to talk about this penny-ante stuff." He said, "I'll leave that to you to take care of with your counterparts." And while we were riding over to the Chinese embassy he said, "What I really want to do today is just talk about global issues, sort of a tour d'horizon," for which we had no instructions whatsoever. In fact I had been specifically told by the NSC that I was not to do that kind of thing, that this was basically a mail delivery program and I was not to engage in other types of conversation.

But we did sit down with Ambassador Huang Chen, who was an interesting individual, and Ambassador Watson did indeed proceed to indulge in a tour d'horizon. The most memorable moment of which I remember-this was 1972-he said, "Mr. Ambassador, the one thing that I think both of our countries have to worry about the most is Germany and Japan." Ambassador Huang, I thought, looked rather surprised at this statement, but we carried it all off, and went back. I wrote a reporting cable which reported mainly what Ambassador Huang said. Ambassador Watson later told me it was the best cable he had seen written in the embassy since he had been there.

He left very shortly after that and went home, and I am told...I don't know this from my personal experience, that he was met in the United States, and informed that it was time for him to resign. So that was really the last I saw of Ambassador Watson.

Q: Could you explain a bit about who was Ambassador Watson? What was his background?

ANDERSON: He was one of the sons of Arthur Watson, the founder of IBM. He had been president of IBM International, and as you know, his brother became Ambassador to the Soviet Union and the story was at the time that there was a question of who was going to become chairman of the board, and the senior leadership at IBM did not want Arthur K., so they arranged for him to become ambassador. I was told later that he had told someone in the embassy that he had always considered me to be the State Department spy in this China business, and he considered that I was responsible for his demise as ambassador, which was not true at all because I was very careful about that.

Q: Just to get a little feel for somebody looking at this in future times. Maybe you were sort of a mailbox operation there while these other things were happening, but at the same time there still was an official source of communication. Kissinger was head of the NSC at that time. Were you getting instructions, or whatever you want to call them from people in the NSC, "Watch this guy. We don't want him to screw things up," or anything like that? Were people telling you this?

ANDERSON: Not really. I was hearing in the embassy, and I think it was generally understood, that this guy was rather volatile, and sort of an unguided missile. But, as I say, the instructions were really that we were a mailbox, and I can remember one instance when Marshall Green came through, he was the Assistant Secretary at the time, and I told him that I was going to try and use these contacts to broaden the discussion. And he said, "That's fine Don." And the first time I wrote a cable back based on a discussion with my counterpart on his views on Sino- Soviet relations, I got a very fast phone call from Washington saying, "Dr. Kissinger does not want you doing that. Deliver the mail, and that's all." So I did very little of that.

My only other job in Paris during that whole period was to fill in for the Vietnam Liaison; actually I did get involved in the Vietnam peace talks which took place at that time, and which involved the Chinese, of course. In fact, we had a meeting with Secretary Rogers who was with the U.S. delegation, and the Chinese representatives at the Paris Peace Conference during that time. There was a period when Jack Kubisch was involved with the talks, then Jack Irwin who was the next ambassador to come out. By that time Henry Kissinger had gone...this would be November of '72, Henry Kissinger had gone to Beijing again, and they had announced that they were going to open a Liaison Office in Beijing, which I think was a very neat diplomatic stroke. They basically had an embassy, without calling it an embassy, and managed to finesse many of the issues.

Q: Particularly the two Chinas problem which was Formosa and...

ANDERSON: I'm convinced that the Chinese, and I think probably Henry Kissinger, reached agreement on the establishment of the Liaison Office with the understanding that this was the first step toward diplomatic relations and the establishment of a full- fledged embassy. I think probably the Chinese expected it to happen, and they expected it to happen much more quickly. In fact, it took from '73 all the way to December '79 when Carter finally announced establishment of diplomatic relations. I think that was a much longer period, but it was due in large part to, on the one hand the Chinese side which was going through a succession struggle with Mao and the Gang of Four; and on our side we had Watergate.

Q: This was forcing Nixon out of office.

ANDERSON: So what happened was, basically I knew from November of '72 that my job in Paris was going to come to an end because we would be setting up the Liaison Office. Then I was informed by Washington that I would be going from Paris to Beijing. I went on a direct transfer from Paris to Beijing in May of '73, so I was in Paris literally one year.

Q: Back to the peace talks. What were your perspective of those peace talks at that particular place and time?

ANDERSON: I was not involved at the high policy level. My job was basically liaison with the Chinese. We kept the Chinese very well informed on positions that we were taking. Again, I was something of a mail man. I was the guy that Bill Sullivan would send out to the Chinese embassy at night to deliver papers and messages, and talk to the Chinese about what our positions were going to be. I think basically the Paris peace talks were a means for the United States to exit Vietnam. I mean it's a very controversial agreement, but at the time I think, viewed with a great deal of relief by most of the people that were involved.

Q: Did you get any feel for the Chinese role? Were they sort of passive by-standers?

ANDERSON: They were cooperative in the sense that they did not make obstacles. In fact, the atmosphere between our two sides was very good. The Chinese ambassador gave a dinner for...it was a Vice Foreign Minister on the Chinese side. We all went out and I can remember that the atmosphere at the dinner, and at a separate meeting that we had at the American ambassador's residence, basically talking about bilateral U.S.- China issues, was very good. I think at that point they felt the U.S.-China relationship was moving rather rapidly in the right direction.

Q: How about the lips and teeth relationship between China and Vietnam? Did you have any feel that this was almost now a secondary problem for them?

ANDERSON: Yes. I think there was very little of that kind of...well, practically none of that kind of rhetoric in our discussion. And, as we found out later of course, the lips and teeth relationship was a rather tenuous one at best. My view of the whole Sino-Vietnamese relationship was one of sort of mutual necessity bringing together two natural adversaries and as soon as the necessity ended in 1975 when the Vietnam war ended, the natural antagonisms came right back.

Q: You were right in there on the opening up of our Liaison Office?

ANDERSON: Yes. I got there, I believe it was in June of '73. The initial people, Ambassador David Bruce, who was the head of the Liaison Office, and much of the Liaison Office staff had already arrived when I got there. I had to shut down things in Paris, and I went back home for a few weeks. Then went on to Beijing. It was a real honeymoon period. The Chinese were doing their absolute dead-level best to be as cooperative as they could under the circumstances. Believe me, the circumstances were not that good at that time. I mean, the Gang of Four, Jiang Qing and her group were still very much a force to be reckoned with.

Q: I suppose in political terms you'd call it the radical left. Mao was still alive, but failing.

ANDERSON: Mao was still alive, but failing, and Zhou En-lai was very much managing the U.S.-China relationship. But he was failing too. Basically we didn't know that when we got there, at least I didn't. When we set up the Liaison Office, Kissinger came out again in November, and Zhou En-lai appeared in pretty good shape and was at the banquet for Kissinger in the Great Hall of the People. That 1973 visit went very well. My job on that one was as press liaison. I managed the press corps, and the liaison with the information office of the Chinese Foreign Ministry. I thought the visit went smoothly, and Kissinger went away quite pleased with that visit.

For example, on the Liaison Office itself, the Chinese really went out of their way to do everything that we could possibly ask for. The building that they had picked out for us...the system in those days was that they basically built chancelleries and took you out and said, "Which one would you like?" The one they had for us was too small, and we asked them to put an "I" extension onto the end of it. They literally assigned a work crew that went 24 hours a day, and in something like three weeks, had built the extension onto the Liaison Office. It was that kind of atmosphere of "anything we can do to make you happy." At the same time, of course, that they were bugging us, and restricting our travel, and other things.

Q: Was the Gang of Four the radical left were they able to intrude on the process, or were they kept away?

ANDERSON: At that time, they seemed to be cooperating with the whole process. It was a very strange time. I mean, Jiang Qing, for example...

Q: That was Mao's wife.

ANDERSON: ...Mao's wife hosted the Boston Symphony which was one of the big cultural events of the initial period of exchanges. She was very charming, of course, when Nixon was there. She was pushing her revolutionary operas and ballets. That group was a very strange group of people. Jiang Qing, for all of her anti-western attitudes, had a fascination with Western movies. We very quietly worked out an arrangement with Jack Valenti, for example, he would send us movies...

Q: He was president of the American Picture Association.

ANDERSON: He would send us out films that she wanted to see, and we would deliver them to Jiang Qing and her friends, and they would return them. We would return them back because the American Picture Association was very, very sensitive about copyrights, and piracy, and this kind of thing. Some of the choices of her movies I found rather interesting. The first movie she asked for was Day of the Jackal, which deals with assassination.

Q: ...of Charles de Gaulle.

ANDERSON: She also asked for Z, another movie dealing with assassination.

Q: A leftist movie about Greece.

ANDERSON: We didn't really sense any attempts to obstruct the relationship, although there was a power struggle going on at that time between basically the followers of Zhou En-lai, a more pragmatic group, and the leftists. As long as Zhou was alive, it seemed, the U.S.-China relationship was contained. Kissinger came back to Beijing in, I think it was again November of 1974, and by that time I was head of the political section so I was the sort of overall control officer for that visit. Kissinger saw Zhou En-lai in the hospital. He'd already been diagnosed as having cancer. I don't think anybody knew exactly what the diagnosis was, but he was ill. By that time a discussion with Mao had to go through two interpreters; one who spoke his native Hunan dialect, and then someone who could speak Mandarin. It was therefore screened through two female interpreters, one of whom was his niece, and the other was a lady by the name of Nancy Tang who was one of finest interpreters I have ever met, but who got involved with the Gang of Four and eventually got into trouble with them. So the visit in '74 did not go nearly as well as the earlier visits, and I think it was partially a reflection of the power struggle that was going on in Beijing. Of course, we had our own problems back in Washington with the Nixon resignation.

We did accomplish a number of things, largely in terms of cultural exchanges-some very significant cultural exchanges; getting the business relationship started, some high level visits, and basically getting the mission up and running and finding a way to function. We started out in the late spring of '73, operating out of a couple of hotel rooms, using one-time pads...

Q: This is a coding device, very primitive, very...

ANDERSON: ...slow. The Liaison Office moved to another apartment, and we set up a very primitive communication system in the bathroom of one of the apartments. Then finally we got a whole communication system, and the building, and we were able to move into it. One rather humorous aside, the Chinese in their efforts to please us when they built the new wing...that was part of the reason we needed the new wing was to put the communication section in. They did a lovely paneling job of the room where we were going to put the communication system, which involved strips and then wood paneling over it. Of course, the security people said that absolutely positively there could be no wood paneling on the walls of the communication section, so the Seabees had to go in and tear out all the work that the Chinese did. And one of our senior officers, who was very sensitive to Chinese sensibilities, was trying to figure out how we could tear all this paneling out and dispose of it without offending the Chinese. The Seabees built an absolutely beautiful parquet bar which they put in the Seabee apartment as the result of this.

Q: How did the restrictions and the bugging affect your work? More broadly, here you are, the first time in China, we're starting up after 30 years or so, how did you go about doing political work?

ANDERSON: It was difficult. We had the normal relationship with the Foreign Ministry. When I say normal, it was a pretty sterile relationship. They were always willing to see us, and they were always pleasant when we went to see them, but in terms of a dialogue, we had very little. One major fact that I neglected to mention was that of course, after about the first year, David Bruce left as head of the Liaison Office to become ambassador to NATO, and George Bush arrived as the second head of the Liaison Office. So I was in Beijing for the second year with...

Q: I'd like to talk about both of those gentlemen afterwards.

ANDERSON: As I say, there was very little dialogue. I think, in fact, that was one of the reasons why David Bruce lost interest very early on. I think he, given his background in London, Paris, and Bonn, that he visualized an on-going dialogue with Zhou En-lai. If my memory is correct, he may have seen Zhou En-lai twice after his arrival, but after that he was relegated not even down to the Foreign Minister, but often times being called in by the head of the American and Oceanian Department, who is about the equivalent of an assistant secretary, and at that time not a very pleasant fellow and I think basically, Mr. Bruce decided this was beneath him.

We did a lot of China watching which consisted of reading the newspapers, periodicals, and trying to figure out what the historical references were, the implications of rather arcane philosophical discussions that appeared in the newspaper from time to time, getting out on the streets and walking around. It was very difficult to talk to people but occasionally someone would talk. There was a period during that time when big character posters were put up, a form of expression that the Chinese permitted from time to time. We would go out and literally spend hours just standing in front of a wall reading the big character posters. Then exchanging notes with western journalists who were out doing the same thing, and collecting as much information as we could that way.

Q: I have visions of these big character posters and all these westerners, "Hey, have you seen this one?" "Come over here and look at this one."

ANDERSON: The journalists were much more open about photographing and this sort of thing. So we worked out a deal to acquire those. And then visiting with people who came through, western businessmen, and Chinese-American scholars who would come through oftentimes had better access than we. One of the things we did is attach ourselves to any major delegation, or any delegation at all that we could, that was traveling around China and go with them as escorts. I escorted the first delegation of White House Fellows, for example, on a very interesting trip through China. My wife and I escorted six U.S. governors on a long trip through China. That sort of thing, Congressional delegations, we would go with. It was strange. It was during probably the most restricted period in our bilateral relations in terms of contacts. I travelled more in China in the period '73 to '75 than I've ever travelled in China since. A lot of it was show and tell. We were shown what they wanted us to see and given the standard propaganda line. Then there was a great deal of gullibility in that.

Q: There has always been this strain in American view of China since the earliest days. For some reason Americans have a rosy view, or keep thinking that things will work out in China.

ANDERSON: Actually, the problem is not exactly that way. It's a two-sided problem. We tend to swing to both extremes. China is either, as you say, this wonderful place with its 4,000 years of culture, and panda bears, and rosy cheeked little kindergarten children that we all love. Or it's the other extreme, the Chinese and the Korean War, and brain-washing, and torture. Right now we're much more on the negative end. We do have a difficult time getting ourselves positioned in the middle where we recognize this is a marvelous country with incredible history, but they're also a bunch of bad guys and they can do very nasty things.

Q: How did you find the Chinese bureaucrats? I'm told that they're one of the most difficult to deal with.

ANDERSON: In the Liaison Office period, they were difficult to deal with, particularly if you got into substantive issues where they would have to go out on a limb and make a statement about a political issue. They were very, very cautious. On the other hand, I find their diplomatic service very, very able, and they were a very bright bunch of people. If they're not telling you something, they're not telling you because they're stupid. They're not telling you because they're protecting themselves. And at times they could be very skillful in finding ways to accomplish what you wanted to do.

I don't want to use up too much time but I remember one case when Henry Kissinger was coming and I was handling the press, it would have been '73. Henry had a friend with the New York Times, I can't remember his name now. But anyway, he was travelling in China, and we got this cable from Kissinger saying, "Please arrange to have this guy included as part of the press corps people" the U.S. press corps, the travelling group that came with Kissinger. So I went over to see Mr. Ma, who was head of the International Liaison, and asked if they could do that. And he said, "Mr. Anderson, you must understand that our rules are that only the people travelling with the Secretary on his plane are considered part of the press corps, and that those are the only ones that can be included." He said, "That is our position in principle." He said, "You understand now our principled position." I said, "Yes." And he said, "Now as a practical matter, since this fellow is a friend of Henry Kissinger's he won't be part of the press corps, but we will include him in all of the banquets, all of the briefings." And I discovered that the Chinese often times follow this approach. They have a position in principle which if you understand that, and agree with it, then in terms of practical implementation of that principle, they can do the exact opposite.

Q: Back to a couple of the people that you dealt with. David Bruce is one of our preeminent diplomats. How did you find his approach? You've talked a little about him, but how did he operate?

ANDERSON: David Bruce obviously was one of our premier diplomats. He was a very, very decent fellow, and his wife Evangeline was a very nice person. Even though Evangeline still remains very interested in China, I don't really think that they were probably well suited to the job. He was well suited in that he was who he was.

Q: It was a gesture that we're putting a top level person there.

ANDERSON: Yes, exactly. The Chinese did the same thing. They sent Huang Chen, the ambassador to France. It was a gesture to show how important this relationship was and how important the Liaison Office was. But as I say, I think David Bruce really expected that he would be communing with Zhou En-lai, and when it didn't work out, Mr. Bruce really, I think, lost a good bit of interest. He spent a lot of time working on his memoirs and other things. But he came through when it was important. Nick Platt was the first chief of the Political Section, who had a fatal accident in China-hit a girl on a bicycle through no fault of his and when he was asked to leave David Bruce was absolutely marvelous in making sure that Nick was taken care of, and it not reflect on him. He looked after his people, had very little patience with children however, which was sometimes a sore point. We had our kids out there...

Q: ...and compound living.

ANDERSON: ...and it was very tough living. The compound for much of the time was hotel living, but I don't think David had much sympathy for little kids. In contrast, George Bush was much more conscious of this type of thing.

Q: Well, tell about George Bush. Now George Bush came to this really...we're speaking at a time when George Bush is President of the United States, but at this time he wasn't a major figure particularly. He had bounced around in a bunch of jobs.

ANDERSON: Some fairly big ones.

Q: Had he been head of the CIA by that time?

ANDERSON: No. He went from the Liaison Office to become head of CIA. He had been a Congressman from Texas, and then ran unsuccessfully for the Senate. I get a little mixed up myself...he was chairman of the Republican Party, and he was Ambassador to the UN. I think he was Ambassador to the UN and then became chairman of the Republican Party, and then came out as head of the Liaison Office.

Q: But still, from Bruce to Bush at that time, he wasn't carrying quite the weight, was he? Or maybe I'm misreading this.

ANDERSON: He didn't really have the same cachet as having been ambassador to London, Paris and Bonn. On the other hand, in many ways politically, he was better plugged in, and probably had more clout in Washington with the Nixon administration and ultimately later the Ford administration, than Bruce. He was not without clout.

Q: Could you describe how he operated during the time you were there?

ANDERSON: He's a very energetic guy, and sort of a go-go-go type of approach. I think the first message we got was a message to be conveyed to, I think, the Ghanaian ambassador-it was one of the African ambassadors who he had known at the United Nations. The message was to inform the Ghanaian ambassador he had just become the second best tennis player in the diplomatic corps. They had been tennis rivals in New York. He arrived running; I think he gave a reception for the entire Liaison Office staff the day he got off the plane. One of the first things he did was go out and buy a ping-pong table and move it into the formal dining room of the residence so that the kids could go over and play ping-pong, and he would go over at lunch time and play with them.

But again, I think he was frustrated by the lack of communication and dialogue with the Chinese. I remember at that time we were dealing very frequently with a lady by the name of Wang Hai-nong, who was Mao's niece and at that point was an Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs. She was really noteworthy for her clamlike approach to dialogue, and I think it used to drive George Bush up the wall because he would go over and we would have a message to deliver from Washington on whatever issue. Quite literally most of the time the message would take five minutes, and then Wang would sort of sit there, and George Bush would be damned if he was going to arrive at the Foreign Ministry and leave ten minutes later. So he would sometimes tend to launch into discussions of issues, political issues that I wondered about occasionally at the time, because we got no response. Wang, or whoever was her interlocutor would sit and listen but we got very little in response.

Q: Do you have any feel for how the policy apparatus worked at that time? In other words, we'd go in and deliver a message which we felt there should be some response, or something like that, you'd get the clam treatment more or less, but did you have any feel what happened to policy things, and how they came back and answered them.

ANDERSON: Oh, we would get a response eventually but basically the way it worked Washington would send us a message, we would go over to the Foreign Ministry, deliver the message, and they would say, "Thank you, we will inform the appropriate offices." And then maybe a week later we would get a phone call saying, "Would you come in?" We would go in, and they would read from their prepared position paper. So we got answers, but it was a process that had to go through particularly the party machinery to get the right answer, or to get an approved answer. What I meant was, in a normal diplomatic situation you could go in and do that, and there is conversation and some back and forth in dialogue on the issue. But there was very little of that. Basically, I think everyone was scared to death. It was a time when the power struggle in Beijing was very intense, so no one was going to stick their neck out.

Q: Was that the situation the whole time you were there?

ANDERSON: Yes. I left Beijing in the summer of '75, and went to Hong Kong. The Consul General in Hong Kong asked me to come down and we amalgated the political and economic section into a China reporting section. We were dealing with both economic and political reporting, and he asked me to come down and run that, which I did. We had relatively little operational kinds of functions, but it was a terribly interesting time from a reporting standpoint. Zhou En-lai died...I got there in early fall of '75, and Zhou En-lai died I believe it was February of '76. I can no longer remember the exact sequence, but Chu De, who was number two to Mao for many years, died. Then Mao himself died. And before that they had the Tangshan earthquake which was the enormous earthquake in the Northeast. Three weeks after Mao died we had the arrest of the Gang of Four. So 1976 was a tremendously eventful year in China, and we were observing from Hong Kong through the Chinese press, through intelligence.

Q: The question always comes, Hong Kong was the preeminent China watching place for years, all of a sudden we open an office in Beijing, so what's Hong Kong doing? And why is it still doing its thing?

ANDERSON: It's because the two bring two different kinds of attributes. In Beijing you have on-the-scenes, you have the ability to talk to people, you can get out on the streets, you're interacting with the Foreign Ministry and other ministries in the government. There is a large political relationship to be managed, which requires an on-the-spot presence of an embassy. Hong Kong, on the other hand, is outside looking in. It has a number of advantages as well. One is resources. There is a Foreign Service national staff there, a local Chinese staff many of whom have worked for the Consulate for 20 or more years, who have followed these developments and have a historical memory that is invaluable. And being Chinese they can get through Chinese materials twice as fast as any American regardless of how good his language is. And then there is the international press, and a whole China watching community there. And a very substantial intelligence operation. There are intelligence resources there that you don't have anywhere else. And it's been very interesting that over a long period of time you get a different perspective from Beijing and Hong Kong. Usually Hong Kong, when developments are happening, when events are breaking, Hong Kong tends to be more on the pessimistic side that things are going wrong, or that there is a power struggle going on. And in Beijing, living right in the community, the inclination I think is to see things as being more normal than they look from the outside.

Q: Before we leave the Nixon-Ford administration, what was Kissinger's role once he established this relationship? Did he sort of move on to other things? Did you feel that Kissinger was really on top of the China relations all the time?

ANDERSON: Pretty much, yes. He retained a very direct interest in China, and at a minimum Kissinger, I think, sort of set a tone that really shaped the way we dealt with China for a very long time. Essentially Kissinger saw the opening to China as part of a global strategic move, and was very much interested in the triangular relationship. At the same time I think he was very affected by China in his book, and speeches I've heard him give. He was obviously very impressed with Mao and Zhou En-lai, and with their intellectual capabilities, their strategic thinking, and this kind of thing. I think they were people he felt he could commune with. Then there was very definitely an atmosphere in the U.S. government as long as Kissinger was running the show that basically in dealing with China you looked at the big picture and the strategic relationship, don't bother with details which led to, I think, a lot of people...not necessarily myself, but a lot of people feeling that we were giving away things that we didn't need to give to China. In other words, if the Chinese said, "We want this," in terms of a negotiation, the inclination was to say, "Okay," rather than have a show-down, and quibble over details, which may or may not have been wise.

Q: What about in Hong Kong the view there of events and Vietnam and Chinese-Vietnamese relations?

ANDERSON: At that period really Vietnam did not figure terribly large.

Q: It was our major preoccupation, and then it just dropped over the horizon?

ANDERSON: The Hong Kong Consulate General did not contribute to the Vietnam picture at that particular time. There were the beginnings of Vietnamese refugees, and as a matter of fact, I had one guy working for me who did nothing but Indochina matters. It was not a major focus.

Q: You left there and came back to Washington?

ANDERSON: Yes.

Q: First you were in Micronesian negotiations for a while from '77 to '78. What were you doing on that?

ANDERSON: I was the Deputy U.S. representative. The Micronesian operation is a very strange thing. It was called the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations, and the head of the office had the rank of ambassador. At the time I was there it was Peter Rosenblatt. I was a very small part of a process that had been going on, at that point, for about ten years, and went on again for another five or six after I left. The objective was to negotiate a relationship with the Micronesian states which was called Free Association. The United States objective, in crude terms, was to grant limited sovereignty to these states so they could basically manage most of their internal affairs while we retained control of their foreign affairs, their foreign economic relations, and their foreign military relations because a major player in this whole thing was the Department of Defense, which was looking at Micronesia...I always felt in terms of World War II Pacific.

Q: We'd gone to a great deal of effort and blood to seize these islands from the Japanese. And I guess the Soviets were sniffing around in the Pacific.

ANDERSON: Then you have to realize Truk, the Marshall Islands, and Eniwetok, these were places where we shed a lot of blood. And there was also in the Marshall Islands another factor which made it very important to us, the Kwajalein Missile Range which was an almost perfect site for testing intercontinental ballistic missiles. We would fire them from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California and drop the warheads into the lagoon at Kwajalein. It was exactly the right depth. So we had some interest, but it was an almost tragic negotiation in many ways. It was a clash of a huge wealthy western culture coming into an essentially native island culture. Right after World War II the Navy ran the Micronesian Trust, and basically took the approach of sort of anthropologically not disturbing the native life. The UN, under which we had the mandate, went in and looked around and said, "These people are living in poverty. You've got to do something to improve their livelihood." The responsibility got moved to Interior, who then took the approach, "We're going to modernize and bring you into the 20th century, and get all these good things for you."

I don't know what the right answer is quite frankly. The result was you had one of the highest rates of government employment I think anywhere in the world. People forgot how to fish, people forgot how to do the things that they had done for generations. Alcoholism became a problem, and economic development was practically zero.

Q: I have an interview I've done with Peter Rosenblatt which would bring this up. Then you went to the China desk where you were from '78 to '80. This was the Carter administration. Was this different? This was a new world, wasn't it?

ANDERSON: It was a new world, but in terms of the U.S. approach to China policy, it was very little changed. The China policy remained very consistent, and as a matter of fact of course, Carter was the one who was finally able to start moving toward normalization of relations, and did so in '79. I'll be absolutely honest with you, I ended up as deputy on the China desk largely because I really wanted to get out of the Micronesian negotiations. They were fascinating in many respects, but I felt like I was kind of out in left field. Our offices were over in the Department of Interior, and I didn't feel that I was in the main stream of what was going on at State. So when I was offered the job of deputy, I came over. And I was glad I did because I ended up being there at the time of establishment of diplomatic relations and the visit to the United States of Deng Xiaoping and some very historic moments in U.S.-China relations.

Q: When you arrived there, how did you see this relationship? We had a strong relationship with Taiwan, and we were working this other one, the two China policy. How did this work out? What was the bureau suggesting that we do?

ANDERSON: One big problem at this particular time was that the normalization negotiations, and some of the moves that were being made, were so highly restricted, so highly classified, that a lot of the other kinds of lower level measures that needed to be taken to prepare for it were not being taken because you couldn't tell the people that had to do it. For example, the Legal Adviser was called upon to perform heroic service when we were starting to move toward normalization and had to have some form of legislation to take care of Taiwan. Because of the relationship we had with Taiwan, we couldn't just simply say, "Good bye," and walk away. The Japanese had led the way with their arrangement that they had developed with Taipei after they normalized with Beijing, and we more or less followed some aspects of the Japanese model where we created in effect an embassy, but declared it a private, non-profit, entity. That was all done through the Taiwan Relations Act, and of course, this all had to be done in the context of the normalization negotiations. And as I say, much of it was very difficult to accomplish because the people you needed to do it couldn't be told why they were doing it. Or if they were asked to do it, they would know what was up. I was kept briefed and involved on the normalization negotiations up to the very end. I guess that would have been into November, but then in early December, I believe it was...

Q: This would be '79.

ANDERSON: ...'79, Ambassador Woodcock, who had been meeting with the Chinese Foreign Minister, had two meetings, or maybe three, with Deng Xiaoping. That was where the last pieces fell into place. I'm sure it took Deng Xiaoping himself to say, "All right, we will do these things." Then it was decided that they were going to do it. I was not included in that, and as a matter of fact I remember vividly that on December 15th when Jimmy Carter went on television to announce that we were establishing diplomatic relations with China, it was the day of the East Asian Christmas party. I got a phone call from Bernard Kalb...

Q: A correspondent.

ANDERSON: I had known Bernie for a long time, and he said, "Don, what's going on?" I said, "I don't know," and I added, "I really mean it, I don't know." "Well," he said, "the White House had just announced the President is going to make a major foreign policy statement at 9:00 tonight. He said, "There is nothing going on that he would be making an announcement about, nothing in the Soviet Union, and there's nothing in the Middle East." He said, "Its got to be China." He said, "Is he going to normalize relations?" And I said, "Bernie, I have no idea, and don't you say that anybody on the China desk had any kind of a clue, because it's true." He said, "We're going to go with it anyway." And they did, and they were right. At 9:00 that night Jimmy Carter...

Q: Did someone then brief you on what was happening?

ANDERSON: By the Christmas party things did sort of begin to fall apart, and it was generally understood that that was what was going to happen.

Q: Was the reason for these negotiations of this type, or concern, within the American political environment that this might intrude?

ANDERSON: Yes, I think it was. There were several problems. One, there was concern about Taiwan. Taiwan actually got treated rather shabbily in terms of notification. I think that they did not want Taiwan to know that we were about to make this move because Taiwan at that time had quite a strong lobby on the Hill. I don't think they wanted the Hill to know too far in advance. They did brief, but a very, very short time before it actually became known. And there was a good deal of resentment about that in the Congress as well. But I think that they did not want a big political "brouhaha" blowing up with Congress passing emergency resolutions, and the top people on Taiwan going to their constituencies and so forth, so it was very closely held.

Q: Taiwan was part of the China desk, wasn't it until that point?

ANDERSON: No. It had been separated. At the time of normalization, there was a Republic of China desk. And quite some time earlier, actually in the '60s, we had split the Mainland off from Taiwan, there was the Republic of China desk, and originally there was the Office of Asian Communist Affairs which included China. And then we dropped North Vietnam and North Korea and it became just the China desk. So the two desks were separate.

Q: And as a practical measure they both had been going in such different directions that they could be treated as a practical measure as different countries, couldn't they?

ANDERSON: In practical terms there was a lot of that, yes. The ROC desk and the China desk worked obviously very closely, and now there is a Taiwan Liaison Staff in the Office of Regional Affairs, again, which works quite closely with the China desk, because almost every major policy impinges on both sides. I don't know if you read the Washington Post today, but there's a sale of F-16 fighters to Taiwan which looks like it might be going through which would have some major implications for both sides.

Q: It seems to be more a political move to get the Texas vote for your former ambassador, George Bush.

ANDERSON: There may be an element of that, I'm sure.

Q: During this China desk period '78 to '80. Any other major events that you were dealing with? One would be the visit of Deng Xiaoping, and how he was viewed by us at that time.

ANDERSON: I think his visit was a tremendous success, and he was very popular everywhere he went. I accompanied the Deng party on that trip around the United States. Everywhere he went there was a degree of tension because there were the Chinese Nationalists and some people were out with the Chinese Nationalist flag, etc. But by and large his reception was very warm, and I think personally he handled himself very well.

Q: Did he understand the Chinese Nationalists element in the United States? Was he surprised at it, or did you get any feel for that? Was he briefed?

ANDERSON: I don't think he was surprised. I mean, they're pretty sophisticated on that subject, and they follow it extremely closely themselves. It was obviously one of their concerns, and one of the things they talked to us at the working level about. "We understand there's been a few demonstrations here, and what are you going to do about? Will you make sure that they are kept at a certain distance, etc." So they were expecting it, and it was managed I think in a way that satisfied them.

Q: How did you feel about, you might say, the High Command dealing with Far Eastern affairs under the Carter administration? I mean, you had Richard Holbrooke who had been sort of a young Turk in the Foreign Service coming in and he was more interested I suppose in Vietnamese affairs at that time. How was he and his immediate subordinates?

ANDERSON: Basically, I think, pretty good. I always found Dick a difficult person to deal with. But I think he had the right instincts, and we got where we wanted to go. And he had some very good people in the Bureau, and up the line, dealing with people that I dealt with who dealt with China. I found generally they were quite good.

Q: As an East Asian China hand, what was your personal feeling about how our China policy came out, which more or less existed to this day. This was considered quite a bold move on the part of Carter to cut this knot that had been around. How did you feel about how it developed?

ANDERSON: Given the emotional involvement in this whole relationship, I think it came out about as well as could be expected. The immediate Congressional reaction was very strong, and in many cases very negative. And the Taiwan Relations Act reflected Congressional feeling that we were abandoning a friend. But we argued at the time, and I think it has been proven historically accurate, that we were not abandoning Taiwan. In fact, Taiwan has prospered mightily since. From a strictly diplomatic standpoint they have become isolated. But from an economic standpoint, cultural standpoint, they have been successful. And I think the relationship we have with them now is a very sound one.

Q: Was there anything else we should cover in that period?

ANDERSON: I can't think of anything. I'm sure that others have covered some other aspects of it in more detail, some of whom like Harry Thayer, for example, were more directly involved in the beginning of normalization negotiations.

Q: ...Shanghai as Consul General from '80 to '83. You must have felt this was the culmination of your career, didn't you? To have a major post in China, having been out in the place where one would never would return to China? How did you feel about that?

ANDERSON: I wouldn't call it a culmination but it was certainly something that I sought and wanted to do. I considered it a real challenge. Even when I was living in Beijing with the Liaison Office we travelled down to Shanghai quite often. I had found Shanghai a fascinating city, its history.

Q: Its really a very recent history. It goes back to about the 1830s, or something like that.

ANDERSON: Even later than that.

Q: It was a made treaty port, like Hong Kong.

ANDERSON: Yes, but an absolutely fascinating place. I was delighted when I got the job as Consul General, and particularly because we were setting up the post. We were creating something new, and in a way setting precedents, and establishing a new consular mission, which I found particularly interesting.

Q: Were you able to pick up any of the residue of the old consulate which we abandoned and were forced out of in '48? I've interviewed some people who left on ships there. I mean, we went out rather reluctantly, dragging our heels. Was anything of that left at all?

ANDERSON: It is all there, but one of the fall-outs from-I guess you could call it a fall-out-from the Taiwan Relations Act, Congress in its desire to protect Taiwan's interests introduced into the Taiwan Relations Act a provision that all properties in the United States held by the former Republic of China would remain the property of Taiwan. So the former Republic of China embassy, and the residence in particular, a place called Twin Oaks which sits on about 12 acres of beautiful land between Connecticut and Wisconsin Avenues, and a number of other buildings continue to belong to Taiwan. So we have never settled our official claims between the PRC and the United States. We haven't gotten back any of our official buildings, really haven't made much of an attempt. So we were not expecting to go back to any of our former official buildings. And, in fact, the then Deputy Chief of Mission, Stapleton Roy, who is now currently our ambassador, was asked down to Shanghai and shown the building that they were going to lease to us, and came back and...I don't know whether you know Stape, but he is not a terribly effusive kind of person, and he was waxing absolutely eostatic about this building. It was the home of one of the Yung family, who were probably the wealthiest Chinese in Shanghai. It was three acres of gardens, and an absolutely magnificent old mansion that they offered us, which we grabbed, and we're still there. Part of the fun of opening the post was taking this place and converting it into a Consulate General without destroying the beauty.

Q: Did you find a contrast in dealing with the Shanghai authorities? One gets the feeling from reading from the periphery about this that they really are a different breed than the people up in Beijing, much more aware of the world, and looser, and easier to deal with? I don't know.

ANDERSON: There is a certain amount of that. As a matter of fact up in Beijing in the Foreign Ministry you'll find an awful lot of Shanghainese. I used to kid them about the Shanghai mafia that used to run the American and Oceanian Department because there are a lot of people who are originally from Shanghai. For example, the current Chinese ambassador. They are a bit different but you have to realize, of course, I went to Shanghai in 1980, and I was in Beijing in '73. In the interim the Gang of Four had fallen, Deng Xiaoping had come back, so it was a whole new atmosphere. So it was a much easier place to live and deal with. But there were still plenty of problems, and Shanghai in many respects at that time, I think, was kept on a tighter leash by Beijing than many other parts of China. Because really the Gang of Four and this whole Maoist clique that attempted to usurp power, their power base was Shanghai.

Q: The mayor of Shanghai, was he part of that?

ANDERSON: Yes, Zhang Chunqiao was one of the Four, and Wang Hongwen, and all three were from Shanghai, and Jiang Qing herself had...

Q: ...had been an actress in Shanghai.

ANDERSON: So I think Shanghai for a long, long time was viewed with a certain distrust, and there were a lot of hangovers and holdovers from the earlier period that were still in jobs; frequently not doing much but they had not been dislodged. So that it was a different atmosphere, but Shanghai people are generally much more friendly, and effusive, and sophisticated, than in Beijing.

Q: Okay, one, you're setting up this thing, but what else did you do? How did you go about it?

ANDERSON: We basically set up the whole gambit of things. One important thing was getting the consular operation going. We held off the formal opening of the Consulate until we felt we had all of the necessary infrastructure. The consular section was built, and we had the visa machines and everything that we needed. At the opening ceremony I said, "We will be open for business tomorrow morning and ready to provide a full range of services." At 5:00 the next morning we had a line of about 60 people waiting to apply for visas. We did a very big consular business. We did a fair amount of trade promotion. Shanghai was one of the more popular places for American businesses to come, and there were a number of things really just getting started that we could...

Q: Had they established those economic zones?

ANDERSON: No, they hadn't come yet. That was later. They were on their way, they were planning them but they hadn't come yet. But Foxboro, for example, which produces electric monitoring equipment for industrial processes, was setting up a joint venture. Nike Shoes came in and tried to set up a joint venture. McDonald Douglas was just beginning what became a major co-production operation building commercial jets. So we had the beginning of a business community, and we had regular meetings of this community to brief them and get their reactions. Finally that grew into the Shanghai- American Chamber of Commerce which now has well over 65 or 70 members.

There were a lot of things not directly related to the consular operations, things like setting up the school. We had to create the Shanghai-American school. We had a cultural section and a very active cultural and educational program. We got the exchange visitor program going, and I think were very successful there. Often times Beijing couldn't use all their international visitor grants and we were always ready to grab them. And Shanghai has an Institute for International Studies, which is one of their most sophisticated sort of Rand type operation. We sent a lot of those people to the United States on short-term grants, and those people have been friends of the Consulate and friends of the United States for a long time.

Q: The great onrush of Chinese students to the United States was probably, I suspect, will be the most significant thing that was done.

ANDERSON: I agree with you.

Q: I mean this back and forth, China will never be the same.

ANDERSON: I totally agree with that. I take a certain amount of pride that either on the China desk, or in my jobs overseas, I have always pushed that aspect because I totally agree that the 140,000 Chinese that have come to the United States now, and it's growing every year, will be a tremendously important factor in our bilateral relations and in China's modernization. I was struck by that when I was Consul General in Shanghai because at that time, after the Gang of Four period was wound up, many of the older people who had been in prison or had been under house arrest, or whatever, were coming back and getting responsible positions. And many of these people had been trained either in the United States, or at places like St. John's University in Shanghai which was an American run missionary university.

Q: And Yale had some...

ANDERSON: Yale was not so big in Shanghai but there were a lot of people who had had extensive contacts with them, and who were American educated. And dealing with them was just marvelous because they understood even after an absence of 35 years what we were talking about.

Q: Did you have any problems on the consular side with protection of welfare, Americans getting into trouble? Or wasn't that a factor particularly?

ANDERSON: We had probably less than many places. People tended to be a little more on their good behavior in China than they are in Tijuana or Naples, or some place like that. We had a few people go around the bend, a few people died. We had several cases of absolutely fascinating individuals who had stayed on in China, American ladies, who had lived in China for the past 30-40 years-in one case for 50 years. She was a Quaker lady from Pennsylvania, had married a Chinese who was studying in the United States and when he got his Ph.D. she married him, and went back to China. This was in the '20s when an American woman, if she married a foreign national, lost her nationality. She had lived as a Chinese all her adult life. We got to know Muriel, and she was a great gal, tougher than nails, and finally decided she wanted to get her American passport and be an American citizen. So we had quite a range, some rather bizarre consular matters.

Tragically, one of our officers married a young girl from Taiwan where he had met her studying Chinese, and she came over after they were married, of course, a little bit nervous about moving to Communist China from Taiwan. And they were out on a trip, one of the consular corps sponsored trips, died suddenly of a heart attack, age 27. Suddenly we had a dead wife, the family wanted a Buddhist ceremony funeral which we managed to do, and got the body shipped back to Taiwan via Japan. It was a terribly sad thing, but in many ways it was kind of touching because one of the Foreign Affairs Office people, who was helping us with this, and he had on other occasions not been very helpful, came over on a weekend and brought me...they had to do a death certificate, and he said, "I have recopied the entire death certificate because it was printed in our simplified Chinese characters (the modern Chinese characters they use on the Mainland)." He said, "I know they don't use those on Taiwan and I was afraid that they would not accept our simplified characters, so I have redone it in the old characters."

A large part of it was getting set up, getting the building fixed, getting the school started, getting the consular program going, getting the commercial program going, and getting the cultural program going. We did a fair amount of political and economic reporting, and it was a good time to be doing that because nobody had ever done it.

Q: It's a Foreign Service officer's dream.

ANDERSON: And then we travelled. The consular district encompassed Jiangsu Province, Anhui Province, and Zhejiang which is really the whole Yangtze basin and includes some of the nicest cities in China, Hangzhou, and Suzhou, and some of the more scenic spots. I used to tell visitors that if my consular district was a country, it would be the fifth largest country in the world.

Q: On the cultural side, here is the ancient Chinese culture, and the very aggressive American cultures, were there problems?

ANDERSON: The problems weren't between an ancient Chinese culture and a modern American culture. The problems, where we had them, were in the degree to which the Communist government wanted to maintain control. And the degree of openness that they were prepared to permit. We were always pushing for more and more open exchanges, more frank discussions. "Let us bring in more films, and show them to more people," and the Chinese were always just a little bit nervous. Shanghai is a very western city in many respects, and as you said, Shanghai's history, while they have the 4000 years of Chinese culture certainly, they look back on a 100 years. They really do look on themselves as sort of the New Yorkers of China.

Q: I take it you did not follow in the footsteps of one of your predecessors, George Seward, who hung an American in the courtyard of the American Consulate back in around 1863 or so.

ANDERSON: No, I did take part...he didn't get hung, but we had the first American government ship, it was the NOAA oceanographic ship, I think it was called the Oceanographer, a beautiful white ship that came in along with the director of NOAA. It was an exchange between our two oceanographic societies. The ship, as I say, was a beautiful ship, and it had a co-educational crew...

Q: It's a fancy term for men and women working on it, which was unusual at that time.

ANDERSON: The captain took out one of the crew, and they both arrived at the banquet with the Chinese...she having not been invited, a bit tipsy, and the Chinese had a bunch of Chinese admirals who did their Chinese number on them, toasting with Mao Tab the Chinese high potency stuff, and they both got absolutely swacked. The director of NOAA fired them both, so we didn't hang them, but we did send them home.

Q: How about the relations with the embassy? Any problems.

ANDERSON: No, we had quite good relations actually. We had a good Admin officer, and we set up a courier system-it was illegal, but we used to send a diplomatic pouch up with our classified stuff. We'd send up an officer, so we got back and forth as frequently as possible. I didn't have any real problems that way.

Q: Then you came back for the last two years on the China desk again?

ANDERSON: I came back in '83 for two years on the China desk, '83 to '85.

Q: Did you find any difference with the Reagan administration, and China? Reagan came sort of an old line Republican, a very pro-Taiwanese.

ANDERSON: Reagan, I think, scared us all to death before the election, and really immediately after the election. The transition team that he sent over to State was pretty shocking. I will give Al Haig really high marks.

Q: He was Secretary of State.

ANDERSON: He was appointed Secretary of State. He went in and said, "Okay, I'm in charge now. All of you transition people get out of here." I think he kept the China thing on the trolley and prevented it from taking a real lurch. And once he had stabilized it, and the bureaucracy that was built up around the President, after that there were relatively few problems. We had a tougher bunch than we did in the early days. Paul Wolfowitz was the Assistant Secretary, and there was less empathy with the Chinese. I think he was more interested in other issues, and he didn't see why we were pandering to the Chinese. This F-16 deal that we've talked about today...

Q: ...this is a fighter plane.

ANDERSON: ...brings up the issue of the 1982 August 17 joint communiqué^{1/2} that was negotiated, which Paul Wolfowitz has always thought was a terrible mistake. This is the one limiting our ability to sell arms to Taiwan. On things like that, the Reagan administration was tougher. I think that they took, if you will, a more pragmatic attitude, and were willing to risk offending the Chinese more so than, say, during the Carter period.

Q: I suppose looking at these things from a certain perspective and saying, "Well, maybe rightly so." ANDERSON: Yes, and history changes too. The relationship isn't the same at different points. I guess the big event of my time as Country Director for China was the Reagan trip to China. I quite literally spent much of my time in the two years I was Country Director, either managing trips or managing visits of Chinese dignitaries to the United States. We had the Reagan trip to China, the visit to the United States by Zhao Ziyang, who was then the Premier, an earlier visit by the Foreign Minister which was the first official formal visit to Washington by a Chinese Foreign Minister. Then a number of other high level visits.

Q: On the Reagan trip from the press, I mean it's hard to say that one had the feeling that Reagan was not very knowledgeable or engaged on foreign affairs. He tended to see things in rather simplistic terms. From your perspective, how did you prepare him, and what was your impression of how he worked on this. Really, it was a major trip on his part.

ANDERSON: It was a major trip, but there was not major substance. In fact, I don't think there were too many people that wanted any new breakthroughs or any major substantive changes. So it was, it was a big photo operation. It was a chance for the great communicator to go to China, and communicate to the Chinese, but there was a very strong element, I can remember, of a desire to communicate really over the heads of the Chinese to the American people as well. And there was incredible television and press coverage of that trip, and he did it extremely well. It was one of the few times when I have watched him turn it on in person, and he is remarkable. I went to the White House briefings and we did our number, we spoke our piece, the President listened, but I didn't have the feeling that there was any great substance. As a matter of fact, after we finished one of the briefings-I think it was the Cabinet Room, he listened very intently, but at the end his only comment was, he told a story about losing his contact lenses in Hong Kong when he was doing a movie, and so he walked around Hong Kong holding his eyes like this...because that's the way you can see better if you've lost your contacts. He said he didn't understand why everybody was so angry with him. That was his sole comment on the substantive issue.

Q: In talking about drawing your eyes back to make you look oriental. Then just briefly, you were in the Senior Seminar from '85 to '86, and then you went back to Hong Kong as Consul General for our years from '86 to '90. Was there any change in being in Hong Kong at that time? Had the operation matured?

ANDERSON: There were lots of changes, but not as many as many people might have expected. The assumption was at the time of normalization of relations that Hong Kong would gradually shrink, would diminish, and in some respects it did. I mean the political section and economic section was considerably smaller. But strangely enough the Consulate was at least as big, and maybe a little bigger, than I had ever known it to be. One of my roles in Hong Kong was to fend off other agencies that wanted to either set up offices, or add staff to their existing offices. It is a great regional center, I think we had 12 or 13 different government agencies represented there, and there was constant pressure to increase. The big thing, of course, that had changed substantively was the 1984 Sino-British Joint Statement a time certain had been set for Hong Kong's reversion to Beijing, which affected a whole range of things in Hong Kong, and the attitude of the Hong Kong people.

Then, of course, the other major development and major tragedy was Tiananmen which occurred in June of 1989.

Q: This is the quelling of a major student demonstration in front of world television in the main square of Beijing. Let's talk first about the reversion. Did we have a fixed policy when the Hong Kong people would come to you and say, "What's the American assurances?" How did we play this? Because this was only two years after the statement, and people hadn't learned to live with it yet.

ANDERSON: What happened with the statement was that there was great fear, and uncertainty, prior to the statement-in the period '82, '83 and into early '84. Property values were affected, people were beginning to make arrangements to get out, and there was a high degree of uncertainty. My predecessor, I will say, played a significant role in presenting an image of confidence.

Q: Who was that?

ANDERSON: Burt Levin. Then came the Joint Declaration in 1984, and the document, I still think, was a very good document. It was well negotiated, and if the Chinese abide by the provisions of that Joint Declaration, I think Hong Kong's future is going to be okay. There was a great collective sigh of relief when that Joint Declaration came out. So I came in '86, following a period of not euphoria, but relief, and a renewed sense of confidence that things were going to be all right. But the next phase in the process, as agreed, was to begin the preparation of the basic law for Hong Kong, in effect a mini-constitution. That process was just beginning. My feeling was that over the period that I was there, there was again something of a deterioration of confidence, in part because of the negotiations over the basic law and a growing sense that the Chinese really aren't going to leave Hong Kong alone to the degree that we hoped. And, of course, Tiananmen occurred which was a terrible shock. The democracy movement in China had a tremendous impact in Hong Kong. I can remember one Sunday there were at least 800,000 people marching peacefully down the main street of Hong Kong. There were enormous demonstrations. There was an interesting change that took place during that period because they were demonstrating for our compatriots in China, our brothers in China. This was a whole new attitude because generally Hong Kong Chinese have looked upon people across the border, in the Mainland, as sort of country bumpkins. "We're the smart guys, we're the wealthy, we're the ones who know how to do it, and all those people up in the Mainland are kind of dummies." And when the democracy movement started, there was all of a sudden in Hong Kong a feeling of being Chinese, of being part of the thing that they were seeing in Beijing. In fact, there was a lot of support, monetary and material support that went from Hong Kong into China during that period. Practically all of those tents that you saw on television in Tiananmen came from Hong Kong.

Q: Were people looking to the United States to do something? How did they feel about how we reacted?

ANDERSON: To what? To the 1997 issue?

Q: To the Tiananmen Square.

ANDERSON: Everybody watched in horror. I personally felt like I was watching a tragedy. They recognized there wasn't anything we could do in the short term in the sense of changing things. In the short term we did take actions which probably still can't really be discussed, to provide shelter, and help for people who were escaping who had been involved in it. We cooperated with a group of about five other countries to help some of these young people, and some not so young, to get through Hong Kong and get on safely to the United States or to Europe, or wherever they were going. And, of course, the President immediately announced economic sanctions, and certain steps in terms of cutting off high level visits, etc. Actually, the United States probably took as strong measures as anybody, and kept them in place, or is still keeping some of them in place longer than anybody else.

One of the very interesting things about the post-Tiananmen reaction was that probably the people who were back in doing business more or less as usual, were the Chinese from Taiwan and from Hong Kong.

Q: You probably left there shortly after Tiananmen...

ANDERSON: A full year later.

Q: Were the Chinese, who were able to leave, beginning to hedge their bets more by getting out of Hong Kong?

ANDERSON: No, the brain drain had already become a serious problem. There is a constant outward migration from Hong Kong, and a steady inward migration from the Mainland into Hong Kong so that the population has remained relatively stable. There are about 22,000 people leave every year, in the '60s, '70s, '80s. It went up to 35,000, then up to 45,000 and the last figures I saw it was running between 55,000 and 60,000, and many of these people are the best and brightest, they are people with needed skills. It's a bit of a dilemma because they want to get out, and Hong Kong is certainly not going to try and prevent them from leaving. We do not want to be seen to be contributing to the brain drain. On the other hand, Canada and Australia, and a number of other countries, were actively welcoming those people because a country like Canada, has an under-population problem, and needed certain types of skills- secretarial skills, skills in the financial field, a variety of things which are more or less mobile. It was an issue that I wrestled with much of the time.

Q: How would you deal with it? Obviously you don't want to shout fire, but at the same time American business people, other people would come and say, whither Hong Kong? Do we have a policy, and how did you handle this?

ANDERSON: I basically took an upbeat, optimistic approach. I think I must have answered that question several hundred times. Every business executive and business leader that came through from the States, the first question was, "What's going to happen in 1997?" My response was that basically Hong Kong is going to change. There will probably be less personal freedom, more controls, because the Chinese I don't think are capable of accepting the degree of free wheeling operations that Hong Kong has permitted. On the other hand, I don't think the Chinese are so stupid that they're going to upset the business atmosphere to the point where Hong Kong will no longer be a good place to do business, and it has so many natural advantages in terms of communications, the port, the skilled labor force, that it is almost irreplaceable, at least in the short term for China. China depends on it to a tremendous amount. So I told them, "I think we'll still be doing business after 1997."

Q: Maybe we might cut it off here, do you think?

ANDERSON: I certainly do.

Q: Just one last question. Looking at it today, and maybe they have, if a young Foreign Service officer comes to you and says, "What about a career as a China specialist?" What would you tell them today?

ANDERSON: I would tell them that if that's their interest, and they enjoy it, I would certainly do it. I have probably specialized in China more than anybody in the Service. Out of 32 years I spent about 25 in China, or China related jobs, and never regretted it.

Q: I thank you very much.

End of interview