Interview with Mr. Paul H. Tyson

Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

PAUL H. TYSON

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

Initial interview date: July 11, 2001

Copyright 2007 ADST

[This interview was not edited by Mr. Tyson]

Q: Alright Paul, let's start at the beginning. Could you tell me where and when you were born, and a little about your family?

TYSON: I was born in Fort Lee, Virginia on February 1, 1950. My father was a career army man; at that point I think he was a private or a PFC (Private First Class). He was stationed down there. My brother came along about fifteen months later. Then we went up to live in Toms River, New Jersey, with my grandparents while my father went off to fight in Korea. We joined my father in Tokyo and I had a sister who was born there. This would've been about 1953; she was actually born in 1954, and late 1954 we returned to the U.S. (United States) and went to Fort Eustace, Virginia. I started school there in a private kindergarten which many, many years later I realized, was both private and segregated, but it wasn't the sort of thing that occurred to me at the time.

My father got orders and in 1956 we were transferred to Nuremberg, Germany; we actually lived in Fuerth at 44 Eisenstrasse. I remember that because it's the first phrase I ever learned in German. My sister, Marcia, was born there, and we were in Fuerth until something like 1957 when there was some sort of major transfer involving different army

units, both in the States and in Europe. Suddenly we were sent to Mainz, Germany, just across the river from Wiesbaden, which was an Air Force patch. We were moved into some housing quarters that were about the worst I had ever seen, and this is even as an eight year old. I think French-Moroccan troops had been in there. They were a shambles.

We stayed in Mainz and we left in September of 1958 when my father was transferred with his unit - he was part of the advance party - to Fort Riley, Kansas. There wasn't enough housing on base, so we ended up living in a town called Wakefield, Kansas and I went to school there, which was sort of the quintessential Midwestern experience. My dad managed to get transferred to Fort Dix, New Jersey because my mother is from the Jersey shore, he's from eastern Pennsylvania, and we lived in the town of Pemberton, which we'll come back to because that's where my mother still lives.

Q: Let me stop at this point. Could you tell me a little about your family's background on your father's side, and then we'll go to your mother's side?

TYSON: My father's family is basically Pennsylvania Dutch. He was actually born out of wedlock; long, shaggy dog story involving my grandmother when she was sixteen. He was actually born in a reformatory in Trenton, New Jersey. He grew up bouncing between the family farm in Bordentown, New Jersey and Norristown and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Q: Sounds like a rather difficult life.

TYSON: Very much so. Actually he went off under-age near the end of World War II and joined the navy. My grandmother tracked him down and got him yanked out just as he was finishing basic training. At this point, I think my grandparents had separated and he came back, went to school, got in trouble, and as he always cryptically referred to it, he was a Pennsylvania volunteer in 1946, which was he was given the choice between reform school or the army, so he took the army.

He was sent to, at that point, post-war Germany, and actually was one of the guards in Nuremberg when they hung Goering - well, I guess Goering committed suicide, but other war criminals were hung. He got out, came back to the States, had sent money home which my grandmother had given to her no-account sister, so he stayed there, tried to help get her out of debt, came home one day, discovered she was still sending money to the no- account sister, so he went back in the service.

He was stationed at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, and he met my mother at a USO (United Service Organizations, Incorporated) dance where he showed up drunk and one of his buddies bet him five dollars that he couldn't dance with the girl in the red dress. Well he won the bet and started going out with her.

My mother's family; eastern European, Jewish. My grandfather was born in Jersey City; my grandmother was born on the lower east side. They had moved to Asbury Park and had a grocery store that failed, and then moved to Toms River, New Jersey, just before the war and my mother graduated from high school during the war. It was actually quite interesting because Fort Monmouth (and I think she was at Camp Evans) and the communications people approached the Jewish communities and were looking for secretaries and technicians. They had problems getting people because of the German-American Bund, the Italian League, and others. So at eighteen, my mother was doing top-secret work.

Q: It was handy that German-American Bund and the Italian League, I mean this meant that security clearances were harder to get, whereas with American-Jewish personnel you're not going to get much tie to the Fascist regime.

TYSON: No, and I think the statement was there was a feeling in the Jewish community that something truly horrific was happening to the Jews in Europe. So there was no question about that.

Q: Was there much of a Jewish influence in your family? I mean, your grandparents; was this sort of an eastern European tie, or not, or sub-related or what?

TYSON: They had pretty much assimilated; there was no knowledge of ties in Eastern Europe, in that my great-great-grandparents had been brought over as children in the 1870s and so forth. But I mean, a very, very Jewish environment and I was reared in the faith. I was Bar Mitzvahed in the former SS Headquarters for southern Germany. So there was always an awareness of both sides of the family, but clearly my grandparents were a huge influence. It was, in a sense, the classic Jewish story of it's not will you go to college, it's when you go to college, and where. Which segues back to my mother as the daughter of this background who shows up with her German-American soldier in 1949; this was not a particularly popular program. It was really my grandfather who put the foot down as?

Q: Which grandfather?

TYSON: My mother's father; the Jewish one who when my parents said they were going to run away and get married; announced that his family didn't do that and wasn't going to do that. They were actually married in my aunt's house - my mother's sister, and the agreement was that the children would be reared as Jews, which is what happened. My father actually converted to Judaism during the Korean War. So that's always been a strong Jewish influence. My family is involved in charities. My sister is president of the Temple Sisterhood in Hadassah. Not in New York City, but a smaller town on the East Coast.

Q: What about the politics; so often in the Jewish community, particularly I think of New York, or maybe Miami, of getting involved in, you know, I won't say really left wing, but you know, sort of solidly democratic and all of that. Was this a small town; might be different?

TYSON: Interestingly enough, not entirely so. My mother's mother, in her early stages, used to joke about having been a Socialist. At fourteen, on the lower east side, she'd

wear a longer skirt so that she'd look older when she was giving speeches on Washington Square. Her brothers actually turned into Rockefeller Republicans holding elected positions on the east coast of north Jersey.

Q: Jacob Javits and all that.

TYSON: The Jake Javits type. They certainly knew the Democrats and my aunt later got very heavily involved in the Democratic Party, but actually always fairly centrist, fairly bourgeois. You know, “Oh my God, we need a hospital. I guess we better form a committee,” type of thing. There were actually leftists down there; the Rosenberg kids had ended up at Toms River under a different name.

Q: You mean Joel and Ethel Rosenberg who were quite famous for being involved, and executed for being a spy case; the atomic spy case.

TYSON: The kids apparently had ended up with another family, and actually in Toms River. My grandmother and grandfather were very involved in the mainstream synagogue there, but there was a smaller one that my grandmother used to refer to as “the leftists”. Another interesting one would be the discussions among the tribes. She would occasionally say, “We don't talk to them. The grandfather does numbers for the mob.” It's always been sort of interesting of how the American Jewish community has airbrushed their involvement in this.

Q: Oh, yes. You know there was a particularly, the name doesn't come to me, but there was a very strong Jewish element [in the mafia].

TYSON: Well, Meyer Lansky and all in Cuba.

Q: Meyer Lansky; that's the name I was thinking of.

TYSON: I was just down in Havana doing inspections; went past the hotel he built.

Q: How about your father; did you sense a, coming from a very difficult childhood, concern about lack of education? Sometimes the military can make up for this, or not. Was there much interest there?

TYSON: He got his high school certificate in the military, and certainly for many, many people it was an avenue of mobility. He never went to OCS [Officers Candidate School] or anything like that. I think in many ways, my mother's family provided a great deal of framework to him, although his mother was always around and was just a wonderful woman. But in terms of the broader frameworks in this society, it was more focused on my mother's family. It was interesting because not having grown up with it, he attempted to prepare us for anti-Semitism, or “this might happen, that might happen,” and by and large, by the time we came along, we were running with a crowd including bankers' kids; I don't think this is an issue. In terms of the education and stuff, I don't think he ever knew what his kids experienced. First of all, the military schools overseas, in spite of a lot of people wincing about them, actually were pretty good. You tended to get, in the '50s and '60s, more adventurous teachers out of the States who were interested in being overseas, and I would say, by and large, the quality of education I got was superior to what I came back to the States to. But when the time came I did better than my brother did and it was clear that I had a shot at some fairly good schools in America. My mother and my mother's family was saying, “Go for the Ivy League or something,” while dad was saying, “You know there are good state teachers colleges in Pennsylvania,” and it was just fine.

Q: Let's go back to growing up now. Firstly, what branch of the military was your father in?

TYSON: He was in transportation at first and then he was in the infantry. He was a basic training sergeant; he was a basic training sergeant at Riley and then at Dix. He got out of the Service in '66. I remember going occasionally. The recruits would buy candy for us because they had him for eight weeks and we had him for life. He had a rough childhood

and he was a man who with an explosive temper and there was a lot about childhood that wasn't all sweetness and light. It wasn't easy growing up with him.

Q: Was there a lot of “Yes, Daddy. Sir,” type of stuff? I was wondering whether sometimes military discipline sort of permeates; the fathers put it on the kids.

TYSON: The fathers definitely put a lot of it on the kids, and there's a problem with that. I'll lay it out by saying when we were in Germany, the men would go out to the field for sixty to ninety days at a time, leaving the women in the housing areas without any real language skills. With three, four, five kids, whatever, and left there to cope. So, I got the lecture, and I know my friends did: “You're the oldest. I'm gone. You need to stand in. Here's what you need to do with your mother,” and “help out with the family.” By and large, particularly since they were teaching us the language in school, I wasn't fluent, but I knew more than my mother. You're sort of the half-adult. In many ways, there's an extraordinary amount of responsibility which in my case and some of my friends cases, we more than undertook. Fine, gotta do this. Consulting with your mother on car repairs or this or that, or “How do we get the engineers out here to fix this?” And then the old men (the fathers) would come in from the field, generally having been out there telling lies to each other for sixty to ninety days about how their wives with five kids are no doubt having affairs with privates or the kids are just out of hand and will need the iron rod when the old man reappears. And he'd show up, and I mean, having done this for sixty or ninety days, help pulling things together, he's go off on a tear about something. It was almost like, “Look, would you just find something wrong so that we can get the explosion out of the way?”

I remember when I was in my late '20s, in the Foreign Service, married, back from my first tour in Germany, and I was out driving with my father and he said, “Well, I know I was tough on you, but you never lied to me.” I looked at him and said, “We lied to you all the time because you never wanted to hear the truth; you'd pop us one for telling you a lie.” So figure out what you want, get it over with, and be done with it.

Q: Where did you go to high school?

TYSON: Pemberton Township High School in Pemberton, New Jersey, which is right outside the gates of Fort Dix. We left Munich in 1963. We had gone to Germany in '61 to Ulm and transferred to Munich. And actually, I trained for my Bar Mitzvah under the chaplain there and was Bar Mitzvahed in Munich. I came back when I had finished seventh grade and I was taking a lot of advanced placement courses. I came back to eighth grade in Pemberton, which, quite frankly, I had already done. I had a good teacher who gave me little projects to do, but I had done the year already. And then did four years of high school there.

Q: Well tell me, in this family atmosphere did you have much time to read or see movies? I mean, what did you do at that time before you hit high school? What do you get active with?

TYSON: I was in Boy Scouts, but I had always read voraciously and there were always movies around on the army base.

Q: 25 cents.

TYSON: 25 cents. I think it went up to 50 cents. Fifteen cents or something, but? No, movies were only one thing, and particularly overseas, my God, the field trips. You know, let's go to museums, let's go here, let's go there. I was always being placed into the top academic group, so I was hanging out with my little buddies, you know, building nuclear devices for science fairs or things like that. It was actually fairly good, because I could use this to intimidate my father, “I'm doing a science project. Leave me alone,” and it seemed to work.

Q: Ah, the strategies that one learns.

TYSON: I had friends doing much the same thing. It's striking in terms of the military schools because these people came in from the wrong side of the tracks, and the military was an avenue of mobility upward, starting with the kids. Where it was most striking was the black kids that I grew up with, because in the '60s and later when American colleges discovered the fact that they did not have black students, who better than military or Foreign Service brats?

Q: At high school, I imagine that the student body was pretty heavily military, wasn't it?

TYSON: Yes.

Q: What were you doing in high school?

TYSON: Pretty much just going through the academic ropes. Once again, I was tracked into the top academic group; the 'nerd patrol' or the 'brain trust'. That got progressively smaller as I went on to my senior year. I still have friends from that time and that era. But it was also sort of gaming college applications; you had to have activities. So I actually ended up running track, badly, for three years and then I was the manager of the football and basketball teams, and sports editor of the school newspaper, audio-visual aids club and stuff like that.

I was also involved in United Synagogue Youth, which was an interesting insight into another world because south Jersey is small towns; there are Jewish communities, but you're a definite minority. Not a discriminated minority, but as a result, when they were doing youth activities, you'd be driving sixty, seventy miles into Delaware to do things. So you knew kids in other schools, other places. It was more than just your high school crowd. This was definitely a crowd that everybody was being pretty much tracked to go to college. The “which med school do you want to go to?” type of thing.

Q: I think about New Jersey and my experience as a consular officer. There's a sizeable Arab community around there. I was wondering whether you ever ran across Yemeni, Syrian, and all that?

TYSON: No. The part of New Jersey that Pemberton is in is the Pine Barrens, which is really much more like Mississippi or Georgia. You know, deer hunting season comes and half of your class is out on the first day. Pretty much an anti-intellectual environment, you know, girls get married at eighteen or nineteen, that type of thing. I had a high school classmate, a black guy, who was knifed to death, senior year, on the lawn of his mistress/girlfriend's house that he'd already had a baby with. That type of thing. Tom Whitewall, who sat behind me in home room, who could drop a Corvette transmission in nine minutes and did. In that environment, particularly in the gym classes, you're one of the weird nerds. There were about fifteen to twenty of us, where I think instinctively some of the kids that were not particularly going to go anywhere in life could look at you, sneer at you, but they sort of knew that it was going to be different for you. And that engendered a certain resentment that I think now is more understandable than it was then.

Q: While you were going through this, and particularly involved with Jewish religious groups, were you getting much about Israel and all that? I mean, was this a cause that was pushed or not?

TYSON: My grandmother, may she rest in peace, is an absolute legend in the Hadassah. Absolutely. I mean, the certificates were up on Grandma's wall. My aunt has been involved in it, my mother is, my sister has gotten involved in charities and activities in New Jersey, and one of the reasons is she is Julia Presloff's granddaughter. She is Evelyn Silvert's niece; she is Myra Tyson's daughter. That's who Marcia Wasupman is.

The causes of Israel were absolutely always there. You know, very heavily Israel, but there's also the local synagogue, the local hospital which is for the broader community, it's

not a Jewish charity. And other issues. It's that tradition of “tzedakah;” charity and broad community involvement. But no, very, very heavily involved in it.

Q: When it came around to going to college, where were you sort of pointed towards, coming out of a New Jersey high school? I mean, how did this work?

TYSON: Pemberton did not particularly do well placing people. The year I went, I went to Dartmouth and one of my classmates went to Cornell and this was just a huge breakthrough. The guidance office always had places like West Virginia University, Murray State College in Paducah, Kentucky, where they could slot people. I was sort of on the edge with my SATs (Standard Achievement Tests) and the grades and stuff, and I thought I had a shot, not a guarantee, so it made sense to roll the dice and I tried a number of Ivy League schools and got into Dartmouth and Columbia. Got turned down at Harvard, Yale, and Brown. Honors program at Virginia, Bucknell and a few other things. It was percentage shooting that worked out.

Q: You went to Dartmouth from when to when?

TYSON: 1968 to 1972.

Q: Dartmouth, I always think, “Dartmouth's in town again. Run girls, run.” You know, you're up there somewhat isolated and all of that. What was Dartmouth like when you got there in '68?

TYSON: Traditional all male New England school. The “Dartmouth is in town again” was absolutely true. It was interesting. At that point, I had been dating in high school. I had one or two of the first really serious love affairs behind me at that point. So I wasn't totally wet behind the ears. But I had gone to a public high school and I found this all male environment, particularly the ones coming out of prep school, just a little strange and immature. The stuff about alcohol - you know, I'd grown up in Europe. I drank, so what? But there were people who would absolutely seek to get totally destroyed. And of course

at that point, all of the drugs were really just beginning to come onto the college campuses big time. It was certainly all around there.

Q: Was Dartmouth going through a change? I think of Dartmouth and most of those schools as being pretty Waspish (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) at that point, but maybe not that point, maybe they were changing?

TYSON: They were still fairly WASPy, as a matter of fact, my mother's family had some distant cousins who went to Dartmouth and Princeton, but it was ten to fifteen years earlier and it was very much under the Jewish quota system which I think by the time I came along had pretty much eroded. So the opportunities were better.

I had a distant cousin who was a year ahead of me at Dartmouth. It wasn't totally unknown, but there was this feeling that these schools actively did discriminate against Jews. Of course, the difference between being Jewish and going to Columbia or Penn versus Dartmouth with, you know, blonde boys with skis is different. On the other hand, on army bases a small southern town, I had grown up in essentially broadly gentile environments. It wasn't totally strange.

Q: Well, one of the people I think of - a much earlier era, but Bud Schulberg went to Dartmouth and came out, I assume, of a Jewish family.

TYSON: Yes. There was always a group up there, and there was a Jewish student group, and there was a Hillel, and indeed I ended up becoming vice president of it. But it was actually very funny; the ones who were more involved in organized Judaism as opposed to, if you will, cultural Judaism, were the ones from small towns; Shawnee Mission, Kansas, Ohio, where part of your definition of Judaism is that you join the organization.

Q: It's a little bit like people coming out of a Protestant, Baptist church. I mean, if you come from a small town, you have to participate, whereas if you were to come out of New York, you know?

TYSON: It's your option.

Dartmouth was clearly changing and one of the small ways it changed ultimately helped me in terms of the Foreign Service. I was in a senior honor society. Well, they sort of abolished themselves. That was also the time the student body voted itself out of existence. One of my classmates in the freshman class, who is now general counsel of Oracle, knew people in the admissions office, so they decided to hire guides and went around and made the offer to about ten of us. So I was a college tour guide for four years, which was an invaluable experience in handling future CODELs (congressional delegations). But, I mean, those types of things had changed at Dartmouth. The parties were just as wild, if not wilder, because they got rid of restrictions in the dorm rooms so we could have girls in the rooms. You did have sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll, but it was still a very good school.

Q: We'll come to the studies later, but while we're heading on the social side, '68 to '72 was a big protest time and all of that. Was there much to protest about at Dartmouth?

TYSON: Oh, huge amounts. You were not isolated from the broader national issue; the Draft was hanging over everybody's head. In '70, with Kent State we had the student strike and actually the administration finessed it where you could elect not to finish classes, but there would be a statement on your transcript. I chose to finish up.

Let's see, freshman year was the takeover of the administration hall, Parkhurst. I was sunbathing on the lawn when that happened. Some of my classmates were hauled off. Sophomore year was Kent State. Junior year was something else involving Vietnam. I mean, the protests were there.

People had friends at other schools. Dartmouth had a student body that drew from the country as a whole, so there was an awareness of it. It was much cozier; you sort of knew

everybody. I mean, it's not like Wisconsin with 30,000 people and I've never seen them, it's the guy down the hall or someone who was in this or that class.

Q: What were you taking?

TYSON: Government and urban studies. I was interested in pol/sci [political science]and international affairs. There was no separate international affairs; I just biased a lot of my pol/sci courses towards that. I had an ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps) scholarship and the army withdrew that, so by the end of my sophomore year I was going to possibly have to transfer, so sophomore year I loaded in a lot of my major courses. Turns out I didn't have to; Dartmouth came up with some money and I stayed on. But by junior year I'd actually had a lot of what I needed to do out of the way, so winter quarter I went off and did an “Outward Bound” quarter, which Dartmouth runs through the Tuck Foundation, a special center that they've got there. Since they own substantial chunks of New Hampshire, they've got the facilities to do that.

Q: What did that mean, “Outward Bound”?

TYSON: It's survival courses; this Hurricane Island and experiential type of things. It was winter camping for twenty-four days. Then living out in cabins in the snow and doing stuff on experiential education groups and stress and all of this. And then teaching a twenty-four day winter survival program. When we taught it, it was with some people from the State University of New York at Buffalo, and actually some New Hampshire high school kids, including a few literally on parole out of the reform school. It was interesting because of all of the college students, I got along best with the kids out of the reform school, mostly because they were very similar to people I'd gone to high school with. We could talk about cars and girls, and girls and cars.

Then my senior year, I was an honors major. In the past you had had to stay on campus, but they'd quietly changed the rules and about four of us figured that out and realized we could do foreign study and still do this. They had a program for African studies that was

interesting, but it always cost more than the normal term, and I was on financial aid. So I was over, at the beginning of my senior year, looking at the bulletin board, and saw an ad for this, and this short Senegalese guy came over and said, “Are you interested in this?” and I said, “Yes, but I can't afford it.” It turns out that they had been running this program with white professors and it was a black studies program - a pol/sci. program. And they'd had huge problems with it and it was collapsing, so they had dug up Aliun Endow, who had done Dartmouth undergraduate on an AID (Agency for International Development) funded scholarship and was now at Harvard doing Ph.D. work. He bargained and came back as associate professor in both political science and black studies.

Aliun is one of the most astute men that I've ever met in terms of politics. Aliun bluntly decided that for the program to succeed, he needed a few whites, and he was going to get them. So he basically said to me, “Well, if I could get the money, would you be interested?” and I said, “Sure, but I doubt that you can.” Two days later he had a $500 grant and a $200 loan, and I said, “Cool.” So fall quarter I did that and then went to Sierra Leone for winter quarter and then came back and graduated.

Q: What about while you were taking, was it African studies or black studies?

TYSON: Black studies, oh politically correct, black studies.

Q: Black studies, at that time, had sort of mixed reviews of what was going on in the colleges at that time. What was your impression of black studies, and maybe your colleagues?

TYSON: Mixed bag would probably characterize it. A lot of it depended on the program and the particular professors. Insofar as you got something that was closer to an international area studies course or something like that, it tended to be more rigorous and more disciplined, and as I say, we tended to have fairly good professors up there. So I

think there was a little more credibility there, although there was a bit of a feeling that it was somewhat above basket weaving, but only just.

It was interesting because I've had this discussion with college friends since then; I think one of the great values of it, actually, was much more for the white students. Insofar as it opened people's eyes to other parts of the world or other aspects of America. That's all been to the good. I have a thirteen year old and an eleven year old now; in February in Fairfax County is Black History Month, and I find out that actually my kids are probably better prepared than many. I think there was some legitimate criticism but it would be a shame to throw out everything that was developed with the bathwater. I don't think you can ignore a continent like Africa, nor do I think you can ignore the African-American role in American history

Q: Before we move to Sierra Leone, were you able to tap into sort of the international world; America's role in what was happening in the world beyond the United States? Was this of particular interest to you, or not?

TYSON: Oh sure, Vietnam was going on, which tended to dominate everything, but I was taking a lot of international relations courses. I was interested in things. At that time, one of Dartmouth's specialties, and it was the president then, John Sloan Dickey, who was very interested in U.S.-Canada and that was about as boring as vanilla ice cream. I think there was more of a push to understand that there was a big world out there. I'd grown up in Europe, was interested in it, so I certainly followed things. You know, the New York Times was up there and any number of other things. It was probably an island in New Hampshire, but nonetheless there were people interested in it.

Q: Sierra Leone - you were there, it must be, '72 or so?

TYSON: Yes, January to mid-March of 1972.

Q: What was Sierra Leone like when you went there?

TYSON: Sierra Leone, in some ways, was actually a sweet little country. It had its dictator there, but, you know, there wasn't really much going on. We showed up with our group which had been split along racial lines, just because the blacks were all hanging out with each other, and we got to Sierra Leone and discovered a group that was virtually all-white from Kalamazoo College in Michigan who'd been there for three months already. So they had figured out where the beaches were, what you did, and all this and that. At first we were up at the dorms at Fourah Bay College up on the mountain above Freetown, and it became rapidly obvious to our black colleagues that it was really useful to have a white with you in black Africa. People would stop when you were hitchhiking, you got moved to the heads of the line; there was just a whole lot of leftovers from colonialism still there.

We ended up moving down the mountain and living with an African family on Lester Road; Mrs. Wright and her sister had two houses near each other, so we were split up. We were doing a lot of independent study and had weekly seminars and then a number of us went up to an agricultural college at Njala for awhile, some went up to Makeni. All names that became tragically familiar much later on. And then you'd also go out to the beach. I mean, it was also the type of country, even as a student, you had money. You know, the police down at the bottom of the hill were selling marijuana for ten cents an ounce; the Kalamazoo people had figured that out. You know, they had Star beer there, Lebanese restaurants, and movies. So, it was nice.

It was interesting. It was obviously a poorer country. Graham Greene had set his first novel there. They had the Creoles, who had been the returned slaves. Just an interesting place. I had gone there because in large part I figured, when will I ever do Africa? So I mean, in that sense it was fascinating. Aliun was out there and, frankly, he had his life, we had ours. He gave us a lot of latitude - or we took it. But it was an interesting time; truly something I would've never thought of doing.

Foreign Service connection; that December, just before leaving, I had taken the Foreign Service exam in the post office in Hanover, New Hampshire, because one of my pol/sci

professors had said, “Well, Mr. Tyson, you've taken every other examination. Why don't you take the Foreign Service exam?” So, about three of us did and I was the only one that passed the written portion. My roommate was forwarding mail to Sierra Leone and I was at Njala Agricultural College in Sierra Leone when I got a letter saying I'd passed the written test and could I be in Boston in ten days for the orals. So I wrote back saying, “Love to do it, but I'm in Africa. Can we reschedule?” I eventually got a letter back saying, Washington, five days before you graduate from college, where I did pass the orals. But, we went from Njala back to Freetown, so wearing my African sandals, my shorts, my t-shirt, and my frizzy hair, I walked into the American Embassy with my little letter and said, “I'd like to talk to someone about the Foreign Service.” Incidentally, I can't remember the name of the man, he might have been in consular or admin. [administration], but he brought me into his office, had a pot of coffee and some cookies, and we sat around and talked about the Foreign Service.

Q: You took the orals, this would've been in '72. Do you recall the oral exam?

TYSON: Very much so.

Q: I would like a sample of what sort of things were asked of you.

TYSON: My oral exam was interesting because it was headed by a young black officer, Richard Moose, and then two older white guys in suits. One of them had extensive experience in South America, I remember that. The other one I really don't much remember. And I think it was very broadly questions of international policy, a lot of sort of trivia, you know, do you know different parts of the world. I remember the South America guy hammering me a bit on South America. But what I think was most interesting about the interview was, of course, they all had in front of them, I was just back from a foreign study program on Africa and Moose, the black guy, looks at me and says, “Did you have racial problems in your group?” and I looked at him and said, “Of course we did!” and you could literally see the other two guys almost falling off their chairs, figuring, “Oh my God,

we're going to go there." And you know, I basically said what I already said, you know, in Hanover, New Hampshire you'd walk out of the classroom, the eight blacks would go one way, the four whites the other. We meet in New York, fly to London, have a twelve hour layover, go into London, the eight blacks go one way, the four whites go another, and then we get to Africa where Aliun actually broke us up in terms of roommates, and I got Mike Orr. But, it became obvious to them that hanging out with the whites in Africa had its pluses. So we talked a lot about it and Sierra Leone, and then I walked out, and they said, "Well, you've passed." So, that was fine. My memory of that was the question, and just the looks on the faces of these guys, "Oh my God, he's going to go there."

Q: So you passed this just before you graduated?

TYSON: Yes.

Q: So what happened?

TYSON: Well, I had a low draft number and I had done the basic first two years of ROTC, and if everything had been equal, I also had a deferred acceptance to the Harvard Business School. I might've gone off and gotten a job and went and done that, but the army was hanging over my head. I had no illusions that two years as a private were going to do anything for me. I had already had eighteen years. And so I decided, well, I'd been accepted to law school at GW (George Washington) and USC; I'd go to law school at GW and eventually go in as a JAG (Judge Advocate General) lawyer. So I started law school and started taking ROTC at Georgetown, of all places, having to bicycle over there for that.

Well, I had to go off for summer camp. This was, by now, 1973. The war in Vietnam was winding down. I end up at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and suddenly they run everybody through a physical and I had asthma when I was a kid, so they made me go out and run, so I come back wheezing slightly, and this doctor puts me down for further tests. It was really rather interesting. He had sort of curly hair and like the granny glasses of that era and he was like four years ahead of me at Dartmouth. So, fast forward, the army suddenly

said after having passed any number of physicals, “You fail. You're deferred.” And growing up around the army, I went, okay, fine. Because I had kept the stuff on for the Foreign Service; the security stuff, the medical, and everything else, all of a sudden I realized, 'Oh my God, I could do the Foreign Service.' Sounded fine.

So I called my mother from Fort Bragg and basically said, “Look, you handle the old man. I do not want to walk into anything about what I've done or not done, this is what's happened; it's all legit.” “So,” you know, “handle it before I get there.” So my mother did. I came back for my second year of law school and started working part-time at the American Gas Association, which becomes important later on, and the Foreign Service basically said, “Well,” you know, “you can come in.” And in that era they actually had a lot of jobs in Washington that they wanted to fill. I said, “I'd really like to get one more semester full-time and then switch to night school and be assigned to Washington.” So he said, “Well, it's risky,” and all this and that, “but alright, we'll move you onto the list.” So, I came into the Foreign Service in January of 1974 in the 111th Foreign Service class, and asked, at that point, to stay in Washington.

Q: Could you characterize your Foreign Service Class?

TYSON: Any number of them have become friends since then. A mixed group with the USIS (United States Information Service) people and all. I don't think we had quite the age spread that came later on. There were five of us in there who were under twenty-five, who were sort of somewhat jokingly known as “the babies”. I was not quite twenty-four. And one of them, Donna Hrinak, is now our ambassador in Venezuela, and so forth. So, a pretty congenial group though. Many of them have remained my friends in this business and I'm still in touch with them. It's one of those things that I think when you enter into it, you don't realize quite how important it'll be to the rest of your career and how, in a way, you'll be defined as part of this group, or “Oh, you were with so-and-so.”

Q: Was there much of a mix of either race or gender, or not?

TYSON: It was just beginning. It was still a fairly heavily white male group, but we had women, we had blacks, had Asian women. Theresa Chin Jones, her husband was an FSO (Foreign Service Officer) and she came in. Terry became one of my best friends. So, the mixing was definitely starting.

Some of them were very, very uptight and stiff. You know, would wear a suit everywhere. For others, it was a little looser because of just the era and the times.

Q: How did you find the basic course?

TYSON: I was going to law school at night, so it was fine. I was not looking for onerous burdens. Tell me what I need to do, I'll sit through it, I'd go through it. I think a lot of it was more the acculturation, you know, how you deal with the bureaucracy, how you do this and that. So in that sense, it was useful. It was a little less important for me because I had a pretty good fix that I was going to end up staying on in Washington. But, I guess the bottom line was, I was happy with it because it wasn't overly onerous, because I had other things that I was doing at night.

Q: Were you married? Did you get married or anything like that during this period, or were you single?

TYSON: I was single, but my subsequent first wife and I were pretty much of an item in the argot of the day. Anne was with me a lot of the time. We were defined as a couple from fairly early on. I had met her the previous summer, after my first year of law school, at a wedding in Milwaukee. I'd been dating someone else, actually, from GW. It was a very funny incident one evening when, once again, my poor army father, the girl I was dating in New York called to basically say she was taking up again with the guy that she had dated for a long time in undergraduate school, which was something that I had sort of seen coming. So, I get the phone call and my father asks what it was, and I tell him and he's doing the “men commiserating with men”, you know, this, “You'll get over it. Time will

pass." Well, half an hour later, Anne called; the girl that I had just met in Milwaukee. I was over it perhaps even more rapidly than my father had imagined. (laughs) She had just graduated from Smith and came down here and started working, so from that point onward we were pretty much of an item.

Q: Were you concentrating on any area of law, or does one just sort of get a law degree?

TYSON: You get a general law degree, but actually, at that point, the Department was actually paying for some graduate studies and I got them to pay for certain courses. So, you'd ask them to pay for International Law as opposed to Constitutional Law or Administrative Law or, I think they even paid for Labor Law which given the fact that I was involved in AFSA (American Foreign Service Association) and later a chapter representative, I always found rather amusing.

I always found that eliminating that educational benefit down the line was a loss for the Department, but at that point it was available, so. It didn't pay all of the bills, but it paid for a course or two, so that was nice.

Q: What were you doing in the Department? This would be '74?

TYSON: This would be '74.

Q: '74, yes.

TYSON: I started out in the Office of Private Cooperation in the Bureau of Cultural Affairs, which later?

Q: What the hell is that?

TYSON: CUPC. It ran a lot of programs like, oh, we funded or gave seed money towards things like sister cities and international cooperation programs. I had been assigned there; it was in SA-6 in Rosslyn, working for a guy named Mike Johnson, who had been a

political appointee in the White House and is now, I think, with FMC Corporation in town. It was a lot of getting the private sector involved and doing more with charity and leveraging stuff like this. You know, in some ways it was a really nice first job for a junior officer.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, I had mentioned Theresa Chin Jones, doing the little exercises that one did in FSI (Foreign Service Institute) at that time, they were trying to make things intensely relevant and I had worked part-time, the fall before, for the American Gas Association in government relations, so I knew a lot about energy. Terry Jones knew a lot about science and nuclear, so when Terry and I were on the same team, we won. Terry, as I said, was married to an FSO and she had been at lunch one day with a guy named Larry Raitch, who has since passed on, a great guy; one of the best bosses I've ever had, who was deputy director of the Office of Fuels and Energy in the EB [Economics] Bureau. That's an office that had been headed by Jim Akins, and the energy crisis was in full bore, blown open, and Larry was saying, “We need bodies, I need bodies,” and Terry mentioned my name to him. I was, at that point, an O-8, and these were O-4 jobs and I got this call saying, “Would you come over and talk to somebody in this office?” So I went to Mr. Johnson and said, “I've gotten this call. I want you to know about this.” He was a very astute man, so he said, “Go ahead and take it.” So I went over there and there was a guy, sort of in corduroy slacks and a sweater, named Steve Bosworth, later our ambassador to Tunisia and Korea, and he just started chatting with me and then he handed me what was obviously a draft memo to look at and it involved stuff like high pressure drill pipe and all of this; for bizarre reasons at the American Gas Association, I had actually worked on some of this. So I looked at the memo, took out a pen, and said, “This won't happen technically, this won't happen politically.” So I got a call about three days later and said, “Friday will be your last day. Monday report to this office.” It turns out that Mike Johnson had been trying to get a deputy director for a long, long time. So he basically traded the equivalent of a second lieutenant for a lieutenant colonel and got his deputy director.

But I ended up moving over to the Office of Fuels and Energy under Bosworth and Raitch. Tom Andrews was the assistant secretary, and got very, very involved in a lot of the energy issues. This is when they were setting up the International Energy Agency (IEA) in Paris.

Q: You were doing this from when to when?

TYSON: '74 to '76. EBORFFSE, the Office of Fuels and Energies.

I actually ended up getting the cats and dogs. The regular guys were traveling to Paris to help set up the International Energy Agency, but I would get inter-agency meetings, export controls, exotic energy, coal, natural gas, electricity. But, as I say, I was a junior officer in a mid-level job, and the office rapidly expanded. It's one of those, you know, hot offices, hot time, most of the people who were there did fairly well coming out of it.

Q: What were some of the, I mean, this was a time when there were, well these were repercussions from the '73 war.

TYSON: The oil embargo.

Q: What role did the State Department have in a lot of it? I mean that you were seeing.

TYSON: There was a lot of the negotiation for this International Energy Agency. But we were also one of the major funnels for the reporting out of the oil producing countries; obviously the Arab ones, the OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) ones, but also Norway and others. I mean, this was really a lot of oil-as-politics coming out. It was also a time when there was the oil for wheat program and a lot of screaming about things up on the Hill (Capitol Hill). The number of congressional inquiries we did was phenomenal. Later on in my career I'd see people freaking; I used to have fifteen of them on my desk. I was put in charge of basically updating the generic paragraphs. I'd literally

read something and do, you know, A-F-G-S, these paragraphs, that's the letter, put it up, and the secretaries would handle it.

It was an interesting time. I think we were trying to get more production in the U.S. and basically decide how to respond to really a major shift in power, which of course was not only in terms of oil, but the finances. The flow of money was just phenomenal.

Q: You had two, Bosworth and then Andrews?

TYSON: No, Bosworth headed the office and Andrews was the assistant secretary.

Q: Who was sort of breathing down your shoulder? I mean, were you involved with both of them?

TYSON: I had very little to do with them. I really had a lot more to do with Larry Raitch because Andrews and Bosworth were very concerned with the negotiations of the IEA in Paris. So Raitch tended to be like the DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission) and was much more the office manager, so if there was a Commerce Department meeting, there was a State Department rep. on this or that, he was running me much more than Bosworth was.

Q: How did you find the relations - I mean, this would be, you're sort of the new boy on the block watching the Department respond. How did the State Department respond, say, with Commerce?

TYSON: I think it was an interesting insight. It depended. If it were a new committee being formed, all bets are off and you see the dynamics evolve. If you're the State Department rep. walking into something that's been established, particularly with people from other agencies who've been doing this committee work for six, eight, ten years, you know, you're the new FSO that they need to reeducate. At that point, if you're very young on top of it, it's “Oh my God, he's even wet behind the ears, too.”

By and large, they were wonderfully supportive. The good thing about Fuels and Energy was that they were so damn busy that they didn't have time to get upset about you. There was a Japanese group that came through and the office was asked to speak and it was a lot on exotics and the future and it was what I did. I went with some guys from OES [Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs] and INR [Bureau of Intelligence and Research], and before I even spoke - we had discussed this - they introduced me and explained why I was so young, but why I was nonetheless so important to a Japanese group. It was great training, great background for that. There was a certain amount of jockeying, but the Federal Energy Agency, or what became the Energy Department at that point, was a lot of new, young people. It wasn't so much the inter-agency things where you've got the rivalry. It was someone who's been in the oil industry, who's forty or fiftyish, who's been on drill platforms, who's been on this or that, and all of a sudden sees these young policy wonks coming in, doing international energy. That was where you got a lot of the feathers up, hurt feelings type of thing.

Q: Did you get any feel for the European response to the problems?

TYSON: Very much so. We were getting a lot of the cables in about the International Energy Agency, and I mean, this was when France basically made the option to go nuclear on electricity and were also trying to cut special deals and arrangements with some of the Arab and other countries. I suspect if you look at some of the scandals involving the French oil companies today, you could trace it back to actions taken in this era. The Germans were beginning to look at more nuclear electricity and any number of other things. The Brits were rather different. The Japanese were in a dead panic; you know, what were they going to do? It was an interesting time to see how people chose to respond.

Q: How were we responding at that time to nuclear energy? What was the mindset of that tune?

TYSON: We were going forward with it. Three-Mile Island had not yet occurred, so it was clear that there were siting and financing and other problems with it, and deep in the future, probably a waste disposal problem, but to one looking at a national energy strategy, nuclear had to be part of it. I think even at that point, coal or coal usage in one form was clearly a solution for the U.S., perhaps more of an option than other countries had since we've got vast amounts of it. But the other twist with the U.S. was always, of course, liquid transportation fuels, which tends to get you back to oil. I mean, our level of usage of liquid transportation fuels was considerable. So each country had a slightly different dynamic on that in trying to fit it all together and to the industrialized world as a whole it was a great deal of the challenge.

Q: Did Canada and its water resources play a role?

TYSON: It wasn't water resources; it was much more Alberta, the blue-eyed Arabs of the north, as the major oil producing province which obviously saw itself gaining from increased revenues, and, you know, the federal provincial rivalry is the federal government's looking at an energy deficit east, with an energy surplus west, and how you handle that. Canadians were always interesting on that. Electricity and looking at hydro out of Quebec and stuff like that.

Q: Did you have the feeling, being in the EB Bureau at that time, that it was riding fairly high within the Department?

TYSON: Oh, yes. It was riding fairly high and Frances Wilson?

Q: I was going to ask you, because she's a name that resounds anybody who dealt with EB.

TYSON: Yes, Frances Wilson, I mean queen of EB assignments. You did not piss Frances off if you wanted a career in that bureau. She was one of those legends that, you know,

knew people who made things happen, and insofar as the geographic bureaus, there are certain countries that have clubs. If there was an EB club, she was absolutely intricate to it.

I knew her slightly - managed to stay on her good side. I think she certainly didn't hurt me and probably helped me a little bit in terms of my first assignment to Germany.

Q: She was a civil servant who sort of lived for this, and had her courtiers and cadre which she saw did well and all, and really was, from all accounts - I've never served in EB - a very positive influence. Particularly in an organization that normally was not very enthusiastic about economists.

TYSON: I think that's true. You didn't want to get on her bad side. I think one of the staff aides, I've forgotten who it was, had been less than deferential to her at one point and she saw that she got him. Of course, she had the ear of the principals within the bureau and dealt with the assignments bureaucracy and knew how to do it. Actually, once again my father being a sergeant, you know, you don't piss off the supply sergeants and the staff, but if you do when you're a young first or second lieutenant, they will get you.

One or two of my friends, I think she really liked and probably helped out. You probably at some point want to ask Brian Mueller, who's now head of the Japan Desk, about her. Frances was quite a player and I think clearly, in my view, EB declined when she left, as far as that goes.

Q: Did you find at that time that the geographic bureaus did play much of a role, or not? In matters of what you were dealing with - energy?

TYSON: The geographic bureaus or particular desks did. The NEA Bureau, obviously on the Arabs and oil, was a seriously big player, particularly the Arabian Peninsula Affairs Division. The Japan Desk always had things to say about anything involving the Japanese. Others, EUR (Europe), probably less so because it was a broader slate of things. The ones who would get involved in that was more the regional political economic office where

I later served. I would say the Gulf States and people like the Japan Desk were definite players. I mean, you made damn sure you cleared your stuff with them. You might butt heads on this or that, but they had an oar in the water.

Q: Did you get your law degree?

TYSON: I got my law degree. I graduated in '75 about four months later than I would have, had I done it full-time, and took the Virginia Bar. And at that point was getting ready to be assigned overseas and obviously with a lot of oil background, I remember one of the personnel counselors saying, “What would you think about Abu Dhabi?” and I said, “Fine, but I'm going to be bringing in Passover supplies.” He looked and said, “What would you think about Germany?” and I said, “Fine, I grew up there,” and my language background was German, so that was fine.

I was supposed to go into an EB job there, but the guy I was replacing managed to stay on. He was much favored with the economic counselor's wife, and suddenly I found myself in a rotational job, which actually was fine, but I hadn't had the consular training for it. But Bonn was a bit of a country club. The new voting rights act had just come in then, so the consul, John Buche, who is a wonderful man to work for, sort of took me and had me doing a lot of the voting rights stuff because I was a lawyer.

I did six weeks in the consulate and then ended up moving up to the science section because there was a very big issue involving (by this time Carter was president, or was about to be) the German's selling the complete nuclear fuel cycle to Brazil, which at some point would've permitted the Brazilians to build a bomb. So suddenly Warren Christopher, the deputy secretary, and others, are greatly seized with this issue. I was sent up to work for the science counselor, Clyde McClelland. There was one of these old Foreign Service secretaries, who was ageless even then, Liz Gray, who just looked at me and said, “I'm getting tired of taking care of wet-behind-the-ear junior officers.” I remember that. Actually because of the work that I had been doing in fuels and energy which included nuclear, I

actually knew a hell of a lot more about nuclear. I was to be there for three months, which became four months, which became six months, which became nine months because Clyde kept going up to the DCM and saying, “For the first time in my career I actually have a junior officer who can back me up and you can't take him away now.” So they, I think sensibly, agreed. It was fascinating work.

Q: What was the issue from our perspective in Germany?

TYSON: Non-proliferation. If the Germans sold the whole cycle to the Brazilians, eventually they would be able to much more easily build a bomb and we were concerned about Argentina getting a bomb, Brazil getting a bomb.

Q: That thing lasted for about twenty years, I think, as far as the issue; both sides sort of jockeying it. It didn't make sense for either one of them to produce it, but it was just they kept getting closer and closer, I guess.

TYSON: I think there was a lot of that. I mean, this was probably related to Vietnam and everything else. The Germans basically jabbing us in the eye as a sovereign country, too. They knew that we were upset, but in a sense they were going to do it anyways.

Q: What was your role?

TYSON: I backed up McClelland and at that point we were getting a lot of visitors through. It turned out, specifically on this, fairly early on after the Carter administration came in; Warren Christopher came out to head the U.S. team on it. I was the duty officer and I had a great vignette of delivering a telegram to Warren Christopher in his pajamas at midnight; absolutely a real gentleman. His first response was, “Tell me it's not 7:00A.M.,” and I said, “It's not 7:00A.M., but I need to show this to you.” So he was at one of the hotels in Bonn and so I got back in my car, I drove back out and dropped the stuff off and did that. It was a lot of “Visits are Us”; these teams are coming over, you're doing that. And because science was so broadly undefined, energy was so important, and the environment was

coming along, we had a huge number of visitors. I did a lot of visitors, with Dr. McClelland and all. But the Germany-Brazil nuclear deal was dominating a lot.

Q: What were we saying to the Germans and what were the Germans saying to us on this?

TYSON: We were saying to the Germans that we don't want you to do this for the following reasons, and they were saying, “Oh don't worry, it probably won't happen, and if it does happen, it'll happen way off in the future.” There was a serious disconnect there. Germany, at this point, also was looking at using this to leverage commercial and political advantage in Brazil, which even then was seen as a comer.

Q: Were we just sort of saying what we were saying; I mean, was there any coercion or sort of plus side to it, or not?

TYSON: I think the fact that we sent the deputy secretary of state gave an idea of how important it was, and it was the type of things that in high level meetings there was often a talking point. Much more Draconian stuff; I think we'd have to wait for stuff to be declassified. I think at various points we didn't make our views known, but that's one that I think the records will have to speak to it down the line.

Q: Were the French a player in this at all? Was this strictly a German thing or were the French involved?

TYSON: I think part of the German concern, and one of the reasons they were doing it, was that they could tell us no and if the Germans gave in their view was the French would step in. The French were sort of seen as the whores of the universe or something like that. As I said, in terms of individual deals with countries looking to make their own arrangements. Not particularly popular, and yet on the other side, you've got the French-German axis which underpins the European community. They had their political pressures, too.

Q: Did you get any feel for the German foreign office and how they operated?

TYSON: Yes, I did. My better feel for it came much later on in the tour when I was actually in the political section in the labor office, in dealing a lot with the trade unions and the people in the party organizations, the SPD (Social Democratic Party) organization, doing the trade unions because they had much better political information than the foreign office did. They were much more tied in to the political leadership.

The German Foreign Office was pretty good. Their science people were very good, had good cooperative arrangements with the other science ministries. It was really much later on when somebody in the SPD party structure and it was an SPD government, just knew more.

Q: Were you there during the neutron bomb business?

TYSON: No, that came later on, but what I was there for the first contacts with what became the Green Party; I did them. I was twenty-six, the assistant labor attach#. As I said, I'd taken Labor Law and was working for the labor attach#. Yes, there were interesting things in what the Germans were doing, but one of my adjunct things was to start meeting with what were then the people in the Berliner Initiative or the citizen's initiatives groups, which was the beginning of the anti-nuclear groups.

Q: Was Petra Kelley in this group, or not?

TYSON: She was just starting to come in on the fringes and I later met her in the summer of '83. But it was even lower level, more diffuse at that. I knew an American woman who was over there working on some projects and she had some contacts there, and Dick Smyser, the political minister, was interested in starting to see where they were going. In a way, I fit the profile. I remember him, as I'm running around in my madras shirt, my leather sport coat, and my blue jeans, saying, “Please don't get arrested.” (laughs)

But I mean, I did some of the initial reporting on that and it was the anti-nuclear groups in Badenburg, I talked to a guy in West Berlin who later became a member of parliament under the Green List. Stuff like that. I mean it was clear that you dismissed these people at your peril. You know, junior officer, you're out on the street, you're hanging out, you're writing stuff that people are reading. It was fun.

Q: Was the anti-nuclear then pointed strictly at weapons or was it also moving towards the environmental?

TYSON: It was pointed a bit at weapons, but it was really much more focused on proposed power plants. There was one in Badenburg and Whyl that got a lot of opposition and then nuclear reprocessing and disposal sites and stuff. I think later on as the cruise missiles, actually the neutron bomb did start then, and yes, there was more of a cross-over. But a lot of this had basis in local groups driven by, “not in my backyard” opposition. And in a densely populated country like Germany, that resonated even more.

Q: While you were working sort of on the labor side in SPD, what was your impression of the SPD people you were meeting?

TYSON: By and large, my impression of the SPD people was pretty good. I still have some friends involved in it. It was interesting. It was a bit more of the newer generation. I mean, the older generation had gone through the streets, fights with the Nazis and the Communists. This was more upscale. This was the SPD in suits. This was much more of, if you will, a Tony Blair type of thing. They cleaned up well. They had their political viewpoints, but also it was a wealthier country; it was a country that was much more powerful in Europe. They were playing more of a role.

Q: Did you find that sort of the older people in our embassy were having trouble sort of adjusting to the new SPD as opposed to, you know, the old time, as with the Labor Party in Britain, you know a bunch of people got around and saying they're a red flag forever and

used a lot of the rhetoric of the '30s. You were seeing the change, but was this change becoming apparent within the embassy?

TYSON: Oh, yes, I think Dick Smyser was an extraordinarily astute political counselor and he had a lot of political contacts in the party and used to meet with them regularly on a one-on-one basis. Rick Large, Willy Brandt, others - we dealt with them. There wasn't that type of feeling. You'd get some of the older guys further down in the organization, you know, “the red flag” or, you know, “Hamburg is red”, or something like this, but the leadership at that point, after the grand coalitions in the '60s; the Godesburg Accord, there was a “regiom sayeg” literally capable of governing. The SPD had fought hard to get that perception amongst the German public and they were not particularly going to let go of it lightly.

Q: Was Helmut Schmidt on the scene at that point or was he?

TYSON: Helmut Schmidt was the chancellor at that time.

Q: Chancellor. Later, the relations between Jimmy Carter and Helmut Schmidt were poisonous, particularly over the neutron bomb, but even before that. Did you get any feeling for this?

TYSON: That was the beginning of Carter being seen as something of a weaker president. Schmidt was quite a personality; a dominating personality; one of the truly magnetic men. You know, you're in a room and he walked in with that Leonine hair and just those good looks and, I mean, you knew he was there, you knew he was the chancellor. Interestingly enough, he was shorter than I would've expected.

I think he found Carter and the administration weak and vacillating. There had also been, I think, a famous quote by one of the more leftist in the SPD that the neutron bomb was the perfect capitalist weapon; it destroyed people and not property. And boy that was a statement that really resonated through Germany and the north German plain.

I think Carter, in his own way, and history is treating him much kinder, had a lot of the right instincts, but in some ways he had some amateurs, really, running the business. They didn't understand it, and I think he felt that if he, in a southern fashion, and I can understand, that if he just sat on the porch and visited with someone, it would be right. It wouldn't be right with someone like Schmidt who's a serious player politically in Europe and on the world stage. I think there had been something in the '76 election that it had been sort of leaked that actually even the SPD had sort of preferred to see the Republicans in. So I think there was a little bit on our side, or some of the Carter people, about that. The other thing is people forget Carter and others coming from Georgia, and the difference between Carter coming from a state like Georgia and Reagan coming from a state like California was night and day. You know, the Carter people just couldn't believe that houses cost as much as they did in Washington. Some of the people, obviously, were pretty savvy, others just weren't. It was, you know, “Guys, this is the big league.” I think Carter, in a sense, and this is something that I later saw when I came back and I was a staff aide, was too seized with the minutiae. You're the president, let others take care of this. He'd start getting down into the weeds on different memos and stuff that the President of the United States does not need to do that.

Q: You left there in '76, when?

TYSON: I left in '78.

Q: '78, I mean. And you had quite a good rotation then, really. I mean, you got your chance to try a few things and?

TYSON: I can go into that in the next session because there was actually some more there.

Q: Would you name these things and we'll put it on in that session.

TYSON: Sure, I was in the consular affairs section, I was in the science office for nine months, then I actually did a special project for the admin. Counselor, Earl Ballinger, and then I was the assistant labor attach# and I did the citizen's initiatives and I also did a series of six reports on the foreign workers in Germany; the Gastarbeiter.

Q: Alright, well we'll cover those the next time.

Paul, you were still in Bonn, right?

TYSON: Actually, if I could, what I'd like to do is go back and catch up on some stuff that you said I could do from the previous things.

One of the things from my time in the Economics Bureau of the Office of Fuels and Energy that came up that was interesting was the assistant secretary was Tom Enders and later went on to become an ambassador and I think he's deceased now, but during that period there was perhaps the most devastating piece on an ambassador's wife done that I've ever seen and it was Sally Quinn writing on Gaetana Enders and, frankly, Gaetana did it to herself. It was quite interesting, came in, and it was, of course, all over the bureau. I think they were trying to suppress it, but for heaven's sakes it's in the style section of the Washington Post; I think the paper was sold out in the building. I understand that Mr. Enders had to do some letters of apology to a number of the senators named in the article.

It was very interesting about Gaetana because the word on her on the street was that when she was back home in Italy, she was always the American ambassador's wife, but when she was in America, of course she was the Italian contessa. But it was an interesting period of time in the office I was in. Produced a number of ambassadors out of thaPaul Taylor and Glen Rase, and of course, Steve Bosworth.

The other thing that I wanted to talk about, actually, was FSI language training. It was sort of interesting. I had had some German so I came in after the course had already started, which probably was not the best idea given because you're like a little dressage pony;

you learn various dialogues and so forth. But the teacher that I always remember was Margarite Plishka, and she is the one who had basically coached President Kennedy for the “Ich bin ein Berliner” phrase, you know, the famous “I'm a jelly donut” phrase. But she had some very, very nice things to say about Kennedy and I guess he'd given her a signed book. But she was one of those post-war #migr#s where I think at some point one of the photo magazines or a magazine in Germany had done something on her life in the States, and apparently she got some fairly hateful letters from the old country about abandoning the Fatherland and so forth. She was a wonderful teacher, but I remember we had this one dreadful wife, who shall remain unnamed, in my immediate section, who wanted to finish all twenty-four chapters, and the teachers were saying, “Well, you don't do that. You reach a certain level, we switch to newspapers, we do movies and stuff like that.” The best quote that I ever got out of one of the teacherI don't know whether it was Frau Plishka - was that the frustration of teaching languages at FSI was that FSOs are very, very verbal, and under the best of circumstances you'd come out of the program sounding like an intelligent twelve-year-old, which frustrates a lot of FSOs.

Q: I had Frau Plishka, too. She's very good.

TYSON: She was very, very good.

Q: Well let's go to Bonn then. We've talked about some things in Bonn. In consular affairs, was there anything of note that you were doing there?

TYSON: Consular affairs was sort of interesting because I had no training for it, but in 1976 the Overseas Voting Act had come in and I'd mentioned that I ended up rotating down there; working for John Buche who is a lovely man to work for and just a truly humanitarian man and did a lot of outreach and American Citizen Services work. But he quite sensibly said, “Well, I've got a newly minted lawyer here. You take it over and do it.” So I was doing a lot of the paperwork on that and some standard consular things. Bonn, in a sense, was a real country club of the system. You have basically affluent Germans

going to the States. During that period, the embassy looked out for people with Nazi or concentration camp records, or in the younger set, the Bader Meinhof types.

There were about five junior officers there and John ended up using two of us, me and David Straub, because we took an extremely liberal viewpoint on unmarried German couples traveling to the U.S. together. My attitude, having done the Eurail pass myself, was “Have a great time. Tell me if you're going to Mexico; I'll give you the multiple visas.” So that, by and large, was fine. Your problems came with the third-country nationals.

The other thing that was interesting was you had to go out and work the line if you had American citizen indigents, because our German employees just really hated them and were more than borderline rude to them. So you needed an American to handle it. The one thing we had going for us in Bonn was an arrangement with the “caritasheim” downtown, and the Sisters were much stricter than we ever could have been. And in that era, it was the '70s and we were sort of the beginning stop on the trek to Nepal so some of the ones fell out on our doorstep. You got some real hustlers, but every now and then you just got that incredibly sweet, dumb American kid that all you could do was say, “It'll be alright. We'll help out,” and we would. But we also had an ACS case involving a naturalized American German-Jewish?

Q: ACS being?

TYSON: American Citizen Services.

John and I ended up working a great deal on that, but the man eventually died.

Q: What was?

TYSON: He was just an older man in his eighties or nineties and he was in a care facility in Germany, and we would call in on him and just check and see that he was okay, but John really went above and beyond on that. It was about an hour ride down the river to the

place where he was, the people were terribly nice to him and it was all fine, but John would take me along and we would go and do that. I was there full-time for about two months, and then periodically when John was away, as I said, because of my liberal viewpoint on visas, I often ended up covering for him.

Q: Can you explain what the problem was in the liberal versus non-liberal points-of-view?

TYSON: Three or four junior officers were devout Catholics and wouldn't issue visas to unmarried couples traveling together to the States. I did. (laughs)

Q: (laughs) Oh John.

TYSON: I mean, the unspoken things in the Foreign Service. I wasn't a consular officer, but, you know, John had a problem and David Straub and I would run the visa section in the fashion that he would like it.

Q: I know when I was a line consular officer, we used to rotate cases of this nature, that certain people we'd make sure didn't interview them.

TYSON: Exactly.

Q: Was there any problem with the Overseas Voters Act?

TYSON: Some of the state paperwork, particularly from the smaller states wasn't particularly good or clear. But one of the things that was amazing about the consulate in Bonn is they had saved every rubber stamp that had ever been utilized in the universe, so when in doubt we just threw more stamps on the paperwork, and at the end of the day it all seemed to work.

The other thing that was interesting about the consulate, from a lawyer's viewpoint, was some of the notarials; notarials involving trusts and estates cases. Aunt Hilda had gone off to marry Uncle Fritz in St. Louis, they never had kids, he died, you know, in the

late '40s or something like that, she stayed on and there's a distribution of an estate. All very straightforward, but just reading some of the documents out of Missouri or Wisconsin or so forth reveal some life sagas in immigration stories. Germans were always terribly nice about it. The biggest problem that we had was that occasionally just doing a straight notarial, it just wasn't impressive enough for some of them, so we always had the ribbon and the foil there. We got an older German who really wanted it and it was a slow afternoon, we'd put the ribbon and the foil on everything and that seemed to make them feel better.

Q: Oh, yes. You know I've made a certain number of equivalents in non-documents. “This is to certify that the American Embassy cannot do such-and-so,” and it was a big seal and it usually got them through whatever they had to do. (laughs)

TYSON: Well it was very interesting with particularly some of the older Germans. Bonn was the type of place where periodically you just had strange things coming up. I remember one day later on in my tour my boss and I were suddenly tasked with representing the embassy at the anniversary of the capture of the Ludendorf Bridge in Remagen. And you know, like, “We're going down there, and they're happy to see us?” “Oh, yeah, yeah, go on down. Have a great time.”

The other thing that was always interesting was the ex-prisoners of war associations used to ask for embassy representatives and since I spoke German I'd go. I figure in the grand scheme of things they must've done something right in that these people were still asking us back and actually had fond memories of being an eighteen-year-old POW (Prisoner of War) in Colorado or something.

Q: Yes, you know, in the middle of Arkansas. It was the damnedest thing. You could probably tell them where they've been and places they've made a studious effort to avoid.

Then you get down to labor attach#.

TYSON: First I was the assistant science counselol think we went through a bit of that on the Germany-Brazil nuclear deal. But I ended up there for nine months under Clyde McClelland and then Earl Ballinger was the administrative minister and he actually gave me a very interesting study. He gave me all the personnel records and a lot of history and the question was basically, “Which of the various institutions left over from the occupation and elsewhere were sort of under embassy authority as opposed to U.S. army Europe or the military authorities?” and you ended up with a lot of the cats and dogthe document centers in Berlin and stuff like this. It was really pretty interesting and pretty much left me to myself. I went through a whole lot of things and I ended up giving it to him, but I think it probably in many ways was a predecessor to what later became ICASS [International Cooperative Administrative Support Services]; that the embassy was carrying a lot of stuff and not really getting a lot of recompense for it. But I did that for two months and then there were two junior officer jobs open; one was with the Bonn group, which in spite of the name, did the status of Berlin - and David Straub went to that, and I was the acting and then the assistant labor attach#. Herb Baker was there just at the beginning of my tour, and then Roger Schrader. But I also had two special projects from Dick Smyser, the political minister, and one was on the foreign workers in Germany. I did six reports on that and then the other was basically political reporting on what was in the citizen initiatives groups, which later became the Green Party.

Q: Let's talk first about the Gastarbeiters. What was your impression of how the system was working and the future of these people; where they were from and how they were moving within German society at that time?

TYSON: At that time, there was an innate hypocrisy or something ostrich-like about the German views. First of all, with the Gastarbeiter there were differences. The Italians, which had been the first group, were EU (European Union) members, so they were going to have the right?

Q: It wasn't EU at the time though.

TYSON: It was the Common Market.

Q: Common Market, yes.

TYSON: They had the right to labor mobility. So if the Italians wanted to be in Germany, they could be in Germany and that was going to be fine. The Spanish and Portuguese had not yet acceded to it and there was going to be a transition period on labor mobility the nuances of which were already being negotiated. The Yugoslavs, interestingly enough, had a very small number, but they tended to be technicians and they had been there for a while and surprisingly weren't that much of a problem. The Greeks also were looking at future accession and much like the Spanish and Portuguese, it was when, where, and how it would go. The big monolith that everybody just couldn't really deal with, and it persists today, is Turkey. Now, in a sense, what was interesting, and I basically went around to the labor attaches in the other embassies, there was a surprising degree of candor of one foreigner talking to another foreigner about the Germans and it wasn't always pretty.

As I say, the Italians were much further along, but the others found a lot of discrimination, a certain amount of xenophobia among the Germans. I think the German trade unions were trying to organize these workers with some success, but the idea that they'd happily work for twenty years and then go back home, I think, was unrealistic from the get-go, particularly when you started looking at a second and even a third generation; you know some young Turkish woman, or boy who's been born in Kreuzberg, in Berlin, grows up there, and you know, Mommy and Daddy are going on about the beauties of the Anatolian highlands and they go back and find two squalid rooms on rocky soil and they just sort of look and figure, “I'm out of here.”

There's one of those instances where I talked with the smarter Germans, and I also talked to people in the political foundations, the Ebert Stiftung, the Adenauer Stiftung, and others,

about the problems and said, “You know, we've done emigration, we've done immigration. The classic novels in America are the immigrant's dilemma. We know a lot about this. Trust me. Here's what you need to do with schooling the kids and all.” And in a sense, the Germans heard it, but didn't want to hear it. It was fascinating to see.

The oil crisis had already occurred and they had really shut off the recruitment of new workers. So if you were in under the wire, you had something. The other law stipulated that if you had been there for five years you could stay. So basically by 1978 the ones who were there had the right to stay. Now there were problems with their kids coming, the children having the right to work, and any number of other things. But a lot of it had been done. You got a lot of professors and others saying, “Well the Germans can just turf two million people out.” Well under their own regulations by 1978 that was really not an option.

Q: Well what about the factories? I mean, had they developed a cadre of Gastarbeiters that they really couldn't lose? It wasn't as though there were Germans queued up ready to take those jobs, weren't they? Germany's major concentration in many ways was producing quality goods.

TYSON: Well, factories, also the food service industries, some of the hotels, they concentrated in key areas. As I said with the Yugoslavs, different nationalities also tended to concentrate in different areas. But no, by this point, the Germans needed the labor and the people, it isn't always the case, the smarter ones, the more talented ones, the more verbally-gifted, were starting to move up and become more keen in organizations. So I think it's probably like immigration in the States. In the abstract, “throw them all out”, but then, you know, “my guy,” or “the woman on the line,” or “we know her; she's so good,” it's always the individual was the exception.

Q: What about your contacts with the Citizen's Initiative which blossomed into the Green Movement? What was your impression at that time?

TYSON: They were absolutely fascinating from a political viewpoint. First of all, a friend of mine, an American woman named Cynthia Whitehead, was sort of hanging out in Europe and involved in some things and doing some freelance newspaper things. I knew her because we were sort of the same age and we were blossoming out beyond the embassy set. So my first wife and I had American friends who were in Europe for one reason or another, and Cynthia was incredible in making some of the initial introductions. She had interviewed these people or had been at conferences with them and saw all this as mostly an anti-nuclear initiative, but it was more than just that. So when I needed some initial introductions, it was Cynthia's, “Yes, you really do want to meet with him,” that got me the initial meetings. But these tended to be local groups that would call us about issues; the big ones were opposition to a proposed nuclear plant, but there would be other things; opposition to a road or a factory or the fact that the social services or infrastructure provided to a poorer section of town was less than it should be. And there was a really conscious viewpoint not to create a national organization. It was much more decentralized, very local, no real leadership stars, everybody's equal; let's sort of hang out and sort of coalesce and make our decisions and coordinate that way. And it frustrated a lot of your typical analysts looking at Germany. You know, here's the wiring diagram, here's who this is, here's who's that. You get some German grandmother out of upper Bavaria or something like that who's never been politically active in her life, who took on a cause and all of a sudden she's sitting at the high table when these groups meet. It was frustrating for even the German officialdom trying to get a grip on this. I think the Greens and the Citizens Initiatives knew this and would very consciously change spokesmen, change leaders. Someone would be on the dais and then they'd go away and then someone else would come, then the first one would come back. But there were different groups, and even at that point the real leaders were emerging.

I did not meet Petra Kelly in this period, but I heard her name mentioned. And there was the evolution of this and I honestly think that we did, me and the political section, some of the best initial, and probably historical, reporting on the genesis of the Green Party.

I went out to Berlin and met with someone who later became a member of parliament on the Green list, but a lot of his issues were providing more social services in a poor neighborhood in Berlin, as opposed to the anti-nuclear thing. But fascinating people. Some were incredibly politically committed, others who had just sort of gotten a burr under their saddle and suddenly found themselves in politics.

This also led to another point, going back to FSI language training. They had refused or basically said, “We're not teaching you the 'du,' the German informal, because in two years in Germany you'll never get close enough to a German to do this.” Nothing could have been further from the truth. Anybody in their twenties, you're at a party together, you're drinking or something, it goes to 'du.' I mean, I used to basically say to close German friends later on in the evening that, “If I slip into 'sie' it's not an insult. I've just been taught that with certain phrases, so ignore me.” With the labor unions, including being a foreign embassy representative to labor union functions, you're all part of the group, therefore you use the informal with each other. The same was true, actually, within the ranks of the SPD. So you'd go to certain labor union SPD functions and you had to know the informal German.

Q: I know, I went through the process and it's very hard, having been trained in the formal, to move to the familiar. I mean, you're gritting your teeth at having to remember this all the time.

TYSON: Well, you know, they've trained you for the court of the kaiser and there you are with a bunch of trade unionists on the Hamburg dock going, “Ah, yes, what is that verb again?” (laughs)

Q: What was your impression of the German political situation, particularly where the parties really have real control over things? Because they have the lists and they rank people on the lists and so there isn't this sort of somebody making a name for themselves

by really doing constituent service in a particular place and winning a certain amount of independence in the party.

TYSON: I think that, in many ways, is ultimately what led to the rise of the Green Party. I think the grand coalition in the '60s had precluded a lot of the elbowing and political jockeying that had happened later. I never knew these people. My friend Cynthia that I had mentioned, had discussed groups that had called themselves the “Ausserpavlamenadrischeopposition,” the Extra Parliamentary Opposition, when they found that there were no channels within the SPD for them and others. And I think this disaffection with Germany Incorporated, and the existing political structure, is what turned a lot of people off and led them to turn to groups like the Citizen's Initiatives and eventually the Green Party. The ossified and stratified existing bureaucratic structures frustrated a lot of the younger people. It was a world-wide type of thing, with Danny the Red and others, going on. I think in many ways, the German political leadership, the older ones, were perplexed. I mean, “My God, we've come out of the ashes and given you this prosperous country. What's your problem?”

Q: Yes. Were you in the political section everywhere else kind of looking under rocks and underneath bushes and all for the Nazis, neo-Nazis? I'm not talking about real Nazis, but a rise of Nazi-like tendencies or something like this.

TYSON: The skinheads, I think, really came much later. I think there was always the question, particularly among the CSU and the Bavarians of, “Where were you in 1944?”

It was always an aspect in Germany and one of the problems was German insensitivity to how they were perceived by others: the Americans, the Dutch, the other Europeans. You know, “Oh, it's just a little unit reunion. The boys got fired up and they sang some old songs.” Yes, the “Horst Wessel” will lead. The Jewish tour group or the Dutch tour group nearby did not exactly appreciate this. What a shock. Our emphasis in the consular section for anybody over the age of fifty was, “Where were you? What were you doing?”

Q: In a way that was history, but looking for a rerise of Nazi-like tendencies.

TYSON: Oh I think Dick Smyser, the political minister, was a lot smarter than that. There was always probably going to be that 2-3% fringe in Germany, but it wasn't really all that crucial at that point. I think in that era, particularly in the old line labor counselors and attaches, we were much more looking for Reds under the bed.

Q: Was there at all a feeling that any group of people there has to be at least one East German spy or somebody like that?

TYSON: Well the East Germans were certainly good, given what happened to Willi Brandt and others, I suspect that at the end of the day we'll never ever really totally know, but I would suspect that a lot of that society was fairly porous. They understood each other. I'm sure that the West had some pretty good spies in the East. I had some friends who had come over the wall, or over the border, and the demographics in Germany were changing enough so that the Germans could get native born West Germans. They were probably, at the end of the day, more reliable. They always spoke about all Germans being Germans. I had one or two friends that I think would've like to have worked for the security service “the Stasi,” but they had come over as teenagers and that just was not going to happen.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover that you can think of?

TYSON: Yes. Ambassador Stoessel; wonderful man. Movie star good looks. Story was that he had actually auditioned for the movies as a young man. He'd been brought to Germany from Moscow. He was a small man, always very well turned out. There are days where he did not look up to his full potential. But, a wonderful man to work for and later became deputy secretary. Stoessel was absolutely the central casting image of what you wanted an ambassador to be and of course having come out of Moscow, knew Russia very well. It was also at that point that I remember one evening when he actually had the junior officers over, he had a very nice little collection of icons and so forth, but that was

really the senior reaching out to the JOs (Junior Officers); it was the beginning of that push.

The other story from Bonn days was Joe Califano, the Secretary of Health Education and Welfare, visited. It was a big deal and I was going to be control officer for some of his people because he had a rather large delegation. Delegations were known to stupidly ignore our advice on how long it takes to get from here to there. They were always going to push it and they were always late, which is very rude in Germany. But Califano is arriving; he's coming in from England. It was very interesting. Went out to K#ln Bonn Airport, I think this was in the fall, so it's at night which means it's foggy. I'm in a leather trench coat, looking like someone from a British “B” movie and Califano's plane comes in and Al Haig's plane comes in from Brussels. They land the planes and taxi them nose to nose. Califano pops out, goes on to Haig's plane. They meet for about an hour. This is all after Watergate and they had all known each other back then. So my colleague and I go onto the little executive jet that's brought Califano in and there are some deputy assistant secretaries from HEW and one of the first ones says, “Well we wore out the people in England, we hope you can stand the pace.” I just figured, “You're on my turf. Watch this. Watch this. I will run you into the ground,” and that's exactly what I did.

We got them all to the hotel, and the next day we went to a meeting with the German association of doctors that dealt with health insurance matters because the issue was healthcare cost containment. They put out a very nice breakfast spread - a cold European buffet, but Califano was on a diet so neither he nor his staff was eating, so the head of the association said to me in German, “What's wrong with the food?” I said, “Nothing. He's on a diet,” and so the guy proceeded to load up my plate with smoked trout and everything else which I proceeded to scarf down as he was smiling and Califano was glaring at me. I figured, “Eh, get a clue.” At a break, I looked at them and said, “Eat. It's rude if you don't,” so one or two of the doctors I think took a lettuce leaf or something like that.

But Califano was sort of a very feisty type and Ambassador Stoessel did a reception for him. My wife and I were walking through and he had his arm in a sling because he had injured his elbow. I came up beside him and the ambassador is right there, so he looks and in front of the ambassador said, “So what do you do here besides meet planes?” I looked at him and said, “I marry your staff,” because my wife was on a year's leave of absence from HEW. That was an opening and they actually chatted and it was quite nice. So that was the Califano and Haig story.

Q: You were there during the Watergate, or had you left?

TYSON: I had left. I was in Washington during Watergate, working in EB.

Q: When did you leave Bonn?

TYSON: I left in late June of 1978.

Q: Where did you go?

TYSON: I went to become staff aide in the office of the undersecretary for security assistance, science and technology. The undersecretary was Lucy Wilson Benson and her deputy was Dr. Joseph Nye, who is now up at Harvard. The other staff aide was David Welch, who is about to become ambassador to Egypt. I came in there and what was striking about the office was that we had some of the first coffee on the seventh floor in the morning, so we had people like Marisa Lino who was a staff aide and SP [Policy Planning Staff] comedown; she was later ambassador in Albania, and Bob Gallucci who was an INR analyst at that point. So it was a period in which I got to know a lot of these people. Warren Christopher was the deputy secretary and one of his assistants was Ned Walker who later was ambassador to Egypt and NEA [Near East Affairs Bureau] assistant secretary. So the seventh floor perspective was quite interesting.

We were doing a lot on conventional arms controls; the U.S. was trying to restrain the arms races. It was one of the Carter initiatives that basically failed. Joe Nye was very involved in a lot of nuclear nonproliferation. There was some stuff about nuclear storage on an island in the Pacific called Palmyra Island. It was an interesting time for that. One of the things that came in, happened after I was there for about a month; I went into the conference room and saw a series of safes - we had a sort of office boy in there - and I said, “What's in there?” “A lot of old files from when this office suite used to belong to Carlyle Maw, who I think was Kissinger's legal adviser.” The task was basically to clean out and retire that stuff, and all that I can really say about that is I doubt that the American public will ever, ever, truly know the complete story behind Watergate and the Pentagon papers. We shredded a lot of stuff; it was other agencies' stuff. But it was stunning to see what was in there, and I'll just leave it at that.

Q: In the first place you were up with in this job from '79 to when?

TYSON: End of '79; I was there for eighteen months.

Q: You were working for Nye or Benson or?

TYSON: Lucy Benson and Nye actually. David Welch and Nye were very close. One of the special assistants was William Marsh, Bill Marsh, who later was a DCM somewhere in Europe. It's just, that you're a staff aide, you're a high-price office manager. You basically do what the principal wants. Used to go and get the classified materials in the morning.

Q: Let's talk about both Nye and Benson. What was your impression of how they operated and how effective they were? What were they after?

TYSON: Lucy Benson had been with the League of Women voters and I think a classic Schedule C appointment. I mean, she wanted to advance to a higher office at some point. A charming lady; a little bit of a tough broad in some ways, but you sort of liked her. I think she was much better in person than she was before a congressional committee

because she never really explained a lot of the nuances of the Conventional Arms Transfer Restraint Policy, if I remember it correctly. She was sort of a nice enough person to work for, I think she thought that she was more highly regarded by Secretary Vance and others than she probably was, but of course remember at this point she was also the highest ranking female appointee in State Department history. Nye was, is, will be, incredibly smart. Harvard connections and nuclear nonproliferation was his issue. He was a very, very good policy animal. Clearly on his way up and it's been twenty-plus years since then and he's done very, very well. He was someone in the Democratic Party policy establishment who was going to be a player. That was clear. I think Benson had hoped for something, but of course, once Carter lost it was over for her.

Q: Did you get any feel on the Carter administration? I realize you were a staff aide, but on nuclear efforts for nonproliferation, was there anything resulting from all these efforts there that you now see more clearly?

TYSON: I think at that time they were onto a lot of the issues which have persisted: nuclear waste storage, and the whole Palmyra Island issue was to create a repository in the Pacific. That really has not been resolved. Immense concerns, even then, about Pakistan and India, which of course persisted through the years. I don't think they made any dramatic changes at that point, but they certainly were part of the progression of the broad policy issues. Those were also sort of issues that people working in PM [Bureau of Political-Military Affairs] or INR or elsewhere were involved with. So a lot of the information and knowledge about that continued within the government when the Carter administration left. Carter, of course, was trained as a nuclear engineer and had a lot of personal stake in that. On some memos concerning this (we'd get the comeback copies) the president would have noted some fairly detailed comments in the margins on arcane technical and nuclear issues. Frankly, as I've said before, does the president of the United States have time to do this?

Q: How about the Pentagon; did you get a feeling that there was a war between the Pentagon and the State Department?

TYSON: There were on the arms restraint policy, but of course, Mrs. Benson chaired the Arms Export Control Board. This is really where you saw the “tough broad” side. There were times when she just rolled over the Pentagon. In spite of Carter having been an Annapolis grad and a naval officer, there were aspects of his defense policies that were not popular in the Pentagon. On other matters we actually worked fairly closely together: arms sales to the Saudis and so forth. There were the F-15 sales that had gone on just before and then, of course the minute they got that they were going in for extra wing tanks and other things like that. So on those issues State and DOD (Department of Defense) were working fairly in close coordination in trying to get it through the Hill.

Q: You left when in '79?

TYSON: December in '79.

Q: Were you there in time to see the impact of all this of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan?

TYSON: Not so much the invasion of Afghanistan. Our office was much, much more involved with the collapse of the Shah of Iran because of all the weapon sales to Iran, particularly the issue of compromising the F-14s and the Tomcats and other things. Mrs. Benson was in telephone contact with General Heiser on that sort of thing; his trip out there to prop up the Shah. So it was really quite interesting to watch all of that unravel. And then of course the hostage situation happened in fairly short order. I'm not quite sure of the time, but?

Q: November, I think.

TYSON: Yes, I was still around for those types of things. So we were very, very concerned about Iran and we had what later became known as the “Ayatollah class of Frigates” under constructions. People forget just what a huge arms relationship we had with Iran.

Q: Well the story is that Benson and Kissinger came back from one of the later visits to the Shah and told him whatever they want, they can have. It was Iranian money, and oil money, and we'd sop it up. The Carter administration had done nothing to stop it.

TYSON: Well, there was another factor, too. Very often those sales, in spite of the export controls, made lower costs available to the Pentagon.

Q: Oh, yes. The Pentagon was always sort of pushing this. They don't really want the other people to be able to use them against us, but at the same time the cost per unit goes down.

TYSON: The one that was interesting was, I think the F-5G, which would've been an export-only model, and the Carter administration killed that, or at least it died. I think the F-14s and the Tomcats were some of the most important stuff though.

Q: Where did you go at the end of '79?

TYSON: I went to the six month economic course at FSI for FSI training; so January of '80 to June of '80.

Q: How did you find that?

TYSON: Fairly rigorous. It was a good course in some ways. It reminded me a great deal of the first year of law school; there's a lot of posturing and attitude. My father died very suddenly during the course - I think at the end of March. So I went up to New Jersey and I'm bailing out of the course and this is one of those, “If you leave for three days, you are forever lost. You will never catch up.” There were things that I had to do with my family and

there was also a week of sitting “shiva” and my father died while he was on a business trip so I had to go up to Watkins Glen, New York and literally retrieve the car, and just a lot of obligations.

One of the things that had happened resulted from my law school training. There were one or two other lawyers who were FSOs in the economic course and we rapidly decided we needed a study group. So we formulated one. The course was taught in modules and I remember there was something on public finance. I only went to the first and last class, and the class instructors said, “Well, what about taking the exam; what do you want to do?” and I said, “Well, let me try taking it.” I went to my ad hoc study group and said, “Forget substance. What are the questions? What are the answers? Just give it to me.” And I think I got a “B” on it, which just stunned everybody. In later years a lot of the stuff that supposedly I was going to use from the course, realistically wasn't used in an economic section. I suspect in many ways that had to do more with a lack of computers and software. But it was interesting to have taken it. It certainly served me well. It also presaged me going off for university training in economics.

Q: I can't remember if she was still there at the time. Did you work with Frances Wilson?

TYSON: Yes, she had been the EB [Economics Bureau] executive director, queen of assignments, and quite a legend - lo be to those who crossed her. But on the other hand, she knew how to maneuver the system and in her heart of hearts I really think she cared a great deal about the Economics Bureau and really set out to take care of the people in it. One of those real legendary people.

Q: So you got out, I guess, halfway through 1980 or so? What then happened?

TYSON: I was assigned to EUR/RPE, the Regional Political and Economic Cooperation Office (Europe) which basically did our mission to the European community and the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development]. I basically did a lot of the industrial trade issues, and I also followed the OECD industry committee and the

trade committee. I got involved in issues involving steel, automobile restraints, chemicals, energy pricing, and a lot of basic economic issues involved in our trading relationship with the European community. I was also sort of the assignments clerk and reservations clerk for the various committees. You'd get cables over from the Commerce Department or others regarding people going to meetings. Commerce used to always hack me off because there would be a reservations cable for something two months hence and they'd type it up as an immediate. So you'd strike it out, send it back, their nose would get out of joint, and you'd sort of take it from there. I also sat in on a number of USTR [Office of the U.S. Trade Representative] committees and things like that. So it was a fairly interesting job. It tended to involve, about every four to six months, travel to Europe; some combination of Paris, Brussels, and London, which was nice.

Q: Well you were doing this from '80 to when?

TYSON: '83.

Q: What was the feeling towards the OECD at that time? I mean from the American point of view.

TYSON: Oh, periodically I think we were trying to revitalize certain committees within the OECD, but the OECD was sort of a talking forum. It was a wonderful sort of travel benefit for people in the Commerce Department or the Census Bureau. My impression on working at the OECD; everybody used to get spun-up about the communiqu# issued after the secretaries of state or the presidents and others met; most of that, frankly, was crap. You got more things done affecting the lives of the citizens in every one of these countries when you just let the working level expert meetings go forward. You probably got more out of a traffic sign safety committee than you did out of some of the “we'll leap tall buildings in a single bound” type of thing. You know, I realize that's the stuff that State Department work is made of, but you get spun-up for the OECD ministerial, and much huffing and puffing and smoke, and did anybody remember it three months later?

Meanwhile, some of the committees and subcommittees were more effective than others, and others were just some schedule, to see who had the chance to do a week in Paris on a regular basis. So in my work I was always happy to help out those that you saw really doing something and the rest you did the reservations or this or that. Periodically we'd end up going over as part of a delegation and one of the most valuable things you did as the State Department officer was draft the cable. What I never understood though was behavior of some heads of delegation, you know, the meeting is done at 12:30 in the afternoon in Paris, they rush out to the airport to get onto a plane to get back to Washington just in time to close their stateside office. This made no sense, but the number of people who did it was stunning. I tended to stay on at least through the Saturday, very often through the Sunday, at my own expense for the Sunday just to see a bit of Paris. Live a little bit.

Q: Did you come into contact with sort of the European cadre that was working the other side?

TYSON: Oh yes, all the time.

Q: How did you find them?

TYSON: Ah, generally very good. Look at Europe. The word bureaucrat or permanent civil service is something of a thing of honor. If anything, their objections were the constantly changing cast of Americans they saw. You know, you just get one trained up and off you go. They then have to train the next. You'd get some of the Austrians and others, I mean, my God, they'd been there ten years at the creation - knew every twist and turn on these things. Very, very professional.

Q: What about manufacturing interests; you know our steel manufacturers, automobile manufacturers, did they lobby us to?

TYSON: Oh absolutely. They tended to do it through the trade reps office and of course the White House and Congress. Steel, of course, has been a perennial issue, and during that time the “voluntary Japanese automobile restraints” was another hot issue. The auto companies were arrogant, this is the best way to put it, and to some degree contemptuous of the bureaucrats. I remember meeting with a Ford executive who was pushing to support the restraints which were primarily directed at the Japanese, but there was some backlash potential against the Europeans which concerned me. But I remember him saying, “Well, we need five years to develop front-wheel drive technology,” and I looked at him and said, “Well why don't you wire your plant in Cologne and get the blueprints of the Fiesta?”

Q: Yes.

TYSON: And he was stunned that a bureaucrat knew anything about his industry, knew about the product line, and could comment on, “Oh, this is such crap.” Well my father had sold cars when he retired from the army and I've always been sort of a closet gear head and there were actually about four of us working the issue in the Department that met with the manufacturer's reps and I think they were quite surprised at how knowledgeable we were about the world industry. So the sympathy factor for Detroit was slight.

Q: Was there sort of the feeling that Detroit was being slippy?

TYSON: Oh absolutely, and in the case of Ford it was their profits in Europe that kept them afloat while they transitioned themselves. The quality was off, they were building ugly cars. It was really beginning to become not even a price thing as the Japanese were coming up on terms of the perceived quality.

Just in this era, I remember saying to my sister who was single at the time and needed a car, “Oh go buy a Toyota or a Nissan,” because they had just switched over from a Datsun. She went out and bought a Pontiac Sunbird that was the biggest rolling piece of crap that I'd seen in a long time. The car was nothing but heartache and two years later

she went out and got the Nissan, and I think that was a story repeated many, many times in America. There are American cars that I absolutely like, but there was just a lot of crap coming out the assembly lines and if you were to ask a lot of the companies these days to look back on their products, they'd probably agree.

Q: One of the things I've always felt about steel was that a steel plant, to a lot of countries, is a symbol of something that employs a lot of people, and the call is more for specialized steel these days and not for just producing steel. Politically, it's very hard to shut these things down and that ends up with dumping and all that.

TYSON: I had no particular problems on the real legitimate dumping things. When you've got into steel, you got into other factors. One, look at Baltimore. Our plants were simply old. They hadn't gotten the investment they needed. Under any sort of circumstances we had a tier of our industry that was just noncompetitive and the question was, “When would you shut it down and retire it?” Some of the newer plants and certainly specialty steels and products, particularly the electric furnaces were competitive.

I remember being in on some of the steel talks and one Belgian looking at me and saying, “You know if we shut this, someone might have to go twenty kilometers for a job,” at a time when the rustbelt was depopulating to Houston. People were living in cars in Houston. My response was, “You'll forgive me for not being terribly sympathetic to your problems when we have people living in cars in Houston.” I had no problems about really hammering it home and doing some tough negotiating. But on the issue that we had an industry that was just in decline and it was a question of time; it's like, “Boys and girls, figure it out,” and let's get beyond this. In a sense, low cost imports at various points have also been beneficial to the American consumer. I've got no problems with legitimate dumping issues, and that continues to this day, but we have not made the investment. You look at the age of our plants versus others; it's not surprising that we're not as competitive.

Q: Well then, in '83 you were there?

TYSON: Let's see, yes, a turning point in my life. My first marriage ended, probably not unexpectedly, but somewhat more suddenly than I'd expected. It was very interesting because I was to be in the job in RPE until that summer, and at that point I was scheduled to go off to university training and I had some choices. It was in economics. My wife and I had friends in Wisconsin. She was going to stay here and work, and I would go to Wisconsin. My other alternative was Stanford. So I agreed to do this and shortly thereafter my marriage collapsed and I thought I'd like to go to California and the State Department said, “You'll love Wisconsin.” So Wisconsin it was going to be.

In the meantime, my replacement had come out of the economic course some six months early. Follow me on thithe OECD had decided to have the first ever urban ministerial meeting, and our HUD [Housing and Urban Development] secretary was Sam Pierce, one of the black Republican cabinet members. Quite frankly, my office was looking for anybody who could make this meeting fly. So they brought my replacement in and basically turned my portfolios over to him and I took on the urban ministerial, dealing with a cabinet member. One of the things that had happened was a certain number of trips were out of central funding and a certain amount of trips were out of European Bureau funding and this was always a battle. I had worked on this not only for myself, but for other people, for three years. And actually the people down in central funding were so delighted to find anybody who would take this on that they agreed to fund me. That was fine. Well, my deputy director found out about this and attempted to steal the funds for himself, and central funding said, “No, you take it away, you don't get it.” So I was assigned to go to Paris with Secretary Pierce. Did a lot of the work on this and ended up going over there. My replacement was in place so I asked the Department, “I've got a lot of leave. How about me taking a month off?” and then I called up some friends at USTR and said, “What do you have going on in Europe at about the time I leave Paris?” They said, “I actually have got some meetings in Geneva. Want to come?” So I managed to put together six weeks in Europe with meetings at each end, to do that, then proceeded to get some Eurail passes and travel around Europe. That was a good thing.

Q: How did you find Secretary Pierce? As I recall, and please correct me if I'm wrong, he was sort of, to put it nicely, a cipher as far as in the Reagan cabinet; he seemed to be very quiet and didn't stand out particularly.

TYSON: That's pretty much it. He shined a bit more as the American on the international stage. I can't remember the man in question, but he had a black former ambassador sort of over there working with him. He was a charming guy. A very funny guy. He and I ended up working together and the ambassador's job was to make Pierce look good. This was pretty much the agenda there.

Pierce seemed to have a certain amount of clout in that one or two minor things that he wanted on the trip. State was balking and he just had the White House take care of it. But in terms of dealing with him, he was very, very pleasant to me, and by and large, to the staff around him. He had a lot of his inner staff from the agency to “Whatever you want, your leisure, grace,” but the ambassador and I seemed to do it fairly well and he seemed to be grateful for what I did as an FSO. Our ambassador to the OECD at that point was Abe Katz, who was a sort of feisty, short, in-your-face, New York type of guy. I was to negotiate the communiqu# in Paris, and I'm standing there next to a cabinet minister and Katz gratuitously comes over, wags a finger in my nose, which means that he's reaching up since I'm taller than he is, and says, “Don't give the store away in front of the cabinet member,” which was like, “Oh, please.” But, Secretary Pierce, himself, was pleasant enough and then the conference was over.

Q: What was the issue of the conference?

TYSON: It was an OECD first-ever urban ministerial meeting: urban challenges in the OECD. So you had urban ministers or interior ministers there. The role of cities, the problems of cities, cities how they go. So it was interestingly enough, and of course as the first ever, it's “Well, what will our work program in the future be?” Important enough as far as that went.

Q: You went to Wisconsin for what - eight months, nine months or something?

TYSON: Actually it turned out to be almost eleven since I managed to extend it into a bit of a summer course.

Q: So you were there, I guess this would be eighty?

TYSON: '83, '84.

Q: '83, '84. How did you find Wisconsin, the economic department? Did they have a particular specialty or?

TYSON: The Democratic Party in exile. (laughs) Well, Wisconsin always has had a very, very good reputation on economics and they've produced policy makers and government officials out of that. Of course, this is a Republican administration in Washington, but there were some real world names out there, and a very, very good department it was.

I took a variety of courses; I took courses on labor and a number of other things. I think part of the objective of this, too, was to have a very visible Foreign Service Officer in the university environment, because you'd get students coming up to talk to you about the Foreign Service and the career and everything else. But no, Wisconsin had a very, very good department.

It was interesting being there as someone with a salary and a little bit older because academia can be absolutely vicious and grad students can be awful. I used to remember people stealing notices for teaching assistantships out of my boxes, and I caught one guy doing this saying, “I don't care. I'm not going to apply for it. I'm here on something totally different. Why are you doing this?” But there would be that viciousness and that competitiveness there. It was an interesting place and I think the State Department was right in sending you to a part of the country where you're not from, or you hadn't gone

to school. As it turns out, I did get in touch with a number of friends out there and it was probably a good place to be for me.

Q: In '84 you were where?

TYSON: '84 I came back and then I was scheduled to go out to Osaka, Japan. I was going to start Japanese language training, which I did. I was not the most brilliant Japanese student that they'd ever had, although I guess I was adequate.

Q: How old were you at the time?

TYSON: Thirty-four.

Q: You were beginning to move into the more difficult time to pick up a hard language.

TYSON: There was another dynamic behind this Japanese language training. Traditionally the Chrysanthemum Club had gotten political officers and/or linguists and trained them. Now with the automobile problem and everything else, economic problems with Japan were becoming more crucial. So what the Department wanted was economists with Japanese language training, and I was one of the first of the crew that they attempted to do this with.

At this time I was trundling along, still recovering from a divorce and starting to date my current wife. I got called in by the linguist; he was a Korean-American named Mr. Park, and he basically said, “Well, you know, you're just not quite doing as well as you could, so we'll let you finish your first year of Japanese. You can then go to Osaka, but you can't have the second year in Yokohama.” Well, you know, if you're undertaking this program with its career implications and they weren't going to let me get the golden ring, why am I doing this? So I had heard about the MFO (Multi-national Force and Observers) in the Sinai. At this point I'd been in the Foreign Service almost eleven years, never done a hardship post. So I went in, took a look at that, and rapidly switched myself to six

weeks of fast Egyptian-Arabic and went to the Sinai. I heard later that the Japanese and Korean Department was stunned. You know, I mean literally, “We're done? Okay, I'm done. Goodbye.” I heard from people later on that there were repercussions and that they chewed up a number of other econ officers, and I have heard, and it's apocryphal, that at some point there was the “come to Jesus meeting” of “This is what the Department wants you to do. This is what we need and you're chewing these people up and this is not good.”

Q: You had the feeling that they really weren't with you there? I mean, it was sort of grudgingly.

TYSON: It was a grudging type of thing and I ran across another econ officer who had virtually an identical experience and had done the same thinjust pulled the plug, and I think the Asia Bureau and others were going, “This is not good.” So I ended up going on to a year in the MFO in the Sinai.

Q: MFO stood for what?

TYSON: Multi-national Force and Observers.

Q: Let's talk about that. You were doing that from when to when?

TYSON: I ended up going out in April of 1985 to El Gorah in the Sinai, and stayed there until basically April or May of '86.

Q: Why did we have something there, and what were you doing?

TYSON: This went back to the Camp David Accords and the Israeli staged withdrawal from the Sinai. It was finally completed in 1983. Initially there had been something called the Sinai Field Mission. Let me back up a bit. I think there had been an attempt to have a UN [United Nations] force out there, but the Russians were difficult about it. So we created

the Sinai Field Mission, or maybe that came later, but the Sinai Field Mission was there to monitor?

Q: Also I don't think the Israelis would, having been burned by the UN before, they weren't going to take anything with a UN label.

TYSON: I think that's true, although they still had some vestigial UN observers present in the Sinai even when I was there. The Sinai Field Mission had been there and they had been running a lot of monitoring sites at Gidi and Mitla Passes. And then, I think at the actual time of the withdrawal, it reconfigured itself into the Multi-National Force and Observers. So we had the U.S., the Brits, the Dutch, the French, the Italians, the Anzacs, the Colombians, and the Uruguayans, and the Fijians out there all doing this. And the civilian observer group at that point was about twenty-six people. The process was that you resigned from the Foreign Service and you were employed by the MFO, but you had reemployment rights. The observers were commanded by a Foreign Service Officer, Bob Steven, while I was out there. His deputy was Lou Kachanic. About half of the people were retired or ex-military and the other half were Foreign Service Officers.

Basically what you did was monitoring and verification in the Sinai. You had a three kilometer long strip inside Israel along their border, and then the entire Sinai. There were different zones as to what the Egyptians were permitted to have where, and a number of other things. You'd look for violations like they had a tank here when they shouldn't or they had heavy artillery here when they shouldn't. That's what you did. You ran around in stunning orange uniforms - the orange jumpsuit was particularly fetching, which really made you stand out. It was interesting because the garbage sweepers in Saudi Arabia wore that. But you had your orange jumpsuits with your American flag on it and your MFO seal and stuff like this.

Actually it was one of the great adventures. You know, you were out there in sort of a paramilitary organization, you had a huge fascinating portion of the world, you had

vehicles and aircraft at your disposal, and minefields and stuff. It wasn't all beer and Skittles. And a tough environment, but quite an adventure. Quite an introduction to the Middle East. You know you'd do the Israelis in the morning and the Egyptians in the afternoon, so you got a chance to see both sides. You had access through the border so you literally could drive into Tel Aviv or Jerusalem for the weekend. It was quite interesting. I think you had, I fit the profile coming off a divorce, but you had divorce-wounded or people paying for kids in college or this was a good way to get the hardship post requirement out of the way in the year.

Q: What was your impression of first, the Israelis, and then the Egyptians, and how they were reacting to the situation? I mean, was this really active or had we gone quiet?

TYSON: It was pretty much sort of quiet. Every now and then you'd get a hard-liner on the Egyptian or the Israeli side with a real hard-on about the other side and your presence there, and you'd sort of have to slap them down. But a lot of the Israelis, actually, were reservists. And also what happened is both sides tended to pick people with foreign language ability to deal with us. You know, Egypt had a draft and all of these poor French literature or English literature majors from Alexandria or Cairo ended up in their equivalent of East Coffee Cup, Mississippi. You know, serving beyond the beyond, dealing with these foreigners. Some really nice, sweet kids, but there they were butting up against Gaza and stuff. And you know, they're all twenty-two. They're all far from home. That was the Egyptians who we tended to have more contact with. If you went into Israel you'd often get someone who is a diamond dealer in Netanya and he's got a branch office in New York and he's got the BMW in Herzliya. It was no real problem dealing with them.

Some of the verification was done in vehicles, some in helicopters. A lot of our ex-military guys were special forces. There was a tendency to do the macho thing of “how quickly can I do it from lift-off to touchdown at the airfield?” and the operations director was Andy Biotus. He was a retired army colonel, I think. One day he called me in and he said, “I will see you six hours from now. You are going to do the 'tea tour'.” One of the reasons that

they had FSOs along on this, was for the cultural sensitivity. There were some of these remote little Egyptian army units in the center of the Sinai that God had long ago forgotten and they were so pathetically grateful to see you that, they would invite you to, “Come sit, come have tea. What do you want to see? We'll show you everything.” And Andy's point was, get there, shut the copter down, sit and have tea, chatter about this or that, and then go on. There was a real importance in terms of that contact and the familiarity.

One of the funniest incidents that I had was with my teammate on the day who was John Mayhew and is now working over in the Department. We had our Egyptian escort officer along and we were at a bakery near the Suez Canal. So we go in, and I mean it's a bakery, fine, sometimes they give you fresh bread, we had food with us so that wasn't the problem, but the major ushers us in and we sit down. We've got our twenty-two-year-old Egyptian there and the guy is very, very pleasant and what he wants to talk about is contraceptives. He's married, wife has just had a child or something like that, and he wants to talk about contraceptives and he's making this absolutely young Egyptian lieutenant who is probably a virgin and absolutely dying and blushing, translate - and fairly graphic translations. We basically said, “Well actually, what you should probably do is have your wife get in touch with a female obstetrician at the American University in Cairo. They'll be able to take her through all of the options,” and stuff like this. At that point, okay, he asked both of us whether we were married and I said, “Well actually I'm divorced, but John's a father,” and all of that, and this poor lieutenant was just dying. And of course we'd gotten the cultural training here saying the Arabs never talk about sex. Well, that's all they talked about.

Q: Were there violations that were playing games? You know, sometimes with troops they've got to do something.

TYSON: It was more than playing games. There were some times where there were even more than overt violations. The Egyptians were pushing the envelope now and then.

The Israelis had a tendency to over fly Egypt. It wasn't just bored troops in some cases, although there was a bit of that.

Q: What happens if you found a violation?

TYSON: We wrote it up.

Q: Wrote it up. Both sides would respond, I mean if there was?

TYSON: Yes, pretty much. I think ultimately the best description I had is that we were the lubricating oil between the gears. Both sides needed some dead Americans there if anything ever broke out. But you know, if the level of complaint about our unfairness was about the same on both sides, we were probably doing the job that was needed.

Q: How about within your own units? How did you all get along?

TYSON: At first, not well. There was a real division between the military types and the State types when I first got there. And I think Bob Steven and Lou Kachanic worked on this. A lot was personalities. My perception of some of the State officers when I first got there, and a number of them are my friends, was that even though we were the same chronological age, they were just younger. The military guys, I think, tended to be contemptuous of them for that. There wasn't necessarily a lot of understanding on both sides, and then what happened is we got some retired military officers in who had done embassy duty and then FSOs like me who'd grown up around the military, or people who had served. So there was more of a convergence in the middle as to, “Yes, I know what you do, you know what I do,” and I think it was just more of a change in the personality mix that, you know, you sort of respected your colleagues.

Also, when I first got there, you were supposed to make up your map and there was a lot of these games of, “I'm not going to tell you,” from the military guys. Well I had taken drafting in high school so I went into the operations center and I knew how to use tracing

vellum to copy maps, so the first time I did it, I did it on vellum and punched through various checkpoints and sites. I got criticized by the military because one location was wrong and I pointed out to them, “If it's wrong on my map, it's wrong in the op center, too.” But I kept the vellum and after that when an FSO came in they'd get the drill, “You've got to figure it out,” and I'd say, “Come on over to my hooch. Here's the overlay on the map. Punch it through this way, mark it up this way.” But it was a lot of the “boys stuff,” the macho type of thing and sort of once you “made your bones” and showed that you could do the stuff, you could write the reports and you knew what you were looking at, you were okay.

Q: I take it the units were essentially American units, French units, British units, what-have-you. They didn't intermix?

TYSON: Well, they had different functions. Actually, in a sense, there was a bit of a mix in the headquarters. The Brits were the headquarters unit, the Dutch were the cops, the Uruguayans were the truck drivers and engineers, the Fijians and the Colombians were the ground-pounders - the infantry troops manning the various outposts, the American troops that we had at North Camp were more logistical support and technicians for our headquarters units. South Camp was where they had the airborne units which were more our straight-leg troops, or infantry troops; airborne is not straight-leg. There was sort of a division of labor. The French had the fixed-wing aircraft; the Otters and the Transalls, the Anzacs did the rotary-wing. So I mean it all sort of fit together because we knew all the helicopter pilots because they were always flying us. We were one of the reasons they were there.

The other unifying thing was the strip of bars on the base. The Dutch had a club, the Brits had a club, the Uruguayans had a club, the French had a club, and you'd go bar-hopping. The Anzacs had the Surf Club. So it was very interesting because Al Gorah which was an ex-Israeli airbase, and quite correctly the headquarters and the commander had very strict drunk driving rules and it was a small enough base you could walk. They never really

said much about drunk bicycling, so everybody had bicycles. As a matter of fact, there was usually a rash of bicycle thefts just before the Anzacs went home. It was a small enclosed base with that and you tended to actually get to know people better through the bars.

Q: Were there problems with Bedouin going back and forth?

TYSON: The biggest problems we had with the Bedouin were them tapping into our water pipes periodically. The stuff about the Bedouin was very interesting because actually what we were hearing, and I don't know whether you've interviewed Chester Pavlovski, but you should on all of this - he's an ex-consular officer, but he was an observer and then sort of the resident archaeologist, the line was that actually the Bedouin, the real Bedouin, preferred the Israelis more. The Israelis basically stayed out of a lot of their internal family matters, but if you had a sick kid or something they'd take care of it. It used to be very interesting because the Bedouin actually knew a lot of Israeli products, food products, very well. We were trying to share the expenditures between Israel and Egypt. The only way the tally ever came close was when they bought a lot of gold in the market in Egypt. You know you could go to Israel and say, “I need ten cases of tomatoes six weeks from now, grade 2.” “Fine.” You know, you'd go to the Egyptians and, “I need tomatoes,” “Well, if God gives us tomatoes, you'll have tomatoes.” So a lot of the actual food on the camp was Israeli, including stuff like packaged yogurfruit-flavored stuff and all.

I remember you'd go out on the patrols where you had the vehicles and you'd get these big green Coleman coolers and the mess hall would make up meals for you. When you had the Egyptians along, they were very careful that it was “halal.” But you'd have ice in there, you'd have bread, you'd have sandwiches, you'd have apples, you'd have oranges, and probably more than six people could eat. Sometimes the Egyptians officers who didn't like the Bedouin would throw the stuff away, because you'd be sitting there parked beside a road or on an overlook and a Bedouin would just sort of appear and be fifty meters, seventy-five meters away from you and just sit there. So you look at them and they look at you. That's fine. Very often what we would do was, having eaten what we wanted, we

would then gather up the stuff, you know the extra bread, the this, the that, and the ice, and either leave it there or walk it over to them. The Egyptians always thought we were nuts for doing this. I remember in the middle of nowhere one of the Bedouins, because we had Israeli fruit-flavored yogurt, I think we had apricot and something else, through sign language made it clear that the next time he came he preferred the apple to the apricot. (laughs) Okay, fine. But we'd hand them the ice and stuff like that, and sometimes we'd also give the extra food to the Egyptian interpreters who lived right outside the gate.

Q: What was your impression of Israel? I take it that's sort of where you went for the weekends or R&R (Rest and Relaxation) and that sort of thing?

TYSON: Well, Israel was fine. That is where we went for the R&Rs. I tended to prefer Jerusalem to Tel Aviv. I'll fast-forward a bit by saying that my mother and sister came out in January and got to Tel Aviv a day or two before I did and then I came in and met them. There were three or four bars, one of them was like the MASH [Mobile Army Surgical Hospital] bar and the other was the Belle at the end of Dizengoff Street where the MFO and the UN guys and others all showed up. It's a typical military thing, you know, bars with girls and whores. My mother and sister were there, and you know my mother has been around army bases her entire life, so there we are in Israel and I said, “Okay, let's go out. I'll see some of my buddies at the bars,” and you know, my mom and sister walked in and everybody is there including the working girls and I said, “This too is Israel. Tomorrow we'll do Jerusalem.”

Israel was fascinating in many ways; the archaeology, the country, the people. It was a mix of things and I enjoyed it. Tel Aviv was fine, but I sort of found Jerusalem, as a city and a place, much more appealing. So there would be groups that would go into Tel Aviv and then groups that would go to Jerusalem. And then somebody was always going up to Tiberius or Yafo or something like that. So it was a chance to see the country.

Q: Well then, after this, in '86, where did you go?

TYSON: I ended up going on to Saudi Arabia, but let me back up a bit.

When I first arrived in the Sinai, I went into Cairo and then you're flown in on one of the French planes, and I've got a beard. I got off the plane and was met by Clarence Stafford who I'd known from Bonn days. I showed up at the unit and they looked at me and said, “You're Joseph,” and I said, “No, I'm Paul,” and they said, “No, you're Joseph. This unit does a live nativity every year and you're Joseph.” Well having been given a role, what could I do but go with it? We had U.S. military chaplains on the base so I went off and went to the chaplains assistants and got what my wife who went to parochial school would call the “Revlon Jesus pictures.” You know the beautiful hair and the robes, and everything else. We had Egyptian tailors on the base and I went into El Arish and got some brown wool cloth. I already had the sort of “galabeya” of the traditional white outfit. But I went in with the picture and me and the cloth and basically said, “I want the cloak.” So they made it up and it's probably still out there. We did the live nativity scene; Jeanne Cope was the Virgin Mary, the Dutch doctor was one of the wise men.

Q: Who was Jeanne Cope?

TYSON: She is retired now, but she was a civil servant who was out there for a year as an observer. We did have some women in the unit. Jeanne decided she wanted to be the Virgin Mary, so that was fine. But Bob Steven actually read the story of the nativity in English, and Spanish for the Colombians and Uruguayans, and I think Jeanne's and my photo is probably on about 500 mantles in Colombia because these are Colombian draftees, they're eighteen or nineteen years old, and there they are in the Holy Land with Joseph and Mary.

My next assignment, well I knew it was coming up, so I'd gotten the bid list because we sort of got them via Israel. Communications in and out of the Sinai was dicey. We had some phone lines that there was a tie line into Israel and then if you got the satellite you got the tie line back to the Department in the States and most of the time it was busy.

So there I was going out on a verification and the weather was getting pretty hot and it had been one of the more difficult ones, so I rolled back in at about 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon, dusty, hot, dirty, and there was a note in the unit, “Call the Arabian Peninsula Affairs Desk,”- I think Gordon Brown or something like that. You know, just call.

Okay. I tried to call. The lines were busy. What could be done? I went back to the hooch, got a shower, got cleaned up, went to the mess hall, got dinner because we had mess halls there, and then I went out to the Anzac Surf Club and proceeded to drink beer and rum with all of my friends. And I had my bicycle. So there I am in the Sinai at about 11:30 at night, tired, basically feeling no pain, with my bicycle, and I figured well, actually, why don't I just drive by the unit, because sometimes late at night you could open it up and the phone lines would work. So I cycle over to the unit, unlock the door, go in, and bam, it goes through to the desk, and I get Mr. Brown. He said, “What would you think of Dhahran as an assignment?” and in one of those “in vino veritaz” [in wine there is truth] or something moments, I said, “Not much. Why?” He said, “We'd really like you to bid on the deputy principal officer's job out there,” so I went mumble, mumble, moan, groan. I was interested in a job in Brussels and one in Mexico City, but okay, I'll take it under consideration. This is like a Thursday or a Friday. So I say that I'll get back to him. Some people were going into Jerusalem this weekend so I figured, well Saturday why not go ask God; let's go to the wall. Let's not only go to the wall, let's go into the tunnel next to the wall and ask God about the assignments. Brussels is always wonderful, Mexico City is good, and then, yes, there's Saudi Arabia. Right? I came out of there knowing that I was going to go to Saudi Arabia. Brussels fell through, Mexico City fell through, and Dhahran came on.

Q: Next time we'll pick this up in 1986 and you're off to Dhahran.

TYSON: Correct.

Q: Where I served from 1958 to 1960, myself. Back in the Middle Ages. In the first place, you were in Dhahran from when to when?

TYSON: I was in Dhahran from May 1986 to June 1988. I had come back to the States and had gotten engaged. My fianc# was not necessarily all that thrilled about Saudi Arabia. Of course Saudi Arabia is the type of place where you don't take your girlfriend. She was working on the Hill in the Senate when we agreed that I'd go out and come back and get married and she'd come out with me.

So I actually resigned from the FMO, went to Cairo, saw some friends and did the Nile cruise while I was technically unemployed, came back, reentered the State Department, did the necessaries, and then went out to Dhahran, which was sort of a real piece of history. It was an older compound, rather down at the heels in many ways, but with a lot of character to it; quarried fieldstone and so forth.

Q: Who was consul general when you were there?

TYSON: Consul general when I was there was John Eddy, who was entering his fourth year there. I was replacing David Trotter. I had taken the job under the assumption that Mr. Eddy would be going on to Bombay, but it became something of a daisy chain, so that was delayed for a year. So he was the consul general.

Q: And your job was the deputy consuno, what was your job?

TYSON: Deputy principal officer. I did a great deal on the economic side of the house in particular - a lot with ARAMCO (Arabian and American Oil company) and oil issues. I also did, it was very strange, a State Department cable on the defense of the Eastern Province. It was a little incongruous because we have all of these military advisers out there and I had to do this cable, but I wasn't supposed to talk to them and this was supposed to come out of the air. It went through a whole series of drafts and was sort of an interesting experience in and of itself. It was one of these classic things that after much effort, we sent it in, virtually nothing ever came of it, but years later people would say to me, “God, that

was a great cable. I really appreciated it," or "insightful," this, that. But basically I just wrote it as: if I were an Iranian, how would I attack the Eastern Province.

Q: But at that time it was predicated on Iran.

TYSON: It was predicated on Iran. What was going on was Iraq and Iran and there was the so-called "tanker war" going on out in the Gulf, forces were picking off tankergenerally going after the rudders and so forth with rocket propelled grenades and everything else. I had someone working for me named Crist Caulth who was an economic officer and he had very good contacts with the marine port captains from the oil companies Chevron, Exxon, Texaco, and Mobil up at Ras Tanura. We got a great deal of information from them about attacks that were occurring. I mean literally, in a day before word processing, we had sort of blank cable forms ready. You know, "The S.S. so-and-so was attacked at?" and then fill in the time and geocoordinates if you had it. That was actually pretty popular with both the Department and the navy at the time.

Q: Why don't we continue on this particular topic? While you were working there, what were you seeing Iran doing? I mean, how did you see an attack evolving from Iran?

TYSON: An attack from Iran - how I would do it, as a full-fledged assault?

Q: Yes.

TYSON: At dawn, on one of the Eids, I would have stepped up over-flights, near the median line and the Gulf, of airplanejust F-4s and other fighters, to get the Saudis and others used to seeing a certain presence. Then wait for one of the Eids when everybody is at prayers, absolutely turn, and go and take out Abqaiq, the big gas processing plants, the piers at Ras Tanura, and a number of facilities in the eastern province. Then I think they would've had a pretty good chance of pulling it off. There would've been a lot of big bangs and very big fires.

Q: At this time, '86 to '88, did Iraq come into the equation at all?

TYSON: Well, what do you mean by “into the equation?”

Q: I mean, when you were sitting there, very obviously, even back when I was there in '58 to '60, we were looking at Iran. I mean, it was the Shah, it was friendly and all that, but you couldn't help but figure that Iran is a big country with a lot of people and Saudi Arabia is a rich country with not many people. Iran was seen like the “big boy” in the bought.

TYSON: It was, and there was a lot of ambivalence about this, and of course the Gulf states had more than tilted towards supporting Iraq in this; mostly in terms of cash, to some degree oil and other things. Something important that absolutely happened, and it happened more than once. The DPOs house had a flat roof. My wife and I were out on the patiwe were actually doing something up on the roof, and a plane came in very low that just didn't look like any one of the Saudi or the U.S. planes. It was an Iraqi Mirage. What would happen is they would fly down the Gulf and attempt to bomb Khark or another Island depending upon the conditions, if the weather wasn't good and they were going low on fuel, they'd come into Dhahran and gas-and-go. “No one ever saw them and it never happened,” but they came in low over the house and were gone in the next forty minutes.

Q: Were you there when the USS Stark was EXOCETed?

TYSON: I left Dhahran that evening and found out about it in the basement of the American Embassy in London the next day.

Q: Ah. Well now, was Iraq seen, you know we had various things, one police when I was there he had something called the Dhahran Liaison Group. I don't know if that still existed, but it was essentially an emergency center for evacuating that part of the Middle East. In your emergency plans for getting the hell out if all hell broke loose, was Iraq seen as a possible problem?

TYSON: Not really, particularly at that time. If it was, it would've been sort of an unintentional overspill. We were a bit of a distance from Iraq and, as I said, Iraq was depending upon the Arabs for money and other support, so I think the perception was that they would be unlikely to “slaughter the golden goose.”

Q: How about Kuwait? What were you picking up from Saudis and ask Americans around there about how we beat?

TYSON: Kuwait was always the sort of odd man on the block. I mean, everybody loved to hate the Kuwaitis and rarely had much nice to say about them. They, from the time of independence, were noted because they had the Russian Embassy others there and were always playing the ends against the middle and were seen as very, very cautious of their own interests. At that time they sort of felt that their own interests in that part of the world included a sort of genteelly fashionable anti-Americanism.

Q: Was Eddy consular general? He was there for about a year or so?

TYSON: He was there for a year. I actually was “acting” for about four months and then Brooks Wrampelmeier came in.

Q: I've interviewed Brooks.

What about relations with the Saudis; what was sort of the government, and how did it operate from your perspective in the eastern province?

TYSON: It was, in many ways, a new era there because?First of all, let me discuss the government. The king's son, Prince Mohammed bin Fahd, who is still the emir there, was newly appointed as the emir of the eastern province. It had been the sort of historical birthright; it had been Jalawis for a long time.

Q: His son, bin Jalawi.

TYSON: And once or twice with Mr. Eddy and Mr. Wrampelmeier, we would call on the former emir and the contrasts couldn't have been more striking. You'd go to the new sort of emiri building or the government headquarters for the eastern province, which was, you know, open atrium, glitzy marble, everything else, and go in and you walk into Prince Mohammed's office and he has this huge desk which is sort of inlaid Italian wood, quite ornate, obviously quite expensive. And here's a man who had made, oh, a billion dollars reputedly on a telecom steal and so forth, who spoke reasonably good English, was the next generation, and fairly savvy about it. His vice emir was one of his cousins, Fahd bin Salman, who actually died this past week; the son of the governor of Riyadh. So it was more the young generation coming in. The head of the Saudi National Guard there was Prince Mishari bin Saud, one of the youngest sons of old King Saud. With Prince Mohammed and all, there was much more the newer generatiomore modern Saudi Arabia. You'd go to the bin Jalawi palace and there would be these old sort of Bedouin retainers with the cartridge belts draped?

Q: Cross bandoliers.

TYSON: Cross bandoliers and the swords. It was literally stepping back into a time, into a very, very different Arabia.

Q: By the time you were there, was there a significant American business or professional community there?

TYSON: There was a very big community there. Actually, 1986 was quite an interesting turning point because there had been the oil boom in '73 and just rivers of money, and the eastern province and most of the kingdom was a huge construction project. They built Jubail and the Envou, they put the gas processing project in, the highways and this and that, and they were sort of spreading the cash around to a lot of people doing that. And interestingly, in '86 a lot of the projects were done, many of the contractors were leaving, and oil prices were declining. So there was actually a contraction where for pricing going

up it had just been accepted. There was actually a little bit of a deflation at that point. A lot of the ARAMCOMS and particularly the businessmen, the contractors who depended on ARAMCO, and the government were saying, “Oh, in a sense, it's sad that you missed the boom days.” Well, au contraire, most of the stuff was built, most of it worked, many of the people had left so it wasn't immensely crowded. Since I had a government salary and wasn't making part of the contract, it was actually in some ways better.

It was interesting because it was also forcing the Saudis to come to grip with making choices as opposed to, “Let's just throw more money at it.”

Q: Well tell me about your impression of how the Saudis were dealing with sort of the problem of getting workers. My understanding is - this is sort of way after my time, that they were getting people from Indonesia, from the Philippines, from Korea, and would have Pakistanis coming in, and the Saudis themselves weren't doing much outside of sort of watching other people work.

TYSON: There had been a big change there. There's a slight difference among the Shia, and I'll get into that. But, in a sense, there had been a lot that had happened. In previous sessions I'd mentioned that I'd done something on the foreign workers in Germany. The Germans are rank amateurs in comparison with Arabs in terms of the purchase, use and consumption of foreign labor. Starting with the hiring of Americans and Brits who tended to be at the upper end of the food chain; I mean everything from investment bankers to doctors to whatever. The name of the game was to explain to the Saudis what you wanted, and how much you would pay them for a particular job. If you wanted a plumber, you wanted a Filipino and he would be so many riyals per month. If you were actually looking for an agronomist you wanted an Egyptian, particularly from Alexandria, at so much, an accountant - a Lebanese Druze. They absolutely had it down as to which nationality, what price. And there were huge differentials based on passport, national background, race, and color, in terms of the salaries paid for what might seem broadly similar work.

Q: How were relations? The Saudis weren't making the mistakes that the Kuwaitis had of letting a large Palestinian population come in. It was different days, but they tend to settle there and cause problems shortly thereafter. My understanding is the Saudis would let people come in, do their thing, and then they'd leave. I mean there was no?

TYSON: That was the image. It wasn't always the reality and it certainly wasn't the reality of ARAMCO with some of their other Arab hires, including Palestinians - a number of whom had come out in the '40s or early '50s had settled in there, had families there, had kids who grew up there, and eventually were turfed out during the Gulf War. No, they didn't have the number of Palestinians or other Arabs as a percentage of their overall population. I think that had a lot to do with the money coming later. The Saudis would tend to balance the sourcing of it; they'd become concerned if one group got too large, or certain groups would have specialties. You know, the Koreans would come in to do construction. The Filipinos would come in to do certain other things. But even then the issue was coming up of personal maids and the abuses of the maids. It was always out there. Obviously some families had servants for many years who were members of the familvery well treated, well paid by their national standards, who could go home. Others, the cases of abuse were real. Probably very little was done about it.

Q: Did you fin“you,” I'm talking about the people in consular, but you yourself, too, were concerned about problems of Americans who had troubles or let's say automobile accidents or alcohol abuse and then the problems of Americans married to Saudis and with children who couldn't get them out and all. I mean did this?

TYSON: That's a whole series of problems that actually also elicited different responses. Let me start with American women married to Saudis and the child custody cases. That's much tougher. My wife actually got involved in escorting an American woman whose husband had died back to Houston. There were the issues of whether the spouse died and was the family trying to assert claim to it, or was it a sort of nasty divorce and the husband didn't want the children to leave. In the latter cases that could be difficult and, in a sense,

what you almost wanted was for the Saudi to take another wifstart another family, and interestingly enough, I think effectively it was the second wife who would basically say, “Get them out of here.” In a bizarre sort of way that would help.

The senior officials in the government would try to be helpful while of course they had to uphold a lot of their own laws and standards. It would often tend to be a very Arab solution of attempting to persuade people to let things go. Now obviously one of the things that would be better is if the children were or were nominally Muslim, they went to a place which had a mosque - Houston, Los Angeles, New York, Washington; that's fine. Pocatello, Idaho becomes a bit more problematic. There would be issues with that type of thing sometimes.

The actual criminal caselet's take the alcohol; that type of thing. It could be difficult when you get the situation of Americans being lashed or being put in difficult circumstances in Saudi jails, particularly if they've got medical issues. It really required a lot of intervention and assistance by the consular officers who did incredible work.

Q: What kind of things would you do? I mean, just say the lashing; what?

TYSON: Very often with the lashing you try to keep the appeals going forward. Sometimes the one in jail would eventually decide, “Let's just go through with this and get it over so I can get out,” which in a sense was their choice. I think in a lot of ways there were discreet interventions to try and deal with a lot of these things.

Auto accidents were much tougher. You'd hope under those circumstances that the person's company had the financial reserves to basically pay blood money. One of the first rules in the Middle East for any junior officer getting such a case was, “You got a problem like that, get a suit on it quickly. Get someone in a suit down there talking. Handle it. Get it done fast.”

Q: When you say “a suit,” would you explain what you mean?

TYSON: Basically a senior official in the embassy or the consulate who has got some stature with the Saudis. You don't send a junior officer down.

In another Middle Eastern post there was an attempted suicide involving an American woman. The government basically did not want to deal with it, and the embassy went in and said, “We're very well aware of this. You absolutely have the right to do this under your laws, but it's difficult circumstances; here's what the company and the family proposes. Let's have it happen.” She's on the plane and out of there that evening.

This was the bottom line for Americans. The Saudis didn't want the embarrassment of a nasty dustup with problem Americans the way that they would with the Filipinos. With Filipinos they would just shrug and say, “So what.” Filipino problems often made the papers. The real punishment for a lot of transgressions out there was loss of your job and income. You know, you've sweated away in the desert on a rig, you're two years away from the ARAMCO pension and you get fired up on seddiki or your kid does something or whatever, and the solution that many people want, including the Saudis, and the companies, is that you're out of there. That's it. You're over. In a sense, its much more than jail time or criminal sanctions; that was the ultimate sanction.

Q: That was true in my time, too. I might put in for somebody who doesn't know - seddiki is a form of homemade liquor, usually made from orange juice, I think.

TYSON: It was made from any number of other things.

Q: When I went out they used to put out a booklet saying, “Be very careful in doing this to orange juice because if you do this, and go through here, it could end up like becoming alcohol,” and this was put out because otherwise you had people experimenting and things would blow up and so they didn't want things to blow up. So they put out a guide and I know my wife couldn't go into the commissary, but asked for some yeast because she wanted to make some bread. She got a five kilo loaf of brewer's yeast.

TYSON: Well, when we were there, you'd walk into the supermarkets downtown and you'd go buy the bottles of Rausch grape juice, the Austrian grape juice, in these bottles with the ceramic stoppers with the rubber gaskets. Right next to it would be the bag of sugar, and right next to that would be the yeast. Just in case you sort of forgot anything. But people were bringing in special wine yeasts and there were actually wine tastings at some of the private compounds. But sid was also actually brewed from straight grain and other alcohols; there was sid white, which was sort of the straight run, or actually what you wanted was the middle cut of the run, and then sid brown was more like a bourbon and you got that by toasting your hickory chips on your charcoal grill and then sitting the stuff on it for two weeks.

Q: There are all sorts of recipes.

What aboul'm particularly thinking about Americans, but the problems of the religious police. What were they called?

TYSON: The Mutawa.

Q: Were there problems of people not observing, or running up against, religious laws?

TYSON: The religious police, the Mutawa, were always something of an issue. First of all, let's define this. In a way, in terms of the Wild West, I mean if you could imagine something like fundamentalist vigilantes out on the town to enforce order, that's probably about the best description of them. I have an image of some puny little guy with a stick who would be nothing had he not wrapped the veil of the Lord about him. It was always fairly interesting because rumors would go around there, and there was a cycle of time that one had to be aware of. We used to talk about this at businessmen's meetings. If Ramadan is coming up, it's time to drop your jets, be a little more discreet, not quite so loud; a little more aware of what's going on, and just to be somewhat more tuned in to what's going on around you. It was interesting because my wife never wore an abaya, and because she's a blue-eyed

redhead and obviously a foreigner that actually probably helped. The women who had the biggest problems were African-American and/or MediterraneaItalian, Spanish, who could be Muslim. They were much more likely to be approached in Arabic with, “Sister, cover your hair. You're showing disrespect.” Well, obviously Susan was European or American. It would come to the attention of the consulate. It was very useful to have a consulate down there because I always thought that the emiri government was looking for reasons to rein in the Mutawa, and the better your case was, the happier they were.

There was one famous story of the Mutawa going into some sort of western party. They broke a whole bunch of imported crystal glasses, when actually there was no liquor there; it was fruit juices and so forth. The emir called in the Mutawa, offered them some orange juice, as it turns out, in crystal glasses. He asked why they did it and the answer was, “Well you could drink wine in this,” and he pointed out that, “Well, you're holding it and you're drinking orange juice. So I think you'll be paying for those glasses.”

The Mutawa also got into teenage boy stuff, which you'd find in the United States, too. You get a bunch of teenage bucks out on the street and they discover that they can go up and harass a foreigner who is their father's age. I was out one day and sort of got a bunch of the young bucks looking around and I didn't speak enough Arabic to really do that, but there was an Arab near me who was sort of looking a little shaky about what might happen, and I just basically said, “Tell them I'm from the consulate. Tell them I have the emir's phone number in my wallet. Tell them that if anything happens, I'll see them there with their father and grandfather.” And that was the end of it. It's teenage boy stuff. That in a sense wasn't religion.

Q: How about working on business - one of the problems has always been to have sort of international commercial law meeting Sharia law. Various commercial problems sometimes could get almost out of control, at least in my time. Was this a problem for you?

TYSON: It wasn't so much Sharia per se, because in many ways you could thank ARAMCO for that. I mean, in many ways as the absolute big dog on the hill there, they had introduced and had contracting practices that were legal in the kingdom - that would go forward. The biggest problem that was going on with most commercial people was late payments at the timor no payments, delayed payments. I think that your sharper Saudi dealers were using that as a way to say, “Well I owe you a million riyals and I'm a year late and I can drag it out because I've got most of the aces in the hole. What do you say if you just take 300,000 and call it quits?” That works to a point, but then, as I used to point out to the Saudis, what that means is that everybody builds that into their price if they're smart. The money is going to be late, they're going to nick me on the last payment, they're going to do this or that. ARAMCO and a few of the other companies were really blue-chip in the way they did it, but some of the merchant families or people who had gotten into it were playing those games. I think in some cases they were getting second quality merchandise and stuff as a result of it in the follow-on contracts, or they couldn't believe that someone would take the settlement and then walk. And of course a lot of times it's not just the building or the piece of equipment that you want, it's the follow-on support, and when you've hacked them off, that support isn't going to be there.

Q: Talk about relations with ARAMCO and the consulate general at that time.

TYSON: I was very well aware of the fact that basically the consulate was there because of ARAMCO. I had said that I've done oil work and remember in the '70s we used to get the ARAMCO magazine, and I'd leaf through it, figuring, “My, this is exotic.”

Q: ARAMCO World?

TYSON: ARAMCO World. I'll never go there. Foolish me. It was fascinating for what it was as an entity - a huge enterprise. Quite an American company and this was the twilight of the American management. The shift over occurred while I was there; John Kelber went out and Ali I. Al-Naimi came in as president. This was the real Saudiization of ARAMCO.

There were always a series of incidents, and I think one of the most important things, actually on both sides, on the ARAMCO on the one side and the consulate on the other, was to maintain a civil and a productive working relationship. I had my counter-part at ARAMCO government relations; it was headed by Abdullah S. Jum'ah and there was Harry Alter there, and then David Bosch who is now at the Saudi ARAMCO.

Q: Harry Alter was a brand new officer when I was there.

TYSON: Well he was much more senior when I was there. (laughs) Harry and Abdullah Jum'ah dealt with Mr. Eddy and I tended to deal with David who was also president of the American Businessmen's Association. This issues that came about the consulate was access to some of our entertainment facilities and other things that we had. And how shall I best put this? I tended to take a somewhat more liberal attitude towards this than Mr. Eddy did, so David and I tended to get along. It was one of these things where every now and then in this business you are given a contact and in a sense it's up to you to make that relationship work. David and I are still friends, although it's, “There you are. You're each other's counterpart.”

Q: What did the consulate have that ARAMCO didn't have; anything?

TYSON: Basically liquor and a number of other things.

Q: Did you have a school there when you were there?

TYSON: We had the school on the compound.

Q: How did that work? Was that a problem for you?

TYSON: I managed by and large to avoid many of the problems as a bachelor and then a newly married person without children. Stuff would come up with the school. I think in smaller places people tend to get very, very well wound-up about them. There were certain

discipline issues; there were some allegations of some drugs at school. I remember butting heads with Mr. Eddy about a new school policy that was fairly Draconian; I don't remember it in retrospect, but it struck me at the time that if someone mentions your child might have been involved with drugs then they were summarily expelled. This sort of offended me as the lawyer. As it turned out, this policy was put through and two of the first kids to get nailed were reasonably senior children. I won't go into who they were, but they were reasonably senior children. It was just very tough as far as that goes. These schools are important, but they take up a lot of consulate time out there.

Q: How about relations with the Saudi military, and did we have any American military there at the time?

TYSON: We had the United States Training Mission (USTM) out at the airbase. Up in Riyadh there was OPM-SANG, which was the Saudi-Arabia National Guard Modernization Program which I think was the Vinnell Corporation. It also had a U.S. army one or two-star general with that. We had a United States Training Mission naval support unit up at the port at Jubail. There was a fairly heavy military presence; they had the F-16s and a number of other things. We were selling them a lot of equipment so there was probably a much larger presence than in your time. The Saudis controlled the base, but there was a small U.S. commissary and things like that.

Q: Was it still - you had the National Guard or what was sometimes called the White Army, and the sort of the regular Saudi army and sort of made to make sure that one didn't get too strong or something like that?

TYSON: That very much struck me; the regular Saudi army definitely struck me as the runt in the litter as compared to the air force and even to some degree the navy. I think the Saudi Arabian National Guard which was much more historically the personal retainers of the Al Saud drawn from their Bedouin support base. They were putting a lot of money into modernizing that. As I said, Prince Mishari bin Saud was the head of the eastern province,

and of course Prince Abdullah, who is now Crown Prince Abdullah - that was always pretty much his baby, too. So it always played an important role there.

Q: John Eddy - was he a relation to the Eddy who was from Lebanon or was sort of a pre-eminent Arabist during World War II, or not?

TYSON: There's the famous picture of Eddy kneeling with Franklin Roosevelt, and I think Eddy had also gone to Dartmouth. I think?

Q: This is on the destroyer?

TYSON: Great Bitter Lake. John Eddy is Irish-American, although there may have been some distant tie, but I basically think not.

Q: But basically he was not part of that group. Were American entrepreneurs, not the big people, going around selling good fountain pens and these things?

TYSON: Oh, you mean all the snake oil salesmen, the descendants of the ones who did the Indians in Oklahoma in the 1920s? Oh, they were all there - some with decent products, others with things that were little more than scams. For a long time that was the get-rich-quick, get out here, make a sale, get huge commissions, and go rolling back home. As I say, it was starting to tail off by '86.

Q: Were you ever called upon by Saudi merchants, like the Algosaibis or something, “Who is this guy; do you know anything about him?” or do they have to get that information themselves?

TYSON: Interestingly enough, what we got was more inquiries about families like the Algosaibis and stuff. I ended up supervising the commercial section for a while and there's the World Trade Data Report which Commerce sold, and we'd get inquiries about that.

Q: It's one of the big merchant families.

TYSON: It's a huge merchant family which has got Citibank as one of their clients. If they want to run a “Dunn & Bradstreet” on someone, they'll do it in New York or London. The level of sophistication that the money had bought to the big families was considerable. I knew the Connus, the merchant family, and the Bin Zagrs among others.

Q: The Connus were also in Bahrain at the time.

TYSON: Yes. Bahrain and the UAE (United Arab Emirates). These people are about as sophisticated as you'll find here, and were big enough, and were it serious enough, they'd run the checks in Europe or back here.

Q: Bin Laden was - this was a construction firm, wasn't it?

TYSON: Yes, pretty much Jeddah-based. They did some stuff in the eastern province. Bin Zagrs were also Jeddah-based, but Muhammad Bin Zagr was like the New England family that sends the son out to California to open the operation. There was a bit of that in the eastern province on some of the projects.

Q: What about the riots in Mecca in '87.

TYSON: In the summer of '87 Ned Walker was the charg#, Anne Patterson was the acting DCM, and I was the acting principal officer in Dhahran. It was generally thought that these riots were inspired by the Iranians as a test of the governing ability of the Al Saud. It was an interesting time because I'd gone up to Riyadh to country team and I met with Ned who later had a number of ambassadorships and was NEA assistant secretary. Mr. Eddy had left. Mr. Eddy was always extremely careful about interviewing the Saudis; one looked for subtle nuances, body language, intimations or hints that this might be this or that, but you couldn't ask a lot of stuff. Frankly, I looked at Ned Walker and said, “I thought we could ask a lot more. I thought they had a new generation in there.” And while, in a sense, it was risky, we're playing these Kabuki shadow games and what does the shadow on the wall mean? He basically said, “Well, go for it,” so I went in to Prince Muhammad, Prince

Fahd, Prince Mishari, and a number of others and basically started asking questions like, “How did you get your job?” “What do you think about the situation with Iran?” “What do you think of the Shia?” Big questions. I just walked in and said, “I've been instructed by Washington to ask you the following.” I had ten questions and I'd get nine out of ten. It was just phenomenal; they answered it. You know, the sky didn't fall; it was, “Wow, okay fine.”

The other thing that went on at this time was Dhahran's a consulate and the move to Riyadh had occurred and the embassy was there. Walter Cutler was the ambassador when I first got there and I remember going to the Embassy at Christmas. The ambassador had a party for the staff and someone had said, “Oh, yes, you'll have to come and meet 'C and C'.” I went, “'C and C' what's that?” and it was carrots and celery and it referred to Mrs. Cutler because that's what she tended to serve. I was going there with someone because we were just up in Riyadh for the country team and they basically said, “We'll have reservations for dinner afterwards.” It was sort of interesting because Senator Percy, who was out of office at that time, was there. Cutler was pleasant enough and competent enough and everything else, but Mrs. Cutler, who is quite a talented photographer, came down to Dhahran on a visit with her husband and Mrs. Eddy. My wife, Susan, and I, went off on the women's program and all I can say about Mrs. Cutler is that she treated my wife dreadfully and my wife has never forgotten it.

Q: What was the background of your wife and then could you talk about how she adjusted to Dhahran?

TYSON: I think you'd best ask her sometime and get her for that.

She had been working on Capitol Hill on House appropriations and Senate appropriations. Then one weekend she marries a Foreign Service Officer and goes off to Saudi Arabia - comes out there, gets pregnant, comes back, has our son in Maryland, and comes back with the first son for three months before we leave Arabia. So it was quite a whirlwind. I would not presume to speak for her. I think she should have her own interview.

We also had Hume Horan and the Chinese missiles incident. Horan came iincredible Arabic and very, very interested in the country. Nancy Horan was wonderful. She came out for a visit to the eastern province with her sister and brother-in-law. Everything was going along very well and then the whole Chinese missiles thing happened and then Horan was pulled and Cutler came back.

Q: How did we view the presence of a significant Shia population in the eastern province? Was that considered to be destabilizing or?

TYSON: I think there were people who thought that it would be destabilizing, certainly the Saudis were historically concerned about it. And of course one of the roles of the consulate was to report on that. Actually one of the more interesting things that I set up for Ambassador Cutler one time when he came down was a luncheon and some meetings with what we referred to as the “Shia notables.” David Hale, who is now DCM in Beirut and is about to come back here, did a great deal of contact work with the Shia when I first got there. He moved on to Bahrain. I sort of inherited it and continued the contacts.

There was an American, Jack Coley, out of ARAMCO. Mr. Clinton Jack Coley, Jr. of Alexander City, Alabama, who had come out to work at ARAMCO and actually, God love him, made a real effort to introduce newly arrived people at the consulate to other people and to Saudis. Some of my first contacts with the Shia community were courtesy of Jack; he had asked me to come along to the wedding of someone he knew, Muhammad Al Dhamin, who just died this past weemay he rest in peace, who actually turned out to be a delightful man and a very good friend. But it's like a small village anywhere; you come to be known to people and you're known as the friend of someone.

Q: Taif, was it, maybe?

TYSON: It was Tarut Island. Katif and Tarut.

Q: I mean Katif, yes.

TYSON: And then we also had contacts in Al Hasa in Hofuf, which was between Dhahran and Riyadh. Susan came out two months into it my tour. My Shia friends and their wives wanted to meet her, so I took her up to Tarut Island and went to Muhammad's house. She was with the women and I was with the men. She came back and was at some sort of women's function in ARAMCO and announced that she had been to Tarut the last weekend, it was the equivalent of venturing into the depths of Harlem or Anacostia.

When Susan came back with David, it turns out I was the acting principal officer. It turned out that a lot of the Saudi women wanted to see the baby, so what we did is Susan and the baby and some of our consulate female staffers were at our house and I was up at the big house receiving the men. So there was a lot of that convoluted socializing, but she'd done it all; she'd gotten married and then she'd produced the heir. (laughs)

Q: You left in '88? Whither?

TYSON: USUN [United States Mission to the United Nations], New York, via a conference in Geneva. I was working on the Economic and Social Affairs Committee for Harry Cahill. I ended up doing Third-World debt negotiations at the United Nations and a lot of other economic issues. I ended up doing one of these 113 to 1 votes with the U.S. voting against a debt resolution. It was fairly interesting, but what colored everything in New York was the change in the housing regulations. Before, in order to get people into New York they'd provide you an apartment, they'd take 5% of your salary and that was that. It rapidly changed to they took 20% of your salary, you had to pay utilities, you were also paying for parking up at the UN, but then the difference between what you paid and the cost of the apartment was added to your salary for tax purposed. So you were getting absolutely hammered. It was just a major, major disincentive to recruiting for USUN, and it was one of those matters that the Department did little to resolve. I think still has done very little. The UN assignment was fascinating because I think the rest of the world takes the UN

much more seriously than we do. I thought at the time that in the future I'd be writing notes of congratulations to the foreign diplomats I worked with when they were appointed to ambassadorships or senior positions in their government. Indeed that's been true. We also had a much more rapid turnover of people, so you're coming up against folks who have done negotiations five or six times and you're the new kid on the block and it's somewhat easier to roll you.

Q: Yes. Well you were doing this from '88 to when?

TYSON: '89 because of the housing program. First of all, it took them two months to get us into an apartment and we were in a horrendous hotel. I don't think that the staff up there had bothered to check out hotels because it became rapidly clear to me that there were other options. We're there with a child; it's a hotel with no laundry facilities and stuff like this. It was just dreadful. This was one of the first intimations of the real split that occasionally is discussed between the Foreign Service and the Civil Service. You've got the New York civil servants with, “What are you complaining about? God, you guys are just used to everything!” and it was really difficult. I think it showed up in terms of their difficulties in recruiting. We were told that the Department was going to break the lease and move us. We basically said, “You know what; a move is a move.” Susan had her old job in Washington lined up and we figured we'd be punished by being sent back to Washington, which was fine. So we were planning on doing that and I got a call out of the blue saying, “Someone had lined up the Energy job in London, but they're going to drop out of it. Would you be interested in it?” And I said, “Yes, go ahead and work it, but just before it's a reality, call me because I'm 90 percent certain that it'll be fine, but I'll want to ask my wife.” So that went forward for about ten days. We're going to be moved out of the NY apartment. What are we going to do? Susan is stressed out; she's newly pregnant. So I get the call offering me the London posting and said, “Give me five minutes.” So I picked up the phone and said to her, “What would you think of London?” and she said, “Do not toy with me,” and I said, “I'm not, it's real. We can have it. I need to give them an answer.” She

said, “Go for it.” So I called back and said, “We'll take London.” Pure stupid, blind, dumb luck.

Q: Before we move on during this '88, '89 period, this would've been the end of the Reagan period, was it?

TYSON: Yes.

Q: When Reagan and his group came in, they came out of the anti-UN culture and one of the American UN ambassadors practically saying, “We'd be delighted to have you all leave the United States,” and all this. But usually an administration goes through a maturization process. How did you find it at the end?

TYSON: At the end it had sort of more than settled down. Reagan had come up any number of other times and the man was an incredible actor. He would come in, he knew how to work a crowd, including at the UN. Nancy was always immaculate. They also took the time, and I must absolutely give them points for coming in to talk to the USUN staff, which was very nice. General Walters was still there as the perm rep. (permanent representative). Herb Okun was the deputy and then there were a series of other ambassadors. Walters left and Tom Pickering ended up coming in. Reagan was very good and, remember, too, at this point, that Maureen Reagan had been U.S. representative to a major women's conference.

Q: Yes, in Mexico City, I think. I mean she'd taken a very active role.

TYSON: At that point they certainly knew what the UN was and what it did. The people surrounding the Reagans always scripted them very well. This was the seventh or eighth time they'd come up for a UNGA (United Nations General Assembly). They pretty much had the drill down.

Q: What was your impression of how the United States was dealing on matters that you were concerned? Your matters were what?

TYSON: Third-World debt reduction.

Q: And what was the American stance on that?

TYSON: Oh utterly opposed to the rest of the world. We were not particularly interested in official debt forgiveness, even though we had written off a bunch of stuff in Africa. I think in many ways we saw it as just a huge give-away.

Q: What were our banks doing because they were the ones giving out the money, weren't they?

TYSON: What had happened is that the Brady Plan had given the banks a period of years to write down bad loans. I used to point out to other countries that in essence the American taxpayer had paid for a lot of these in foregone taxes. The most striking example, and you know we weren't totally consistent in our policies was the issue of Mexican debt relief. Mexico had the absolute luxury of leftist rhetoric and a telex into the U.S. Treasury. I was at a lunch near the end of the session at the Tunisian Residence and the Mexican delegate who was sort of fun, but he's got his positions, I've got mine, was egging me on, “Why isn't America doing this and that?” Many delegates of African countries are standing around with wide-eyes listening to this. I said, “Oh Victor, please. You know that if your president calls my president and says, 'We need five billion and we want it tomorrow in Juarez,' we're going to say, 'That's impossible. It'll have to be four billion in El Paso.'" As it turns out, three days later we made a huge loan to Mexico on essentially those terms. Later all the African delegates came around to say, “Oh you were right. You were right.”

The Europeans were sort of playing a dodging gamwanting to get a lot of political capital and looking for the Americans to be the stumbling block and to take the big bad falnot so

much on debt, but on one or two other issues. I got instructions from Washington that said I could follow a European consensus, but I was not to lead it. The Europeans came in convinced that, “Well, the Americans would say no, they'd abstain, and that would be that,” and I showed them the instructions which was basically saying, “You want it to go away; you have to make it go away.” Oh boy, that shoe pinched.

Q: I was wonderinthe thing that's always disturbed me about these debt reductions, you know countries saying they can't pay it, I would think that would be almost a one-shot thing, because if you lend money to a person and they can't pay it, they say, “Oh that's too bad,” but you don't lend it again.

TYSON: Well in a sense this is what was going to happen. Debt reduction or some sort of buy-out was going to be an exit strategy out of a whole lot of countries. This was a different era. The banks were not going to be interested in essentially of the slate of 100 countries, there were about 12 that they were seriously interested in. For a lot of the rest, it would be, “Thank you for settling up this account. We're closing our representational office. Have a great life. Have a great national destiny.” And I think a lot of the other countries didn't get that. They assumed that the minute that debt reduction was agreed to, the spigots would re-open. That wasn't going to be the case.

Q: Did you find that on debt reduction and things like that, did we have any support; I mean, say the Brits or somebody?

TYSON: Not particularly on that. As I said, it was 113 to 1. On other issues we would, but that was also, I think, the beginning of a great deal of resentment against the United States for out non-payment or delayed payment of dues. I mean there was just a very, very strong and underlying resentment about that. I think that resentment has been shown recently in terms of being voted off committees and a number of other things about Israel.

Q: Was our close relation to Israel a factor?

TYSON: Yes, but that was much more the work of the political section. We'd occasionally get into Israeli matters and the occupied territories on some of the other committees. But yes, Israel was certainly a factor, but this was equally true of our views on North Korea and some other pariah states. There are times when others are quite happy to hide behind our skirts, but there are other times where we had well-known and strong views on things.

Q: Was China a factor at all - as a player really?

TYSON: Oh, yes. My Chinese counterpart was mission-educated and quite urbane. China, in a sense, had the luxury of sort of being part of the G-77, but also larger and more than that since they had the veto. The Chinese could be useful brokers of compromise at various points. If China suddenly saw middle ground it was often quite astounding as to who they could bring along. I think what was also striking was a lot of very small countries; you definitely got the impression that they had wide latitude and really were probably not reporting a great deal back to their home country or getting instructions.

The Scandinavians always had a phrase; one of my friends used to put it, “You're authorized to join a consensus with like-minded countries,” which unfortunately did not often include the United States.

Q: What about France; in your dealings, how did you see their role?

TYSON: In working with the French including those at the UN, I had a 50-50 rule. About half of the French diplomats that I've met are pretty savvy, sophisticated people that you can work with and probably like and then you get another half that is just gratuitously snide and nasty to Americans for the sake of doing ipreferably in public in front of others. During the time that I was there, the first French representative fell into the definitely nasty category, and then he was replaced by a much more reasonable woman who was willing to deal, which was fine. But with the former, with the really nasty one, as it turned out, one of the best things was one day there was a new smart German representative whose

English actually was somewhat weak. There also was a Colombian delegate, an Egyptian woman delegate who played a very, very key role, a South African delegate, and me, and as it turned out we all spoke German. So the nasty French delegate goes by and he sees the American speaking German, dealing in a foreign language, and then he comes up to me and he starts speaking in French and I say, “I'm sorry, I don't speak French.” I mean it's obvious I speak a foreign language; it's not French. There would occasionally be this sort of nasty shots. But that's one of those things, whether it's the French or others, you do it at your peril. The day will come when you need something from ma bit of information, something about a visa, this or that. Now, I can be nice or I can be very correct. It's your choice. It's funny how you can get that message across. People actually remarked upon this incident with the nasty person which had been observed by others who had seen me stiff-arm the other guy; his successor was just much more reasonable. She was going to pursue French interests. Fine. But she wasn't going to be gratuitously nasty about it and that was also fine. The other thing is, once again, as I've pointed out to the French, it's really de Gaulle who did it; they're still paying for de Gaulle's behavior. Coming up in elementary school, you know, you're coloring pictures of the Bonhomme Richard, the Marquis de Lafayette, Ben Franklin in Paris, Pershing in France. Everything was there; it was the complete lay down of French-American relations, and then de Gaulle comes along when the reality is, in terms of policy terms, if you're doing something where you want to punish the European Union, and the bulk of the punishment is for the French, you can probably sell it quite easily in Washington. You can certainly sell it in Heartland, America.

Q: You're absolutely right. It's gratuitous because we're trained to have an affinity with France.

TYSON: Well the history is there. You know, part of my father's family is French-Huguenot. I mean we've got the DuPonts in Delaware. We've got the history going back and forth. Two world wars. But de Gaulle, and this is something that I have pointed out to other countries - watch it when the Americans stop arguing with you. When you are so minimal that you are not even worth arguing with, you need to worry about us, because we don't

care. And I mean, the gratuitous thing is to look wide-eyed as the French come up to you and complain that they weren't consulted and you just do this stupid American thing of, “But we talked to the Japanese and the Germans and Brits and all the important countries.” You know, just hit the launch button and launch. That said, on the other hand, about half of the French diplomats that I've worked with in different locations over the years, were very civil, very cooperative - certainly the French military in the Sinathe pilots and all were very good. I think France, to this day, is still paying for the legacy of de Gaulle.

Q: 1989 comes a year that was sort of the year the Earth shook in a way, but you're off to London.

TYSON: I'm off to London.

Q: You were there from?

TYSON: '89 to '93. Leaving New York - I cannot emphasis just how difficult that year and the whole administrative mess was for me and others. We got on that plane and we were so happy to get to London.

We were in a temporary apartment in a building that's actually at Number 1 Abbey Road in London. We got there in late August. It was actually very cute; you'd go out and you'd see all the Japanese tourists in the crosswalks from the Abbey Road album. And you'd be walking around the neighborhood and disoriented people would have disoriented maps and some Japanese tourist or German would tentatively approach you and ask for directions. And it was really terribly sweet. We were two doors down from the EMI recording studios. We were there for about three weeks and then we moved into our townhouse just north of Hyde Park, and started settling in. As I said, Susan was pregnant with our daughter.

London was just nice. It was a big embassy. I was working for Anne Berry, the economic counselor. Henry Catto was the ambassador. I liked my job, liked the work, the house was nice; everything in many ways was just rolling along. It was just one of those things: nice place, nice assignment, a particular time in your life.

I loved doing the oil work. '89 also brought cataclysmic changes in oil. For years we'd been looking at Eastern Europe and Russia, particularly the oil fields, and guesstimating that, “Well it probably has this or that.” All of a sudden all of these Russians are coming up to conferences in London and doing presentations on the Timan Oil Fields or other matters. You know, you're standing there saying to someone, having read the briefing materials on it, “Well, if you're looking at a billion barrels,” and they'd look at you and go, “Fivfive billion.” So I mean there were just these little bits and pieces of fascinating information. It was a wonderful reporting job because there was just a lot happening.

Q: You were the petroleum officer?

TYSON: Energy officer.

Q: Energy officer. What did you do?

TYSON: Basically followed North Sea developments. This was also a time when the British were privatizing their electric industry and I reported on that. If they ever pulled it up, the California government should have read about power-pool pricing. There was a lot of stuff that was aggressively happening in England that was ahead of what the States was doing. They had a huge commercial presence in both the Norwegian and British sectors of the North Sea. But London is also a wonderful listening post for the world oil industrbetter than Houston because it's Russia, it's Africa, it's Asia. You go to these conferences up at Oxford. I was doing stuff on off-shore Vietnam; any number of things. I would also arrange for dignitaries to visit the four big companies: BP (British Petroleum), Shell, British Gas which was becoming a major international player, and British Coal which

was government-owned and was undergoing a lot of restructuring and mines closures. We had American companies operating there, but if they want to talk to Exxon, they can talk to Exxon in the States. So I'd end up sitting in on some of these “whither the world” sessions with senior American officials. I also consulted on the Middle East with some of Shell and BP's Middle East experts. It was fairly interestinnew people in the oil trading community, and I was doing stuff like off-shore oil safety issues. There's a broad range of things, including power.

Q: Did the breaking down of the Iron Curtain and Germany joining and all - did that make much of an energy difference or a challenge?

TYSON: Yes it did because a lot of assets in Eastern Europe were suddenly up-for-grabs: refineries in East Germany, pipelines, any number of other things. And then of course you had the companies interested in going in to look for prospects. So it really changed. The reunification was actually harkening back to the UN. I honestly think that certain people - including the Thatcher government in the UK and probably the French, were less than thrilled with the prospect of German reunification.

I'm not sure exactly when, but we had a reception in the atrium of the embassy and a German diplomat from their embassy in London was chatting with me and we were speaking in German; he basically said, “Well, what is the U.S. view on reunification?” And I said, “The same as it's been for a long time. We support it. We want to see Germany within NATO,” and there was this sort of smile and “Thank you very much.” I think there are people in Europe who would've been happy to see America be the bully-boy, but when it became clear that we weren't going to do that, that to stop it they would have to stand up and be counted, they weren't willing to do that. Reunification went forward.

Q: Did you see both the reunification of Germany and were you getting reports about all these facilities that were available in Eastern Europe? Were sub-standard a problem; I mean, was this going to be a huge re-doing job or not?

TYSON: Oh, yes, the environmental impact and cleanup was going to be huge. There was a lot of concern about the nuclear plants. Remember, too, that it was an interesting time to be in Britain, particularly that fall because it was the anniversary of the start of World War II, and the very time Germany is reunifying. And of course the beginning of that war is all over the television and so forth; they had the newscasters reading the news from that era as though it were today. I mean it was just in-your-face. So the combination of what's happening in Berlin and the reality of what had happened was just all there. So it was quite an exciting time to be in Europe.

Q: By this time, was Thatcher still in, or??

TYSON: Thatcher was still in.

Q: What was sort of our attitude towards Thatcherism, vis a vis the British economy?

TYSON: At that point Thatcher was punching through a lot of real reforms, and as I said, in my little area, if anything, they were further along or more aggressively free-market or privatized than the U.S. was. Also remember that there was that great love feast going on between Thatcher and Reagan - and then Bush. She just always had this rapport, starting at the White House. That was a real reality.

Q: Somebody I interviewed that was in the White House at the time said they used to get very nervous when Margaret Thatcher came to the White House - and also Brian Mulroney, because they didn't like to see Ronald Reagan alone in the room with them because God knows what might come out of that as far as agreements and all this.

TYSON: Yes. Well I think Thatcher, of course, the iron lady with her handbag, was one hell of a politician and personality. What was becoming clear though, was that Thatcher was probably more popular outside the UK than she was in. Like Nixon and Reagan were also more popular outside the U.S. The Tory Party historically has had a tendency to eat its own young and I think the downfall of Thatcher, which was hard for many Americans to

understand given the parliamentary system, was very real. It was funny because we had actually had John Major into the embassy three weeks before he became prime minister. And I mean for us Major initially was viewed as, “Who is this Brixton-born nothing who is coming along?” You know, this someone who had gone off to make some money doing banking in Nigeria or something like that, but then he really came along.

The ambassador used to have people in for breakfast?

Q: Who was the ambassador at that time?

TYSON: This was Henry Catto. He used to have personalities in for a breakfast and then they'd join in an expanded country team meeting. I remember the Major breakfast because the night before my boss called me to plant a question on agricultural policjust to make sure it wasn't a total dud. He was actually quite engaging in person. I had also seen Thatcher when I helped escort Vice President Quayle out to Checkers during a visit that he made. A much shorter woman than one would've expected.

Q: The great confrontation - the great battle of Western Europe, was when Thatcher confronted the miners under - was it Cargill or Scargill?

TYSON: Arthur Scargill.

Q: Scargill. It looked very dubious. This was a little before you got out there. This basically was the breaking of the power of the unions. Was there a feeling energy-wise that things were looking better?

TYSON: Not necessarily better; things were changing and indeed the National Union of Miners did have a lot to say while I was there. The issue was privatizing coal and then even before that as a run-up to it, a lot of what they call “pit closures.” It's hard to really describyou almost need sort of like a black and white 1960s Rita Tushingham film of how these local towns and these mines are all bound up with each other; that's your life and

your father did it and you'll do it, too. If you're one of the local lassies, you'll marry one of the miners, and stuff like that. And then they're going to close the pit and what do you do because there's nothing but that.

I did Wales which had a development commission which was trying to attract newer and lighter industry with some success. But the pit closures in certain areas were just devastating, and we had miners' marches in London. Michael Heseltine got involved in some of the face-offs in parliament there. Scargill, in a sense, was past its peak, but there were still some very real issues there: would they go for nuclear power, would they go for gas-fired powehow would they be doing that. They were also importing coal from a number of places. We exported metallurgical coal, some steam coal. They were beginning to look into bringing in Colombian coal, South African coal, which is often strip-mined and just cheaper.

Q: What was the attitude of our government towards nuclear power at that point; that you were getting reflected from your principals back in Washington?

TYSON: Nuclear power at that point had essentially stalled after Three-Mile Island. The nuclear issue that tended to come up was much more waste storage. The Yucca Mountain in Nevada. And then the Brits were doing nuclear reprocessing in Celafield and elsewhere, and the shipments of nuclear waste from Japan to Britain, and back and forth, were issues. We were tending to follow some of the choices that Britain was making, but there really weren't any new plants being built in the U.S. France was going gang-busters on nuclear energy. So in many ways, I think if you're looking for practical experience on building and operating nuclear plants these days, it's in France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, and elsewhere; not in the States.

Q: Were you there during the Chernobyl business?

TYSON: Yes, must've been.

Q: I was wondering if this put a damper on things.

TYSON: Well, it caused a lot of concern, but this issue concerned the safety of facilities in Eastern Europe. Chernobyl threw the spotlight on all of those types of reactors in Eastern Europe and Bulgaria and elsewhere, where it was not only the issue of a deteriorating physical plant but the lack of a corporate culture of safety. Did they have a safety culture? And in many ways they didn't. People who were going into these plants were just horrified at what they saw.

Q: Did we find ourselves at odds with the energy community that you were dealing with over in Libya at that time?

TYSON: What an interesting description. Yes and no. Yes, in that actually I dealt with the UK branches of some of the American companies that had interests in Libya, such as Marathon and others that were part of the Oasis Group. No, in that any time the U.S. had sanctions, European companies - particularly some of the smaller ones, saw that as an opportunity to get in. All other things being equal, they wouldn't be at the high table. The minute you knock out or keep out the Americans, they've got a shot. Libya was one; you had the Austrians and others going in there. Vietnam at that time was another. You had British companies in there off-shore when Americans weren't. I used to meet with the British companies who'd say, “My God, I hope you're continuing your sanctions.” So it was much more like that.

Q: Did you see, by this time, a change in the energy culture? One thinks of the earlier years as OPEC versus the consumer, and all this. From your vantage point in London - which is always a good place to have a vantage point, was there a coming together - a more rational approach on energy?

TYSON: Not particularly. I did a lot of OPEC watching and meeting with OPEC officials. Of course a lot of it goes on in Vienna, but they'd come through London. I'd do reports on

that. OPEC politics was a big staple as was curiosity about what Iran was doing. I had a timeline of the OPEC meetings and I'd step stuff back three to four weeks; you know, do the round of usual suspects of, “Well, what do you think is going to happen?” throw together a cable, address it to the world, get other people referencing me; that's how I was a player in energy policy.

There was always an ambivalence about producer-consumer dialogues and quota or price-fixing coming up, so we'd always dance around that, as would OPEC. There were also certain institutions like the Oxford Energy Seminar and other events in London that were off the record where you got senior officials from both sides with an opportunity to talk about whatever they wanted to discuss, off the record or in reasonably private circumstances. But in terms of a great coming-together and meeting of minds, not particularly.

Q: Did other nations - the Germans, the Japanese, have their own energy watcher in London, too?

TYSON: Actually, interestingly enough, with the Japanese it was much more the companies that had traders in the city. I think the Germans and others tended to follow more the IEA in Paris. But I used to meet with, and brief the Japanese fairly regularly; I did it with my counterpart who was doing the Middle East watching type of thing.

Q: I'm trying to pick up the nuances of diplomacy. What was in it for you to brief the Japanese?

TYSON: Information.

Q: They would give you information on?

TYSON: Sure, on Asia. Or what they're hearing in the market. In any number of things. In the first place, the Japanese tend to be very interesting. If you get to the poor, shy, little

chrysanthemum flower fairly early on you basically say, “Look, I know who you guys are. I know how competent you are. Fair is fair. If we're talking about things, it's not a one-way street. I'm going to have some questions or issues for you.” There were things like the Japanese concessions in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, what they were looking at in China, whether they had anything on North Korea - certainly Vietnam, what they were looking at in terms of the world gas business with LNG and stuff. You know, one just never knew. There would be different topics. They're out there, too; they're talking to other people and two or three of them were fairly knowledgeable observers that I found very good value iand probably vice-versa, which is why we continued to see each other.

Q: Well you were there '89 to '93, so you were there when Iraq invaded Kuwait. How did that play when you were there? Did this come as a shock to everybody or what?

TYSON: Actually yes. To back up, my daughter had been born in February of 1990, and we're there and my job is going along. The summer of '90 there's a rattling of sabers with Iraq and I think a lot of “knowledgeable Middle Eastern observers” just basically figured that this was another effort to shake the piggy bank to get some cash out. There was a feeling that, “Well maybe Iraq might do something like take Warba and Bubiyan, the two islands, and/or a little bit of a strip,” or, you know, “It could be difficult, but basically bottom-line, Saddam wanted cash.” I mean, he had a river of money, the war ended, and the river ended, and he didn't like it. So this is all fine and good. The saber rattling is going on and one particular evening my new daughter - she was just a baby, was up and cranky so my wife and I were juggling this back and forth. I don't look at a paper, don't look at anything, get to work, and Walt Lockwood, my boss, says, “What do you think?” I said, “About what?” He said, “Iraq invaded Kuwait last night,” and I said, “I think my work requirements have just changed.” In fairly short order, this is just shocking and of course a lot of the Kuwaitis are in Europe. What does it all mean? Are the Iraqis going to go into Saudi Arabia?” You know, we've got friends in ARAMCO and stuff like this. So everybody is very spun up. It's an adrenaline rush at the embassy.

Also in fairly rapid order - I don't know whether we were between Middle East watchers or not, but it was the sort of, “You've done the Arabs; you go do them,” because we were getting a lot of inquiries. So suddenly I was doing liaison with the Kuwaitis in exile, in particular. I remember one American working for Kuwait Petroleum InternationaRalph Brown, a good friend, who called up with the ever typical designed-to-endear- yourself-to-FSOs comment, “Well we've got a problem because all of the Kuwaiti and Iraqi assets have been frozen. We're actually selling jet fuel in Hong Kong. Here's who we are. Who's this. I'm being forced to call you even though I know that U.S. Embassies are totally ineffectual on this. No good will come of this.” “Thank you very much for calling,” and I said I'll look into it. Basically we were all sort of cutting and pasting; this was very ad hoc. And I basically said, “Okay, we'll need copies of the transactions. The transactions can go forward. No money can be transferred to Iraq or back to occupied Kuwait. Here's who you'll need to contact at the Treasury.” You know it's like Casablanca; it was the beginning of a great relationship. And fairly rapidly, I was getting a lot of calls because you're seen as responsive.

The Assets Control Office at Treasury was trying to do every five pound or hundred franc transaction without additional staff and it rapidly became clear that they were going to get overwhelmed. We're talking with the Bank of England about the freeze and the Kuwaitis are beginning to stabilize because they've got this huge operation overseas. They've got the Kuwait Investment Office in London; they've got a major oil company in Europe with refineries in downstream assets, and a whole bunch of other things. So I just start dealing with them. Of course there are many sources of information. People calling up, “Well, what is the state of their industry? What did they have in the country?” What does that mean if the Iraqis take the additives the Kuwaitis had and use it for military fuel, and so on and so forth. So there was a wide series of reporting requirements, or things that you could get into, that were of interest to many people. I just felt as though I was feeding this maw; that it all went in and very little came out.

They started getting people out and we started giving block grants of their own money to Kuwaiti Embassies to handle their people in exile. We always retained the right to go in and look at it, but I don't think we ever did. They really started getting Kuwait, Incorporated in exile up and running again, and I was very, very involved in this. In October two Kuwaitis from the oil company came in who needed visas. They were going off to hire Red Adair, Boots and Coots, and other firefighters. Texana Stubbin Papworth, my secretary - God love her, just did absolutely Herculean efforts. She had stacks of these applications and just knew the Kuwaitis, dealt with them, was always very civil to them at a time when they'd lost their country, and they're feeling shattered and oppressed. She was really just a sweetheart in dealing with them.

What also happened is various committees started evolving to publicize the Kuwaiti cause because we lived in an Arab neighborhood and in the first week there was a pro-Iraqi demonstration on one side of Edgware Road and a pro-Kuwaiti on the other, with the Bobbies in between. So this was getting interesting. The Palestinians were getting involved. But I started working this, and one day I was over at Kuwait Petroleum International and they'd gotten a batch of “Long live free Kuwait” t-shirts in. They said, “Do you want some?” and I said, “Oh sure,” so they handed me some and I said, “Actually can I have, oh, about twenty?” They said, “Fine,” so I took them back to the embassy, walked in, dropped them off at the Front Office, had them in my office, and it rapidly became, “Where did you get those?” “I got it from Kuwait Petroleum.” “Can you get more?” So I called them up and said, “I think you've got a winner here, guys,” and what started to happen was a Mercedes would pull up behind the American Embassy in London and 1000 t-shirts in boxes would come out. I would be there with my little loading cart, our people would x-ray it and scan it, and I'd bring the t-shirts in. It was all free; the Kuwaitis were donating it. One of the most astute things they ever did. And I just had a sign up saying, “Send it to whoever you want, but please, whoever gets it, send a thank-you note to the Kuwait Investment Authority in Kuwait Petroleum International, 80 New Bond Street in London.” This is becoming like this perpetual motion machine. The Kuwaitis are thrilled

that it's going to Pocatello, Idaho and the middle of Kansas, so whenever I want t-shirts I can have them. And they started branching out to baseball caps, umbrellas, sweatshirts. We gave Marilyn Quayle a “Free Kuwait” sweatshirt and umbrella.

The baseball hats were particularly popular and at this point I had friends in the Gulf in Riyadh, and elsewhere, and I just took a box of the baseball hats and sent it out in the APO (Army Post Office), and apparently Schwarzkopf was walking through the embassy in Riyadh one day and saw one and said, “I want one, where did this come from?” So I came back and had four yellow slips on my desk, “Call the following military people,” and it was basically, “Norm wants.” So I called the Kuwaitis and got about 100 hats and handed them to the Air Force and they were packed off to Riyadh. I think when it was all said and done, we went through 8000 t-shirts.

Q: Good God.

TYSON: It was some of the best publicity that the Kuwaitis ever did. All free, and as I said, “Send a thank-you letter.”

Q: Were the British pretty much aghast at this whole thing? I keep thinking of that small little boSaddam Hussein tousling his hair, a British boy and hostages, and it just turned your stomach.

TYSON: For you who have been in the Middle East, that was a very interesting one. Of course I understand exactly what you're saying, and yet, from his cultural context he is trying to show that he is protective of children and cares for them and would not do harm them, while the rest of the western world looks at it and sees it almost as a sexual assault or something like that. And, no, that had a lot of impact there and getting the hostages out and then the build-up and everything else.

Q: Did you find as the build-up went on that whatever problems there might be, there was a drawing together of the Americans and the British?

TYSON: Oh my God. Problems - hardly. “Excuse me, let me bring my bag of state secrets over to you and you can hand me your bag of state secrets.” The cooperation with the Uthe Bank of England, the Treasury, FCO, and State - was just phenomenal, this was really the special relationship in war. I remember being the duty officer and having to go over to FCO one Saturday morning?

Q: FCO would be?

TYSON: Foreign Commonwealth Office. ?to see the duty officers there and I'm sort of American weekend casual; boat shoes, blue jeans, work shirt, baseball hat. They're in sort of tattered corduroys and a jumper and stuff like that. It's these cultural moments. I mean, literally, it was hauling out some of our classified stuff and then reading theirs, taking notes, taking our stuff back, “Thank you very much.” It was actually an interesting incident because they looked at me, the two duty officers, and said, “What are you doing about Jews in your forces?” and I said, “We're sending them and the women, too.” “Oh, are you sure about that?” and I looked at them and said, “I was one of the tokens who has already done Saudi Arabia. We're sure about it and this is what we're doing.” I think that had some influence on some of their decisions, too.

The cooperation with the British was just phenomenal on the freeze. Indeed, later, after Kuwait was liberated and the freeze was lifted, Kuwait Investment Office hosted a dinner for a number of the people who had worked with them in London. I mean, it's extraordinary that you're thanking the two countries that have basically slammed a hold on a hundred billion of your assets. A hundred billion. Just a huge amount of money.

I think it was handled in a very civilized and a remarkably sensitive and respectful basis. And that's paid out down the line.

Q: Paul, you mentioned that there is something else you might want to add onto before we leave London.

TYSON: Right, it's the oil spills in the Gulf just before Desert Storm went in and liberated Kuwait. The Iraqis were pumping millions of barrels of oil out into the Gulf from their facilities in Al Ahmadi in Kuwait and this was obviously becoming something of a problem and one of the things that I diwas asked to dwas I went to Kuwait Petroleum in London; walked over there one day through the square, down the streets and all, met with them, and they pulled out a facilities map, schematic and marked, and basically said, “Bomb here, and bomb here.” I put it in my briefcase, walked it back to the embassy, handed it to the Air Force. And a few days later the bombing did occur. Later on when I was in Kuwait I talked to some of the people, the Kuwaitis who were involved in the resistance there, about their side of that, but we can get into that later.

I ended up doing an awful lot after the liberation. For some reason or another, my phone and my fax, or the fax in the econ section, became the contact point and we were dealing with what we called the “purple death ray people,” and that would be, you know, someone calls up and says, “I have a purple death ray that can solve the fire fighting. If you give me a million dollars (or whatever), this will go on.” We toasted about four fax machines just overloaded with stuff coming in; engineering drawings and everything else. But it was an interesting process, once again involving Bechtel and Kuwait Petroleum. It was the type of thing that everybody was rushing to get into Kuwait and there was no particular reason for me to go there. There were problems getting equipment in and at one point Kuwait Petroleum came and basically asked to charter a C-5A in order to bring in a whole work over rig from Houston, which I helped arrange. It was one of the more bizarre moments of go and rent an Air Force plane.

Q: The C-5 is the biggest plane in our inventory.

TYSON: Right. It's a huge cargo plane.

Q: Who was making the decisions of who knows what they're talking about and who doesn't, on this fire-fighting thing?

TYSON: There really weren't all that many decisions. First of all, a lot of it was experience. On the fire-fighting in the past, what had happened is that basically it came down to the difference between a one-off construction or making a custom-made suit versus an assembly line. This was one of the few situations in the world. There was something in, I think '47, in Borneo or whatever, where there was a field on fire, but most of the time fire-fighting involved one, perhaps two, wells going out. Red Adair or Boots and Coots or one of the well-known people comes out, handles it, and it's very specific to that. In Kuwait you had close to 500 wells on fire and a number of them gushing oil, but not on fire. There were different problems. There were the ones gushing, but not on fire, the ones on fire, and then a subset of that - about 60 of them were extremely high pressure with hydrogen sulfide, and extremely dangerous. So there was a basic effort to first get water pumped in, and then gradually an assembly line sort of development to handle the well-killing and the fire-fighting. And it went along surprisingly fast. There had been predictions that it might take as long as five years and ultimately is was done in somewhere between nine and ten months. As it went on, there were a whole lot of different groups wanting to get involved in ithe Hungarians and others, and some of them were very good at it.

The Kuwaitis had a lot of their own indigenous engineers involved in this, including one woman. So with the support of Bechtel and a number of other things, Red Adair, Boots and Coots, and the fire fighters - I think there were four groups, the fire fighters specifically, it went remarkably well. A lot of it was cutting red tape; getting stuff to move and doing things like that. I don't think there was any one real set decision making process; there was an awful lot of autonomy and by working and coordinating with the Kuwaitis we just got a lot of stuff done, and frankly didn't ask Washington in many instances.

Q: Just for the record, these fires were started by the Iraqis to be beastly, was that it?

TYSON: Pretty much. They wired the well heads and exploded them on the way out. It was truly one of the great crimes, and ecological crimes, of all time. I guess eventually the Kuwaitis will have an estimate on how much oil they lost, but at the initial stages I seem

to recall that six million barrels a day was either going up in flames or just flowing out onto the desert. So it was a huge loss.

Q: Well then, this would be wha'81?

TYSON: It would be '91. Kuwait would've been liberated by about May, so it would basically be the end of '91, early '92.

Q: And then where did you go?

TYSON: I stayed on in London and I actually got paneled very early on to become economic counselor in Kuwait. So my tour ended in July of '93. We came back home and did home leave and consultations and we flew into Kuwait City on September 1st of 1993.

Q: And you were there until when?

TYSON: I was there until June of 1996, so it was a three year tour.

Q: What was the situation in Kuwait when you got there in '93?

TYSON: The situation in Kuwait was surprisingly good in many ways. Of course there was the invasion/occupation damage, but there had been very little fighting in the city itself; a lot of the major infrastructure had been brought back up so you had electricity, water, air conditioning. The shops were operating. There was a lot of wreckage on the “highway of death” towards Basra, and out in the desert. There was some damage in the city, but you sort of had to look for it. In many ways, the damage to buildings and stuff, including hotels, was somewhat cosmetic; they'd need to redo the exterior and interior walls, but it's not as though they took the structural steel down. So in many ways it was a return to more normalcy.

It was also a big transition for the embassy because there had been the group that had come in right at liberation, reopened the embassy under difficult and adverse

circumstances, and now they were being transferred out. It was more of a return to a normal Foreign Service type of post. Ambassador Edward “Skip” Gnehm was there; he had been there since liberation and he stayed until 1994. So I was there for the last year of his term of office out there. He was much admired; very, very active in Kuwait and quite the personality. Very much the right man, at the right place, at the right time. Not everybody's cup of tea, but a hell of an ambassador. Really knew a lot of people in the country and really pushed the embassy to be out and active, and if anything, I think that the Kuwaitis or certain elements of Kuwaiti society, said that the U.S. Embassy was too active, but so be it.

Q: How about your view of the Kuwaiti government at that time; were they like the Bourbonforgot nothing and learned nothing, or was there a change from what you were able to gather?

TYSON: I think it remains to be seen. There were certainly changes. The parliament had been suspended and it was agreed that it would be restored. There were elections to parliament that occurred shortly before I got there, so you had a new fairly activist parliament. There was a perception that unlike previously, the royal family could not capriciously just dismiss it. It had been suspended for a long time; there had obviously been the invasion, the liberation, and everything else, so there was a large process of the government sorting itself out and a lot of internal political jockeying going on. Frankly as to the long-term political acumen of the Al Sabah family, I think it still remains to be seen. They've learned some things though perhaps not as much as they should have.

Q: Was there a group of those that stayed behind, and were active in the resistance, who had become a different breed of cat than those who had been taking their vacation in London and just hadn't gone through that? You know, because this often becomes a real divide.

TYSON: There were some very interesting splits, and in a sense I played an interesting role in that. There were different groups. First of all, as is often the case in that part of the world, you had a lot of the Kuwaitis out of the country on vacation when it was invaded on August 2. So there were any number of people who were not in Kuwait. So right at the beginning, August 2, you've got those who are in, those who are out.

Within the next few months you had a number who found that it not always easy, but there were ways to get oueither over desert tracks, bribing the Iraqis, or any number of other things. So you had a group who left at that point. Some who just took a look and made the choice to do it. Certain specialists, I don't have the whole storthere was no reason I needed it; were ordered out; some of the oil company experts and others. Others stayed behind; others got family members out, that type of thing. I think if there was any dissension between those who stayed and those who left; it would be that group who left Kuwait after the Iraqi occupation. You have that group. Then there's the subset of the actual resistance, including those who were very active in the oil fields in Ahmadi. The Kuwaiti group which was out of the country took a lot of flak; some of which was deserved for the playboy warriors of the discos. Certainly there was a lot of that, I think probably more on the European continent than in London itself. There was a large Kuwaiti community in London. Kuwait had a lot of its assets and financial operations there, including the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, Kuwait Petroleum International, their European subsidiary, and the Kuwait Investment Office. My take on the Kuwaitis in London was that I've rarely seen a harder-working bunch of people in my life. If I needed them anytime, seven days a week, I'd call the office and someone was there. There were very, very effective. In fact, some of the Kuwaitis used to joke about certain of their own, that, “My God, we never knew he could work until he had to,” and a lot of them were really throwing their backs into the effort. I found later on when I was in Kuwait and when I would meet many of the people that I had dealt with in London at some of the “diwanis” or the meeting places where the men would sit and talk; I would make a point of saying that I had known them in London and I had certainly appreciated the extraordinary amount of work

that they had done for their country and their people. Obviously this works out very well for other reasons, but it was very easy to do because it was true. And with certain families you could just basically say, “I worked with your brother, your cousin, your nephew,” and I basically said, “I of course know what you went through in terms of the excesses of the occupation, the brutality of the Iraqis, but I gotta tell you, much like the Dutch resistance in exile,” or something like this, “these people played a part in the ultimate liberation of your country.” A few, maybe one or two of the minor Al Sabah who were seen in the discos, but I think the more astute people recognized the publicity problems with that. But from my perspective, the people that I was dealing with were working very, very hard.

Sheik Ali Jabar Al Sabah, who is an Al Sabah married to one of the emir's daughters, came by for a little Christmas open house that we had; driving a ten-year-old Mercedes, extremely understated - no flash or glitz, and some of the other guests, actually some Iranians that I dealt with because of the oil business, apparently looked at Anwar and said, “Well, how are you related to the emir?” and she said, “He's my father.” But, I mean, there were some very, very hard-working Kuwaitis.

There's a whole other story going on with the Spanish investments, which went south to the tune of about five to six billion dollars. But London, in many ways, was really quite the nucleus of Kuwait in exile.

Q: Did you have any handle on the Spanish connection?

TYSON: I knew it was going on, but our embassies around Europe were dealing with different aspects of Kuwait. I realize that there was something involving the Kuwait Investment Office, but that didn't particularly concern me. It would be our embassy in Madrid or the Brits in Madrid. There was a certain compartmentalization. Of course the corporate structures, the expensive lawyers that the Kuwaitis had hired to set up all of this was Grupo Torras in Spain. It was a very different thing. I later got involved with aspects of

it in Kuwait when I was there, but there was no particular reason for me to get involved in it in London.

Q: What was your take on the effect of the expulsion of the Palestinians, and was it a real expulsion of the Palestinians?

TYSON: It was. First of all, it was rather interesting. I ended up butting heads about this with Ambassador Gnehm. I was working with the Kuwaitis on the return; the fire-fighting, the reconstruction.

Q: This is when you're in London?

TYSON: In London. So, you start with, “Well, what happens?” I mean, it's sort of like a Berlin airlift type of thing. How do you supply a city or a country with “x” million people, and the number was approximately 2.2 million previously. It became rapidly clear that the math of most of the Kuwaitis was 2.2 minus 400,000 Palestinians equals 1.8. In some of the cable reporting that I was doing I was mentioning that there were definite statements that there would be no role for the Palestinians in a liberated Kuwait. Ambassador Gnehm came through, and of course he had been named, and he was dealing with the government in Taif and he sort of said to me, “Well you don't need to say that anymore,” and I said, “Well, I continue to hear it.” “Well you don't need to say that anymore,” and I finally said, “$20 says that a year after liberation there'll be less than 50,000 Palestinians in a liberated Kuwait,” and he didn't take the bet, but the numbers were pretty accurate. There were 400,000 at the time of the Iraqi occupation; by the time of Desert Storm, something like 200,000 either had been forced out, had chosen to leave; any number of other things, and then I think in fairly short order after that, many left. Now a few Palestinians who were extremely well-connected managed to get back in or stay on, but it was generally with the royal family acquiescence. And sometimes it was a shell game; they had to get another passport, like a British passport or something, but those numbers

were very, very limited. There are also a number of instances of particularly Palestinian women married to Kuwaitis who ended up staying on, too.

Q: What was the effect of taking this entrepreneurial group out of Kuwait when you were economic officer there?

TYSON: It opened up opportunities for others. First of all, I think the next generatiothe younger generation of Kuwaitisuddenly had to put their back into it as opposed to basically throwing a bunch of papers at the Palestinian clerk. Kuwaitis are also sophisticated consumers of labor; they got Filipinos in, Indians, and others, to fill in on some of those jobs.

The most striking change was probably in the neighborhood just over from us. We lived in a district called Jabria. Hawali was one district over and the joke was that it was the capital city of Palestine. I remember I used to get my electronics and stuff repaired at Palestine T.V. in Hawali. And that had been quite the neighborhood and obviously the population was much less, and other groups and so forth had moved in. I think it was an absolutely wrenching blow to the Palestinians and a lot of work that I did involved aid to the Palestiniannot exactly the most popular thing with the Kuwaitis. I dealt with Palestinian monies and reparations.

Q: Well what were you getting from accounts? I mean, after sorting it through, how have essentially the Palestinian population behaved when the Iraqis came in?

TYSON: Gnehm disagrees with it. It's oil. It's always been oil. There's a hundred billion barrels worth of reserves in Kuwait; on field, Berghan has got about fifty. Iraq, with Iraq and Kuwait, is still not Saudi Arabia, but it's a major world power?

Q: In this immediate post-war period, did we have any real leverage as far as getting what we could out of our economic relationship with the Kuwaitis?

TYSON: Oh, we got a huge amount out of it. The anecdotal statement was that we made money on the war, given their transfer payments to us, which were huge. We certainly got in there with huge amounts of weapon sales; U.S. contractors and so forth had the ability, at least for a time, to come in without local sponsors. No, I think there was certainly money to be made and the Kuwaitis needed things and I think we provided them. We were certainly very, very concerned about the commercial opportunities and the economic aspects. Of course much of this was done at extremely high levels, but other countries were also getting payments, too. The Russians got a billion dollar loan which I doubt that the Kuwaitis ever collected on. Turkey had a commitment for a total of a billion dollars over five years; 200 million a year. I think Syria, the Egyptians, any number of others, got debt forgiveness, actual grants, low-concession loans. The Kuwaitis were passing out the daj and it bought them support.

Q: Did you find when you went there that economic ministries, with whom I imagine you dealt, were pretty much back and running?

TYSON: They were very much back and running, and in many cases like at the Kuwait Investment Authority; it was people I had dealt with in London. The key officials were people I had known in London. I think the economists who are always more tuned in to a world economy, and the Kuwaitis are as sophisticated as the day is long, were always easier to deal with. At the top level, they're pros. You'd get visitors in from Washington and the Kuwaitis at the upper tier are extremely impressive. So in terms of that, professionally it was a great deal of fun.

Q: Was there any Iranian factor while you were there?

TYSON: There certainly is. The Shia population in Kuwait tends to be of Iranian origin. There have always been ties to Iran. I just think that there was always an undercurrent of potential unrest or hostility, but people other than myself are probably better qualified to comment on that.

Q: Saudi Arabia; how were ties there? Have they improved?

TYSON: The Kuwaitis understood the importance of Saudi Arabia, and of course the Saudi viewpoint is important. But they're very different societies in some ways. It's sort of like Mississippi attempting to dictate to New York state, or California. The Kuwaitis were not always in tune with the more conservative aspects of Saudi society. There's always been a certain amount of backbiting and rivalry there, which I think continued at lower levels or sotto voice. Clearly the Kuwaitis understood that the support of their GCC [Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf] neighbors was very important, so they were going to have to work at it.

Q: Prior to the Gulf War the Kuwaitis had kept most of their Arab neighbors at arm's length, saying, “We know how to handle this,” and “We can take care of it,” and “Don't bother us.” The Kuwaitis, let's say, were not beloved by its Arab people including Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

TYSON: Oh I think that was true then, and to some degree it probably continues to this day. They were seen as difficult, distant, arrogant, and any number of other things. I think there was a sentiment that, well it was a pity that it had to happen, in terms of the Iraqi invasion, but if it had to happen to someone, it was just as well that it happened to the Kuwaitis.

Talking with Kuwaitis, both then and later, you get another Arab saying something pretty hateful and the Kuwaitis would be shocked, and I think you get a bunch of ex-pats there, including the Brits or the Americans, who would say, “Haven't you heard that before? We certainly have.”

Q: When I asked you what was the major economic thing, you said it was oil, and you implied that Skip Gnehm, the ambassador, didn't think so.

TYSON: Well, he basically said that the reasons we did it was the defense of liberty and the repelling regression, and any number of other things, which were all, I think, fairly true in some ways, but there are other wags who've pointed out that we would not exactly have done it in the same situation if it were, say, Mauritania. This was striking much closer at U.S. vital interests, and certainly the oil focused everybody's attention.

Q: I must say that I personally had no problem at all with doing, in fact I think it was absolutely justified because we're not only talking about Kuwaiti oil, but really the eastern province, and to having probably as nasty a dictator as has come down the pike sitting on?

TYSON: 400 billion barrels of oil.

Q: It just wasn't in the cards. I mean, it was nothing to be ashamed of to say, "We're not going to let this happen."

TYSON: I think that was basically true and I honestly think that in the period from about August 2 to August 11, if Saddam had rolled further down, he probably could've gotten to the causeway to Bahrain without undue problems. His supply lines and stuff would've been stretched, but he probably could've gotten further into the eastern province.

Q: I've talked to people who've dealt with the Iraqis, and who were in Baghdad, and said the Iraqis had terrible supply problems. This is during the Iran-Iraq War; they just couldn't deliver. They'd get something going and they just couldn't support it.

TYSON: There were stories, in the later stages of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, of Iraqi soldiers begging food from the Kuwaitis because they weren't being supplied. Now obviously, this had its advantages in that, if you've got a soldier there who needs food, he's quite susceptible to bribery on any number of levels - and I think a great deal of that did occur. There were clearly supply problems.

I think in that first week afterwards there was little standing in their way in the eastern province.

Q: How did you find it; did you have any old, sort of, Kuwait hands working at our embassy?

TYSON: Not really. It was pretty much Skip Gnehm with very much of a hand-picked team.

Q: Who was the DCM?

TYSON: When I got there Mary Jeanne Kennedy had just left and Georgia DeBell came in, so she was the DCM, and actually she was the DCM my entire time there. Political counselor my first year was Matt Tueller, a reasonably junior officer that Skip had picked up and really elevated to quite a senior level. My predecessor was Paul Daly, and Tueller was eventually replaced by Margaret Scobey. So I mean Skip had gone through, and where I give him credit, he is less concerned about rank and protocol, and more about particular talents of an officer; and he's willing to give you a lot of leeway until you prove otherwise.

Q: What sort of tasks were you getting assigned from Washington, on the economic thing particularly?

TYSON: I think Washington was terribly interested in the Kuwait economics and some of their foreign investments; the whole structure of the oil industry and the refurbishment of it. The returning of Kuwait to being a player in the world oil market and in OPEC. Some major investment projects like petrochemical plants and a number of other things. Pretty much a wide range of economic and commercial things, worked with my commercial counterpart. It would depend. We were starting to get a lot more on copyright infringements, bootlegs, tapes and software, IPR [Intellectual Property Rights], and trademark stuff.

Q: Where would this come from, because this sounds like real third-world stuff?

TYSON: Oh it is.

Q: You know, China or India or that sort of thing.

TYSON: Well it was, or it was coming out of places like Indonesia or Jebel Ali down in the UAE [United Arab Emirates], and anybody with a tape duplicator can buy masters in Amsterdam and run twenty copies. The cassette shops were all over the place. People were doing bootleg software. For a wealthy country, the Kuwaitis can be cheap about things. So there's an interesting market; you get really high-end designer goods, and absolute crap out of the factories of China. For many people the difference between buying the trademark stuff versus a good bootleg that you got from your cousin more than outweighed the ability to have servicing. It's a tough issue, and in that sense Kuwait was a Third World country.

What's interesting though is they were a member of GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade]; it was sort of like Grandpa had bought them a membership to the country club that they'd sort of forgotten about. So they don't face the issues that Saudi Arabia and others do now. They don't have to join; they're already members.

Q: I would imagine, speaking of Kuwait with these tremendous sums of money, that there was a whole area way above your pay grade that was taking place between say in London or Washington Treasury and all that or not. Reinvestments and things like that.

TYSON: The investments were being pretty much done on a commercial basis. There was some government to government stuff. The things that came up more than anything else, the bane of my existence, was foreign military sales payments - because the Kuwaitis were purchasing a lot and it's sort of like a revolving charge card; the more you buy, the larger your quarterly payments get. More often than not, it was just a question of getting the paperwork through the Kuwaiti bureaucracy. The money would be there, but I'd be working a program and then the head of the Office of Military Cooperation, a U.S. general,

would run into problems. And he generally had an officer on his staff doing FMS (Foreign Military Sales) payments. Such officers varied in quality. The last one there who's a friend of mine, Jim Dursow, was much more thorough and systematic, and easier to work with. But a lot of our military guys were in and out of the country and something would happen; the payment would be due, it wouldn't be made, the finance center back in the States would go ballistic, the officer who was supposed to do it wasn't around, so the general goes to the ambassador and suddenly the vital project that I'm working on is not so vital, and I get to pursue money through the Kuwaiti bureaucracy. I literally had a card in my file-o-fax of the five numbers to call asking, “Okay, where's the money?” because once it moved from the Ministry of Defense, it would take anywhere from three to seven days to get the requisite approvals. And it's almost like tracking a satellite; it's at the Finance Ministry, it's about to go to the central bank, the wire transfer will be done. That was typical inter-agency stuff at an embassy. You know, let me drop everything to do your work for you. More often than not, when we actually had a U.S. officer there prompting the Kuwaitis, “Hey, it's coming up in fifteen days. What have you guys done about it?” it was done on a somewhat more timely basis. It was more just bureaucratic ineptitude as opposed to lack of money.

Q: Well you mentioned military equipment and I sort of have the impression that here's a very small country with a bunch of people who really don't want not military type people - and you can get all the equipment you want. You know, upper-end stuff, but who's going to fly it, or drive it, or shoot it?

TYSON: What an interesting question, and I think many are still asking it. Interestingly enough, fighter pilots were less of a problem. Where we had problems was with the backbone of the army; you know, your NCO (Non-Commissioned Officer) level: your technicians. For example with the Abrams tank, trying to train tank crews up to operate this incredibly sophisticated piece of equipment was a real challenge. I don't know whether anything more has been done on it; I know the training aspect of it and building the

personnel side of a modern military force has been one of the most challenging things our advisers have faced.

Q: Did you get the usual push and pull; our military says, “Oh hell, let's sell them this,” because then you begin to make in savings and having large orders and all of that, and then we have to worry about this from sort of a diplomatic side of who's going to use it and all of that.

TYSON: I think there was less of a concern about that. A lot of the big arms deals had been pretty much consummated, if not delivered, by the time I got there. Stuff would come up for other bits of equipment: helicopters, or howitzers, or artillery, or stuff like that. The big deals, in a sense, had been done.

One of the problem areas in terms of sales, and you asked about it, was more commercial aircraft. Boeing, in particular, I think felt that while they didn't have a written commitment, there was a moral obligation to buy, and I think the Kuwaitis felt that they are buying U.S. tanks so a lot of the commercial aircraft actually went to Airbus, and of course the Europeans. So that wasn't particularly popular.

The whole question of what you're selling, and their ability to field it, and absorb it, and maintain it, I think, is a valid one. I can't say that I have any definitive answers to that; I defer to my military colleagues.

Q: How open did you find, socially which spills into professional, Kuwaiti society? You know - entertaining, getting out, meeting the folks, and all of that.

TYSON: It is very interesting; my wife basically says that in a sense we have closer Saudi friends than we do Kuwaitis, and I think in a sense that's true. There's a bit of standoffishness about aspects of Kuwaiti society, although we did come to know a number of them. There was an active expat community there; we had some British friends and other friends. One did not want for company. There were a lot of receptions done for

business reasons; someone's coming in. I remember meeting now Vice President Cheney at a reception because I knew the local agent for Halliburton. You know, so you'll show up, it'll be a nice hotel, there'll be decent food, the usual assortment of soft drinks or fruit juices, and it's a small town so you meet the usual suspects. One had access, could meet people, do things.

There are a number of Kuwaiti families, actually, who did some very nice things about hosting the troops who were being rotated through Camp Doha; on Thanksgiving and Christmas, and some of the other holidays, which was very, very nice. I've always sort of said that it's interesting that in the United States the Kuwaitis among the Arabs are like Bostonians, and I think there's a certain affinity, in terms of the styles of people, in that there's perhaps a bit more of a distance and a reserve. I came out of the country with friends, but there have been countries that have been friendlier. But from my standpoint, no complaints.

Q: Well you left there in 1996?

TYSON: '96.

Q: What then?

TYSON: I came back and I went over to the Pentagon on the State-DOD (Department of Defense) exchange, and I went to the Office of Foreign Military Rights Affairs to basically work as a lawyer doing Status of Forces Agreements. I had responsibility for the CENTCOM (Central Command) area, the Middle East, all of Africa - which CENTCOM has got part of East Africa - and all of Central and South America. I also worked on the Foreign Student Program at the Service Academies in which we recruit and get foreign students to go to the three Service academies.

Q: How did you find working on the Status of Forces Agreements? I've talked to people that have been involved from the State Department and embassies on negotiating these

agreements and they say that, almost to a person, that the problem is not coming up with a good agreement with a country, it's coming up with an agreement that you can get past the Pentagon lawyers.

TYSON: This office was headed by Phil Berringer who was in his 80s when I was working for him. He was the grand old man of Status of Forces Agreements and base negotiations. His deputy was Frank Stone who is a retired JAG [Judge Advocate General] lawyer. It's not only the lawyers, it's these high priests.

Now certain things that happened after the Berlin Wall fell are also important to consider; I mean, I think base negotiations for many countries had basically been an excuse to shake the U.S. piggy bank and see what came out, for years. And after the fall of the Berlin Wall there was more and more of a focus on burden sharing. And much more of the, “No, we're doing this because it benefits both of us; now your side of the cost equation is the following?” And I think a lot of countries just figured, you know, the gringos are going to come in and we're going to do this and that, and were very, very wrong. There's also more of a move away from the, “We need the base with the American flag on it.” We were much more concerned about access to adequate facilities, whoever owned them, when we needed them. So I think a lot of our leverage on the other side had changed.

There also was the fact that some State Department people lacked an understanding of what Status of Forces Agreements could do, or how you could do it. During one of my recent inspections in South America this came up. Part of it was knowing how to use a lawyer rather than just deferring to the military. “We wish to accomplish the following.” For example, you want your troops to have their weapons. Fine. You can have a statement saying they can carry all unit equipment including weapons, in an exchange of notes. Some countries don't like that explicit, so it's “all unit and ancillary equipment,” nod, nod, wink, wink; we know it means guns, but we won't say it means guns. Or “any material required for the performance of the mission.” You know, there's that sort of agreement that

if you had to stand up in parliament you could say, “Oh well, we didn't authorize guns.” There were others ways around sticky problems.

There was the option of an exchange of note, what we call Administrative and Technical Status Agreements. Sort of standard language with different options that one could opt for. And a lot of it was just also educating an embassbecause you know we were fairly amenable, too. You get an embassy that would come back with one or two comments as to why or why not this was the way to do it. You could often manage to make it work.

Q: How about the students? This is coming from particularly Latin America. By this time we must have been very aware of the problem of getting students, particularly Latin American students, who weren't going to go back and beat up on their people.

TYSON: That was more School of the Americas and IMET [International Military Education and Training] issues. At the Service Academies, actually the issue was that each academy could have up to forty foreign students; that's one percent of the student body. The issue became who paid for this and this was on different income levels. When I came in, the vast, vast majority of students were getting a full ride courtesy of the U.S. government. There were high income countries that were going to pay full freight, a sort of middle that would pay part of it, and then many who were going to get the scholarships. Representative Buyel guess he's from Indiana or something like thareally wanted to clamp down on and reduce the number of full rides. Basically this was going to mean that a lot of otherwise qualified students weren't going to come because their governments couldn't afford it.

You also have situations like the Brits, the Japanese, and others have their own service academies; they don't send their people to ours. We were picking up a huge number of very qualified Eastern Europeans - Croatians and others, that I think in the long term were going to make a huge difference. We were getting involved in Hill legislation among other things, and I rapidly found that about half of each day, every day, was occupied by this.

While it's a worthy and noble cause, you don't need an FSO-1, full colonel equivalent, doing this. And indeed, when I left I said, “Noble cause, but, one, it probably shouldn't be in this office; two, it should be handled by a lower ranking FSO.”

Q: Well you were there until when?

TYSON: '98.

Q: And then what?

TYSON: Went to the National War College at Fort McNair from '98 to '99.

Q: How did you find the War College?

TYSON: I found the War College quite interesting; it's the fast-track of the best and brightest. I'm an army brat and had served in a number of posts overseas such as Germany and Kuwait and Saudi with strong military presences, so it wasn't a total shock to me.

What was most striking about this particular year and this particular time were two things: one, continuing my perfect record, we weren't in the beautiful building on Fort McNair; that was being renovated. So we were on the fourth floor of the Coast Guard Headquarters building; so you walked through the back gate and up into this temporary facility. The second thing was this was during the impeachment of President Clinton and we're studying American policy. It was absolutely fascinating because there's a large range of people from the military in the War College of varying political views. I think it's no surprise that the military tends to be somewhat more conservative, although not exclusively. It was fascinating because it was the civilians, particularly the Foreign Service Officers, who called the result. They basically said, “Beyond the merits, beyond the girl, beyond this and that, he's going to walk because they don't have the votes.” It was one of these very, very interesting things; it was an aspect of American society.

Of course I was also struck by the fact that you're put into sort of committees and your committee leader is designated. You know, let's see, “We're here to learn about democracy and you've just appointed the leader. What is wrong with this picture?” But it's a great program. I have absolutely recommended the War College or war colleges to people I know who are a few years behind me in the career or who have worked for me. I think it's a big plus in that the State Department can learn about the capabilities of the military, and the military in many ways can learn about the capabilities of the State Department. It's, I think, one of the strongest programs that we have, I particularly liked the fact it was “national” so no one's service or no one group of civilians dominated; all must play well with others.

Q: One of the things that struck me is that sort of the new Foreign Service is coming along and people of my generation - I'm 73 now, almost always were male and we'd served; I had my four years as an enlisted man in the military, but I've always known the military, so it's no great shock to me. But you've got kids coming right out of college who have no conception of the military, and tend to look down on it, which is a great disservice to their own professional ability.

TYSON: Well that's true, but, you know, the other side of it is you're getting some very fast track women in the military; women who have gone to West Point or the Air Force Academy who are definitely on the “general” track. So I think it's a little bit more mixed up; it's just society has changed. I think one of the most disturbing things, and particularly in some of the army units and the marine units, was the sociology of the junior officers in the past tended to follow the tradition of apolitical involvement in the military. There was much more of a explicit pro-Republican, anti-Democrat attitude and also a much more fundamentalist Christian type of bias among some, which is somewhat disturbing to us who aren't Christian.

Q: Well even for those of us who come from the Christian tradition it tends to be rather there are solid straight answers and all; you know there isn't much deviation and this is scary. Particularly in a military man. I mean you want some flexibility.

TYSON: It was interesting because there was one army guy. At the end, you were put into different groups, so there was an attempt to mix everybody up, which was fine. And at the end of it they'd have what they call the sort of “hot wash” evaluation, so your instructor or your committee would sort of pick someone from the group to go and do that and twelve people from the different groups would do it. At one evaluation, it just turned out that five of the twelve people were Foreign Service Officers and I was one of them. And this one army guy basically said, “Well the Foreign Service is here; now we'll hear from the left,” and a number of us really looked and said, “Look, hot shot, we have worked and served both Democratic and Republican administrationas a matter of fact, the bulk of my career has been Republican administrationwe're here to serve the country. What you said is very inappropriate.” I had just had it with him and I basically said, “I guess you've never really seen a Foreign Service Officer wreck a Service career, have you?” and he looked a little stunned and in front of my colleagues I said, “You know the guys with four starthe commanding generals? Sometimes comes to receptions, you're near the ambassador and the general says to you, 'Well, how is Colonel so-and-so doing?' and you just basically remark upon how much better it will be for him to get to the troops, to the real army, and serve where things are much more direct and his sort of take charge bullish style will probably be more appreciated, i.e., 'Don't ever put this guy in the Pentagon. Don't let him play with others.'" And I think it stunned him that someone outside the military could have that impact on it, and yet it was the type of thing that military leaders overseas would occasionally ask - quietly, privatelclearly they're going to make the decisions, but sometimes only after getting input from an FSO on what we thought some of their subordinates or what would we recommend.

I remember a group of majors in Kuwait and looking at a few of them and saying, “You know, these are really command and general staff track. They have real futures in front of them.” And I think if you're remarking that to a commanding officer who says, “Well someone else has noticed this,” it's a very positive thing.

Q: Then in '99 you're out of the war college.

TYSON: I'm out of the war college and I come to work for the Inspector General's Office.

Q: And you were there until when?

TYSON: I'm still there.

Q: You'd been in the Service for a long time; you'd been inspected. What's your impression of how the inspection core works today?

TYSON: Right. Today it's in a particular state of flux. Frankly, before joining the inspectors, I thought about it because I had been through one or two inspections that I frankly thought were blow-offs and did very little. In other situations it seemed as though the inspectors had gotten a few things right and some changes came about. So on reflection, I decided, well, take the risk; let's go ahead and see where we're going on all this.

At the time I came in, the then-inspector general was really looking to change and revise both how inspections were done, the products that we did, and any number of other things. I'm not talking out of turn when I say there's been a certain amount of turmoil in the OIG (Office of the Inspector General) in the last two years. A new inspector is in and it looks as though there is going to be much more of a return to traditional State Department inspections, and attempt to do them on at least every five year basis because some posts are way, way overdue. More of an attempt to do that. There may be some cross-cutting studies, but I think basically the intent is to return to the core values or your classic post inspection. The truth is, that in some ways a lot of how an inspection goes depends in

great part on the team leader, who often is a current or a retired ambassador, and how aggressively they choose to pursue a number of issues. I mean, clear malfeasance or something like that, theft or whatever, that's fine. It's more judgment calls, and I think increasingly, too, it's much more the broad systemic issues of personnel problems, shortages, any number of other things that are not just one post or specific to one post, that need to be addressed. I mean, there becomes the shrug and it's ever thus. There are times when, as an inspector, you can make a difference. On my last inspection I suggested someone for a Service-wide award and he won it. So that can be positive.

It's interesting how much you can learn about a post by doing interviews here and going through the surveys. It's amazing what people will talk about and what you find out about, and I think in a sense inspections are a very useful reality check for Front Office, and much of the emphasis is on Front Office coordination and leadership. I think a good ambassador or DCM will use an inspection as a vehicle to solve a lot of things. Quite frankly, in many ways, you either want the inspection to occur just as your arriving because whatever is found is not your fault and someone is giving you a roadmap of, “This is wrong; you need to fix this. Go here. Do this.” Fine. Either that, or you want to have just departed when the inspectors come in because I think that one of the real weaknesses is that they go into a situation, someone was there for three years, bollixed it up, but they're gone. And it's only those who remain at post who sort of get caught in the crosshairs, which in a sense is unfair, but that's part of the way that it's been done.

Q: Are you seeing a new beginning? Because there was a very difficult time in the '90s of being starved for money which really had effects up and down the line, didn't it? Have you been able to observe any hope that things are beginning to come back again?

TYSON: Some things are beginning to come back. I think you've got a number of things; on the personnel side, we're going to be paying bills of the '90s for years to come. I, of course, would not describe it as the Tony Quainton-Dick Moose legacy, but others might. Those years of not recruiting, those years of deficit, will skew the Foreign Service career

path for the next fifteen years. It's just inevitable. They're taking in larger classes now, which in a sense solve one body problem, but then the competition within those grades will be much tougher and you're not entirely going to get a smooth pyramid or flow-through. It's something that's going to have to be digested and worked through.

Clearly the personnel issues are huge. Africa and the Africa Bureau is probably ground zero on terms of just recruiting qualified staff and bringing people up. There are huge shortages. Part of the problem is at the top with some of our old line ambassadors sitting there figuring, “Well, let the supplicants come forward and I will anoint one of them,” and you're in the position of saying, “If you've got a body, take a body.” Because the system is pulling out stuff that just flat out won't be filled, and posts are going to have to make do with it. It's a lot of stretching; stuff gets done in a slap-dash fashion. I've got a lot of admiration for people working under adverse circumstances overseas, but there's a time that it's just broke and someone needs to fix it. Once more into the breech, boys, just doesn't cut it. You're burning people out. And I think about the problem with Africa which has extremely difficult circumstances where you stretched first or second tour officers too thin. Each individual decision makes sense. You look at a place collectively and it's the kindergarten running the school. With all due respect to some extremely qualified people there, the only experienced folks you've got will be perhaps the ambassador and the DCand that's just not enough. Not in those difficult type of environments. And then what happenand this comes out in the candid, private meetingthe one lesson that these people will learn is that they will never, ever, under any circumstances including Cape Town or Jo'burg (Johannesburg), do sub-Saharan Africa; full stop. That is no way to build a cadre of Africa experts.

Q: Well, Paul, I guess this is a good place to stop. It's been fun. I've enjoyed this.

TYSON: Thank you very much.

End of interview