INTERVIEWEE: MRS. EUGENIE MOORE ANDERSON Tape # 2

INTERVIEWER: DOROTHY PIERCE

(Nov. 13, 1968, Nov. 14, 1968)

A: I felt this was one of those times when it did make a difference who was the American chief representative in this mission--in this case, Sofia. That, quite possible, if I had been a career minister that I wouldn't have had the same freedom and the same independence, you might say, to do what I thought was right, lacking clear-cut instructions from the Department. I wasn't afraid, or I wasn't worried, about my future. I can always go home and I thought it was better to do what I thought was right and, particularly, where the rights of an American citizen and the life of an American citizen was involved. I didn't worry about, you know, whether the Department liked it or not. I was sure they didn't like it--this was very obvious. And it's possible that if I had been a career person that I would have been more cautious and been afraid to do what I did because what I did was risky.

P: You just have to finish the story of what happened.

A: Yes. Well, it became very involved, of course, because for one thing, the longer we kept him, the more serious it became, for how we were going to get him out and how this might complicate our relations with the Bulgarians. We were at a very delicate stage in our association just at that time on settling the claims, and the State Department--I speak of "the" Department as if it were an anonymous entity--which you do, you know, when you are in it--but actually by that time I really knew who the people were who were really sending the instructions, so I understood what they were thinking better.

I understood also the strengths of my own position, and I felt that the Bulgarians were very anxious to settle these claims. I knew by that time that they were. And I didn't think that they would want to risk a serious breakdown in our relations over this issue, and I felt that in a way I had a trump card. That I could let them understand--I won't say threaten, but I could let them understand that if they really were difficult on this that we wouldn't be able to settle the claims.

Now, I will say that for a period of about several weeks I kept getting the most awful instructions from the Department of State--nearly broke my heart and also enraged me because several times I was really told to let the man go and each time I would argue on why this wouldn't be the right thing to do. In the end I won out, so it all worked out all right. But I will say that this was a period when I had the most, really, conflict and difficulty with the Department over any issue or over any instruction. It really was quite an exciting chronicle of events, and I suppose I won't remember it all correctly, but I do remember after several days when the Department had been urging me in the beginning to try to let him go. And I kept realizing the more I learned that this would be just disaster for him and also, I felt, for the United States because I felt that the Bulgarian government must know that we had him and that they would interpret us as being afraid of them if we let him go.

I remember one of the sort of interesting times was two or three days after we had him there and we hadn't told them yet about him, and I expected that they would come any day and call me, demand that I come over to the Foreign Office and say, "well, what's this going on." I got a call one day to come over and I thought, "Well, this is it," but when

I got there it was something else, and apparently they had either decided to ignore it or else they didn't want to discuss it. And then a couple days later I gave a luncheon at which the Deputy Foreign Minister was invited--the one that I was negotiating with on the claims--and I thought, well, this will indicate to me whether he knows about it or not--whether he comes to the luncheon. He came to the luncheon, and he not only came, he was very affable and friendly. And you could always tell by their attitude whether there was some serious problem, so I concluded once again that they still didn't know, although I could hardly understand how they couldn't know because there were police outside of our door all the time watching everybody that came in and everybody that came out, and they must have known that this man never came out. And they also had several--we had several Bulgarian employees in the building, you know, janitors and others, and so I didn't see how it could fail to be known.

However, finally, I got a very firm instruction from the Department that I should inform the Bulgarian government that we had him and ask for their assurances that he would be permitted to leave the country immediately. And so I felt that I should do that--it was a definite instruction and I also thought that I just had to--that was the only way we could ever hope to get him out was with their agreement. And I remember that the Deputy Foreign Minister appeared to be really very shocked when I told him. I think he really was. I don't believe that he really knew, and he, of course, not only acted shocked--perhaps he did know because he immediately reacted very negatively and said he was shocked, he was outraged that I would detain a Bulgarian citizen in our mission, and I

said that this man was not a Bulgarian citizen, he is an American citizen and he has every right to be there, and I'm not detaining a Bulgarian. So we established our position and then followed several weeks of negotiations during which time the talks on the claims were essentially sort of broken off, and I did make it clear that it was too bad to have this matter affecting settlement of the claims.

P: Did you feel the Department understood--the State Department understood that you impression was that we had the upperhand?

A: No, I didn't think they did; I felt that they didn't ever feel this, and I felt also that they did not have the proper--what I thought was the proper--awareness of our power. I felt that for one thing the United States is the greatest country in the world and the strongest, and that this man is an American citizen. And why should we be afraid of the Bulgarian government because they kept telling me--the Department kept telling me--that they were afraid this was going to harm relations and everything. Well, I didn't really think that that was the central question, that in the first place I wasn't afraid, I wasn't afraid of the Bulgarians, I was only afraid of what they would do to this American if he were at their mercy. But I wasn't afraid of what they could do to the United States, and I felt that this was something that I couldn't understand.

I remember one time when I was particularly enraged, I got this telegram telling me that the Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister's advice--which had been to me to let this man go quickly--telling me that this advice was right, and I was really furious to think that I would see the day when our State Department would tell me that the Bulgarian Deputy

Prime Minister's advice was right.

P: Do you think this sort of temerity on the part of the Department's Foreign Relations pervades our attitude?

A: No, I don't think it does, but I think that, particularly in the eastern European division, that this has been one of the most cautious and fearful and--

P: Are we still sort of trying to run a popularity contest?

A: No, I don't think it's that. I think that really comes down to the Soviet Union, our relations with the Soviet Union, because our relations with the Soviet Union have a great deal of--well, they really primarily determine our relations with the countries in Eastern Europe, the ones that we used to call satellites or the Iron Curtain countries. And I think that there has been, from my point of view, an excessive anxiety about these relationships. Now, I realize that this is a very complex question and that you soon run into the whole central issue of avoiding nuclear war and nuclear confrontations. This was before Cuba, I might say, and I think after--I mean the Cuban crisis of 1962, this was in the spring of '63 that this took place--I might say that if this had happened after that, possible we might have had--we might have been a little more courageous. But in any case I felt that we were excessively cautious and lacking in courage.

P: Do you think the desk officers were qualified authorities in this area?

A: This was not being handled by the desk officers, you see; this was being handled by a higher level. I don't think it was being handled by the Secretary of State himself, but I think it was being handled by up to the level of Assistant Secretary of State. I doubt that the Secretary of

State--maybe he knew about this, I would hope that he did. I would hope that he was informed about it, because I think it was actually it was pretty important from the point of view of--I knew for one thing, one of the cards that I had in dealing with the Bulgarians and, also, with the State Department--I really felt I was in a two-front war, one with the State Department and one with the Bulgarian government.

P: Let me just pursue another area. Did you experience any difficulties, particularly in reference to this event, because I think this can show various things--non-State Department employees working in the Embassy, for instance, your AID or your intelligence area or anything else.

A: In Sofia?

P: Well, yes.

A: Or Copenhagen?

P: Either one, but I was thinking--did this come to bear in this particular situation, with this American citizen at all?

A: In this particular situation, I had very good cooperation from the CIA man, who happened also to be the Consular Officer who was most directly concerned with this whole case. He, as I mentioned, was not present that day when Dorset walked into the mission, but he returned there sometime later, and his support was very valuabe. His sympathy with my position and his understanding was very heartening and, also, was my cultural ataché, who was from the USIA. The one who was not helpful and who I think was just terrified by this whole situation was the DCM, the Deputy Chief of Mission, who was a career officer with whom I had had not been congenial from the beginning really. I felt that he had an entirely different approach than I did to diplomacy, and I was anxious for him to be

transferred, and he was transferred in August. But he was, I think, very, very worried about this situation because I suppose he thought it might reflect on him if it didn't come out well.

While we have, maybe, spent too much time on this, I should just like to close by saying that we succeeded fully. We got the Bulgarians to agree to let the man leave the country. There was that final moment when I had to decide whether or not I could trust them--the Bulgarians--because there would be a period of the time that he left our mission. He had to get his passport and things like that, and it was, you know, a matter of whether or not I thought I could trust the Bulgarian government officials' word that they would let him leave right away. But they did do so; there was a slight sort of a mixup on his passport because he went to the wrong office or asked the wrong way or something, but this didn't take too long to straighten out, and he was able to leave and get back to this country safely.

P: This more or less affirmed your assessment that you were really in the commanding position.

A: Yes.

P: Did it affect the negotiations?

A: No, in fact, I think it actually helped the negotiations in a sense. It did maybe delay things by a few weeks because there was this period of maybe five or six weeks when we just didn't proceed with the talks on the claims because of this question. But I think the Bulgarian--it convinced me, for one thing, that the Bulgarians really wanted to settle and that we could afford to hang pretty tight by our position. And it also convinced me that we had another card with the Bulgarians which I had felt

we had. I used this in getting Dorset released--that if they didn't let him go that this would make the US Congress very angry.

P: How does that add a card to use in this area?

A: Well, you see, Congress is the one that has a great deal of power so far as trade is concerned. The Bulgarians were especially anxious to get the most-favored nation status which they were constantly wanting to talk about and wanting to try to achieve. And I had to explain to them repeatedly that this was a matter for the Congress to decide and that Congress would never be likely to do this if there were really serious problems with the country. Public opinion would prevent the Congress from acting. So I think that this encouraged me in what I felt was my belief that we were in a strong position, and we were. And Dorset left Bulgaria about--oh, it must have been about the eleventh of May, I believe. And we concluded the claims agreement later that month, about two weeks later, I believe, and we signed the agreement. Then we had specialists come from Washington to wind up the details of it, the technicalities, you might say; but we got, basically we got the Bulgarians' agreement just a couple of weeks after Dorset's departure. And then we signed the agreement itself early, I believe, in July, soon after the fourth of July.

P: Did you see evidence of an independence of action in Bulgaria--this independence from Soviet influence?

A: No, but I saw a desire for it, a desire for independence, a very strong desire, but I didn't see any independence officially.

P: What I started to ask you about experiencing difficulties with non-State Department employees working in the Embassy, you thought of some

other areas. Of course, it wasn't directly related.

A: Oh, yes. In Copenhagen I felt that the relationship with the CIA representatives, I felt that they were at that time more--. Well, in the first place, I didn't have so much respect for them as individuals, and in the second place, I didn't feel that I had confidence in what they were doing. And I found that it was more difficult to get them to recognize the executive order which President Truman did lay down--I think it was in 1951--which made the Ambassador the chief of all the agencies, all the US agencies. I felt that this was a help so far as our overall functioning was concerned--the military group and the AID mission, which at that time was ECA--. It was called ECA, then later it was called Mutual Security, I guess. In any case, we had a very good working relationship, and I really didn't have any difficulties there at all. The chief of the Marshall mission was a fine man, and we got along very well together and worked together well. I didn't feel we had any problems with the USIA nor any serious problems with the CIA people, but I just felt as if it was hard to know what they were doing.

P: Do you think that this is one of the problems of the State Department administration currently?

A: I think in some places it may be. I think it depends to a large extent on the Ambassador, on the Chief of Mission. I feel that there was again another--as you probably know, under Kennedy there was another executive order--which once again clarified and really established the Ambassador as the chief US representative, who had the responsibility ultimately for the functioning of all the agencies in the country. And I felt that the Ambassador had this responsibility and had the authority and if he

used it I didn't feel that it was a problem accepting it as much as--. It's always difficult to know what the CIA is doing. Though there were some problems in Sofia in connection with a spy trial which took place in late 1963, and our CIA man was in some difficulties, but I thought he was pretty good about cooperating with me, and I must say we got along pretty well. He was, I think, a rather exceptional person.

P: These various problems that come up, perhaps it would be a normal part of a working relationship when you have distance separating you, but do you think it has affected the morale of our State Department officials? Our Foreign Service officials abroad?

A: You mean the problem of coordination between the department and the other agencies?

P: No, not only this--that included--with either any frustrations in getting response to your requests for instructions, having qualified desk officers behind you in your home office, any of these areas, have they--

A: I want to say that I never felt that the desk officers were really a problem. I felt, quite the contrary, that the desk officers that I had--they tried to be helpful and understanding and most of them had served--those that I happened to have--had served in the country and knew something about the problems. I felt the difficulties were higher up, not the desk officers. I do think that it is very important that the desk officer be an officer with experience in the country and with direct knowledge, first-hand knowledge of the country which he covers, and it's a very complex question whether the desk officer ought to be a higher ranking officer or not. I know there is a good bit of controversy about this.

Oh, I think there are lots of problems that cause morale difficulties

in foreign service. But I don't think that it's simple; I think it's very complicated, and I wouldn't say that it's any one thing.

P: Do you think it is a factor presently? Is morale low in our Foreign Service officers?

A: I think that there were certainly serious morale problems. I found in Copenhagen when I went there, there were serious morale problems because [of] lack of direction in the Embassy, from the Ambassador. I felt that after I had been there for a while and had established a direct and, you know, continuous relationship with the people in the Embassy at all levels, I felt that we had--in fact, I was told by the inspector after I had been there for a couple of years--that we had the best morale of any embassy that he had ever inspected. And I felt we did, and I felt that it was in large part due to the fact of the Chief of Mission taking a direct interest in it, in the whole question of running the Embassy and the morale and the relationship with the people and knowing what was going on myself. I might say that I was very much assisted in this by a very good secretary who had been there with my predecessor and who was very sensitive and in close touch with everybody in the embassy and who kept me in close touch. I had an open door policy, I would see anybody, I had regular staff meetings, you know, and all--.

In Sofia I felt that there were problems that were partly because of the nature of living behind the Iron Curtain. There are always morale problems that are special in Iron Curtain countries, in communist countries. They weren't necessarily related to the State Department although

I think there was a general feeling in Sofia that they had just sort of been forgotten. We did quite a few things to overcome this and, naturally, to improve the life for them, such as getting the Department to agree to our having a recreational house outside of Sofia and things so that the people could get out of the town. You are very hemmed in in the communist countries; you can't move around as much; and there aren't many places to go. You are always on guard in a communist country. You may never speak freely to anybody, anyplace, except out in the open. So there were all these problems that I think caused morale problems and the fact that it was a very small post. In a way, you might think that made it easier, but I'm inclined to think that maybe it made it a little more difficult, and there were morale problems there.

P: You are indicating though that they didn't come from the relationship from the in-country office with the State Department--

A: I think they did in part, but I wouldn't say it was just the Department. I think it's more related to the system. Maybe you mean the same thing by saying the Department.

P: Yes, I do. Can you elaborate on that? Where does that come from? What areas of the system are in fact frustrating to your field officers?

A: I don't think that I'm the best person to analyze this, because I'm not a career person. I may be a little more objective about it and detached about it. It's a subject that interests me very much because I feel that so much depends on the quality of our Foreign Service people. I always felt that I would really like to make a thorough study of this and try to come up with some recommendations, but, of course, when you are involved as much as you are with day-to-day problems, you never do it, I never did do it.

I think that if I were to try to put my hands on the one--there are more than one factors--but if I were to try to say what I think is the most damaging single thing to the quality of the performance and, also, the morale of the Foreign Service, it is the knowledge if you make a mistake that you won't get promotion and that you may indeed, just be relegated forever to lower levels and, possibly, then transferred out. And I think that this fear of making mistakes induces in many people--not everybody, there are a few rare souls that survive it, and fortunately for the United States government--a few people of exceptional courage. But by and large I think that this fear induces a super-caution that if you don't do anything they think you're not going to--their thinking is that--in that way you will be avoiding mistakes. Or if you only do the things that you know will win the approval and the rating, the efficiency ratings, of your superiors, then you may devote much of your time to figuring out what they want, and you will try to please those people instead of doing what you think is right, and instead of doing what may require some courage and maybe some initiative and maybe making some mistakes. Because anybody that is going to do anything is, probably, once in a while, going to make a mistake. And I believe that it is this fear of error that gradually seeps into so many levels of thinking and of acting that it's, I think, very damaging.

P: Mrs. Anderson, could you tell me with whom you were dealing in these areas, particularly in East European affairs?

A: Mr. Harold Yedler was the Director of the Office of Eastern European affairs during the time that I was in Sofia. And Mr. Richard Davis, who is now our Ambassador to Romania, was at that time the Deputy Assistant

Secretary of State in charge of Eastern European Affairs. And Mr. Foy Kohler was the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs. And those were the three top officers involved in Eastern Europe at that time.

P: How would you assess their reaction to the problems that developed while you were in Sofia?

A: Mr. Yedler visited us in Sofia in September of 1962, and I had been there only a few months. And he happened to be present on the occasion when I walked out of a Bulgarian official reception because the United States had been called a pirate and other insulting names by the Bulgarian President at this reception. This was in connection with the Cuba--Wait a minute, was this '62 or '62? No, this was '62; yes, because it was while the Cuban crisis--. And Mr. Yedler was at the reception with me, and I went to consult with him. I said, "I don't think that we should stay here. I think that we should leave." And he didn't really quite know what to do. I said, "Well, I'm going to leave." So he left with me.

P: That was not his reaction though?

A: I think he really wasn't--I don't know what he would have done; but I will hand it to his credit that he supported me and left with me. I do recall that he told me, I believe it was about that time, that he thought that one of the good things that I had done when I first arrived in Sofia was at the Plovdiv Fair, when I had stood up to the Bulgarian officials at that time who had tried to make us stop distributing a pamphlet at our exhibition at the Plovdiv Trade Fair, which is the largest trade fair in Bulgaria, a bi-annual, every two years. I had refused to back down in the face of their threats because we had had the approval of the government to distribute this pamphlet, and then when we saw how good our exhibit

was, they wanted to try to intimidate people from coming to it. They wanted to try to limit the effectiveness, so they tried to stop us. They had custom officials and lower-level police come and try to stop us, and I refused to back down. I stood by our guns and in the end it came around--we won out. And Mr. Yedler told me that he thought that was a very good thing that I had done that had established my relationship with the Bulgarians. They knew that they couldn't push me around. And they might have been inclined to think that, because I was a woman, that they could. So he had supported me on that, and in fact I had a telegram from the Department, which I'm sure he had drafted, congratulating me on that victory, you might say. And I might say that my Deputy Chief of Missions; whose name was Mr. Charles Stefan--he had been just terrified by my action, and he was, I think, afraid that we wouldn't succeed and then he would be blamed for it. And so he was quite relieved when we got this telegram congratulating us on having done the right thing.

P: Were Mr. Yedler and Mr. Kohler and you mentioned one other gentleman--

A: Mr. Davis.

P: Mr. Davis--were these the men involved in writing the instructions to you regarding the Dorset problem?

A: Well, I presume that the instructions were probably essentially worked out by Mr. Yedler and Mr. Davis, and, I suppose, approved by Mr. Kohler.

(End of first day's interview)

P: This is a continuation of an interview with Mrs. Eugenie Anderson the following day on Thursday, November 14, at 3:30 in the afternoon.

Mrs. Anderson, yesterday, and during a lot of both of the tapes, we were discussing your ministry in Bulgaria, and I wanted to inquire as to why the mission to Bulgaria was at a ministry level instead of--if I am saying this correctly--an embassy level. Could you explain that to me, and, also, did this raise problems in the area of protocol or prestige--in your negotiations and your dealings with the Bulgarian officials?

A: After the war the United States government raised most of its legations around the world. It had had a good many legations instead of embassies in a number of the smaller countries, but raised most of them because it just seemed sort of customary for all countries, regardless of their size, to have relationships with the embassy level instead of the legation level. But there were several countries with whom the United States had outstanding problems, unresolved difficulties, and it didn't seem appropriate somehow to raise the diplomatic status of these particular missions until those problems were resolved. Bulgaria was one of the few countries in Europe--Hungary was one of the others--and Romania. There were three countries at the time that I left to Bulgaria which were at the legation level. I think there were one or two other countries in the Middle East. Subsequently, all these countries have been raised to the embassy level. I think these were gestures that were taken sort of in an attempt to improve relations with the two countries and, actually, after we had settled the financial claims in Bulgaria, it didn't seem to me that there was any particular reason why we shouldn't then raise the

level of the mission to embassy, although as I recall we were about to do it on one or two occasions when, then the Bulgarians staged some violent demonstrations and broke windows, smashed windows and all in our legation. And they were doing other things too, which really had a deleterious effect on our relationship, so we couldn't very well do it at that time. So it came about after my departure from Bulgaria.

In regard to your question about the--whether this raised protocol problems with my rank as a minister. No, it did not. In the first place, during the time I was in Bulgaria until almost the very end of my service there, all the western countries were represented by ministers and legations. And it was only late in 1964 that, I believe, Italy and then the UK, France, decided to raise their missions to embassies in accordance with the common practice around the world now. So it really didn't make--didn't have any affect. The countries, Eastern European countries, of course, were all represented by ambassadors, and this means that so far as protocol was concerned, they usually outranked, or they did outrank the ministers, but you see protocol is determined partly by precedence, of seniority--how long you've been in the country--and this was not any problem so far as that. It wouldn't have made any difference in our relationships, I think, with the Bulgarian government whether I was a minister or an ambassador. The main awkwardness about it so far as I was concerned was that in other countries and, particularly, in this country, nobody knows what a minister is. And now I'm usually introduced as a former Ambassador to Bulgaria, because people just don't know what a minister is. It's really an archaic term now.

P: You mentioned demonstrations. Were these at the time of the Cuban missile crisis?

A There was a demonstration about that time. The first demonstration occurred at the time of a spy trial. There was a Bulgarian by the name of Gheorgiev who had represented Bulgaria. He had been a rather high ranking member of the Bulgarian delegation to the United Nations, and he was accused of--. He was first taken into custody in the Soviet Union and he was arrested there and brought back to Bulgaria and tried for espionage. He was accused of having been--spying for the United States. In the uproar, because this was quite a big trial and it created quite some anxieties, I think, in the Bulgarian government. And they also, I think, were quite embarrassed because it was the Soviet Union who apparently--which discovered or found this man out. Their own security apparently did not. In any case they had to do something, I guess--they felt--and they organized a mob of several hundred, mostly young Communists.

P: When was this?

A: This was in late 1963. This was a very damaging blow to US-Bulgarian relations which had been developing, I think, rather well up to that point. Because when something like this happens, you can't just go on where you were before. It really sets back the whole relationship, and it was an indication, furthermore, that the Bulgarians wanted to injure the relationship because a demonstration of this kind, while it was claimed--alleged--to be spontaneous, this cannot be spontaneous in a Communist country. It is always organized, promoted, by the Communist Party and by the government. So we protested very vigorously. I should say that at the time this actually occurred, I happened to be in the United States on consultations; and so I was not there for this first demonstration. My husband was there and witnessed most of it, and I

returned fairly soon after with instructions and made a very vigorous protest, of course. And we asked damages from the Bulgarian government, not only for the damage to our legation itself--the front windows were all smashed in about two or three stories. And a rock even landed in my office through the window. And, then, there were a number of cars belonging to members of the mission that were destroyed, too. This was one of the hardest aspects of it, because in Bulgaria to be without your car was a hardship on American members of the staff.

But the worst and most discouraging part was the barrier that this threw between us and the Bulgarian people. I really think that one reason that this happened was because the Bulgarians felt that we were beginning to get through to the Bulgarian people. And I think they wanted to do something to remind the Bulgarians that the United States was the enemy and that it was dangerous to be too friendly with the United States. And they wanted to present us in the light of being warmongers and imperialists and people that you'd better stay away from.

P: How had they indicated their friendliness?

A: People were beginning to come to our library and not be afraid to enter the legation, for one thing. And everywhere that I went around the country, people were receiving me very--in a very cordial friendly, way. And I think one of the most clear demonstrations of Bulgarian friendliness was right after the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963--late 1963--when I put a little notice on the window of the legation where we had had a picture of President Kennedy draped in black and we had drawn the curtains together excepting for that. And then I put this notice on the window saying that I would receive people who wished to call at

my residence, and they could sign a book there for the next two days at certain hours. I had expected that this would just be diplomats and officials that would call, and ordinary people from all over the country came--really hundreds of them came--to not only sign the book of condolences but to come and speak with me and express their sympathy and their grief. It was so moving, such a clear indication of how the people felt, not only about President Kennedy but about the United States and about me. A number of people told me that they had always wanted to come and meet me, but they had never dared before. And I think that this was quite possible related to the incident that occurred later.

P: Was Mr. Johnson very well known or understood in Bulgaria at the time of the assassination?

A: No, at that time he was not well known, of course, and I should say that the image that had been projected of him by the Communist press was an unfavorable one.

P: What was it?

A: I think they had tried to depict him as an old-line politician of Texas, a political boss. It was very unflattering and unfair, but they had cartoons in the newspapers, and in general they had depicted him in this light. I don't think that the people necessarily accepted this as the truth because I discovered, as you do in a Communist country, that they are very suspicious always and very skeptical of what the Communists papers wrote and published. But still they just didn't have very much information about President Johnson.

P: Was there any period there where the Bulgarian officials were waiting any changes effected by the new administration?

A: Yes, I think there was a period of, you might say, uneasiness. They weren't quite sure, you know, what would happen or whether there would be great changes in our policies.

P: Do they understand our transition of government?

A: I think that one thing that did come through very clearly. I believe they were quite impressed with the fact that there was a very smooth transition and the swiftness with which President Johnson took command, and the speeches he made. I think that these did make an impression on those Bulgarians that were, you know, able to read and got the message. I think it had a pronounced effect, and I know, I rememeber that one of the things which I assured all the Bulgarians who did call on me those two days when I received people--I had already had instructions, of course, from President Johnson that he wanted all the Ambassadors to remain at their posts, not to resign, and that we should assure the government and the people that he would continue the same policies and that there would not be a great change. And I did my best to assure everyone of this, and I also was able to speak in Bulgaria on the Bulgarian radio in December. And I had a message to read from President Johnson to the Bulgarian people.

P: How did you master the Bulgarian language so quickly?

A: I can't say that I really mastered it. I worked very hard at it, and I had given my first speech on the fourth of July, 1963, and I had had a wonderful teacher. I had a Bulgarian lady teacher who was a public school teacher of English, but she came to my office very morning and I worked hard with her, and I have a good ear. I think that helped. More than anything, I just wanted to learn it because I knew this was

the key to the communication with the people. And it was. If I hadn't done that, I never would have been able to speak to them. But they thought I could speak actually better than I really could because when I made my speeches, you know, I would work for several weeks just on that one speech so that when I came to give the speech on television I practically knew it by heart. I had perfected every word. Once or twice this was a little bit embarrassing for me because people would sometimes speak to me on the street, or at a dinner, in Bulgarian, and I would have great difficulty to reply to them in Bulgarian. I never became what you would call fluent in the language. I did gain enough proficiency so that when my husband and I traveled around the country, I could order things from menus and, you know, it was helpful.

P: I believe you did that same thing in Denmark, and it was quite successful too.

A: I did do it in Denmark; it wasn't nearly as difficult in Denmark. Danish is a difficult language, too, but not as difficult as Bulgarian. You see, for Bulgarian you have to learn a different alphabet, and Bulgarian is a Slavic tongue, and this was quite new for me. But with Danish I really learned enough Danish that I could carry on a conversation in Danish after about a year, and I used Danish more also because I was able to associate more freely with the Danish people. In Bulgaria this was not so easy.

P: What was the effect of this administration's policy of building bridges in Bulgaria and Eastern Europe, and this would involve both your cultural relations and your trade agreements?

A I think that the Bulgarian officials, particularly, were encouraged by

President Johnson's speeches, especially his first speech in which he spoke about wanting to build bridges with Eastern Europe. They were curious as to exactly what this would mean, and I think that while it never became widely known among the people--because speeches by the American President were not really widely publicized, although I think they did publish his speech, as I recall, or at least excerpts from it. But I think that, unfortunately, we were not able to really carry out very many steps in this bridge-building process in Bulgaria. There were different reasons for this. We did do some things. They let down some barriers so far as tourism was concerned, and we, also, did, so that it was easier for the Bulgarians to get visas to come to the United States, easier for Americans to go there. And we had a few more visitors between scholars, professors, exchanged. This is the first time, I believe, while I was there, that this has been done. We had a few more Americans visiting the country. I would say definitely more. But the trade expanded only moderately, and the thing that the Bulgarians really wanted above all was the most-favored nation status, and I think they had thought that perhaps this would mean that this would be forthcoming; and, of course, this was not forthcoming, primarily because of Congressional failure. President Johnson did request the legislation several times, but Congress never acted on it. So I regret to say that, so far as Bulgaria was concerned, I think that the bridge building--well, the bridge was just begun.

P: Did the NATO agreements and the MLF, the Multi-Lateral Force, concept have an impact on Eastern Europe and the Bulgarian military posture?

A: I think not markedly. Bulgaria, of course--its whole military position--

is so closely integrated with the Soviet Union and related to the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact members. And while there was a great deal of propaganda against NATO, this was sort of one of their standard propaganda themes, and NATO was depicted, of course, as a very warlike, sinister organization with designs on Bulgaria and every other country in Europe. But I think the people didn't really take this very seriously, and so far as MLF was concerned, there was some propaganda about this when this idea was being discussed fairly widely, but--. And the Bulgarians were opposed to it, they saw us as a way of rearming Germany, which scared them somewhat. I think the Bulgarians themselves had a genuine fear of German resurgence, but I think that there was a great difference between the propaganda and the reality. I believe that the people themselves didn't take the propaganda very seriously about NATO.

P: Yesterday, you had mentioned to me, in response to a question regarding any liberalization taking place in Bulgaria that you felt that it was probably there in desire but not effectively taking place. And in light of this, or along this line, I should say, what effects do you think the Czechoslovakian invasion this last summer has had on the Bulgarians?

A: I'm sure a very depressing effect on the people. I should imagine if I --knowing what I know about how the people react to events in other countries, especially events in which the Soviet Union is involved, as in this case, it must be a further indication to the Bulgarian people that any kind of liberalization is hopeless because if they do develop to any point where there is really some significant freedom that it will be snuffed out or crushed by the Soviet Union. And I'm sure that this is part of the reason, of course, the Soviet Union did this was because they

wanted to be sure that this pattern would not be repeated in other countries. And while the liberalization process has not been as developed in Bulgaria as in other countries in Eastern Europe, nevertheless it's incipiently there, and there have been--. For instance, there has been more writers, writing freely; there have been more poets, and there have been expressions of a much freer kind, also, from the young people in Bulgaria. And I think that the Soviet Union wanted to be very sure that nothing happened in Bulgaria, the gateway to Turkey and Greece and all that had happened in Czechoslovakia. And they wanted, of course, to show what would be the consequences; if it did happen. I'm sure this lesson has not been lost on the Bulgarian people.

There was an attempt made to overthrow the Bulgarian regime a few months after I left there. This was in April of '65. It was a small group--a number of military men were involved in it. It was put down. It did not succeed, of course, and it was denied even though later they brought maybe fifteen or twenty people to trial.

P: Were these people not Communist Party members?

A: Yes, they were Communist Party members, and they said that they just wanted to have more of a Titoist type if independence--

P: Which would be an improvement.

A: Yes, it would have been an improvement. But this failed, and, of course, I don't know how many other plots may have failed. I'm sure that there are people in Bulgaria who would like to achieve their independence, many people. I would suppose that probably eighty-five percent of the people are anti-Communist. I think the number of Communist Party members and believers is very small. And even those who do belong, I think that

the big majority of them are no longer really what you would call true believers.

P: Do they feel a need for Soviet Union protection? Do they fear Western power?

A: Oh, I would say the majority of the people do not fear Western power. The only ones that would fear it are the little handful of Communists who believe their own propaganda, but I think that's a very small number.

P: Mrs. Anderson, you had a fairly long career in foreign service. I'd like to draw on some of your opinions and assessments; particularly I would like to ask you how Lyndon Johnson is regarded abroad?

A: Well, of course, I served abroad a relatively short time after President Johnson became President. You see, I returned home from Bulgaria actually in December of 1964 and he had been in office about one year while I was abroad. And I really think that in a Communist country, especially that first year after President Kennedy died--. I don't think that this was a very good year to evaluate. I think people simply didn't feel that they knew him. They did have this period of uncertainty, I think, and some anxiety. It is certainly true that President Kennedy was very highly regarded, as I indicated by the people who came to express their sympathy on his death.

P: Did this develop after his meeting with Kruschev in Austria?

A: Oh, no. No, I think that this was a gradual thing. It's hard to say that it was any one thing. I think it was a certain particular ability that President Kennedy had to project the kind of an image--himself--as the President of this country which he wanted to project. Perhaps the public relations people that had worked with him had a lot to do with this. His pictures, of course, had a lot to do with it. His youth, I think,

had a great deal to do with it. I remember that many of the people [who] spoke to me at that time of President Kennedy's death spoke about his youthfulness, and how this fact that a young man was the President of the United States, how this had given them a new hope for the young people, and that this was a new generation that had taken over. And I think the fact that many of his speeches, especially in the beginning, stressed this. I think that this had made an impact and in the same way, that just because they had, I think, been so attached to President Kennedy. It was really quite fantastic, you know, I can remember people saying we felt almost as if he was our President, too. Well, this is amazing in a Communist country. And to follow a man, a President, about whom the people had had this kind of attachment, this was very difficult, very difficult; and I don't believe that the Bulgarians ever appreciated the great strength of President Johnson. I don't think they did. I don't think that this ever--I didn't feel that it ever came through. I did not feel while I was in Bulgaria that there was hostility against him even though there were some rather crude attempts in the propaganda to picture him as a warmonger. Vietnam was beginning to be an issue that the Bulgarian propaganda made a good bit of, and there were pictures, propaganda pictures, exhibits and things like that, and we did have, I believe, one or two demontrations. In fact, I think we had one violent demonstration. Windows were broken again. We had three altogether during the time I was in Bulgaria.

P: What about during your time at the United Nations? Have you gathered an impression of how foreign countries regard Mr. Johnson?

A: During the time that I was at the United Nations, I think that the Vietnam

war, of course, became much more of an issue, and I think that many of the diplomats at the United Nations really were obsessed with the Vietnam War. Now, this was not true of all the diplomats. Certainly the Asian diplomats had quite a different view of the Vietnam War than those, say, in Europe or Eastern Europe or the Communist countries. Of course, one expected the Communist countries to be opposed.

P: Did they feel the Vietnam War was directly Mr. Johnson's doing or responsibility?

A: No, I don't think that they did probably if you pinned them down. But still they felt, you know, he was the President, and I think that because the escalation of the War which they thought--which I think they were mistaken--but they thought that we were the ones that had escalated the war. Most of them were very poorly informed about it and I think that they tended to sort of, you might say, blame President Johnson.

P: Were those people here in this country?

A: I think that the United Nations diplomats. Of course, they read the American newspapers and listen to the American TV, watch TV, and listen to the American radio, they get most of their information from American sources, and they talk primarily to each other. They really are not open to very many outside sources, you might say. This is sort of an ingrown sort of club, in a way, situation.

P: Then it's the American information that you say did not keep them fully informed?

A: Oh, I think there's no doubt about it. I also should say that I think that President Johnson, until very late in 1967, when I began to feel that his talking to the American people about the War was beginning to get

through to them. For some reason, which I don't fully understand, I felt that for a long time President Johnson did not--maybe because he didn't like television as a medium, I just don't know--he didn't speak to the people very often about the war. Secretary Rusk did, but in speeches, and not very often on television excepting the hearings. I think whenever the Administration's case, you might say, or interpretation was presented to the people, it was too often presented by others than the President.

I do believe that the President has the greatest power for educating the American people, and I feel that if President Johnson had, perhaps, started sooner to talk to people, explain--. I think many people were so confused, in large part because of television coverage on this. I think this played a very great role, and in order to try to overcome that so that people wouldn't be so confused, I think that possibly if the President had talked to them more often--. He became so effective in the last two or three speeches that he made about it, but he didn't do this in the early phases.

P: While you were in the United Nations, and serving as an alternate to the United States delegation, you've said that you did attend many of the general sessions and that you even served on the Security Council. I'd like to ask you your views of Secretary-General U Thant in that capacity, and what your assessment is of his reappointment.

A: I think Secretary-General U Thant acted with great impropriety time and time again in expressing the views that he did regarding the Vietnam War. I think he became obsessed with this war. Whether this is because he is an Asian and from a small Asian country; whether he had sort of

inherited the psychology of the Asian -- in a country which had been formerly a colonial country and had a sort of a built-in reaction against the white man. I sometimes felt that this might be it, actually. I didn't ever get to know him personally well enough to know how much of this was a matter of his--you know--personal background, personal experiences, and all. But I felt that he was deeply what I would call prejudiced, and I felt that time and time again he was blind. I felt that he seemed to always come down on the side of the Communists. I don't think he was a Communist. I don't think he is in favor of Communism; but I felt that his various positions that he took time and time again were anything but helpful to the United States. I think they were very damaging. And I think that he was out of bounds in his way of acting as Secretary-General.

P: Do you see the role of Secretary General as more or less an impartial arbiter, and should not speak up.

A: No, I think there are times when the Secretary-General should take initiatives. I don't mean that he should just be an impartial arbiter. But I think he should be fair. And I think that he was not fair. And I don't think that--. I really think that the American officials showed enormous forbearance and tolerance of him. I must say that there were times when I would have understood if someone had disagreed publicly with him. I guess occasionally we did, but we were always exquisitely courteous about it.

Well, at the time when we were urging U Thant's reappointment, at first, frankly, I was very puzzled by this. I couldn't quite see why we were so anxious to have him re-elected or reappointed. Gradually, I

guess, when I began to consider the possibilities, the alternatives, and also, I could see that if we didn't go along with U Thant that there would be undoubtedly a prolonged crisis in the UN to try to find someone we would support because almost anybody that we would support automatically meant that the Soviet Union wouldn't support them. So there would have been a problem.

And then there was also the fact that the African countries were beginning to feel that it was their turn to have an African Secretary-General, and there were several candidates who wanted to be. There were a number of candidates from other countries and areas, too, but none of them seemed to really have quite the stature that was needed.

And so I guess I became, more or less, at least, acquiescent. There wasn't anything I could have done about it anyway. This was a decision over which I had no--. I wasn't consulted naturally. But I have an idea that we must have regretted since then that we supported him so enthusiastically. I may be wrong.

P: Do you suppose he was struggling to lean--that he has been struggling to lean the other way--to not gain the title or the implied association of the United States with the Western powers, since he is still outside the Communist countries.

A: I think he thought that. Oftentimes, I think that he thought that in order to maintain his prestige with the other countries, particularly with the Communist bloc, and in order to avoid being called a stooge of the United States. I think he felt that oftentimes we supported him more than they did, which is true. He perhaps leaned over backwards. Then he may have simply--I have to say that he probably had an entirely

different view of the Vietnam War, for instance, than we did, or that I did. But I found it very difficult to understand him.

P: Of course, right during the time of his reappointment, we were involved in negotiations on the financial situation of the United Nations. Did you become involved in that?

A: No, this was handled primarily by, I believe, the fifth committee in which I was not actively involved.

P: While serving on the Security Council, was this during the period of the Israeli crisis, Middle East crisis?

A: Primarily, yes.

P: Could you just elaborate a little on what did occur during those times that you were involved in?

A: As I remember, the first time, it was one of the earlier incidents in 1967 when I guess Syria had attacked Israel. This was one of those times when there were several weeks of meetings. I didn't attend them all because I believe it sort of dragged on, and I had made other plans, actually for a family vacation, so my period there was sort-of interrupted. I didn't attend all the meetings at that time. Later on, of course, when the really acute crisis occurred in May and June of 1967, at the time of the June war. The whole mission was quite involved at that time, and while I was not, what you might say, always present, I did attend quite a number of the meetings, just as a member of the delegation.

P: Do you think our posture in that situation was the best way to handle the crisis?

A: I think that it was brilliantly handled by the United States. I think that Ambassador Goldberg was just superb and I think that the fact that

President Johnson really, apparently, had so much confidence in him--and worked so closely with him--during that time was very important. I think that it's hard to imagine anyone else that could have gone through that period as well as Ambassador Goldberg there at the United Nations. I admire very much the way in which he handled it, and I think that the policy which the United States developed was right. And I think it was a great victory, really, for United States diplomacy that in the end the policy was our policy essentially with only a few changes--basic. This was accepted by all the members of the Security Council, and by the Arab countries, and by Israel. Of course, this took a long time. It was in November of 1967 when this resolution was finally unanimously adopted. And it's, of course, still not implemented. But at least this was a step along the way and the principles that were embodied are still the ones that eventually I think, will have to be the basis of the solution.

P: Did you feel that Ambassador Goldberg had a good relationship with Lyndon Johnson?

A: I think, on the whole, I would say yes. I think the best thing about it was that it was candid, and you know they were both, very frank with each other. And I think that they were in almost--well, more than just daily communication--they were very close in communications at times of crisis, particularly, I think, during the Middle Eastern crisis. I am aware that they had some differences on other aspects of our policies, such as Vietnam, for example, but I think, so far as I am aware, that their relationship was, I think, a constructive one on both sides.

P: You've indicated your admiration for Mr. Goldberg as Ambassador. How would you assess his contributions during that period, and could you

compare them to Mr. Ball?

A: I think Ambassador Goldberg was undoubtedly one of the best representatives that we have ever had at the United Nations. While I admired Adlai Stevenson, and was very devoted to him, and had great affection for him, respect, I think that Ambassador Goldberg's achievements as a US Chief representative were probably even greater than Adlai's. I think Adlai was widely respected and loved by everyone, but I think that Ambassador Goldberg's fairness, and his tolerance, and his real capacity to understand and to mediate differences made a very deep impression. And this is one of the main things that the UN must do, you see, is to develop the understanding and respect for the views, opposing views, and to find a way to compose those differences. And I think Ambassador Goldberg's special genius, was of course as a negotiator and a mediator. But his, also profound involvement in law and justice--. I think that these strong qualities made a great impression on all of his colleagues at the United Nations. And I think just as it was hard for President Johnson to follow President Kennedy, I think it was hard for Ambassador Goldberg to follow Adlai Stevenson because Adlai was, you know, so eloquent. And while Ambassador Goldberg was not an eloquent speaker, he won the respect of all the delegates by his character and by his quality of mind and spirit, his compassion, and his enormous patience, persistence, and his dedication to these principles of law and peace.

It was interesting, incidentally, while I just spoke in quite a critical vein of U Thant, I do want to give him credit for recognizing Ambassador Goldberg's worth. One time I was sort of taking a group of Congressmen who were visiting the United Nations over to visit U Thant.

This had been arranged in advance, and Secretary U Thant greeted the Congressmen and said that he wanted them to know what a high regard he had for Ambassador Goldberg. And he said that he had served at the United Nations, I believe, for more than ten years, because he had been there as the representative of Burma before he became Secretary-General. He said that in all the years that he had been there--it may have been more than ten, but he said that in all the years that he had been there, that he thought that Ambassador Goldberg was the ablest representative of any country that he had ever known.

P: How would you compare Mr. Goldberg, Ambassador Goldberg, to our current Ambassador, George Ball?

A: Well, I don't think I could really compare them as representatives at the United Nations because I didn't really serve at the UN while Ambassador Ball was there. You see, while I was still actually the US representative on the Trusteeship Council, I was in Washington serving primarily here and then I resigned at the end of September just about the same time that Ambassador Ball resigned. So I never had the pleasure of serving under him. I have enormous respect for Ambassador Ball, and I thought that his handling of the Czechoslovakian invasion in the Security Council last August was absolutely brilliant and extraordinary. And I'm sure that if he had stayed at the UN that he would have continued to make a brilliant record I suppose that he may have had some difficulties when he first came; I don't know, but I just wonder if he might have because he just published a book in which he had expressed a good many views and sometimes this is difficult.

P: On April 15, you were appointed the Special Assistant to the Secretary of

State. What were your responsibilities in this area?

A: They were never very clearly defined, alas. I would have liked to have them a little more clear cut. I think that primarily they were in the field of public liaison, you would say--community groups. I did some briefings and made some speeches, and I thought of this period in large part as one in which I was there preparing myself to do more things. I had been feeling at the United Nations as if I had become a little too specialized, in a way, because I had had to devote too much of my time, or much of my time, to the African and the colonial question so I was very glad to have a period in the Department which was relatively short, just a few months. I did a great deal of reading and studying, and I sort of felt as if I got back in a better sort of broader position so far as my own background is concerned.

P: You spoke of being a liaison--from what to what?

A: Well, you know, the State Department has lots of contacts with citizens groups and community groups, and I think that if I had stayed, I probably would have done a considerable amount of speaking with students and colleges and groups of that kind. But since the summer months are not very heavy for speaking, I didn't do an enormous lot. I did some television interviews--went on a television tour that was arranged by the public affairs people. And I probably would have done a good deal more of that if I had stayed.

P: Since your first appointment in 1949, you have served under several Secretaries of State. I would like to know what your opinions are from Dean Rusk, Mr. Dulles.

A: I never served under Mr. Dulles.

P: No, you would not have been--it would have been in-between times, wouldn't it?

A: I've served under just two secretaries of state, Secretary Dean Acheson and Secretary Dean Rusk.

P: What is your assessment of Secretary Rusk? And how is he regarded abroad?

A: I admire him very much and respect him very deeply, and I have a very great affection for him. I think he's an enormously strong man. I sometimes wonder where he really got the resources to stand up under these last few years which have certainly been among the most difficult that any Secretary of State has ever had to endure.

P: This is in regard to Vietnam?

A: Yes. I have appreciated these last few months here in the Department because I was a little more closely associated with him than I was while I was at the UN. While I saw him on a number of occasions at the UN, and while I was, you know, more active in trusteeship matters, I did always feel that he was so involved with the Vietnam situation that this was constantly uppermost in his mind. And I felt that it was understandable but I was sorry that I didn't get to have more association with him. Actually, I think I felt that I saw more of him almost when I was our Minister to Bulgaria than I did here while I was at the UN. That's natural, I suppose, because at the UN, Ambassador Goldberg, naturally, had a very close relationship with him, but I didn't (very close.)

P: Has he, to use a more common term, come across well in his office of Secretary of State in matters of foreign affairs?

A I think so. I believe that the only people in this country that don't really admire him and respect him are the ones that would be classified as not only just doves, but rather extreme doves, who are really just projecting their opposition to the policy of the Vietnam War on him

because he was one of the chief defenders of the policy.

P: In other nations is our Secretary of State regarded to be very influential in our foreign affairs decisions?

A: Yes, I think so. I think that I did have an opportunity at the United Nations to see how highly regarded Secretary Rusk was by other foreign ministers, representatives from other countries. The Secretary, as you know, spends several weeks each fall at the General Assembly in New York meeting with the foreign ministers and in some cases Prime Ministers that come there to the General Assembly. I felt that he was highly regarded, and the representatives from other countries value these opportunities to meet with him privately and individually. I had some role once or twice in arranging meetings with the Bulgarian Foreign Minister, and I knew that he and the Prime Minister--who was there on two occasions--really, they were just as anxious to meet with him as if they had been from a Western country.

P: Mrs. Anderson, as we have already noted, you were the first woman to hold the rank of an ambassador, and also the youngest person. Do you feel that women make good diplomats, good ambassadors?

A: I always feel as if--I mean, I'm not a femininist; I feel that you can't generalize about whether women make good ambassadors and diplomats. I think it depends on the woman. It depends on the man, too. Not all men make good diplomats, and not all women do. But I think that from what I know of the records of the other women who have served as ambassadors, I think most of them have acquitted themselves well.

P: You don't feel as if a woman has another type of an outlook or a different approach to some problems?

A: I think women are sometimes--you know, have special capacities. I think women tend to be rather natural at human relations, and I think that to a certain extent diplomacy is a matter of good human relations.

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By Eugenie Anderson

to the

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