

BDOHP Biographical Details and Interview Index

CAMPBELL, Juliet Jeanne d'Auvergne (Born 23 May 1935)

Career (with, on right, relevant pages in interview)

Daughter of Maj.-Gen. Wilfred d'Auvergne Collings
and of Nancy Draper Bishop.

Married 1983, Prof. Alexander Elmslie Campbell.

Entry Foreign Office (Western Department), 1957	pp 2-6
EEC Delegation, Brussels, 1961	pp 6-15
FO (Mutual Aid Department), 1963	pp 15-17
Second, later First Secretary, Bangkok, 1964	pp 17-20
UK delegation to NATO, Paris, 1966	pp 20-21
News Department, FO, 1967	pp 21-25
Head of Chancery, The Hague, 1970	pp 25-29
European Integration Department, FCO, 1974 (including general reflections on Britain and European integration)	pp 29-39
Counsellor (Information), Paris, 1977	pp 39-45
Royal College of Defence Studies, 1981	pp 45-46
Counsellor, Jakarta, 1982	pp 47-50
Head of Training Department, FCO, 1984	pp 50-59
Ambassador to Luxembourg, 1988 (CMG 1988)	pp 59-64
Retired 1991	

The interview closes with reflections (pp 64-68) on changing attitudes towards the employment of women in the FO/FCO.

This is an interview with Mrs J J d'A Campbell, who retired as our ambassador to Luxembourg in 1991, by Jimmy Jamieson on 3 March 2003.

Copyright: Juliet Campbell

JJ Your CV says that you went to various schools before going to Oxford in 1954. Did you study something relevant to a future career in the Diplomatic Service or had you no idea at that time of going into the Diplomatic Service?

JC I studied PPE, politics, philosophy and economics at Oxford and I think that I did that with a view to preparing myself for a career, but I certainly at that stage hadn't much idea what it was going to be. I should perhaps explain the various schools were because I was brought up abroad quite a lot. My father was army and during my teens the family lived in Beirut in Lebanon so that as a teenager a lot of the brightest young men I knew were diplomats learning Arabic at MECAS in the Lebanon, which was the Arabic School in the mountains above Beirut.

JJ The spy school?.

JC The so-called spy school, that's right. Also a sort of grooming ground for future permanent secretaries but I think that's what put it into my head to try for the Foreign Office.

JJ So you already had a background of being abroad and knowing what other people were like outside our little island, so that, in a sense, was a good training ground.

JC Yes, I think it was.

JJ So then you went straight from Oxford into the Diplomatic Service?

JC Yes, I did.

JJ And that was in 1957 and you were there for about three years until 1961 in fact. What did you do first of all?

JC Well, I was very fortunate because I was put into the Western Department which was then the Department dealing with western Europe. I was given what was, I think, essentially a training desk but it had least nominal responsibility for France, Switzerland, the Benelux countries and all their overseas territories other than those in Africa, which was a splendid pile of things. Of course if anything important happened somebody took it away from me and dealt with it. But it was a very interesting time because it was a time of great upheaval in France, leading up to the Colons' revolt in Algeria, the time of General De Gaulle. Also I joined the Foreign Office in the year of the signing of the Treaty of Rome. Our interests were beginning to change and thereafter there followed a pattern for my career of increasing involvement in European Community matters.

JJ Yes, the Western Department obviously covered many of the countries where you served subsequently. But that's interesting, 1957. What was the overall view in the Foreign Office of not signing up to the Treaty of Rome then?

JC Well, it was the time that Reggie Maudling, then the Paymaster General, was trying to set up EFTA, the rival organisation, and there was the current jargon about being at sixes and sevens, the six being the Community and the seven being EFTA, and building bridges between the two, and all that sort of thing. I think it gradually dawned on people, probably quite quickly, though everything seemed slow when you were at that stage of starting off on a career, that the EFTA way forward wasn't going to solve our problems. And then, I suppose it was 1959 or 1960 that the Prime Minister, Macmillan, began the exploratory talks, contacts, with other members of the Community with a view to opening negotiations, which started in 1961.

JJ And of course at that stage free trade was all we wanted from our European connections, wasn't it?

JC And influence.

JJ And influence, of course, but through trade rather than political leverage, combining as

the six were determined to do. They wanted their political hands free if you like, I suppose.

JC Yes. Clearly there were political problems even then when the Community was in such an embryo stage. There were many difficult political problems but when we actually did get into the negotiations, we will be coming to that later, one of the most interesting things that stayed in my mind about it was that what we were actually negotiating about was very, very largely concerned with Commonwealth and Colonial problems, not problems with Britain.

JJ But in 1957 it was still in a sense the post-war period, five of the six, perhaps not the French who were going to dominate it, were very keen for us to join and help build the new post-war Europe. Did they actively encourage in any specific way, or did they just say, 'We would like you to join, we need you'? It seemed to be a golden opportunity that, with hindsight, we missed.

JC I quite agree with you on that. And we had observers there for much of the negotiations for the Treaty of Rome and then we pulled them out at the last moment, assuming, I think, that the negotiations were going to fail. I think even our friends in the Community, for a long time, suspected us of being wreckers, with a certain amount of justice I think I must say.

JJ Well perhaps they were aware, even with Churchill as prime minister, that he encouraged everybody in Europe to join up but made it clear that he didn't think Britain itself should. And this was perhaps a major stumbling block. I was going to ask you about Western Department from the point of view of you finding your feet. Did you have much formal training or was it purely learning on the job, looking at papers, preparing first drafts, minutes and that sort of thing?

JC I don't remember any formal training at all. I vividly remember the first morning I turned up there and I went to see the Assistant, ie the Assistant Head of Department, who was a very nice man called Martin Anderson. In a rather fatherly way he gave me a large pile of papers and told me to go away and read them and come back at the end of the morning and discuss them and what I might supposedly do with them, and that really was how I learned, and it was quite a good way of learning actually, if you had somebody who was really prepared to

take you through things. The other thing, which was a pattern in that Department, which I think nobody seems to have time for now, is the afternoon tea...

JJ Ah, yes, I've heard about them...

JC And it happened actually in my office through much of my time in Western Department. It was a third room with three desks in it, but a big third room and a messenger wearing a frock-coat used to totter in with an enormous jug of tea and then so did the other members of the Department, the Head of Department, the Under-Secretary, visiting ambassadors, and it was a wonderful way for young people like myself to learn because there were Berlin crises, there were stand-offs with the Russians and we were hearing people debating these things, and what to do. And I do think one learnt a great deal. But somehow today's world doesn't seem to allow time for that. I once tried to re-introduce it in one of my Departments later on but it didn't work at all.

JJ But you had gone past the time when young diplomats would actually go to tea dances in the office, on Wednesday afternoons I think.

JC No, we didn't have tea dances but we did come in remarkably late in the morning. There wasn't much point in getting to your desk before about 10 because the telegrams had to come round and be distributed, and the departmental ladies as they were called, the secretaries, came in about half past nine and they would sort out your in-tray, so if you came in at about 10 things were ready and you could get started. But at the other end of the day it was already quite a late culture, one didn't leave until half past six or seven.

JJ It always was part of the culture and it still is, despite efforts to cut down on overtime. If you left before half past six you were not really doing a job. That was the attitude, wasn't it?

JC That's right, but it was something to do with the shift of hours, everything was late. And also one went off quite freely for a fairly long lunch hour. It was much more leisured, certainly at my level it was.

JJ A lot has changed since then, I'm afraid. So after that good first training job and learning all about Europe from a political point of view you went off in 1961 to Brussels. That was your first post of international diplomacy, if you like. You were a member of the UK Delegation to the Common Market when we were trying formally to join the European Community. What was your particular job then?

JC It was rather an odd one really because I was attached to the Secretariat for the negotiations. There was quite a lot of debate between Britain and the six about how those negotiations should actually be conducted. It was decided very late on that the sensible thing was to ask the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers in Brussels to provide a special Secretariat for our conference to which would be added a couple of British representatives, and I was one of those two. It was a small team of about 10 people run by a Belgian and there was a Frenchman, a German, there was a Luxembourger, there was one each in fact, and then a man called Jimmy Newing and myself, who were the two Brits on this team.

JJ So what did you do with them?

JC Well, you may well wonder. What one's job was, what the Secretariat was supposed to do was to produce the minutes, produce position papers, to service, rather as a cabinet secretariat would service, this conference which met, as it turned out, about monthly at Ministerial level, about weekly at senior official level and then spawned all sorts of working groups that were going on through the week as well. So it was quite hectic but with the strange monthly pattern of working up to a frenzy for each Ministerial meeting. The British idea, surprise, surprise, was that the Secretariat would be strictly neutral and we would all work as a happy team at arms length from everybody. As a result of which Jimmy and I were, for much of the time, at semi-arms length from the British delegation, who none the less administered us in all practical ways. But of course that's not at all how the six played it. On the contrary their members were very close to their national delegations, national negotiating teams. Indeed something else happened, which is not what the Brits had expected, which was that before each negotiating session with Britain the six would be closeted for hour after hour after hour negotiating a common position to put to the British. We had, of course, hoped it would be seven negotiating on an equal basis, but it wasn't, it was

six versus one.

JJ Do you remember the joint secretariat taking part in those discussions as well?

JC Absolutely not. The Secretariat, other than Jimmy and myself, were servicing the meetings of the six as well. So Jimmy and I did endless crossword puzzles, negotiated the text of records, rang up the British delegation to say 'it looks as if they are going to break up in about half an hour. I have just been told you should be ready to come up in an hour's time', all this sort of thing. So it was pretty odd and when the British came in, and you had this huge room in which the full meetings took place, the British delegation was at the far end and I would be sitting up at the end of the table with whoever was in the chair from the six. I acted as a sort of conduit of information. Every now and again somebody would consult me about what the British delegation were likely to think about this, and how they would react to that.

JJ Did you answer openly those sorts of questions?

JC Yes, I did the best I could and I would then ring up the delegation to check. I knew everybody in the British delegation very well and indeed spent my social life with them to a very considerable extent.

JJ Interesting, because I did that job later, and I wouldn't breathe a word of what we were thinking about, which would be regarded by John Robinson and co. as treason...

JC John Robinson was very much one of the characters of the first negotiations. He and Christopher Audland were the two senior First Secretaries who were there on the spot. They would sometimes give me things to say or trail. But one was being used a bit by both sides.

JJ And you mentioned different sub-committees of this Secretariat. Did you have to jump from one little committee meeting to another then, to find out what was going on or contribute...

JC ...Jimmy and I got allocated; I don't think there were ever more than two strands actually going at the same moment and Jimmy and I got allocated to different subjects. I tended to be the Brit on a lot of the tariffs and trades issues, all those endless discussions about cricket bats and kangaroo tail soup and those sorts of things. There was a tremendous amount of that. Indeed, as I was saying earlier, my very strong recollection of the whole thing is that almost all the negotiations on the ground were really about the interests of the Commonwealth, whether there should be special terms for the New Zealanders, for instance, what were the key exports of different categories of countries, whether the African ones would join in the special status that the French African countries had, all those sorts of things.

JJ It must have been very difficult to keep your focus on all that, but how long did these talks last? You say they met monthly?

JC Fifteen months.

JJ For fifteen months and when you say monthly was that a few days each month or two weeks out of every month or what?

JC Well, when the Ministers came over it was usually, as far as I remember, about three days, something like that. Who came varied a bit but it was usually Ted Heath...

JJ He was leading the delegation?

JC Yes, he was called Lord Privy Seal and worked out of the Foreign Office. Other ministers came from time to time - and I remember Christopher Soames was there a certain amount, I remember Duncan Sandys there - depending on what the subjects were coming up at different meetings. It was absolutely fascinating stuff, being a fly on the wall as it were.

JJ But you said that the problems with the Colonies and the Commonwealth were very high on the agenda. In a way, I suppose the French had protected their dependencies during the formation of the EC. What about other questions that we had to deal with subsequently, the

role of sterling, the role of nuclear energy, coal and steel, all that sort of stuff. Did that not figure very much? Did you have the occasional expert out from London?

JC There was certainly some negotiation on coal and steel and there was a strand on Euratom, and indeed, quite late on in the negotiations, another chap was sent out as a Brit to service that strand of negotiations. I don't think it got very far. I was never involved with it. On a subject like agriculture, which was of deep interest to Britain, what one has got to remember is that the EEC was so unformed at that stage. The six had signed the Treaty of Rome, they had got things going, but they were still at the stage of negotiating amongst themselves the major regulations that shaped the way the Community structure was later developed. The different agricultural regulations were being agreed at the same time as our negotiations, and some of our people were desperately trying to persuade the six to tie up these negotiations in ways that suited us. Some of the worst crises in the negotiations were when the six were going ahead with their own business, particularly the Finance Regulation. I can't remember exactly when that was, summer 1962 I think it was, or something like that. But how the Community was going to be financed was a major concern to Britain, and one of the major crises in our negotiations was really because the six were tying up rules that we found very worrying. Also, even later, the price levels were set for the agricultural products, which, of course, made an enormous difference to how the Common Agriculture Policy later worked.

JJ I suppose, by the time we got to agriculture and finance, it might have begun to dawn on Whitehall that we had made a mistake not being in there at the beginning, drawing up the details of how the community would operate so that it wouldn't operate against our interests.

JC I'm sure it had dawned, or we wouldn't have been in there negotiating. I think it was very clear already that an enormous mistake had been made.

JJ Yes. And eventually it was wound down. How did you find working with your continental colleagues in the secretariat? Were they helpful? You had to sit down and actually draft these minutes, hadn't you?

JC One almost negotiated the minutes, because one's interest was to try, and if you have done a secretariat job you will know it, to get in wording that reflects the interests of your people, whereas the others were desperately trying to put in things that suited them more or less. And so we would negotiate a draft that then went forward for approval. And that was always quite interesting, actually.

JJ Did you have to sneak back to the delegation in the dead of night and show them the latest draft and say, 'what do you think...'

JC I would use the 'phone, and, yes, very much that sort of thing from time to time. I would discover how much something or other mattered. Another business which was quite labour intensive, was keeping an eye on the translation of all the documents, because when a paper was produced it was quite important what it said in English as well as what it said in French, and whether the English translation was the acceptable translation from our point of view. And so one was keeping a sort of eye on quite a lot of things while this went on.

JJ Fortunately, your French was very good and you were able to spot the inadequacies of the translation one way or the other.

JC My French was pretty good, much better than it is now I must admit. But it was also technical translation. It was also partly a matter of knowing how the words had been translated in the negotiating sessions, so I do think that the translators who were working on a different floor had a much more difficult job in some ways because they didn't necessarily know how the words were being used in the negotiating session.

JJ They didn't have access to... presumably each discussion was taped for historical records if nothing else, so they could go back to the original English or French to see what phrases had been used?

JC Yes, things were indeed recorded, and of course everything was being interpreted, and there were admirable, very good, interpreters operating, but people tended to listen to whichever language they thought best and sometimes people didn't listen to their own. They

listened to one they understood where they thought the interpretation was particularly good.

JJ So that was another hard work baptism of fire for you...

JC At times, certainly there were the nights where you went straight through and worked on. The crises of that negotiation were very intense and very emotional. I think there are two things I would like to add about the atmosphere. One was that there was still in Brussels at that time a sort of tremendous feeling of having just created something. Members of the six had almost all been through the Val Duchesse negotiations (leading up to the Treaty of Rome); they had been through a real baptism of fire together, they knew each other very well. It was a sort of world in which people were prepared to work fearfully hard for a cause that they deeply believed in. That was really quite infectious and I think that the British delegation also felt that to a very considerable extent. It was a very remarkable delegation. A lot of extremely able people and with a very high esprit de corps.

JJ This was part of the reconstruction of Europe after the war in a way wasn't it?

JC Yes it was. It certainly was. I think perhaps we are coming to the breakdown, and I would like to talk about that a little bit. But the other thing I wanted to say is that while we were negotiating about soup and cricket bats and aluminium and this that and the other, we all knew perfectly well that the fate of the negotiations really depended on things that were happening totally elsewhere. The relations between Britain and America, the extent that de Gaulle was concerned and saw Britain as a Trojan horse, de Gaulle's personal position within France, Franco - German relations, a lot of things were going on. And all these things were happening at other places and they were really setting the framework for our negotiation, which seemed immensely important if you were there. Clearly it was immensely important, but it was only one part of this much bigger network of things that was going on. De Gaulle, as you know, in the end said, 'No'. It wasn't clear for a very long time whether he would or would not say no. I think we were all perfectly clear through most of the negotiations that he had the gravest doubts about Britain coming in. But the French, most of the time, negotiated, it seemed, in pretty good faith. And, as I say, it was a technical negotiation. People were looking for technical solutions, and on the whole we had more or less found them that

autumn of 1961. This was really when the agricultural dossier came to the fore, and it looked as if solutions were in sight for most of these problems. It was when we came back after that Christmas break that de Gaulle gave one of his Delphic press conferences from which it was pretty clear that what he was actually saying was that he wasn't prepared to let Britain into the community. We had a very odd couple of weeks before that was formalised in the negotiations and then Couve de Murville, who was the French Foreign Minister, came and essentially put the knife in. That meeting I remember tremendously well, and I was again up there, sitting in this long room, sitting up beside the chairman of the conference, with Heath and the British delegation at the far end. The light was streaming in from behind Couve de Murville and he had Olivier Wormser with him and Bernard Clappier as far as I remember, and from what Couve said it was totally and completely clear that he was bringing these negotiations to an end. But all the other five made it clear that they were deeply unhappy about this and then, when the meeting came to an end, and Heath etc got up, they were quite close to the door, and all the other five came and shook Heath's hand, shook the British delegation's hands. Couve de Murville and Wormser sat there in their seats, extremely uncomfortable, sort of giggling, sort of chatting to each other, but, I think, highly embarrassed. That was very memorable.

JJ Which year was that, 1963?

JC It was the beginning of 1963.

JJ At this time, was not Macmillan in some discussions with the Americans about Polaris missiles?

JC Yes, that was 1962.

JJ Wasn't this one of the factors which made de Gaulle believe that we were not really Europeans, looking towards the Americans...

JC This is all the Rambouillet saga, which was 1962, and the other major thing that happened in the autumn of 1962 was the referendum in France, and it was about some

constitutional change, I think; I don't remember what. What it actually turned out to be was a sort of plebiscite for de Gaulle, and de Gaulle having won that very well, seemed immensely strengthened. One of the arguments that was much debated in the British delegation was whether, if tactically we had pushed the momentum of those negotiations much quicker, and had got them through before de Gaulle had felt so reinforced, whether we would have had a greater chance of success. I think it was probably felt by most of the delegation that we would have had a much better chance of success, that having let them run quite so long was a mistake, because, as I say, de Gaulle became so greatly strengthened internally.

JJ I was going to ask you whether in fact you thought, with hindsight perhaps, that had we had a more political approach, rather than becoming involved in these very technical discussions about kangaroo meat and so on, that we would have been more successful?

JC I think that is a mistake. Everybody knew that this was totally political and if I was negotiating on kangaroo meat, the politics were certainly there all the time, and nobody was in any doubt about that, so I don't think that was really the issue. There is one other thing I would like to tell you about because it was one of the most remarkable meetings I ever attended in my life. After the meeting at which Couve put the knife in, Edward Heath called a meeting of the British delegation. And now I was totally part of it, the first time I think I was ever there for a delegation meeting. It was really very remarkable because Ted Heath analysed what had happened and he went over this business, that I have just been talking about, of whether the negotiating tactics were right, and he said maybe, or maybe not, but when it became pretty clear, as it did, that de Gaulle was going to veto things the next tactic was to keep the five together with us so that it was totally clear that this was a breach caused by the French, and only the French. And there, he said, we had had a very considerable success. Next, he said, the question would be to see what one could do in the way of other arrangements, but he personally was totally convinced that it would not be possible for Britain to enter the Common Market as long as de Gaulle was alive. Therefore the next thing was to go back and look at Britain's own problems that we had, to some extent, been looking to membership of the community to deal with, some of the economic problems of Britain, how to re-invigorate the British economy. Now we would have to go home and look at these problems and tackle them on our own and in due course, when de Gaulle was dead, things

might change. It was very impressive, actually, and though Heath in his latter political career became a rather sad figure, I always thought, a figure with a deep grievance against Margaret Thatcher and also a man with a sort of obsession about things European, who could look a figure of fun, I think the Heath who led that negotiation in 1961 to 1963 was a man at the height of his powers who did a really splendid job and was extremely impressive.

JJ He kept his eye on the global picture, really, didn't he? This was the real thing that underpinned his success, I think.

JC Absolutely. This in many ways was one of the most interesting things I was ever involved in. The negotiations were part of the network of other negotiations, and almost everything the British delegation said had to be measured not only by how it played in Europe, but also how it played in Canberra, how it played in Ottawa, how it played in Westminster. The phrase at the time was that there were the different constituencies, and you always had to consider how everything worked against the different constituencies.

JJ Did you feel, at that time, that outside say the Foreign Office and the DTI and the MAFF, the rest of Whitehall was in the right mental frame of mind to go into Europe, or were they being dragged along, kicking and screaming, saying, 'really this is not our game, not something we really want to do?'

JC Well, of course at the place where I was I didn't really see anything of the rest of Whitehall. I saw the people who came to and fro on the negotiations, and I think most of them were certainly committed to its success. The flying knights, as they were called, were an extremely interesting bunch and they came from all the departments in London. There were certainly some who were from the Colonial Office/Commonwealth Relations Office who had very considerable problems, so there were some who dragged their feet, without a doubt.

JJ When it came to the actual preparatory work, the paper work, the briefs that were prepared for the different departments in Whitehall, they put in their views for the discussions in Brussels, that was presumably done and looked at and was as good as it could

be?

JC Well, there was clearly a lot of preparation in London.

JJ So although the negotiations between the UK and the six had failed, no doubt the members of EFTA, the European Free Trade Association, were keeping a close eye and perhaps having regular contact with the British government on what was going on and so on. Was there any sign that they wanted to join, or what?

JC As far as I remember what happened was that the EFTA countries all opened negotiations but they had a sort of opening session and then decided that the sensible thing was to adjourn and wait to see how the British negotiations went. There were certainly EFTA people around in Brussels, just as indeed there were Commonwealth people around in Brussels. They were following the negotiations very closely, and following of course what the six were doing on their own because there were these two strands going on in Brussels at that stage, and in many cases, just as Britain had a delegation which was following what the six were doing as well as a negotiating delegation, other people were trying to keep an eye on both the strands.

JJ I suppose the Colonial, or certainly Commonwealth countries who had some sort of representation in Brussels were becoming increasingly anxious that they would lose their market if Britain had to squeeze them out once they had joined.

JC Well indeed. They were pressing their case very hard for special arrangements of this sort or the other.

JJ As they did in the subsequent negotiations, of course.

JC Indeed. But I think that by the 1970's the Commonwealth countries had seen the writing on the wall so most of them had already diversified their trade quite a lot and I don't think they were as dependent on the British market as they were at the early 1960's.

JJ So, thank you for that, that was very good. Let us move on a bit. After that exciting time

you came back to the Office in 1963 but you left again in 1964. That was a pretty short stay by normal Foreign Office standards, and went off to Bangkok. Why was that? What happened that you just passed through, in a sense?

JC I actually think I went out to Bangkok even earlier than that, I would have thought. What happened really was that we all came back to London at very short notice and the Office suddenly had quite a number of people who had been employed in Brussels, without anything very much to do. I was immediately attached to the Department which had the unfortunate name of MAD at that stage, which was actually the predecessor to the European Integration Department, was it Mutual Aid Department, something like that. That was the Department that was trying to put together a history of the negotiations and essentially that became Con O'Neill's rather famous account, which was suppressed, I may say. I am sure copies are around now but it was not a widely known document. It was how the delegation saw what had happened. I was involved in trying to edit that and indeed to write bits about what concerned me, but basically, the different members of the delegation were asked to write up the bits of the negotiation they had been concerned with.

JJ I hadn't realised that Sir Con O'Neill was involved in the first negotiations.

JC He wasn't, in the sense that I don't recall him ever coming to Brussels. I think he was fairly involved in London and I'm pretty sure that he, I could be wrong, I think he was the chap who had the overall task of pulling together that report.

JJ Right. Because he had then added to the history...

JC ...Was he the Under-Secretary in London at that stage? As I say, he wasn't one of the flying knights but I am pretty sure he was already fairly thoroughly involved at the London end.

JJ Right, so that was really your very specific task...

JC ...I did that for a while and then they decided that they might as well send me back to

Western Department since I knew about that, so perhaps I was there for another year. I had forgotten it was as long as that, to be absolutely honest. But it was rather a fill-in until people decided what to do with me, and after all, I had had the best part of 4 years in London already, so it was about time I went abroad. Perhaps the other thing I should say is that when I first joined the Foreign Office I actually came in as a temporary officer because I didn't pass the interviews, but no girls had been passing for several years so they were starting to feel a bit worried about this. So I was asked to come in on a temporary basis and resit the exams. I did do them again when I got back to London from Brussels and I think that must have been the time I got myself fully established in the Foreign Service.

JJ We will come back later to the role of women in the Foreign Office because that is an interesting aspect and how that developed, but after the Office then and your helping with the history of the negotiations, and so on, you went off to Bangkok as a second secretary and were promoted to first secretary while you were there between 1964 and 1966. That was quite a different place to work from Europe; how did you enjoy that? What did you do there?

JC A mixed experience, I think I would say. I had a rather special job there in that I was the SEATO desk officer. Few people will remember even what SEATO is, or was, today.

JJ South East Asia Treaty Organisation.

JC Full marks, Jimmy. SEATO was part of that ring of alliances that the Americans, I think it was Rusk, had developed to try to contain communism. There was CENTO and there was SEATO and there were I think, seven members of SEATO. But SEATO, to be honest, was already completely stymied by the time I arrived because two of the members, France and Pakistan, had already taken a really dramatically different political stance, vis à vis China and Vietnam, from the other members. I remember endless discussions in the context of military exercises. A press release would be put out about what each one concerned and my working group used to get involved in negotiating the terms of these sorts of things. The issue that came up, time and time again, was where the threat this exercise was designed to counter existed and whether or not it was possible to suggest that the threat came from the northeast. Neither the Pakistanis nor the French could stand that at any price. So SEATO's political

purpose was pretty well stymied. The Vietnam war was, of course, the major overhanging event of that time in Thailand. The Thai situation vis à vis the Vietnam war was peculiar to say the least, really, because Thailand's vital role was that it allowed the Americans to use Thai airfields for the bombing of Vietnam and the Ho-Chi-Minh trails, and I think I am right in saying that about 80% of the bombing was from Thai airfields, but this was not admitted by the Thai government. This was a secret, and it was not something one could actually discuss. You can quite imagine that this meant that politics were bizarre, to say the least. One couldn't really discuss what was going on with one's Thai colleagues, except for the very few people who were prepared to talk. But Thailand was a military dictatorship. I think it was an agreeable place in many ways but it was not a place where you could actually talk about real politics.

JJ Of course the Americans, and Dean Rusk as you mentioned as the Secretary for State at that time, had signed what was called an assistance agreement with Thailand, which, I suppose, covertly or openly, had a degree of military co-operation, as one might put it, with Thai forces actually going up into the combat zones as I understand it...

JC ...I don't think Thailand had much of a role inside Vietnam, really, as far as I remember, but yes, the American embassy in Thailand was very important at that time and my equivalent in the American embassy was vastly senior to myself because an American military presence was really very important to Thailand.

JJ So what were our bilateral relationships like?

JC Well, this wasn't of course really my concern, because I was, as I say, concerned with SEATO and the various other aid projects that SEATO involved, almost as a sort of displacement activity, some of which were intriguing, such as help against counter-insurgency in the northeast, and that sort of thing. There was quite a substantial aid programme, both the small one through SEATO and a bigger one through the Colombo Plan, a certain amount of bilateral aid. Trade was, of course, an interest, though nothing like as dominant in an embassy's life as it became later in our careers. The Royal connection was, I think, one of some interest. The position of King Bhumibol was very intriguing.

JJ Did he come to the UK when you were in post?

JC Not that I recall.

JJ You would have remembered that from the preparatory work I expect...

JC Not that I recall. I certainly remember the Duke of Edinburgh coming to visit Bangkok when I was there.

JJ So bilateral relations were on a good basis; there were no particular bilateral difficulties?

JC I don't think there were any major issues at that time. I think they were quite happy. The Thais on the whole thought that we were pretty supportive. They were much more concerned, I guess, about French policy because Thailand certainly did look to SEATO as the fig leaf which covered the fact that the Americans were supporting them against invasion by the communists. That was the major issue in Thai politics at that time.

JJ I suppose they might have been worried that the American presence and activities could have attracted antagonism on the ground from Laos or Vietnam.

JC I don't think the Laos were in a position to do that. The Thais were much bigger, but I do think that they didn't want to be seen to be as quite as hand in glove with the Americans as they were, hence the secrecy about the whole of this. But certainly the domino theory was very much what people believed at that stage and Thailand did consider that it was in the front line. I don't know how interested you are in Laos, but I got sent up for six weeks to Laos, a funny little episode in foreign policy because there was a conference run by the International Control Commission, I think. Britain and Russia were co-chairmen of the Geneva Agreements, which provided for a truce of sorts in Laos.

JJ What was their function, then?

JC It was the time when Laos had two rival princes, Prince Souvannaphouma, who was the prime minister and his cousin, Prince Souvannavong who was the communist leader. Souvannavong was with the Pathet Lao, who were on the Plain of Jars and there was all sorts of infighting. There had been truces, and this conference was an attempt to work out some sort of modus vivendi and to take the sting out of it all. But the Russians wouldn't play and so they didn't come and we had this negotiation at the British Embassy with the Brits in the chair. It was rather intriguing. It seems like another world now.

JJ After Bangkok, Juliet, did you go back straight to London to News Department?

JC Not immediately because I went to Paris to join the British delegation to NATO. The background to this is that, it was at the time when de Gaulle had given the NATO headquarters notice to get out of France...

JJ Because?

JC France was not a full member of the military alliance and it was one of his moves to increase his distance. The permanent representative at that time was a man called Evelyn Shuckburgh and he decided that he wanted a press officer, because hitherto the delegation had depended on the British embassy in Paris as a press section to cover both. It sounds absurd in retrospect, but Evelyn Shuckburgh felt he wanted his person who would be a press contact, and because I had known him before and I was coming free at this time my name came up. He said, yes, he would like me to come and then, of course, I went and got dengue fever in Bangkok, which was quite nasty. So I wasn't ready to go to NATO and I didn't actually turn up until September and frankly by September it was totally clear that if there had been any point at all in trying to get the press to argue the toss with General de Gaulle, and getting me to do it, that the moment was well and truly past. So I stayed as part of that delegation for about three months, really without a job. During that time Shuckburgh moved on to Rome anyway and Bernard Burrows came as his successor. And I remember John Bushell, who was the Head of Chancery, asking me if I thought I had a job, and the answer was that, no, I hadn't. That's when I went back to England and joined News Department.

JJ That brought you close up against the foreign correspondents in London and, of course, the representatives of the national press who always wanted to know everything.

JC Were you in News Department too, Jimmy?

JJ I was in the Commonwealth Relations Office News Department for a year before they joined, so I know what a dangerous job it can be.

JC I loved it, I must say. I thought it was one of the best jobs I ever had.

JJ Yes, there was always the risk, wasn't there, that what you said off the record or unattributably to a journalist would appear on the front page of the Daily Express, quoted or misquoted, and you had to answer for that. Anyway, tell me about it.

JC I would like to tell you about it because the Foreign Office News Department at the time was rather remarkable. Perhaps the best way to start is by describing a typical day. We would all come in and we were all allocated areas of the world, or responsibilities, and I was the person dealing with the Middle East, coming back for the only time in my career to my roots, as it were. So one combed the newspapers, found out what the issues were, got in touch with the departments, got a line from them about how to tackle the most likely questions that were going to come up and then, I think it was 11 o'clock, we had a departmental meeting chaired by the Head of News Department. When I joined it was a marvellous man called Donald Maitland.

JJ Oh yes, he was a Middle East, a MECAS man...

JC I had known him when I was a child, virtually. So that was quite fun too. Then as now, the Head of News Department had a very special place in the Foreign Office and he was present at almost all the Foreign Secretary's meetings. I must say he was the most wonderful mimic, so Donald used to give us impressions. U Thant was then the Secretary General of the UN, a Burmese. I still remember Donald doing U Thant in discussion with the Foreign Secretary, which was really very, very funny indeed. So at this meeting we would get

Donald's account of what was going on at the top and at the Permanent Under Secretary's meeting on that day and then we would in turn feed in what we were getting from departments and the proposed lines to take. And Donald would sometimes say, 'fine', and he would sometimes say, 'actually, no, that won't do.' And he would pick up the phone and ring up the head of department or somebody or other and get agreement to what he thought was a tenable line.

JJ And because of his special position, vis à vis the PUS and Under Secretaries, he had the authority to tell Departments what he thought the correct line should be.

JC Yes, depending on how people felt, it went up the line for approval. Coming out of that meeting you then had this group of press officers who all had, as it were, a line to take on the most likely subjects journalists were going to be talking about on that day. And then there was the formal press conference, the 12 o'clock press conference, and I was one of the people who took my turn at doing that. That was a bit scary but actually you weren't asked all that much, which was surprising. It was very formal but you could bat things away. I don't ever recall being asked a thing that was impossibly difficult at that stage because everybody realised this was a thoroughly formal occasion. The whole of the afternoon, however, was a very, very different story. The regular journalists, foreign correspondents, both of the UK press and of the foreign press were grouped, and I remember there was one group called 'the trustees', another called 'the Circus', I can't remember what they were all called but they had nicknames. They were created by the journalists on a personal basis and the press officers took turns at briefing different groups according to their interests. I think, on the whole, the senior press officers dealt with the most important papers. But one had quite a busy afternoon; one usually had two or three briefing sessions and they could be quite grilling I must say. And then there would also be the people ringing up with questions from other correspondents, editorialists ringing up about different things. Of course I had my special clientèle with the Arab and Israeli journalists based in London, and they were quite an interesting bunch, and occasionally caused me quite a lot of trouble, particularly the Israeli ones.

JJ At that time the Middle East was still aflame, wasn't it?

JC It most certainly was. We covered the 1967 war.

JJ Exactly, you must have had some very difficult discussions with your journalistic colleagues, and the BBC as well.

JC I also remember being woken up in the middle of the night by John Dickie from the Daily Mail saying that Nasser had stopped shipping in the Gulf of Aquaba, did I think this meant war? I think I had the courage to say that I couldn't see how it didn't.

JJ Very brave of you. The trustees were presumably people to whom extra bits of information could be given knowing that it wouldn't be used, or at least not for the immediate future in the press, because the Commonwealth Office had its trustees as well.

JC Well, I think that there was much faith in the unattributable rule, and it was on the whole understood that what you were giving people was for their unattributable use and that they could if they wanted to say, 'well informed sources,' or the usual sort of thing, but what they couldn't say was, 'a Foreign Office spokesman said this,' and then quote it. With the Trustees one of the things that we used to do was to let them see telegrams that one thought were particularly useful as background. But one would make totally clear that this was not for use, one would offer things, 'are you prepared to take this on a total background basis,' and some people would find that was very helpful. Some people wouldn't want it but at that time I think that the rules of nonattributable media briefings were really remarkably well formalised and understood and accepted by both sides. I know it is a system which has been much maligned since, but it certainly had its virtues.

JJ One of its virtues was that you were able to tell the journalists the truth with the background to it so that people wouldn't get hold of the wrong end of the stick inadvertently, and publish silly stories.

JC Yes, it could create a much better informed press.

JJ That's right. One of the telegrams which was shown in total, I believe, was the one about the Soames affair in 1968. I had this from one of my other interviewers. Yes, certainly the Commonwealth Office did exactly the same, and the trustees got more information, but it was an exciting time there in the News Department.

JC Yes, I enjoyed it immensely. I enjoyed the journalists I met and respected them. As you will know so well, there are journalists and journalists, but on the whole the appointed diplomatic correspondents were a pretty good bunch and I am glad to say I still have some friends amongst them. There was one question you wrote on your question sheet which I thought about, 'what were the rules about telling the truth.' I think that is always such an interesting question because yes, we did very much have the rule that you should at all costs avoid a lie. Clearly you could be economical with the truth, and I think you could also mislead and lay traps. I must say I had one or two very difficult issues to deal with in that respect and the worst I remember concerned Aden. I don't know if you remember but this was the time when there had been a war going on with two independence movements, not one. And then there were some secret negotiations in Beirut with one of the rebel groups and I remember it being impressed on me by the Departments dealing with these things that if word came out about this the chaps who had been involved, not the Brits but the Adenis, would probably be assassinated. And that therefore I should on absolutely no account ever confirm or let people guess that these talks were taking place. How you deal with a situation like that is very difficult. I don't think I ever had to tell a flat lie, but I'm sure I used some red herrings. And the more scarlet the herrings were the better. And then just when I was about to leave I had rather a good friend actually, a man called Richard Johns with the Financial Times, and I remember he gave me a farewell lunch and he said to me, 'anything going on these days in Muscat?' And I had just been reading the most fascinating secret telegrams about the coup in Muscat when, with British help, they quietly ousted the old Sultan and put in his son. It was vividly all in my mind and I think I sort of went very white around the gills and said, 'there is bound to be something going on,' something as feeble as that, and fortunately for me Richard, though he gave me a slightly surprised look, didn't actually follow up, because what do you do in that sort of situation?

JJ There are reasons of state for not saying anything at all in certain situations.

JC I think basically my view is that when people's lives are at risk you may need to lie but otherwise you do not.

JJ So after those exciting moments in News Department you were posted in 1970 to The Hague as Head of Chancery. So you got quite an important position in the embassy and that coincided with the opening of our negotiations, again in Brussels, to join the European Community. How did the Brussels event affect your work in The Hague?

JC Greatly, actually, because that was my political speciality in The Hague and, as I am sure you will remember yourself, the Dutch were in many ways our most supportive and helpful interlocutors amongst the six, and so it was really very important to keep in close touch. I was extremely lucky because the very fact that I'd been in Brussels earlier meant that, with the same people still dealing with the EEC on the Dutch side, I had a lot of old friends in rather key positions, particularly in the Foreign Ministry, but also in one or two others. That was a great help and I was at least as busy on that as I was on more standard Head of Chancery type things.

JJ Well, the bilateral side, Anglo - Dutch...

JC Actually it was rather an odd set-up at that stage because we had a counsellor, a political counsellor, a man called Dick Faber and he did the bilateral, to my mind much the less interesting part of the political work, whereas I homed in on the EEC work which I was more familiar with. We also had a third secretary, a sort of trainee post, so we were quite well staffed on the political side. I was naturally interested in Dutch politics and what was going on. It was a rather engaging country.

JJ I suppose once the negotiations started most of the EEC posts in a sense found their work was downgraded on the bilateral side because the multilateral negotiations would dominate the local scene?

JC It didn't feel quite like that to be honest if you were part of it. I think that this is a

comment on the Foreign Office's admirable telegrams system, because the Foreign Office really has always played the relationships with international organisations on a multilateral basis, so that sitting in The Hague I was reading the next day the detailed reports of things that had gone on in Brussels and I was able to be, as it were, a sort of relay station in a negotiation that had many, many different aspects. It was quite helpful to be able to tune in, particularly with the Dutch on agriculture, for example. I had rather a good contact in the Ministry of Agriculture who was very close to Mansholt, who was the Dutch Commissioner, and who was quite prepared to give me a slant on discussions that were going on amongst the six and that were likely to be surfacing in our negotiations. So one could actually play a part in all this. It seemed to me, despite the fact that clearly the major negotiation was in Brussels, that when you were in The Hague the work that was going on there was much more interesting, because of those negotiations going on in Brussels. It gave an extra dimension.

JJ And from time to time no doubt you and the other posts would get instructions to lobby in the capitals on particular points going on in Brussels...

JC ...Absolutely. And I must say I also remember coming down to Brussels from time to time. Again I was lucky because I had friends in the delegation, but one was encouraged to do that and to go and meet people and be briefed, and so I was really fairly well up to speed on what was going on.

JJ Who was the ambassador in The Hague at that time?

JC When I arrived it was a man called Eddie Tomkins (Sir Edward Tomkins), a very nice, easy man. I had worked for him before because he had been Head of Western Department part of the time I was there. But then he was succeeded by a man called Sir John Barnes, who was one of the tigers of the Diplomatic Service. He was always quite nice to me but he was a very difficult man in many ways.

JJ Difficult with the staff or...

JC Yes, he had very strong ideas of how he thought things should be done. He would fly

into tantrums. I really remember him coming in to my office gibbering with rage and it was either because he didn't think that the front desk was dealing with things quite properly, or occasionally that the assistant admin officer, who was Dutch, had put round a circular that wasn't in perfect English. For a clever man he could be a total idiot, I thought. He was really, I think, destructive of some members of staff. And to be Head of Chancery in that situation was difficult. Personally, he was nice to me and he was somebody else who had known me in Beirut, I may say, and he enjoyed going round telling people he had been at the first party when I had put my hair up. Since I don't think I ever did put my hair up this was a slight sort of exaggeration, but he did treat me as if I ought to behave as a daughter.

JJ Ah, interesting. How did he get on with the Dutch Foreign Minister, who was Joseph Luns?

JC I don't really know the answer to that. Anglo-Dutch relations were pretty good. We had one or two flaming disputes on matters of trade in which the Dutch were, what was that wonderful quote, 'giving too little and asking too much.'

JJ They were hard negotiators, despite their generally supporting our entering. They were very hard weren't they?

JC Yes.

JJ I seem to remember in the 1974 negotiations arguing endlessly about pig meat, which was of course one of their main interests at that time, and Luns was a man who was very tall and he wore red socks and would take his shoes off in the negotiating chamber.

JC I remember that. He was of course already there in my Brussels days too, so I remember him very well indeed.

JJ I remember him once saying to the chairman, the foreign minister of which ever country it was, 'minister, I am like wax in your hands.' A most unlikely image one could possibly imagine of Joseph Luns, but there you are. How about generally living in the Netherlands,

meeting locals and so on?

JC Of all the posts I have been in I think it was the one where I found that I really made no distinction in my friends as to whether they were Dutch or English or whatever. I had a lot of very close Dutch friends. I would go off and stay with them. It was a very, very easy place in which to be British. It was great fun. I was also at that stage in my career when you reach a certain level but you are still pretty young, and there were young diplomats of very considerable quality. There was an admirable diplomats' club, called the Club du Jeudi, and I found myself being the president of the Club du Jeudi and the great virtue of that was that we had a lunch once a month and we invited politicians to come and be quizzed by the young diplomats. It was really for anybody below the level of Head of Mission. I think the No.2's had a club of some sort but they could come. Anyway, it was great fun because it meant that I could more or less decide who it would be rather fun to meet and on the whole they came. The Dutch were terribly good at doing that.

JJ Very open in their general attitudes...

JC Very. There were some fascinating people. Some I still remember with much interest.

JJ So, Juliet, after The Hague, still on the European circuit but back in London again in 1974 to European Integration Department, which, I believe, did all the preparatory work prior to the re-opening of our negotiations in 1970 under John Robinson. Although the negotiations had been finalised, completed in 1973, you, no doubt, had a lot of follow up work in that Department.

JC Actually I came back, I think, at the beginning of February in 1974. It was a shock to come back to London because it was the three day week and the Foreign Office had hardly any electricity and there were candles around. Anyway, there was an election almost immediately, and Heath was flung out. And so we suddenly had a Labour government, and the Labour Party, as you will recall, had been thoroughly anti-European and anti-British membership. But they now had to rethink their policy and we got ourselves onto the track of re-negotiation of the terms of British membership, which was really one of the most

extraordinary political operations I had any opportunity to see.

JJ This was Jim Callaghan, wasn't it?

JC Callaghan was Foreign Secretary first and then when Wilson surprised everybody by retiring, Callaghan moved over to No. 10 and we briefly had Crosland, and then Doctor Who, in other words Doctor Owen. I remember Doctor Who as being in the headlines in lots of the newspapers of the time.

JJ Yes, he had been Minister for Health.

JC He then came to the Foreign Office in that Minister of State role, so he was actually in the Foreign Office when Crosland died.

JJ So was Callaghan's brief to somehow get our money back, or what?

JC The Labour Party was virulently anti, and really what Callaghan settled down to do was to analyse the Labour Party's manifesto and to try to reduce to a minimum the changes that he would want to see in the way the Community operated so as to be able to sell them to the Labour Party to satisfy them and Parliament that we should actually remain members. This is the view of hindsight. Frankly none of us at my level knew this at the start. As you know, the entry negotiations had been put to bed only about a year or so before and here was Britain already saying, we may have signed a treaty but we don't think it is good enough, we are going to renegotiate it all. I must say I thought it was one of the most shaming episodes of foreign policy and it was far from clear what the aim was. From Callaghan's point of view, if his strategy was as I've just described it, the last thing he could do was tell everybody 'don't worry because all that I'm really trying to do is find terms on which we can stay in'. But what they did was to produce this great document that identified four or five areas in which changes were necessary and one of them indeed was the financial area. I can't even remember what all the rest of them were now.

JJ The level of our contributions, for example, to...

JC The EEC budget was one, agriculture, the changes in agriculture...

JJ VAT perhaps?

JC They were very woolly. One of them, I think, concerned developing countries. Actually, and this is the subtlety of what Callaghan was doing, having identified the areas in which improvements needed to be made they were all, with the exception, I think, of the Budget contribution, a bit immeasurable. One can't help thinking of Gordon Brown's criteria for joining the Euro, the same sort of thing. You can then work towards it politically. So then, anyway, negotiations began with the other member states and various, often rather cosmetic, changes were negotiated in various fields. The one that was far and away the most difficult was the British financial contribution. This is where the brilliance of Michael Butler, who was the Under-Secretary, came to the fore. He invented the claw-back mechanism that would be triggered under various strictly defined circumstances. It was all so terribly complicated, that the general public could not be expected to understand a word of it, while it looked as if it would actually prevent us paying too much. But its terms were never triggered though there was soon ample evidence that Britain was paying too much. This, together with the assurance that the Six had given in the entry negotiations that the Community would look for solutions if "unacceptable situations were to arise", laid the basis for Maggie Thatcher's money back agenda in 1979-80. So, eventually, here came Callaghan and Wilson saying we have re-negotiated and this is what we have done. And then there was a big White Paper that went to Parliament and then there was the referendum. That was the background to my time in the European Integration Department

JJ A difficult time.

JC It was a fascinating time, very, very interesting.

JJ And I believe the pro-European officials who had been involved in the negotiations, were largely removed from the seats of power, so to speak. John Robinson, for example, was posted to Algiers as ambassador. Since I went there three months after he did I knew he had

very little to do having done so much...

JC Well, I don't actually know the inwardness of what happened to John Robinson. I always thought it was a tragedy because he was one of the ablest people whom I came across. He was clearly not an easy man to work with, and he had flaming rows with various people, especially in Washington from everything I have heard. And he was clearly side-lined, I think you might say. But I don't think it is fair to say that the people who were dealing with this round were people who had not been involved with the EEC earlier. I mean, Michael Butler who was very pro-European, very able, had been in Paris, I think, through the earlier negotiations in 1970. I think he had. My immediate boss, when I went to European Integration Department (Internal) of the FCO was a man called John Fretwell. I think it probably is true just because of the pattern of Foreign Office postings that people had moved on a little bit and you got a rather different team. We were no longer using quite the people who had been doing the negotiations in the 1960s and 70s.

JJ The Department must have been deeply hurt, nevertheless, by the whole idea of re-opening negotiations after a year. The ink was hardly dry on the Treaty of Accession when this came about.

JC I think that is absolutely true and I think that there must have been a number of people - perhaps particularly, I think it was Michael Palliser, wasn't it, who was, at that stage, in Brussels - there must have been a number of people who were very, very close to resignation. I don't recall that there were any resignations, unlike Suez that did produce a few, but it was, I think, the only, as it were, Suez point of my career. I think that I didn't feel that my own honour was enough on the line to feel obliged to resign, and, as I say, it became clear after a bit that we were negotiating to stay in rather than to get out. I think then it became something of a very important thing to achieve, even if you thought you shouldn't have to do it.

JJ It was, in a sense, a domestic issue.

JC Yes. It was overcoming a domestic problem, particularly in the Labour Party. But that made it the most extraordinary sort of episode in foreign affairs because the Labour

government itself was deeply divided, as you will recall. There were in particular Peter Shore and Tony Benn who were both full members of the Cabinet...

JJ And totally anti-European...

JC Totally anti-European, and I must admit there was the most arrant connivance between officials, when subjects were coming up of importance and one had to prepare briefs. Certainly I dealt with officials in the Departments concerned, Trade and Energy as far as I remember, who were in great difficulty because they were trying to be part of the governmental team effort and yet what they were working for, their own ministers would happily sabotage at any minute. Extraordinary really. Totally extraordinary.

JJ You had to deal with the other Departments quite a bit at that time, did you, Juliet?

JC A certain amount. I was doing the internal aspects, including financial, not agriculture or trade. The Department (EID(I)) was divided, members of another Department (EID(E)) dealing with the external EEC matters. But I was co-ordinating a lot. I remember the endless business of co-ordinating briefs for Council meetings. We took it in turns between the two Departments to do that. I must say this was the hardest work I have ever had in my life. One ceased to have a social life almost completely. It was often writing speeches and things like that late at night. I used to go to bed and spread them out on the covers. It was really very, very tough. It was the only time when I really got to the stage where I was beginning to find it very difficult to sleep. It just was such pressure.

JJ Did the Foreign Office generally change? At least we were members and were working with our colleagues in Europe. Did it change in any radical way because of our European membership, in structural way or do you feel that lots of things have changed?

JC Certainly the general attitude of the Foreign Office was very different in the early 1970s to the early 1960s, for instance.

JJ You had seen both...

JC I had seen both and had clearly come back to a Foreign Office which was totally converted to British membership. I did actually feel that being in the European Integration Department I was in one of the élite departments. And because our community relationship cast so many shadows on all sorts of things it was in a central and important position and also very much a hinge, particularly with the Cabinet Office but also with the rest of Whitehall. The other thing that was interesting, of course, was that on the whole in a Foreign Office career you don't get much experience of Parliament.

JJ ... to deal with other Departments, in EID and perhaps with Members of Parliament as well?

JC Dealing with Parliament was very much part of my job and of course there was intense interest in Westminster, a long, long series of debates in connection with negotiation and the referendum, in connection with direct elections to the European Parliament. The other thing that was happening at about that time was the setting up of what was known as the scrutiny machinery. Both Houses of Parliament have set up committees which deal with Europe, keep an eye on European affairs, and there was also the business about how to bring before our own Parliament material relating to European Community law and there were a whole series of complications about that. We gradually worked our way towards different patterns for dealing with different sorts of things. Treaties made in the name of the Community got laid in front of the House, which could demand a debate, and if they didn't it was just taken for granted they were OK. Draft regulations and directives were a quite different cup of tea. We developed a pattern by which when they were put forward by the Commission, they were laid in Parliament and then we developed a system of explanatory memoranda, to explain to Parliament what they were about, whether they were really important. Then sometimes the committees or sometimes the House would pick them up and demand a debate. This became extremely elaborate, this machinery. We were working our way towards dealing with this almost insoluble problem of how to bring before national Parliaments in a meaningful way accountability for decisions that were going to be taken jointly by all the Member States. I also did a round trip with people from the Cabinet Office, and one lawyer, of Germany, Denmark and Ireland, which were the countries who were doing the same sort of thing,

though not as elaborately as we did, but who had machinery in Parliament for vetting what was going on, monitoring what was going on in the Community. That was a very interesting, rather specialised subject.

JJ The problem was though, as I remember, one of our legal advisers in Brussels saying before we joined, there is so much legislation coming out of Brussels it is hard even to keep track of what there is, never mind analyse it, consider it in relation to, say, British legislation, and then find the means or the tools to actually do something about the secondary legislation that we don't like.

JC I think that is extremely true. I do think that the business of these explanatory memoranda, which were taken very seriously, was an immense help. Members of Parliament were not just left to wade through the morass and find out what mattered, they were given pretty clear sign posts to things. But there is, clearly, at the heart of this, a real problem that one can't finesse away.

JJ And I wonder how much of that legislation was actually challenged or even changed as a result of the views of Parliament...

JC There were certain subjects that were summoned for debate and there were some very difficult debates. There were debates that the government lost because they hadn't got a very big majority at that stage, and that got reflected in negotiating instructions, and I am sure some things were thrown out. There were some times, of course, if there had been a really rough debate, when the Minister went back to Brussels with a stronger hand to play. So it worked in all sorts of ways.

JJ Was there any feeling in the Office, once we had got our feet properly under the table in Brussels, that actually we could do things a lot better than they could? I found that sometimes visiting senior officials thought that they were going to show the Continentals how to do things properly.

JC Well, the time I think I was most aware of that was when the UK came into its first

Presidency of the Council of Ministers. It was taken tremendously seriously and we had a Presidency Unit (in the FCO), and this is really quite right and proper, but there were completely unrealistic expectations as to what could be done, or what should be done in six months. What really seemed to me to be the lesson out of that is that the countries who have successful presidencies are on the whole those whose main objective is to forward Community business, to get decisions taken, while the ones who have national agendas, as we clearly did at that stage, on the whole, are a disappointment.

JJ We still do have a national agenda, actually...

JC Yes, but you can't actually use the Presidency. You are perfectly welcome to have a national agenda but you shouldn't actually use the Presidency as the tool for getting it. It is a mistake to think it works.

JJ Yes. I will come back to that point in a few minutes, but one of the aspects which I know was a great concern when the negotiations began again in 1970, was to secure adequate representation in the European Commission which initiated legislation, and to get the people that we wanted into the key jobs so that we could defend our position within the Commission where it all began before it got to the Council of Ministers or...

JC ...Of course we were really under-represented by the nature of things. It definitely was a concern. Indeed I myself was fielded for a job in the Commission at one stage. One for which I was totally unqualified; not surprisingly I didn't get it. It was to do with the Lomé Convention, or something like that. African territories about which I knew absolutely nix. They were all very nice to me when I went over to be interviewed but it was quite clear that if the idea was to get the job away from the French, which I rather think it was, we had chosen the wrong person.

JJ I might add that when I was in Brussels, the Secretary General's office of the European Commission wanted a Brit, and for some reason Michael Palliser put my name forward because he knew I wanted to stay on. So I went over and I had a very genial conversation with one of the senior men in the Secretary General's office, and all seemed to be going very

well until he said, 'now which university did you go to? What did you study?' When I told him I had never been to a university, first of all he couldn't believe that I should be in Brussels at all if I had not had a university education, and then he said, 'oh dear, that will cause a little difficulty,' because at that time the rules were very clearly not a degree, or suitable professional experience, but a degree, full stop. So that was the end of my career. I am glad...

JC Well I am glad I didn't make that switch. There was a time when I thought quite hard about possibly moving. I once explored a job at NATO but I am very glad I didn't follow that route either. I did much better as it turned out, by staying put.

JJ On this business of what one could do in the Presidency, six months is a very short period of time isn't it, even though when you know you are going to be in the chair you start getting your team together and thinking thoughts and preparing briefs before your Presidency actually begins, nevertheless it is a very short space of time to turn the ship round, or even adjust by a few degrees, in the direction you want it to go.

JC You can't. That's why I think that those who try to do that make a major mistake. What you can do is bring on certain areas if you think they have been neglected, you can alter the priorities a bit in that way. With really good and competent and professional chairmanship you can break through some of the log jams. That is what you can do.

JJ That's all you can really do, is it?

JC I will come to Luxembourg later but I was intrigued about how efficiently a little place could do a Presidency if they really gave their all to it, and weren't trying to follow their national interests.

JJ If we can just perhaps look forward a bit on the EU, I think that the question of how long the Presidency should be is one of the things under discussion under Giscard d'Estaing, but the real problem is managing an organisation with 15 member states. That has been tricky for all sorts of reasons. Imagine an EU with 25 or 26 member states with all the difficult

decisions that entails. Do you think it will ever work?

JC I find myself pretty pessimistic. I am here in disagreement with what has been British policy recently. I actually think it would have been better not to have gone on extending the Community. I know drawing lines is always invidious but I think that it's going to be extremely difficult to make a Community of 25 or 26 really effective. There are major issues to be faced up to, such as voting, of course, but also languages. There are all sorts of other issues, but I actually think that it is a recipe for dilution of the Community. There has been a long argument that we have been so familiar with for most of our lives, broadening versus deepening. I personally would have called a halt to broadening. I would have found it difficult to say exactly when, certainly when we were safely in ourselves, but I think 12 was probably a happy number. The idea of the ever open door... Jacques Delors, who was a man for whom I had a lot of time was obviously the bogey man for a lot of people in this country, but I heard him once develop the theory of concentric relationships; that you would have the Community at the heart and it would have rather close relationships with the East Europeans, the former satellites, and then rather looser relationships as you go on, so that you would have a lot of degrees of involvement, and I think that was a much better architecture for Europe than the one that we seem to have adopted.

JJ And are working towards now.

JC There is no doubt as I mentioned earlier, that there was tremendous enthusiasm for Europe. It is very difficult for anybody to have that sort of enthusiasm for the Europe of today. The Union of today, I mean.

JJ The point you made about languages, if you think of all the languages already in use, and the multiplication of interpreters, never mind translators, with half a dozen more languages there would be so many people in simply producing documents that all the languages demanded...

JC There is a bit of a nonsense in this. The Community, like the UN, ought to work to have a more rigid limit on its working languages. It does have a rather more practical and sensible

practice than the public realises, but the trouble is that when you are ultimately dealing with documents that are going to become the law of the land it is crucial for every country where it is going to become law to see the text in their own language and so there is no short cut as far as ultimate documents are concerned.

JJ I noticed in a story the other day in the press that the British government is submitting hundreds of amendments to the draft that Giscard is preparing on this convention. Whether we will get out of that I just wonder how much we would have to give to make the thing work, whether we will ever, as you say pessimistically, get to a satisfying conclusion.

JC Well, I think it was a very brave man who decided to write a constitution. In many ways it is a sensible thing. I don't know if you remember trying to read the Treaty of Maastricht. You can't read it because it is always saying that in article something or other you will put words before something or other else. The whole thing is referential back to previous texts. The consolidated text, as it is known, is a useful working tool but it is not a legal document so the whole constitutional side of things, and after all the Treaty of Rome is a constitution in the areas it covers, is very difficult. But, on the other hand, the wording covers so many fixes and fudges and so much agreed give and take, that to actually put this into one clear document like the American constitution will be immensely difficult politically. I did think about this quite hard in connection with some talk I had to give about three years ago after I left Cambridge, and I remember ending up saying that I didn't think anybody would have the courage to tackle it. So I am not surprised it is so controversial, and I think everybody will be producing lots of amendments, and it may never succeed.

JJ The problem with a constitution, as the Americans have found, is that something set in stone or in printed text is afterwards very difficult to change, even small matters. I remember in the Office trying to get Congress to agree that British citizens need not have visas to go to America, even as tourists. But years and years before it could be agreed, and that was a fairly insignificant matter. So having a constitution embedding commitments in Europe then finding it almost impossible to change without unanimous voting by all 25 members of however...

JC But that was true of the Treaty of Rome. I think the ...

JJ But there were only six of them...

JC That's right, and I think it was basically a pretty good document. But by the time - we have reached the stage now - when we seem to be having amendments every other year, it becomes totally unwieldy.

JJ So after difficult times in EID, you went to Paris as Counsellor, Information in 1977, by which time you obviously knew a lot about European affairs, and Paris must have been an extremely interesting post. Tell me about it and what you did there.

JC Well, it was an interesting post and dealing with the French press was essentially yet again dealing with Europe and we had the arguments about sheep meat, and of course Maggie Thatcher was Prime Minister through most of the time, in fact all the time I was there, and it was 'I want my money back' and New Zealand lamb and fish and this, that and the other. That very much dominated it. I didn't enjoy it. I wanted to go to Paris, I was thrilled to be asked and I looked forward to it very much. I didn't actually enjoy it as much as most of my other posts.

JJ Why was that?

JC I think it was partly because I really did not get on with Nico Henderson, who was the ambassador. It's difficult when that happens and I think I had a rather different view from him about what my job was. I don't think we ever really sorted it out. That was probably my fault.

JJ What do you think it was?

JC I came very clearly, with my News Department background, quite clear that what it was about was getting to know journalists, making a relationship with the press, trying to act, as it

were, as a sort of arms length news department in support of British policy, etc. I think he saw it much more as an old fashioned information job, and much more as a service to the ambassador, to be absolutely honest. And so we... but as I say, I didn't flourish in Paris, loved being in France, but did find that high pressure embassy not my favourite place to be.

JJ It's quite a factory, isn't it?

JC It was a factory.

JJ I visited it once and it just looked like a factory to me, people working there said it is a factory...

JC ... beautiful surroundings, I will never forget sitting in the conference room gawping because you had all those nudes draped with little bits of clothing all over the ceiling, and you gawped and tried to focus on whatever was being discussed.

JJ ... but the workers inside never got to see daylight, probably.

JC Well, actually I had a nice room and the Embassy is in a very handsome palace...

JJ ... I meant you never got out...

JC Well, I got out a great deal because that's what I saw my job as being. But it was an early start job because the first thing to do was to prepare a review of both the British and French press for the ambassador. He used to turn up in my office at about half past nine.

JJ Did you have to sort of do that in writing, or just a verbal briefing?

JC No, you read it all, did the cuttings, you presented it with the major articles to read and took him through the main trends of comment and press. It was a difficult thing to do, jolly hard work and it depended on having a few people doing a cutting service alongside one, but it was not easy, and after that every single day the embassy had a meeting which took about

an hour, from about ten to eleven. And this was big and rather formal...

JJ Quite late in the morning, actually.

JC It took a lot of the day...

JJ And this was just to keep the ambassador up to speed on what everybody was doing, what problems they were dealing with...

JC ... well, I am sure that was part of it but it was also co-ordination. If you have a big embassy doing all sorts of things, how do you make them know, everybody, what was going on. But even so I think it was questionable whether it was sensible to spend so much time on it. Then I tended to go out and see journalists or write my few telegrams or what ever else it was I was doing.

JJ Did you have, yourself as information officer, have any formal or informal briefings with the local or British press corps, or was it ad hoc according to what came up above the horizon?

JC I used to organise get togethers with the British press once in a while. I can't remember how often. I used to try to get the ambassador to brief them all and if we had a visit to brief about, I used very occasionally to do it myself. But it was really much more to the point to act as the facilitator and fix things up for a visiting Number 10 spokesman, or whoever it was, so I had quite a bit of that sort of thing. I tried to get to know quite a range of editors of French papers, and I think it's the time when I found entertainment one of the most useful tools because how did you get hold of a French editor? You take him out to lunch. I did, through that, get to know quite a lot of people. It was quite useful...

JJ It is not only the most civilised way but after a glass or two of good French wine people tend to be a bit more relaxed, a bit more open in discussion.

JC I must say that I did find one of the, to me, strains of that particular time, was that the

French are not good at separating, or the Parisians are not good at separating their social life from their political arguments. Time and again I thought I was going for a nice dinner party and I found myself doing all the arguments on the EEC and lamb. This could be a flaming nuisance and it was quite tough. I also made a point, from time to time, of going off to visit the local press. The French have a very lively provincial press, and that was the greatest fun, so don't feel altogether sorry for me. I had some good times too. One of the things I should certainly mention about that time, because it was rather peculiar, was that the Duke of Windsor was still alive and living in Paris.

JJ He didn't require a daily briefing I hope?

JC No, he didn't, but the British press were very interested. About twice in my life I remember a relationship with a journalist whom I almost felt threatened by. I remember the then Reuters man saying, 'If anybody other than Reuters is the first to hear that he is dead, I'll never forgive you.' One did just occasionally get that sort of thing.

JJ They did regard themselves as prima donnas in Paris, didn't they?

JC They certainly thought the British reporters absolutely had to have it first. But they were a very good bunch and I enjoyed dealing with them.

JJ Did you ever feel that you had penetrated the French society somehow, or even the French press for example, or was it still... did you feel they held you at arms length and examined you to see whether you were worth dealing with...

JC I had one or two really quite good friends and contacts in the French press, and indeed one or two other French friends. I must say I found getting out of Paris a relief. I rented this small house down on le Loir and I used to go there whenever I had a breather or a weekend, and I began to feel that there I was beginning to be accepted as part of the scenery and that was quite, quite different to the relationship in Paris.

JJ It is not easy, is it?

JC It can be quite tiring sometimes being the representative.

JJ Yes, everything is put on you, isn't it?

JC Well, you can be put continually on the spot and as I say I think the French were particularly difficult.

JJ And how did you think that your French press contacts regarded the UK in general, were we perfidious Albion or...

JC Yes, one heard a lot of perfidious Albion, one heard quite a lot of the sick man of Europe, and it was quite difficult. I remember setting up with a very nice economics editor there, a sort of special supplement on Britain, but when it came out it actually focussed on all Britain's economic problems, which were seriously undermining of all our foreign policy at that stage.

JJ But of course in 1977 to 1980 when you were there, the British economy was in a pretty dreadful state, so we were pretty sick.

JC I can't pretend I found it easy when sat down over lunch to be asked where the wrong turn had been taken. It was not easy. Not at all easy to answer. And Giscard, who was the President, I must say I don't know if he knew he was anti-British, but he did rather like at his press conferences to measure the glory of France by how much better they were than the British on this that and the other. I suppose the other running sore was the Irish question. A lot of French people romanticised enormously Irish nationalism.

JJ And it had a few famous Irish writers living their life in Paris so...

JC A paper as reputable as 'Le Monde' basically always saw Ireland as a colonial problem that we had failed to solve.

JJ So there was a general malaise between our two countries at the time of...

JC ... the relationship was not relaxed, I think you could say. In many ways a lot was going on that was very good and very warm. But certainly at the political level it was quite tense.

JJ How did the embassy order its life as a corporate body for its staff? There were an awful lot of people there, did it gel at all, or did you all live in your little compartments?

JC We mostly got on with our own separate things. I saw very few other diplomats, for instance. It wasn't really what I was about. One or two were obviously friends but basically I saw my job as getting to know the French, particularly the French press. Apart from the press officers at the Elysee and the Quai I didn't really know very many French officials either. It was not my job. Other people were covering that sort of thing so it was very much a segmented thing, and that's why, I think, the co-ordination meetings really were pretty important even if we overdid it a bit.

JJ So you perhaps didn't regret leaving after three or four years?

JC That's true. I mentioned at the beginning I didn't get on with Nico Henderson. I got on much better under Sir Reg Hibbert, his successor, but even so I think I realised that, though I felt I had done quite a bit while I was there, it wasn't one of my more glorious postings. Probably it was time to move on.

JJ Right, so that was Paris. After a fairly stressful time you had a gap year, so to speak. You went to the Royal College of Defence Studies in 1981. That was quite a usual step, wasn't it, for diplomats to take a year out to do something quite different.

JC Having seen it also from the other side, I knew, because when I was in Training Department I was responsible for filling these slots, that the Foreign Office were being leaned on to provide two or three people each year for the RCDS, and then there was the Canadian equivalent, and one or two others.

JJ Why was that? What was their interest?

JC Well, what is the Royal College of Defence Studies for? It is really to bridge the gap for British officers of the different services who are going on to senior command between what is essentially a rather regimental, or limited view, and the level of strategic thinking. It was the most wonderful experience. I was better informed after my year at RCDS than ever else in my life, particularly about how Britain works. It really was very interesting. They like to have a leavening of outside people; about a third of the group is foreign; about a third civilian; two-thirds from different services, often from another country; and seventy-four were men and I was the woman.

JJ Wow. So the benefit was really to yourself; broadening your vision, as it were, at a strategic level, as opposed to ...

JC I think the Foreign Office were also part of the process of contributing to the broadening. I mean, our experience was already fairly broad. As far as I was concerned, I didn't know very much about life in Britain and the experience of meeting experts in all fields, going off on a tour of Britain, going down a coalmine, all sorts of things that I knew very little about, seeing local government in Britain, it was great, fascinating.

JJ But the military lead a much more sheltered life than diplomats, I suppose. They needed to know more about their own country and others.

JC Yes, this was designed not for the likes of me. It was designed for the Colonel going on General. Some of them really went on to the highest possible ranks. It was very interesting and I enjoyed it enormously. But it was fairly relaxed, I must say.

JJ Did you do any trips together as a college group?

JC We periodically divided up. We split about six ways to visit parts of Britain, and I went on the Welsh trip and it was very interesting. I learned about coalmines. And we split up into six groups for about a month abroad. I was really lucky for I drew the Far East tour, and

we went to China, then Japan and Korea and Hong Kong. In 1981 they were all extremely interesting places to be.

JJ And you get entertained by the embassy, of course?

JC One always got briefed, and given a meal of some sort, but when we were in China we were essentially guests of the People's Army, which was still a funny little Mao enclave, whilst China was liberalising on the economic side, though not obviously politically. You went back and saw all the walls of the Chinese National Defence College were lined with charts about the expansion of Russia and the danger to China from Russia, and the 'Thoughts of Mao', and things like that.

JJ So it was a year well spent, in fact...

JC Oh, it was. And I was lucky to have done that tour when I was going on to Jakarta, and I heard just about that time...

JJ It was very appropriate...

JC It turned out to be quite fortunate.

JJ And that must have been a very difficult, but a different country than anything you had seen before. Even though you had been in Bangkok...

JC Yes, though it was quite like Bangkok, Muslim more than Buddhist, but the same sort of syncretisation of one religion on top of another.

JJ Another military regime, General Sohartha had been in power for quite a long time.

JC He had. I think his New Order, as it was called, was probably at the height of its efficiency at the time I was there.

JJ What did that mean?

JC Well, that actually meant that Indonesia was remarkably prosperous, that on the whole most people lived an increasingly comfortable life and that they were really very optimistic about the future. It meant that dissidents were dealt with extremely toughly. There was a period when I was there when the papers started reporting that tattooed bodies had been found in lots of ditches. Now tattoos were a sort of sign of the criminal underworld, and it was just a way of dealing with them. It was easier to bump them off than anything else. And of course there were a number of revolts that were on the whole at a very low simmer when I was there. East Timor was the nearest to boiling over but nothing like what it became afterwards. My impression was that most of the Indonesians I met, and, compared with Thailand, these were people who were prepared to talk about politics, were not afraid to talk about politics, and most of them seemed to think that there was a reasonable deal: a tough regime delivers economic growth, law and order. I think at the best of it this is what the Suharto regime was. But it was already clear there was a lot of corruption. If you wanted to do business there you had to find ways of doing it, usually by having an Indonesian partner, or some thing like that. But I think its faults became much more glaring later on. That's what I mean by saying I was there at the height of Suharto's time because he had developed his remarkably sophisticated grip on all the levers of power to a high degree of efficiency.

JJ And that covered all of Indonesia?

JC Yes, and Indonesia is an archipelago ...

JJ Although looking on the map it is such a spread out country, it is an awful long distance...

JC And they claimed all the water between the islands too

JJ Of course.

JC I can't resist an anecdote about one of my worst moments. There had been a great argument about the Ark Royal, which was going to go through to Australia. You remember

the British government would never confirm or deny it had nuclear weapons on it, and everybody knew it was going to Australia and the British government did not want to ask the Indonesians for the right to pass through Indonesian waters or straits, because they were maintaining the right of free navigation of straits. So somehow or other we had spoken to the Foreign Ministry about it and they told me they really expected to be formally asked for permission to go through the Sunda Straits (between Java and Sumatra) because it was their waters. I had quite a brusque exchange with the Foreign Ministry. I think I was summoned in about it. Then I was changing to go out to a cocktail party and suddenly my phone rang and it was somebody or other, I can't remember if it was the duty officer or the head of a department at the Foreign Office, who said to me, 'Well, and so if we send a warship through the Straits without permission what is going to happen?' I was standing there half dressed. I'm pretty sure that what I said was that, 'I wouldn't be surprised if they buzzed you, but I am jolly sure they won't do anything more than that. They aren't really going to bother you'. So Ark Royal went on and they didn't buzz it and nobody from the Indonesian government ever mentioned the matter to me again. Which I thought was a very interesting comment on...

JJ A very grown-up way...

JC Saving face. It was very oriental...

JJ If you don't raise a problem then it doesn't exist, in a sense, so the Ark Royal got away with it?

JC Right.

JJ And what is the real answer to the question? Did it have nuclear weapons onboard, or is that still a state secret?

JC I simply don't know. I am sure it was reserving the right to have them when it wanted to, and it sometimes did, but whether it did on that trip I have no knowledge. The Australians were demonstrating about it; they didn't want it either. I could go on about Jakarta which is the most fascinating place, and Indonesia. Jakarta is a fairly awful town...

JJ Did you have the chance to travel around some of the islands?

JC I did quite a bit. I was very fortunate in that my ambassador, who was an old Indonesia hand, was a man called Robert Brash. He knew Indonesia of old. He had been there as a young man and he was absolutely determined to visit all the provinces which was absolutely great because it meant that he was very often out of the office. I was the number two at this stage as well as being Head of Chancery so I had considerable spells in charge, including three months at one stage, of being chargé d'affaires. That is great fun and there is no doubt that is the way to learn, and the whole embassy was really tremendously supportive in that sort of situation. So I had really a lot of fun in that. Robert Brash also encouraged me to get out when I could. He was away so much it wasn't quite so easy. For all that I did travel quite a bit and enjoyed it very much.

JJ That is the advantage of being a very long distance away from the Foreign Office. You can get out of your desk and travel. That always was the case until the whole system got overloaded with paper and administrative forms to fill in.

JC Of course the Falklands affair happened during this spell. And Indonesia, a leading light of the Afro-Asian bloc, and all that sort of thing, was full of the iniquities of our occupation of the Malvinas, as they called them.

JJ They took the Argentinian side, did they?

JC Absolutely. They took it for granted this was entirely a colonial problem. They thought that we had no right to be there, that it must belong to the Argentinians because we were just the old colonial power who were hanging on. Then after we watched the ships going to the south Atlantic and we re-occupied the Falklands, the Indonesians were so, so impressed. They really thought it was absolutely terrific, and thereafter people spoke of Mrs Thatcher with the greatest respect. It certainly did an immense amount for the prestige of Britain. I am sure you have heard that story elsewhere but I was really very surprised.

JJ Did they ever appreciate that this is what the Falkland Islanders themselves actually wanted, to remain British?

JC I don't think they desperately cared about who the Falkland Islanders were. They were just colonists, they had no right to be there.

JJ I found in my time in French West Africa, the Ivory Coast as well as in Strasbourg, that Mrs Thatcher had an enormous reputation and so many French people came up to me and said, 'Oh if we had Mrs Thatcher running France how much better everything would be.' So that was a lot in her favour and it helped our diplomats didn't it. They could all walk tall.

JC In comparison with what I was describing in Paris when we had our tails down, rather on the defensive.

JJ So after that where did you go? Oh, you came back to London again.

JC I came back to London. I didn't stay all that long in Jakarta. I hadn't wanted to go. It was rather disastrous in personal terms; my mother had a stroke and died and my father was in his nineties and on his own. I was also wondering whether to get married, which I was not confessing to the Foreign Office at that stage, but I then sent a letter to them saying I am getting married so bring me home please. They were a bit slow about postings but they did me very well with a direct swap with the Head of Training Department, so that's how I ended up in Training Department.

JJ That was good fortune.

JC Well it was for me, in many ways. I enjoyed Training Department very much.

JJ The Office does sometimes take account of people's personal situations and circumstances...

JC I think they try quite hard, given how difficult it is to suit all the wants and problems. I

remember the conversations with POD when I said I didn't want to go in the first place. They said you have had a very long spell in Europe, it's time you went under palm trees, got your knees brown, all those sorts of phrases, and then I said, elderly parents - worried. They said that's the trouble. At your stage of life, we all have elderly parents. I think there are genuine problems, as I said. When the personal crises hit they dealt with me very fairly.

JJ My mother died inconveniently in the middle of an inspection of the post but I did a week of it then went home. It was OK.

JC It is something that people don't take into account, but it is very much one of the costs of the Service that you're not there to help your nearest and dearest at the moments when you most want to be there.

JJ Absolutely. Well, training when I first joined the Service was very sketchy, almost non-existent. You may have felt the same?

JC I did.

JJ But it was different by the time you took over training in the Office.

JC It was and I think I was extremely lucky to take it over when I did because not only in the Foreign Office but in Whitehall generally there was as it were, a tide turning, a belief that people needed more training, not only career training. When I arrived we had got certain things very well established. I think on the whole the language training pattern, not all the practice but the pattern and the necessity for it, was really very well established. And so were the courses preparing people to be commercial officers and consuls, admin officers, the courses for people to do specific jobs.

JJ This was all in-house training?

JC All in-house training, all pretty well organised. But they hadn't really started thinking about your average political officer and what he ought to be doing. There was a little

economics training, not very much, and there was very little training on entry. So there were plenty of things to get ones teeth into.

JJ ...for general political officers and so on?

JC Yes, we introduced a lot of really quite important courses at that time. We certainly totally revamped what we did with people on entry, new recruits. We developed a couple of weeks course on entry and something I was very attached to was that it should cover the grade 9s as well as the grade 8s, the A stream entry.

JJ They had been neglected all those years.

JC Well, I thought they had been neglected. I know some people thought it was a great mistake to put them together because it made everybody think they had the same career expectations and made them unhappy. I thought - this is I am afraid one of my themes in the Foreign Office - but I thought the Service had often under-utilised and indeed been a bit cavalier with the talents of our grade 9 entry.

JJ So what sort of training was offered to them?

JC Well, we did a fortnight's concentrated course which I laboured on and devised so that they could have a snapshot of everything. In retrospect I think this was a mistake, I think they were punch-drunk...

JJ Too much too soon...

JC ... they just didn't really take it all in, but it was an introduction to admin and how departments work. It was quite good but I don't think it was quite pitched right. The other thing we did was arrange to grab almost all of them, certainly all the grade 8s and some of the grade 9s for a three month slot of language training, either French or German or Spanish, the assumption being that then with any luck they would have at least one basis of a European language on which to build later on. So we did that, and we tried to develop a sort of

entitlement to training. This was something that was going on in Whitehall as well. I don't think, I honestly don't think that succeeded.

JJ What did that mean, an entitlement to training?

JC Well, gave people a little book, a leaflet on the sort of training that they might do, and their right to at least five days a year so that they could negotiate with their Head of Department. The difficulty, I found, was actually getting people out of jobs for training. If you could get people between jobs you could usually hang on to them long enough, for instance to do a course or a language pre-posting, or something like that. That didn't seem to be a problem. The problem was that when somebody was actually in a job it was always so pressing, so urgent, that the idea that you could actually give them a week's training in management, or something seemed unrealistic. Quite tricky.

JJ This was because there was such a staff shortage that there was no room spare. They could not be spared from one desk before they went to another job. Was that it?

JC Between jobs you could usually get them. So I don't think it was basically the man power problem. I think it was much more a cultural problem. No doubt that many Departments, particularly the front line ones, are very busy and it is quite difficult to get people away, but they manage to take their leave. I think also a lot of members of the Foreign Office hadn't really taken in that training was useful as opposed to a slightly boring extra for the not so gifted. A number of Heads of Department felt a bit like that. So I think it was a matter of changing the culture. One thing I was delighted to do while I was there. Patrick Wright, who was the PUS, invited me to come in and address the PUS's meeting one day. I negotiated to have half an hour and I took them a slide presentation about what we were trying to do in Training Department. And I really felt that I did get through at that level the importance of what we were about and the fact that as a Service it was something that we weren't actually good at. Man management, and helping people use time well, things like that, were very much in that category.

JJ Fairly basic, really, but very necessary.

JC Yes. However basic I think most people don't necessarily deal with the things as well as they might. One is usually too busy just getting on with things.

JJ Yes, there are so many people with good degrees and it is then thought they are clever, they are brilliant, they can do whatever is necessary, but management and training and team work, that sort of thing...

JC ...Delegation, staff assessment, we talked about that earlier, people don't know how to deal with these things without a bit of help. And then we did one or two other innovations, which I was very pleased with. One was as daring as could be, to introduce training for ambassadors before they took up their first posts. It went rather well actually.

JJ What did that involve?

JC The Chief Clerk gave an introduction. Then there was about a day with the admin, the Head of Finance Department, the Head of Personnel Department, really to tell people what was going on, and we dealt with the problems of security and also a bit about how the finances of an embassy worked, what was happening. We were beginning to move towards financial delegation to posts and frankly, a lot of these people had come into a Foreign Office of a different age, and some of them hadn't been in London for some time. We didn't get everybody if they didn't come through London. Usually they were in London for briefings and one could grab them for a day. That is some thing that has stayed. I think it has been built on. I think it was very useful. We tended also to have a session about what the expectations of businessmen were and how posts should help, what an ambassador's role was. There was an admirable man from Balfour Beatty who would come and talk for us. These sorts of things I thought were very much to the point. Another thing which some ambassadors did was a day in Parliament and that we set up with the help of some of the Whips and our junior Ministers who were really quite interested in it. We got the group together with MPs and they talked to a number of people from different perspectives. I thought that thoroughly useful, and certainly it was very popular.

JJ You mentioned financial delegation. That sounds a bit new to me. What did that actually mean for an embassy? They could spend what they liked within the budget in ways that they liked, or...?

JC The Office was moving towards giving more money to posts. Now I think a post has a post budget and gets on with it. But it hadn't got that far. There were different aspects of finance that were being given to posts so that they could be given a bit more flexibility. But the training was also about accountability, because ambassadors are responsible for signing off the post account. So what actually is your responsibility? How do you try to control things? You can't double guess a clever accountant who knows what he is doing, but there are ways in which you can keep a fairly rigorous check on what is going on. So there was a certain amount of encouraging people to think quite seriously about this sort of thing.

JJ There was a former ambassador who got sacked because of discrepancies in the account caused by fraud of some sort at the locally engaged officer level...

JC It could happen very, very easily.

JJ This chap had been Head of Finance Department but he took the can, had to carry the can for that, which I thought was a bit hard.

JC Well, the Permanent Secretary carries the can when he is grilled by the Public Accounts Committee.

JJ But he doesn't lose his job, look, for example, ...

JC I don't know in that case. It may have been negligence. There are some cases, and some I have actually seen a bit later on, because I am on an appeals committee, where I do think that the senior staff should have been asking far more questions about what was going on, but then the junior staff sometimes took the can.

JJ But when the Office wastes a million pounds or more on a not good enough computer

system for its archives or whatever...

JC Folios.

JJ Folios. That's it. Nobody carried the can for that.

JC They were very lucky to get away with it. I do think it was a slightly different issue because they were at the state of the art on IT and nobody at that stage knew how it would behave. Setting up security barriers was the main problem, and that is what it really was; the whole thing was too vulnerable. At least, that's the story I have heard. I was only involved to the extent that we were considering how to train people.

JJ I think they did hire a small company headed by a chap who had worked for IBM and it went bust.

JC There are two other things I should mention about Training Department. One is that we, I should say John Moore, who was the Head of DLC, Diplomatic Language Centre, introduced a total reform of the language exams, which I think was very important indeed and admirable. On the basis of that the emphasis was put much more on the ability to use your language in ways that diplomats use it, ie speaking, listening to the radio, making notes of speeches, as opposed to the three hour essay in the foreign language, which had been central before. I'm exaggerating, it wasn't three hours, but it was that sort of thing.

JJ A very academic approach in the old days.

JC Very academic. It was based on the old degree in languages, and I do think that the reform of the language exams and everything that went with it was a major contribution to the Office. And, as I say, John Moore did that, and all credit to him. I think my role was to try to make sure that John, who was a British Council man, understood the constraints of the Foreign Office, and the Foreign Office understood what he was up to. And so it was making sure that it actually fitted. But I was tremendously lucky in Training Department as I had such good people working for me. The other person I would like to get onto the record is

Michael Hodge, because I thought he was an absolutely stunning person to have as a number two. When our premises were condemned..... To start with we were in Palace Chambers, do you remember Palace Chambers? I must say it was the most extraordinary, dilapidated, building. On my door was a notice saying, 'Do not put heavy weights in the centre of this room'. The whole place was sort of creaking and then suddenly one day Mike and I were summoned and told that they had realised that there was nothing holding the building up out of Westminster tube station and that it was only a miracle that it had never fallen in, and that we were to get out very, very quickly. And so we had to clear it all out in three weeks. It was quite a problem, which Mike took the lead on, to try to find premises for us. We went into temporary premises for a while.

JJ Down on the Embankment wasn't it?

JC No the temporary premises were at the bottom of St James's Street in a very old Commonwealth Office press centre, or something. It was quite fun. It must have been a theatre at one stage. It was a very, very odd building, totally unsuitable. And then we were given Cromwell House which is on the Embankment, which was the first tailor-made Training Department and which was, I thought, super. I heard to my deep regret that they have just moved out of it. I don't know why. They had outgrown it perhaps, but it was very good. So much for Training Department.

JJ Do you think, though, that language training is still given enough money and time for people?

JC I think we are very good at the hard language training. I do think for instance that with two years for Chinese and Japanese we produce people with terrific...

JJ Where is Arabic taught now, at SOAS?

JC I am not quite sure. When I left it was the first year at SOAS and then a year in situ and we were moving around between Alexandria and Jordan, and I am not quite sure where it is at the moment. When MECAS collapsed, or had to be evacuated, the question was where to

go.

JJ Because one needs an awful lot of Arabists in our service.

JC Yes. My guess is not so many now as we used to, but it was tremendously important. So that was very interesting. There is the problem that we all use English most of our careers. It would be lovely if everybody spoke French or German too. I think there are quite a lot of people who speak them to a very high level. I think probably you have got to work on the basis of posts that are earmarked for linguists and absolutely make sure that the people who fill them have top fluency. And I think we do. And then you do the best you can for everybody else, which should mean at least giving them a start before they go, and giving them their hundred hours, and letting people do their best to take it up. And I think you can get quite a long way on one hundred hours.

JJ Absolutely, yes I agree. Were there any attachments, or detachments of staff either to other foreign ministers, say within the European Union or to businesses or anything of that sort?

JC Yes, there were indeed. There had been a pattern of sending people for sabbaticals to universities that was I think was slightly on the wane though it was quite useful from time to time. I was thinking of Mig Goulding before he went to be Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations and we were able to arrange for him to come to St. Anthony's here to bone up on peace-keeping. That sort of thing could be very useful. I do think that the exchanges with industry are in theory a very good idea. In practice it was quite difficult to see the level at which it was most effective because if you send somebody in their 30s and 40s they are used to taking decisions but they don't actually fit in at first and their respective bosses hesitate to give them quite enough responsibility. The answer is some exchanges worked and some didn't. Then during the time I was there we also set up exchanges with the foreign ministries of France and Germany. I think that was good and I believe goes considerably further now. But we send much younger people on that and of course the Treasury have done it with the Ministère des Finances for years.

JJ I think we have swapped diplomats with the Quai d'Orsay from the Foreign Office but an interesting experience on both sides.

JC I think it is very good, excellent I think.

JJ So, after that what did you do?

JC Well, I got back from leave one day and the telephone rang and it was the Head of POD and he said, 'I have rung you about your posting.' So I sat on the edge of my chair. He said, 'We are sending you as ambassador to Luxembourg.' So I gasped and he said, 'It's all through, except that it hasn't been to number 10 yet.' And then a slightly anxious voice said, 'Do you know Mrs Thatcher?' So I said, 'Well, I have actually met her, but I don't think for a minute she would remember.' 'Oh, that's all right then.'

JJ But the question is does she know you.

JC I thought that was a very funny start.

JJ So, there we are, that was a good finale to your career, to be ambassador.

JC It was. I was delighted and far from sure it would happen. Luxembourg is a wee place as you know, the population is under half a million.

JJ Oh, it's as big as that, is it.

JC Well, they have started including the foreigners in their total now so it looks bigger than it used to. They used to call it 360,000.

JJ They have had a lot of immigration, especially from southern Europe...

JC Certainly the Italians and the Portuguese and they also have a lot of people who work there but actually live in France and Belgium and Germany and come in to work.

Luxembourg is a honey pot. It's funny because, thinking back to those early EEC days we were talking about, Luxembourg was the poorest of all the six and now it is the richest per capita, I think, of any community country, a very prosperous little place...

JJ All those banks. So what did you do there?

JC Well, a lot of it was Common Market again, or European Union as we were beginning to learn to call it later on. I don't honestly think we would have much of a mission at all if it wasn't for the EEC and if it wasn't for an extraordinary accident. Luxembourg was, as you probably know, extinguished during the war. Hitler turned it into a 'land', just a sort of German province, and expected the Luxembourgers to join the German army as proper little Germans. But come the end of the war, and Luxembourg was firmly put back on the map in time to become a founder member of the EC and NATO and the Council of Europe. You name it and there they were. So, as British policy was becoming more multi-lateral, so the voice of little Luxembourg became of more importance to us. I think this became particularly true over the time I was there because Luxembourg was developing its financial centre, and particularly as a base to be used for investment funds, and financial instruments like that, but in a number of very innovative and clever ways. The City of London, which at first asked what this upstart little financial centre was doing, we needn't bother with that, suddenly decided actually it is rather a useful ally in various ways, both an ally in the EEC on various issues, and also a place to have an off-shore branch or some sort of representation. Let's use it rather than ignore it. So there was suddenly a great interest from the banks. And that was the other thing I really found myself quite involved in.

JJ And they got one of the Community organisations, the European Investment Bank, to...

JC ...Yes, they got the European Court of Justice too...

JJ ...But I meant on the financial side...

JC ... Oh, on the financial side the EIB and they had the Court of Auditors.

JJ One of the directors was a former Treasury man on our EEC negotiations...

JC Roger Lavelle?

JJ No, before him...

JC Well, Roger was one of the people I used to do crosswords with in 1961 when I waited all those hours outside the door. He turned up as the vice president of the EIB. As I say, I did find the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg extremely interesting. The British judges were most distinguished and interesting.

JJ They dealt with all the, if you like, commercial disputes within the EU.

JC Well, they weren't all commercial by any means though many of the issues that cropped up were about how European law should be interpreted and the relationship between European and national laws. There were some quite important cases and people in London always wanted to know exactly what was happening. Let me not pretend I was following the substance of the cases as a lawyer, I wasn't. But we had a responsibility for getting judgements back to London as quickly as we possibly could and doing various things like that. If I had nothing better to do I used to go up occasionally and listen to a case.

JJ And, as usual, they took a long time to reach judgement, didn't they, in a lot of the cases?

JC Yes.

JJ Especially the complicated commercial ones. And there was a lot of money at stake.

JC There could indeed be.

JJ But you are right. They did establish themselves as a key part of the EU and they got all these institutions. It was part of the deal of being with the EU, wasn't it? I've got to have my share of the pie. I need an institution and so on and so on.

JC And the Luxembourgers fought their corner, particularly on the European Parliament, very strongly. They have still got the Parliament's secretariat in Luxembourg. Rather pointless now, I think. And the other thing of course is the Council. You remember the business about the Council of Ministers moving around its meetings, so that for three months of the year all Council meetings happened in Luxembourg. I found those three months that my embassy was more or less a hotel, with a stream of visiting ministers coming to stay. Sometimes I got involved in the meetings themselves. It was absolutely fascinating to be a fly on the wall when the European Council was meeting.

JJ It was such a small city you must have been very close to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs if not the prime minister's office.

JC Absolutely.

JC You were feeding in information, and briefing, and persuading, the usual diplomatic activity...

JC And once again, very much so. You got the agenda of every meeting in Brussels, you knew what was coming up, you knew what would matter to the Luxembourgers. Often one had an instruction to lobby, otherwise one simply went through the agenda. I got to know the Minister of Finance quite well. He is now the present prime minister, and I don't think many of the local Diplomatic Corps were very much interested in the minutiae of the tax issues and of course the moves then underway towards economic and monetary union. Dear old Pierre Werner was still there...

JJ He was very strong on monetary union in 1971 or something...

JC And so I was able to go and sit at his feet and ask what he thought about things. So there were a lot of quite interesting things going on. And then of course during the final six months I was there it was Luxembourg's turn in the presidency, and that was hectic, it really was.

JJ It didn't have a very big team.

JC I'm glad to say the Foreign Office more or less increased my staff by 50 percent for the six months because we had a good first secretary who came in, somebody of the conference officer type and I think somebody else on the registry team and that was a fifty percent increase. And we did need it, because it was really pretty hectic, especially when key meetings took place. But it was also the time of the Gulf war, Yugoslavia, the beginning of the Maastricht Treaty, which the Luxembourgers tried desperately to finish off in their presidency but they didn't succeed. So it went on and the Dutch came next.

JJ It really was very, very busy.

JC Their own Foreign Ministry was so small. Almost everybody was involved. It was really very interesting because they had boys in charge of things, almost. And it was surprising how well most of them did it, I thought.

JJ I remember myself when I was in Brussels and one of the Luxembourg diplomats said, 'Well, I can't answer that question, I will have to send for instructions back to my Ministry and I will come back to you next week.' I asked him after the meeting who was dealing with it and he said, 'I am. I am sending myself instructions, I will have to talk to the Minister but effectively I have got to deal with this at both ends.' So they were as short of staff as that.

JC I am sure that was true. When I used to go and lobby before a meeting in Brussels I very often found the chap who I was talking to saying, 'I am awfully sorry, I don't know. They will decide that one in Brussels.' I think they operated in a quite different sort of way from us. I thought they did pretty well. Going back again to my earlier experiences, when I turned up in Luxembourg who should be the Foreign Minister, but a man called Jacques Poos, who had been a young sprig in the Luxembourg delegation back in 1961-62. So it just shows, it's funny, those things kept on coming round in a career.

JJ If we can go back a moment to the Foreign Office and its set up, we have already talked

about the training aspects, what about recruitment and in particular the recruitment of women, perhaps nowadays it is fifty - fifty, I don't know. Do you have any views about women in the Service and how they were posted, how they were treated and so on?

JC I joined in 1957 and that was about 8 or 9 years after the first women had come into the Foreign Service as opposed to the civil service on a permanent basis and there were very few of them around. You could count the number of women officers in the Foreign Office on your fingers, just about. I think it was not very woman-friendly. Women didn't see how they would fit in, and it was quite difficult to get in. For anybody it was quite difficult to get in. And there was of course the rule about leaving on marriage. No woman who got married could expect to stay.

JJ Was there any particular masculine reasoning behind that, or...

JC Well, I think it was just regarded as normal. The same thing had existed in many other professions. I think that the Foreign Office still thought that it was impossible to combine two careers, for a woman to go round with babies in tow was completely impossible and that the simplest thing was to say sorry, you choose; you do it one way or the other. This rule wasn't changed until, I think 1972, just before the Equal Opportunities Act came in, in 1974. It was a great deterrent; it was a deterrent for women to even apply; and it meant that many of them who did apply got married and got out. So, until about 1972, there weren't that many women about. That's really why so few were coming through to the senior levels at the period I did. I didn't get married until 1983, but by then it was a different world. In those early days one did get the feeling that women were there on approval in some sort of way. You were certainly out to prove you could do a job as well as a man and that you didn't get the vapours and all those sorts of things that seem absurd now. But there were quite a lot of men who really hesitated and I was certainly told at least once in my career that I had been turned down for a post because they thought it inappropriate to have a woman. Not possible now, of course, but it was very much possible in the 1960s still. I would also say that I met with immense support and help. I was extremely lucky in my first Head of Department, Pat Hancock. And John Killick, I don't know if you ever came across him but I worked under him at one stage. And I have reason to believe that he was the man who really said, 'Look,

this is absurd, you have got to get this woman into the Foreign Service, she will do you well.'

And he really was a great support at a time when I much needed it. There was a sort of swings and roundabouts. I have absolutely no doubt that because there were so few young women around at my sort of level virtually everybody from Permanent Secretary downwards knew exactly who I was. That can be a great help. So in some ways there were advantages. But I remember being detailed, in the very early days, to act as departmental representative on some talks with the Treasury and the French, and suddenly the chap at the Treasury who was leading it, said, 'Now we will go off to the Travellers.' And he suddenly looked round at me and said, 'I'm terribly sorry, I didn't think of it but, I'm sorry, you can't come.' And that happened. Things like that that happened. I would say, given the climate of the times, that I was extremely fortunate and the Foreign Office was, on the whole, very advanced in its thinking and that I met with much kindness and support. But certainly, the climate of the times was very different, certainly things like that could still very easily happen.

JJ Certainly I remember in the 1960s, in the late 1960s, there was a senior colleague in General and Training Department who just could not accept women, because they would all go off and have babies and so on, and really it was just a waste of our time and money spending it.

JC Well, I'm pretty clear that's why I was never given any language training at the start of my career. The idea at that stage of wasting a year's hard language training on a woman would have been considered absurd.

JJ But there was a female diplomat who sued the Office in recent years, who was turned down I think by our High Commissioner in Australia, because she was a woman.

JC I was going to say it was one of the African posts, but yes, that is certainly true. It was settled rather than taken to a tribunal...

JJ Settled out of court...

JC It was indeed.

JJ And then she resigned, and got a prestigious job outside the Office subsequently.

JC Well, the one I am thinking of actually went on, I thought.

JJ Well, I think she went on and then left early...

JC That also may be true. People are much more conscious now of the implications of some of these bits of law.

JJ Especially the Human Rights Act.

JC Yes. It is a very different climate. And I must say, as I went to Luxembourg with a husband, I realised how great an advantage it actually is. Apart from being able to consult somebody, there is no doubt that all these jobs are much easier to do as a couple than they are as a single person.

JJ Yes, you are right. I think there was a certain hesitation over bachelors being ambassadors. How could they manage the domestic side, the entertainment and so on without a wife to cook sausage rolls, or whatever it was.

JC It is much more difficult, and looking back on my career as a whole, I would say the worst experiences I'd had were loneliness, and that was really in South-East Asia where I was neither fish nor fowl, nor good red herring in some sort of social terms and where as a single woman, less as a single man, but particularly as a single woman one was really pretty isolated. I think the Service has become much more aware that single people have their problems as well as married ones with families. The Service does make quite heavy demands on people.

JJ I think also there is the story of the British ambassador to one of the Nordic countries, a woman, who was invited to dinner by the Foreign Minister and there were other ambassadors and at the end of the meal said, 'The ladies may now retire.' And she refused to move. She

said, 'I am not a lady, I am the ambassador.' In the end she backed out but I think an official protest was made. I think it was Norway.

JC The other side of that, my husband used to say in Luxembourg, was that he thought that we should always have women ambassadors because whenever I had a dinner party, if we invited, say, the prime minister, I sat him on my right and the next most important guest on my left, and I had the interesting conversation whereas, he complained, he had to talk to the wives. The most boring ladies sometimes who hadn't necessarily risen to the challenge of their husband's position. But that also was the other side of it which was sometimes quite...

JJ I found in the Council of Europe in the 1990's, my wife got a job in the Council of Europe, a lot of the secretariat people couldn't, the senior ones, some of them, didn't quite figure this out, didn't think it was quite right that a diplomat's wife should be having a job at all, and certainly not one to which she was accredited.

JC I can well imagine that.

JJ They would speak to her at a social function when I was there, but otherwise would ignore her.

JC I must say some of the British community, and the British community institutions, were a bit tricky. When I went to Paris, I was the first woman as a press counsellor there, and there were one or two awkward moments. A club called 'Les Miserables', which was a sort of hangover from the Second World War based on Anglo-French resistance ties, of which the press counsellor had always ex-officio been a member. And there was also a British community business club. Both of them had always been male and were really quite upset. They in both cases invited me in but I was then told, 'Goodness, we had an argument about this, some feeling very strongly that we couldn't have a woman, it would change the nature of the institution. Once we had one woman how could we tell our wives they couldn't come?' All this sort of thing. These are the sort of stories along the way. I do think it is all a very, very different world now. In that way at least, a preferable one.

JJ Juliet Campbell, thank you very much indeed.