named Wayne Glenhill, who later left the service and lives now out in Salt Lake City. And the other was a man named Alan Lester, whom you will find mentioned in Jim Bill's book. They were younger, but either of them was up to Lois's caliber. You have to remember that Lois had been a Fulbright in Sweden, came back from Sweden and instead of going into university education, went into the foundation world. She'd worked for nine or ten years with the American-Scandinavian Foundation, ending up as special assistant to three successive Presidents. So she'd been doing cultural work for the last ten years. She was very skilled, very socially graceful, very steady, ver wise. She came from an upper middle-class Jewish family in New York, and she had had a wonderful education including graduate study in sociology, her Fullbright year in Sweden, and superb control of Swedish. She was just a very elegant mannered lady.

Both Wayne and Alan were a more rough-hewn sort of American. They didn't have that kind of experience, or that kind of education. Wayne had almost no experience and Alan had only been in Africa. They didn't have that vital sense of style. And I suppose, in my own way, I was not terribly tolerant of that deficiency in both cases, though I have never been short on teachng ability when there are willing students. Wayne later left the service because I think <u>he</u> felt he didn't have much future, and I think he probably wasn't wrong. He would have made a good officer, but never a great officer, and I think he figured that out. Alan Lester had problems at one time or another that got in the way of his career development; he came back to Washington and I've lost track of him, I don't know where he is.

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Q: Now did you keep in close touch with the State Department's Bureau of Cultural

and Educational Affairs?

Arndt: At that time every Cultural Attaché, as Charles Frankel's book will explain, had two bosses and was "the man in the middle." He was hired, fired, damned, praised, whatever-- transferred above all-- by the USIA. But the work I did-- I'm talking about the exchanges work now, not the library, but the exchange-- the Fulbright program, the International Visitor program, the private visiting firemen, the short-term American visitors, and the performing arts that we had, all that came from the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. I would say that eighty per cent of my work and ninety per cent of my most useful tools came from the Department of State, and its Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, which I considered to be my real boss. Always did. Which didn't set very well with my USIA agency, but that's a problem which I had to deal with. I was, in any case, as Frankel puts it, "the man in the middle."

Q: Who was your chief contact in Washington? Or did you have a chief contact, is that the right question to ask?

Arndt: Well, we had a desk officer in USIA, who varied. We had a couple of people, but I had little to do with them. The persons that I most closely related to in the State Department were the two area directors for Near East and South Asia. One was a USIA officer named Renzo Pagin, who is retired and living over in Fairfax. Another was a state officer named Arthur Allen, who retired to Austin, Texas, and died last

year.

Q: They were working in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs?

Arndt: Correct. They each headed the Near East Division of the Bureau. And then there were desk officers below. There were good people there, all kinds of good people. Brilliance was not required, just good, solid, steady backing.

Q: How much guidance did you get from the staff at the Bureau, from the Near Eastern desk?

Arndt: Guidance is a funny word.

Q: Maybe instructions perhaps?

Arndt: Well, you have to remember that the Bureau, as a Bureau had been created (or elevated) by Kennedy. The first Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs--there had been a sub-bureau, a public affairs bureau before--was Philip Coombs. And Philip Coombs, like Charles [Frankel], had written a book about it. Coombs had come out of the Ford Foundation and had a developmental bias in his view, which I found very helpful. And I felt very much that I got enormous guidance from Philip Coombs and from his successor Charles Frankel. Frankel was in office for a couple of years in the time that I was there in Iran, but he was succeeded, in '68, by

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Lucius Battle, a better bureaucrat but a man, who had little impact conceptually. So the real guidance-- repeat, guidance-- in terms of forming my conceptual approach, was done by Coombs first and foremost and by Frankel secondarily.

Now the guidance that I got at the lower levels was largely budgetary. I would put in, to the Bureau, every year, a special country plan. At that time every post produced two country plans, one for USIA and one for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. And the format in which we would put that thing meant the work was endless. I hope you find some of the Iran material in the archives, because, in my judgment they're very impressive documents. They were in the 90-page range because the format dictated the length. But they were very, very interesting documents. I wish I had one, but I can't find any in my own files. They were unclassified documents, they had to reflect U.S. policy goals in Iran. They were put in every year; I spent a great deal of time on them. They had to be cleared by everybody in the Embassy, but they were so long and complex, and my relations with my colleagues were so good, that nobody bothered to argue with me. Including the PAO, I mean. I had an enormous amount of say over what went into that plan, practically total.

That plan then went to CU, as we called it, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and if anybody wanted to argue with me about it, they could, but nobody ever did. In fact, people would tell me consistently that when the plans went in that our was invariably the best in the area-- we had periodic visitors from CU and there was a lot of communication. So our program had a kind of a charmed life in Washington. And nobody really would have dared to tell us No. The only thing they could tell us No on was the amount of money we would get, and that is a form of guidance, after all.

The structure in those days was such that, after you'd finished your country plan and told them all the things you wanted, you listed on the last page what you wanted first-most and then second-most and third-most. Detailed grants one after the other: you put in this list of forty or fifty or sixty grants per year, and they would draw the line right where the budget cut off. And that was what you worried about, the margins. You tried to get two more grants or you tried to make it so that the line would fall just ahead of their favorite project, so that you could get that little extra put in there as well. So you were doing a certain amount of maneuvring. But the word guidance would not have occurred. It was a kind of a negotiation to get a maximum amount of money out of them, and extra funds at year end.

We had an enormous problem during the time I was there, because Frankel, for reasons that you can speculate on, was sabotaged by Representative John J. Rooney in the Congress; the CU budget, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' budget, was cut over a two-year period almost by fifty percent.

Now that was really spectacular damage, and what it meant to us was that something like the Fulbright program was cut back very, very severely. We had an American Director out there at the time, named Charles Boewe-- worth talking to, by the way. I think he's in Transylvania College in Kentucky or some place. Interesting man. The business of the heavy cuts in 1967-68 is a long complicated story, but let me just tell you this much of it. We had to tell the staff at the Fulbright Commission-- we had a senior Iranian Deputy, and then we had a small staff with, I don't know, three or four people-- we told them that we could only keep the Commission and existing staff alive, if they would go on half-time, half-salary until we got the budget built back. Well,

they took this in precisely the wrong way and went on what I considered to be a strike. So, in fact, we ended up simply having to bite the bullet and saying, we can't keep you on any more, sorry you're terminated. And it amounted to firing them and we had to go to the Ministry of Labor and do a lot of explaining as to why we had to do that. Of course, the Ministry of Labor wasn't very happy that they'd gone on strike, as we considered it, strikes were rare to non-existent in Iran, then and now.

It was a major cut, and to survive at that time was really very, very iffy and difficult. My game, by the way, was to get the Iranians to understand that if they would contribute to the Fulbright Commission, we could do twice as much as we were doing before. And we had had considerable luck in joint contribution in to other parts of our program, which we can talk about later, and I thought it would be appropriate for the Iranians to do what so many countries do-- mathe the U.S. contribution to the Fullbright Commission. but I never got that done. It would have helped in 1967-68, for sure.

Q: Wasn't some of the Fulbright budget counterpart funds from foreign aid? Wasn't that funded partly from-- ?

Arndt: Originally from the sale of surplus war materials in Europe. Originally, but then it had grown far beyond that, to many other countries. We didn't have any more counterpart funds in Iran, when I got there (counterpart funds can be generated by AID food sales and in other ways.)

The other big issue that we had in Iran in the Fullbright program had to deal with to do with foreign students. It was a simple issue. When I got there, we were sending no

graduate students to the United States. Now, in my thinking, if you're going to develop-- if you're going to bring a chemist, let's say, to teach chemistry at the University of Tehran, and then send their best graduate student to the United States, so that he can come back and replace the man, then you're wasting your money. And so we began to propose and urge student grants. We got a total stony silence in Washington about it.

And finally I pushed the issue, in a noisy cable that demanded an answer, and they came back and they said, you can't have it "for political reasons." And being very dumb at the time, I didn't understand what that meant. I thought I was dealing with politics, not them. This dialogue of the deaf went on until I learned what they should have explained to me, that some of the key Congressmen, who lived in the city of Washington, had hopped into taxicabs and found them driven by an Iranian student. There were, as I recall, fifteen to twenty thousand listed Iranian students in the country at the time, and some of them had been there since the Mossadegh years, in fact. So the Congress was annoyed and thought there were too many Iranian students here already, so the Bureau was afraid to propose anything at all that would bring more Iranian students here. The big buzz-word was "Brain Drain." So we had a terrible fight about that-- and that was the only time I ever argued with the Bureau. I said, we cannot run programs without this necessary part of the recipe and you've simply got to have the courage to tell Congress that that's the way it is. And finally, we won it. We began sending very carefully selected graduate students at the end.

Meanwhile the Fulbright thing was an incredible mess because of this enormous cut, Boewe was holding the fort all alone. We practically lost the program. And we

didn't ever get any success in getting the Iranians to fund it, because it required parliamentary action and there was no way to get that group to do something which would open the door to all the other countries, as they saw it, including the Soviet Union. I did get a contribution from the oil consortium, and we started some interesting fund-raising projects, which I can tell you about later, that did earn money, but not in the direct government to government kind of grant that is routine in Germany or in Italy or in France.

All, that is a lay answer to the question about guidance, from the Bureau of Cultural Affairs. In terms of guidance from USIA, of which I got a great deal more, mainly from my PAO, the question was only to get the PAO to understand that you were doing the right thing--to keep him informed and not worry about it too much. I only quarreled with Larry Hall on one occasion. I had decided I needed to accompany a performing group to Shiraz, and he called me and asked me to come back, because he felt I was needed. I was annoyed at that, but I did it-- I could lose one or two, because I was winning so many. So I was usually ready to knuckle under, if the PAO had any problems; but it did not happen often.

The big argument I had with Jay Gildner was more serious: we had lots of empty office space at USIS, and it occurred to me that-- on a specifically temporary basis-- we could use it for the Fulbright Commission at the time it was disastrously cut. I argued that we could move it into the USIA building, rent free. In principle, I was wrong and he was right; and he used the argument from principle to beat me down. In practice, however, it would have-- for an interim period that could have been presented acceptably-- saved us a lot of money. We could have done it, I think-- I still think it

was an acceptable plan, so long as we were very careful about making it clear we were doing it only until budgets were rebuilt. But I lost the argument. I also lost to Gildner on a variety of planning issues, but I got most of my funds from CU anyway. He also tried to get rid of my little Aid office, but I won that one-- as long as I was there.

Q: Now through the first few years, I guess, that you were in Tehran, how did you define your role as Cultural Attache? You spoke of this implicitly to some extent, but maybe you want to talk about it more explicitly, how you saw your role in the country.

Arndt: I saw myself, and by extension our culture program, as a switchboard, would you believe? A clearing house. As a nerve center for intellectual connections between Iran and the United States. I tend to think that's what a Cultural Attaché should do everywhere. But it never worked so well in my career anyway-- as it did in Iran. It had to do with the fact that we were put in charge of what was left over at the AID mission, which were all human resource development programs, three of them. It had to do with good and productive contacts with the Embassy, including the Peace Corps. It had to do with the fact that we were plugged into most of the intellectuals and academics in the country, including some in the mild opposition and even others, as need, in the somewhat more overt opposition. Mild, of course, but opposition in any case.

And so between us we simply knew everybody in Iran, and if we did not know them it was easy enough to arrange. After all, it was a small elite. I was lucky to have an enormous memory for faces and names and wives' names and their children's names and all that stuff. I was just one of those natural "politicians" in that situation, and

that meant I knew everybody, and Lois was almost the same. So if I knew that an American was coming-- like Milton Friedman, for example, they invited Milton Friedman on their own. I suggested that we do such and such a thing with Milton Friedman, jointly. Walt Rostow was coming, so we cooked up an event and had a hundred and fifty or two hundred Iranians for a lunch at the IAS. They were all the right people, come to hear Rostow talk about "the three stages of economic growth revisited."

Our sense was that, if there was an American coming in, we could find some way for him to plug into society. In fact, Lois [Roth] and I used to joke about it. We thought we were very clever thought, at using any itinerant Americans, and we used to argue that we could use even the Good Humor man. If we got a Good Humor man coming through by accident in Iran, we thought we could develop a program on Refrigeration, Food Preservation and House Distribution in a Dynamic, Developing Society. That was kind of a joke with us, but we were very proud of our ability to plug almost any American with anything to offer into some nook or cranny in Iran where he would be useful. And we didn't make many mistakes, because we could always brief Americans to say relevant things and to find people who were interested.

Now that reflected, I think, the climate of the time. This country was trying to fly on its own and they recognized they needed a lot of help; they had not yet gotten into the later period that I never had to experience, the period of "arrogance" that went with the vast increases in the oil revenues. At that time there was humility, or at least modesty; there was openness, willingness to admit ignorance, and to take advice. And there was great curiosity, and even nostalgia among the US-educated, about the U.S. There was

simply a sense of willingness to listen and learn.

Now to get back to this clearing house idea. One of the devices that we used to play this clearing house role was the Returnee Professional Association, probably the most important thing that had been left to me. The Returnee Association had been formed by my immediate predecessor, John Reinhardt later was the head of USIA under Carter, John had set it up he had the idea we always used to worry about follow-up on those we had helped visit the U.S. After you send a grantee to the States and he comes back, what do you do then? We had a lot of ways to follow up, but there's never enough. We would send them books and we would send them magazines in their professional field. We would incite them to IAS. We would try to have them to lunch or dinner, to keep in touch with them in one way or another.

But to organize a formal returnee body was, at that time, a fairly original idea. And even more original-- and I have to give enormous credit to John-- was that he'd listened to the Iranians when they told him the following truth: that just because an Iranian from one class-- it's a very class-oriented society-- or one circle even, had gone to the United States, it didn't mean that he had anything at all in common with another Iranian, just because he'd gone to the United States. But what they did have in common was their profession. The doctors of Iran had more in common with each other and with American doctors than they had in common with the bureaucrat or the engineer down the street. The lawyers of Iran had more in common with themselves and with American lawyers than the clerks in the Ministry of Justice, and so on.

So we had the Returnee Association. The Association of Returnee Professional Groups, we called them. There were six or eight professional groups, as I recall.

Medicine, law, Engineering, science, architecture, education, economics business and so forth. I think we probably had well over three thousand names on that list. Obviously we couldn't do things for them everywhere. The heavy programming was in Tehran. And we put out a magazine that came out a couple of times a year, in English. It was devoted to them, written specifically for their interests and needs, and with their news and contributions. It was run out of the culture section-- it was really done almost double-handed by me and Lois. We did quite amazing things. We published articles about things in the developing world that were pertinent to Iran, without ever mentioning Iran's name, but which suggested things about life there. I have the whole run of this magazine in my files.

For example, we had an issue on what we called "communications," in which the editorial was called "Communications, the Torn Web of Human Society." And what we were saying to Iran is, if you don't build your communications structure and exchange more information, you're going to die. You can't live without it. We were saying communications was everything in developing a modern society. Now that was a message to Iran, but it was also a message to the returnees about their role there. It was also a thread linking them to their US experience and to our programs.

So we had this returnee network. Now what happened as a result of all this? Well, when people came back from the United States, they would hear about it and they would come to one of our luncheons. We would say, what did you do your work in? Well, I have a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Illinois in DeKalb. And I would say, well, terrific, what are you doing? And he would say, well, I have a terrible job and they don't understand it. They're all French-educated and they don't think I

know anything and they don't know how to use me.

So I would call up some friend, maybe the Chairman of the Chemistry Department or whatever at one of the universities, or I would call up somebody who ran a petrochemical firm, and I would say, what do you do with a Ph.D. in Chemistry, who is being pushed around by a bunch of ignorant people who don't know what he can do? They would say, I've got just the man for him to see, and sooner or later he would end up with a different job. And so the cultural section and the returnee association were literally a job-clearing house for these people coming back from the United States. So that was part of the program-- to help Iranians at the proper level into their society so as to constitute to its growth. And then the other thing we could do was to say to a person, "You know, you really would profit enormously from watching what we do in the Tennessee Valley," if he was in, let's say, irrigation. Or you could learn enormously from what we do in California, in terms of dry lands irrigation. Would you be available to go to the United States if we could find a way to get you there? And the answer, of course, would be yes, and usually we could persuade their employers to cover half cost. So not only could we put people in touch with Americans who were in Iran, but we could send people to America. So that we had an enormous amount of power to mold human clay, to educate. The only word for all this "educate." We were educators.

Many Iranians recognized that and they used to refer to think of us, us as educators. They understood their function. There had been a very famous American missionary educator named Dr. Jordan, and some of them even teased me about being a latter-day Dr. Jordan. Dr. Jordan, in fact, was an amazing man. Lived there for thirty of forty

years and did a tremendous job. In any case I was seen as an educator, and so I was in touch with what was going on in the universities around the country, because our kind of education was post-secondary and adult education.

Now one thing that I think I should tell you right here. In 1966 there were fifteen to twenty thousand or more Iranian students and other Iranians in the U.S. Armin Meyer made a decision to try to get Iran a better press, in part to try to get some of them to come back home. Iran was at that time much criticized by the press. It was accused of torturing people and all the rest, some of which was true, some of which was greatly exaggerated. But its

development was being very badly hindered by its poor press around the world, and one of the effects that this had was that the students did not return. It would be fair to say that Armin Meyer tried to change that and I think to a great extent he succeeded in changing that, in very intelligent ways, as I saw it. Some think he went too far, but I think it needed to be done and I think he did it skillfully and within the bounds of correct diplomatic procedure.

In any case, one of the effects that this poor press had was that the Iranian émigrés, who were all over the place-- in this country, they were at the World Bank, they were working in international agencies, they were all over the place-- were loathe to come back. And we talked about how we could make it happen. For example, Meyer suggested we ask 100 university alumni offices for their Iran lists. One of the things that just happened to come across my desk at that time was an application for a Fulbright grant by a man named Ramazani--Rouhollah K. Ramazani, who is now my colleague at the University of Virginia. Ramazani is a great Iranian who emigrated during the

Mossadegh period, who had become an American; but he was a great political scientist and the world's authority on Iranian foreign policy this prominent and respected émigré applied for a Fulbright to come back to Iran.

This came across my desk in, I guess, '67. I may have the year wrong. The story is interesting. I assumed it was routine, but we had to ask permission to bring in Fulbrights, and so asked routinely for permission for Ramazni, and one by one we got all our permissions except his. So we let it sit around for a while, and then we decided we would do something about it. So I took the question up to the University Chancellor. Now the Chancellor of the University at the time was an extraordinary man named Jahan Shah Saleh. A truly great, great, great human being and a great Iranian. And he called in his contactman for SAVAK. Saleh, by the way, was a member of the Fulbright Commission, but he usually sent his vice-chancellor as his delegate. So I had every right to go to him; besides he had already become a rather special friend. And I said, look, here's there's this Ramazani case, we're not getting an answer.

So he called in the man who was his connection with the Secret Police and said, what about this Ramazani story? Well, came the answer, you know, the Secret Police are not at all happy about Ramazani. He said, they say to me, "How can we be sure that he will not come back here and pour his poison into the ears of young Iranians?"

I said, well, of course you can't be sure of anything of the kind, but I think you could read Ramazani's writings and I think you would find he wasn't very dangerous. Besides his return would have great <u>symbolic</u> meaning in Iran.

Well, the matter did not seem to advance at that time. And Ramazani came to the

Middle East anyway and filled the Aga Khan professorship at the American University in Beirut for 1967-68. But he had a second year to spend, so we persisted. The Ambassador had had a letter about the case from Cuyler Young at Princeton. By now, it struck us as important. It was an accident that Ramazani happened to be a grantee, a potential grantee at that moment, but he became a symbol. And Armin Meyer, because of the letter from Cuyler (at the time chairman of Near East Studies at Princeton), knew that Ramazani's return to Iran was not just an ordinary return, but had a certain value of its own. So Armin went to the very top (I have always presumed he went to the Shah.) He will tell you if you ask him. Somehow, with that and the other pressures, the next year we got Ramazani in. So he stayed abroad a second year, and that year-- I think it was '68-'69 Ramazani was in Iran.

That, in my way of thinking, happened to coincide with the beginning of the return of a lot of other prominent Iranians, lots of them. Cyrus Sami'i to the Central Bank, from the World Bank. Abadian from the World Bank. Ali Aghassi from the U.N. Fazlolla Reza from MIT (?) A lot of fine Iranians began to come back to try to find their way. Now that made the switchboard clearing house function even more complicated. A lot of these people were put in at the very top. For example, Fazbollah Reza was made the Chancellor of the Technical University, Aryamehr, the MIT of Iran. He turned out to be a terrible mistake. It was a terrible administrator and a very complicated man indeed. But he was not a success at that and left later on. But some returnees were very successful. As Khodadad Farman-Farmaian used to say, all we needed was a "critical mass," of such people and things would begin to move.

The integration problem of these people was enormously complex, and we were

sitting right in the middle of it. for our sins. Like spiders in the middle of a web. I don't mean to use that as a power image, but, we happened to know who were on the receiving end, and I our programs with returnees put us in touch with all the people who were coming in. Sooner or later we would meet them. If we didn't meet them the first day they got back, we would meet them a month or two later. Sooner or later we would hear about them. If we didn't meet them, we would go find them. I would hear such-and-such a man was back and I would go call on him. The more I did this, the more I saw how vital it was and it was obvious that I should be cultivating this role. We even tried to get Americans universities to help us locate their Iranian alumni and formed alumni bodies for Columbia, through Harvard and MIT already and their own quiet little groups, formal and informal.

Now your question was, how did I conceive my role? One major focus was on this re-entry question. But it goes well beyond that. I could talk about that for hours, but my role, the role of our "adult education programs" had to do with the university revolution, it had to do with what the Iran-American Society was doing, it had to do with how we shaped our exchange program, it had to do with the way we structured our library, the way we went into a very large library project on the Fulbright program, in order to help build Iranian library resources, on the assumption that if they didn't have libraries, they didn't have any memories hence brains that you had to have a library-- now we call it an information retrieval system-- in order to know anything, other than what you remembered, if you were lucky.

So that it had an overall design, our program. I wish you could find one of those CU country plans some time. You would get a pretty good sense of the shape of it.

But it was a large, well conceived country design for how to use the tiny American resources that we had for the growth of Iranian hither education, and other things we could do.

We also used our visitors, had visitors like Eli Ginzburg of Columbia University, who was the great manpower expert, and J. Hurwitz from Columbia, the Middle East expert. And people like the economist Stan Wellisz, also from Columbia. And with these people-- they would do their lectures, but we would also go around with them and call on people. The Minister or Vice-Minister of this or that. And we would sit and they would talk and we would listen and learn. And we could throw in a question every once in a while. So we were constantly getting our batteries recharged by these high-level Americans, who would come in and try to learn about Iran and who would ask questions and, in fact, would in some cases give advice. For example, warn them that if you don't let beef prices rise, you're not going to get anybody raising cattle. Simple stuff like that, but for me it was an economics education, and certainly for Lois. It was a very important experience, one of personal growth for me at least, at the same time we were constantly revising and shaping the overall plan on the basis of inputs and feedback that we were getting.

Q: When you thought about your role in Iran for this period, how did you define the connection between your work and maybe long-term American foreign policy objectives or goals?

Arndt: I thought that a stable, developing and better educated Iran was an enormous

American asset in the Middle East. Douglas MacArthur, the successor to Armin Meyer as ambassador, used to talk about the "arc," the whole arc, from here to here, i.e. the Middle East. The only island of stability was Iran and so forth. It was a dramatic way to put it, but it was true. Iran was almost a model for the area and could have been an even greater model had it succeeded. And I think we all thought Iran was going to make it. It was going to gradually liberalize, gradually strengthen, gradually grow.

One of my key wise-men on the American side, by the way, was Edward A. Bayne, Ned Bayne, whose book PERSIAN KINGSHIP IN TRANSITION was one of my Bibles, one of the books that I really used and based on my own thinking; he'd done that book on the basis of tape-recorded conversations with the Shah. So my sense was like his, that the Shah wanted to liberalize at the proper pace. So the sense was that the foreign policy interests of the United States were served by a healthy, developing, and presumably friendly Iran. And that's as far as my policy needs had to go. The Soviet Union was to the north. Everyone agreed they were the bad guys. Very few even dreamed of thinking differently. The Iranians were not interested in the Soviet Union. Vietnam was beginning to get hotter, but it seemed at the moment to be a fairly distant conflagration, and certainly the Iranians were uninterested in it. You remember there was an Iranian team in Vietnam, a medical team that went into Iran and did some work there. One of our staffers went with them, to send back useful publicity. It was done by the Iranian Red Cross, what they called the Red Lion and Sun.

Q: Can you tell me about the trade factor?

Arndt: Yes. The other factor, of course, was that Iran was a tremendous trade partner of ours. The balance at that time was very, very positive for us in spite of the fact that we bought a certain amount of their oil. But we were doing very well on the balance of trade and we obviously wanted that to continue. There was no doubt that there was some connection between education, training, and trading. For example, medicine was clearly-- it was growing American medical domain, after years of French influence. And American medical machinery and equipment and drugs and so forth were more and more heavily used in Iran. The same was true of engineers. The engineering people used American goods, and that was it. So we stayed very close to that and tried to keep our hand on it, as part of the returnee picture. It was particularly interesting when we began to try to raise money when the Fulbright program blew. We'd been so close to the management of some of the people in the oil company-- notably in the Western Oil Consortium, that worked with the National Iranian Oil Company-- that they gave us money, because they wanted to help us carry out some of the things that we were doing. They saw our effort as relevant to their deeper needs in that country, as part of civilizing process. Lois got a lot of business contributions to the IAS, every year.

We were trying to convince the American businesses in that country that enlightened management meant investment not only in PR, which most businesses do understand as advertising, but in manpower development over time. I remember when Union Carbide came out to open an Eveready Battery plant, we tried to convince them that if they worked with the faculty of chemical engineering at the University of Tehran and

perhaps made small investments in its development-- maybe sent a young chemical engineer every year to the United States, it wouldn't cost them a lot of money. And it would help take care of their manpower needs in the long run very, very nicely. That did not work out, but that was the idea. We had a very constructive dialogue with business. American businessman sat on the boards of the Fullbrigth commission and the IAS. There was a lot of American investment in Iran, most of it doing very well. And a lot of this, in one way or another, touched my office. I remember a big Chicago architectural firm, Perkins & Will, that wanted to open a Tehran office. They consulted with us at great length. And Lois and I introduced them to all the right people and gave them the best advice we could on a quiet basis. It wasn't my job, but I felt it was the loyal American and friendly thing to do. Unfortunately, in my judgment, they chose the wrong partner. By then we were good friends, we stayed in touch for years, and they never stopped saying, if we'd only followed your advice, we would have made it in that country.

END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE; BEGINNING OF SIDE ONE, TAPE TWO:

Q: You mentioned earlier that the Public Affairs Office at the Embassy had an Information Bureau, an Information Division, which I guess was more related to short-term foreign policy objectives? That's the impression I got from reading about their activities, that the information program was more based on short-term needs of the foreign policy. To what extent did the short-term goals have any complicating impact

on your interest in having more of a long-term influence on the country?

Arndt: In some countries a great deal, but in Iran at that time almost none. As I said, it was not a paradise for information officers. Their program had to be unusually long-range; in many cases it was parallel to what I was doing, except they were doing it from the press and TV side. There was no real way to pack policy U.S. information into the papers, and, in fact, what they packed in was general information, and the fact was there really wasn't a lot to be done with or press that was basically state-controlled. Besides, from our viewpoint we didn't have any real issues with Iran. Not the kind of thing that would be hammered out in the press anyway. So that they put out a magazine, on the editorial committee board of which I sat, so that it would be more or less in tune with what we were doing in culturla affairs. They printed our the little returnee magazine for us. As long as I was there, they let us run that magazine. It was stopped, by the way, when I left, which is probably a sign that they didn't really like it, but that's a different question. Certainly there was no one to whom I could have passed it on, and it was not ready to stand or its own, without USIS help and editorial assistance. By then I was into my third PAO.

So we were well supported by the Information Section, and I don't recall anything ever happening that was tricky in policy terms. Vietnam was a growing problem. We got a pack of slides about Vietnam, really quite ridiculous, around which we were supposed to develop slide lectures, to go out and tell people why Vietnam was a noble cause. And it came into my office, because that's where that kind of mail arrived. And I just made it quietly clear that I had no intention of going out and giving

lectures on Vietnam. And as far as I know, nobody else did either, in Iran. Because it was still, at that time irrelevant in that country. There was no real need for us yet to explain what we were doing in Vietnam. They knew perfectly well what we thought we were doing in Vietnam and that was enough for them.

The only time that I ever had the sense that there was something going on that I didn't know about was the assassination attempt on MacArthur. I remember Jay Gildner coming into a staff meeting that day and saying that there was this rumor going around that there'd been an assassination attempt on the Ambassador and that we were to be absolutely emphatic that it wasn't true. And I remember asking Jay, in front of everybody, and at the end of this long and now I realize quite carefully calibrated explanation, whether it was in fact true. "Jay, is the story true or not?" And he looked at me with a big smile and he said, "It's absolutely untrue." Everyone in the room understood. Wonder if Jay will remember that. But that's the only time where I ever felt that I had to lie about anything in terms of policy in that country. In fact, I don't think the subject ever came up with Iranians.

We had, by the way-- while I was there we had a tiny "projectile," it was a rock or something, thrown through one of the windows of the Iran-American Society. And something else at the teaching center. And then we had a real bomb. We had a messy bomb. It seems to me it was in the spring of '71, following the offering of a big show by the American painter Douglas Johnson, in which there were a few pictures of the Royal family. It was planted in the men's room and made an awful mess. It blew out the plumbing and there was a lot of water flowing around, and it blew out the telephone switchboard and so forth. It was pretty messy, but it was timed to go off around

midnight, when no one would be there. I happened to be there because we had just wound up a big reception. It was just a warning that they know we were there and that they were watching. You remember that I've several times alluded to the fact my first four years were wonderful and the last year was a little different. That was one of the factors in 1970-71 that made me think that things were changing and that we were going to be in for rougher times ahead. But that's another story.

Q: I read in James Bill's book that in the late sixties, mid to late sixties, the Iranian popular press ran a fair amount of critical material on the U. S. involvement in Vietnam. Did you know much about that at the time? Did you read press reviews or translations of press articles?

Arndt: You know, my leftish friends, of whom I had some, used to gripe about it from time to time; but I wasn't particularly aware of any profound discussion in the press. In fact, I'm rather surprised, now that you say that, as I think about it. I don't know how much criticism they could have published in the press about that. Maybe they alluded to it, but I just don't have any awareness that Vietnam was a big problem in the press. Certainly it was not a problem in the world that I moved in at all though it was certainly a serious problem within the American community. I had run up against it in Ceylon, of course, and Lois-- straight out of New York and Scandinvia-- was bothered by it.

Q: Now when you arrived in Tehran, as you've mentioned before, Armin Meyer was

Ambassador. How would you assess him as Ambassador?

Arndt: I think Armin Meyer was a very good Ambassador. I think he had a lot of detractors-- there were a lot of people in the State Department who thought Armin was a kind of a-- oh, I don't know, a peasant or something. Armin comes from the middle class, probably the lower side of the middle class. Didn't have much of an education and had knocked around in the Department of State on Middle East affairs and had somehow done very well for himself. But he wasn't your ordinary polished FSO [Foreign Service Officer]. He saw himself as a man of the people, he identified, I think, more with Abraham Lincoln than anybody else. He had a certain rough-hewn quality, and as I'm sure everyone will tell you, he had a very difficult lady with him, whom we could talk about it if you want.

But the key fact is that Armin was a very ambitious man in a special sense: he wanted to be the best Ambassador we'd ever had in Iran. It's as simple as that. And he worked endlessly to that end. He put in endless hours. He's a workaholic. He didn't do anything else.

My sense is that his contribution was very simple and very real. He supervised this transition into a period of sovereign partnership with, it seems to me, considerable skill, a great deal of earnestness, and with a certain resistance to Iranian ambition, which was absolutely necessary. It was critical that the American presence during this period of partnership did not get over-beguiled, into a period of reverse tutelage, that we become clients, as it were, of Iran. And what Armin Meyer was capable of resisting these

things and putting them in perspective. So I give him high marks for that.

The other thing that I think he should get credit for was a very intelligent, unusual effort for an American diplomat-- a intelligent effort to get a better press-- a more accurate world press-- for Iran, as I think I said before, and to convince Iranian émigrés that they could return. All things considered, I think he was a very decent Ambassador. He was not, I think, appreciated by the Iranian upper classes, who tended to be rather snobbish about him. He didn't speak French, after all, and I mean, that put him down in their eyes, but no more than other Yanks. And he was a very earnest, very simple, straightforward kind of a man, and I think the Iranian upper classes didn't particularly understand that, they had need for a more Byzantine personnaltiy. But on the other hand, I think they appreciated that he was a very useful Ambassador for them to have at that time. They know he was a professional.

Q: How did he run the Embassy? Or how did he manage the Embassy?

Arndt: Well, remember, I wasn't in the Embassy. The USIA building was about a mile and a half down the road. And I didn't really watch that very carefully. I knew everybody in the Embassy. He had a fine deputy, Nick Thatcher. He had two-- while he was there, I think-- two superb Political Counselors. One was Martin Herz, the great and late-- unfortunately-- Martin Herz. And after him Jack Armitage, who is retired and living in Charlottesville, as you know.

The Political Section I think was extremely good, had wonderful younger officers. The one issue that I think I should tell you about-- it's a very interesting issue-- a

Cultural Attaché who knows as many people as I did is always on demand to do some kind of political reporting. I had taken the line that I was not a trained political reporter, that it was not my job, and that I had many, many other things to do, but that I would be very open to anybody from the Political Section that wanted to talk to me.

Well, the Political Section took me up on that and every Friday at, as I recall, three o'clock, usually the junior man in the Political Section, but somebody, would come over and sit with me for an hour and we would just chat. And they would ask me about people and they would ask me about ideas and they would ask me about anything that came to mind. And I would be

perfectly free and easy with them and never held anything back that they wanted to know. I was a little mindful of something I'd read in Peter Avery's book, in which he points out that in the sixties a plot against the Shah was revealed in confidence to an American Embassy representative; the Embassy then, he said, leaked it to the Iranians and the whole thing was blown out of the water, some people put in jail and-- who knows. So I was very aware of the fact that I could get people in trouble. So I sometimes held back minor or irrelevant details of one kind or another. But basically it was an open context of good and useful exchange.

There's one episode in there that I think is interesting and revealing. I also maintained a certain amount of friendly social contact with my colleagues in the CIA on the research and analysis side, and one in particular we got to be very close to. And one day he asked me if I would mind coming over to his office, and I said I'd be delighted. I'd never been invited. They lived in a different section of the Embassy and we didn't normally go there. So I went over and he said, "The reason I wanted you

to come over is I wanted to show you something which I can't take out of this office." And he had had a long conversation with a source, whom I have no way of identifying. Did not at the time and have never tried. Some day, when we get older, I'll ask him for it, because it was an intriguing source.

But it was a very interesting essay. This was, it seems to me, around '70. And it was about opposition to the Shah, and it was a very thoughtful analysis from this obviously prominent Iranian source, talking about the kind of intellectual dissension, the kind of political opposition that was rampant in Iran and that was not getting any less. Some of it went back to

resentments of the Mossadegh era, but others had to do with strictly developmental flaws--with the Shah's incapacity to delegate, with his wanting to be involved in everything, with misallocation of priorities, and so forth. A very sensible, a very good thing it was, and I thought both true and useful.

And he said, "Look, I would like to put your name on the bottom of this as having seen it and signed off on it." It's unusual, but for reasons that you will understand as you read this, that's what I would like. If you agree with it, will you sign off on it?"

Well, I saw that what he was trying to do was to get some inkling of the opposition side of the picture, and the Embassy's awareness of it-- which was read-- into <u>overt</u> channels. Now you understand that the CIA can send anything it wants to its offices in Washington. They don't have to show it to the Ambassador. This one however he wanted to go <u>through</u> the Ambassador. In other words, he was trying to tell the Ambassador and the State Department desk that things were not all so hunky-dory.

Q: What year was this again now?

Arndt: I think it was '70. The fall of '70 maybe. Maybe spring of '70. That I'm not clear about.

What I became aware of that day was that there had been a certain amount of screening at the Embassy level of negative information about the regime. Coming out of the Embassy in the first place and probably more important-- it's perfectly natural-- once it got to the Desk. Anything that got through to the Desk-- obviously it would not necessarily get upstairs. Why would it? So there was kind of a tendency to say, this does not concern day-to-day thinking, we'll have it in the file, but we won't talk about it. There was alos, at both ends, a lot of second-guessing-- "We know how much we can get away with telling Washington, so don't tell them any more."

So the result was that a certain amount of negative reporting wasn't getting out. Also that may have had to do with Armin Meyer's attempt to present Iran in as good a light as possible.

Well, this document I agreed to sign was exactly what I knew, a good statment of what we all knew. But it was in writing, that's the important thing. And about two or three days later I got a call from Armin Meyer. He said, "Dick," he said, "I know it's a bit of a hop over here and it's late in the day, but would you mind very much and coming over?"

I went over and there on his desk was the famous memo. And he looked very perplexed and concerned. That was in the tone of his voice. He said, "Dick, this is very unusual. I see you signed off on this." He said, "I know that's unusual and I know

you must have done it with considerable thought, and I know that the author must have involved you for various reasons." And he said, "I want to ask a very simple question. Is this really true?" And I said, "Mr. Ambassador, it's almost as true as anything I've read." He said, "I can't believe it." And I said, "It is really true. That is the way they're all thinking. It's obvious that the people that you're talking to are not going to tell you this; you can't talk to everyone, and they're not going to tell you what they tell us. It is equally obvious that the people we're talking to are going to tell us this. This is only a manifestation of what I think we all know and it's here in print. We all know, and if you ask any of us, we can tell you, but I understand that it is not a subject that comes up, and you don't ask me to report on it and so I don't. But my assumption is you know, have known, and my assumption is that if you ask ten people in this Embassy, they will tell you, at least nine of them, the same thing."

And he thought. I mean, there was a long silence. Two minutes. A long silence. And he just nodded his head, he said, "I'm just surprised by this."

It was a man earnestly coming to terms with a force that he respected and people that he respected and people that he couldn't say No to. And it was a matter of great personal concern. It was a very interesting moment, for me.

Q: Did he send it?

Arndt: Oh, yes. Well, I mean-- [Laughs] a good question. I think he sent it. How would I know? And if you then ask me, did it do any good, I haven't the slightest idea, because once it gets to Washington, you know, who knows what happens to it?

Q: Actually this must have been before '70, because he went to Japan as Ambassador in the spring of '69.

Arndt: You're right. It certainly happened with Meyer.

Q: Spring of '68, early '69?

Arndt: Well, it was very late. It was very late, because the author in question didn't come until late '67 and I knew him pretty well by then.

There was another episode that happened to me much later, when I was back here in Washington, in the fall of 1971, that will give you some inkling of this. I was, in fact, staying with the same officer in his home, and he drove me to work on morning, and as he drove me in, he said, "You know, you're going to the Iran Desk, ask them what they think of the following piece of news that we got day before yesterday." Now he was talking from the point of view from of the communications he received.

And I went into the Desk people. There were three people on the desk, the desk officer and two assistants, at that time.

Q: These are people at the Embassy now?

Arndt: No, no. Now I was back in Washington. This was in the fall of '71. I was at Princeton that year.