you get a sense this was going on, in your recollections? This effort to induce reform?

Irwin: Again, I wouldn't try to say I have a specific recollection of what was actually happening. But yes, I think you would have a general knowledge that State and the Secretary wanted to move a certain way. Here again, to philosophize a bit you get in to the same type of problem as many of these others. Clearly, you want to try to move totalitarian or authoritarian or dictatorships, whatever they may be called, more toward what we like to think is democracy. That often is very difficult, without effecting the control of the party who may be a friend, an ally, and a good support in whatever part of the world he may exist to the United States and to his policies. Then I think the United States, particularly today--less so in the 1950s, but particularly today--in the press and all the people who really consider these things, they tend to push harder and harder for democratization. Which is the ideal thing to do, which I would favor. On the other hand, you--we tend to forget that it took us a couple hundred years to reach where we are today. We tend to expect a country which does not have an open education system that we've had, doesn't have the middle class that we have, doesn't have the resources and wealth that, even though we have poverty our wealth reaches down to a level that is unheard of in many of the countries that we keep pushing to be more and more democratic. It's a real dilemma. It's not that we shouldn't do it, but how do you achieve when you have a completely different culture, different education system, and different history. I often think we Americans tend to

over-simplify things, and say, "This is obviously a good goal. Therefore, push hard for it."

Q: You mentioned a few minutes ago that after the coup in Iraq the Baghdad Pact sort-of withered away.

Irwin: I must admit I don't remember the time, and all. Whether that even could be one of the causes--as you just pick a question out of the air--I think it possibly could be one of the causes.

Q: Since ISA had to deal with the pact in some respects, did you get a sense of what the U.S. role in the Baghdad Pact, or CENTO, was generally?

Irwin: I think basically, again, I hesitate to speak because of not knowing enough about what went on, by reviewing records and so on. But generally speaking I would say Mr. Dulles at that time, for whom I had a lot of admiration, had wanted to establish pacts that would help stabilize areas. He had NATO, and he had CENTO. I forget exactly when some of the others came about.

[End Cassette 1, Side 1]

[Begin Cassette 1, Side 2]

Irwin: My memory would be that in considerable part it was Mr. Dulles and his policies that made him believe that a CENTO pact would help in the stabilization of Middle East and South-east Asia areas.

Another comment on Secretary Dulles, which isn't necessarily applicable to this particular circumstance but--. Often the--I say the press or the media, but I don't mean to restrict it to them because I think that within academia or just the general public looked at Mr. Dulles as a very, not narrow minded but very set in his ways and views. I found him quite the opposite. As I say I often traveled with him. At that time you traveled in a four-engine airplane propeller driven, so you had about ten berths in it. So he would limit the party to ten people. Included two security guards--I mention that because today they take innumerable secret service men. Then they were only State Department guards, no Secret Service. You had occasionally Mrs. Dulles who would go with him; his secretary; perhaps a counselor of the State Department; sometimes a legal advisor; sometimes an assistant secretary and the desk officer of the areas concerned. Then one representative from Defense, which in those days happened to be I. If he were writing a speech he would make a draft of it, he would pass it around to all of the people with him saying "Give me any thoughts you have, changes or additions." I was impressed that he would listen. The desk officer would say, "Mr. Dulles, I don't think you should say this because of these reasons," or "I think you ought to add this in because of these reasons." Mr. Dulles would listen and say, "Well"--he might argue the points, there'd be an exchange--and he'd say "All right, I'll put it in." Or he said, "No, I disagree with you, I'm going to leave it out." He had an open mind! That didn't mean when he made up his mind finally, after considering all the points he thought, that he didn't stick to it--he did. Unless he saw some reason to change. But he did not

have the narrowness of view or the unchangeability that was often--people still reflect about him, at least in my limited experience with him.

Q: He had the reputation of being an unflexible person.

Irwin: I thought he had a flexible mind. Willing to explore all aspects of a problem. Then when he made up his mind, he did remain inflexible in the sense that he didn't see any point to change that, unless somebody gave him a really good reason. Then I think he would have considered that, and if it modified his view he would have changed it. I came away feeling he was a very fine Secretary of State. He did keep Eisenhower fully informed. Eisenhower would be in touch with him. So, people would say, "Well, the President doesn't really know what's going on." He did. Even if he hadn't taken an interest, which he did, the Secretary would have always gone back to him.

Q: In terms of Dulles' interest in the Baghdad Pact. I guess the U.S. never became a formal member of the Baghdad Pact. It was just the British and the countries in the region. But apparently the U.S. still participated in the military planning of the pact. Did the ISA coordinate that military planning, or have to do with the military planning. Or it would be someone else from the Pentagon that would actually do the war planning, and so forth.

Irwin: Any actual planning would have been done by that area that

was involved. If you're really talking about military planning it wouldn't have been ISA. It would have been Joint Chiefs, or a particular service, in their aspect of it. But ISA would have been in touch with what was going on, and would have participated in any way that was valid for it to participate. It obviously wouldn't try to say what the strategic or tactical military plan should be. It might have a comment on it, but that wasn't an area of expertise of ISA or State for that matter. You might have ideas on it--war is too important to be left to the generals, sort-of. As for the specific policy you'd go to the military.

Q: I see. Were you at the State Department until the end of the administration, until the end of Eisenhower. Did you participate in transition talks with the Kennedy administration officials.

Irwin: Yes, to a degree. I talked with both Mr. [Robert] McNamara and Mr. [Paul] Nitze--Mr. Nitze being my immediate successor--and some of his people. I've always had a high regard and respect for Mr. Nitze, which has only grown over the years. I'm happy he's in the position he's in today. He's an able, dedicated fine American.

Q: Did you do any further government work during the 1960s? You went back to your law practice, apparently.

Irwin: I came back to New York. I loved working in Washington and I always have, but once my job was over I was quite happy to come back to New York. I never had a desire to hang on in Washington. But I

did negotiate with Panama about the canal treaty under Johnson, which ultimately came to fruition at a much later date. Again in 1969, early, I negotiated in Peru under President Nixon. Peru had nationalized the International Petroleum Corporation [IPC], which was a Canadian company but a subsidiary of Exxon. So I was asked to go down. I was practicing law in New York at that time, and I was asked to go down to negotiate with the new Peruvian military government that had just seized power, been a coup.

Q: Did William Rogers ask you to do that?

Irwin: No. Well, indirectly I suppose. The person who talked to me was Eliot Richardson.

Q: He was at State Department then, right?

Irwin: He was under secretary of State at the time. Under secretary title was later changed to deputy secretary. That was actually when I was there. I was under secretary one day and deputy secretary the next. I was the only one who spoke against changing the title. It seemed to be the fashion in Washington in those days. There was a deputy secretary of Defense, then everybody else thought, "Well we ought to have a deputy secretary instead of an under secretary.". For many years the State had <u>the</u> under secretary, who was the number two. It also had under secretary for Political Affairs, or under secretary for Economic Affairs. <u>The</u> under secretary, who later became the deputy secretary. Purely a matter of title--the change

had no real significance at all.

Q: In terms of this Peruvian question that you helped negotiate. Without going in to the details, did the U.S. government consider invoking the Hickenlooper Amendment at any point during the negotiations about the nationalization of these properties?

Irwin: There was consideration of it, but I think I don't know how serious it ever really was. I recommended against it, although it certainly was one of the possibilities. It was a negotiating tool, not in the sense that you use it as a threat, but they knew that was in the background.

Q: To cut off foreign aid. Did the oil companies involved see it that way?

Irwin: I never talked to the oil company, in any major way. I talked to one of their representatives. They really didn't have much day to day, or any real, participation. In fact, all I did really is keep the subject open. The new military government--and my memory may not be accurate--they came in power one day, and the immediate reaction of the country was unfavorable. It was almost the very next day, maybe two days at the most, that they confiscated IPC. That was a popular move. That made them popular, and gave them a base to work on their popularity which they hadn't had in the first twenty-four hours. This is at least as I remember. When I went down to negotiate shortly thereafter, it was clear that the government was

not going to take any remedial action with respect to IPC. We had talks going on for six months or so, or even longer. But quite concentrated for the first few months. But, what it did do was keep it open to such a time when it was settled, the United States and the Peruvian government reaching a settlement, but each interpreting it in different ways. The United States in effect interpreted it as a remuneration and settlement of the IPC case. The Peruvian government considered that it had nothing to do with IPC. This was another matter that they were settling with the United States. So it gave each an out. The U.S. didn't need an out. Just handling it in such a way that it didn't cause the government of Peru to feel they were backing down on what had been one of their first acts.

Q: When you mention the IPC, that's International Petroleum Corporation? Is that correct?

Irwin: That was the name of it.

Q: Just wanted to make sure. Now what were the circumstances that led to your appointment as under secretary of the State? Was it because of these negotiations?

Irwin: That I don't know. I was just telephoned one day by Mr. Rogers, said, Would I come down and see him. This was in 1970--mid-1970. So one never really knows what leads to these things. In fact I've noticed in government, there'll often be a group of people on a list. Not on a list per se--nobody has a list

of potential candidates. But someone is looking for an assistant secretary of State or Defense or Treasury, or whatever the appointment. There'll be certain names that will come up when they're being discussed. If there's an under secretary desired by a department, two weeks later or two months later some of the same names may be discussed. So a lot of it's luck. You might be considered for an assistant secretary one day or an under secretary another day, or commissioner another day. All depends, I think, on what background they're seeking. You could be considered for different posts.

Q: That's interesting. How would you characterize the responsibilities as under secretary, and then deputy secretary of State.

Irwin: Well in essence you run the day-by-day State Department, and handle anything that comes up that the Secretary isn't handling or doesn't want to handle, or wants you to handle. Both substantive and administrative.

Q: Did you have a deputy that worked closely with you, or your own special assistant?

Irwin: I had a special assistant, very able, named Nick Veliotes. Later retired from the service as a distinguished ambassador in Egypt. He also was assistant secretary of state for Middle Eastern affairs--he was ambassador to Egypt as his last post. He was deputy

chief of mission in Israel, he was ambassador to Jordan--so he saw the Arab-Israeli problem on both sides. Very distinguished Foreign Service officer, and I was very fortunate to have him in his younger days when he was very able, energetic, and a very intelligent young man. Then you also had under secretary for political affairs, which was Under Secretary [Alexis] Johnson. You had, when I was there, Nat Samuels who was deputy under secretary for economic affairs. You had all your assistant secretaries. You had Ted Eliot, of whom you spoke earlier; he headed the Secretariat of the Department at that time. Then there was the counselor. So there are a lot of people on whom you can rely, and with whom you work.

Q: How closely did you work with Secretary Rogers?

Irwin: Quite closely. We met almost daily.

Q: You'd have a meeting of all the under secretaries, basically?

Irwin: No. He would start out, often, his day with, usually, Mr. Eliot who knew everything going on procedurally. With perhaps the under secretary for political affairs. Then deputy under secretary for economic affairs--myself. That type of combination. Two to four or five people at the most. Once a week or so he might have all of the assistant secretaries--maybe every other week. But I think that became less. When you get so many people, so many diverse interests it tends to be a little amorphous.

Q: Did you get a sense of how the foreign policy making process under Nixon compare, say, with that used by Eisenhower.

Irwin: 180 degrees different. President Eisenhower really used the staff system in the NSC. The NSC was made to coordinate and discuss policy and not decide policy. It had some very good national security assistance. Bobby Cutler ran it for awhile, and then Gordon Gray. Both were able men. Gordon Gray had been secretary of the Army at one point. But I never would have thought of either one of them trying to compete with the Secretary of State, or the Secretary of Defense. Their mission was to coordinate and to present an agreed view or to note the different views, rather than trying to make their own recommendation. Under President Nixon there was some of that. But real top policy was President Nixon's policy, but added to and carried out by Dr. Kissinger. So, much of the policy was Dr. Kissinger working under and with President Nixon. Now, to some degree obviously the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and others, would participate. But in essence it was really the President's policy effectively carried out by Dr. Kissinger.

Voice: I just wanted to remind you.

Irwin: Holy Smokes!

[End of interview]

ALM

Interviewee: John Irwin
Interviewer: William Burr

Date: April 7, 1988
Place: New York, NY

Q: The second part of the interview with John Irwin, by William Burr, took place in New York City on April 7, 1988.

Before we get back to your work with the State Department during the early 1970s, I have a couple questions about your law background that I just want to briefly pursue. Former Secretary of War Robert Patterson was the founding member of your law firm, I think.

John Irwin: Not a founding member. The firm had been in existence since the late teens. The senior member when the Judge resigned from the War Department was Chauncey Belknap. Early in their lives they had been good friends--three good friends: Judge Patterson, Vanderbilt Webb, and Chauncey Belknap. When Judge Patterson came out of the War Department Mr. Belknap invited him to come into the firm and said he was also asking Vanderbilt Webb to come back to the practice of law, because at that time he was with the Rockefeller office. He was there with John D. [Rockefeller] Jr. Judge Patterson said, "Well, if Van Webb is coming back in with you, I'll join with you too." So the three of them came together again, and reconstituted the firm. But the firm had been going, and Mr. Belknap had been with it for many years.

Q: I see. Besides you, were there other members of the firm in the first four years who were involved in government service?

Irwin: Well, when I went to Washington, my first job in the Defense Department, a young man was there named Robert Pennoyer. He was a lawyer, and I recommended him to Patterson, Belknap, and Webb so when he came back, he came back to Patterson, Belknap, and Webb to practice law. He's still with the firm, and he had experience in government. At that time, I believe there was no one else that had been in the government. Since then there have been quite a few people.

Q: Can you give a few examples?

Irwin: Well my best example is Judge Tyler, who is a federal judge, then he became deputy attorney general, then he came back to practice in New York, and fortunately for this firm he joined this firm. It's now Patterson, Belknap, Webb, and Tyler.

District Attorney Giuliani came to the firm with Judge Tyler, and was in the firm for awhile before he went into the district attorney's office. I'm sure, as you really looked through, you'd find other people that had been in and out of the office in either federal or state or local government.

Q: Anybody else in foreign policy, besides you? Or defense policy?

Irwin: I think of no one at the moment. That doesn't mean there may

not have been.

Q: In recent years, historians and social scientists have noted that a good many high level State Department officials during the Twentieth Century have had corporate law backgrounds. This goes all the way back to Elihu Root and Robert Lansing, up to William Rogers and Cyrus Vance--as well as Warren Christopher, his deputy. What makes corporate law a useful background for a role in foreign policy making?

Irwin: I'm not so sure that it's corporate law, per se, that is useful.

Q: Yes. Well, perhaps law in general.

Irwin: Background, I think, it more perhaps is law generally. Corporate law would be useful to the degree that it has brought the lawyer in contact with foreign laws in other countries, and negotiating abroad--that type of arrangement.

The law generally, I think, is both a good background because of the training it gives a lawyer, but I would say also there's another aspect to it. The law is an easier profession with which to go to the government and come back and have your job back again than it is in a corporate organization. If you're a vice-president in a corporation and you leave for four years, there's no telling who may have risen in the corporation and who may be going up to higher positions, and you will have lost a certain amount of attention. It

doesn't mean you wouldn't get your job back--I'm sure that most corporations would give your job back--but you may have lost out in the sense of attention, as far as participation in the firm. So it's more difficult in a structured organization than it is in the law, where if you're a partner you've got other partners. Assuming they're agreeable, you may go to the government and then come back and pick up practicing the law--somewhat like a professor. A professor can go into the government, spend whatever time he wishes in whatever area. He still is able to come back and pick up his teaching. Now he may or may not be able to pick up his exact post in a particular area, but it's somewhat similar. You take a little risk if you leave the law firm and go to the government. Maybe the firm will say, "Well, I don't want you back." Just like a professor might go and the university say, "Well, I don't have that post open anymore." But essentially it's much easier than the structured organization. So I think that's a factor, rather than just the so-called legal training or the legal mind, or the professorial mind.

Q: That's interesting.

Now, when we broke off at our first meeting I'd asked you about the foreign policy making process in the Nixon Administration compared with the Eisenhower Administration. You just only started to answer comparing and contrasting the means of policy making during those two periods.

Irwin: Well, that is a difficult question in some degree. In both administrations the policy was clearly the President's. President

Eisenhower worked with Secretary Dulles a great deal, and Secretary Dulles carried out his policies and I think undoubtedly helped President Eisenhower to reach certain decisions and policies. But essentially it was President Eisenhower's policy, working very closely with Secretary Dulles.

In the Nixon Administration it was President Nixon's policy. Again, helped and carried out well by, in this case, Dr. Kissinger, rather than the secretary of state. Dr. Kissinger, as NSC advisor, worked very closely with the President and was more influential in the ultimate policies, you might say, than I think Secretary Rogers was--although Secretary Rogers had a good relationship with the President and carried out a normal policy. But, for example, the areas of detente with the Soviet Union or rapprochement with China, that was essentially President Nixon and Dr. Kissinger. So in one way you have the President working with one man in each case, each administration, but in the Nixon administration it was more, tended in many cases, to be Dr. Kissinger at the NSC rather than Secretary Rogers at State. When Secretary Rogers left office and President Nixon appointed Dr. Kissinger secretary of state, then you had more of the relationship I would have said existed between President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles.

Q: Now getting into the question of Iran, specifically, how would you characterize the Nixon Administration's, I guess, general approach towards Iran during the period of time you were at the State Department?

Irwin: It would have been supportive of Iran. Not without some concern because of the autocracy of the Shah, but still generally supportive. We discussed a little of this existed back in the late 1950s in the Eisenhower Administration, except I suppose over the years one saw more clearly that the Shah was becoming more and more an absolute monarch. There are, I would think, in the broader philosophy similarities. There must be many differences. If you go to the record you, undoubtedly, would come up with--either you or I would come up with--

[telephone interruption]

Q: During the time you were at the State Department the U.S. ambassadors in Iran were Douglas MacArthur II and then Joseph Farland, briefly I guess. Did you become familiar with the work of either of them?

Irwin: Well, at that time I would have been, but if you ask me just to describe it now I would find it difficult, in trying to remember off hand.

Q: At this time the Iranian ambassador to the United States was Amir Afshar, I guess in the early 1970s. Do you remember much about him?

Irwin: I don't really recall much about him.

Q: When you were working on Iran issues during this period, either

on petroleum or other questions, who were your major sources of information? Where there any people that you dealt with in particular?

Irwin: The key man in the State Department was a chap in charge of, in effect, the oil desk. A very able fellow named Jim Akins. Within the State he would have been my--not only my, but the secretary's--closest advisor, along with the assistant secretaries in the areas in which oil might be being discussed.

Q: Now, it was shortly after you became undersecretary that the issues of OPEC and oil prices became a high level concern. In the fall of 1970 Libya demanded and got an increased share of the take in its oil revenues, and this was followed by similar demands in the Persian Gulf countries, all in the fall of 1970. Later in that year there was an OPEC meeting in Caracas, where the members declared their intent to control the price and supply of oil over the long-term. Did these developments come as a surprise to the State Department?

Irwin: I doubt if it came as a surprise, at least to those who were working in that area, but I couldn't really say positively.

Q: What kind of concerns did these demands raise, within the State Department when people discussed them?

Irwin: The question of supply and price, I suppose, were the two

basic.

Q: Was there much concern that others like Libya might convince other OPEC members to use oil as a political weapon? I think there was some talk about that.

Irwin: I think there would have been concern about that, but I think at that time with the relationships that existed there wasn't a great fear that Libya would be able to induce all the other oil states to follow its lead. So while yes, there would have been concern and attention, it wouldn't have been a feeling that that's what was likely to happen.

Q: When these questions of oil price and supply came up, what kinds of policy options were discussed in the State Department, in terms of responding to these initiatives being taken by the OPEC members?

Irwin: Ambassador Akins would be much better to answer all these questions, because I'm sure he would have a more--

Q: Unfortunately, he's declined to be interviewed.

Irwin: --background knowledge and information.

Q: During early 1971, in the wake of the Caracas meeting, John J. McCloy and the major oil firms that were in the consortium were working out a plan for the companies to take a united front, what was

called the Joint Approach, vis-à-vis the OPEC members. Did you meet with McCloy to discuss this plan?

Irwin: Yes. Do you cover this in later questions, too?

Q: No. This is where it'll be.

Irwin: Mr. McCloy and some of the representatives of the oil companies came to the State Department in early 1971, and if my memory is correct--which it always may not be--in effect said they were trying to get an agreement among all the countries on oil, so there would be a standard with all the different countries. He said there were particular questions being raised by Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. He said they thought someone should go over and discuss it with the heads of those countries, from the government rather than from the oil companies. The result was that I was sent on a trip to call on the Shah, the king of Saudi Arabia and the head of Kuwait--sultan of Kuwait, I guess would be his correct title.

Q: I think that's right.

Irwin: I went first to Iran, then to Saudi Arabia, then to Kuwait. Ambassador Akins accompanied me, as did the assistant secretary for the Middle East. Both were very helpful.

Q: Would that be Joseph Sisco at that time?