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Interviewee: Richard C. Clark

Interviewer: Sharon Zane

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Q: I can say that this is an interview with Senator Dick [Richard C.] Clark for the Columbia University Oral History Research Office for the Carnegie Corporation Oral History. It is the -- let's get the quality -- it's the tenth of June, 1999, and we are in Washington, D.C. That's it. So I can say good morning. Let me just make sure I have the level on you.

Clark: I probably would speak at about this level.

Q: That's perfect. Thank you. Now I'm going to pull this out because it gives me back -- are you comfortable?

Clark: Yes.

Q: Okay. Good. So because you have done an oral history that Columbia has with a lot of your background, I'd just like to ask you a couple little questions.

Clark: Fine.

Q: This one is an easy one, where and when you were born, and just a tiny bit about your background, and then we'll --

Clark: Yes, all right. I was born on September 14, 1928, out in the country near a

little town of Central City, Iowa, on a farm. Lived there, my dad ran a general store sort of out in the country. I moved to the big city of Lamont, Iowa, a town of about four hundred people, where he also ran a grocery store. I think I was in the third grade when I moved there. Went through grade school, high school there, graduated there.

Q: Depression times, I guess.

Clark: Depression times, yes, exactly.

Q: Hard in Iowa?

Clark: Well, it didn't seem that way to me --

Q: No.

Clark: -- because even though, in retrospect, obviously it was, my dad ran the store and then sold eggs in Cedar Rapids door-to-door and so forth. It certainly didn't, as I look back on it, seem even difficult, but by comparison now I realize that -- and it's partly just because everybody was in the same position that we saw in Iowa. Rural Iowans were all in deep depression. Growing up with that, obviously, it was not visible at all to me. I wouldn't have known that it was any different than any other time.

Q: As a kid did you feel landlocked, you know, I mean --

Clark: No, not at all. I didn't think much about the rest of the world. It seemed to me that, you know, I think you kind of absorb the things around you. I knew a lot of people, because the whole community for fifteen miles around, this was the only store, so of course I knew everybody for fifteen miles around by name.

Q: You went to public schools?

Clark: Oh, sure. I went to a little country school there. Started at a country school and when we moved, over to another country school. There must have been about ten or twelve students, maybe fifteen, in eight grades. Then when I went to Lamont, I went to a consolidated school and I think I had about twenty-five people in my grade, so that was a big change. I went from only one teacher for eight grades to one teacher for one grade and graduated from high school there. Went on to --

Q: You graduated in nineteen --

Clark: I graduated in 1947.

Q: So you were really in high school, well, part of the Second World War was going on.

Clark: Yes, sure. The Second World War started when I was in junior high school.

Q: So one of the things I'm interested, just -- with a lot of people I've interviewed around your age, that was sort of, obviously, the thing that really got them interested in the world and pulled them out of this kind of isolationist view of things.

Clark: Sure.

Q: Was that true for you?

Clark: Yes, without being conscious of it, it certainly was, because I was very interested in following the war, and I remember every morning seeing in the paper, in the *Des Moines Register*, particularly toward the end of the war after, what, June 6, 1944, when D-Day occurred and we actually had the Russians coming from one area and the Americans from the other, every morning we would look at that map to see what had happened. Over the next eleven months, that map kept shrinking, and so you got to know where Germany was and where Russia was and France and Britain. I think you couldn't live in that period and listen to the radio or read a paper without being conscious of Europe.

Then, of course, at the end you became interestingly conscious of Asia, because then suddenly the war shifted to places like Iwo Jima and Okinawa and so forth and so forth.

Q: So you went on to college?

Clark: I went on to college. Actually, I worked for a year. I was what we would have called a "pop man," which you wouldn't understand in the least --

Q: No. [Laughter]

Clark: -- but maybe you'd call him a "soda man," or whatever, somebody who delivers soda to retail stores. Every summer in high school during the war -- well, I worked first at the Rath Meatpacking Company and I got a job when I was fifteen, because in the war you could get special permission. Then I worked in a defense plant, Chamberlain's, making bombs for the end of the war.

Then when I got out in '47, I worked as a soda deliverer, and then I decided after a year that I ought to go to college. My brother had gone to college, the only one, certainly, in our family. He was a year older than I, so I went where he did, to a very small liberal arts college called Upper -- miscalled Upper Iowa University. It was a college, not a university. It was twenty miles away from my home in a little town of Fayette, and I graduated from college there. But it was interrupted because the Korean War started and I went into the Army during the Korean War. I was actually sent to Europe rather -- and then I really --

Q: Saw it.

Clark: -- saw the world --

Q: That was your first --

Clark: -- and that was the thing. And I had an interesting buddy named Phillip Windsor, who was a Harvard [University] graduate and trying to be a novelist, and he really sort of opened my eyes with all these discussions about -- this was the [Joseph R.] McCarthy era, and he taught me all about that. So I became very interested in American politics and what I saw as the threat from McCarthyism and so forth.

I hadn't actually graduated from college. As I said, I'd gone two years and then I was drafted and then came back. So I really traveled Europe. I'd get as many three-day passes as I could, as many leaves as I could, and they were very liberal, because we were only in Germany because if the Russians came, we needed a lot of people there. I served in the 2nd Armored Division Artillery and 78th Field Artillery, and so we had a lot of time off. I went to Italy for two weeks. I went to France a lot. I went to Amsterdam, The Hague, and I went to Ireland and England and on and on and on. Really got interested in history, politics, the whole schmear, I guess.

Q: So that's how you decided your major?

Clark: Yes. I had already become a little bit interested in history. I'd only been in school two years when I was drafted, and I started taking courses -- at that time the University of Maryland had courses all over Germany where you -- you know, it's like going to an extension course. Not extension.

Q: Foreign? You mean just --

Clark: Yes, you had teachers and classes and so forth at night and maybe in the daytime, I don't know. They did this in Wiesbaden, which wasn't all that far from where I was stationed. I'd get on the train, go into Wiesbaden and take political science and, above all, history courses, international relations, and just got very turned on by the whole thing and started to become a reader at a ripe old age already of --

Q: Twenty-three.

Clark: Is that what I was? Twenty-three. Yes. I mean, I hadn't been a good reader before that, certainly. I wasn't a precocious kid in any sense of the word. So that was a wonderful thing for me.

Then I came back -- I took a lot of courses, several courses, there. I came back, finished it up in Iowa in a year, and accidentally became involved in -- because everybody in the speech class had to give an oration because the college had inherited some money once, a hundred years ago, when they had oratorical contests, and ended up winning the state tournament and going on and, I guess, getting third in the national tournament. So I kind of learned more about speaking as a result of that accident in that little period of one year when I went back to Upper Iowa, and so I graduated from there, I guess in the summer, I think August of 1953, and then decided to go on to graduate school.

Q: Did you speak any languages at that point?

Clark: No. You know, I was fiddling with German, because I was in Germany, but to say that I really -- I could get by, but I didn't have any real training.

Q: And in graduate school your interest developed --

Clark: Yes, I knew then I wanted to be a historian, and I took a master's degree in English history, actually 17th century English history, the reign of [King] Charles II [of England] and so forth, and then switched to Russian history for my work on my doctorate. We had a wonderful man named Nicholas Revzanovski [phonetic], who then went to Berkeley, has since retired. He was very stimulating to me, and that's why I went into Russian history, I guess. As most people do something, I was more interested in him than --

Q: And that's what drew you?

Clark: That's what I did. See, I never got my doctorate, though. One of those all-but-thesis dissertation people.

Q: And Russian history -- all of it or just a piece of it?

Clark: Well, if I had written a dissertation --

Q: Yes.

Clark: -- it would have been in 19th century Russian intellectual history, which I was principally interested in. But, yes, you know how you prepare to teach, I really did all of modern European history, but most interested in Russia, a little bit in political science and international relations.

Then, of course, when I left the university in 1959, I started teaching at Upper Iowa University, the same place that I'd gone to school, and I stayed there teaching some Russian and Russian history and European history, international relations. You know, you had a big teaching load in a small school.

Q: Got to cover all your interests.

Clark: And then got interested in politics. In fact, I left there on leave in 1964 to come here as an administrative assistant to a congressman, John [C.] Culver, and just never went back.

Q: Found it as exciting as you thought it would be?

Clark: Well, yes, and --

Q: Of course, those were pretty heady times, too.

Clark: Yes. And then he decided he was going to run for the Senate as soon as he could, so I thought, well, I'll hang on and run for the House. It turned out in 1972

that we had really gotten everybody out of the Senate race on the Democratic side, and Culver was my boss, John Culver, who was Second District congressman, decided at the last minute, for a lot of reasons, and very good reasons, that he didn't want to run. So we didn't have a candidate and I couldn't run for the House; he was going to stay there. So it turned out that I decided, well, a lot of people talked to me, said, "You want to run anyway? Why don't you run for the Senate?"

I said, "Well, I've never run for public office before. How can I run for the Senate?"

"Well, we don't have a candidate."

So I took a vow to myself and my family that I would not go one dollar in debt, because I knew I wasn't going to win. This is a long story. I'll see if I can say it in thirty seconds. I ended up, you know, I was seventy points behind in the polls or whatever. I had no opposition in the primary, running against a man named Jack [R.] Miller, who'd been in for twelve years, and the only person to this day who'd ever carried every one of the ninety-nine counties in the state the time before when he ran. So it looked rather difficult, to say the least.

I struck on the idea, it wasn't entirely my idea, but I struck on the idea of walking across the state. Every day, that's all I did all day long, every day, seven days a week, and stayed with people along the way. And it kind of caught on. I certainly didn't think I was going to win. By the time the election came, I think a month before, I was about twenty points behind, but the Sunday before the election, I took no polls, but the *Des Moines Register* had a poll with me only, I think, seven

points behind. [George] McGovern was heading the ticket, and we knew he was going to lose Iowa very big. It turned out I won by ten percent, so don't ask me how or why, I don't know.

Q: Oh, you really -- you don't speculate on that?

Clark: Well, no, you know, I think it was the walk and the interest that it created, and --

Q: Because you had really had no political base before that time?

Clark: No, no, no. No, none whatsoever, except that I'd been an administrative assistant, I knew something about raising money and so forth. I didn't raise much. I'd only raised 100,000 until the last two or three weeks, and then I raised another 152,000, so I spent 252,000, which was the least expensive successful race, obviously, in the country that year. It sounds like a tiny amount now, but --

Q: But it was not at that point.

Clark: Well, it was a tiny amount even then. I mean, it was a small amount for a Senate race. Pretty unusual to win a Senate race on less than a million dollars, but now, you know, in the same state you'd need five million or something like that, not that inflation has gone up that much, but campaign finance has gone up that much. But that's another story.

Q: So I mean, I presume that this was what -- and I should have really looked at it, but I didn't -- the interview at Columbia covered then were your years as senator, so we don't need to really do that, except insofar as maybe how some of your interests developed which you later brought to this.

Clark: Yes. Well, let me just talk about that. I served on the Foreign Relations Committee, which was really my interest. I was also on Agriculture and Aging, and I did a lot of work on Agriculture just because that was the political thing to do from an agricultural state, but I was very interested in foreign policy, and I became chairman of the African Affairs Subcommittee and became very active on Africa.

Q: Did you know -- you really didn't have a knowledge base before that?

Clark: Not at all. Not at all. In fact, I only became chairman because I was the least senior and nobody else wanted the committee.

Q: Which is reflective, I presume, of basically sort of -- has been of -- the sort of American attitude towards Africa.

Clark: Well, it is, sure, and a political attitude toward Africa. You know, the senior member always took Europe and whatever. [Michael J.] Mansfield, I remember, took Asia and so on down the line. But I became very interested in it. I started holding hearings on it. I went to Africa a lot. I was active in legislation. The Clark Amendment has cut off assistance to covert groups in Angola. I did a lot in terms of getting the Byrd Amendment repealed on Rhodesia and so forth.

Q: Those are things that you talked about in this previous interview?

Clark: I must have, yes.

Q: I would think.

Clark: But anyway, for the purposes of background on what I later did, which is very closely related to the Carnegie Corporation, is that I developed this interest in foreign policy.

Q: Foreign policy in general, and as related to certain areas of the world?

Clark: Africa in particular, but, of course, I kept my interest in Russia. I think I just really had an opportunity to expand my interest a lot. I was on the Asia subcommittee. I was defeated in 1978 and then became an ambassador-at-large in charge of the American refugee program, the first coordinator --

Q: That's right. Yes.

Clark: -- of refugees early in 1979.

Q: So there was a lot going on with that at that point.

Clark: Yes.

Q: So you were a [James E.] Carter appointee?

Clark: That's right. And I reported to the President and the Secretary of State. I was housed in the Secretary of State. They really were getting all these refugees. We had no program for refugees in the bureaucracy or even legislatively, and my assignment was to quickly get a law passed. Up to that time, the only way we could let refugees in was under an Attorney General's pardoning them under some pardoning provision. We couldn't bring refugees legally into the country other than by a special pardon by the Attorney General of the United States.

Q: And that had been policy for how long?

Clark: Yes. Well, I think from the beginning. The pardon power was inserted at some point, I assume, but -- people could come as immigrants, obviously, but not as refugee, not as refugee status. The reason we got around it by the pardon, when the Hungarians came after --

Q: I was going to say. Yes.

Clark: -- 1950 -- what? Seven.

Q: Six, seven.

Clark: '56. And now we had this enormous number coming out of Southeast Asia,

and then a fairly big number of Russian Jews that were leaving, up to 50,000 the year I was there. So we got the legislation passed, set up a bureaucracy.

Q: Oh, you mean, in other words, that all took place under the -- under 50,000 -- I'm trying to remember what it was like after World War --

Clark: It took place under an Attorney General --

Q: Same thing. Yes.

Clark: -- special provision, pardoning provision, pardoning. So we got a law passed that really established a refugee program and a refugee bureaucracy, with an Assistant Secretary of State and etc., etc. I wanted to spend a lot of time in Asia, obviously, because of that, because that was the big problem, all these Sino-Vietnamese being forced out of Vietnam into Indonesia and Malaysia, particularly, and Thailand and Hong Kong and Philippines and so forth. So we got familiarized with Asia. Then I left that in the summer -- let's see. I left that in very late 1979 to become a deputy campaign manager for Edward [M.] Kennedy when he ran for President. That, of course, was quite unsuccessful, and I came here to Aspen [Institute] in May of 1980, just nineteen years ago.

Q: Now, tell me how that happened.

Clark: Oh, you know, like most things happen.

Q: Hmm.

Clark: I went up to see a friend when we were working on the New York campaign, who worked at Aspen. I don't know whether I'd ever heard of the Aspen -- yes, I had, because I'd gone to Aspen as a senator, an arms control seminar. I met the vice president I knew and I just went in to see her and chatted and she said, "What are you going to do when this campaign's over?"

I said, "Well, I really hadn't thought about it."

She wanted to know if I felt like coming to Aspen and, "Let me introduce you to the president, Joe [Joseph E.] Slater."

He said, "Why don't you come with us?"

I said, "Gee, that kind of sounds interesting."

"Take some time to decide what you want to do at Aspen," and that's how I came.

Q: So they really invited you to sort of think about what you would like to do here?

Clark: Right.

Q: As opposed to fitting you into --

Clark: That's right, yes. I took two or three months. It really took me about three or four years to figure out what I was going to do. [Laughter] But, I mean, I did things along the way, but I ended up obviously doing something called a congressional program, which I've now done for fifteen years, or a little longer, I guess. But, yes, I first thought I wanted to work on executive legislative relations on foreign policy. Then I looked at that for several months and found that it was so dependent upon personalities that it was not something that one could really make recommendations on with any great success, I thought, or at least I thought so.

And eventually worked my way into the program that I'm now doing. That was really -- should I talk about that now?

Q: Yes.

Clark: That was really -- grew out of my own experience, both as an academic and as a senator and a person that worked in the House, and particularly as a senator on the Foreign Relations Committee, because what I was shocked by when I was there, was that you had all these policymakers making policy, and you had this world of scholarship, and even policy scholarship, out here, you know, unbelievably informed, intelligent, bright people full of ideas, and never did they meet. There was a complete disconnect between policy scholars and policymakers. I don't say that there was no contact between the two, but there's almost none, ever.

Now, you have hearings in which you say we're going to have a hearing on Russia, although I think that you'd find that the number of hearings that ever occurred on

Russia would be -- you could count on one hand in the last decade. So if you have a hearing on Russia, what happens is that you call four or five or six scholars in. Well, there are almost never any committee members there. Maybe the chairman and a couple of people, and they may stay for fifteen minutes. They put their statement in the record, and like any member of Congress is so busy that I can't imagine any of them ever read the record. It's just not the nature of their lives to have time to sit and read, unfortunately.

And so it occurred to me when I came here that if there were a way of bringing together scholars and experts with members of Congress for off-the-record, quiet meetings for several days at a time, that they would really learn something from one another. Not just the policymakers, but the scholars would see what kind of problems these policymakers face.

I'll give you an example. I was a little late for this meeting with you because I had five young scholars at breakfast with several members of Congress this morning and several members who really had responsibility for sort of the microprograms in Russia, whether it's Nunn-Lugar on disarmament or whether it's Minor [phonetic] paying atomic scientists in Russia two hundred dollars a month so that they won't leave to go to Iran, whatever. These young scholars, all of whom are in their twenties or thirties, a new generation of scholars who lived in Russia, can speak the language perfectly, know Russia backward. And they sat with these policymakers, who are really making these policies, and we had an hour-and-a-half discussion back and forth about, we're doing this, or should we do that, or can't we do this, or wouldn't it make sense to do this, and, no, that wouldn't work anyway

because of this.

So that was an unusually productive -- I don't say that all of our discussions are as productive as that. We do breakfast meetings as well as conferences.

Q: Right.

Clark: But anyway --

Q: But you -- just measuring -- and I don't mean to -- just measuring productivity in this way, because of the quality of the exchange, is what you're saying.

Clark: That's it, the quality of the exchange, because this young people, I've started calling them kids --

Q: Yes. Well. [Laughter]

Clark: -- this new generation of scholars on Russia, they're from Harvard and the Fletcher School [of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University] and the University of Oklahoma, you know, all around the country. They have had so much on-the-ground and in-Russia experience, whereas the members, of course, have none of that, you know. They're trying to figure out things, principally, from their point of view, America's point of view. So, tempering it with where the Russians are coming from on these things is really helpful.

Well, anyway, I started this program in 1983, bringing scholars together with policymakers. I tried to do it out at the Wye [River] facility that Aspen has on the Eastern Shore of Chesapeake Bay for a couple of years. It didn't work very well. People came late and were on the phone all the time, the members, canceled out easily and left. And this was funded by the Carnegie Corporation, David [A.] Hamburg.

Q: From the beginning.

Clark: From the beginning, from 1983.

Q: And did you make that initial connection?

Clark: I did.

Q: You knew David Hamburg from --

Clark: I didn't know David Hamburg, actually. He had just come to the Carnegie Corporation.

Q: Oh.

Clark: I contacted a program officer and he seemed quite interested in it.

Q: Who was that, do you remember? Oh. I should offer it to you. Um --

Clark: I know him very well. He has now left Carnegie.

Q: Yes. He just left?

Clark: Yes.

Q: Fritz [Frederic A.] Mosher.

Clark: Fritz Mosher. Fritz Mosher. I'm embarrassed.

Q: No, I'm the one. [Laughter] I'm sitting --

Clark: Fritz Mosher.

Q: Yes.

Clark: He worked with me, you know, and he basically said, "Well, how do you know any of these members will come? Everybody tries to get members of the Congress and nobody comes."

I said, "Well, let me go around and talk to a bunch of them," and I did.

And he said, "Okay."

I think they gave me a 25,000 dollar grant to look at the whole situation. Then I think I got a 200,000 dollar grant, maybe, and we did the first program. As I say, we had a lot of good scholars and so forth. At that time I was trying to mix administration and Congress, policymakers and the scholars. We tried this for a couple of years, and I said to David -- David became quite interested in it then. He had always, by the way, had this same idea, you know, why not bring the scholarship to bear on the policy? And he said, "You know, you're just doing exactly what I've been thinking about for a long, long time." And so we were a good team on this.

I said, "You know, I think, David, if we would do these, not in a short day or two on the Eastern Shore on a weekend and when they may or may not be tied up in policy in the Congress. Let's try it in a recess period. That means we've got to plan it six, eight months ahead. Let's take spouses, because if spouses are involved, they're less apt to drop out. And let's take them outside the country, where they can't come late and leave early and be on the phone all the time."

So he said, "What's it going to cost?"

I said, "It's going to cost a hell of a lot of money." I've forgotten what it cost to do it in those days, maybe 250,000 dollars to do this meeting someplace for four or five days at a time. Actually, we always did four days at a time. We had four days and five nights.

Q: Someplace good, right?

Clark: Someplace very nice, you know. I think we started, the first one we did, I think was in Bermuda, and then I think we moved them to Jamaica, because the room wasn't big enough and what we were doing in Bermuda. We got a bigger place, but very nice. Sure enough, we were attracting fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen members of Congress on an average of these. We now attract twenty, an average of twenty.

Q: When you began, did you do the selection of invitees?

Clark: Oh, yes, I've always done the selection of invitees.

Q: And, you know, on what basis did you --

Clark: Well, a lot of different things. One, I wanted to try to get people who were responsible for that policy. I wanted to get people, if I could, out of the leadership. I wanted, above all, to have an even -- I wanted to be nonpartisan. It was going to be a failure. And my having come from a liberal Democratic background, I was very conscious of this, so I worked very hard to get an equal number of Republicans and Democrats. I never quite succeeded, I might say. We're about fifty-five/forty-five if you look at the whole history of the program. Of course, in those days there were a lot more Democrats in the Congress than -- by the way, when we moved it overseas, we dropped the executive branch. Now, it was just the Congress and --

Q: Because it was too --

Clark: Well, because the executive branch was always there to defend its policy and it would end being so much wrangling between some chairman and the executive branch person about how something really happened, and none of the rest of us even knew what they were talking about, you know. So we eliminated the executive branch people. There's a difference between the two.

So anyway, we were quite successful and have been throughout all those years. This was 1985, just when [Mikhail S.] Gorbachev came to power. Remember we're just doing Russia; that's all we did the first year or two or three, I think, and it worked very, very well. Of course, it was a critical time in U.S.-Russian relations because, on the one hand, you had Ronald [W.] Reagan coming in, and he was speaking right at that time about the "evil empire." Now, he later, of course, became very close to Gorbachev and they got a lot done together.

Gorbachev, meantime, is this new guy coming in on the block, but it was interesting, the scholars we had said, in the first year or two, "Well, he's come out of the old attitude. Of course he's going to be just like all the rest of them. He's younger and so forth, but -- "

And the members of Congress, the second and third year, would say, "Well, now wait a minute. You told us," -- to the scholars -- "you told us he was going to be the same as everybody else, but he didn't sound like the same as everybody else in the same position." [Laughter]

So it was a learning experience, looking at this guy in Moscow and what does all that mean for us in American policy, and getting the very best scholars in America to come down and talk with them about this. And so that program has continued from that day until this. We're going to do the, I don't know, twenty-third of these, or something, in Berlin in about six weeks, in August of 1999. And so it's gone on and on and on and on and on.

I have right now twenty members of Congress signed up for that program in Berlin, and we've involved well over a hundred members of Congress in that program, hundreds of scholars. We brought in European parliamentarians who are particularly expert at Russia.

Q: To give a different --

Clark: To give another view, you know. I mean, after all, we're in alliance here. This is the Cold War until ten years ago, nine years ago, whatever. So we brought in a Brit and a German. Our German, in fact, became Defense Secretary later. In fact, we've had four people become Defense Secretaries, either in this country or else that came out of this program. A Pole, who is now Defense Secretary, Janusz Onyszkiewicz. And a man from the Netherlands who became Defense Secretary. Dick [Richard B.] Cheney. [William S.] Cohen, our present Secretary. [Secretary of State] Madeleine Albright was a scholar at one of these meetings, and a number of other heads of state who would speak to us when we moved the programs to Europe about ten years ago, I guess.

Q: Can you find ways in which you think that this kind of dialogue affected the -- impacted the changes that came about in '89?

Clark: Yes. Well, you know, it's a little hard to be sure exactly how it had an impact on those changes. Certainly, there were dozens of people in the Congress who had a much clearer view about Gorbachev, about what the Russians were doing, about the details, about the general policy. Of course, when we started this, we didn't include any Russians, because in those days every Russian would tell you exactly the same thing, but as soon as we began to loosen up, particularly, even before the Cold War was over, by 1987 or '88, we started bringing Russians in to talk to us, because we could get Russian scholars and Russian parliamentarians who began to have differing views as well. So it was a mixture of mostly American, all intended for American members of Congress, their information, their knowledge, but salted with these European parliamentarians and Russian parliamentarians or scholars. But I'm not sure how it may have affected that.

I did a later program on South Africa and Vietnam where I could say it had a very direct impact on it --

Q: And you'll tell me the -- yes, but this is --

Clark: -- but here I think it's harder. In the post-1989 period, beginning in August of '89 when the coup took place, I could trace a number of things. For example, we happened to be meeting two days after the coup occurred in August, in

Budapest, in August of 1989. Coming out of that meeting, Sam [Samuel A.] Nunn went back to Moscow with [Andrey A.] Kokoshin the Deputy Defense Secretary, and worked out arrangements. In fact, this led to, along with [Richard G.] Lugar, to the Nunn-Lugar legislation, which is our principal effort to help Russia disarm, dismantle nuclear weapons and so forth. And I could cite other legislative appropriations, measures, that grew out of these meetings, although obviously we have to be very careful, as a 501(c)(3), not to sponsor or advocate legislation, but ideas coming out of here, of course, led to a lot of things that have happened in that period. Various programs that have been set up between the two countries and so forth.

We expanded this. I had some members of Congress come to me on South Africa at the time. That was a hot program. By the way, this all funded by Carnegie to begin with, and to this day funded, at this day, funded entirely by Carnegie. But we began to get help on the program. It became very expensive.

Q: Let me ask you, first of all, why you went to Carnegie initially. What did you know about it that made you --

Clark: You know, I knew that under David Hamburg, even though I didn't know him yet, they had established a program, I've forgotten what it was called, Preventing Nuclear War, I believe, that Fritz Mosher ran. That sounded like it would fit what I was doing. I didn't know much about raising money, by the way, of course, at that point. I knew a lot about raising money in politics, but I knew nothing about foundations. Like every other member of Congress, they know nothing -- almost

every -- about foundations.

So I suppose I went to them because of that and because it looked like it was somebody I could go talk to about this idea. We got into it small, but by this time it's probably, you know, by the mid-eighties or so, it's probably costing a half a million dollars a year. By that time, we'd added these breakfast meetings. Szervadnaze came to town. We did a big dinner and invited the members of Congress. We were doing some other outreach things.

Should I shift into other programs, or not?

Q: Yes, it --

Clark: Well, I went to David and I said, "You know, several members of Congress have asked me to do something on South Africa. There are a few people in the Black Caucus who know a little something about Africa and South Africa, although not very many, and almost nobody else who follows that issue, a handful of others, three or four. And I really think it would be great if we could start a program on that."

Pat [Patricia L.] Rosenfield, in fact, put up the money, most of the money, I think maybe 300,000. I think I got additional money by that time from Adele Simmons at [John D. and Catherine T.] MacArthur [Foundation]. I know I did. And --

Q: You already had multiple funding for the Russian program at this point?

Clark: I think MacArthur came in maybe also in this program a little bit by that time. Ford [Foundation], I think, maybe. No, not yet. Ford had not. It was almost entirely a Carnegie operation, and I would say the first, from '83 until '88, probably completely --

Q: Carnegie.

Clark: Carnegie.

Q: And during that time -- and then I will try not to interrupt again -- did you get assistance from, let's say, from Fritz in terms of developing program ideas or --

Clark: Oh, sure. Sure.

Q: So there was --

Clark: A lot of input. And David, more and more from David, because he got so interested in this. He attended every meeting we ever did, I think. No, I think he missed one here three or four years ago. But, yes, David and Fritz [Mosher] and I would sit down and talk about speakers and talk about agenda. I was very fortunate, I started from the very beginning with a man named Michael Mandelbaum, who was my consultant, and he is one of the brightest, most capable scholars I've ever met in my life. So he's been with the program all these years, as well, so, of course, I leaned a lot on him for ideas, for people, above all for

scholars. So it was really Michael and Fritz and David and myself who did this. I made the decisions on the members to invite, and they really worked on the agenda, with me, on the agenda and on the scholars. And I leaned heavily on them.

Q: And so these members of the House or of Congress who came to you wanting to maybe apply for --

Clark: These are actually members of the Senate.

Q: Senate. And they had been through the Russian --

Clark: Yes, they had been through the Russian program and said, "Look, why don't we do something like this on South Africa. First of all, you were the chairman of that committee, you know more about South Africa than any of us do. It's a good thing for you to do and we need it, because the question is, what are we going to do with the problems down there? [Nelson] Mandela's in jail," etc., etc.

So I started a program with, as I said, Pat Rosenfield and David and, I think, some MacArthur money to help begin. We did the first conference in Bermuda and we did two days with the Liberation Groups and two days with the government. Well, the government wouldn't come on the island when the Liberation Group was there. And these members, you know, we had fifteen, eighteen, twenty members, and they just listened to these people and they learned about what this -- what did the ANC [African National Congress] think, what did the PAC [Pan-Africanist Congress of

Azania] think? What did Inkatha [Freedom Party] think? What did the government think?

The government in South Africa was very reluctant about all this at first, but they couldn't stop it, obviously, and they sent a fairly low-level parliamentarian to represent them. By the second meeting they had the constitutional minister there, you know, really giving their side of the story. And from then on they had the highest representation.

We would keep these meetings two days here, two days with the other side, and, I don't know, I suppose we ultimately got forty or fifty members of Congress involved in that. In other words, you've got a mass of people now in the Congress who really know something about this.

When they let Mandela out of jail and unbanded the ANC, we moved these meetings down to Cape Town. Now, we had President [F.W.] de Klerk, Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki. In fact, Thabo Mbeki came to every one of these meetings that we did. He was their chief representative before Mandela was out. We continued these meetings right down until the time Mandela was elected. At that point, the policy interest here declined enormously, so that was the end of that program.

Concurrently, we started a program on Vietnam. It was a little different program. At that time nobody would talk about Vietnam. We had no relations with Vietnam. You certainly couldn't have gotten members of Congress to go. So we started it

actually by just holding dinners of everybody in town that we could find out was interested in Vietnam and every side of the issue -- conservative, very conservative people in the Reagan administration, the woman who runs the MIA [Missing in Action] program, and then people who were anti-war over here. We'd just bring them all together and say, "We're going to talk about Vietnam, have a speaker." We'd get fifty, sixty people after the first two or three meetings of this.

Q: This was when?

Clark: About 1988, probably, or '89. Sort of simultaneously with the -- if that's important, we could find out. These were not funded by Carnegie.

Q: Yes. That's why I don't know.

Clark: They were funded by MacArthur and Christopher Reynolds.

Q: So just for me, the impetus in terms of what the issues were at that point for us --

Clark: Normalization --

[END TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE; BEGIN TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO]

Clark: Some were for it, some were against it. We took a neutral position on that. We just brought these people together to talk about it.

Q: That's what you always do?

Clark: Yes. We finally then started to move that to a meeting when MacArthur gave us more money, of Americans and Vietnamese, and now we began to get some members of Congress in it. A lot of members, finally. A lot of Vietnam vets. A lot of senators who had been Vietnam vets, [John F.] Kerry and [Charles S.] Robb and a whole bunch of them. I think this program, I know the young man who represented Vietnam, who then became their ambassador, is now their ambassador to the U.N. [United Nations] and to the United States, says publicly that we had more to do with the normalization of relations than anything else that happened. I don't know whether that's true or not, but we did get a lot of activity going in the Senate, of members standing up and saying, "We've got to review this policy," and so forth. Meantime, we --

Q: Just one other thing. The South African thing, because it just stopped because of the change in government --

Clark: That's right.

Q: Yes.

Clark: You see --

Q: But isn't there --

Clark: -- Congress deals so much with crisis that they face, rather than longstanding, long-term problems. I mean, there would be every reason in any of these programs to continue them forever, because the problems of South Africa after Mandela's election --

Q: Still there. Yes.

Clark: -- and after Thabo's election are going to be there. They're there and they will continue to be there. But you find two fundamental problems when this kind of thing happens. One thing happens, one is that the Congress is less interested in them now, and remember they come to us probably turning down ten or fifteen other invitations to do other things, not the kind of things we're doing, but to go back and give a speech at home or to do other things. and the second thing that happens is that the foundations lose interest in it. I think that's not true in the case of Carnegie. I think they're still very -- in fact, Rosenfield is still doing a lot on Africa. But foundations are not unlike Congress in that regard; they move from subject to subject very often.

So we then replaced those two programs with a program called Multilateral Diplomacy. We wanted to not do countries now so much as problems, and we held two meetings on the United Nations and peacekeeping. At that time Kofi [A.] Annan was the head of peacekeeping. He came to both meetings. He was very popular with the Congress. Bill [William C.] Richardson met him, as a matter of fact, at one of these meetings. We had two meetings on international economic

issues, how do the banks work, what's the IMF [International Monetary Fund], etc., etc., what about international trade, what's the future --

Q: You mean there are guys who don't know that?

Clark: There are lots of people. Remember, members of Congress --

Q: Sorry.

Clark: -- are elected just like you and me. You know, they're farmers, they're businessmen, and they deal with seven or eight hundred issues a year, all of which have complex parts. As George [A.] Miller announced at breakfast this morning, a congressman from California, this is the only time in the world that we have an hour, an hour and a half to think about one subject, is when we come to these breakfasts, and certainly the only time we ever have four days to think about a single issue is when we go to these conferences.

Now, there are other people that will take them to meetings, and so they're all people with a financial, direct financial interest, in these things. There are no nonprofits that are taking these people for four days at a time in a neutral way. We're a neutral convener, and that's the only attractive thing about it, really. I mean, if we weren't a neutral convener, it wouldn't mean anything.

Q: So in something like Multilateral Diplomacy you can just include almost anything?

Clark: Well, actually to get to -- the foundations want to see what subjects you're going to deal with, and so we did that. Then the last part of that, we did three meetings on international environmental issues, the last of which we did this January, in fact, on global warming. You know, environment makes a lot of sense for members of Congress, because there are complex scientific issues involved in almost all -- in all of these issues, whether you're talking about biodiversity or global warming or oceanography or land productivity or clean water or clean air or whatever, and it's very hard for them to keep up with all these issues, even in a fundamental way.

That program was replaced, the Multilateral Diplomacy program, with a new program on China. We've done now two meetings on China. Again, these are not funded by Carnegie; these are principally funded by MacArthur and [Henry] Luce [Foundation] and Ford.

Q: The China one?

Clark: Yes.

Q: Yes, because the Multilateral Diplomacy, I think, has had some money from Carnegie.

Clark: It did have some money from -- it had a small amount of money from Carnegie also. Carnegie has been involved, I think, in all of the projects except

China and Vietnam.

Q: And the Vietnam.

Clark: They have been our -- well, let me put it this way. I have this year a two-million-dollar budget for these programs. Over probably about sixty percent of the money comes from Carnegie, and through the years I would say that about seventy, I haven't looked at this exactly, but I'd say that about seventy percent of all the money that I've raised in those seventeen years, if that's what it is, has been from Carnegie.

As I have always said, David Hamburg was really the father of these programs. He and I worked them together, but they would not have been possible without that kind of interest, because I could not have funded -- there was no other foundation. There may be now. I mean, MacArthur -- and Adele Simmons -- has become very fascinated by these and gives us a significant amount of money, helps us raise money from other foundations. But it really would not have been possible to do this at all from the beginning or in the middle without -- and would not be, I must say, to this day. Sixty percent of my funding is from Carnegie.

Q: Does that make it easier? I mean, you know, one of the questions I ask is for programs that have multiple funders what the issues become for the grantee, different foundations, different expectations.

Clark: I'm not sure that I understand you.

Q: I guess I'm asking you whether you found -- whether you've run into snags like that --

Clark: With foundations?

Q: Yes.

Clark: Oh, sure.

Q: When you have a program that has a few funders, therefore a few different maybe --

Clark: Points of view?

Q: Yes.

Clark: Oh, yes, absolutely. If Carnegie had not put up most of this money and we had four other people saying, "Well, I'd like to have some input on the agenda, too," and maybe who comes. In fact, we did get some assistance from a foundation, whom I will not name, I think from 50 to 100,000, at different times. We actually, David and I decided to drop them, because they were so interventionist and then, frankly, came to the meetings to lobby the members on their issues, to directly lobby them on it. We said, "Let's drop it." I mean, fortunately, he said, "I think we should drop them, because they're misusing this

and we'll make up the difference."

Now, frankly, that's the only time I have had another foundation be that directive, but, sure, it's a greater problem if you've got -- it depends a lot on the foundation. Like in the China program, I must say that I have not had -- I deal with MacArthur principally, and less with Ford and Luce and the Asia Foundation. None of them have been directive at all. They've been very, very undirective about it, but it can create problems.

One of the reasons also that I've noticed -- and David and I have talked about this, as Vartan Gregorian and I have, as well, now -- is that because this program was viewed so much as a Carnegie program, I remember going to the Ford Foundation one time and they said, "Well, look, this is Carnegie's program. You shouldn't ask us for money for this. We have our own programs, and it's a great program, we love the program you're doing and it's a huge success, but it's really Carnegie's program."

So a lot of foundations -- some foundations exist, you know, to give money only for their own programs, or at least almost entirely. If they didn't create it, they don't want a part of it. Other foundations, smaller foundations, know that they're not going to be able to create very big things, so they support other groups. They get a group of people together of common interest who will do this together. So, you know, foundations come in all sizes, I think, and differing attitudes, depending upon their president. But clearly, this is a Carnegie program and there's no denying it, in terms of Russia, at least.

Q: Well, in terms of what you do, you're solely -- it's solely foundation-supported, right?

Clark: Absolutely. I take no other money, because --

Q: Tell me what the pros of that are.

Clark: Well, from my point of view, the Congress, first of all, is under constant -- and members of Congress -- constant and direct attack for taking trips. So I feel that the money that I use has to be the cleanest money I can possibly get, and the cleanest money available on a neutral basis is foundation money. It is not totally neutral, obviously, any more than anything else in the world is totally neutral. But, you know, Andrew Carnegie is no longer alive and the people, if you look at the board, are respected people and a cross-section of people without a great bone to pick. It doesn't mean they have no point of view, but they will allow me to do neutral conferences. And my conferences would fade in a moment if they were not neutral, because the Republicans would see them or the Democrats would see them as a loaded deal here. So that kind of money is very, very critical, both for appearance sake, that is, for the press to say, "Where'd the money come from to take these people to Europe?" We say, "Well, it came from the Carnegie Foundation," or Ford Foundation.

The press has become a very big problem in all this, and I don't mean an increasing problem. In fact, I don't think that's the case, but because -- you see,

part of the problem is that criticizing members of Congress for taking trips in many cases has been a very valid criticism. The Tobacco Institute has taken members of Congress down to Florida to wine and dine and talk to them about tobacco legislation, and so forth.

So the press has become very, very critical of these people, but unfortunately they don't make much -- a distinction. They make no distinction between the Tobacco Institute and any other trip, which is a bit of a problem for us, but I talked to the press about it and they said, "Oh, of course, we shouldn't do that. We shouldn't do that," but the reports come out and it's a new reporter each time. I don't think that it's hurt us very much, but I'm always sort of perturbed by it. I get calls from the press about these meetings because we do a lot of them.

I have, the first time ever, I've had hundreds of press calls, and the first time ever that I could convince a reporter, or at least the editor, who published it, to even say what we talked about at the meeting. I mean, if you go to St. Petersburg, Russia and do this conference on Russia, you know that it will not be mentioned. It will be "The Aspen Institute took members of Congress on another trip to a swanky place in St. Petersburg, and here are the people who went and here's how much it cost." And so it's a problem. And I'm really, in a long-winded way, trying to explain why we take only foundation money, because if we took private money or corporate money, we would be subject, I think justifiably --

Q: Or government money.

Clark: Or government money. That's right.

Q: So it kind of gives you freedom, too.

Clark: It gives you more freedom. It gives the members more freedom. And it gives me the independence of doing neutral convening. And I must say that I have never, ever in these seventeen years had a single member of Congress or member outside Congress, any person ever say, "You know, these meetings are obviously done for a particular purpose." I've never had a criticism in those seventeen years from any member of Congress or any outside organization. The closest that anybody comes to that would be what I just described. I mean, the press may say, "Gee, Aspen spends all this money to take people to swanky places," something like that.

Q: So if I were to ask you what you feel the place of American philanthropy, private philanthropy is in American life and society today --

Clark: Well, it's enormous, particularly if you take all of philanthropy. You know, I just deal with foundations.

Q: No, I'm --

Clark: They're a small part of the overall, when you've got religious giving and everything else. You're talking about the foundation world.

Q: I was thinking of that specifically, yes.

Clark: Well, you know, it plays an enormous role and now that the foundation, there are so many more foundations and so much foundation money and so forth, it plays an enormous role in public policy. And, of course, there are so many different agendas. I mean, I just talked to a foundation yesterday, a small foundation in town, very interested in the whole complex of environmental issues and how they connect and what it means to sustain a full development. That's their thing and that's all they spend money on. They have 100 million dollars, assets, they give away, what, six or seven million dollars, maybe a little more. And you get hundreds of these people working on the environment and you get a lot of attention and a lot of scholarship and so forth. I think it has a great impact.

I'm trying to kind of help members of Congress understand a little more. I'm going to do a breakfast in a couple months on this question of what do foundations do, because they don't really know this. They can't know everything, and this is one of the things they don't know. I mean, there are a few people who know about it. The people that come to our meetings know about it because they meet people and they see what we're doing and so forth, but for the most part it's not very well understood. It could be so much of an assistance to them in so many areas of policymaking. I'm thinking narrowly here now, only about the Congress. Needless to say, most foundations would love to have an input on these issues with Congress or with the administration, even of a general fundamental educational nature to get them interested, keep them interested.

A lot of the problem with the Congress, understandably, is not that they're not interested in these issues, but they haven't had an occasion to learn about them. They haven't had the concentrated time. I mean, look at their lives. I mean, I served on four major committees. I served on sixteen subcommittees. I was the chairman of two subcommittees. I have to go home every weekend or two. I've got a breakfast meeting every morning with some constituent group, the Farm Bureau, whatever. I run to my committee. I can't go to three others, because I can only be at one place at once from ten to twelve. You're on the floor after twelve. You've got at least a hundred phone calls coming in a day. You've got at least a thousand letters coming in a day. I mean, where are you going to sit down for two hours and learn about nuclear energy or global warming or any of these things, unless you load them up and take them someplace and isolate them?

Q: Does Carnegie, in your mind, have a particular profile? I mean, you've dealt with other foundations now. You have --

Clark: Yes. Well, yes, of course. I mean, they all have a very different, to me, at least, but look, I'm seeing it from one person's point of view.

Q: That's -- yes, of course.

Clark: And a narrow one at that. Yes, I have always found Carnegie to be, first of all, very easy to work with. That is to say, I never place a call there that somebody doesn't call me back, and usually pretty fast. That's not true with a lot of foundations. You might place ten calls and never, ever get an answer. They're

very good and responsive. Now, admittedly, we've worked together a lot and we've got a relationship.

But the second thing is that with David Hamburg, and I really believe Vartan Gregorian, from what I've seen so far, has a real vision of what he wants to do and a clear vision of the kinds of things that he wants to accomplish. And that makes a big difference. You know, if you go to a foundation and you say, "I wonder what they're really about? I wonder what their goals really are? What are some of the things they'd like to get done?" And it's not at all clear to me, as an outsider trying to deal with them, what they want. I mean, I think of a major foundation that I've worked with for years, I don't quite know even how they work yet, after fifteen years. I'm not sure who's in charge of what. I get the plans that say this person is the boss and that one works for this and this is what this program is about, but it never quite -- I never am sure who to talk to, and when I do, I find out I'm talking to the wrong person, even though I know them all very, very well. Obviously, there's a turnover. But that's not true with Carnegie.

Now, a lot of it has to do with -- maybe a part of it has to do with the fact that they're not the biggest. I think maybe if you get as big, big, big, big and a lot of turnover, that that's a problem, but it's also -- therefore, I think it's manageable size. An awful lot has to do with who the president is and what kind of direction. David would always defer to the program officers, but he was always clearly in charge, and in the sense that his visions were being pursued along with theirs. I think Vartan is the dominant character also, and I think you can see the way it's developing. It's going to be his vision.

And I think that's often true of much smaller foundations than Carnegie, where you've got three program officers and a president, and so then it's much easier to do, but I think anybody who's dealt with a lot of foundations would say that Carnegie is an easier place to deal with. You know where you stand. You get, I think, reasonable, direct answers. People say, "Well, you know, this isn't something we can fund." Okay, that's -- I find them much, much easier to deal with.

I must say I've established a similar relationship with MacArthur Foundation since that time. But again, the reason, a lot of it has to do with whether you're doing -- I always tell people here, if you want to make your fundraising easier, you want to raise funds, you got to find somebody who wants to do what you want to do, not something that you want to do, but they don't, or they want to do, but you don't. And it's partly just looking for that person or persons who have the same idea that you do about that -- I think it's important for policymakers to be educated, but there are other people -- I remember talking to somebody once who said, a foundation person, "Well, look, Congress is kind of irrelevant now anyway, you know. I mean, the world's going around them. I don't quite see Congress." Well, that's his view and he may be right, but we can't do business together, because I say, "Well, whether you like this Congress or not, it's there, it makes all the laws, it appropriates all the money, it regulates the country." So you've got to find somebody who is like you in terms of their compatibility on what they want to do. I think it just happened with Carnegie, starting with David, and I think continuing with Vartan, that we have similar goals in mind.

I haven't given enough emphasis to the importance of this experience to scholars. See, it isn't just for policymakers. You know, these five young people that I had for breakfast this morning really got a feel for both the level of knowledge from members of Congress, what it is they want to know, what it is they don't see as all that relevant to their experience. They learn how to deal with these people. They learn how policy is made, and they're policy scholars, so they need to know how policy is made, you know, and what the pitfalls are and what the politics are. So it's an experience.

If you went and talked to -- Carnegie had an independent evaluator come and do an evaluation of us.

Q: I was going to ask you about that whole process.

Clark: Yes, it was a very good process. I can give you a copy of the report. Carnegie's perfectly willing to share it. What they did was to go talk to a lot of members of Congress and then talk to a lot of scholars.

Q: And see what they --

Clark: What do you think of this program? Is it worth anything or not? What's its strength? What's its weakness? What should we do different? It had some good recommendations of things that we're not doing.

But the scholars are always in a way the most impressed by it, because of two or three things. One is that this is the first time they've had an opportunity to sit down for three or four days at a time with members, several members, to see what they think and to learn about them, what policymakers are all about, and to get to know them. Then that also means, since Congressmen, because they can't cover most things, members of Congress, they immediately go back and sop up these people, you know. [Laughter]

I had one guy, Jim [James C.] Greenwood from Pennsylvania, a young Republican Congressman who got very interested in population, called Joel [E.] Cohen at [The] Rockefeller University and said, "Now, look. You gave this speech in Lisbon to us about population. I've got some big problems down here. We can't get the family planning bill out of committee and we can't get it on the floor and we don't have the votes if we got it on the floor. Come down here and spend a week with me."

He said, "Well, I can only spend two days," or whatever.

They came down and they got it. They got eleven more votes. They got it out and they passed it. So it's for scholars, too, that this thing has some real impact. They're the biggest proponents of it. I remember Bob -- oh my god, I'm having a senior moment. One of the most famous Russian scholars. He was at Columbia, as a matter of fact [Robert H. Legvold].

Q: The only one I can think of is Kohn [phonetic], but that's not --

Clark: No, it's Bob -- I'll tell you in a minute.

Q: That's okay. Or I'll find it.

Clark: Well, anyway, he said to me -- because he's so famous, he's always called down to testify, and he said, "It's always the most disappointing experience of my life. I'll never do it again. I'll never do it again, because I go down, I spend all this time preparing the paper, there's nobody there. Then they don't have enough time, so they say, 'Well, instead of telling us your paper, just give us a five-minute summary.' So I give a five-minute summary with nobody there and I've made this trip down from New York, from Columbia down there. Now I come to these meetings and we have four days together with twenty members. That's really having a chance to have an effect on policy, to help educate people on policy."

Q: Boy, that really has to be an ongoing thing, because your legislators come and go, whereas your scholars just sort of take it and keep it.

Clark: That's right. That's right. That's right. Bob [Robert H.] Legvold. A South Dakota boy.

Q: See. You got over your senior moment.

Clark: I got over it.

Q: I never do. We forgot one thing. We forgot the Children's Policy Forum.

Clark: Yes, indeed. We've been talking only about foreign policy.

Q: Yes. Well, maybe --

Clark: Do you want me to talk about how that developed?

Q: If you would.

Clark: Yes, because it's a very, very interesting and valuable program. What happened was that I was up -- I've done this maybe twice in fifteen years, David asked me to come up and talk to his board at a meeting about how this Russian program works and what it does and so forth. Coming out of that meeting, Vivien Stewart walked over to me and said, "Why don't we do a program like this on children's issues? My God, we need that."

I said, "Well, yes, but I don't know anything about these issues." At that time I thought I had to know everything about these things in order to do them.

[Laughter] I said, "I don't know, Vivien, I don't really think I have time to do them. I'm doing two or three different subjects, but it's a great idea. It's a great idea."

Then David called me and said, "Well, do you know anybody else that would do it?" And we sort of scattered around and we finally found Lawton Chiles, who was very interested in education and children's issues generally. So David and I went up and had breakfast with him, and he was in his last months in the Senate. He'd

retired, he was getting out of politics. And he agreed to do it. I went on an advisory committee we had about it and so forth.

Then after about two years of doing it, he decided he'd run for governor of Florida. So that was the end of that. So then, I didn't, but David talked to Belle [Isabel V.] Sawhill at the Urban Institute into doing them, and she did a great job with them.

Q: But you were following it all this time?

Clark: Sure, I was on her advisory committee and so forth. But they followed the same thing we do. They did some things differently, I guess, but basically the same thing. Then when [William J.] Clinton was elected, how long ago was that? '92, I guess. January of '93, he made her budget director or deputy budget director, whatever. And so David came to me and said, "What are we going to do? What are we going to do?" He said, "Why don't you do it? I mean, you could do it."

I said, "Well, I don't know much about it, David."

He said, "Well, look. We have Vivien and we've got Michael and we've got all these people who know these issues, they'll help you with the agenda and they'll help you find the scholars and identify them. You could do it."

So I said, "Well, fine, you know, we ought to continue it."

So I've done it since that time, I guess, since '93, apparently. So '93, '94, '95, '96, '97, not quite that long, but something like that. We just did our [crosstalk].

Q: Well, since '93 -- I have it was transferred to you in '93.

Clark: Yes, that's what I thought. Just didn't seem that long ago. My gosh, that's six of them we've done then.

So we've continued it. It's worked very well. We got a lot of help from Vivien and Michael and other people up there. We hired a consultant, Elena [O.] Nightingale, who had worked for David Hamburg, who was up there. She's been very, very helpful. It's gone swimmingly. I mean, we've got good attendance. We've had good issues. It's slightly different in that we cram more into it. Under the new Ethics Code of the House and the Senate, we can only pay for three nights' stay if you do something inside the continental United States. We've always done this in Florida or in the South. I think one time we went to South Carolina. So we do cram a little more into it. We travel down there, register at the hotel, have an evening speaker, then meet for two more days, and then go back.

Q: I think one, or maybe it was the second one, you took up Carnegie's report, the "Starting Points"?

Clark: We did, yes. We've used a lot of Carnegie -- well, I mean, we've used a lot of results and connections with Carnegie itself, and obviously because they know the scholars in the field that they've worked with. We've had a lot of -- you know,

in a way, and I don't know if I've ever quite discussed it this way with Vivien, but I think it's a very good thing for Carnegie because they invest an awful lot of money in developing talent and expertise and information and reports. The ones we're talking about are all policy reports. I mean, things that involve directly or indirectly American policy.

This is an outlet for them to get this information to these members of Congress. Now, of course, they're only getting them to nineteen or twenty members, but over a period of about ten years they've been doing this, they've probably had seventy-five members of Congress, and many of them time after time. Bill [William F.] Goodling, Republican chairman of the Education Committee, never missed a meeting. So particularly people who are making the policy. Jim [James M.] Jeffords, chairman of the Senate Committee on Education is always there, and so it goes.

We've had some very good things come out of this. I remember we had a young person -- oh, I'm not going to be able to speak his name again, from Baltimore about three years ago, who had a great idea about a school reform. Dave [David R.] Obey, a Democrat from Wisconsin, ranking Appropriations Committee member. Republican John [E.] Porter of Illinois on that Appropriations Subcommittee put in whatever, 150 million dollars, and that reform is now in law, you know. Members are always telling me these stories that I never even knew about, that I learn about. The last meeting, Obey and Porter stood up about something else they'd done that grew out of an earlier meeting that we did. Again, Republican and Democrat, that's the important thing.

So it's been a very successful program. The fact is -- that we've wondered about this -- it would probably work on any public policy issue, you know. It's a process that works, if you keep it neutral and you're careful with it, and it's viable and you're not selling any one side. It doesn't mean that we're probably totally neutral. I mean, we do want American education and children's issues to receive more attention. We do want U.S.-China relations -- we believe in developing them in a better light. It doesn't mean we're soft on human rights or whatever. We get people in to talk about it. So in that sense, I find that sometimes we can't attract some people to these programs, because maybe they don't believe in federal aid to education of any kind, or federal interference in education. Well, of course, we can't affect that attitude.

Q: [tape interruption] Because I guess Aspen has its own personality.

Clark: I'm sure it does. Yes, it's a little hard for me to figure out.

Q: Yes.

Clark: And they're pretty careful to be non-partisan. I think the last president was probably a conservative Republican, not the last one, but the one before then. But, nevertheless, it's got to have and must have its own -- you know, with most members of Congress, I've found, I didn't realize this, they only know the Aspen Institute because of this program. They keep calling me the president of the Aspen Institute. [Laughter] I say, "I'm just a program director there. Aspen is more than

this program." But that's their experience with Aspen.

Q: We've got foreign development assistance, which is a fairly new one, is that --

Clark: Yes, that was a little different kind of thing that we did with Pat Rosenfield. What happened was that Pat called me one day and said, "Foreign assistance is going down the tubes. What are we going to do about it? What do you think?"

I said, "Well, you know, Pat, I don't really know. I served on that Foreign Relations Committee, I've always been interested in it, interested in Africa, but times are changing and I just don't know what you can do with it."

She said, "Well, think about it."

Well, she called me back a month later and I said, "Well, I don't know, Pat. I don't have any idea."

And she said, "Well, suppose we just assigned you the job to try to do it, what would you do?"

I said, "Well, I guess what I'd do, since I don't know anything or have any ideas, is probably try to bring together a half a dozen people, or ten or so, who have an interest in this and have a history in it and have kept up with it, and ask them what to do, you know, maybe we'd get some ideas coming out of that."

We got former Republican head of the aid program, a wonderful guy, [Peter] McPherson, president of Michigan State [University], and Paul [S.] Sarbanes agreed to come, and Dick Lugar, were the only members of Congress that I even invited. And a number of other people around who were interested in it, including the present aid director, and we just talked for a weekend about what might be put together or how one might -- you know, some ideas about it.

Then we pursued that further. We had a couple, three more meetings with these people and some other people, some other people who were much more directly involved in doing it, and talked about whether it might be possible to get a major kind of reform where Congress would look at it in a different way and so forth. I think we had three meetings in all.

We got some ideas and thoughts and so forth, but decided in the final analysis that there just wasn't enough of a coalition, enough of a common view. We even got some fairly high-level people then to come out, [Brent] Scowcroft -- I've forgotten all the people that there were. Mandelbaum. A lot of high-level people who'd been involved at the highest levels of government, to talk about it, but nothing ever came out of it that we could get our hands on, that we could really say -- half of them say, "Give up on this system." I mean, they were so fundamentally different. "Give up on this system. It'll never be popular. It isn't working anyway. We want it to work, but it isn't working anyway, and you've just got to come in with a totally new kind of thing." Other people, Sarbanes, say, "Oh, look. You throw the baby out with the bath water. We'll end up with absolutely nothing."

And we couldn't get a consensus to build around anything that might be done of a positive nature.

Q: So it --

Clark: I think Pat [Rosenfield] and I both felt, after that period, which ended, I guess, maybe more than a year ago, that we couldn't see where to take it. We did get some reports out of it that we circulated and so forth, but we really didn't know where to go with it after that. It's kind of a conundrum that's hard to deal with.

I, myself, came to the conclusion that you probably couldn't repair the present system, and yet it's there, it has a bureaucracy, it's got a lot of workers, it's got a lot of people, and so it would be very hard to change. A lot of the other sort of stumbling block to all this is, that anything that you do to change it has to go through Jesse Helms, who is not going to let anything positive go through. Until he retires, which I suspect he's going to do in 2002, so in January of 2003 I think he won't be there.

Q: That's a long way a ways.

Clark: Yes.

Q: Could I have ten more minutes?

Clark: Sure.

Q: Would that be all right? I just have to change the tape, if that's okay.

Clark: Yes.

Q: Okay.

[END TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO; BEGIN TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE]

Q: All right. So, fine. Anyway. I guess -- so we finished that, right? I think. I was going to ask you, for you, what might be next?

Clark: Well, actually we've got something kind of interesting going. Adele Simmons has become so enthusiastic about these programs that she feels that we ought to have more flexibility to move toward new areas, like the developments in the Balkans or something. So she's proposed, for their contribution, to just give us money generally, and she's talked the Ford Foundation, the presidents of the two, Susan [V.] Berresford at Ford and Bill Richardson at [W.K.] Kellogg [Foundation], into giving an equal amount of money for the same general purpose. That should allow us to do five programs, which is our maximum. There are only five recesses and we don't want to do more than five.

So what we're going to do is continue Russia, which will be funded by Carnegie, continue Children, which will be funded by Carnegie, and then China. This next year we would then do China, international and environmental issues, and I'm

going to start a new program on U.S.-Cuba relations. So that's sort of the new --

Q: Because -- ?

Clark: Because it's time to move on that issue. I've had people talk to me about doing it for years. I never felt the time was at all right for a lot of different reasons that had to do with the Cold War and had to do with the perceived threat from Cuba. It had to do with the strong politics in America, in Florida and New Jersey. But now several things are happening. One is that the Cold War is over and Cuba is no threat to anybody, as our Defense Department says. And [Fidel] Castro's getting old and he's not going to be there forever. There are going to be changes down there. I think, thirdly, there's a lot of activity here now about Cuba. The Council on Foreign Relations did a two-year study with all of the distinguished people on each side of the issue.

What time is it? [Brief interruption]

So that sort of opened this whole debate and discussion. Then, quite shockingly, I guess maybe business interests or somebody got twenty-eight members of the Senate to sign something saying we ought to have a reevaluation of our Cuba policy, and mostly conservative members. So I think up to date, the politics of the Cuban question have been controlled principally by the delegation from Florida and New Jersey, and it's had a big impact on everybody who runs for President, because they want to take those two big states. Members of Congress have sort of stayed out of it, except from those two states. I happen to believe that if we

could get fifty or sixty people involved in that issue from South Dakota and California and Iowa and Nebraska and so forth, that we probably could get a clearer evaluation of what American policy ought to be there. I'm not sure at all. I mean, I've thought about it, but I'm not sure at all what American policy ought to be there, but I think we ought to start discussing it and talking about it and thinking about it, but how do we do this? What are we going to do when Castro's gone? What are we going to do before he goes? What should policy be? It's been stuck in about the same place now since 1959. That's forty years. What should our policy be? I'd like to get the dialogue expanded to a lot more members and get them involved and interested in it.

Q: Ever a teacher.

Clark: Maybe. I never thought of it that way. [Laughter]

Q: Okay. I guess --

Clark: We've got another five minutes if you've got a couple --

Q: I was thinking really about that and how satisfying -- is it satisfying for you?

Clark: Oh, tremendously. Yes, I feel as if I've had more impact than I did when I was in Senate, in the sense of a positive impact. I mean, it doesn't mean that I change policy, but it means that -- I think it's something that's very, very badly needed. The members, to the last person, think that it's a godsend that they can

go off someplace for four days at a time and learn about one thing and hear about it. I just think that it's something that's really missing in the system.

I'm sure that 220 years ago that they thought the hearing system would do this, that they could call in experts all the time, hold these hearings. So the hearing system, as every member of Congress knows, is totally broken down. It doesn't mean it's of no value, because if they're going to develop an agriculture bill or something, they can be helpful, but for the most part these two worlds exist out here and the foundations sponsor an awful lot of this policy research. That's sort of about there, and it has nothing to do with policy, except academically. And then these policymakers. So it's very satisfying to me to bring these two groups together to connect them.

We've involved 183 members of Congress in these programs, 110 of the sitting members of Congress are involved, have been to at least one of these meetings. Some of them have been to as many as twenty. I think Paul Sarbanes has been to twenty-two of them. So this is their education forum for a lot of these people and, yes, that's satisfying. I love it. I wouldn't ever stop until I die or they quit giving me money or quit coming to the meetings or something.

Q: Okay. Thanks.

Clark: Thank you.

Q: Thank you very much.

Clark: Not at all.

Q: Great.

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