

Oral History

Conducted by Edward McCarthy (M) with James Bill (B) in Williamsburg Virginia on May 4th, 2006.

Edward McCarthy: Jim, where and when were you born?

Bill: I was born on March 2, 1939, in Lacrosse, Wisconsin.

M: **What** were your parents' names and where were they from?

B: My father's name was Alban Bill and my mother's name was Irene Sobota. My father was born in Arcadia and my mother was born in Independence, two small Wisconsin towns along the Mississippi River.

M: **What** did he do for a living?

B: Dad worked on the farm until he was twenty-one. Then he moved from the farm to Arcadia and became an assistant Brewmaster, a master chemist. His profession was making beer. When I was two years old he received an offer to become head Brewmaster in Reedsburg, Wisconsin at the Reedsburg Brewery. My parents, younger brother, and I moved to Reedsburg. Dad was in charge of marking a beer called Old Gold.

My mother was a registered nurse who worked at the Mayo Clinic and then in Reedsburg.

M: **She** was working while she was raising all of you?

B: Yes, she enjoyed her profession. In some ways, she wasn't always all that excited about the mundane business of a household. She had to have an outlet. She was a very intelligent woman and managed with the help of my father to raise six of us.

M: **What** school did you go to?

B: I went to public schools most of my life as Wisconsin had a good public school system. When I was in 8th grade my parents decided it would be important for me to go to a Catholic school.

M: Why did they?

B: They were very religious.

M: Were they Catholic?

B: Yes. My mother and father were very religious. Very Catholic. My brother Dick and I were sent away to live with my grandfather in Arcadia where we went to a Catholic

School for one year. It was run by nuns. They were the first ones that taught me how to think, how to study, how to work, how to achieve.

M: Did you like that there?

B: Yes, I did like it. I was competitive there. My graduating class had about thirty, thirty-five students and they ranked everyone. I was ranked number four.

M: What did you do during the summertime, growing up there?

B: Well, my family had certain rules; we abided by those rules. The most important thing was your religion. Second was your schoolwork, you did well in school. Third was athletics. Athletics were stressed in our family. From an early age on I loved to play baseball, basketball and football. And for that part of the country at that time I became pretty good at it. But I'd played ever since I was four or five years old. I played Little League baseball in Wisconsin. The first Little League baseball team in the whole state was in my city Reedsburg. We went down to Chicago, Illinois, to play these big city slickers. They looked like they were twice our size. We thought we were pretty good. The final score was Elgin, Illinois, 22, Reedsburg, 1.

M: You didn't score that run, did you?

B: I got the only hit! and had my name in the *Chicago Tribune*.

M: Any other activities growing up there?

B: Most activities were outdoor activities. I also spent a lot of time in the library.

M: **Did** you have brothers and sisters?

B: I am the oldest of six. I have four brothers and one sister.

M: Where did you go to high school?

B: I went back to Reedsburg after a year of Catholic school and went to Reedsburg high school. I got a good, solid education and I played four sports. I ended up with thirteen letters which was more letters than anyone had ever gotten at that time. Basketball, baseball, football and golf.

M: Golf?

B: I was not a very good golfer, but I played it.

M: What particular subjects were you attracted to in high school?

B: I was already interested in history and politics.

M: What year did you graduate from high school?

B: I graduated in 1957 and went immediately into the army.

M: Where was that?

B: I found out about a program in the army called the six month program where, if you were under 18, you would go in for active duty for six months and then the reserved for 7 ½ years. I thought this sounded like a pretty good deal. I took the lead and about eight of my friends who were graduating at the same time joined up also. We all went down to Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. The trainers and the sergeants, who had little education, hated to see people like us come in for six months and then leave. They took it out on us. It was a tough experience but I learned some lessons at that time as well.

M: Such as?

B: Such as, never raise your head when you can keep it low. Never be too good or too bad at anything. Don't let the sergeants get to know your last name.

M: Where did you go to college?

B: When I was in the army, my mother, who was a very religious woman, used to hang out with the priest's housekeeper. She had friends in the east whose children went to a school called Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts. So my mother took it upon herself to write a letter to Assumption College saying that she had a son who was an excellent student and athlete, and he would, we would, very much like to see him go to a Catholic school. She wrote me a letter and said "Jimmy, I hope you don't mind, but I've sent in an application for you to Assumption College."

M: Your mother wrote this.

B: My mother wrote this to me. She filled out all the application forms, sent it in to me at Ft. Leavenwood. I signed my name and **my application** went off to Assumption. The college gave me a huge scholarship and paid for everything, including my laundry and books. They also allowed me to graduate in 3 1/2 years so I could graduate with my class. With six kids in a family that wasn't wealthy, this was very important to us, so I accepted.

M: So you went there?

B: Probably the most difficult thing that I ever had to go through was going from Reedsburg, Wisconsin to Worcester, Massachusetts.

M: Why?

B: Because I had to get on a bus in Wisconsin **Dells**, with my little suitcase and my package full of sandwiches and cookies that my mother had made and threw in a few extra grapes for me. My parents didn't know the difference, they called it "Warchester." Our son Jimmy's going to "Warchester." And I taught 'em it's "Wooster," I think, is the way it's pronounced. "Well, whatever, it's Catholic and that's what counts." So, Dad took me to Wisconsin **Dells**, and I had my suitcase. It was a thirty-six hour bus ride straight through stopping at Cleveland, Ohio, stopping at Chicago, stopping all the way up to New England. And I remember my Dad taking me all the way up to the bus station and the bus driver came down and it was a cold, snowy Wisconsin January night and my dad said, "Mr. Busdriver, this is my son Jimmy, he's going to Assumption College out in Worcester, Massachusetts. I want you to promise me that he'll get there safely." He went over and kicked the tire of the bus a couple times as people used to do. "Good luck, Jimmy." Gave me a hug and that was it, I was on my own.

M: Had you ever left home?

B: No, that was the only time, except the eighth grade visit to Grandpa's house. Well the story gets interesting because I said this was the most difficult thing I ever had to do. Talk about Iran, and Iraq, and Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, Morocco and all these other places I've been—nothing, compared to what I had to do here. I got off of the bus, thirty-six hour bus-ride. I still remember one of the vignettes in the Cleveland washroom. There was a man in there with a bottle of aftershave lotion. He was drinking it straight out of the bottle, he obviously was in trouble, it made quite an impression on me, I decided I'd never drink aftershave lotion in my life. Anyway, we get to Assumption, we get to a taxi cab, I'm in Worcester, and the driver says, "Where do you want to go, buddy?" I said, "I'm going to Assumption." "Okay, buddy, hop in, I'll take you to Assumption." So he took me there, and I reached into my billfold, paid my two dollars or whatever it was, and went up to the steps of this forbidding, Augustinian, Catholic structure, walked in the front door, there was a black robe standing there, and I said, "My name is Jimmy Bill and I'm supposed to go to school here." "Ah, don't worry about that son, we'll take care of you, go over the study hall, make yourself comfortable, hang up your coat up here, and we'll get back to you a little later." So I went into the study hall and I sat there, and I sat there, and nobody came."

M: Were you by yourself?

B: Totally by myself. I sat there and sat there. And finally I heard one of the students at a desk nearby say, "Oh, let's go over to the college." And I said, "Excuse me, isn't this Assumption College?" "No, this is Assumption Prep School!" I said, "Well, I've already gone to high school, I don't want to go to high school again." "Well, hop in the car, buddy, we'll take you over to the college, we're going over there now, anyway." So, I pile in this car with my suitcase and they take me to Assumption College. I go up to the registrar's office and introduce myself. The registrar walked me up to my first class, opened the door, and shoved me into the classroom. I went and sat in the back of the classroom. I remember the professor had all of these logarithms up on the blackboard, I didn't know what a logarithm was from a timber log. I had no idea. But I reached in my

billfold and took out a little piece of paper and copied down what was on the blackboard knowing that these hieroglyphics meant nothing to me and it would take several months before I caught up with the class. The class is over, everybody gets up and they go leave and I'm still sitting there. So I grabbed my coat and I followed the group down to the dining hall. I watch what they do. Nobody says anything to me, I don't say anything to them. They don't know me from Adam, I'm just a stranger as far as they're concerned. They grab a tray, I grab a tray. They get a jello salad, I get a jello salad. They get some bean soup, I get some bean soup. They all go sit down at their tables with their friends and I'm by myself. So I went over and sat down in a corner by myself.

M: Eating?

B: I want to tell you that was the loneliest moment in my entire life. Somehow I survived that. Having survived that, Iran was nothing.

M: This is an all-boys school?

B: Yes, it was an all-boys school. It is run by an order of Augustinian priests out of France. They taught all of their history of philosophy courses the same year in French. So you had to take French.

M: So, did things smooth out after the first days?

B: Yeah, they did. It was extremely difficult. I was very lonely. My class was way ahead of me. I had to make up courses in Physics and Philosophy and General Math and Biology. I had to learn all of those from scratch, because I hadn't been prepared for this. Most of them came from a prep school where they had already gotten a head start. But after three and a half years spending Easter vacation washing windows, I graduated with my class three and a half years later. Class valedictorian.

M: So, during your college years, what did you major in?

B: I majored in something called Foreign Affairs or International Relations, with a minor in philosophy.

M: Why did you pick that?

B: Because going back to my early years in Reedsburg, I found out that I was interested in government and politics already. This seemed right up my alley. And Assumption was sending students overseas, they had study abroad programs. I wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to go overseas. I did that one summer. I worked in the French countryside in 1960.

M: During your college years did you participate in sports there?

B: Yes, sports were big for me at Assumption. They had a tremendous basketball team. Many of these small, Catholic schools did. We played Holy Cross, we played Providence College, we played the University of Hartford, we played a good schedule: Springfield, St. A's, I came in and they put me on the B team and I was okay. I had guys I had to go up against from New York, New Jersey, that played basketball for blood in the tenements. Because if you lost you had to sit in the sidelines, another team played. And they put me as a roommate to one of the other great basketball players in the country, a man by the name of Fred Barakat, who later became the associate commissioner of the Atlantic Coast Conference. I pulled him through. He was a mediocre student. I taught him how to study. I taught him how to take notes. He taught me how to play basketball. But, in my sophomore year at the University of Hartford, I was chasing a ball out of bounds, when a huge guy came up behind me and threw a cross-body block at me. I was trying to let the ball go out of bounds. He rolled down the back of my legs, and you could hear my knee crack as it ripped the cartilage. That was really the end of my basketball, but I did play four years of baseball. I got four letters in baseball. I could always hit a baseball but did not have a very good arm. So, sports did play a big role, especially baseball and some basketball.

M: Any other activities during the summers or outside of class or working?

B: Yeah, I had some interesting work experiences. I took some jobs that people would raise their eyebrows at. For example, I picked beans in the Wisconsin bean fields, green beans, with the Jamaicans. The Jamaicans would come up as migrant workers, and go to the green bean patches and the corn patches, and all these others... and they would, we would fill gunny-sacks, we would drag the gunny-sack over to the weigh in, and there was a guy there that would weigh in your gunny-sack, put down how many pounds you weighed and put down your name. I spent the whole summer picking beans, made a little money doing it, actually, because that was one of my hobbies, also, I liked to pick berries, I liked to pick beans, and here I was getting paid for it.

M: Is that why you took that kind of job, you just liked it? Or, was there anything else available?

B: It seemed like a good job, at the time. They paid decent wages, I thought, for a high school kid. So, anyways, that taught me about other cultures to some extent, because I had to communicate with Jamaican pickers.

M: Speaking what?

B: Pidgen English, of some sort. Some French, because of the Jamaican French culture in the background. But that was not a major interlude in my life. This was two summers, is all I did that. The other job I had, which is a dirty, dirty, job, is tarring roof, flat roof, in the hot sun in the summer.

M: Wisconsin?

B: Wisconsin. The humidity. There was a company called Hanksraft Corporation that had a huge, huge, flat roof building and we had to get up on the building and pour tar. I'd come home at night and I was just black from head to toe with this tar. I worked there, I think, three summers, and that was not a pleasant job, but I got a check, I liked getting a little check.

M: Was that about the only work you could get?

B: Yeah, in a small town like that. There was a creamery, which had a huge smokestack. My brother and I used to shovel the coal into the stoker. And, the coal would burn so fast, so rapidly, that you could see it literally in the pole going down and you had to keep it replenished. That was a tough job, back-breaking work, and dirty work as well.

M: When did you graduate from college?

B: I graduated in 1961 with a degree in foreign affairs and a minor degree in philosophy that has stood me well. The philosophy degree, taught me how to think logically. How to analyze. You got a lot of St. Thomas Aquinas. Aristotle was a big hit in those days. Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, these priests relied on them. And that's helped me over the years, believe it or not in my more secular education.

M: The logical thinking?

B: Right. Syllogisms, you got to learn to use the syllogism. Cosmology was a course, the study of the soul. So you would think I established a very good record there, you would think I could get into a good college. When it came time to apply to college scholarships I didn't do very well.

M: You talking about graduate school?

B: Yes, my graduate school.

M: What happened there?

B: What happened was that even though I was class valedictorian and even though I had excellent letters of recommendation, I also had on my transcript courses like "Christ and the Sacrament." John's Hopkins, Yale, Harvard, Princeton, they weren't impressed. They weren't impressed at all. So, I was turned down at these schools. I got two scholarship opportunities, one at Pennsylvania State University, one at the University of Miami. And I just tossed a coin and took the Penn State scholarship. Worked in the library there. With UN documents. And got a master's degree in two years. Then I got interested in Iran when I was at Penn State and applied to Princeton because I had to have Persian. They didn't teach Persian at Penn State.

M: There's a story about why you got interested in Iran, could you tell that?

B: Yes, people have asked me, how could it be that a Wisconsin farmer like you became interested in a country called Persia? Somebody who liked to fish and play sports, yet wants to study Persia? There's no connection here. Tell us what happened. How did you from Reedsburg, Wisconsin, become the only American speaking Persian in all of Sauk County? And what happened was I was in my first graduate seminar.

M: At Penn State.

B: At Penn State, exactly, and the professor was a wonderful professor by the name of Vernon Aspaturian. I'll never forget. He was a Soviet specialist. And I took his course on International Relations. There were ten of us in the seminar.

M: How do you spell his name?

B: His name was **A-S-P-A-T-U-R-I-A-N**. Aspaturian. He was an Armenian, very smart with a biting insight into what was going on in the world. In his classroom, he said, "I'm going to put ten names and ten countries up on this blackboard. I want each of you to choose a country. And do a paper on these images of national relations. Well, I was very interested in what was going on in Cuba. This was 1961-62. Castro was coming to power, Sputnik was going up, and I had a couple of years of Spanish. So I wanted to take Cuba. But somebody else got Cuba before I could get Cuba. I looked up there and the only other country I could use to study my Spanish in was Mexico. But the young man sitting next to me got Mexico. And when I looked up at the blackboard there was only one country left. Iran. I didn't even know where Iran was, I didn't want to study Iran. So... uh... "Yeah, Bill, you got Iran." "Yes, Sir." So I got everything I could get my hands on on Iran. I found out Iran and Persia were in fact the same country. I found out Iran is not Iraq. Iran is not spelled Iran like "I ran, You ran," it's pronounced Iran, something our leaders have still never learned to do. And, I wrote a paper and became absolutely fascinated by this country. So I wrote my master's thesis on Iran.

M: What fascinated you about it?

B: Well, it was kind of a quaint place, where you had a king who was involved in land reform, trying to reform his country so that he could maintain power, but was in fact coming down far too hard on his people. He was corrupt, those who surrounded him were corrupt, to a large degree, not all, but most of them were. I just found the whole business of a storybook king trying to use power to maintain himself on the throne was a fascinating story of the modern and the traditional. And I wrote a paper, a master's thesis, for Aspaturian, and I got an article out of it. I actually got an article published in *The Middle East Journal*. It was my first publication, in 1963.

M: While you were still in graduate school...

B: While I was still in graduate school, which was unusual in those days, for a graduate student to get an article published in a refereed journal, the leading journal perhaps in the field. So, I transformed my interest in Iran to the need to study Persian. Aspaturian said,

“Bill, we can’t go with you any further here because you’ve got to study the language, if you don’t know the language, you can’t understand the country. So, I hate to say this to you, you’re one of my very best students, but I think that you need to apply to a place like Princeton.” So, I applied to Princeton and I got a scholarship, a very good scholarship, to study Middle Eastern politics with a focus on Iranian studies. And I drove my old Chevrolet down to Princeton and enrolled there and in their course on politics in the Middle East.

M: How long were you at Princeton?

B: I was at Princeton between 1965 and 1968, two years of those I was in Iran in the field. Traveled to Iran to do research on politics. And married my wife, Ann Marie, who was also from a Wisconsin town. She and I were married in 1965, June 1965.

M: Were there any particular people at Princeton that had an impact on you? Mentors?

B: Yes, there was. Asaturian had been my mentor at Penn State. I’m going to backtrack for just a moment to say I had a mentor at Assumption also. His name was Father George Bissanette. He wrote a book called *Moscow Was My Parish*. A brilliant man that always wore a blue baseball cap around. He could answer any question you had, he was a walking encyclopedia. And he took a liking to me on the basis of my first exam that he gave me an “A.” If you got an “A” on the first exam, you got an “A” on all the exams. If you got an “F” on the first exam, you got an “F” on all the exams. Because that’s how he pigeonholed you. But the major force that directed me was Manfred Halpern at Princeton.

M: What did he do?

B: I worked with him very closely all the way through Princeton. I wrote my dissertation under his supervision, which later became a book, called *The Politics of Iran*. This man was a seminal thinker. He was so far out in the clouds in his ideas that people couldn’t follow him. I tuned into him pretty early, because he was a man who argued that what counts in the world, what is most common is conflict and competition. And not reform and moderation. We live in a world of transforming change. He taught about transformation. And coming out of Assumption I had a philosophy course that dealt with this. So I used some of that. Halpern is now dead. Wherever I went to teach, when I went to Texas to teach, I invited him in to be a guest speaker. He came here to William and Mary twice to give talks. Interestingly enough I wrote an article that was published in the *Mediterranean Quarterly* where I used Halpern’s framework. I tried to take Halpern’s framework and distill from it the essence of human relationships. And the *Mediterranean Quarterly* took it without any revisions. They said this is great, we will publish it. And they published it. So Halpern lives on, to some extent.

M: Anyone else at Princeton?

B: Yeah, there was a man, grand old man of Iranian Studies, T. Cuyler Young (spells out). He was the grand old man of Iranian studies, first went to Iran in 1925, spent the whole rest of his life teaching about Iran. He was an old-time missionary, there were a lot of missionaries in those days. He was born to the Presbyterian mission up in Northwestern Iran. He was a wonderful man, an intimidating man with a white mustache, very forgetful, as most professors are. But Halpern and Young could not have been more different in how they approached things. They were both supermen in their own areas. At Princeton there was a tension that existed between the social scientists and the historians in the department of Oriental studies. It would be very difficult for a scholar to have to straddle the two lines. It was very difficult because Halpern was my advisor, but T. Cuyler Young gave me a lot of my empirical substantive material.

M: Were they both in the same department?

B: No, one was in Oriental studies and one was in politics. As a result of that, graduate students got whip-sawed between the two. I was one of the few individuals who was able to bridge that gap. I had the respect of the people in the Area Studies department and the respect of the people in the department of politics, mainly Manfred Halpern. So, I managed to do some effective public relations, because on my graduating committee, my PhD committee examination, both sides were represented. So, if I argued with one person, made a point to one person, there was always somebody that was opposed to it. At the same time, I had allies who sometimes went to bat for me as well. There was a kind of dialectical tension between different schools of thought and it got pretty personal, but I managed to ride that out.

M: So, as part of obtaining your doctorate you did a research trip to Iran.

B: Right, I won a scholarship, a fellowship, which was very lucrative.

M: Was that a Ford foundation?

B: It was a Ford foundation, foreign area fellowship. The Ford foundation put money into this organization, which was a top notch organization, where you applied to do field work. Feeling was that if you really want to understand another culture you had to go to the field. You can't do it in your arm chair, you can't do it reading the newspapers, you can't do it reading your books or anything else. You've got to get there, you've got to be there, you've got to get dysentery there, you've got to get typhoid fever there, you've got to learn to survive in a Third World environment, because that gives you a much better feel for the soul and the heart of another country and culture. I have very little regard for those who take a trip to Istanbul or a trip to Cairo for a conference and come back and speak with great authority. Tourists are even worse, they'd come into these countries, sit at the Hilton hotel, swapping stories about the jungle. That's one of the reasons that we aren't doing any better in the world. I spent two years in Iran plus two more years back at Princeton. I had the best of all worlds there. I didn't have to worry about money because the scholarship was very generous.

M: This was part of the application for these scholarships?

B: Yeah, right and for some reason, no one thought I had a chance. Even Halpern suggested you're just wasting your time; they don't give money away that great when you're just starting. That was just my first year there.

M: Your first year at Princeton?

B: Yeah, my first year at Princeton. It was amazing, I got it. I applied for it, and I got it. And that took care of my next four or five years of academic life. I had enough money not to worry about it. I wrote up a proposal that I was going to study there... and, my wife and I departed in October of 1965 for Iran.

End of Side A

M: Jim, it was about this time that you married. I would like to know how and when and where you met your wife. Could you speak about that?

B: Yes, there are so many stories that are entertaining, but may not be of all that great interest to an individual outside the family. I'm serious when I say this, that my marriage was an arranged marriage.

M: An arranged marriage?

B: It was an arranged marriage. Like they have in the Middle East. I didn't quite know that I was that Middle Eastern yet, but my marriage was arranged by my father. My sister, Betty Ann Bill, went to college at Alverno College in **Milwaukee**, Wisconsin. This was a Catholic girl's school and my sister was there. And, Ann Marie Bachhuber was there, **B-A-C-H-H-U-B-E-R**, and she was a roommate of my sister's. She was the daughter of a small-town physician who was the grand old doctor up doing calls day and night. A wonderful man. A saintly man. And they became good friends. And my sister would bring Ann home to visit our home on weekends and my father got to know Ann long before I did.

M: Were you at home at that time?

B: No, I was at Penn State at this time. And my father said, "Jimmy, there's always time for marriage, but you need to start looking around. And I've been doing some looking for you." Like my mother did some looking for me, too. "I've been doing some looking for you and there's the Bachhuber girl that I think would be just a good mate for you." I said, "Ah, come on Dad, get off it. I don't even know her." "Well, why don't you call her up." This was a Christmas vacation.

M: Had you ever seen her or met her at this point?

B: At this point I had met her, but only briefly. When we went down for a Christmas song fest at Alverno College. I only saw her briefly. I must admit I liked what I saw. But my father liked her even better. So I came home on Christmas, Christmas of 1961-62 and Ann lived in Kaukauna, Wisconsin where her father was this physician. Close to Appleton, Wisconsin. And Dad said one night: "Jimmy, why don't you call up this Bachhuber girl, and get a date." "I don't even know her, I only met her once. Come on. She won't even know who I am." "Get on that telephone young man." "Oh, man, I was nervous about it. But I did. I called her." And her home town was 130 miles from my hometown, which was Reedsburg. And it was a snowy, winter time. And Dad said, "Call her up, see what she says." So I called her up, long distance. I said, "May I speak to Ann?" Her mother, "Just a second." "Yes?" "I said this is Jimmy Bill." "Who?" "This is Jimmy Bill. Betty Ann's brother." "Oh yes," she said. "Look, I'm home for Christmas and I'd very much like to come by, and pick you up, and maybe we can go out and have some pizza and do a little dancing. And wondered if you would be willing to do it, to join me." Now this is an incredible thing because it was a stormy, snowy night. She said yes, she would be happy to. I drove 130 miles in a blinding snow storm to take her out. We went bowling, I remember, we had pizza, I took her back home, and fell in love with her, she fell in love with me, just like that. We carried on a long distance romance. I got three or four hundred letters that went back and forth between the two of us. Our priorities were that I would pass my general examinations before we got married. Don't get married when you're still in graduate school, because it will just not work out. So, we did that, everybody was pretty surprised about it, especially when all the folks heard that I was taking Ann to Persia. This was considered to be the height of stupidity, ignorance? Whatever. Her father and mother were very good about it. But the father came up to me right before and said "Jim, take good care of Ann. Please take good care of Ann." We were just a couple of kids, basically, is what we were. And so, we were married in Kaukauna in June 1965 and we then went to Princeton, packed up my suitcases, and we headed for the Middle East. We went by ship, we took the S.S. France. Great, great ocean-liner. If you're going to spend your honeymoon, that's the place to go. We had a wonderful time, wonderful trip. And, landed in London. And then we began a long, harrowing adventure, cross-country, all the way from England to Tehran. Anything that you can imagine could happen, would happen, did happen.

M: Now this was a trip by train? Bus?

B: By bus and train, basically.

M: How long did it take you to get there?

B: It took us probably 2-3 weeks, I would guess. It was a long trip overland. And we had things that happened on that trip that left no worry about culture shock ever again. By the time we got to Iran, we were so culture shocked there was nothing that could have happened to us that would have troubled us about this trip. Now there were several incidents on that trip that are fascinating, but I don't know if we want to go into all of those. Should I just select one or two of them?

M: As many as you'd like.

B: Well, one of the incidents that occurred on that trip was when we were in Ankara, Turkey. We crossed Turkey from Istanbul. We got on a train in Istanbul, got first class seats because we knew that these trains were so packed that you could not find a seat even if you had a first class ticket. We finally got a seat, that's another story, we finally got a seat, Ann got a seat, I stood up outside the men's room, every time somebody had to go to the John, they would step on my fingers and my hands and move my suitcases aside. It wasn't the greatest or most romantic trip in the world. We were going along the Turkish countryside and the train stops in Ankara. You have the first class car which is the very end of the train, and you have all of the other cars, including a dining car, that are packed with Turkish people. It was just packed, you couldn't even move it was so crowded. But we had a little breathing space back there. Ann and I went to have breakfast. To get to breakfast you had to go to the first class, through a car full of Turks, and then the dining car. There was a car in between our two cars. And I said to Ann while we were having breakfast: "Ann, I don't feel comfortable about our luggage back there, I'm going to go back and I'm going to sit and watch our luggage so that nobody takes it. You just finish up breakfast and I'll see you later." "Fine." So I go I'm sitting in the compartment, waiting for Ann to come back from breakfast. She doesn't come back. I got very worried. So, I opened the door, went through the empty car, which had been the car between these two, got to the dining car, her hand was trying to get in, but the door was locked. She couldn't get in. So I said, "Ann, get off the train, come around the platform, and come around the other way." "Oh yes," she says. The train started going, "Chug, chug, chug." "Run, Run, Run." And, before she ran, a Turk jumped from the side, and grabbed her to keep her from hurting herself. From killing herself underneath the wheels of the train because she was desperately trying to get on. While she was running, the Turk grabbed her and I went bezerk. I said, "This is my wife," I said to the conductor, "We're just newly married. She's with me. I've got our passports. She doesn't have her passport. She doesn't have her purse. She doesn't have anything." I just went totally off the deep end. We were on our way to Iran. And so I am raging. The conductor went like this to me, and that communicated exactly what he wanted to communicate to me. The train was going back out of the station to switch. Take one car off, but another car on. So, it looked to me like it might have been the shortest wedding and marriage in human history. But that was a very interesting event.

M: How long did it take you to get across?

B: I think it took us several days.

M: To go across Turkey?

B: Yeah, to go across Turkey. And it was the funniest damn thing. There was only one railroad track. Not two. One railroad track. So, if a train is coming this way, and a train is coming that way, they're bound to meet. But, along the way there are little villages with switch offs, so you could get around and let the other train go by. Well somehow, in the middle of Turkey, the train got derailed. And they had steel, not wood, but steel

railroad ties. And I looked out the back of my window and all the villagers came out, laughing and pointing at our train.. And, I went and took a look out the back and here the train had become derailed, had gotten right in the center drudge of the steel ties, and knocked them up in the air. So, as far back as you could find you'd have track bed that was totally useless. It looked like we were going to be there for a long time to come because this was in the middle of nowhere and repairing those tracks was another two day job. Somehow our car was pulled around, the car in front of us was detached and we were connected to the train. Meanwhile, sitting back in that car must have been seventy or eighty Turks with nothing to do, nothing to eat, no place to go. But we managed to escape that bullet.

One other incident: this will be the last incident I tell about this trip. When we got on the Orient Express in Venice, we were going to Istanbul, from Venice to Istanbul. We got right up on the front, we knew that in order to get a seat you couldn't be bashful, you had to elbow your way in. The train comes in, everybody rushes like mad to get to this train, They are all going to Istanbul, and I see if I don't leave first class...I say, "Well, Ann, this is our car, why don't we just get on right here?" So we got on, feeling pretty confident, pretty proud of ourselves. Put our luggage in place, and sat down and watched all these other poor folks struggle to get into all the other cars. Ann said, "Jim, isn't this a little strange that we're the only ones in this car?"

M: Only people in the whole car?

B: The only ones in the whole car. She said, "Jim, I don't feel right about this." I said, "Maybe I better check." Meanwhile everybody's loaded up, hanging out, crawling out of the windows and everything else. And I walked down and said to the conductor on the platform, I said, "Car, Istanbul?" He said, "No, no, train go to Istanbul, car stay here." And, we grabbed our suitcases and we did a flying rush down that platform, crowded into a compartment, and we couldn't find a place to sit down. It was a three day ride from there to Istanbul, we couldn't find a place to sit. So, I said, "Ann, I'll watch your suitcases, you go down and see if you can find a part of a compartment, some place where we can at least switch off and sit." She went down, she's got good, sharp elbows, and sitting in one compartment was one Turkish man, with a big back mustache, very prosperous looking man, and he had his compartment filled with bird cages, and watches and wines and he was taking half of Venice with him to Istanbul. Ann said, "One seat, one seat," she says to him. And he says, "No, crowded. Full, full, full." And he grumbled and mumbled and she got a seat. Once she got a seat we got our territory established. Well we got to know this guy pretty well in those three days. His name was Vedat, **V-E-D-A-T**, I'll never forget his name. He was having the time of his life. He had the finest wines that he brought with him. We'd drink a bottle of wine and open the window of the train and throw the wine bottle out. We got to Bulgaria and Vedat is still feeling pretty good because he's been packing the bottles of wine away. I must admit, we did our share of drinking, too. And, in Bulgaria, in the middle of the night, about 2:00 am, border guards, police, come onto the train. Big red stars on their caps. The stereotypical view of the Russian soldier. "Passport, passport." So, we gave our passports to them. They look, "This visa no good, this visa no good." I say, "It's my wife's visa, we were traveling together." "No good, no good. She come off of train

now.” Can you believe, Ed, that they had stamped the wrong date in the Bulgarian embassy in Washington. And she did not have a visa because of the date error made in Washington? And so they grabbed her, and started dragging her out of the car. And I said, “Vedat, do something about this. Do something about this.” “Don’t worry, I’ll take care of it.” And so he goes over, and he’s the type of guy who can convince anybody of anything. He puts his arm around these border guards. “Come with me, come with me.” He’s got three fine bottles of Swiss wine with him. He gives him the three fine bottles of wine, and they say, “Okay, okay, okay, okay.” And they backed off, they let us get through, mainly through the help of Vedat. We get to Istanbul. And this is when it really gets tough: We are at Istanbul, and he’s smuggling. Inside of his coat is all full of Swiss watches, on both sides. Bird cages, everything he’s got with him. And we get to Istanbul, and he says, “Now, I helped you when you needed help, you help me get my things through customs.”

M: Are there birds in these cages?

B: No, they were just cages. But you get the ambience of it all. And he said, “You go through customs with my things because you’re Americans. They won’t check you the way they check me.” I knew that Turkish prisons were not someplace I wanted to spend any time at all. We didn’t know what Vedat hid in all those suitcases, either. God knows what he might have had. So I was just sweating. And he says, “Here’s a suitcase, this suitcase goes, this box goes.” And I say, “I tell you what you do, Vedat, Ann and I will go down on the platform, and you hand your suitcases through the windows to us, and we’ll stack them up for you and you come and we’ll go through customs.” The minute Ann and I got out of that car we raced away as fast as we could get, and thank God we did because they went through everything. Even boxes of candy they were going through. They looked at our candy. They looked at everything.

M: When you went through customs?

B: When we went through customs. I don’t know how Vedat, if he ever got through there. But I wouldn’t doubt that he could. He was one of these guys that was an international adventurer, who wanted to be paid back. And I’m sure he’s still cursing those two young Americans who never really appreciated what he’d done for them. We had these kinds of experiences all the way along the line.

M: Jim, could you talk about your arrival in Iran.

B: Yes, that was a shocking experience for us. After two weeks of traveling overland, maybe even three weeks, I forget exactly what it was. It was a long trip. We arrived in Tehran, after a thirteen hour drive from Tabriz, which is in Northwestern Iran. We’d spent the night in Tabriz, and from Tabriz we drove to Tehran, getting into Tehran at about 2:00 am in the morning.

M: On a bus?

B: On the bus. Now the bus was not what you'd call a real bus, it was an Iranian bus. Called Mihantour, was the name of the company. And it was crowded with peasants, to tell you the truth, peasants and us. And there were chickens in the aisles. And people were carrying their goods to market in this bus. And, in the middle of the ride, just before we got the Tehran, we got into a horrible rainstorm, it was a cold, icy rain. This is in October, when it gets cold out there, in the mountains. And the rain came down through the top, which had no protection, and it was raining inside the bus. And Ann and I had the umbrella with us; for some reason I figured we'd need an umbrella someday. So we put up this umbrella, in the bus, it rained in the bus. And the peasants in Iran they were fascinated by it. They had never seen anything like this. Who were these crazy foreigners, Can we try it? So we passed the umbrella back and forth, up and down the bus. We got soaking wet, despite the umbrella. Persians are wonderful people, they are very hospitable people. They are very warm people, they are very courteous people. They have many years of civilization that they can be proud of and they are proud of it. And on that bus they shared their food with us. Sandwiches and melons and we became good friends and so we were happy to let them use the umbrella. We arrived in Tehran at 2:00 am in the morning, and what do we do now? Strange town, strange time, strange part of the city.

M: Did you have any arrangements beforehand? A place to stay?

B: We had one arrangement that helped us get through that first night or two. Believe it or not, from the home town of Reedsburg, Wisconsin, where I was raised, there was a family that had a young man that had been in the US army in intelligence. And he was stationed in Iran and I gave him my phone number. He and his wife took us in those first few nights until we could find an apartment. Which we did with the help of the Iranians. The Iranians are very hospitable, very helpful. Little bit nosey, too, because the first place that we moved our things into, we were in bed one night, and the door opened up and the proprietor walked into the bedroom. And Ann and I were after all on our honeymoon and we didn't want anyone interfering. And he came in and turned the lights on, because he lived downstairs, we lived upstairs, and he'd rented out a room to us and meanwhile he's rented out a room to some else in some other place. And we realized this was not going to work. Not going to work. So, we had friends help us, Iranian friends help us move out of there and we had another apartment, that we stayed in for two years, which worked just fine. And we started from the ground up. We met people **who that were from peasants to** bazaaris. We met people who were professional and non-professional. By the time we left two years later, we had met everybody including the Shah, by working our way up the network. You don't do that when you fly in on a plane to Tehran after you come into London or some place. We got down there in the dirt with the people, we saw the way they really lived, we saw the way the people hated the Shah. He was already very oppressive, some corruption as well, people close to him.

M: What year was this now?

B: This was '65-67, the Revolution occurred in '75-78, so ten years later he had a Revolution, or twenty years later he had a Revolution. But we could see the Revolution

coming, and the time we met the Shah, spoke some Persian with him and the Empress. And on later trips to Iran, I became acquainted with the Empress. She was a good woman, an educated woman, who got caught in something bigger than she was. She used to send money to the peasants, she'd build libraries throughout the countryside. And she used me as a source of information on what was going on in her own country, because the Shah had the secret police following her and watching her. She believed in human rights and because she believed in helping the masses of people, genuinely help them, she didn't believe in corruption, all the flattery, so she'd ask me about what I'd heard and I'd tell her. She'd use me as a conduit of information, because the Shah had his own wife watched. And the corrupt inner circle of advisors would come to the King and say "Your majesty, your majesty, the empress is involved in things that are no business of hers, your majesty, she is supposed to be working with charity and helping the arts, but not getting involved in politics, your majesty. Because she would help people wherever she could. And she had her own bureau and her own office. She learned how to survive in court life. So, I was able to get into the royal family and I met others who were members of the political elite. But my study was of the Iranian middle class. I went in to study the alienated Iranian middle class.

M: Why alienated?

B: Because this was a new middle class. The Shah had plenty of oil, he had a great deal of oil. There was considerable economic growth going on, but no political participation at all. There was a parliament, but it was [ineffective?]. He wanted more and more power and he eventually began to come down on his own people. He originally ruled like a Lion and Fox. He'd be strong as a lion, and clever as a fox. But as time went by, he became an ego-maniac and he became straight as a smiling lion and he forgot about the intelligence, the wiliness of the fox. And, partly because of that, there was a revolution being born in the streets of Iran. I studied this class with middle class professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, middle-ranking army officers, bureaucrats, teachers, journalists, students, all those who made their living through a salary. They are a salaried middle-class. The Shah needed them because he wanted to introduce reform on the economic front. To have economic reform, you had to have political reform. He didn't want that. So, the middle class was alienated from him. And there was a revolution that occurred in 1953 that never succeeded. And Dr. Mussadeq who was a grand old man of Iranian politics drove the Shah out of the country and took over in the name of democracy. But we Americans in the CIA gathered together with the Shah's intelligence organizations and they overthrew Massadeq and brought the Shah back to the throne for 25 more years.

M: Same Shah?

B: Same Shah. 25 more years. The people had thrown him out. And the American image of the Iranian dynasty plummeted straight down. And we're still suffering from the interventions that we made at that time. It was a sad story in our foreign policy history, although some circles say it was successful because the Shah held power. So, there are two sides to this story, but in the end people wouldn't tolerate it. They wouldn't tolerate him. And the religious leaders along with this educated middle class, formed an

alliance, the religious leaders formed an alliance with the professionals. And they had a full-scale Revolution. It rose from the bottom of society and swept its way upward. Seated at the very top of the pyramid was the Shah of Iran. His corrupt entourage and the United States Uncle Sam standing there and holding him in place. When the people overthrew him, he collapsed backwards right on us and we got blamed for it, because we were there propping him up.

M: How did people regard you as an American?

B: Well, I was treated very well. They were very open to me. They knew all about me, because you can't do the kind of research I was doing without the secret police following you around.

M: And they followed you around?

B: Yeah, they would be sitting in the next room while I interviewed. I kept all my field notes in cereal boxes and under rugs, because I knew I was being watched and they were searching my apartment. And several Iranians, it was a very difficult situation, several Iranians thought I was working for the CIA, because they felt why else would a young man, from America, from Princeton, come here, study our language, live with our tribes, travel around our country, unless he is a spy. And there's really nothing you can do to alleviate this feeling. They have this conspiracy theory, and in some cases the conspiracy ends up to be the truth. But, in many cases, the one way I would handle it, I went into an interview one time and the teacher said to me, "How do I know you don't work for the CIA?" And I said, "How do I know that you don't work for Savak?" And he said, "Oh, okay."

M: That's the secret police?

B: That's the secret police. **S-A-V-A-K**. A security organization. A frightening organization. Very, very ruthless.

M: Did they respect you for having learned their language?

B: Yes, they did. They respected me. But deep down, some of them didn't trust me. But they respected me, and I picked up a lot of colloquial sayings in Persian that I would use in my discussions. They had great senses of humor. They'd laugh and laugh when I'd use a proverb in Persian to describe something that had happened. Iran is our second home. There's no doubt about it. These people are the finest people that you could meet any place. They took us in when we had no place to go. From the bottom of society took care of us. Hospitable. And I also found, however, that in the Middle East this is an important principle. If they like you, if they like **your** personality, they'll do anything in the world for you. If they dislike you, there's nothing they'll do for you. It depends on, it's a personality thing, it's a PR thing. You know, you meet people, sometimes you get the wrong impression of them, once you get to know them, they're different. Sometimes you get the first impression. They rely on the first impression. They look you right in

the eye when you are introduced to them. They decide right there, then, whether they like you or not. So, and you can't fake them. They've been around for 5,000 years and they can read people. So I got along with them really very well. They liked Ann. We loved Persian food. She prepared Persian food. We went on all kinds of trips together with Iranians. We plumbed that society. We traveled up one side and down the other. And we miss it very much.

M: I wanted to ask you, what did she do, during this two year period, when you were off doing research or interviewing people.

B: Ann stayed at home. Although she did have a job for quite a while, with the US air force hospital in Tehran, and that kept her busy. She also did some nursing at the hospitals. She did the shopping, did the cooking. It was not easy for her to do. We had no stove, nothing to really cook with, except a frying pan that we had on a transformer. She made cakes in this frying pan. She washed all our clothes in a tub, in a shower. It wasn't easy but it was an adventure. I don't know how we did it, now I look back on it. At that time, it was an adventure. She loved it. She liked it, the Iranians liked her.

M: She didn't speak the language, did she?

B: She learned enough of the language that she could do her shopping. I took her around for about a week's time. Introduced her to shopkeepers. We worked on her Persian some. And she was able to get along just fine, but it was not an easy language to learn. But she got it so she could use it to go shopping.

M: So, you feel that the two of you adapted pretty well to this new life of yours?

B: It was a completely different culture than anything we'd been used to. There are many characteristics that Persians have (and you have to be very careful because you are getting into stereotypes here). They believe in inter-personal relationships. What counts is not your institution or your organization or your company, what counts is the network or web of individuals that in fact runs that company. Runs that company. Runs that organization. And in that personal network, family is so important. Family is really important all over, but in countries like Iran and the Middle East it's even more important. So you have a gigantic web and network, constantly moving, of individuals related to one another. And you've got to really understand that, you've got to penetrate that network. And you can't penetrate that network unless you speak the language. They'll speak in Persian in front of you. And if you can't speak it... It's important to know the language because that helps these inter-personal relationships. It helps oil the joints in society. In Iran, they'd think that was mighty stupid, "Tell it as it is." Why would you insult people unnecessarily? Tell them as it isn't, if you want to preserve a relationship, you don't brutally and bluntly tell somebody what you think of them. You praise them. You work with them. You are a bit deferential towards them. They have a huge number of sayings in the Persian language that capture the essence of this kind of personalistic approach to life. If I can think of a couple of the expressions that are really, really very good. Well, one final anecdote that will tie up to where we've been up until

now and gets us into this personal network I'm telling you about. When we were in Iran I got typhoid fever. I didn't know I had typhoid fever. Ann went up to the **air force** hospital and they wouldn't see me because I wasn't an official American. And she was working in this hospital. And my temperature went up to 105/106 degrees. I was just burning. I was delirious. And the Iranians would come up with all these medicines. They'd go to the pharmacy and they'd buy just all kinds of medicines. "This green bottle looks like it would be helpful, Dr. Bill." "Drink three teaspoons of these in your tea and put in a little drop of wine." All of these home remedies. And they wanted to do their best. But they weren't able to find out what my problem was. And finally a friend of mine in Iran who was an eye doctor, said, "I want to introduce you to my brother, who was trained in the United States, and he can help you, I'm sure." So, his name is Hussein, Dr. Hussein. So, Dr. Hussein came by to see me, because I couldn't walk, I mean I was in that bad shape. Said, "We're going to run some tests." And he did some tests and found out I had typhoid fever. The **antidote** for that is Chloromistn and it killed the disease like that. I went over to see Dr. Hussein and I said, "Dr. Hussein, I thank you for your time and your diagnosis. I am feeling much better. And I want to pay you, I want to pay you for this." I knew what he was going to say. He said, "No way, no way young man. You're insulting me. Anyone who is a friend of my brother's is a friend of mine." And I said, "No you don't, I'm paying you for this." "No, you aren't paying for this." "Yes, I am." "No, you aren't." And he would not take any money. About two months later [knocking sounds]. I go to the door. "Dr. Hussein, how are you?" "Oh, Mr. Bill, I am fine. But I need you to do a favor for me." "Oh, what's that, Dr. Hussein?" And he said, "My son wants to go to Princeton, you'll get him in there, won't you?" I looked at him, and I said, "Your son wants to go to Princeton?" He knew I studied at Princeton, he said, "Aren't you from Princeton." I said, "Yes, I am." He said, "Well, you'll help Bijan, my son, you'll help him get in there?" I said, "You know, its August, all the applications..." "YOU WON'T HELP ME? YOU WON'T HELP ME?" I said, "Wait a minute, Dr. Hussein, I didn't say that at all. Come on in, we'll have a cup of tea. We'll talk about it. Now tell me, how's his English?" "Well, he doesn't speak any English, you can teach him though, can't you?" "I said, of course I can, I'd be happy to work with him. I'll take him up to the Iran America society, introduce him around, get him started with the language. And we'll see what we can do. But it's going to be very difficult, just to be very frank with you, Sir. It's going to be very difficult, at this late date, very difficult for him to get accepted into Princeton without speaking English." "And he said, well, I'll put all this in your good hands, Dr. Bill, and you'll take care of Bijon and I don't want to worry about it anymore and he'll be going to college in the United States before we know it." And I went, "I don't know how to tell you this. Its not going to be easy, but I'm going to do it for you." He leaves. Bijan, this poor kid, comes every morning to our house and I teach him some English. One day, Bijan doesn't come anymore. I went to a party, a garden party one night and there's Dr. Hussein, he sees me, and he says, "Mr. Bill, Mr. Bill. You said that Bijan could not get into a good American university." Well, he said, North Dakota State Teachers Tech, New York Radiological, and Teachers College of [...] something like that. Just names that no one... he had been accepted to all three of these schools. Well, I said, "Don't you thank me. Don't you dare thank me. It's the very least I could do. I said, "After all, your brother's a friend of mine, I don't expect thank yous from you." They believe in reciprocity, you do me a

favor. But they do it in a very charming way, and if you understand what game is being played, you can play the game.

End of Tape 1

M: This is an interview with James Bill by Edward McCarthy in Williamsburg, Virginia, on May 11, 2006. This is tape #2, side A.

M: Jim, will you talk about your first research project when you first went to Iran.

B: I went to Iran with a thorough research project which involved the politics of stability and instability in the Shah's Iran. It was a fascinating case study because it was designed to analyze how the Shah was able to maintain power in the 20th century, when in fact his society was becoming more and more alienated from him. I went in with the basic hypothesis that a professional middle class posed a serious threat to the Shah and his rule. A professional middle class I identified as those individuals who had a modern higher education. Many of them educated in colleges and universities outside of Iran. They were a technocrats who the Shah needed in order to modernize. He never trusted them, because they believed in promoting political development, political participation, justice, freedom. They were very interested in exerting political power themselves.

M: So, do you want to elaborate a bit on these people?

B: Yes, a little bit more about them. Anyhow, you had three traditional middle classes. You had the business, or bourgeois middle class, who were primarily interested in the bazaar or doing business and having a good economic situation. They could be easily handled as long as business was good and they could be brought up by the Shah, because all they cared about was business. Then there was a religious middle class that was closely intertwined with the middle class of the, the bourgeois middle class. And the religious middle class was primarily interested in promoting Islam and in doing the best they could to exert power in the Shiite tradition. And then you had an old middle class, the bureaucratic middle class, with the scribes, the accountants, the writers, and they were an extension of the arms of the ruling class. The Shah rests at the middle of the ruling class. So you have these three traditional middle classes, neither one of which is really revolutionary, although the religious leaders became revolutionary after a while. And you had appearing on the scene, beginning in the 1950s really, a burgeoning professional middle class, that I called the professional bureaucratic intelligentsia, a new middle class, that could not be bought out very easily by promises of money or salaries and even by religion. They were educated primarily in the West, mostly in the United States, and they were the ones that spearheaded the attack on the Shah, beginning in the '50s in the Musadieg period. Muhammad M., the prime minister, although he himself was upper class, had all the aspirations of the professional middle class. He was educated in Switzerland and was a great nationalist hero. Still is a great nationalist hero in Iran. And he represented his professional middle class. Although he himself, as I say, was not a member of the elite or business middle class or of the religious middle class. He was the one who overthrew that Shah in 1953. When I was in Iran in the '60s, they're still

talking about Musadieg. They still talk about Musadieg. And so, if the U.S. had not intervened in 1953 to put the Shah back on the throne they would not have had to suffer twenty-five more years of the Shah, between 1953 and 1970.

M: How is his last name spelled?

B: Dr. Muhammed Musadieg (spells).

M: What became of him?

B: There was a coup that took place in August of 1953 in which the CIA and British intelligence were deeply involved and the Shah's army and the right wing thugs in the streets of South Tehran were receiving monies from the CIA and he was put under house arrest where he lived an isolated life by himself until he died in 1967.

M: What did your research show?

B: My research found that the professional middle class was in fact a revolutionary class. They were alienated. They did everything to make the Shah's rule as unpleasant as could be. They had contacts in the West including the United States because many of them had been educated in the United States. I found that the Shah was not going to be able to modernize without assistance of this professional middle class. That proved to be the case in the revolution. The professional middle class were individuals who expressed their views in a repressive society through their poetry, through their writings, through their informal group meetings, through their networks. The Shah tried to corrupt them, but he found it very difficult to buy these people off. They were one major force that spearheaded the revolution in 1978 and 1979. I found this in my many, many interviews. I had over a thousand interviews over the years in Iran. And my pieces about Iran and the Shah came to be true at the time of the revolution.

M: So, did your research tell the people in Iran anything? Did they learn from it? Or did they hear of it?

B: Yeah, they knew about it, because it was still a small society. And if you have an American asking political questions, speaking the Persian language, it created quite a stir. I know I was watched by the secret police, and I know that my friends were questioned about me when they met me. And it was difficult doing research there, but in the end my life was never threatened. But I do know that the secret police were listening in on my interviews. And they would interview people after I interviewed them. Until I reached a situation where I began interviewing the secret police. And I had a couple of fascinating interviews with a couple of professional thugs, I would call them, that were part of the secret police. The head of the secret police was a very arrogant personality. Down below the head of the secret police, you had individuals that were just trying to make a living. But the sign or the signal was given by the colonel or head of the secret police, and the Shah kept him in power.

M: Did you ever interview him?

B: No, I never did interview him. I interviewed his number one assistant, though.

M: Were those people honest with you?

B: They were honest, I think. They were not completely honest because **whatever** they spoke with me they were in fact were making things difficult for themselves in a police state. I found out that in Iran you never get anything for nothing. Just because you are studying at Princeton and have a university degree and an American passport doesn't mean that they you don't owe them something for all their time. They are a very hospitable, generous people, and I found that over the years, over the months and over the years, I made friends who I found would level with me. And my interviewing technique went against all the standards and canons of interviewing. Because I found that in order to get information I had to give information. So they would ask what I thought about a certain situation before they would commit themselves. And I would do the best I could to answer the question honestly without being too blunt. And that would open up the channels of communication in one place that they realized I knew what was going on in a society, they would level with me. But, in the end, the research was extremely difficult. I had to have interviews, and follow-up interviews, and follow-up, follow-up interviews, and some individuals I interviewed thirty or forty times. And that built a level of trust that is indispensable in dealing with Iran.

M: Did you feel at the time you left you had sufficient information that would give an accurate picture.

B: Yes, I did, and in the end I was able to interview everyone from taxi cab drivers to the empress herself.

M: How did you get to see her?

B: Through the Iranian web system. Through the networks of individuals that I knew, who knew her lady in waiting. The lady in waiting told the empress about me, and the empress said I'd like to talk to that man. And I think over the years I had five or six interviews with her. That were fascinating interviews.

M: On different trips?

B: On different trips. Yeah. The first two years I never met her, but in 1970, when I spent six months in contact with her, I must have had several interviews in 1970 and 1974 with her, and then at the time of the revolution I went back to see the timbers crack and see the system fall apart. And I had my final interview with her. Up at Niavaran palace. And I'll never forget that interview. It was an important interview and I refer to it in several of my writings.

M: Would you comment on the interview?

B: Yes, I will, I will try to be as brief as I can. When I flew back into Iran in November of 1978, in order to see the revolution from the street, I tried my best to see the Empress. But no one would take me up to North Tehran. I couldn't get transportation and the revolutionaries were in the streets, bombs were being thrown. There was fighting. Banks were bombed out shells. Theaters. Anything modern. Hotels were devastated. And she sat up in the palace, many miles North of the central city, and when I went into see her, she was smoking a cigarette, a Winston. She smoked Winston cigarettes. She was smoking one after another and she welcomed me. I was able to get a ride up there through a contact with a friend. And she said, "Dr. Bill, Dr. Bill, what do you think is going on? Where are you staying? What are you doing?" And I said, "Your majesty, I'm living down in South Tehran where the people in fact live." And she said, "My gosh, that's not safe down there for you." I said, "That's the problem, your majesty. This is where the people live. You and his majesty live up here on a hill, isolated and insulated from the society. The revolution is occurring down there." "Well, what can we do?" I said, "Well, I'm a scholar, it is not my business to tell you what you, or tell your majesty, what they should do." She said, "Well, just give me a reading, because you've just come from down there." I said, "Well, I think that they are blaming your husband for everything that is going on." "Well, what can he do, what can he do?" I said, "Well, he can get rid of some of the thieves and crooks that are surrounding him." "I'm not going to do that, but you know who I'm talking about." She said, "But we've tried everything." I said, "If your son is going to become a constitutional monarch someday, then the Shah is going to have to step back off of power." And, of course, the Shah never wanted to step back and give up power. Once you taste power, you never get enough of it. The more power you get, the more you want. And the Shah wouldn't do that, and he wouldn't step away from power until it was too late. The Empress was a good woman. She cared about people. I said, "Your majesty, this is my opinion." She looked at me and said, "You know, Dr. Bill, the husband does not always listen to the wife." That's exactly true. She was his last line to reality, and when he didn't pay attention to her, that was the end of it. He didn't have any contact with the people any more at all.

M: And you never interviewed him?

B: I met him once, but never got an extensive interview with him.

M: When you came back from your first two years, **then** you went back to Princeton?

B: Yes, I went back to Princeton, where I had a semester, the fall semester of 1967, and I wrote my dissertation basically in those six months. I had all my field notes with me, and I also accepted a job in Texas at about this same time. They hired me for January of 1968 to become an assistant professor of Political Science in the department of government at the University of Texas. But, before I went to Texas, I did my best to finish that dissertation. And, despite the predictions of some of my mentors, I was in fact able to get it done before the Spring semester was over, while teaching my first load of courses.

M: So, you finished the dissertation and you got your degree?

B: Yes, I had to defend the dissertation before six distinguished scholars, and had about a two or three hour oral interview on the dissertation. I passed and I became assistant professor at Texas.

M: Can you speak about your first years at Texas? You were teaching, obviously, you were doing further research? Writing books?

B: Yes, the first thing I wanted to do was turn my dissertation into a book. And that isn't easy to do because dissertations tend to be theoretical, and a bit high in the sky, and don't read very well. But I did the best I could, and wrote and re-wrote the dissertation until it was published as a book in 1972, when I was just starting in Texas, by Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.

M: What was the title?

B: It was called *The Politics of Iran*, and the cover of the book was more famous than the book itself because the cover caught everyone's attention. The Iranians don't do much reading; they didn't have to read this one. It immediately became an item that everybody sold surreptitiously. It was smuggled into the country. It had nine figures, nine political figures on the cover. At the center with sort a grizzly grin is the Shah himself. To the right of the shah is his twin sister Ashraf Pahlavi, who was a Black Panther who affected a great deal of power over her twin brother, and to the left of the Shah was the empress Farah Diba, the one who I had the interviews with. Then at the top I had members of the professional middle class: a poet and two writers. At the bottom I had three figures: I had Muhammed Musaddieq representing the nationalist intelligentsia, Hasan Arsanjani, who was the architect of the land reform program who I knew personally and [Imam Jomi?] who was the religious leader who was in the Shah's pocket. He played...he was a religious leader who did not oppose the Shah, that justified the Shah. So an Iranian would pick up this book, and they see the Shah at the middle then they'd see all this wide variety of characters, and that's all they talked about. It was well received, well reviewed, and it I think pretty well summarizes my theory of the professional middle class.

M: Did they have a role in the revolution?

B: Yeah, they did. They formed an alliance with the religious leaders. And every class in Iran, with the exception of the ruling class, opposed the Shah. Every village, every city there was an uprising against the Shah. The professional middle class did a lot of the organizing in Tehran. They had some political organizations going back to Musaddieq's time. But the religious leaders were the ones that were in touch with the masses of people, not the members of the professional middle class. You had a conflict between the professional-liberal-reformist middle class and the religious leaders and the religious middle class, and in that it was no contest. The religious middle class drove out the professionals, because the professionals didn't have the guts to fight and do the kinds of

nasty things you have to do to be successful during a revolution. The religious leaders had no such qualms.

M: Back in Texas, you taught there for how many years?

B: I taught there between 1968 and 1987 and I did a lot of my writing, both articles and books, when I was at Texas. I had a full teaching load. I also got very much involved in building a Middle East Center at the University of Texas at Austin. And I went out and raised money to build this Middle East center. And that Middle East center, I'm proud to say, is still in operation. I started a publication series, they're still publishing books on the modern Middle East in this center that I myself and a few others were deeply involved in forming and establishing. So I did get into administration there.

M: And you wrote some other books there.

B: Yes, I wrote several books. I don't know if it's worth listing these. I wrote several books. I wrote *The Politics of Iran*. That same year I coauthored a book with Robert Hardgrave Jr. called *Comparative Politics: The Quest For Theory*, which was an attempt to teach American graduate students how to go about their work scientifically, how to go about their work with logic and rigor, and the various theoretical approaches you could use to study various countries in the world. That book stayed in print I'd say almost thirty years. It's still found that graduate students use it to prepare for their comps. And I constantly get people still today that don't know that I had anything to do with Iran or the Middle East that know me for the book called *Comparative Politics*. Then I began writing a sophisticated textbook with a colleague, and this textbook was called *The Politics of the Middle East*. That went through five editions, and the fifth edition... it was the bestseller for Little, Brown in their series on comparative politics. And my most recent author was named Robert Springborg, it was Bill and Springborg, and that was the only book written that studied the Middle East not on a country by country approach – descriptive, taking various countries – but taking problems and issues, and patterns and processes. So we'd have “Islam and problems in the Middle East,” we'd have “Administration in the Middle East,” we'd have “The Military in the Middle East.” We had all these problem areas that we wrote about.

M: In this one book?

B: In this one book. We had a chapter three in it about groups and classes. We had a section on the professional middle class that crossed the Middle East. And the publishers have begged us to write another edition, but to tell you the truth I don't have it in me to write another edition. Five editions ought to do it, I figure. That's enough for one career. But the publishers pushed hard for another edition of it because it's a big seller, probably the second largest Middle-East politics book ever published.

M: And then you?

B: I wrote a number of other, less-distinguished books as well. I wrote one called *The Politics of Oil*, which is a study of politics and oil in the Middle East. And I wrote more books when I came to William and Mary in 1987.

M: Is there anything else you'd like to say about your years at Texas?

B: No, no, I don't have much to say about those, those years are gone... I was there for a long period of time, made many, many friends. I received an offer I couldn't refuse from the College of William and Mary in 1987.

M: How did that come about?

B: Well, again it's like everything in life involves a network, a contact, or a web of some sort. A friend of mine who had taught at Texas with as a colleague, Hirsch [sp.?] his name was, came out to VCU to teach, and when he was out at VCU he was told about a position that had opened at William and Mary. And so he dropped me a note and said you might want to consider applying for this job, they want to set up an international studies center at William and Mary.

M: Similar to what you had done at the university....

B: Similar...on a much broader scale thing. It was not just on the Middle East, it was on all areas of the world. International studies as opposed to just the Middle East, or just Russia, or just Russian Studies centers, German Studies centers. This was an international studies center, and I liked what I saw when I came out here for an interview. There was a lot of energy and you could feel the excitement in the air. William and Mary at that time was transforming itself, where they were beginning to recruit scholars who would write and prepare books and do research, as well as being excellent teachers. William and Mary understood the fact that you could be both a researcher and a teacher, and each side can benefit the other side, each side can intensify the effects of the other side. If you're a good researcher, and you're doing groundbreaking research, you can use that in your classes. You can use that information – share that information – with your students. And your students...I wrote articles with some of my students. And William and Mary for so many years had been just focusing on teaching, but beginning not just when I came there...but a series of other scholars came to William and Mary who were also very well known writers, authors and scholars. William and Mary had that magic mix.

M: So they could do both: teach and do research?

B: Right, and so I could go to the field. I would go to Iran. I'd go to the Middle East to do my research you know, and I was at the University of Texas. And I'd come back and I'd have new ideas. I found out new things because I was out there. I talked to the people; I rubbed shoulders with the people; I knew what was going on. And that could only benefit my teaching. I'd share this information that I'd picked up with my students. I might also point **out** here that at Texas I had a number of graduate students, students

working on their PhDs under my supervision. It was very difficult for me when I left it for them, because I had something like fourteen or fifteen graduate students that I had to leave behind me. I tried my best to distribute them among some of my colleagues who could oversee their dissertations, or I stayed on their committees and flew in from William and Mary to be there at their examination. Graduate students were extremely important to me. Sometimes they're given a bad rap, but some of them are just as talented and sometimes even more talented than the professors with all the degrees after their names.

M: Did some of those students go on to do significant things?

B: Yes, several of them became political scientists teaching in various colleges and universities throughout the country. I'd say there are probably six or eight of them that are now professors in their own right.

M: Did you ever collaborate with them on anything afterwards?

B: Yes, I did do some collaboration with them. But more than the collaboration, I read every one of their dissertations. I helped edit it because they were bright and brilliant people, but they did not have a command of the English language. English was their second language in many cases. So I had Arabs, and I had Persians, and I ended up – I wouldn't say I wrote their dissertations for them – but I certainly edited every sentence and every word in it, and that took endless hours. And I was viewed as being kind of a tough guy in terms of what are my demands on my students. One student who is now a chancellor of the University in Kuwait – he's the head of the entire university – still tells the story of when he handed in the first draft of his dissertation to me and he and his wife had worked so hard. And I read it and he called me and said "Dr. Bill, how's it going?" And I said "Don't you ever send me a paper like that again, never, never, never." He said it was just such a shock to him. But he said "I'm glad that Dr. Bill was tough. I went back to the drawing board and his help enabled me to get this book published." That dissertation I said don't you ever, ever, ever hand a paper like this to me again, he went back, redid it, and ultimately had it published.

M: What was your problem with it?

B: It was very poorly written, very poorly written. And I said the least you can do is get somebody in the English department to go around and straighten out the writing. And organization left something to be desired. The ideas were there. That's the important thing, the ideas were there.

M: Before you came to William and Mary, there was not an international studies center. What was the situation here prior to that developing?

B: When I came here there was one woman, very talented woman, that was in charge of study abroad programs, where William and Mary students wanted to go overseas to study. She would facilitate that, and we had programs in France and England and other

places. That was about the extent of our international studies program, except for several faculty members who had kept the fires burning over the years, the faculty members who were interested in the world, interested in international studies, interested in countries, interested in different cultures, and they became my natural allies when I came here to build a program.

M: What department were you in?

B: I was in the government department.

M: And that's where they were?

B: That's where a lot of them were. But they were also in History and Anthropology; you could find them in all of the social sciences.

M: And so you were offered the job?

B: I was offered the job. And I decided – I was **forty**-eight years old at that time – that if I ever was going to make a move and try to do anything significant, this was the time to do it. It was very difficult on my family because my daughter was sixteen. She didn't want to move under any circumstances. She was an A student at St. Steven's school. And my wife was very loyal and helpful during all this, but it was difficult on her as well. But in the end we made the move, and I'm glad that we did. It was the best thing that I could possibly have done at that time with my professional career.

M: What were the challenges to establishing the center?

B: The challenges were very serious. The challenges were trying to get working together a group of faculty members who represented different cultures, different backgrounds, different personalities, and getting them to work together as a team. The faculty... I have struggled very hard to get the faculty on board. I was able to do that, but it took an awful lot of time and energy, many lunches, many meetings, many committees. But I was able finally to get them lined up behind me, and what helped me break the ice was money I was able to raise from Mrs. Emery Reves. It was this time that she came through town about...less than a year after I got there, she showed up in town and gave us three million dollars before she left. That three million dollar endowment was what enabled me to have the budget and the personnel that I needed to really build a quality program.

M: To back up a moment, whose idea was it to have this center?

B: The president and the provost were the key factors behind the center. They're the two highest administrative academic officers at the college. Walter Verkuil was the president, Mel Schiavelli was the Provost. Schiavelli was a brilliant man, a great organizer. He actually was a candidate for the presidency when Verkuil left. He did not get that position, but he was the major reason I came to William and Mary. He had vision, he

was demanding, he had an excellent personality. He was well liked in the faculty in general, and he stood solidly behind me when I started making reforms in the program.

M: And that was difficult?

B: Very difficult, very difficult because I had so many different tasks that I had to do: I had to satisfy the faculty, I had to think about the students, I had to think about development and fundraising, I had to deal with other administrators on campus, other schools, like the law school or the business school. We wanted to go international in all of these ways, so I was called the director rather than the dean. I was designed to pull together all of these disparate forces and to build a curriculum that stressed not just descriptive area studies, but that stressed problems and issues, the politics of education in the world today, global politics in the world, revolution and change in the world today. And I could draw from our Russian studies program, our Soviet studies program. I could draw from our anthropologists, from our philosophers. We had some massive conferences, major conferences. One was called "The End of the Nation-State," and in that Mrs. Reves herself came and she bankrolled that entire conference. And we brought in leading thinkers from around the world, not leading thinkers just from Williamsburg, but leading thinkers from Japan... a Japanese anthropologist, a Mexican political scientist, a British philosopher. They all came here together and we had this three day conference that was outstanding in every respect. It represented what I wanted William and Mary's international studies program to look like.

M: How did Mrs. Reves get involved in this?

B: Mrs. Reves was a woman who had contacts in Dallas, Texas and here in Williamsburg. Her Williamsburg contacts were Frank and [Erica?] Shatz. She knew Emery Reves, her late husband. She knew he knew the Shatz and the Shatz had built a relationship with Emery, and then eventually with Wendy. They let it be known to Wendy that rather than giving all of her beautiful paintings, her impressionist collection, to the Dallas museum, she might want to think of an educational outlet for her funds as well, and they recommended William and Mary. She came to town, spent three or four days here, left three million dollars with us when she left. Now, I did some things right during that period, some things not so effective, but one of the things that I stressed to her was that Emery's ideas were ideas that we could resonate to. His ideas were beyond the nation-state. Nation-state sovereignty, lines and borders and boundaries only mean violence, only mean warfare. We have to get beyond this unit. And he wrote this the book *The Anatomy of ...*

M: *Peace*?

B: *The Anatomy of Peace*. He wrote this book and it sold a million copies in 1946-1947. It's a brilliant book. I took it upon myself to read every page of it before she came. I had not known about the book, I must admit. But once I read it I realized here's something we can work with. This is something we all stand for. Who's against peace? No one's against peace. So we decided really it was a peace studies center, with her funds.

M: **When** did it open?

B: We had a grand opening, and the Governor himself, Governor Gerald Baliles came. I can't tell you what year that was. You can look it up.

M: **You** invited a speaker?

B: We invited a speaker, and the speaker was Bill Moyers. Bill Moyers's story with William and Mary and Wendy Reves and myself is a very interesting story. Wendy Reves grew up a barefooted orphan in Marshall, Texas, of all places. Marshall, Texas also happened to be the hometown of Bill Moyers. Bill Moyers and Wendy Reves had had some of the same teachers in school together. And so when I asked Bill – I called Bill Moyers blindly one night, got him in his kitchen in New Jersey – I introduced myself on the telephone, and he said "Oh, Dr. Bill I know you, I know of all the work you've done on Iran."

M: You had never met him though?

B: No, I just called him blindly. He happened to pick up the line. I introduced myself; he said he knew me, and I said "Well, we're going to have a major academic opening inauguration at William and Mary. We're looking for a keynote speaker, and we can't think of anyone any better than you; no one can top Bill Moyers." Well, he thought about it, said "I'll get back to you," so I thought that would be the end of it. But he actually did get back to me. He flew here and gave an outstanding talk, got a standing ovation, a fantastic talk on a world of violence and conflict and change.

M: And was Mrs. Reves at this?

B: Oh yes, she was there, dressed in her headband and her boa and her see-through blouses and her slacks. She reminded me of Hollywood. She had a lot of Hollywood about her. She and I just hit it off. We just got along very well at the gut level, at the core level. She called me "my director." I was "her director," which, of course, got quite a few comments from my colleagues. But we just hit it off very well and we went back to her for resources and she helped us again and again and again with more money, more resources. A typical idea, or example, of the way she operated was she said that one Christmas...she was here just before Christmas, and there was a dinner for her in the president's house. Vice President Allenby was there and his wife, Frank and Jarka **Shatz** were there, President Verkuil and his wife were there, and Ed Allenby was the one that did her bidding. When she needed to get something she'd call Ed, who would have been director of our development, Vice President in charge of development and events.

M: For the college?

B: For the college. So we went out to the President's house and she said "You all stay here," and "Ed, will you go get your Christmas gift for the college." So Ed went out and

there was a great big Reves Center van outside, with painted on the side The Wendy and Emery Reves Center for International Studies, and there was ribbons...wrapped with Christmas ribbons, and that was a very interesting touch. That van is still being used. It's been used for twenty, thirty years now, not just for the Reves Center but for other important, international events, trips to the airport to pick up dignitaries and so on. That's the kind of flair she had; she had flash and flair. Very difficult in many ways to deal with because she had her own ideas, and sometimes those ideas we could not do anything about, but we tried our best to be good diplomats.

M: Is she still involved in the Reves Center?

B: No, about three or four years ago she cut her ties with the outside world. With her health...she had a very serious health problem and she's way up there in years now, must be late-eighties. So we lost contact with her after about six or eight years of wonderful collaboration. She spiced and sparked things up around here.

M: During your time as director of the center, did you find the college generally supported you?

B: Yes, I was fortunate to have support at the very highest levels; both President Verkuil and President Sullivan stood behind me every step of the way. At times there would be organizational problems or there'd be some feuding between departments or whatever, and I was able to, whenever the chips were down, I was able to talk to the president and the provost, and received unrelenting support, and that's what helped me build the program, when you have that kind of support from upstairs.

M: What were some of the things that you accomplished in building some of the programs that you started?

B: Well, what I tried to do was to take all subjects international, regardless of where the faculty or the students were, to bring them together into a coherent organization that was designed to answer key questions: questions of war and peace, questions of bureaucracy and education, questions of political development and modernization, questions of religion and politics, and then to draw from a wide faculty – rich faculty in the various departments – so that everyone could be working in unison, regardless of what their particular area of expertise was. So someone was an expert on Japan, but an expert on Japan is just as interested in politics of participation and democracy and environment as the faculty members who were experts on Africa. So the key that I had to do was to build at the center a core, about which rotated expertise from every part of the world. So when we had conferences, it wasn't just a conference on China, or just a conference on **Ecuador**. It was a conference on key issues of war and peace, or foreign policy issues, and we could learn from one another, so the faculty members who were experts on China could consult with those who were experts on Japan, or experts on Latin America could consult with experts on the Middle-East. So it was designed to be an integrated, whole program, about which we raised key questions, and we had a certain philosophy, and that philosophy was that we live in a world of conflict; we live in a world of violence; we live

in a world of unprecedented incoherence. If we start with that as the premise, and you buy that premise, then it is easy to go and to pull into your thought and your participation a number of the faculty members with expertise everywhere, from village life in Kenya all the way to Turkish villages. So we were quite successful in that I think.

M: How about the study abroad program?

B: The study abroad program grew in leaps and bounds over the years, and I don't mind saying that I enjoyed fundraising. I enjoyed raising money because this was for something that I myself really believed in. I believed in this, it was mission almost. And so I would not hesitate to go out and raise money for the center, especially for the study abroad, for the students. And I started a scholarship fund. Probably I'm proudest of this of all my accomplishments at William and Mary. It's the Dr. James A. Bill Study Abroad Scholarship Fund, which sends dozens if not hundreds of students now overseas, with scholarships enabling them to study overseas.

M: For a year or so?

B: Anywhere from one summer, to a semester, to a year. It depends on the particular program. Some cases, they needed just two or three thousand dollars to go to Jerusalem to carry out a project for the Palestinians, for example. But we were able to come up with enough money to make it possible to do these kinds of things. They would work during the summer, their parents would chip in, and then we would come in with scholarship money to enable these things to become true. When the students come back from overseas... they're different people. They never forget those experiences. They're more well-rounded, more open, more progressive, more understanding, more compassionate, and that is something that I don't think you can measure in terms of numbers of students sitting in a classroom or anything like that. It's something that they learned overseas, just as I learned in my travels learned when we first went to Iran. You have to smell and savor and feel and touch the cultures and peoples that you're part of. You don't do that by sitting in the library, reading. It's good to start at the library, but you don't want to end there. No offense [chuckles]. I might say about the scholarship fund, though, that there was a woman from Texas who was a widow of a gentleman named Fred Moore. He was president of Mobil North America. We became very close friends with the Moores when we were in Texas; this is when we were in Austin, Texas. Fred Moore died and Ella Mae Moore called one day, called up [Langley?], Vice President Allenby, and said "I'd like to contribute \$50,000 to any project that Jim Bill's involved in." And I didn't even know about it; Ed came and told me that this was the case, and I said "Oh, this is great, but I'd like to have the money for study abroad programs, for students, not for faculty research grants, not for administrative purposes, not for shuffling papers more effectively, but to actually get students an overseas experience that'll change their lives." So this \$50,000 was the seed money for that. Then Mrs. Moore came by with another \$50,000, then another \$50,000, and then once that started, the ball started rolling. All kinds of people started chipping in. So now we have a very large endowment, called the Dr. James A. Bill Study Abroad Scholarship Fund. That makes me feel good, because if I never accomplished anything in the world, I sent young people overseas.

M: And in addition to this Texas money, where else did you do your fundraising?

B: Well, the fundraising was done in all kinds of different ways. One of the things I did was establish an executive advisory council of outside experts, with men and women who were very wealthy, and also very international in outlook. I met many of these people when for a while there I did lectures on cruise ships. In the 1990s I did about eight lectures on the cruise ships, and on these cruise ships I would meet individuals and we would become friends, then I would invite them to join my advisory board, and we have a fourteen member advisory board, most of whom I met on cruise liners, seaborne cruise liners. And they've been very generous; they were very generous in giving money to the center. That's one way I did it. Another way I did it was by members of the community, working with members of the Williamsburg community, drawing them into our programs. I said we had a good program and I would handwrite under every letter – a very formal letter of invitation – a note from myself with the statement “Gerald and Mary, this is one program you don't want to miss. Come early, we'll see that you get a seat, Jim Bill.” I wrote out hundreds of those, so I had quite a constituency in the community. Still do, as a matter of fact, and a lot of them have been very generous and very helpful with their time and funds. Another way that I'd get money for the center, for the college, was I would give lectures and consultantship lectures to major industries, major companies, oil companies and other companies. And for my services, they would make a donation – a substantial donation – to William and Mary and the Reves Center. So I would go out and give lectures and then ask them for money for my center, and this is all deductible, so I was quite successful in doing that as well. Those are three ways that I raised money.

M: So the center was pretty well provided for then?

B: Yes, yes, because besides the Reves money, you had a lot of other money that I was able to raise. I don't know if this is accurate or not, but I probably had a hand in raising as much as fifteen million dollars for the college. Most of that was from Wendy Reves, of course, but others were very generous as well.

M: You also were teaching during this time.

B: Yes, you have to teach in order to get a pulse of the university. You don't understand at the gut level or at the heart level what is going on unless you are rubbing shoulders with students on a regular basis. This is not one course taught every five years because you want to just indicate that you're committed to teaching, but I taught fourteen different... fourteen different times I offered my course “The Politics of the Middle East.” And every semester or every other semester I would be sure to teach that course. It was my bread and butter, of course. I taught it at eight o'clock in the morning. That meant that only serious students showed up. The other students were still in bed snoring and my class was going forward, and I had many comments about that over the years. Students say “Why does Dr. Bill always teach [inaudible].” I go to the classroom at 7:50, and there they would all be sitting. There'd be nobody else in the building, but all of the

students would be sitting, waiting for my lecture, and I figured those students were pretty damn good, pretty committed. One student once told me “You know, Dr. Bill, I heard so much about your course, I wanted to take it, but I just couldn’t get up in the morning for an eight o’clock class. I’m sorry, sir.” So I kept my hand in teaching.

M: You also invited students to your home for dinner.

B: Yes, one of the things that we used to do was we would have... I was teaching a course called a freshman seminar, where I had fifteen students, fifteen excellent students on a topic. And those freshman seminars became...a part of them became a visit to our house for lunch. And so the...Ann would make two or three big lasagnas, garlic bread, soda pop, all the rest. The students would come in, I had a lot of trouble getting cars to transport them over here because these were freshman; not many of them had cars. But we managed to pile them all in and I made a couple of trips myself to get them all in. Funny thing was, after dinner you couldn’t get them out of the house. They hung around and hung around and told stories and exchanged tales; we’ll never forget those days, but neither will the students. I’m still in contact with many of them. A lot of them have gone to Washington where they’ve been successful in government projects of various sorts.

M: They were undergraduates and graduate students?

B: These were all undergraduate. We did have graduate students in, but we didn’t, we don’t have a real graduate program to cover them. And the students came to the door for that lasagna special, because they filed into the house, and each one met Ann, my wife Ann, introduced themselves very politely and courteously, and we got to know them, she got to know them, very well. She did an exceptional job of hosting students and faculty members. Every fall we had an International Studies reception at our house, where we’d have up to eighty, ninety people. And that was a major to-do because the preparation for this took an enormous amount of work and effort, but it was appreciated.

M: Who attended?

B: Anybody having to do with international subjects, any body, department.

M: Faculty and students?

B: It was faculty with a sprinkling of students, mainly faculty. And I must say that somebody once wrote a letter to the administration here and said that “When you’re evaluating James Bill, remember you’re not talking about Jim Bill: you’re talking about Jim and Ann Bill, they work as a twosome.”

M: So she made a great contribution to your...

B: She made a contribution of her own. She was a charming, hospitable, lovely woman. The students loved her, and she loved having the students over. It was a part of the whole educational experience.

M: This is the End of this Side of the Tape.

End of Tape 2, Side A

Begin Tape 2, Side B

M: This is an interview with James Bill by Edward McCarthy in Williamsburg, Virginia on May 17, 2006.

M: Jim, would you summarize your duties at the Reves Center and comment on any memorable speakers that you had invited to appear there?

B: Yes, I would like to say just in very brief terms what my responsibilities were at the Reves Center. I put in place an administrative structure with staff from ground zero. I attracted a multimillion dollar endowment for the center. I hosted speakers from many countries around the world, especially speakers who had to deal with subjects international. I wrote two books during this period of time and I appeared on numerous public affairs programs, television and radio, during this time. I organized a series of international conferences including one on the Middle-East peace process. Probably the thing that I accomplished that I think is the most important was a student scholarship fund in my name – which we've already alluded to – which enabled us to send young people overseas in perpetuity, because it's an endowment that spins off moneys that are spent, and to see it possible for students to go to places all the way from Egypt to Japan to South America. Every... practically every area of the world that we have, William and Mary students study, either a semester, or sometimes an entire year. I'm very proud of this because one of the things we've learned is that we still are quite illiterate when it comes to understanding subjects internationally. Our foreign policy seems to be built on ignorance, arrogance, and violence. That's not good enough. We're supposed to be a superpower, the greatest country the world has ever seen, yet our firepower far outstrips our brainpower. It's very difficult to deal in a world as complex as this one if you don't speak the language, live in the cultures, get to know the people, and rub elbows as we live in one another's backyards increasingly. So I feel that this is a continuing contribution that I feel very good about because certainly if our foreign policy is built on ignorance – and an awful lot of it is – we can do something about that. We're a great enough people that we can do it. It's a question of leadership and a commitment of resources. We've talked about violence, spending all kinds of money on violence and too little money on peace. We certainly have to do better than this, and the students that we have been able to send abroad are going to be the shock troops of the future. They're going to be the ones, like in the US Peace Corps, which I have a very great deal of admiration for...these are American representatives, young people, in every corner of the world that we made it possible for them to be there.

M: Is it too early to see a real payoff resulting from the students who have gone overseas?

B: No, a number of them have sprinkled themselves throughout Washington's bureaucracy, its foreign policy bureaucracy; they've moved into positions of considerable

influence. I have one student, for example, that's been in the Department of Commerce, where he's dealt with Middle Eastern trade issues. He's been there now twelve or fifteen years, and I'm still in close contact with him. There are dozens of other students like that, examples I could give.

M: So there has been an effect from your work?

B: No doubt about it, and when these students come back from a trip overseas or from a stint overseas, they'll usually give me a phone call or we'll have lunch together and they'll tell me what they've been doing. Or when I, not too long ago, went to Harvard to give some talks – we had four students studying at Harvard and Tufts – we all got together and we had a lovely get together. I was so proud of these kids.

M: As far as visitors here that you invited to speak, any ones in particular you'd like to comment on?

B: Well I think probably the most interesting speaker we had – as a matter of fact his speech was so well received that we published it, distributed it high and wide – it was Bill Moyers's inaugural address on peace at the Reves center grand opening, which I believe was in 1989.

M: Following your first trip to Iran, you made some others. Would you comment on other trips that you made?

B: Well I made trips to Iran and the first was the first two years, as you refer to, in 1965-67. I went to Iran again in 1970, where I spent six-to-eight months doing research on the Iranian political system. I went back in '74, '77, '78, '88, '89, and '93. And during those trips I had built a network of friends and acquaintances; I was able to get done in a few months time what it would have taken me years to get done if I hadn't built this network, to be able to go back again and again. I ended up meeting everyone, having interviews with everyone, from the Empress of Iran and the Prime Minister, Abbas Hoveyda, who was then later executed by the revolutionaries. I met old statesmen such as Sayyid Zia Od-Din Tabataba'i, who was involved in the 1921 coups that brought Reza Shah to the throne. I met the feisty Minister of Agriculture, a man by the name of Hasan Arsanjani, who was the brains behind the land reform program, and had to be jettisoned and pushed aside by the Shah because he became so popular. I met a number of poets, writers, politicians, artists, foreign policy experts, engineers, doctors, students... I knew, really, thousands of Iranians during my career, during those visits, and there's always something interesting going on. In fact, in 1974, I wrote a long letter to some friends of mine, in which I said the Shah of Iran cannot make it. He is... I've never seen a society so uptight and intense and so much anger bubbling up to the surface. The Shah is not handling it right. I'm going to be anxious to leave this country because I'm concerned about the safety of foreigners here, because we have supported the Shah so strongly. I saw it coming in '74, and then in '77 and '78, I wrote papers for the State Department, based on these trips to Iran, predicting the fall of the Shah, and both papers are a matter of public record.

M: Were you the only person in the country, or one of a few people, who were making these points?

B: There weren't many Americans making these points because they were there for business and political reasons. The only ones who had the independence and the experience – and knew the language that they could get into the culture – were by and large scholars, social scientists, and many archaeologists, many anthropologists. There were a good number of foreign scholars, including excellent American colleagues, who also were uncomfortable with what they were seeing. But I believe I was one of the two or three who saw the revolution coming and told the US government in these papers, in March of 1978 for example, that the Shah was all done.

M: What kind of a reception did those papers receive?

B: In those days I was taken very seriously, and my point of view was taken very seriously by the State Department. The State Department realized, because I studied the US Embassy in Tehran in 1970 and wrote a chapter in my book *The Eagle and The Lion* on the operations of an embassy, that gave me access to all kinds of American officials, some of whom were very good diplomats by the way, excellent diplomats. But they were unable to get their message pumped up higher into the structure. Their fitness reports had to be signed by the Ambassador and the Ambassador was a status quo figure whose job he thought was to represent the Shah and not the people. And as a result of that Iran became, I call it...became the graveyard of many fine young Foreign Service officers who left Iran because they could not get their point of views listened to. My point of view was listened to, but not listened to the degree that we were going to institute any changes. We stood by the Shah to the very end.

M: Were you there during the revolution?

B: Yes. I was at the University of Texas when the revolution broke wide open, and I went to see the President of the University of Texas, telling him that I needed to be absent for two weeks, and that I would see that my classes were covered by colleagues or I would do double classes, but I told him I needed his permission to go. He thought it over and said that it was important for his faculty to get involved in what was going on the world, and he gave me an approval to go to Iran. And I went to Iran during the revolution, actually. It was 1977-78. Actually, the real date was November of 1978. The revolution broke wide open in '79. The Shah left in early '79. **Martial law** was declared in Iran at that time. I had guns pointed at my head. I had people shouting at me. I traveled to the bazaar where the people were so upset, and traveled, talked to them or the taxi drivers. I still remember what one taxi driver told me. He said "Our only hope is to go to Islam, because we need to bring Iran back to its own people. We don't know who we are anymore. This is a revolution about identity, and this society under the Shah has become a veil of tears."

M: They wanted an Islamic government?

B: Well, I think that there were...they wanted anything but the Shah. But when the revolution broke out you had different classes and different groups who wanted different things. They weren't united in that. The religious leaders wanted an Islamic society. The secular professional middle class wanted to have a more liberal society. Some army officers wanted to have a military dictatorship. It was all broke to pieces and shattered when the revolution occurred because then you had individuals fighting for the spoils. And the religious leaders came out on top mainly because of their contacts with the people. Thousands and thousands of them lived with the people. The Shah lived in a palace – he had several palaces – up on a hill, and the religious leaders lived with the people in the villages. That should tell you enough.

M: On one trip your daughter accompanied you.

B: Yes. In 1993, my daughter Rebecca graduated from Princeton University. We asked Rebecca what she wanted as a graduation gift. Would she like some jewelry? Would she like a car? Would she like...books... whatever, what could you... She said, "Daddy, I want a round-trip ticket to Tehran." And of course, everyone raised their eyebrows about this one. My family thought "You know, Jim has always been a little different. But this is going a little beyond the bounds, to take his daughter to Iran of all places when she graduated from college." But they were used to me by that time and so Rebecca and Ann and I, the three of us, made a fascinating trip to Iran, post-revolutionary Iran. This was 1993, remember, and we traveled all over the country. We traveled by car from Tehran to Isfahan to Yazd to back to Tehran.

M: Was it your first trip after the Revolution?

B: No, I'd been there twice before, '88 and '89. This was '93. So I've been there three times since the revolution. I've been to other Middle Eastern countries. I've been to the Persian Gulf since then, but my last real defining, in-depth research trip was in 1993.

M: To Iran?

B: To Iran. And that's the trip that Rebecca made, and Ann made. Both Rebecca and Ann had to be totally veiled. We were there during the religious season of Ashura it's called, the month of Muharram, when everyone is going through ceremonies of grief, crying and wailing because of their martyrs in past history. And there were large crowds of individuals in villages and in the cities marching, flagellating themselves, shouting cries of criticism of the regime, and we were right there in the middle of it. Rebecca and Ann had their chadors on, the black all-enveloping robe that women wear. You can show just as much as you want of yourself in those chadors. And Rebecca and Ann kept theirs pretty closely tied so they wouldn't be recognized. They went into Khomeini's tomb, and they went into this mosque, Khomeini's mosque in central Tehran, and they grabbed the steel...iron bar...silver bars. And one woman who was there next to them tied herself to the bars, and they were all praying and crying and wailing, and Ann and Rebecca were right in the middle of it. Meanwhile, I'm at the back of the mosque not daring to go in,

because as Iranians have told me again and again, "We understand you're an American." And I always said, "How do you know I'm an American." And they said "You've got an American face," so I didn't try to go places that Rebecca and Ann went. They were my research assistants. They were the ones that went out into the mosques and into the crowds, while I sort of had a cup of coffee back in a coffeehouse.

M: You didn't have a veil to cover your face.

B: I didn't have a veil to cover my face but sometimes I wished I did. Ann and Rebecca traveled with me and Iranian friends, and they had to be totally veiled. This was in August, it was very hot, these chadors. But they didn't dare take them off because they were afraid we'd be picked up and thrown into jail and imprisoned by the regime, which was pretty draconian at that time.

M: Were they ever recognized as Americans?

B: Yes, they were. They were recognized as Americans many times, and the people, with one exception, were extremely hospitable and warm. "Welcome back, welcome to Iran," and they would give us candies and Persian food and pistachio nuts; whatever they had, they shared with us. So, even though they were recognized, they weren't recognized by the revolutionary guard, for example, although there's no doubt in my mind that the revolutionary guard and the secret police knew where we were, who was with us and what we were doing. But I asked Rebecca how it felt to wear a veil in August, covering her from head to toe, where temperatures were over a hundred degrees and very humid. And she said "Well, daddy, when you visit another country, you have to take on the customs and respect the customs of that country. But..." she said, her lips got very thin, "I'd like it to be my idea." If she was going to wear a veil, she'd like to have the choice to do it, not be told to do it. But at the same time she understood that that's the way these people dressed and, it was their traditional costume, and she was willing to live with it. She had such a great trip. She's a Latin American scholar now, an expert on Argentina. She still talks about going back to Iran. She'd love to go back to Iran, because she had the perspective of being able to compare Latin America with the Middle East, Argentina to Iran. There are some fascinating similarities and differences between these cultures, and she would have been in an ideal position to write an article doing that, explaining that.

M: They... all the women don't still wear the veil there, do they?

B: All the... yes, they do. The veil is one of the things why Americans and Westerners are short tempered about the regime there. The veil is viewed by them to be a sign of subjection... by many of the Western people. But in Iran many of them choose to wear the veil. The lower and lower middle classes always wore the veil. The intelligentsia, the professionals, the Western trained ones, did not, and they were like Rebecca, they were not going to be told what they could wear and what they couldn't wear. But in fact that's what has occurred since the revolution.

M: So some of them do not wear it now?

B: Some of them... oh, they all have to wear it.

M: Oh, they do.

B: They all have to do it, but it's by choice I think by the lower classes. It's their traditional dress. But the others that wear it – like Rebecca had to wear it – we went to parties, and people would come to the parties wearing the veil, the chador it's called. They would take the chador off once they got into the room, throw it over in a corner, and they were dancing and eating and merrymaking. As long it was kept within a private residence and there weren't any police around, they knew how to have a good time. Then when it came time to go home, they'd pick up their veil out of the pile of veils in the corner, put it on and go home.

M: Would you comment on the books that you wrote, any particular significant things that came out of those you'd like to mention?

B: Yes. The book that was best received and won a number of awards and prizes was called *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*. This was the result of ten to fifteen years of work on Iran, and it became some say a seminal work on the Iranian revolution and US foreign policy.

M: Published in?

B: Published in 1988 by Yale University Press. That book must have sold 15,000 or more copies. It was Yale's bestseller in 1988. It was not my favorite book, however. The book that I consider my favorite book was the book on... a biography of George Ball, and it was called *George Ball: Behind the Scenes in US Foreign Policy*.

M: Why do you consider it your favorite?

B: I think it's a book that successfully bridges the gap between biography and history and politics. It's a book that tells the story of US foreign policy through the eyes of a man who for many, many years, was at the center of US foreign policy making. George Ball was Undersecretary of State in the Johnson and Kennedy administrations. He knew both Kennedy and Johnson well. He was a favorite of Lyndon Johnson's, and he knew everybody in the power elite in the United States, and he opened all kinds of doors for me. Because I knew George Ball, I was able to learn about the guts of politics because he got me access.

M: How did you get to him?

B: Well, he knew about me because of when I was in Iran during the revolution. I came back from Iran in '78. He was in the White House, where he'd been invited by President Carter to do a paper on what we should do with respect to Iran policy. So he called me into the White House and at that time the National Security Council folks were less than

enthusiastic about seeing me there, so the State Department took me up the back steps, into Ball's office, and sure enough not long after I got in there the National Security Council people got word and came scurrying in to monitor the talk. There was tension then between Brzezinski, who was the National Security Advisor and George Ball, who was a grand old man, one of the wise men is what they used to refer to him.

M: What was their concern about you?

B: Well, the policy at that time was to support the Shah regardless of anything at all. They didn't want to hear anything that said we should...

M: This was prior to the revolution?

B: This was prior to the revolution. It was just before the revolution, just about that same time frame. And Brzezinski felt that the Shah should use whatever troops were necessary to put down the Iranians, the Iranian insurgents, in blood. The Shah, fortunately, had more sense than Brzezinski because the Shah had announced that "I do not want to rule a country when I'm up to my ankles into the blood of my people. I do not want to be a king in that kind of society." Meanwhile Brzezinski was pushing, pushing, some of the military advisors were pushing, pushing, some of the business types were pushing, pushing, and the Shah's friends in Washington, people like David Rockefeller, John J. McCloy, and others, were pushing. Our ambassador during the Revolution was a man named William Sullivan, who became a convert to the revolution because he realized it was going to occur. He didn't believe that when he was sent out there, but once he got in the streets, he realized that this was a full fledged revolution, that we couldn't stop it, we had to learn to work with it, and talk to the future revolutionaries. That's basically what Ball advised, and I remember one exchange between Ball and Carter and Brzezinski, when Carter called Ball in to give him his final paper and recommendation. George Ball said "When I walked into the office, there was President Carter, and sitting there on the sidelines was Zbigniew. And I wondered why he was there. And in the course of the conversation, Zbigniew suggested to Carter, that "Maybe I could fly over there and do some good." Ball said "I've heard a lot of wild ideas in my day, but this was the worst idea I've ever heard, and I told that to the President." In terms of the Ball book, just to complete that, I was able to meet and interview people such as the following, I got extensive interviews with them, and those tapes are in the William and Mary Swem Library, the tapes of my interviews and also they're transcribed. So people can pick these tapes up and listen to the tapes themselves. I once used the interview that I had with David Rockefeller in the classroom, and students listened to me and Rockefeller go at it. That was a very interesting session as well. But besides Rockefeller, I was able to interview many of these people, people like J. Kenneth Galbraith, Senator Fulbright, Roger Hillsman, George McGee, Walt Rostow, Dean Rusk, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., James Schlesinger, Robert McNamara, Raymond Vernon, and George Bundy. In other words, I met the cream of the crop in terms of American foreign policy makers. And when they heard I was writing a book on George Ball, they were very open. Michael Blumenthal was very helpful; James Schlesinger was very helpful; they knew Ball intimately. So when I would call and use the name of George Ball to set up the interviews, I had no

trouble whatsoever. I was given entrée wherever I went, and I learned a lot about the politics of informal relationships, and this book is a book about informal... behind the scenes of US foreign policy. My thesis was that the major decisions are made not in institutions and not in organizations and not in formal instrumentalities, but they're made in personal networks and personal webs, and politics is intensely personal. There are reasons for that, but they want – many of these key decision makers – do not want to receive publicity. Many of them do not. They want to remain behind the scenes because the longevity will be increased if they're not up front. There's an old Persian expression that goes [foreign language], which means that "The camel rider cannot duck out of sight." So if you're in a caravan, and you're on lead camel, you're right up front and when the marauders raid the camel caravan the first one shot is the camel driver, the lead camel. The one bringing up the rear, the little, dusty, unnoticed camel herder and baggage carrier made many many, many caravans, but the man in front was shot down. That's what happened to the Shah. He got all the credit, so he got all the blame. Now in George Ball's book, I have a thesis in where I analyze a number of these people in the second and third tier I call them.

M: These are in the American government?

B: Right, in the American government. The same thing is true in Iran by the way. That's how I got onto that, because in the Middle East power behind the scenes, highly personalistic politics, family politics, is everything; it's just everything.

M: Do you want to make any other comments regarding your book?

B: There's one other thing about my book, the George Ball book: I counter pose Kissinger and Ball. There's a long section there comparing George Ball and Henry Kissinger, and both of them were brilliant men. Both of them had a sense of history. Both of them had huge egos. Both of them were considered to be leaders behind the scenes. But beyond that there was very little that they shared. They, in fact, did not much like one another, although they communicated with one another. Ball was far too critical of our foreign policy establishment to suit Kissinger. Some of the time Ball would make critical comments about Kissinger. Kissinger didn't take this kindly, and he struck back at Ball in a couple letters he wrote Ball, that I've seen. Kissinger...Ball had a big ego, but Kissinger had an even larger ego, and that has to be a pretty big monster to have a larger ego than Ball because George had a big ego. All of these individuals I interviewed had big egos. And Kissinger was always looking for a way to promote himself. He was a self-promoter. Ball was not a self promoter. Ball would...there were levels beyond which he would refuse to go. Kissinger had a sense of humor that seemed to be self-deprecating, but it was false. He'd tell these little jokes on himself in order to get the audience behind him. Ball had a sense of humor, but it was a witty sense of humor, a really hilarious sense of humor. He had a way with words and a way with stories. The whole juxtaposition of Ball and Kissinger indicates the strengths and weaknesses, I think, of our foreign policy over the last decades.

M: Of the people you interviewed in researching the book, are there any that stand out in your mind as people who were very helpful or favorite people of yours.

B: The smartest individual I interviewed was James Schlesinger, who was at one time, I believe he was Secretary of Defense at one time. He's had several positions. He's also still active behind the scenes, although he's becoming quite an elderly man now. But I was impressed with his intelligence because he described Ball, he said "Ball had kind of a reflexive intellect, he could reflect and bring together and analyze and see and predict and be a great prognosticator," and I thought that this business of him being able to be an original thinker who could reflect on things was a very, very telling point. Unfortunately, the interview I had with Schlesinger lasted only one-half of the time I thought it was going to, because my tape recorder went on the blink. No offense to you, here in this discussion. But it went on the blink after I had had some fascinating, fascinating insights provided by Schlesinger. I had to then turn to get the thing back and moving in the right direction, and I didn't make a big deal of it, but Schlesinger there, he wouldn't have taken kindly to all the time he gave me and none of it went down on tape. So Schlesinger was one. Senator Fulbright, William Fulbright, was an exceptional, extraordinary man. When I went to interview him, he was so much a gentleman.

M: Was he still in the Senate then?

B: No, he was working for a law firm in Washington when I went to see him, and his memory had begun to slip on him. He got so frustrated because he said that "if you'd come only one year earlier I would have been able to be clear in my comments." And somehow he found out that Ann, who had driven me to Washington, my wife Ann, was in the waiting room. When he heard that he became upset and he said "Please, Mrs. Bill" "Mrs. Bill, please come in. Have a cup of tea with us. I don't want you to have to sit out here." A true gentleman, and a very courageous man as well. Fulbright and Ball had many things in common. Okay, let me continue talking a little bit about my books, I've just spoken about the book about George Ball, biography of George Ball. Now I just want to point out that I had three other books that are probably worth noting. There are a total of, say, seven or eight books that I've authored or coauthored. But the ones that are worth mentioning is my PhD dissertation which was converted into a book called *The Politics of Iran: Groups, Classes, and Modernization*. That book was well-reviewed and well-received. It was one of the first books ever written by a political scientist on Iranian politics, so I got in early. Another book I wrote at the same time, 1972, early 70s, was *Comparative Politics: The Quest for Theory*, which was an overview of the way students...comparative scholars, do their work. It was a theory book, but it was a theory book that was successful because students preparing for their comprehensive examination would use this book as their Bible. And lastly, there was the textbook called *Politics in the Middle East*, which went through five editions, and which for years was the leading textbook on politics of the Middle East. It was first published by Little, Brown in their comparative series. It was picked up by other publishers since then, and now the publisher wants a sixth edition, but I figure that they can have a sixth edition, don't count me in. I'm a little bit tired. Five editions is enough for one book. Incidentally, the

coauthor with me in that book was Robert Springborg, a Berkeley trained political scientist, an expert on Egypt.

M: Would you care to comment on or summarize the situation as you view it in Iran today?

B: Well, it always seems that Iran is living in crisis. It's certainly been in crisis ever since I first began studying it in 1961, and today is no different. The only difference today is that Iran has become the regional superpower of the Persian Gulf and Iran is a country that we have to take seriously whether we want to or not. Unfortunately, our policy since the revolution has been a policy that has been anti-Iranian revolution. And the Iranians are very upset and remain upset today, and they point out that the United States opposed their revolution, supported Saddam Hussein in the war, shot an Iranian passenger plane out of the sky, and declared an embargo on Iran's economy. "That's not the act of a friendly nation." And so you have the United States, a world superpower, and Iran, a regional superpower, at loggerheads. And that is going to have to change, it's going to have to change because the United States is already overextended in Iraq and Afghanistan, we're making soundings about dropping tactical nuclear weapons on Iran, invading Iran. This is crazy; it's insane. But when people talk about things, you have to listen to what they're saying, even though they may be just posturing. The Iranians are scared to death, worried to death the United States might just do that, might just try... or have Israel do it for us. And Israel would not hesitate if given the green light, I don't believe, to get into it with Iran. But getting into Iraq is one thing, getting involved in Iran is quite another. And our same military, former generals and others that have retired since, eight or ten of them have been outspoken in their criticism of our presence in Iraq, and especially of our threat to bomb or nuke Iran. Iran has no constituency in the United States, however. No congressman or senator would say anything positive about Iran, not even objective about Iran, so Iran is ripe for the propaganda of our mass media. That, in the long run, bodes very poorly for the United States. If we were to fight Iran, it would be like fighting – this is a nation of seventy million people – with presence all over the world. The whole Middle East would go up in smoke, and we would bleed and bleed and bleed, and we'd make Iraq look like a tea party. But that's the way we're talking and Iran hears this. And so the President, who is a hardliner although not as hard line as some might say, because his words have been exaggerated in the press as well...

M: The Iran president.

B: The Iran president. Ahmadinejad, his name is, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Lower-middle class, religious extremist, but one shares in his people a desire to keep Iran Iran, and not to be kowtowed, or not to be bullied, by the arrogance of a superpower. They say that "that's what our revolution's all about, to get out from under the thumb of a client of the United States. That's why we lost so many thousand young people in the revolution and in the war with Iraq." Finally, the Iranians will say, "You know, Saddam Hussein was your creation. Saddam Hussein was an individual that you built up. You built his ego. You supplied him when he was fighting Iran, when he invaded Iran in 1980. You came in behind him, '82 and '83, and supported Saddam. You expect us to forgive and forget?"

You expect us not to take care of our own defense, when nobody came to our aid when Saddam invaded us? Now everybody's fighting Saddam. We fought him alone. All alone, for ninety-five months." And they have said they will never forget it: we opposed their revolution and were responsible for the war with Iraq.

M: Are there any other people in this country that support your view?

B: Yes, but they're generally scholars, a few sprinkling of journalists, a few people that have served in Iran in past years, retired foreign service officers, perhaps, and mainly it's been a one man, one group campaign, that is the scholars. Why? Because the scholars have been there. They speak the language, they lived in the country. Many of these scholars are young Iranians that have migrated to the United States. Some of the best scholars of the younger generation are Iranians by nationality, who have come here to teach.

M: Do you think their voice will ever be heard to the extent that it will have some impact on foreign policy?

B: I'm very pessimistic about that because after thirty-five years of studying Iran, and always being opposed to our policy, I've become very frustrated and even a little bit cynical. I find that they're just not willing to listen. Their minds are already made up, and also this ignorance I'm talking about. I like to think that I've had an influence on the thinking of my students, and audiences when I've lectured or been on television, that I've changed some minds. If I've done that, then that's about the best that I can hope for. You never know, when you're talking, or when you're on television. For example, I was on the Bill Buckley show, *Firing Line*, a couple of years ago, and there I took it as an opportunity to express my views and to promote the George Ball book. I don't know how many people listened to that, but I may have changed a couple minds in doing it. You never know, that's one of the things about teaching: it's not like being a housepainter where you paint one wall and you say "Now tomorrow I'll do that wall," because you don't know what you're painting. You could be painting with water, the paint may not be any good, but you see it, you see the job you're doing. And this business I'm in, you never know, and that in a sense is kind of exciting, because every once in a while I'll get a letter... I've got a whole file of letters I've received from Americans and folks around the world, and a lot of them have been very supportive and praised me and congratulated me. Others have been a little bit on the nasty side. I've had death threats having to do with my positions on the Middle East. I've had situations where I've been shouted down in crowds when I've given lectures in crowds. I was once going through Milwaukee, Wisconsin on the way to Racine, to the conference center in Racine, and in the middle of Milwaukee on a cold and dark night, raining out my brother was driving the car... the middle of nowhere, and suddenly somebody comes up to the car, standing on the corner and puts a pamphlet inside the car, a bulletin. And in there is the statement "These are members of the Muslim brotherhood, these six people. They are enemies of America. We need to dispose of them. They're the big target." My name was one of the six.

M: After a successful career of teaching and writing and administering, directing the Reves Center, and directing students, what would you say has been your major contribution to the field of International studies, foreign policy affairs, understanding?

B: I have a personal approach, and intellectual approach, that I picked up in my years at Princeton and from some of my professors, a way of looking at the world. And if you look at the world this way you are more likely to be successful in predicting than you are in not predicting. That is: we live in a world of conflict, we live in a world of fundamental change, a world of transformation, a world in which groups, classes and societies are constantly rubbing one another in situations of tension. Old relationships have shattered. These systems by which we live have become pieces. It's very difficult to put together a world that is not stability and order oriented, when in fact the natural condition seems to be one of conflict. So I start with conflict, get to transformation and change, and talk to students about this in their lives, if they have any examples they can give me of conflict and change in their lives. All systems by which men and women organize their lives are under the midst of fundamental, unprecedented change. We've never had this before in human history. Our systems of religion, our educational systems, our economic systems, our political systems, our psychological systems, every kind of institution that we've grown up with, and been comfortable with, have been shattered before our very eyes. We live in a shattering, unraveling world, and the students have been able to tune in on that very effectively. They've written essays for me about the way change has influenced their families – the family community – for example, in the midst of this. The Catholic Church is going through this kind of transformation. Now that's my intellectual philosophy. Where I go with that is I take it to the Middle East and to Iran, where you have the case studies of what I'm talking about. I give examples from around the Middle East of a world caught in the midst of fundamental change. And I think students who begin with that understanding – and they're having a great deal of difficulty in their own lives – are better citizens, and are much more sensitive to what in fact is going on in the world, than if we very smugly and comfortably sit back and say "well, all we want is stability. All we want is the status quo." We have no choice in this anymore. It's taken out of our hands. Technology alone has pushed this transformation. It's my philosophy, and it's one I taught and the students have tuned into it very well. We use some of the same terms, when I see my students even today, we talk about examples of this world caught in the midst of transformation. That has policy implications as well. If you see a world in which change is inevitable, then you're going to doubt the policy that's going to be change oriented. You're going to try to look down the road. You're going to try to see the future. You're going to try to predict what is going to happen. You're going to try to be not crisis oriented, not crisis management, but going to avoid crises. And in Washington that's one of our major problems, we bounce along from the crest of one crisis to the crest of another crisis. We need not managers, but crisis avoiders. We need to get involved in preemptive diplomacy, and that has very serious policy implications. In Washington, the...many, many wonderful men and women working in Washington and the State Department and in the Pentagon and elsewhere, but they are tied to the particular problem of the time. Their job is to move everything from the "in" box when they get it at seven a.m. to the "out" box by the time they leave at eight that evening. And revolutionary change and violence, and twisted

education, and illness and disease, and natural disasters don't get in to that "in" box they way they should. We need a theory of change. That's how I would summarize it: we need a theory of change. If we have a theory of change, then we're going to be more successful in coming to grips with the challenges of change. Students seem to understand that better than the older generation does.

M: You've mentioned some members of you family throughout this, would you like to like to say any more about your family?

B: Yes, I think I would like to say a few words about my family, because family is so important to us, and in the Middle East it's also very important. In the Middle East they oftentimes say "you know, we haven't done very well politically, and we haven't done very well economically, and we haven't done very well socially. The only institution that we can rely on over here is the family. And as we see in the Western World, we see the family beginning to crumble and crack and fall apart to divorce and other things, we don't want that. We like your technology, we like what you're doing in terms of education and medicine, but please don't let that culture of the family be destroyed. It's all we have left, and it means everything to us." In a sense that summarizes the situation with my family. I'm the oldest of six children. My father was a brew master, rural farmer, then he worked in a factory. He carried three jobs at one time. He was an impressive man. My mother was also extremely talented. She was a registered nurse, and she raised six children. And both of them had enormously great senses of humor, and yet beneath the surface my parents insisted that we do the best we could do. There was a lot of pressure, unseen and above board, for us to succeed and do the very best we could do. That's happened in my family. I'm the oldest of six as I said. My first brother, second one in the family, is Richard Bill, Dick Bill. He was in the Marine Corps, went to and graduated from Assumption College in Western Massachusetts, as I did. He went into the public warehousing business, and he was very successful in public warehousing. He and I were very close because we grew up so close together. We were only eighteen months between the two of us, difference in age. And so he would be, I guess, my closest friend and my closest buddy, and he was always a very generous individual. He gave what he had and shared with others and his friends, and he "was a good person to ride the river with," as they say in Texas. Then the third member of the family was my sister Betty [Biddy?] Anne [Ann?] Bill. She was married to Michael Murphy, and they now have split up. But she was the only girl in the family, was an extremely, extremely compassionate person. She's even a saintly person. Anything that needs to be done if a family comes on hard times, she's right there to help. She has a family of her own. She's a grandmother now. She's very religious, and we all respect her and love her very much. So you had two levels there: Jim, Dick and Betty Anne, then you had three who came along a little bit later. This is the second tier of Bills: Tom, Al, and Michael. Tommy Bill may very well have been the most intelligent of the whole group. He was a very, very – still is – very well read, very open minded, a natural comic, a stand-up comedian, who worked for years as front level management for Xerox, and he worked very, very, very hard. His health has suffered since then. He is now retired. Dick Bill is just retired from the warehousing business after a very successful career. And Tommy's closest brother was Alvin Bill. He was a little chubby fellow when he was a kid, and so they called him

Chub [Chubb?], the name is Chub Bill. He's been into sports in a big way. He's been Director of the Wisconsin Independent School Association. He's been a basketball coach. He played basketball in college and... but he's just a little guy... quick guard. And he is one who had also been very, very hard-working, compassionate, tries to help. When my parents went into nursing homes, he was right there to help all the time. He lives in Minneapolis now, where he is the development officer for a brand new Catholic high school. And the last but not least is Michael Bill who is a Down Syndrome boy who we loved and kept and did the best we could to help him. My parents brought him up, and finally when it became too much of a task he was put into a home. And the folks that are still back there in Wisconsin, including Chub, look after Michael on a regular basis. So it's been a large Catholic family. Everyone has been college educated, with the exception of Michael, and he's educated us in many ways. And we've all succeeded, I guess. When you look at our origins, we've done pretty well, and my parents...I'm proud of my parents and my brothers and sisters.

B: It's also worth mentioning, and I've mentioned this several times because she's been my partner in research and my partner in life, that's Ann Marie **Bachhuber** Bill. Her father... she comes from a long line of physicians in a small town in Wisconsin, the **Bachhuber** family. And on my side, my relatives come from a long line of teachers, at all levels, from junior college to college teachers. But Ann's family is a medical family. Her father was a doctor. His brothers were doctors. Her mother was a nurse. Ann was a nurse, my sister Betty Anne was a nurse. So we've got, between medicine and education, we've been in there slogging away.

M: One final aspect of your life I'd like a comment on: You've been cited as being an expert fisherman. How did all that start?

B: Fishing has been an important part of my life. My father, when I was younger...he was not a great fisherman, but he would take us out fishing and whatever we caught we would clean and eat. We just loved being out on the water, out in the countryside. There's an element of fishing that is relaxing. There is an element of fishing that you're relaxing close to nature. You can take it as seriously or not as seriously, as you want to, and I've always found it an excellent hobby and a wonderful pastime. Fishing gets in your blood; once you're a fisherman, you're always a fisherman, not necessarily a good one, but you're always a fisherman. You never know if you're going to catch fish, which is very much like life, you never know what you're going to catch in life either. Sometimes you catch things that are beautiful, and other things you catch are as ugly and monstrous as you could possibly want to see. So it's a microcosm of life, I think fishing is. Unfortunately, with the Parkinsons, it's taken over more and more of my life. I've had to slow down on my fishing, but I continue to get out there whenever I can.

M: So you still do some?

B: I still do some fishing. I still do. Yes, I do.

M: Where do you go?

B: I like to fish in lakes, not saltwater fishing but lake fishing, bass fishing, bluegill, sunfish, croppies. And in this little lake right behind my house we have some fish that I've caught. As a matter of fact, Ann caught the biggest fish ever caught out here, caught a huge, 24 inch bass, eight pound bass. If you don't believe me, it's the picture hanging in the kitchen.

M: This is the end of this side of the tape, and this concludes the interview with James Bill.