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**The Vietnam Archive
Oral History Project
Interview with Barry Zorthian
Conducted by Bob Horton
Transcribed by Jessica Fontenot
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1 Barry Zorthian: Listen, I've been giving some thought on Doug Pike and I must
2 confess, we're talking about events of forty years ago.

3 Bob Horton: I understand that.

4 BZ: My memory is getting a little limited on that. Most of it I remember are
5 personal contacts, personal relationships, some business relationships. I do remember
6 very faintly interviewing Doug for VOA, Voice of America, and bringing him onboard.

7 BH: That's my general understanding, too. Myrna may help us on that.

8 BZ: Myrna may help. I believe that was while I was program manager of the
9 Voice from '56 through '61. Doug came aboard basically in our Central Services
10 Division, newsroom, talks, and so on. He was not the conventional journalist, news
11 writer. He was more of a, pardon the use of the word, an intellectual. But a very good
12 one and a very active one. Then with obvious qualifications, joined the Foreign Service.
13 As far as I'm aware Vietnam was his only Foreign Service post.

14 BH: I think his biography shows three or four others, but I don't know exactly.

15 BZ: If they were they were short-lived.

16 BH: They were short-term sort of deals.

17 BZ: He was in Vietnam, in Saigon, when I went there in February of '64.

18 BH: Yes, he had been there since '61.

19 BZ: To the best of my memory, he was the only one I really knew on that staff.

20 BH: Really?

21 BZ: Was very, very, what shall I say? Helpful in introducing me, breaking me in,
22 if you will.

23 BH: Now was this VOA?

1 BZ: Doug? No, no I was then assigned, I had been in India as Deputy Public
2 Affairs Officer and then was assigned as Public Affairs Officer in Saigon.

3 BH: So by then Doug had transferred to USIA (United States Information
4 Agency), am I right?

5 BZ: Right and the Foreign Service was, as you know called USIS, U.S.
6 Information Service. But he was in a special role in the embassy in Saigon. Specializing
7 on the political side on the VC (Viet Cong), what was then almost all VC. The NVA,
8 North Vietnamese Army, didn't get involved until a little later. Doug, when I arrived
9 there was the first one to have me for dinner, he and Myrna at their apartment. That's
10 where I met my first Vietnamese, one of whom I had lunch with the other day, Bui Diem
11 who was then publisher, owner of the *Saigon Post*. Eventually became American,
12 Vietnamese ambassador to the U.S. who now lives in Washington. He is a good guy, but
13 if I haven't said this to you. I probably should have. You ought to talk to him about
14 Doug.

15 BH: I'll try to, I sure will.

16 BZ: He knew Doug quite well. Bui Diem, B-U-I, D-I-E-M.

17 BH: Any relation to the Diem family?

18 BZ: No, no Bui Diem was a northerner who came down, you know, in the '54
19 exodus from North Vietnam after the Geneva agreements. Doug was our brain, in terms
20 of political analysis of the VC and the opposition within Vietnam. His work was
21 extremely helpful, it was to the operation of our information and internal communications
22 programs. It was also very useful, as a resource to the media in Vietnam who respected
23 his knowledge, would often talk to him and to other agencies of the government in
24 Vietnam. The structure in Vietnam was quite unusual and it evolved eventually into
25 something that was unique, I guess, a mission council. Where the heads of the agencies
26 met once a week, sort of expanded, if you will, country team. Doug would be a resource
27 for all of them.

28 BH: That included the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency)?

29 BZ: Including the CIA, certainly feeding them. He worked with them not for the
30 CIA, but with the CIA. I don't think, well, I'm quite sure he was never on CIA payroll.
31 He was never formally part of the CIA, but the CIA considered him, and I may be

1 mistaken on that, the CIA considered him almost part of their team because he did an
2 awful lot of work on whatever information and documentation was available, captured
3 documents, et cetera, et cetera. Doug became eventually the expert on the VC, more than
4 anyone else in the mission.

5 BH: I don't want to interrupt your line of thought, but at what point do you think
6 his input, his studies, his analyses began to make an impact at higher levels, the
7 ambassador on the scene, to the extent that they were being fed back to Washington?

8 BZ: Hard to measure, hard to know. It was a sort of evolving, growing
9 knowledge and information. He would certainly brief the ambassador periodically and
10 other heads of other agencies.

11 BH: Who was ambassador when you arrived?

12 BZ: When I arrived Henry Cabot Lodge was ambassador followed, if you
13 remember, Lodge was being discussed as a potential presidential candidate. Lodge left in
14 June of '64 to come back and help Bill Scranton who was even more prominent as a
15 candidate; although people forget Lodge's picture was on the cover of *Time*. In those
16 days when *Time* would have a person every week on the cover, as a potential candidate
17 the picture was Lodge with the rice paddies behind him. He came back to join and help.
18 Lodge beat, if I remember, won the New Hampshire primary in the spring of '64. Being
19 from Massachusetts, he had a special appeal in New Hampshire. But he came back not to
20 run as a candidate himself but to help Bill Scranton from Pennsylvania, ex-governor
21 Scranton. That didn't work out very well.

22 BH: Didn't he wind up vice-presidential candidate with Goldwater?

23 BZ: He ended up vice-presidential candidate with Richard Nixon.

24 BH: Oh, Nixon. That's right, '64.

25 BZ: Again, people forget how close that '64 election was. There are those
26 who—well, excuse me. Lodge was the vice-presidential candidate in 1960, Nixon.
27 People forget how close that election was. There was one evaluation of the election that
28 Senator May or Richard Daley had a lot of votes in the Chicago River, the Illinois River,
29 Nixon would have one.

30 BH: Nixon said, "Okay. Forget it." He walked away from it. Anyway, do you
31 think that Pike was giving Lodge input at that point?

1 BZ: By then, yeah, Lodge. Although Lodge was not, because of all the troubles
2 that had been held in the embassy, Lodge was not that receptive to outside advice. He
3 did his own analysis and evaluation. But there's no doubt he got some from Doug.
4 Lodge was replaced by Maxwell Taylor, came out in, my dates may be off a couple of
5 weeks, but June in July of '64. Taylor was there for one year to command, and I use that
6 word advisedly, the four stars Taylor had on his uniform always shined through his
7 civilian clothing. Taylor certainly turned to Doug every so often, not on a regular basis,
8 but for reading particularly on the political side of the VC and as things went on of the
9 NVA, of the entire North Vietnamese. Taylor lasted a year and then Ellsworth Bunker
10 came in and Ellsworth was there for what? Six, seven years? Replaced finally by
11 Graham Martin. I don't have the date when Doug was finally transferred back to the
12 States.

13 BH: I have that somewhere, but I know he was there when Bunker was there.

14 BZ: But he came back and he wrote that book. He's worked on a lot of the
15 material while he was still in Saigon.

16 BH: He was on leave from USIS? Foreign Service gave him leave.

17 BZ: Right, he had leave and I think he was attached to one of the universities.
18 I'm not quite sure.

19 BH: M.I.T. (Massachusetts of Technology) where he went. He thought about
20 getting his doctorate and decided, "Well no, just go ahead and write this book."

21 BZ: The book had quite an impact. It was the first and certainly the best book on
22 the VC.

23 BH: Called *Vietcong: Strategy of Terror*, was that the name of it? That made an
24 impact, that sort of made his name. It was reviewed in the *New York Times*, I'm told. He
25 was clearly snapped as the Viet Cong expert.

26 BZ: And was. I have to say there wasn't a hell of a lot of competition. There
27 was a lot of superficial evaluation of the VC, but Doug had it in depth. I don't know that
28 many others. The only ones I would put even close to Doug may have been Bob
29 Chaplain of *The New Yorker*, who was very, very good on the political side of the war.
30 They may have been Bernie Fall before his untimely death about Indochina in general.
31 But not many others, in fact, none others that I think of offhand.

1 BH: Now tell me, when did you leave Vietnam?

2 BZ: I left, I know the exact time, July 7, 1:00, 1968.

3 BH: '68.

4 BZ: Four and a half years, one month short of four and a half years there.

5 BH: Things were really heating up in '68.

6 BZ: Well, we were past the Tet Offensive. When I left for Vietnam there were
7 some like 22,000 or 23,000 American military there. A couple of hundred, maybe, three
8 or four hundred, maybe a few more civilians. But the effort, the U.S. effort was a
9 combined civilian-military effort. When I left Vietnam we had over 570,000 military
10 there. Obviously, the military dominated by then. This was after the Tet period. Tet was
11 the end of my war. I stayed on a few months. The ambassador and Westy wanted me.
12 My agency replaced me as PAO (public affairs officer). The ambassador kept me on as
13 special assistant for media relations. Then asked if I would take over I Corps as the
14 senior American there. But by then I had been separated from my family for three years
15 except for occasional visit to the Philippines. I finally decided my war was over and it
16 was time to leave.

17 BH: When you went there in '64 what was your title?

18 BZ: Public Affairs Officer, head of USIS.

19 BH: When you left, though, it was different.

20 BZ: When I got there and I got a letter from Ed Murrow, assigning me there
21 telling me my job was appointed and so on, saying, "The one that I have to say to you is
22 Henry Cabot Lodge has told me and my Deputy Don Wilson a number of times, he's his
23 own press officer, always will be, always has been." That I would have nothing to do
24 with the media. I could run the USIS program. That was February; in June there were so
25 many difficulties with the media. Westmoreland, by that point—

26 BH: June of '64?

27 BZ: Westmoreland by then had taken over from Paul Harkins, or about to. I
28 think he took over July 1. Lodge and Westy agreed and recommended at a meeting in
29 Honolulu, which was co-chaired by McNamara and Rusk, to appoint me, put me in
30 charge of all media relations. The NSC (National Security Council) issued a directive, of
31 which I still have a copy, appointing me the public affairs advisor to both the ambassador

1 and the commanding general of MACV, Westmoreland. This was by name. As far as I
2 know, that's the only time the NSC has ever done that.

3 BH: Was that the creation of JUSPAO (Joint United States Public Affairs
4 Office)?

5 BZ: No, I got that assignment in June, actually in July, I guess the directive came
6 out, of '64. But I was still head of USIS. However, we had a coordinating committee for
7 communications for psychological operations, which consisted of USIS, AID (United
8 States Agency for International Development) and MACV. The head of AID there in the
9 communications area, not AID overall, was a fellow named Ralph Boyce, whose son
10 right now is ambassador to Thailand, had been an ambassador in Indonesia, and a
11 Lieutenant Colonel Bowen, who later became a Major General. We three agreed that this
12 didn't make sense to have separate organizations working in the same field. So we
13 recommended that they all be merged into one organization. Carl Rowan, who was by
14 then director of USIA, came out on a visit about March of '65 or so. By then, U.S. troops
15 were coming in, combat units. Picked up on that and came back to Washington and
16 recommended and got approval from the president and the agencies above for the Joint
17 U.S. Public Affairs Office, JUSPAO. I was appointed director of that. JUSPAO didn't
18 come into being formally, officially, until July 1, '65. But that was a separate assignment
19 from being the Minister Counselor for Information, on Media Relations. Actually, I had
20 two hats in Vietnam. One was Minister Counselor for Information, which was Chief
21 Spokesman, Media Relations. The other hat was director of JUSPAO, of the Joint U.S.
22 Public Affairs Office. Organizationally they were separate assignments, obviously
23 merged together. But I had deputies for each of them, quite separate ones. That went on
24 from '65 to spring '68. You use up your credit in these jobs and a lot of people weren't
25 happy with what they thought I was catering to the press too much. I had been there too
26 long. So then USIS replaced me as director of USIA, director of JUSPAO, a guy named
27 Ed Nickel came on. The ambassador kept me on as Special Assistant for Media
28 Relations for Communications. When I left I was replaced by a State Department officer
29 in the media job and JUSPAO, the communications job went its own way until I think
30 '72 when the whole withdrawal came and JUSPAO was abandoned. Went back to USIS,
31 the last three years, '72 to '75.

1 BH: I don't mean to interrupt.

2 BZ: No, I was just going to say '72 to '75 it was a more conventional structure of
3 USIS.

4 BH: How did Doug's progression or did his job titles change from the time you
5 were there until the time you left? His role must have stayed about the same.

6 BZ: His role stayed about the same, but was more formalized. I don't know what
7 the hell he was technically when I got there, probably part of the Information Division.
8 But it soon became clear that his contribution and his role should be distinct. He was
9 simply our political analyst.

10 BH: That's a good enough title. He dealt not only with people in the
11 government, in the various agencies, but he helped the press when they came out. Don
12 Oberdorfer has told me how valuable Doug was.

13 BZ: He was.

14 BH: He collected all this stuff.

15 BZ: That's right and he would spend a lot of time briefing, not only journalists
16 but State Department people and military people and so on.

17 BH: In the after hours, how'd they spend their time? You mentioned social
18 things?

19 BZ: Our families were evacuated in February of '65. My own family went to the
20 Philippines to Brent School up in Baguio in the Philippines.

21 BH: As well as the American troops were about to arrive, is that it?

22 BZ: American troops were about to arrive, but the VC had attacked a number of
23 times in Saigon itself. The war was obviously cranking up to a new level. So Taylor
24 decided to get dependents out of there. That left us all, there were women stationed
25 there, but that left us all without families. The job itself was much closer to a twenty-
26 four-hour-a-day job, there wasn't that much time for social activities, but there were a
27 number of them. There were receptions and cocktails and one of the things that got
28 underway, Doug and I were avid and original members of what became almost a
29 legendary poker game. Friday nights in my residence.

30 BH: In your house?

1 BZ: In my house. We played for a long time. USIA types were in there,
2 journalists sometimes took part. There used to be a charge that the journalists were
3 feeding us winnings in order to get information.

4 BH: They could have been just incompetent players (laughs).

5 BZ: We just claimed they weren't very good poker players. Doug was a very
6 good poker player. The table on which we played, when I left was left behind, Doug
7 Pike—was it Doug Pike or (unintelligible)?—but that table came back to Washington.
8 The game revived here in 1975 when I moved to Washington. We started playing on that
9 same table. Very often played at Doug's house until he finally left and went out to
10 California. That game still goes on, most Friday nights with three of the early players are
11 still in it, and myself and two other former USIS types.

12 BH: When it was going on in Saigon were there some names that would be
13 recognizable to the public who played?

14 BZ: Probably not. The journalists would come in and out. What was his name of
15 Associated Press who would play?

16 BH: Peter Arnette or Malcolm Brown?

17 BZ: No, they weren't but their colleague—God I'll think of his name in a minute.

18 BH: George McArthur was there.

19 BZ: George McArthur was there, he didn't play much. I saw him, but I'll think
20 of his name. He ended up for AP (Associate Press) in Boston, now retired. Luccia of
21 ABC (American Broadcasting Company) I remember there. As we go along, more
22 names will come back.

23 BH: I'm sure the make-up of the game changed from one Friday night to another
24 depending on who was around.

25 BZ: Yes.

26 BH: Was this penny ante or?

27 BZ: No, no, no it was a pot limit game. It got fairly substantial.

28 BH: So you could win or lose ten or more.

29 BZ: You could win or lose a couple of hundred.

30 BH: Where was your house and describe it for me.

1 BZ: Initially I was in what had been the PAO's house. If I remember the address
2 it was 8 Ly Qui Dong. It was a townhouse originally by some French plantation
3 manager, big house, a lot of property. Living in it all alone didn't make a hell of a lot of
4 sense when my family left. We then had an attack on our USIS library downtown, during
5 one of the protest rallies. The USIS library, which was on the ground floor of the, not the
6 Brinks Building. What was the name of that building? Was really sacked. I wanted out
7 of that big house, it was too visible. It was not very efficient. So we made the house the
8 library. It was big enough to serve that purpose. I got a house that had belonged at one
9 time I think to SO, but the address was 5 Dong Hong Bu. Many years later in '95 when
10 Margaret and I went to visit I just wanted to see the house for sentimental reasons. They
11 wouldn't let me in, there were guards at either end of the short block. The VC had taken
12 it over, or the North Vietnamese government had taken it over, as a guesthouse for
13 visiting intelligence people. It was their equivalent of CIA taking it.

14 BH: What year would this have been?

15 BZ: Well, that was '95 when I went back. Now, I lived in there alone but usually
16 an incoming USIA officer before we could get quarters for him would stay with them, for
17 a good long time one of my deputies who was our liaison to the Vietnamese government
18 John McGowan lived with me. Then Gene Rosenfeld lived with me for a while. I would
19 have household briefings; our poker games would be out there. But usually on Thursday
20 nights or Wednesday nights I would have a background briefing by one of the principle
21 officers of the mission for a very limited group of journalists, representatives of each of
22 the bureaus and so on. Those were very candid briefings, very straightforward. Also
23 sometimes we'd get visitors, among them was Gen. Wally Green of the Marines. I
24 remember as well as a number of other people. But also at one time Henry Kissinger was
25 out there on a mission from the White House to explore the prospects of some kind of a
26 negotiated peace.

27 BH: Do you think he talked to Pike?

28 BZ: I honestly don't know. I wouldn't be surprised if he did.

29 BH: These thoughts are going to come to me kind of at random, but do you know
30 if Pike had personal contacts with Robert McNamara at times? I say that, he mentioned
31 to me once going to McNamara's house.

1 BZ: Again, it wouldn't surprise me. Specifically, no. But it would have been a
2 scheduled event. It would not have been unique.

3 BH: Not a staged briefing?

4 BZ: No.

5 BH: No, I didn't mean that. Can you recall a time when Doug's findings or
6 conclusions got him in hot water or caused controversy? I think I'm thinking about Hue
7 and what happened there.

8 BZ: I think Doug's briefings of the structure of the VC and the influence of the
9 North on the VC, the power placed within the VC organization. Their approach and the
10 relative impact of various personalities probably was counter at times to CIA's
11 evaluations. There was no long-running feud like the CIA and the military and MACV.
12 CIA and MACV always differed.

13 BH: Now, is this because the CIA thought there was more of a civil war element
14 to it?

15 BZ: Yeah, and the CIA put much more credence on the VC's determination and
16 ability to compete. The military approached things with very little experience in this kind
17 of a counterinsurgency war on pure military factors and the military came up with a
18 cross-over point where the casualties from the VC would be greater than the North
19 Vietnamese or that the other side could replace. I think the figure they had was about
20 100,000 a year. Whereas CIA continued to say, "No, they've got much more
21 determination and readiness to keep going regardless of the amount of sacrifice." That in
22 many ways, our great mistake in Vietnam was underestimating the commitment of the
23 VC and North Vietnamese and their readiness to keep going despite enormous loss and
24 sacrifice.

25 BH: Let me get this straight. Did Doug sort of differ with CIA on this point of
26 how long the VC could do it on their own?

27 BZ: I don't remember that as a sticking point, but on who was playing what kind
28 of a role with the VC structure.

29 BH: When the North Vietnamese began to take a more dominant role?

30 BZ: Right. Doug had the best reading on the internal political elements, factors,
31 influences within the VC, who was calling the shots. Who had influence, etc., etc.

1 BH: Now did he base his knowledge strictly on paperwork that he saw,
2 documents?

3 BZ: He had to, captured documents. But also probing North Vietnamese
4 broadcasts, occasional interviews—

5 BH: With defectors?

6 BZ: Defectors.

7 BH: Or captives?

8 BZ: Yes.

9 BH: Did he make it a practice or did he often talk to VC?

10 BZ: He would talk to VC. I don't think it was a major, major part of his time.
11 CIA and the military were not that anxious to have "outsiders" talking to their captives.

12 BH: Doug seemed to work like a dog. I saw him here at the Vietnam Center
13 when he worked and he tended to be here seven days a week. I guess that was pretty
14 much what he did in Saigon.

15 BZ: He worked like a dog. He had enormous files.

16 BH: Yes we have them now, thank goodness.

17 BZ: Those files he brought back to the States, I remember in his house he had a
18 whole, in the basement, a whole room of files all well organized. Then he took them all
19 out to Berkeley, of course, and then took them down to Lubbock.

20 BH: Yes, we have them here at the Vietnam Archive. I went back to college and
21 got a master's degree three years ago and wrote my thesis based on a suggestion that
22 Doug gave me before he died, which was "You might take a look at that Viet Cong
23 propaganda. There's all sorts of stuff over there." He was right. There are just tattered
24 little remnants of things and then there's some polished propaganda, and their leaflets, all
25 sorts of things that he brought back.

26 BZ: Doug was also influential in our propaganda, if you will, our messages.
27 Probably could claim originating one of our basic messages to the North Vietnamese that
28 said on leaflets and posters "Born in the North to die in the South."

29 BH: Yes, I remember seeing something like that.

30 BZ: I've still got some of that stuff. If I ever get this stuff of mine down to
31 Lubbock, you'll have some. Some of the posters, we used to come out with posters at

1 Tet. The Trung Sisters and Li Loi, what was his name? The Year of the Horse, was to me
2 a very attractive poster. I've got it framed and my son has it on his wall in Connecticut
3 and so on.

4 BH: This is an off-the-wall question that I was thinking in about Doug as a
5 person and his personality. Did he have the beard when he arrived in '64?

6 BZ: I don't remember. He grew the beard later, I think. I won't swear on that.

7 BH: Do you know what his tastes ran to in the way of music or any personal
8 things about him that sort of stood out? Was he a snappy dresser?

9 BZ: No, not particularly. Physically, as you know, he was—what shall I say?
10 Rotund.

11 BH: A little bit rotund. He liked that food I understand, Chinese.

12 BZ: Doug really was a quiet guy. He wasn't very, very loud. He was what in our
13 framework passed as an intellectual. He really was an intellectual in the true sense of the
14 word. He was certainly not athletic. He certainly was not physically active.

15 BH: I had the question there and it just got away from me. He worked briefly for
16 the *Washington Star* and, of course, they wanted some punchy headline-grabbing stories
17 and they found that he was writing things that tended to be too, intellectual may not have
18 been the word. Maybe too in depth or too thoughtful. They weren't snappy, in other
19 words.

20 BZ: They weren't snappy. He loved to have dialogue. He loved to talk, talk, talk
21 discuss things, argue them out.

22 BH: He could tell a good story, too. He could illustrate a point with a story. I
23 know he talked about going to see Lyndon Johnson one time. I forgot who took him
24 there, it was a congressman from, maybe Burdick. I guess Doug had been back and had
25 written this book and Burdick took him over there and Lyndon was talking about the Viet
26 Cong and said, "Go over there and do what you have to do and we need to know this."
27 He asked Pike "What do you need?" Pike said, "Well, I guess what we really need is
28 time." He said Lyndon banged his fist down on the table and said, "God damn it! One
29 thing I don't have is time!" I think this was '65 or so. I'm not sure.

30 BZ: That sounds typical.

31 BH: What time is it getting to be, by the way, there?

1 BZ: Here?

2 BH: I don't have a watch on.

3 BZ: It's 4:09 I have.

4 BH: 4:09 by your time?

5 BZ: Yeah.

6 BH: Can you think of anything else we ought to be covering in this interview?

7 BZ: No, I'll say this Bob, if I do I will certainly get back to you. I am committed
8 to getting all my papers together. I confess it's sheer laziness, procrastination.

9 BH: That Edward R. Murrow letter, be sure and include that.

10 BZ: I talked to, what was his name? Steve?

11 BH: Maxner. Right?

12 BZ: I said, "Look, I've talked about writing a book for thirty-five years now and
13 haven't done it, I suspect I won't." But I've put together speeches, articles, things I've
14 done, oral histories I've done, and all the papers I have. Plus that equivalent of the Early
15 Bird that I told you about. "Are you interested in any of that?" and he said "Sure." But
16 this is just a short part of this letter. Murrow quoting Lodge says Lodge put the following
17 language in his telegram accepting me: "Mr. Zorthian should understand that he will not,
18 repeat not, have responsibility for press relations, newspaper, magazine, television,
19 radio, because I do this work myself. Mr. Joseph C. Lumen is Embassy Press Officer
20 with his office in the USIS building where there can be practical facilities for journalists."
21 Then Murrow speaking, "This is the way Lodge has been operating and this is the way he
22 intends to continue. He has made the point to me and Don Wilson on several occasions
23 that I have always been my own press officer and always want to be. This we simply
24 have to accept. The job will not be easy, but in many ways it is the most important job
25 any PA was called upon today to do. I am confident you will fill it with distinction. Best
26 of luck. Sincerely, Edward R. Murrow."

27 BH: That's good. Did it reek of cigarette smoke by any chance (laughs)?

28 BZ: My point is that may well have been my greatest achievement in Vietnam
29 was to have Lodge recommend me to take over the whole media relations thing by June.

1 BH: Yeah. No kidding. Listen, Barry, I may have to come back to specific
2 questions from time to time. I think this certainly is very helpful and I appreciate it and I
3 appreciate your time.

4 BZ: Let me give you one other thing. This is the Joint State-Defense-AID-USIA
5 message, "The president has approved the decision to place one man in overall control of
6 dealing with the American and foreign press in Saigon and of prosecuting a vigorous
7 program to ensure the true story of our efforts is reported in the United States and
8 elsewhere. The appropriate agencies here have spelled out the decision in the following
9 details. Barry Zorthian, presently a Public Affairs Officer, will assume the
10 responsibilities of overall press counselor. He will retain the title of country public
11 affairs officer with jurisdiction over the total information effort. He will delegate such of
12 his responsibilities as he considers necessary to his deputies in order that there be no
13 lapse in the execution of all information programs. Mr. Zorthian will serve both the
14 ambassador and COMUSMACV (Commander, United States Military Assistance
15 Command, Vietnam) in their context with American foreign correspondents. They can
16 look to him for advice concerning the desirability of seeing certain correspondence, etc.,
17 etc."

18 BH: What's the date there on that there?

19 BZ: That is dated June 6, 1964.

20 BH: That's quite a few years ago.

21 BZ: It sure is.

22 BH: All that stuff is very valuable and will be needed. Boy, the Early Bird things
23 that you have and the other documents, researchers, historians can come in here and look
24 at that stuff and piece together what they choose to piece together. But it's really
25 valuable. I know it's appreciated here.

26 BZ: Well, as they say sheer, sheer laziness.

27 BH: Well, I can relate to that I've had my own book that I was going to write for
28 years and never got around to do it. Listen, let me just close. I need a tag on this little
29 piece of audio which says, "This has been Bob Horton interviewing Barry Zorthian about
30 Douglas Pike and other things relating to JUSPAO in Saigon and the Vietnam War. It is
31 January 17, 2005." Barry, thanks very much.

- 1 BZ: Thanks, Bob. Don't hesitate to call.
- 2 BH: Appreciate it. I will be talking at you.
- 3 BZ: I will get back to Texas Tech one of these days.
- 4 BH: I hope you do. Look forward to seeing you. Bye.
- 5 BZ: Okay. Thanks.