The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

CHESTER E. BEAMAN

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is September 7, 1999. This is an interview with Chester E. Beaman. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy.

What should I call you?

BEAMAN: Chet.

Q: You're "Chet" and I'm "Stu." All right, Chet. When and where were you born? Tell me something about your family?

BEAMAN: I was born in Kokomo, Indiana on January 16, 1916, said to have been the coldest night of the year. My father was a factory machinist and my mother before she was married worked as a maid. Her father was a carpenter. He had a large family of eight children; on my father's side, there were four children, but two of them died before I ever came on the scene. Grandpa Beaman was also a factory worker.

Q: What was family life like?

BEAMAN: I did not regard ourselves as poor, but, nevertheless, it was a factory district middle class existence which like others was hard hit by the Depression. When I was growing up, at first we had just basic furniture and rugs. However, we did not have an inside toilet, a bathtub, telephone, or anything now considered proper living until I was in high school or college.

Q: A machinist was somewhat of a specialty.

BEAMAN: Yes. My father went into the factories early. He worked himself up until he was a skilled machinist. Even during the Depression, when a lot of people were laid off and he was too, he would be called back periodically for maybe three or four days or maybe a couple of weeks because he did have this skill. The other thing about him was that he was an avid baseball player. In those days in Kokomo and elsewhere, they had what they called "industrial leagues." "Industrial" is an odd name because it could be a church, a clothing store, as well as factories that had baseball teams. They would play a summer season in Kokomo. My father was considered a star player. So I grew up in the current baseball environment, but I never was as good at baseball as my father.

Q: What position did your father play?

BEAMAN: Third base or left field. He was also a boxer and a basketball player in his youth, but his "love" was baseball. He was a man about six feet two inches. I never reached that height.

Q: You had to reach. At home, were ideas discussed much? How did you spend your time at home?

BEAMAN: Of course, in the early years, like all of the children, I played with the few toys available. I primarily had trains. I loved trains and still do. We did not have many shelf books - a book and a large picture book on World War I, and a book entitled "Sermons of the Devil." There were family discussions, not so much ideas per se, but facts and events - politics, sports, factory work, local scandals, and costs of various items. Actually, I became somewhat "bookish" even at about age seven, when I could get a library card and walk a mile downtown to the library. There I could read various books and references in the children's department and bring books home. The first book I ever brought home was "The Life of George Washington."

Q: Was it the Carnegie Library?

BEAMAN: Yes.

Q: Was there much discussion in the house about things you would read?

BEAMAN: No. I'm sorry to say that my mother had to quit school in the sixth grade to work to help support her family. My father left high school in his sophomore year because he played hooky and the principal expelled him. What I learned from them were practical things of living. Idea material? No. That is what I got from the library. Then later when the radio came along, listening to Lowell Thomas, and general programs. One of my favorite radio programs was listening to "The Little Theater Off Times Square." Over the radio it presented various plays, operettas, and musicals.

Q: Like the Lux Radio Theater.

BEAMAN: That's right. So, my intellectual stimulation didn't come directly from my family, but what I did learn from them were practical things, for which I am grateful.

Q: How about school?

BEAMAN: I started at an elementary school which was three blocks from my house. I later went to a high school which was about a mile downtown. Then I eventually went to DePauw University, where I got a scholarship. The first year, I had to make at least a B average to get it extended.

Q: Let's go back to elementary school. What was the school like?

BEAMAN: Certainly not like today's schools. We had classes of 20-30 pupils. They had half grades: 1A was the first semester and 1B was the second semester. Then there were 2A and 2B. It was in a school that my mother had gone to. It was that old. It was a brick school, the usual thing, with sort of a tower at the front that you see in pictures. My sister and I went there for seven years. We learned under individual teachers for each grade.

There were school activities like Arbor Day athletic exercises. Little plays would be put on in each class, usually on a "parents night." There was also a basketball team which played other schools. As far as grades were concerned, I made good grades from the beginning. Teachers used to say, "Oh, you could be President." I would think, "I don't want to be President." One thing about schools in those days, the teachers maintained discipline, not excessive, but they would not permit any nonsense. "Bully boys" were kept in line. No one ever brought a gun to school. We had groups of friends but not "gangs." I am appalled at what is happening in some schools today.

Q: What was Kokomo like in those days?

BEAMAN: In those days, Kokomo was basically an industrial town and it still is. It claims that the first commercially successful automobile, the Haynes, performed there on July 4, 1896. Later I learned that the Germans and French had also developed automobile models about the same time. Kokomo became an industrial center because of the invention of the automobile, Haynes and Apperson, and because of natural gas discovered along Wildcat River. The gas provided the fuel for the factories. A lot of different factories were there for years but some have now been replaced by other factories. But the city grew. I don't know what its population is now, but at one point in my high school years, it was about 30,000. Then the city spread out, like a lot of communities, into the countryside. Most of our entertainment, if you want to call it that, was on a Saturday night. Mother worked at home and my father worked at the factory. Saturday was the day we all went downtown together, first by streetcar and then later by a Ford we acquired at some point along the line. Many other people came to the town center. There were no malls in those days. We just went from store to store. Some people, especially the Amish, came by horses and buggies and parked them around the Courthouse. Otherwise on Saturday night, we often took in a movie and then did shopping or got refreshments at drugstores. When I got to high school, I, of course, went downtown by myself - usually to take a girl or go with friends to a movie.

Q: You went to the drugstore, didn't you, for soda?

BEAMAN: Yes. Most of the time for a cold drink or some ice cream. I had terrific headaches in those days. Sometimes my father took me to a drugstore for a dose of Kapedine, which was supposed to knock out a headache. Anyway, my headaches eventually tapered off.

Q: How about the ethnic makeup of Kokomo?

BEAMAN: I guess I would basically say it was an Anglo-Saxon Protestant town, although there was a substantial Catholic, usually Irish, population. In our part of town there was a mix of Protestants and Catholics. There was a small Jewish population, but most of them lived elsewhere in town. In addition to the Irish, there was a sprinkling of Germans, Poles, and Greeks. About three miles from us was an area called "the Negro District" where most of the blacks lived. It was not that they were officially segregated. But the elementary school, "Douglas," set aside for black children, was in that district.

Naturally black parents wanted to be where their children had to go to school. Unfortunately, if Negroes wanted to go to a movie, which were all in the center of town, they had to sit in the balcony or at the back of the theater.
Q: In the school system, were things pretty much divided? Was there a Catholic school system?

BEAMAN: Yes. As I have indicated, the black children went to one specified elementary school. The Catholics, on their part, segregated their own children at elementary level. Their church (looking like a medieval cathedral) was near us, as were also the Catholic school and the nuns' (teachers') home. In both these cases, the Negro and Catholic children came together with the rest of us at high school level.

Q: Did that divide the children up?

BEAMAN: No, I don't think so. I played with Catholics. I didn't even ask whether they were Catholics. We just played. The interesting thing, however, was that when we got to high school, black students were among us, but they tended at lunch hour and between classes to keep to themselves. So, I guess I had a black friend or two, but not really close. I don't think there was a definite structuring of society there based on religion, but there is no question that the Catholics had their church, they had their school, and they had their own beliefs. The blacks, on the other hand, because of the situation in the country in those days, had their own part of town.

Q: By the time you got to high school, which would have been about 1928 or so...

BEAMAN: No. It was 1930.

Q: 1930. Did one major or specialize in high school?

BEAMAN: Yes, they had three sets of courses. I took what was called the "general course" because I didn't know what I was going to be doing in life. Consequently, I took a course that had history, English, algebra, and French. At the same time, part of it was machine shop, printing, automobile mechanics, woodworking, and drafting. But they had another course that was strictly academic. That was primarily for high school students who thought they were going to go to college. Instead of the craft-type of classes, it had other classes. Also, there was a business course which could be pursued.

Q: When you were in high school, did any of the teachers inspire you?

BEAMAN: Definitely: my French teacher. I was editor of the French newspaper and I made As in French. She called me in one day and had a talk with me about my language - not swear words, but just my "ain't" and other word usage. She said that I should correct these faults because she felt that I was moving on, but I had better start preparing myself. So, she was an inspiration. Then there was a chemistry professor who had gone to DePauw University. He encouraged me to apply for a scholarship to DePauw University. Actually, I was in competition with a friend of mine who said, "Well, you make good

grades. You ought to apply for this scholarship." He lost out and I won. I felt bad about his not getting a scholarship. I'd say those two, at least - Mr. McCarthy and Miss Thornberg - but my teachers all did, in a way, urge me to succeed.

Q: While you were in high school, what sort of things were you reading on your own?

BEAMAN: By that time, largely historical material from the library. There wasn't anything like today where you can go buy a book at Crown Books and read it. One went to the library and borrowed books. Our family never really had any intellectual-type material. There were a few books, as I have previously noted. In the library, there was a series of books on the Civil War. They were novels and were in the children's section.

Q: By Ashland, by any chance?

BEAMAN: Right!
Q: I'm 10 years younger than you are, but... I was also interviewing Judge Silberman, who was later ambassador to Yugoslavia. He is on the bench today in federal court. In my interview with him, he was talking about how important the Ashland books were to him.

BEAMAN: Yes. I enjoyed them. I also read all 30 Books of Knowledge over a period of time. I read some of Sir Walter Scott's books - Ivanhoe and The White Company. I recall two other books I enjoyed - Not Peace but a Sword about the uncertainty and turmoil in Europe, and Upton Sinclair's The Jungle. I did not eat meat for several days after I finished that one. I did read narrative novels as well as straight history. There was no question history was my greatest interest.

Q: While you were in high school, did the outside world intrude at all, things in Washington, the New Deal, Hitler's coming to power?

BEAMAN: Oh, absolutely. In history and civics classes, we had discussions about Mussolini and the Fascists and Hitler and the Nazis. We had one teacher who had served in World War I, so he was very good at explaining political and economic problems. As the Depression deepened there was discussion of its attributes.

Q: But sometimes in the Midwest, one thinks one can be somewhat oblivious to that.

BEAMAN: I have written a thing on Franklin D. Roosevelt's time. I could give it to you and cover a lot of ground that way.

Q: I want to know how you perceived it at the time.

BEAMAN: I perceived it as being quite a blow. Not only was my father laid off work. There were family discussions about how to cut expenses; we ate the cheapest food. I personally wondered what the future would bring.

Q: We're talking about the Depression.

BEAMAN: Yes. The Depression is one of the events that is imprinted on my mind and really shaped part of my career. Many people were unemployed. There were men who obviously had worked in offices, selling apples at five cents on streetcorners downtown. There were soup lines of people who didn't get enough food. They would go to the fire engine station and get a meal at noon. Many banks closed, losing a lot of people's savings. Many mortgages were foreclosed on farms and homes. It was a low point in our American history. That explains why a lot of working class people admired Roosevelt. When he came in, I don't know if he knew how things were going to turn out with his various programs, but he did something. Many New Deal programs were intended to put people to work. Agencies like PWA, WPA, and CCC put unemployed persons to work until industry and business could reabsorb them. When I was in college, I was the recipient of NYA (National Youth Administration) work for college students. I got so much an hour for first manual work, then research work. This was a great help to me personally. Kokomo, being an industrial town, the majority of the citizens suffered during the Depression. The New Deal programs at least raised their hopes for the future.

Q: What about the newspaper in Kokomo? What did you as a young high school student read to keep up with what was happening?

BEAMAN: First of all, originally, when I was younger, there were two papers: "The Kokomo Dispatch" and "The Kokomo Tribune." "The Kokomo Dispatch" was a democratic paper. My father took "The Tribune" because it was an evening paper. Later, I became a carrier for "The Kokomo Tribune." I read all sorts of things on politics, economics, history, and I also scraped up enough money to subscribe to "The Literary Digest," which I later learned was a conservative publication.
Q: That was the magazine which predicted the election of Alf Landon in 1936.

BEAMAN: Yes. It folded after that for predicting wrong. Nevertheless, it provided good summaries of world events. Also, my father was a member of the Eagles. He and my mother would go to dances on Saturday nights. I would sit down in the reading room. It had a lot of magazines and newspapers. I read those. This was the type of reading that I got over and beyond what I would have gotten at home.

Q: Would you all sit around and listen to the radio?

BEAMAN: Oh, yes. In the late 1920s, the radio had something for all. I always listened to Lowell Thomas. He came on every day, and I listened to him avidly. He had traveled the world and, during his evening news program, would often describe Lhasa in Tibet (I've been wanting to get there all my life; I only got to Nepal). Thomas also spoke of Africa and Europe. My father, of course, liked the sports programs; my mother the comics and barn dances. When the radio carried the conventions for the 1928 election, I spent hours listening to the proceedings. I was age 12 ½ years old at the time.

Q: This was Al Smith versus Hoover.

BEAMAN: And Hoover won. I also stayed up nights in 1932 listening to the conventions. Both were held in Chicago that year. In any event, it was fascinating to hear how a convention operated. Later in 1940, I visited as a student the Democratic Convention in Chicago and saw first-hand what I'd been hearing on the radio before.

Q: During the time, did the family sit around and listen to the Fireside Chats and all?

BEAMAN: Absolutely. The whole family listened to what FDR said. You could hear my father, from time to time, cussing the "God damn Republicans." When Zangara attempted to assassinate Roosevelt after he was elected, my father came home in tears saying "They will not let that man live to become President."

Q: That happened in Miami.

BEAMAN: Yes. Chicago's Mayor Cermak got killed instead.

Q: I find, in a way, the feeling abut the Clintons somewhat reminds me of the intensity of feelings towards the Roosevelts.

BEAMAN: Sort of similar. Because of the effects of the Depression still obvious when FDR was elected, I think the appreciation of his administration was deep and heartfelt. A patrician in demeanor, a large portion of the electorate "worshiped" him. Clinton, for all the turmoil while he has been in office, had winning ways - a common touch - and several proposed programs (not all of which succeeded) which appealed to a majority of people through two elections. Both had and have strong critics. FDR was referred to, derisively, as "that man." Clinton has the name "Slick Willie" and other terms applied by opponents. Both had and have intelligent wives strong enough to offer advice and support but who themselves were and are lightning rods for both admiration and criticism.

Q: In high school, what about extracurricular stuff?

BEAMAN: I participated in speech. I went out for school plays, but I wasn't good enough to get selected. Then there were a series of clubs. I belonged to three of them. I was either president or vice president of all three. One of them was the Philatelic Club, which I organized myself. The other two were the civic and French clubs. Of course, there was the usual athletic events, but I was not athletic. At that time, my favorite spectator sport was basketball. The Kokomo team was very good in those days in basketball.
Q: Indiana is the premier state for basketball.

BEAMAN: That's right. I got to know various athletes. They weren't close friends, but they were some of the people that I knew and was impressed by. I would yell for them even though I did not play.

Q: By the time you were getting ready to go on to college... It was 1934 when you were a senior in high school. Where were you pointed towards?

BEAMAN: A trip to Chicago served to "point" me. I went on my own - the first time I had been out of Kokomo on my own - to the Chicago World's Fair. It was two years: 1933-1934. I was impressed with a lot of things at the fair, but one of them was the State Department exhibit. One of the things they did was pass out samples of the Foreign Service exam. I could see that it was going to require a lot of knowledge to get together. So, when I went to college, even though I specialized in history, English literature, and political science, my aim was to try to get into the Foreign Service. But the war came along and disrupted the plan.

Q: Why the Foreign Service? What was there that stirred an interest?

BEAMAN: For one thing, my father gave me the bug, I guess. He used to travel around the eastern part of the United States as a hobo. He would bum his way to Cleveland so he could work in Cleveland awhile and go back home. The next time, he would maybe go up to Michigan or elsewhere. It wasn't the work, but the stories he told of bumming, so to speak, that sort of infected me. I also started reading about China, Tibet, and the South Sea islands, and other faraway places. I had the desire to see foreign countries. I figured this was one way to do that. Anyway, it was this that inspired me.

Q: This was the heyday of travel books like Richard Haliburton's New Worlds to Conquer, Pearl Buck's The Good Earth, about China, and his South Sea Tales. I have to ask you this fairly serious question. When you were at the World's Fair in 1933, did you see Sally Rand?

BEAMAN: No, I didn't. I knew about her, and I certainly saw pictures of her dances, but in the flesh, so to speak, no.

Q: She was a very exotic drawing card.

BEAMAN: That's right. Later, I wished I'd seen her because she was the talk of the country. I went to that fair by myself. I had bought in advance a book of tickets for entry to certain attractions. She was not among those. I stayed at the YMCA hotel. It was a short walking distance, maybe a half mile, from the Fair.

Q: Then you went to DePauw University.

BEAMAN: That's right.

Q: You were there from when to when?

BEAMAN: 1934-1938.

Q: With getting into the Foreign Service in mind, did you have a plan of action?

BEAMAN: No, I guess I couldn't say I had a plan of action, except that this was what I

wanted to do eventually. I majored in history and English literature. I also took courses in geology, French, and philosophy. In order to have something to tie to, I also took courses that were for teachers. I hoped that if I didn't get into the Foreign Service, at least I would be a teacher, for which I felt I was qualified. My aim in the back of my mind, however, was always eventually getting into the Foreign Service.

Q: Did you run across a real live Foreign Service officer or a former one?

BEAMAN: No, not at all, not until I got to Washington. In 1941, I was offered a job in the State Department as a position classifier in Personnel. But the boss I was working for at Federal Security raised my salary to keep me working there. I also did not feel I could tell the State Department that getting into the Foreign Service was the reason I was interested in that job. The woman who offered me the job would have been interesting to work for. She was competent in the classification field.

Q: At the University, did you talk to anybody about the Foreign Service?

BEAMAN: No. We didn't have visitors who came recruiting for companies or the government like in later years. I may have talked to individual history instructors or individual students, but there wasn't any outside professional input.

Q: This, of course, were dramatic years in both Asia and Europe. Were you following those?

BEAMAN: Yes. I wrote essays for philosophy, history, and literature. One was on Japanese nationalism. I also wrote a paper on Nazi training of German youth. I can’t think of others offhand, but I used current events as inspiration for writing various things.

Q: Were you doing anything extracurricular?

BEAMAN: No, not nearly as much as I did in high school. For one thing, I had to do various jobs to supplement my scholarship. I wasn't in any dramatic activities. I did go to the football games, obviously, and the basketball games. But otherwise, it was just social activities such as dances and dinners. I was not a member of a fraternity. I joined the Men's Hall Association. I lived in a dormitory, and there was a dormitory organization. I held a few positions in the Men's Hall Association.

Q: During summers or school, what type of work were you doing?

BEAMAN: The first year, I had this newspaper route that I told you about. I kept my hands on that route during my first year in college. I hired somebody to do it for me so that the first summer I could earn some money in that way. Then, in later years, I worked for the city, the Democratic Administration. My father arranged it. I made 50 cents an hour. For these three years, I piled up money by working on the streets. The first year, it was really collecting garbage, tree limbs, and all the stuff that people used to dump in their alley. The second and third year, it was primarily working on a truck, where we

repaired roads and streets. That is how I built up a bank account. I had a scholarship, of course, but I had to pay for room and board and other activities.

Q: In 1938, that was not a good time to get out.

BEAMAN: No. The economy was still uncertain, and jobs for high school and college students were not plentiful.

Q: The Depression was still going.

BEAMAN: Yes, and I had to consider whether to get a job or continue in college. I told you I took courses that gave me a teacher's license for the State of Indiana. During the summer after graduation, I went to various county schools that were closed. The principal or the superintendent was always there. I vowed that any job offering $1,000 or more a year I would take. I went to these various schools and they would say, "You know, you ought to have some experience." I said, "How can I get experience unless one of you people hires me?" Maybe $850 was the most that any school head offered me for nine months of teaching.

In the meantime, I had applied to the University of Cincinnati and the University of Michigan. I got a scholarship to the University of Michigan. So I went there and got a master's degree the next year. Again, the same principle was in my mind: whoever offers me over $1,000, I'll take the job. Anyway, after receiving a master's degree, I continued to study toward a Ph.D.

Q: A master's degree in what?

BEAMAN: History, especially American history. My thesis was on Sam Adams and Boston politics in the 1770s. I took a Civil Service Exam, not that I was thinking about getting into the Civil Service. I just figured if I were a political science (my minor) teacher, I ought to know what a Civil Service Exam was like. So I took it. It was for an archivist. I finished it in 25 minutes. I finished it really in less than that, but I went through it again and finished in a total of 25 minutes. I got up and handed it in and walked out. Everybody thought I had failed, that I just couldn't get the right answers. Well, I made a very high mark and was offered $1,620 by the U.S. government.

Q: Boy!

BEAMAN: I could not turn it down. In 1940, that was big money for one fresh out of college.

Q: Of course not. That <u>was</u> big money.

BEAMAN: Yes! So that is how I got into government.

Q: This was when?

BEAMAN: This was September 1940.

Q: So, you moved to Washington?

BEAMAN: Yes. I moved to Washington. I worked first for the Civil Service Commission. It was a boring clerical job. I wrote to my family, telling them, “Well, it's nice money, but it is boring.” I was grading Civil Service Exams. All I had to do was put a template next to the answers and mark plus or minus. In any event, the next thing I know, I was getting a call to come to the Federal Security Agency. They wanted to talk to me. I found that my father again had pulled some strings. At that time, Paul McNutt was the head of Federal Security. But it was a personnel officer with whom I talked.

Q: McNutt had Indiana connections.

BEAMAN: Yes. He was governor of Indiana. I told you earlier that I went to the Democratic Convention in Chicago in 1940. If the crowd had had its way, McNutt would have been nominated for Vice President, but Roosevelt had already picked Wallace.

Getting back to the point, the personnel officer at Federal Security calls me in and said he understood I was looking for a job. I said, "How did you find that out?" He said, “Well, we heard from Indiana.” I said, "Well, look, I'm Civil Service. I'm not political." Stupid me! He smiled and said, "You <u>are</u> looking for another job, aren't you?" I said, "Yes," so he hired me as a position classification analyst. That really became my second specialty in life. Even now I'm a salary and wage specialist.

Q: Could you explain how that type of work was conceived at the time that you were picked up?

BEAMAN: Even down to the present time, salaries were and are a volatile issue. There was and is a law that laid out a classification of jobs in the Federal Service. The law, like all laws, has a certain generality. So, trained specialists are needed to interpret the various levels. The way I approached the problem was to read the original debates when the act was passed. Consequently, I got a better idea of how the program worked. The other thing was that I had a very good mentor. He was my mentor for several years. He was not a college graduate, but he knew every job in Federal Security. I would audit the job, come back enthused by my findings. He would say,"Well, what about this? What about that? How does it compare to this over there?" He was a good teacher.

Q: How long did you do this work?

BEAMAN: I continued doing it really throughout the war. This is where I got off track on trying to get into the Foreign Service. I was sure war was coming. I knew it was coming. I would not stand the chance at this point in getting into the Foreign Service. It was 1941 when I started doing position classification. I went into the Army in 1943. Those two years I worked first for Federal Security and then for Army Quartermaster. For the latter I traveled all over the United States. I finally was called up. I went prepared

to go to basic training, but Quartermaster wanted me to continue to work for them in uniform. When I was going to the induction station, they said, "Be sure and insist that you get in the Army." I went through naked, holding my clothes, like the rest of the men, and came to a Marine sergeant, a Navy petty officer, and an Army sergeant. The Marine took one look at me and didn't want me. The Navy guy said, "I'll take him." He told me to sign a ledger. I started arguing, "I don't want to be in the Navy. I want to be in the Army." They all looked at one another. Then the petty officer said, "Okay, you can take this guy into the Army. I'll take the next one." So, I was in the Army. At Camp Lee, they pulled me out early and sent me to Front Royal Remount Depot, still as a private, to hold me so I could take a warrant officer exam. I did, and it was pro forma. It was very interesting. I went down to Washington from Front Royal to take the exam. By the time I got back after the weekend, I couldn't get in the barracks. I had been made an officer immediately and, therefore, I couldn't sleep in the barracks. I had to go out on the town and find a room. Can you imagine that? I then worked for Army Quartermaster, but in California and eventually Utah. By the end of the war, I was in charge of all Quartermaster classification west of the Rockies. Then I came back to Washington where I was in charge, in the name of the Quartermaster General, of all position classification operations in the United States. Later I became head of Position Classification Administration in Germany, the Army of Occupation.

Q: When did you go to Germany?

BEAMAN: 1946. My wife was there in 1945. She came back recruiting people and she recruited me. That is how we met.

Q: Were you still in the Army or were you out?

BEAMAN: No. As a warrant officer, I couldn't serve in Washington. I had to be a lieutenant or above. So they got me out of the Army and made me a civilian so I could head the whole program. There are silly things in life like that. In any event, I was a civilian. I first was head of the Quartermaster program. Then, in 1946, I became head of the program in Germany where I helped convert former military personnel to civilian status.

Q: You were doing this from 1949 to when?

BEAMAN: Actually, I went in 1946, and in 1947, I came back to get married. I went back in 1948 and then I finally got in the State Department in 1949. The Office of Military Government [OMGUS] was being replaced by the U.S. High Commission [HICOG]. After the war, I was still pursuing and talking to people about getting into the State Department. Consequently, the people who were recruiting knew what my desires were. In 1949, when the U.S. High Commission was established, I was already in Heidelberg working for the Army and they gave me an interview and hired me for HICOG. But they didn't hire me for position classification. It was for what they called "Employee Services," which involved counseling, training, meeting VIPs, and putting out a newspaper. That is how I entered into the Foreign Service.

Q: You took this exam where, in Frankfurt or Heidelberg?

BEAMAN: Initially, I was only hired as a temporary Foreign Service staff member. I guess you know what that was. I was taking a chance. I could have stayed with the Army and probably gone up higher in the Army hierarchy, but instead, I was hired by the State Department for a job in employee services. I was finally in, but it was in personnel work. I continued to work at the High Commission until 1951 when I was transferred to London.

Q: In the High Commission, were you working in Frankfurt?

BEAMAN: Yes. The Army headquarters had moved to Heidelberg, so I had to move to Frankfurt with HICOG.

Q: What were you doing in Frankfurt when you were working for the State Department but under HICOG?

BEAMAN: A number of military officers as well as civilians in OMGUS, like me, wanted to get into the HICOG organization. I did not personally make the decision as to who was retained and who was out - that was another section - but I had a lot of employee service work connected with this group, such as counseling, arranging transportation if a person was moved geographically, obtaining housing, and various other problems connected with the changeover. Percentagewise a very small number of former military or OMGUS civilians were taken into the State Department. There was simply an excess of personnel.

Q: I think these were called Kreis officers, weren't they?

BEAMAN: Yes, some Kreis officers (U.S. representatives at local level) were converted OMGUS personnel. But the State Department had its own program. Young people with college degrees were recruited as Kreis officers back in Washington and sent over. They were then assigned to various Kreises (the German equivalent to a county). That program was very effective. There had been something like that with the military.

Q: When the war was over, you were ending up with sort of a residue. I think this whole program was designed to make the transition, to get the Army out from under and get the State Department there as an interim force.

BEAMAN: That's right. They did very well. Some Foreign Service officers whom I later met when I was a Foreign Service officer had started as Kreis officers.

Q: They would have a meeting here from time to time.

BEAMAN: Oh, they did? Well, I had a few friends in that program. Later on, I realized that it was really good training for Foreign Service officers to be in jobs like that. There

were other services for which I was responsible. We had to work on a lot of problems. There were deaths that we handled. It was sort of like consular work. There were consulates in Germany. I wasn't replacing the consuls. But if the person were a HICOG employee, it was my responsibility. We had one fellow who committed suicide. We had people killed in automobile accidents. One officer, when he died, we found out he had two wives, one in Germany and one back in the States, and they both showed up to his funeral at Arlington. Another task was that of putting out a news-type sheet. Also I had a VIP bureau under my wing. For any high-ranking people who came from Washington, my assistants or I would make out their schedule, introduce them to people, and see that they were happy. The VIPs were quite often congressmen. Wayne Hayes was one of them. They were checking on what was going on.

Q: How did this work? With congressmen, things were relatively cheap. They were getting counterpart funds. I would think it would be a little hard to keep the congressmen "under reservation," in other words, from going off and hitting the high spots and the low spots.

BEAMAN: Yes. After I got into the Department, there were CODELs. We would just make out a schedule for them and they could change their minds: "I don't want to go there" or "I want to go here." So, we would arrange whatever they wanted. But they enjoyed the PX and local nightlife while they were there, and took back a lot of purchases.

Q: What was your impression of how the State Department fit into the High Commissioner's office?

BEAMAN: The officers who were from the Department, the real Department, so to speak, were a bit unhappy to be assigned to jobs in the High Commission unless they were high up. Also, at the consulate, which was in downtown Frankfurt, they didn’t like, for example, my entering in when an officer of the consulate committed suicide because they figured it was their role rather than mine, even though I was in the higher echelon. So there was a feeling that "You people aren't the regular Foreign Service." In a sense, we weren't. I had a Foreign Service staff designation, but I really was just temporary. I had to take an oral exam in Germany to become permanent staff. Then when I got to London, I had to take another exam to get regular Foreign Service officer status. It was step by step.

Q: Do you recall when you took the oral exam to get permanent status as a staff officer? Do you recall any of the questions?

BEAMAN: No, I don't recall those as well as I recall the ones in London. Those in Germany were primarily administrative-type questions. I remember, I was so nervous that I would fool around with a pencil in front of me. I flipped it way over in the corner. One of the examiners got up, walked over to the corner, came back, and put it right in front of me. In any event, I passed, along with a number of others. The questions were either administrative facts or cases like "If you had this person killed, how would you handle it? If you were going to go to the government and talk about privileges for our

people, what would you say" and things like that.

Q: Was there any effort made to train you to be part of the Department of State or was it just "Here's the job and do it" and you pick it up as you go?

BEAMAN: Sort of the latter. At least, in my case, I had fooled around with the idea for so long, I knew a lot of things to be done. We just picked up knowledge as we went along. That is not a proper statement either. A lot of material we ourselves developed. For example, for new people coming over, whether hired by the State Department or from outside the Department, I developed a handbook to orient them to life in Occupied Germany. We also developed and held training courses for our local staff. I developed outlines for accomplishing each of our employee services. Without my realizing it at the time, this, my first Foreign Service assignment, coupled with my previous Army experience, later helped me in attacking other assignments in the Foreign Service.

Q: You haven't mentioned the Germans. I realize our structure in Germany was so much that one could have a very satisfactory, very busy, productive career in Germany literally without talking to a German.

BEAMAN: That's right. Stepping back a little, when I was with the Army, which led into the same thing under the High Commission, the Germans at first worked for us because they got an 1,800 calorie meal. The money was virtually worthless. It wasn't the money they worked for; it was the food and the possibility of getting tips in food. For example, I always gave my maid a bar of soap and a pack of cigarettes, which was like tripling her salary each week. We were discouraged from associating with Germans outside of work. That was the situation in the Army. Under HICOG, the Americans were a little closer to the Germans because by then the organization was aiming to prepare Germany for sovereignty. The Germans at HICOG were more experienced and at higher grades. They worked in both administrative and substantive positions. We had certain training courses directed specifically at German staff. By that time, we could and did associate with Germans outside of work. Glenn Wolfe, the administrative officer, developed a program where groups of Germans and their wives were invited to several American (HICOG) homes on the same night. There we had a couple of hours of binational discussion aimed toward understanding each other, followed by a serving of food.

Q: When you were in HICOG, your work was still pretty well concentrated within the American working community.

BEAMAN: That's right.

Q: You did this until when?

BEAMAN: 1951. Before that, I took the oral exam that made me permanent Foreign Service staff. Being permanent, I was eligible for transfer to other posts. At first I thought I was going to go to, of all places, Manila, which I got to years later. Somebody else had staked out London, but much to my surprise, he turned down that job. I was thus assigned

to London as personnel officer. That was February 1951.

Q: You were in London from 1951 to when?

BEAMAN: 1954. Then I was in Cardiff, Wales from 1954 to the end of 1955.

Q: Let's stick to London first. What was the embassy like when you arrived?

BEAMAN: Big. SHAFE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Forces Europe) was there. That office later was transferred to Paris. But the embassy itself was very big. For example, the Political Section had several political officers. Their role was divided into British relations with Asia, British relations with Africa, British relations with the U.S., etc. It not only was big in terms of personnel, we were scattered around Grosvenor's Square in one five story building and several old Georgian houses. Workwise, there wasn't any feeling that I was an outsider. By that time, I was considered an insider. Two things happened in my case. One, personnel administration, big as the job was, didn't keep me busy. I talked to my boss about it, did he have anything else? The first thing he did was make me protocol officer in additional to personnel work. Queen Mary had died at that time. I had developed a protocol book based on her funeral and other arrangements. Then, of course, the Queen was coronated about a year after I got there. Anyway, I was protocol officer, responsible for assuring that officers and staff were advised of the British way of doing things...

In staff meetings, they kept talking about an emergency project. They talked about the need to get it “moving.” Finally, being new, I said, "What is it we're talking about?" They said, "It's emergency evacuation. So and So was doing it. He's gone and we need somebody." I didn't say it in the meeting, but I went around to the administrative officer later and said, "Is there any way I can help on this?" So I took on a job that practically doubled my work. I found the previous officer had made only a few notes on legal paper. Otherwise, there was a file of books and manuals on evacuation.

Q: We're talking about E&E (emergency evacuation) plans.

BEAMAN: That's right. Over the next year, I developed a plan for evacuation of Americans plus certain others from Europe in case the Russians started rolling over the borders. Consequently, we had good relations with the British. They were going to use the British navy and we would pick evacuees up at certain specified points. The big problem was that the previous incumbents of this job had been using the total annual tourist figures. In other words, 400,000 tourists in Europe, and the Russians start rolling across. Well, I pointed out finally that all 400,000 in a year would not all be there at one time. The number was going to be considerably less than that, probably 50,000 in summer. We changed the evacuation plan accordingly.

Q: Too, as the tensions go up, tourism goes down.

BEAMAN: That's right. There were also plans for taking out other diplomats and

selected foreigners.

Q: Tell me about being protocol officer. What sort of problems did you have?

BEAMAN: One thing was that everybody had to be accredited to the foreign office. Believe it or not, some of our military people stationed in Singapore and Hong Kong because these were British territories, had to be accredited by the foreign office in London and put on the embassy's diplomatic list. Periodically I sent them groups of invitations to official British functions, knowing the attachés would never appear. A more major task was seeing that all new officers were accredited by the foreign office soon after they arrived. There were certain laws and regulations relating to utilities, renting, leasing, etc., which I had to explain. I handled cases of complaints of some American staff about living conditions. One example - a British woman living below an American fed cats on the steps. The complaint was there were always food scraps at the bottom of his steps. I had to go to the foreign office to see if there was anything which could be done about the problem. It persuaded her to clean up after the cats.

Another case: a man wanted to present a sword to Eisenhower, who was President. This father came in with his grown son. They had this very rusty looking sword that had the Swiss spelling of Eisenhower along its blade. The son wanted to present it to the President. I accepted it. Then I took it down to the shop in the embassy and had them polish it. It looked beautiful. Then we had the problem of getting it to Washington. There weren't any funds for it. The DCM was going back and he took it on his leave. He knew Eisenhower, so he presented it.

A lot of the protocol was routine. Every officer who was assigned, during his or her first year was invited to one night reception at the palace and one garden reception. Only the senior officers went every year. I had to make out a schedule and make sure all the officers got their appearance before the court, so to speak.

Another task involved people just coming up and asking me: "I'm going to have a dinner next Friday. Will you rank these guests for me?" I could easily rank the Americans. I had to do a little studying if there were foreigners involved, as I had to find out which ambassador or which counselor outranked the other.

In addition to the emergency evacuation and protocol, the next thing that came up was the purchase of scarce or special books. The officer who had the job was leaving. The political counselor wanted somebody to do it. They wanted me to do it. The administrative counselor, however, put his foot down and said, "No. He's got too much as it is." So I never purchased books for the Department.
Q: Did you get involved in presentations at court? I recall reading the diary of someone who was our sort of third secretary in London from 1854-1870 or something like that. One of the big things that he had to worry about was wealthy Americans bringing their daughters to be presented at court. Had that gone by the time you had the protocol job?

BEAMAN: No, I never got involved in anything of that sort that I recall. They may have

consulted somebody higher up. There was a rule that the daughter of any woman who had been presented at court could ask for her daughter's presentation.

Q: How about congressional delegations? Did that develop?

BEAMAN: Not in London. My biggest job in that was in Manila. There were congressional delegations, like there were in HICOG, in Germany, but they were usually handled by the political officers.

Q: There was a lady who was very well-known, an Englishwoman, who was particularly good at getting anything, doing anything, for people who came there. Does that ring a bell with you?

BEAMAN: I think you are referring to Jane Autin. During my time she worked in General Services, handling housing matters. After I left apparently she arranged VIP visit schedules. Perhaps some protocol matters. In any event, she got praise from Kissinger and other high ranking officials. She was, as you noted, an FSN. When she died a few years ago, her obituary was in the Department Newsletter.

Q: During this 1951-1954 period, who was the ambassador?

BEAMAN: Walter Gifford; he was from AT&T. He was the first ambassador. He was succeeded by Winthrop Aldrich.
Q: Did the ambassador from your point of view make much of a difference or life just went on?

BEAMAN: I assume the ambassador had connections with the palace and with the high-ranking political people. In working on this emergency evacuation, I quite often went with the political counselor to the foreign office to exchange ideas with the British. Those were the days when Churchill was the Prime Minister.

Q: Ambassadors come and go. Gifford, I don't think he's crossed my radar in all these years.

BEAMAN: I remember him because I was taking him someplace where he was supposed to make a speech and he was worried about his suit, whether his suit looked all right. The other memory of him is that at a garden party, he and Adlai Stevenson were walking along together, and it dawned on me that Stevenson was not a tall man, as I thought he was. Back home, they talked about his being a new Lincoln, but he and Gifford were both short men.

Q: Rotund and small.

BEAMAN: That's right. As you know, Stevenson died on the steps of the embassy in later years.

Q: Were you making any moves about getting an FSO appointment while you were in London? You left in 1954 and went to Cardiff?

BEAMAN: Yes. There was the oral exam for Foreign Service officers.

Q: Do you recall that?
BEAMAN: Very definitely. I gave you this paper on Wristonization. You might want to cover this special topic later. But in any event, I set up the schedule for the examination. There were 40 people in London who had applied to become regular Foreign Service officers. I set up the schedule and, of course, I was scheduled also. There were five officers who came to give the exam. One was an ambassador. There were two political counselors. One was from Agriculture. I think maybe the other was from USIS. In any event, there were five of them that examined me. I estimated that in a few hours time, they threw about 100 questions at me. If they saw I was beginning to answer correctly, they quickly moved to another question. I had been advised by Foreign Service officer friends, "Look, if you don't know an answer, say so. Let them go on to the next." So I did that. Whenever I didn't feel confident to answer, I said so. The questions were more substantive than the original exam that I took in Germany. I tried to anticipate their questions. I read the "Times of London," cover to cover, including the court calendar and everything else, for about three or four months before the exam. I reasoned that because I had served in Germany, they were going to ask me questions about Germany. I had all of the monthly publications from HICOG. I reread those. I also reasoned that while I was in the Army, I was stationed in California and Utah, so they would probably ask me statistical-type information about the West. They did. Exactly. Then they would ask such questions as "What should we do about the Oder-Neisse Line?" I said, "Well, unless we're willing to fight the Russians, I think we just have to leave it as it is for the time being." The substantive-type questions were on current events. In any event, I was the only one approved out of the 40. I don't think that was right. There were others who were, I figured, equally qualified, but for whatever reason, they didn't select them. I hate to point a finger, but I feel part of the reason was that the old Foreign Service, as I might call it, was reluctant to take in much new blood.

Q: Oh, absolutely. The Wriston program was fought tooth and nail.

BEAMAN: Yes. I came in under Section 517. I had done enough work that related to the Foreign Service that they were willing to accept me. An interesting thing was this: I had friends who were regular Foreign Service officers, but I had never been invited to their parties because the parties were usually for political purposes or a trade delegation, which were not my field. I was a personnel officer. Only after they had heard that I had passed the exam, I wasn't even an officer yet, they started inviting me to their homes. That was one angle. The other angle was that when the appointment finally came through, Washington said I could not continue to be a personnel officer and be a Foreign Service officer. Consequently, they assigned me to Cardiff. The Department considered Cherbourg and Cardiff. They found out Mrs. Beaman was pregnant, and they said, "Oh, we don't want to send him to Cherbourg. An easier move would be to send him to Cardiff." So I was moved to Cardiff to become principal officer strictly because, as a

Foreign Service officer at that time, I could not be in administrative work.

Q: You were in Cardiff from 1954 to 1955?

BEAMAN: Yes. It was a little over a year. My son was born a couple of months after we got there, and I think he was a year and a half old when I was approved for Arabic language training. That was another thing that I kept trying to get. I had the feeling that the Arabic side of the story of Middle East turmoil was not being heard. Not that I was against Israel. In fact, in visiting Israel, I understood their situation, and I used to tell the Arabs when I got assigned there, "Look, you're not going to push those people into the sea. They have an excellent army, an excellent economy, and a united country." I had applied for Arabic language training sometime before. From Cardiff, we had gone home on leave and were going to come back to Cardiff. By the time I got to Washington, they said, "We are assigning you to Arab language training." The reason was that they had previously assigned a person who was Jewish. They didn't know that he was Jewish, and when they found out, they said, "Oh, we can't do this. Beaman's been after the assignment, so give it to him."

Q: Let's talk a little bit about Cardiff. Technically, it was the equivalent to the capital of Wales?

BEAMAN: It officially became the capital of Wales after I left.

Q: This was the principal city of Wales.

BEAMAN: That's right. Even though I wanted to get into economic work and an Arab specialty, that was one of my best posts. It was best because, first, my son was born there and local friends celebrated with us by sending gifts and flowers. But the other thing was that I was my own boss. Not belittling, but the norm of previous consuls had been to clip items out of the newspaper, put them in a report, and send them to London. I started visiting people. I visited workers institutes in the coal mine areas. I even went down into the coal mine. I came up saying, "They can have that job. I don't want it." I had to drive the official car myself. I would just jump in the car and go up in the valleys or go over to Swansea and go through a steel mill. I had a grand time. I did a lot of speaking and visiting. I also made certain friends, like a Labour MP by the name of George Thomas, who later became speaker of the House of Commons and eventually Viscount Tony Pandy. We had a friendship that lasted 40 years before he died a couple of years ago. When I sent condolences to the newspaper respecting his death, I got letters from people who went back to my time. They were writing to me or my wife.

Q: What were our concerns? What were you doing?

BEAMAN: I was trying to project a good image of the United States. Those were the days when Dulles was Secretary. Unfortunately, the State Department would put out very dull booklets of very dull speeches that he made and would send those to the consulate. I put them out on the consulate's counter or I would distribute them to officials. But this

wasn't the way to do it. That is why I made a lot of speeches. I tried to interpret U.S. policy or what was going on to the people. Once, I went down to a seaman's institute on the docks. I expected heat from the seamen, but after my talk they came around and wanted me to have tea with them. These were blacks mostly, and they were asking about segregation in the U.S. It was the first time a consul had been there. Whether they agreed with what I had to say, that's beside the point. The fact is that I was down there trying to interpret the things that we were being connected with. One of my memories is the time the U.S. was warning China about its threatening Taiwan. Here I am, the consul, walking along the street. They knew me. They would come up and stand in front of me, grab my lapels, and say, "You're trying to get us into war over Quemoy and Matsu." I would just back off and laugh and say, "What are you talking about?" Then, I gave a paragraph talk on U.S. policy. It was fun. It was probably my best post.

Q: Were you involved in visas, passports?

BEAMAN: Yes, but I had a vice consul who just loved to sign and process papers. I left most of that to him. I would sign when it was expected.

Q: In Cardiff, was it a Labour local government?

BEAMAN: No, not completely. George Thomas was Labour. He represented Cardiff West. Callahan, another Labour MP, represented the dock area. Beyond that, the MPs were Tories, as were a number of city officials. I cultivated both sides. The pubs were closed on Sunday, so I held my cocktail parties on Sunday after church. I had Tories and Labour people mixed together.

Q: You were there how long?

BEAMAN: It was only about a year and a half.

Q: So that was 1954 to when?

BEAMAN: September 1954 to the end of 1955. I think the official transfer was in January, but I went home before that.

Q: So you missed October 1956. That would have been the Suez crisis.

BEAMAN: Oh, no, I was in Beirut at that time.

Q: Did you sense a waning of interest in the United States, a blood is thicker than water type thing in Cardiff?

BEAMAN: No, they were people who spoke their minds, but I didn't regard them as being anti-U.S. People on the dock I expected to be and maybe some of them were even after I had been there. Nevertheless, they were receptive and basically friendly.

Q: I was wondering about strong left-wing labor rights, verging on the communists side and all that.

BEAMAN: I had a little taste of it. But the people weren't necessarily from Cardiff. In Britain, they have a practice that they call "Brain Trust." They liked to hold these sessions periodically. They would choose a couple of people from each side, Labour versus Conservative, and have a moderator. These people would voice their opinions. Well, I went to all of those that I knew about. There would be Labour people maybe from elsewhere, not necessarily from the Cardiff area, who were very left-leaning. At times, they would even talk about the American consul. They didn't know that I was there. In any event, these brain trusts provided material for reports. I had an easy way of sending reports in with what I figured was substantive material rather than clipping newspapers. There was one woman. I can't remember her name now. She was very leftist, inclined to spout the communist line vis a vis the U.S. But even George Thomas, who was my Labourite friend, through the years, he was a moderate. At the time he became Speaker of the House, he had to be nationalized, so to speak. He couldn't be on either side. So, when they held elections while he was Speaker, he had to run on a national ticket. He was reelected.

Cardiff was a post that I was sorry I didn't get back to. I enjoyed the Welsh people and the assignment.

Q: Were you pleased with the Arabic language training assignment?

BEAMAN: Yes, I was pleased, except as it turned out, I wasn't very good at speaking the language. I thought (having studied two other languages), I could do well at it. Not so. Friends in the Department later said they would have sent me to the Middle East without language training.

Q: What were you looking at by applying to this? This was sort of like becoming one of a priesthood or something?

BEAMAN: At the time, I felt that our policies were not fully considering the importance of the Arabs to our security (both oil and alliances). This was not being critical of Israel because I considered both sides. At the same time, I felt the Arabs were critical of the U.S. when they should not be (I had an example of this when I was later assigned to Damascus). About the time I was assigned to Arabic class, my closest friend was Cleo Noel, who was assassinated in Khartoum. George [Curt] Moore, who was assassinated there, was also in the class along with Ned Shaefer, John Gatch, and a couple of men from USIS. I don't think any of us were strongly pro-Arab over Israel although the press has often talked about the Arabist "elite" in the State Department. We were all pro-U.S.

Q: Did you see it as a good solid career move? In other words, coming in as a Wristonee, you wanted to find a home?

BEAMAN: Yes, I did. As I mentioned, they started recruiting more specialists in Arabic.

We had people like Parker T. Hart and Ambassador Raymond Hare who had been the forerunners by several years in this specialty. What I wanted to do was to specialize in the Arabic world and economics. I found that I just wasn't good at Arabic. I could carry on a rudimentary conversation in Arabic, but I couldn't have negotiated in Arabic. Curt Moore, who was killed, could have. Cleo, I think, maybe wasn't as good as Moore, but he was certainly better than I.

Q: You started this class in Washington or in Beirut?

BEAMAN: I started in Washington. In those days, we studied in Washington from January to September. August is when we actually moved to Beirut to finish the course. After I was no longer connected with it, the Department transferred the course to Beirut. There later was an Arabic language school in Tunis. We found really that western Arabic was not like the Near East Arabic. So, at that time, I was in both Washington and Beirut. That was at a time that Dulles turned down a plea for us to help with the High Aswan Dam. Of the whole class, I was the one that said it was a bad move. The rest of the class felt Nasser should be slapped down. I later found in documents, however, that Dulles could not have made a different decision because the Congress would not have supported him. That took me a few years to learn. My opinion was that we should have tried to help build the High Aswan Dam. Bad feeling grew out of the way it was done diplomatically. Apparently, we had been talking to the Egyptians, and Dulles just came out, pulled the rug out and said, "No."

Q: I have been told by people that there was a visceral dislike of Dulles for Nasser and probably the reverse. From our point of view, Dulles really enjoyed doing this.
BEAMAN: I would say so, just by the method used in rejection. Speaking of Dulles and stepping back a little, when I was in London as personnel officer there was what we called the "Dulles reduction in force." He had a concept of an ivory tower-type of Foreign Service. He wanted to get rid of the whole Foreign Service staff. He wanted them transferred to the Civil Service or whatever. I don't know how he expected to do that. That is why in here I've got a note that it was a mistake. These people were required to run the embassies and so on. It was one of the most difficult parts of my work in London. I had grown men come in and cry in my office.

Q: How did it come out?

BEAMAN: I kept tabs on everybody who had been reduced in force. I couldn't keep tabs on the secretaries very well. In any event, officers and specialists, I kept tabs on them. Within one year, practically all of them had been rehired by the State Department. For example, Andy Killgore (I later met with him in the Arab language training) was a consul there, not the top consul, but a consul. He came to my office. He didn't cry. He was mad. He walked up and down just mad as Hell. All I could to was talk to try to soothe him. He returned to Washington and they put him in Security. Then they got him into Arab language training and eventually he became an ambassador. Life is interesting at times.

Q: At that time and when you got to Beirut, did you get any feeling about the motivation

of the people who came? The reason I'm asking is that there is this thing that has been put out, particularly from Israeli sources, that American Foreign Service officers who were Arabists are essentially anti-Semitic and all that.

BEAMAN: No, I challenge that.

Q: Did you get any feel for why people were signing up for this?
BEAMAN: Like in my own case, it wasn't anti-Semitic. It was just our belief on policy in general. I don't know of anyone who had any anti-Semitic or anti-Israeli feelings. They might have disagreed with what Israel had been doing, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they hated Israelis. No, I would challenge that. They'd have to prove it to me.

Q: Right from the beginning, the Israelis seemed to have had this "If you're not 100% with us, you're against us. If you're against us, you're anti-Semitic." Also, it was a way of diminishing the impact of our Arab experts, who were saying, "You've got other interests than Israeli interests in the Middle East." In a way, it did kind of work.

BEAMAN: In my case, I'm not saying what the cases were for Curt Moore or Cleo Noel or anyone else, but for most of them, this was a career. This was a home where they could help shape policy. In my case, as I say, it's because I felt that the Arab story had not been completely exposed and talked about back in the States. But on the other hand, having visited Israel (I first visited Israel in 1951), I knew it was not going to be pushed "into the sea" (as the Arabs boasted). The Arab armies were not as good in discipline and tactics as the Israeli army.

Q: You were saying that looking at the Arab armies, that they didn't appear very good.

BEAMAN: It was my view. I wasn't a military man, but it was just that their discipline, looks, and demeanor were not "spit and polish." I felt that they would not overwhelm and push the Israelis into the sea. The Jordanian army was the best. That army, however, was trained by the British.

Q: You were in Beirut from when to when?

BEAMAN: I got there in September of 1956. I left about a year after that. The reason was that Cleo and I had signed under one directive of the State Department where it said something to the effect "one year's Arab training." The Department was going to have us do two years. Cleo and I both said, "We didn't sign on for that." Of course, as I wasn't very good at Arabic, I reasoned why spend another year at it? So we were assigned out early. I was assigned to Cairo.

Q: How did you find the course in Beirut?

BEAMAN: We had Palestinian Arabs, and we had Syrians and Lebanese. The Arabic is slightly different among those countries, but the course was well organized. There was a fellow by the name of Frank Rice, who was a language technician and specialist. He ran

it. Medjid Said was his chief Arab assistant both in Washington and eventually in Beirut. We had classes about six hours a day. A lot of it had to do with grammar and learning to write in Arabic, but also we had little skits that we played out. For example, you have an American citizen who has been arrested and is in an Arab jail. One person plays the Arab official and another person plays the Foreign Service officer trying to get him out of jail. Or somebody comes in with false credentials for a visa, and what do you do to challenge the applicant? I felt it was good play acting. I helped write some of the scripts. Then, of course, there was a long field trip. The whole class was taken. We went to Ankara, Baghdad, Teheran, and Saudi Arabia on a circular tour. In each place, people talked to us about their problems. Turkey and Iran were not Arabic, but nevertheless, they were on the tour. I remember, in order to get to Israel, we had to fly to Cyprus and backtrack to Israel. It was a well run course. There is no question about it.

Q: You were there during the October '56 Arab-Israeli conflict? Could you explain how it came about, what you were all doing and how it was perceived at that time?

BEAMAN: It came about when Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal. He took this action because the U.S. and Britain had refused to help with the Aswan Dam project. Israel invaded the Gaza Strip and the Sinai. Britain and France invaded the Canal Zone. Our concern in Beirut was to help American citizens get out of Israel, Jordan, and Syria, over the border into Lebanon. The school director sent several "advanced" Arabic students to help with the exit. My class were "beginners," so we were not sent. As you know, international pressure, especially from the U.S., induced Britain, France, and Israel to pull out of Egypt. My feeling, and I think that of some of the other Arabists, was that the turnover of the Canal should have been a negotiated shift. The Canal Zone was a part of Egypt, but Nasser's belligerent marching in with troops and closing down British and French businesses turned us off. A myth grew up that the Egyptians had succeeded in expelling the French and the British and had beaten them - this despite the fact that Port Said, a lot of it, was damaged by bombs. I later was assigned to Egypt and to Port Said. The myth still was that Egypt had won, even though they hadn't militarily. Diplomatically, it was largely U.S. intervention that got the three invaders to pull back. But we never got any credit from Nasser for the intervention. We were ranked with so-called "imperialists."

Q: As we all learned, the myth is often more important in the Arabic world than reality. For example, there are still Egyptians today who think that American planes attacked in the 1967 War the Egyptian air force.

BEAMAN: Yes. I was in Syria at that time. Absolutely, that is what they believed. I was DCM then. I went with a political officer to talk to officials at the foreign office. They were accusing us directly of participating in this invasion, which, of course, we denied. We had gone over there to deliver a message from President Johnson. We got lambasted. That was in the morning and by evening, they were telling us that we had two days to get out.

Q: How were the Lebanese responding to the Suez Crisis?

BEAMAN: I don't know that I can answer with any exactitude. The Lebanese played a temporizing role. They wanted to be considered Arabic, but at the same time, there was a lot of French influence particularly in Lebanon. They didn't want to give that up. But they were on the side of the Arab criticism in the newspapers and on the radio.

Q: Did the embassy intrude at all on you in Beirut?

BEAMAN: No. We were sort of separate. The only intrusion was that they gave us a title that wasn't "Foreign Service officer" on their protocol list. Even though we were all Foreign Service officers, we were not considered a part of the embassy Foreign Service officer group. So, on the accreditation list, we were separate. We had a descriptive title of "language specialists."

Q: I thought we might stop at this point. You were assigned after language training in Beirut to be what in Cairo?

BEAMAN: Consul in Cairo.

Q: What rank did you have by this time?

BEAMAN: At that time, I was an FSO-4. That's what I came in with. I finally got my FSO-3 when I was later transferred to Port Said.

Q: So, you went to Cairo in what year?

BEAMAN: In 1957.

Q: We'll pick this up in 1957 going to Cairo as consul.

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This is October 30, 1999. You mentioned in talking about HICOG that one of the differences between your set of officers and the others was what?

BEAMAN: HICOG took over from the military government. So a lot of the people were from the military government, but in my case, I had been working for the Army headquarters and was hired by the State Department for the personnel program. But there was a difference that I had forgotten to mention earlier - namely, that those of us who were Foreign Service Staff were only temporary. Secondly, we had "official" passports rather than diplomatic passports. That was what drew the line between the regular Foreign Service and us. As a matter of fact, I had quite a bit to do with passports. I had to approve, put a stamp in the passports, that the individuals were employees of the High Commission. I think the thing was that there were so many, it would have considerably increased the number of diplomatic passports, which the Department did not want to do. They knew at that time that all of them were not going to stay on. Later, while still in Germany, I was examined and was made a permanent Foreign Service Staff officer.

Q: And then you got a diplomatic passport.

BEAMAN: Yes. When I was transferred to London, I got a diplomatic passport.

Q: In 1957, you went to Cairo. You were in Cairo from when to when?

BEAMAN: I got to Cairo in 1957, and I was there until 1959. Then I was transferred to Port Said. In the 1957-1959 period, I finally got economic work. I went there as consul. I was disappointed at that. I had been a principal officer before Arabic language training. I had taken Arabic language training, and I was still a consul. I wasn't even a principal officer. But about partway through that period, the Department transferred me within the embassy to an economic position. An interesting thing, one of the reasons I was assigned was, in the exam that I had taken in London, the Commerce representative on the panel had recommended me for a commercial job. So I was transferred, and I did both commercial work and economic reporting. There was a regular commercial attaché. I was just the deputy to him. One of the things that I spent a good deal of my time on was keeping an eye on various aid projects from the Soviet Bloc, primarily Czechoslovakia and Russia.

Q: Could you describe what the situation was like when you arrived in Egypt in 1957? What was the political/economic situation?

BEAMAN: Our relations with Egypt at that time were unstable. The time was after Secretary Dulles had said, "No" to the U.S. helping with the High Aswan Dam. Of course, even before that, the Egyptians had been getting a lot of assistance from the Soviet Bloc, primarily Czechoslovakia. The Russians were going to help with the High Dam. It was part of my job to find out what planning was going on. During a trip to Aswan, I was briefed by an Egyptian official. We used a boat to get nearer to the current dam. He proved to me that the Egyptians had already carefully formulated plans for building the dam. He also said the Russians had some different ideas about how to approach the construction. They would have preferred the U.S. give help in building the dam. Another work project was that as a result of the 1957 clash with the British over the Canal, it was closed for some time. There was a need to report on Egyptian plans to open it up, how soon it was going to accept traffic. Later on, after my economic assignment, I was posted to Port Said. By that time, the Canal was open. Strangely enough, the Authority had employed a U.S. Army engineer ship to dredge the Canal along with two American dredging companies. To answer your question, when I was there it was very difficult to cultivate Egyptians. Nasser was angry with the United States. Everything we Americans did was watched. For example, when I invited locals to my house in Cairo, some guests would park their cars several blocks away and walk the rest of the way. After I was assigned to Port Said and I put on large parties, I would always invite key officials and businessmen. A lot of them wouldn't show up. They wanted the invitations, my deputy found, but they did not want to be seen at big parties. So there was a disparity of feeling: they'd like to be courteous but were afraid of government spies. The police knew wherever I was along the Canal. Yet once the governor and police commissioner

attended a speech I gave at the USIS center on “Life in the U.S.” I should note they also watched the Russian consul.

Nasser came to Port Said every year to make a speech on the day of the supposed victory over the British. At these times he would be very critical of Britain and the United States in his speeches. I, as consul, had to debate in my mind whether I should get up and walk out. I didn't at any time. One of the reasons was, they locked the gates. When Nasser made his speech, they locked the gates, and one couldn't get out. Anyway, there was a very tenuous situation in our relations. On the other hand, working as I did in economics and commercial work, I had quite a series of contacts in the Cairo ministries that dealt with economic matters. I had several official contacts in Port Said whom I could see directly.

Q: Did we have many contacts? You mentioned you got special tours. Who was the ambassador when you were there?

BEAMAN: Raymond Hare. At the end, there was Frederick Reinhardt.

Q: Did you get the feeling that you could really call on the government, do your normal diplomatic thing? Was that a problem?

BEAMAN: No great problem. In fact, when I was still consul in Cairo, the ambassador commented in a staff meeting one time that I seemed to have a lot of contacts. His reasoning was that the title "consul" was historic in Egypt as being a very important person. He felt that because I was consul, I had developed more contacts strictly on the title. A lot of these contacts were developed for tourism purposes. Egyptians going to the States had to get approval from their government before we could issue them a visa. Also, several visiting Americans got themselves in trouble. Sometimes I'd get a call late at night from the airport that So and So was being thrown out and the Americans wanted to see the consul. In one case, I got to the airport and said, "Well, I'm the consul. What can I do for you?" He said, "Oh, I just wanted somebody to talk to until I got on the plane." But in any event, there were very few times when they evicted an American. One of the big case problems was when we had a group of students who had been signed on by a tour operator. They got to Cairo and were taking unauthorized pictures. Tourists were not supposed to take pictures of presumed military stuff. That was one problem. Another problem was that they had been left high and dry by their tour agency. The Egyptian government was begging me to get them out of the country. Similarly, when I was consul at Port Said, one of the big incidents that I had to handle was that of a ship called "Valiant Faith." It came into port after we had received a telegram saying that the crew was almost mutinous. It had stopped at Gibraltar and crew members had talked to their wives. They found their wives had not gotten their paychecks, which should have been sent to their homes. The crew was angry, and the captain used the word "mutinous." When they arrived in Port Said, there were very angry sailors who poured out on the streets. The local governor asked me to please get them out of there. We did. If an American ship went through and had a berth, the consulate could insist that the ship take this or that “beach” sailor. There were about 30 of them, and over a period of a month or

so, we finally got them all on American ships going out. The captain stayed behind to handle ship-related matters. The ship company itself was financially broke. “Valiant Faith” had come in under an American flag and was there for over a year. I had left by that time. It sailed out under a Greek flag. Our problem was that it was filled with wheat. I can't remember whether it was hard or soft wheat. I think it was soft wheat, which was on its way to India. Well, the Egyptians don't usually eat soft wheat products. They like the hard wheat for their bread. So it was a matter of our just sitting in on negotiations between the captain and local people to arrange for turning the cargo over to the Egyptians instead of getting it to India where it was supposed to go... Port Said was an interesting assignment.

I got assigned to Port Said, incidentally, after I had been assigned in Cairo to economic work for the first time. I was sent to Port Said because they had successively assigned two other officers there and for some reason, they were transferred elsewhere. The Department was getting a little desperate. The fellow who had been there had left, and it was open. So I was assigned to Port Said. But I was able to do some economic reporting on the Canal in addition to handling consular and representation duties.

Q: Were you followed much? Were the Egyptian police a bother?

BEAMAN: Oh, yes, particularly when I was consul in Port Said. They knew where I was at any one time. They had informants along the Canal. If I would go take a trip down the Canal for any reason, they knew where I was exactly. The same way they kept an eye on us around Port Said, not only me, but the others in the consulate.

Q: When you went down when they were getting ready for the High Dam, what was your impression on how it was going - and what was that of the economic counselor?

BEAMAN: Actually, the Egyptians had it well planned. They had been working on the project for several years. They had their own ideas. At the moment, I can't remember the difference between their plan and what the Russians did, but in any event, they had a complete plan when I went for this visit. I thought, well, the Egyptians are really set up. One of the things that irritated them was that when the Russians came in to help, the Russians had insisted on following their own ideas as to how the dam should be built. I think probably in the long run, it was a compromise. They just didn't see eye to eye despite the fact that the Russians were helping them build it. It was finished after I left. I later got back to Egypt and was able to see it. The economic counselor never questioned my reports.

Q: There was concern when the planning was being done that what would happen would be that Egypt depended so much on the Nile flow and including the sediment in the waters that the dam might stop the sediments and the water would not be as nutritious. Was that a factor?

BEAMAN: It was a factor for consideration at the time. As I say, I've been back afterwards a couple of times (latest 1990). Water from Lake Nasser has led to a lot of agricultural development below the dam. Also, industry has moved upstream. After a

consulting project, I signed up for a tour coming from Aswan down to Luxor by ship. One of the things that disturbed me was that there were industries with their belching smoke along the Nile. I felt it was spoiling the atmosphere. The dam had been an excellent plan for them really. There is more food and more industries now in a growing Egypt. No question the High Dam eventually did improve things in Egypt. They've got a large population, so I don't know whether the improvement has kept up with growth or not.

Q: We weren't doing an AID project while you were there, were we?

BEAMAN: AID wasn't there. At the time of the Suez Crisis, AID pulled out. When I got to Cairo, there was just the AID comptroller who had remained behind because of projects that had been funded. But then AID came back again. Most of this was after I had left. As you're probably aware, Egypt is one of our biggest clients in the matter of receiving U.S. aid.

Also, of course, we had NAMRU (Navy Medical Research Unit) there. It continued to operate despite the bad feelings. The Egyptians wanted NAMRU to stay because NAMRU was helping do vital studies, including the West Nile fever that we in the U.S. are talking about now. That was and is one of their major research projects. I could see also when the Persian Gulf War came later, a lot of the things that they told me were being studied was used in handling the troops in that war.

Q: When you arrived at the embassy, what was the attitude that you were picking up from the ambassador and others who were talking about Nasser?

BEAMAN: Ambassador Hare was very good. He spoke Arabic, so he could keep in close touch with the government. The same thing with the political counselor and to a certain extent the economic counselor, but it was more a political situation. We were trying to get back in their good graces vis a vis U.S. policy and planning. The thing was, though, that Nasser already had his mind made up on a lot of things, and he particularly was angry because we didn't help him with the High Aswan Dam. There had been talks going on, but as I mentioned earlier, Dulles just pulled the rug out from under the idea. It was the way it was done rather than it being done or not. If there had been some negotiations and saying, "Well, we can't agree on this. Sorry," it would have left a little better feeling. But he just issued a statement. Nasser was expecting the United States to help.

Q: Was there much sign of Soviet and Czech activity there?

BEAMAN: They provided funds. The Russians were concentrating primarily on the High Aswan Dam. It was the Czechs and maybe some other East Europeans which helped on getting industries started in Egypt. As I said, I was supposed to keep up on this. I would read in the paper that down 30 or so miles from Cairo, they had built a factory. I would go down there in my own car and find there wasn't anything there. I finally said to somebody at the economic ministry, "Look, I read in the paper that you've built a factory at a certain place and the Czechs helped you. But it's not where the paper said it was."

They said, "Well, the Arabs, if something is formulated, they consider it done." "You've got to think like an Arab" is what they were saying. "You Americans expect stuff to be done when it's published." The same thing happened at Port Said when they built a clinic for women to help with childbirth. I went with Mary to the dedication, and I found it had no water. Here is a medical outfit where obviously a lot of water is going to be needed, and they hadn't put the water in. Yet they were dedicating the "clinic" with a lot of speeches.

Q: You were at Port Said from when to when?

BEAMAN: Just before July 4, 1959. I was there for the July Fourth party. Then I left about two years later in March 1961.

Q: One of the things that had been said when Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal was that the Brits and the French were saying,"Oh, these Egyptians can't run the Canal." That wasn't too long before you got there. Was this one of the things you were tasked to look at and see how the Canal was running? What was your impression?

BEAMAN: I was expected to report regularly on Suez Canal activities. I felt they were doing all right. Of course, during the period when I was there, the Egyptians were devoting effort to clearing the Canal of silt and debris which had accumulated. The Canal had silted up during the period of its closure. Once cleared, I think the Egyptians did very well in running it. In addition to hiring American companies to dredge the Canal, the Authority hired three or four American pilots who brought the convoys through and trained Egyptian pilots. I had good relations with Colonel Mahmoud Younes, managing director of the Suez Canal Authority. I kept in touch with him, during which he discussed plans for developing the Canal. One of the best reports I wrote during my career was "A Socioeconomic Survey of Port Said" (May 1961), which dealt with what was happening and future possibilities for the Canal. I got kudos from the Department for the 29 page document. Since those days they seemed to have no problems in running the Canal.

Q: Were the Israelis at all a problem while you were dealing with Port Said?

BEAMAN: Israelis weren't a problem for me certainly. Sometimes in that 1959-1961 timespan, I would go to Cairo periodically to consult. Once when I was going to Cairo and I passed miles and miles of tanks and army trucks filled with soldiers, sometimes guns, headed toward the Suez Canal. I immediately went to the military attachés in the embassy and said, "Do you know that this is going on?" Yes, they knew. Nasser at that time had had some sort of disagreement with the Israelis. So he was throwing all this equipment into the Sinai. It went on for about a month. It was a month before "Time Magazine" picked it up. It amazed me that nobody was writing about this. Of course, I prepared reports when I got back to the consulate. So, the 1967 business might have happened earlier if Nasser had gone through with an invasion then, but he didn't.

Q: Were there little probes, small unit actions going along between the Israelis and the Egyptians? Was it pretty quiet?

BEAMAN: It was pretty quiet. I made a trip to the Gaza Strip one time. I was using a map that I found was out of date. I found that the Egyptians had built roads that weren't on the map and these roads were leading to the Gaza Strip. Nasser was given to making acrimonious statements about "imperialists." He always condemned the Israelis, the U.S. and Britain during his speeches in that period. Sometimes he would add Jordan, too, if King Hussein had made some statement he didn't like.

Q: Was there very much the feeling both while you were in Cairo and in Port Said that Nasser was almost a larger than life figure in the Arab world?

BEAMAN: Yes. That was the thing. He would come to Port Said to celebrate this so-called "victory," which wasn't really a victory, on the anniversary of the seizure of the Canal. When he came, the population turned out en masse. At one time, I really feared for his life. The crowd was overwhelming the open car that he was in. I said, "Oh, my God. They're going to kill the man." They were jumping in and wanted to shake his hands virtually lying on top of him. The people outwardly, I think, favored him. Years later when I went back to Egypt, some of the local employees at the embassy said, "Well, he really was a dictator and we didn't like him, but what could we do?"

Q: How about contacts in Port Said? Did you find it was sort of a different ballgame than in Cairo or not?

BEAMAN: In Cairo, I had contacts with the various ministries and particularly with tour agencies and businesses. In Port Said, on the other hand, I cultivated as much as I could the governor and chief of police. I always had good relations with the governor. In Port Said, we had a USIS theater. It was large enough to hold maybe 25-30 people. We had a program of special days at USIS to attract children, including Mary's providing cookies. I would also give speeches and sometimes the governor would come to those speeches. So I always had good official contacts. When these "Valiant Faith" sailors were running in the streets, I had more discussions with the police than any other time. My contacts in Port Said other than the government were primarily business officials. Some of the British were still there doing business, so if I gave a party and invited businessmen, there were going to be British there, knowing that some of the locals didn't show up but some did. But they always wanted an invitation. People weren't coming and I was marking them off my list, but my deputy said, "Well, they want the invitation just to say they have it." So I spent a lot more on printing costs and invited twice as many people as came simply just so they could say, "Oh, yes. I got an invitation from the consul, but I'm busy."

Q: Were there papers that came out of Port Said? Was there a local press or not?

BEAMAN: Yes, there was a local press, but it didn't have the influence of Cairo. The local press in Arabic maybe had some influence, but I wasn't able to read that well enough. Even though I had studied Arabic, I just was not that good at it. I read the local French language paper. I was a friend of a reporter who worked on the paper. Unfortunately, he was a suspect because he had a French background. His mother or

father was French. When it came to the British invading, he left on a British ship. That really ended his career in Port Said as a reporter.

Q: Did you cover Sinai and the Gaza Strip?

BEAMAN: Yes. The Sinai was part of my consular district and there were Canadian UN peacekeepers near Gaza. That is the reason that I made this trip to the Gaza Strip. I did have contact regularly with the Canadians. One of them gave my son a little white military jeep as a toy. One of the things I wanted to do was go to Mount Sinai where the Ten Commandments were supposedly formulated. I had it all worked out, and then the government would not approve my going there. I raised the question, "Why?" They said, "Russians from the Russian embassy have gone up there, and they've passed out leaflets to people on the way up and back." I said, "Well, I'm not going to pass out leaflets." Nevertheless, they had made the rule that no diplomats could go to Mount Sinai, so I never did see that historic mountain.

Q: How about Gaza? What was the situation there?

BEAMAN: When I got up there, they had a lot of Palestinian refugees. I was there twice. I was there on my own for the first time; the second time, FSI Arabic language students made a tour of the Middle East out of Beirut. I was in Gaza with this group. In my talking to the refugees, they were, of course, complaining that the Israelis had stolen their land and they had no place to go. Unfortunately, on the second trip with the group, the head of the group said, "Well, actually, there are worse slums and worse situations elsewhere." This did not create a good impression! My trips were intended to gather information, including checking the military attaché's map. I really had no regular reporting from there. It was just impressions and stories. Some of the people in the Gaza Strip later became the militants inside Beirut particularly. The interesting thing was that from Gaza Strip, I could look up on the hill and see Israeli cities. Then when I got to Israel on a trip, I could look down on the Gaza Strip from the other side. There was no mixing or border crossing in those days.

Q: Did you have any contact with our people in Tel Aviv?

BEAMAN: No. On an earlier trip with my Arabic class, we visited Israel. There I heard their side of the story, but I had no direct contact as far as work was concerned.

Q: You left in 1961. Where did you go?

BEAMAN: I came back to the United States. I was assigned as head of the Basic Officer's Course.

Q: You did that from 1961 to when?

BEAMAN: 1961-1963, about two years.

Q: The Basic Course was called "A-100." How did that name come about?

BEAMAN: I don't know why the "100" is"A." Perhaps it stood for “Administration.” I was assigned because I had worked toward a Ph.D. in college and the job was called "college professor." I must say that, there again, when I was assigned, I was a little disappointed. I was still aiming toward economic work. But it was one of the most important steps in my career development. I might stop at this point and say that while I was wanting my own assignment desire. I realize now that with each step up, I was getting nearer to being qualified for managing an operation, whether it be consular work or economic work or whatever. Getting back to the Basic Officer's Course, I think I was selected because of my academic background as well as my previous experience. At first, we had relatively small classes, maybe 20, but after a while, it got to be over 30 and sometimes as many as 40. They needed two of us to work on it. Duffield was brought in as a codirector. Toward the end, when I was seeking reassignment a couple of years later, they brought in an officer who outranked me. So it was time to go.

Q: The entry course, the preparation of new officers for the Foreign Service, is a very important one. Do you think the Department of State took it very seriously?

BEAMAN: Yes, I think so. You understand that each course director sets up his or her own agenda. I tried to make it as practical as possible. In other words, there were sessions where we talked about reporting and sessions where we talked about getting sailors out of trouble. The things I tried to instill was 1) learn to make decisions and 2) assume responsibility for whatever you're doing. Re this business of decisions: One of the classes for some reason, in all of these big classes, only had about 14 people in it. I thought, "Oh, let's go for the Secretary." I would have assistant secretaries, former ambassadors, and specialists come to talk to the class. Because of the size of the class, they came to FSI. But here was a class small enough that we might arrange for Secretary Rusk to talk to them. I posed the idea. Of course, his aides immediately arranged it. At a certain date, we were over there. We sat around in his conference room at a big long table along with him. During the discussion he gave me an idea that I hadn't thought of. He was talking about the burden of all of the mail and telegrams that go out, 1,000 telegrams a day, and then hundreds of bags of mail. He made the point that he couldn't possibly read but only a small portion of this correspondence. He had to rely on officers to make the decisions at various levels. In the midst of his emphasizing the need to make decisions, he said, "No decision is a decision." I hadn't thought of that. What he was saying is, if you don't make a decision at the end of the day, you've decided to wait until tomorrow. He gave a very good story on that. During World War II, he was political advisor to General Stilwell. In 1943 or 1944 when things were going our way, Rusk, along with a lot of other people, reasoned that we were going to win the war. What should the U.S. do afterwards? Stilwell told him to draw up a paper, which he did, recommending certain actions in Indochina, what the U.S. should do. He said that Stilwell sent in the question; no answer. He talked to all the military and civilian high ranking people who came: "Has the President seen this paper?" Finally, he pushed Stilwell again to follow up. "Where is the answer to this proposal?" He went in to Stilwell and said, "Do you have an answer?" He very graphically described how Stilwell went to the wall safe, turned the dial, and took

out a piece of a paper and handed it to Rusk. It was the same paper that he had sent in, but at the bottom, it said, "I do not want to hear any more about Indochina - Franklin D. Roosevelt." Rusk said, because the President did not make a decision at that time about what to do with Indochina, that was one of the things which had led to the situation existing when we were talking - namely, Vietnam and the problems in Vietnam. He used that to illustrate that no decision in 1944 led to the necessity for a lot of decisions at the time we were talking. In the Basic Officer's Course, both Duffield and I tried to make it as practical as possible by bringing over to FSI people to talk about problems in planning. One of the things we learned from these people talking - and even Rusk said that - was that you can draw up all sorts of plans, but they will not cover every contingency. That was the point he was making: you've got to make decisions within plans. I find that that talk gave me a hold on the whole management of foreign affairs, which if I didn't fully realize before, I certainly knew afterwards.

The people who came through the course were really very select individuals. At one time, I had an officer above me called a "Basic Foreign Service Officer Specialist." He was higher rank and he was over in the main State building. I went to him and said, "Look, you don't have very many minorities. You don't even have very many women in these classes." He said, "Well, we would take them, but they don't score high enough on the exam to get in." So, that was the only thing during that period that I was critical of, that we needed more women, more "colored," oriental, Latins in the class. I can't recall one black person going through this course when I was in charge there. That later changed, of course, as you well know.

Q: Was there concern at the time about the rule that if a woman got married, she had to resign? From what I gather, when I came in in 1955, there was one officer, San Wee, of Chinese descent. I think there were about 20 of us. The rest of us were all males. I understand that a number of the women who came through would end up by getting married even before they went out, often to a Foreign Service officer, which was great for breeding purposes - two very bright people. Was there concern about the fact that the women had to resign when they got married and all that?

BEAMAN: Yes. Early, when I started working for the State Department in HICOG, that was one of the things that bugged me. If a male State Department employee wanted to marry a foreigner, usually a German in this case, he had to hand in his resignation until his fiancé was cleared. If she were cleared, they would return the resignation. If they found some problem in her background, they would accept the resignation. Admittedly, some women in the tough months right after the war, did engage in certain activities that weren't acceptable.

Q: Usually prostitution.

BEAMAN: Yes. When I was consul in Cardiff, there was a big U.S. military establishment in the north part of my jurisdiction and we had the same thing of the Department having to approve visas for the prospective bride.

The other thing was, as you mentioned, pregnancy. I presume you mean action when a Foreign Service woman was married to a Foreign Service man or somebody else and she got pregnant.

Q: Well, not just pregnant. In those days, 1961-1963, if a female Foreign Service officer got married, no matter to whom - to another Foreign Service officer, which often happened - she had to resign. That was rather discouraging, I would think, to the recruiters and the trainers, that would think, "Here we've gone to a great deal of trouble to produce a candidate who was being trained. Now she is going to be lost to the Service."

BEAMAN: Yes. Cleo Noel, who was assassinated in the Sudan. His wife was a Foreign Service officer. They're an example of a couple that developed out of Foreign Service officer training. Of course, she quit when she got married. The same was true for a good many female FSOs. In the classes that I had, there were a few that got married right after the class, maybe two or three. Yes, there were questions of discrimination raised about this procedure, but they weren't very loud at that particular time. Now, of course, the whole assignment process has changed.

Q: Did you have problems in getting interesting presentations? One of the complaints I've heard over the years (I suffered through this way back.) was that often you'd get people from the Department or other departments would come in and say "This is what we do" and not being very lively. It wasn't very inspiring.

BEAMAN: When our choices made their first presentation, we didn't know how they were going to be. But if we found somebody who came before our class was like what you're talking about, we would get somebody else to come the next time. We did try to get desk officers who were good speakers. Even some of the ex-ambassadors were the type you were talking about. They were rather boring, but they were ambassadors. I can remember one ambassador who was worried because the students hadn't presented any questions to him. Of course, I urged the class to raise questions, but they often didn't. He was very disturbed when he left. Yes, we tried to make it practical and as interesting as possible. That is why I arranged for Dean Rusk to talk to the group. I'm sorry that he couldn't have talked to all of them, but it just wasn't possible. But there were certain ambassadors or certain assistant secretaries who were very good at explaining policy and planning.

Q: One of the complaints that we had - and I've heard it reflected other times - was that when we went over to the Department of Commerce, that was always the deadliest of times.

BEAMAN: We didn't go to the Department of Commerce. We took the classes to New York instead. Sometimes we first took them to Philadelphia or Baltimore and then New York to have business people, including bankers, talk to them. Up in New York, Immigration officials also spoke with them, as did our officers at USUN. So we did have field trips, and we tried to get interesting people. But what you're saying is that some of

these people from other agencies didn't prove as interesting. We may not have succeeded 100%, but we tried.

I think we did a pretty good job. I was a consultant after I retired. I was down in Mexico City at the same time that a State Department inspection was going on. When I was introduced to one of the female inspectors, she said, "Oh, I know you. You wrote the best evaluations I've seen for the FSI basic course." These things surface later. Both Duffield and I really tried to write analytical and thoughtful evaluations.

Q: Duffield's first name was what?

BEAMAN: Thomas Jefferson Duffield. He's dead now. He had been consul in Portugal and in Brazil. I don't know what the rest of his career was. In any event, the two of us worked well together. As a matter of fact, Ms. McMillan used to work with us. She was our special administrative assistant who arranged classes and called people for appointments. I was surprised to find she was still working with A-100 after all these years.

Q: Were you making a mental list as these groups of officers came by of which ones you saw as moving towards the top?

BEAMAN: Yes. Each class, I tried to pick out who I thought were the leaders of the class. Well, some of them, like Winston Lord, Peter DeVoss, Richard Holbooke, and other people you'd recognize. Some of them whom I considered leaders left the Foreign Service. The name of Featherstone comes to mind. He was tops in my mind. He resigned after a few years. He said that he didn't feel his skills and knowledge were being effectively used. One of the things was, of course, many students didn't like assignments to consular or administrative work. So, Featherstone is an example of an officer who had a good background. He did very well in the class discussions. But after a few years, he gave it up and went back to private industry. I think he was a lawyer. I was sad when I heard that he had resigned. I had a chance to talk to him when he was on his way out. By then, it was too late to get him to change his mind. I had occasion this past week to read something that another Foreign Service officer loaned to me - a man by the name of James Hallway. In 1963, he submitted a resignation to the Secretary. It was in the Newsletter. He was bringing out just what I've been talking about, that he did not feel he was recognized for his talents. At that time, there were eight grades, and he had come in and was only a seven after five years of service. He couldn't understand why he hadn't gotten promoted. He just felt that he wasn't being fully utilized and said he was sorry to leave. He wanted to serve his country, but it just wasn't giving him a career that he thought he would like to have.

Well, there was criticism in cases like mine, where I came in at a class four, which was halfway up the scale. At that time - the Wristonization (I came under Section 517 conversion), the people that were in the regular Foreign Service didn't like that. I could appreciate it. If I had been there having gone through the difficult written exam, I might have felt the same way. My only reply is that before entering the Foreign Service I had

had several years of professional experience.

Q: Did you work with Personnel to try to tailor the first assignment?

BEAMAN: No, I didn't have much to do with that. Near the end of a given class, somebody would come over from Personnel Placement and would read where they were sending various people. Some of them were staying in Washington. Some of them were going into other courses. But I can remember one woman who cried. She had been assigned as a vice consul in Bermuda, and she wanted to go to Africa. She cried that she didn't get an assignment to Africa as she had requested.

Q: Africa was a big thing then.

BEAMAN: Yes. Africa was a big drawing card in the 1960s, with many new countries becoming independent. If they were put in consular or administrative work, most of the students really were not happy. It seemed as if they all wanted to be political officers or, at the least, economic officers. Duffield and I both kept emphasizing to them, "You're not all going to be ambassadors, but you aim in that direction and otherwise be satisfied with a career." It was interesting, the reaction to some of the assignments. I can't remember what Winston Lord got, but he seemed satisfied. I had known his mother before him, as a matter of fact. She was UN representative, and I had met her in Egypt on a visit, at a desert tent party.

Q: I've had an extensive set of interviews with Winston Lord.

I would have thought, during 1961-1963, these, of course, were President Kennedy's years. This was the height of inspiration to serve your country. There was a great spirit of "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." Were you feeling this?

BEAMAN: Yes.

Q: This wasn't just a job.

BEAMAN: No, no. These young people really came in wanting to make a contribution. That is why they thought, if they were doing consular work, they weren't making a contribution. I kept emphasizing that, "Look, someday, some of you will be ambassadors and you'll be glad you did consular or administrative work as well as other types of work." In my own case, by the time I was a DCM, I could perform any office job in the embassy when section heads went on leave.

Q: Oh, yes. I've had many retired ambassador interviewees make that same point, how much they got out of administrative or consular assignments and how it was an important tool when they later had more responsibility.

In 1963, what did you do?

BEAMAN: I was desk officer for South Asia. I had come into the Basic Officer's Course in 1961. In 1963, I became post management officer for South Asia. That was the first time I realized my various assignments had paid off. I knew how a post operated. I knew how a consulate operated. In those days, for example, they were changing the Pakistani capital to Islamabad from Karachi. I spent a lot of time helping organize that project. It was also a time when I learned things that I would not ordinarily have learned. Each year, around budget time, we were supposed to put down the various vacancies that we, the management officers, felt should be allotted to specific posts, that they needed a new consul or a new assistant GSO or something. So we put them on the list. Then my boss at one point said, "You know, if these are approved, it doesn't necessarily mean you're going to get them. We'll use them wherever we think we should have them." I thought, "Well, what's the use of my doing all this for my post and then I don 't get them at the end?" That was somebody else's decision rather than mine. These are the little things you learn.

Q: When you say you were on the South Asia desk, what countries did that comprise at that time?

BEAMAN: Afghanistan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Burma, and Sri Lanka.

Q: You were doing this from 1963 to when?

BEAMAN: It was really not a full two years. I moved to the desk because 1) I had spent approximately two years on the Basic Officer's Course and 2) I was outranked by Duffield's successor. I wasn't hard-nosed about it, but I considered that I might as well move on to something else. So, in 1963, I moved over to the South Asia desk job. In 1964, which I'll mention later, I was sent to Manila.

Q: In 1963 with India, this must have been a pretty good time after we had assisted India with their border war with China and all.

BEAMAN: There was a lot of work concerning India. Chester Bowles was ambassador for a time. Was Galbraith right ahead of him as ambassador?

Q: Galbraith had been before, yes.

BEAMAN: Well, Galbraith, if he decided he wanted to go someplace, he'd just order the Air attaché to fly him there. After all, it was a subcontinent. The Pentagon, however, was pressuring us to pay for use of the plane. But by the time Bowles came to be briefed, in the meeting I pointed out that a lot of money was going for these trips. He said, "Don't worry, I'll talk to the Pentagon." I left, so I don't know whether he was able to get the Pentagon to approve use without payment.

Q: As the desk officer, did you find that you were getting reports that were coming from our ambassador in India, Chester Bowles, and then our ambassador in Pakistan? Often,

the two countries were at loggerheads. Each ambassador had absorbed the country in which he was working's point of view?

BEAMAN: No. I wasn't on the political desk. I was on the management desk, so I didn't enter much into these possible conflicts. I might hear conversations at staff meetings, but nothing with which I was directly concerned.

Q: Were there any particular problems in any of these countries as far as management?

BEAMAN: Not particularly. The amount of counterpart funds we had in India was almost enough to buy the country. We were attempting to use it up by buying furniture for other posts in India. We even bought airline tickets for other locations with Indian counterpart funds. I suppose USAID also made use of it. One of the problems for me personally was it was a bad budget year for the Department, so I was not able to visit any of my posts. Only later, as a consultant, did I visit them. Offhand, I cannot think of any great problems other than day to day management. Obviously, all posts were bucking for additional positions or funds.

Q: Where did you go in 1964?

BEAMAN: The story that I've been leading up to has come to a point. While I was post management officer, I still kept trying to get an economic assignment. It irritated me. They would say, "Why don't you go down and talk to So and So Bureau or Such and Such place? Maybe they might have an economic job." Well, why should I have to look for an assignment in economics? If they knew what was available, why wasn't I considered? The reason I felt I was qualified to do economic work was because, even though I had only one economic course in college, I had taken special night courses in advanced economics and money and banking. I had taken a foreign trade and labor relations course. I took the War College correspondence course, which was heavy on economic planning. Anyway, Cleo Noel was a very good friend of mine. He was in Personnel Placement at that time. He called me one day and asked would I take an assignment in Karachi where I would have been the deputy to the consul general and at the same time do economic reporting. I said, "Well, I'll talk to Mary about it and let you know tomorrow." So, I went back and said, "Yes, I'll take it." I had hardly returned to my office when he was walking in the door. He said, "We want you instead to go to Manila as deputy economic counselor." Here within 24 hours, two economic assignments were dropped in my lap. I did go to Manila. The reason was that Maurice Taylor, a financial expert, was economic counselor. He had home leave lined up. His deputy was not on the promotion list and retired on the spot. He said, "You get somebody here by the time I go on leave." That was about a month. I fell right into the gap. I had only been there about two or three weeks when he took off, and I ran the place until he came back. Shortly after he came back, things blew up in the Dominican Republic, and they needed a financial expert. They pulled him out. The Department said, "Beaman can run it on an acting basis until we find somebody." Well, it was 10 months before Donald Calder came in to replace Taylor. Calder was there a couple of months and he had a heart attack. So, again, I was acting for another two or three months. He didn’t get evacuated. He recuperated at

home. That's the reason why, from 1964-1967, I was really getting my economic experience. It was at a crucial time. We were negotiating a trade treaty that was going to run out in a few years - and what could come after? There were airline rights that had to be negotiated. So, all in all, it was a good experience.

Q: In 1964, what was the Philippine government like?

BEAMAN: Diosdado Macapagal was president at the time. The embassy in general had good relations with the president. The Philippines had a lot of economic problems, and there was a big AID operation attached to the embassy. I used to go on field trips with the AID director to various places. Came an election and Macapagal was replaced by Ferdinand Marcos. When Marcos was elected, the embassy was a little bit shocked because they had not had very many contacts with Marcos. The consul general, an officer by the name of Gleek, had the most contacts with Marcos. So we officers were all called to go to parties in order to get acquainted with the new incoming president. I can remember, I was talking to Mrs. Marcos for, I guess, too long a time, and my wife came up and said, "Somebody else wants to talk to her." In other words, "Get away and let somebody else talk." In any event, as a result of this, the Marcos camp gave a lot of parties to which Americans were invited. So we did get well acquainted with Marcos.

At that time, the embassy regarded Marcos as the "Great White Hope," if you want to use that phrase. He came in speaking a lot like Amos in the Bible, saying, "You have been corrupt. You've been doing such and such and it's got to stop. We're going to do such and such." It was an amazing inaugural address, at least to me. But there was a lot of corruption. It didn't start under Marcos. It had started long before that. It was rather benign until after Marcos came into power. In later years, he and Mrs. Marcos became like other politicians. I wasn't there when corruption seized the Marcos. I would say that all the time I was there, the relations were pretty good with the Filipinos.

Q: Was the Economic Section keeping an eye on corruption or was this more political?

BEAMAN: It was more political. We might be on the periphery of something, but our task was primarily promoting trade. We had an Economic Section that had seven officers and a showroom. It was a big operation. During my period, we did have talks on airline rights. Further on, one of the things that I spent a lot of my time on was trying to get the Filipinos to join in a satellite project. In addition to being deputy economic counselor, I was also the science attaché. A lot of officials from Washington having to do with satellites came quite often. I would go over to the foreign ministry with them for talks. What they wanted the Filipinos to do was to build a receiving station. These satellites were going to be like beads around the Earth and they wanted to be able to beam something from Washington to the Philippines. Just before I left, I went out into a field where there was a temporary receiving and sending station. President Marcos came and talked to President Johnson via satellite. So I figured, at least I had accomplished something while I was there. I had good relations with the Atomic Energy Commission and other groups concerned with these matters.

Q: Where was the emphasis? I would have thought that, one, we would have been doing everything we could to encourage the Philippines to develop its own industrial base and to turn it into a viable country because we had this implicit responsibility, but at the same time, we're always trying to find markets. How did this work?

BEAMAN: We were trying to push both industrial and agricultural development. There were a number of American companies operating there. Many of our contacts were with them. We were trying to push trade, for one thing, and then there was the AID operation which was trying to help the Philippines, particularly to develop agriculture. The agricultural attaché did a good job of introducing the Filipinos to "bulgur wheat" as a supplement to a rice diet. At that time, there was a communist rebellion in rural provinces north of Manila. Our main thrust as far as public relations were concerned: 1) serving with the political counselor or the AID director on negotiations for help. I didn't have anything to do with getting any money to them. It was the AID people. But I would go with the AID director sometimes, and then I'd go with the political counselor 2) Ambassador Blair when he came wanted to visit every province in the Philippines. He again, like in India, used the Air attaché's plane. He would select officers to go along. I didn't go on every trip, but I went on many trips with him where we would go to a given province and talk to political and economic people.

Another thing as far as embassy-government relations were concerned related to the military bases. We probably (not me personally) had more difficulty with incidents that happened at these bases. Filipino thieves would steal yards and yards of cable wire right out of the ground. One time, somebody threw a small bomb over the fence of the air base. Somehow, our USIS people put out something that inferred that the Filipinos had done this. Obviously, they were probably Filipinos. So, that created a little flurry. Then there were the usual problems of sailors and soldiers getting into trouble with the locals.

Q: What was the major export of the Philippines in those days?

BEAMAN: Sugar. The Laurel-Langley Agreement had sugar quotas as one of its main provisions. Before that time and even during that time, we were buying a lot of sugar from Cuba. When Cuba went communist, Philippine sugar became more important. There were other things, but that was the main thing we discussed with the government.

Q: In a way, that was a very controlled thing. You could only bring so much in. It really wasn't much of a looking for a market type thing, was it?

BEAMAN: No. The thing was that the Filipinos wanted a long-term agreement. The Laurel-Langley Agreement was going to run out about eight years after I left. They were trying to get a bigger quota on sugar. There were discussions on that and also what to do with the Laurel-Langley Agreement after it expired. I think after I left, the U.S. got it extended a few more years, but I'm not sure.

Q: Was the Philippines a very attractive place for American goods?

BEAMAN: Oh, yes. In the stores, they liked American products, particularly records and music tapes. That was for the younger crowd, but there were other U.S. things - dresses, blue jeans, household equipment, especially air conditioners - that were sold.

Q: Were we having any problem with pirating, intellectual rights, and all that at that time?

BEAMAN: Yes, that was a problem in the Philippines, particularly in music tapes. Taiwan was the worst offender with respect to books. We kept an eye on the problem in the Philippines also, but there wasn't that much pirating. They didn't have much of a publishing industry. Taiwan did more pirating in books as well as music tapes.

Q: Did you get many visitors for trade?

BEAMAN: Yes. The governor of Illinois brought the biggest trade delegation. There were a few trade delegations like that which came through to talk business. We had also individual businessmen and smaller groups visiting. Our commercial attaché worked with such groups. We also had a small showroom featuring smaller American products. Exhibits were changed from time to time.

Q: How solid did you feel the economy and the handling of the economy was at that time?

BEAMAN: There, I had some doubts. There was corruption. Even though Marcos made this wonderful speech that he was going to stamp it out, there was not only corruption, but they would kill one another. Many carried guns. They would stick them in their belt behind their barongs. It's worse in the U.S. now than it was then, but, in any event, there was regular violence and robbery. I felt the Filipinos weren't having a good development. There were still a lot of poor people. It was most obvious around the U.S. air base. Outside the air base was a large pocket of poverty. You've seen pictures of shacks along the railroad. I felt that the rich were doing better in the Philippines than the rest of the people.

Q: Was there any concern about the embassy, particularly the officer staff, being almost absorbed by the wealthy Filipinos. Their hospitality is well-known, but also, it's a hospitality with a hook. In other words, there is often a reason behind it.

BEAMAN: I don't think we purposely cultivated only the wealthy. We were trying to maintain high contacts with the government. Of course, there were a number of parties put on by Philippine organizations. For example, whenever the Atomic Energy Commission had a dinner, I was always invited. We certainly concentrated on contacts with the government and business people. In our daily lives we had contacts with ordinary people who were largely friendly and liked Americans. However, as you were saying, did we get down to the poor? No, I don't think we did.

Q: I was really thinking more of looking out to the middle class and the professional

class.

BEAMAN: Certainly, I think everybody was trying to cultivate as many Filipinos as they could. They were very friendly. There is no question about it. Most of the social functions had, from our standpoint, an aim of trying to cultivate friends. Some of the invitees were middle class. For example, there were teachers, journalists, and small businessmen.

Q: Did you find yourself under a lot of pressure from Filipino contacts about visas?

BEAMAN: No. The consulate got that. I don't recall anything along that line. When I was science attaché, some of the conferences got a little dicey. I can remember one instance where a fellow who was big, fat. He was chosen to go to some conference on an airplane, and we were paying for it. He wanted us to pay for two first class seats because he was so big. Well, we ended up doing it, but it was things like that that were petty really.

Q: You left there in 1967. Where did you go?

BEAMAN: First of all, I was promoted to FSO-2. I had been promoted to FSO-3 in Port Said.

Q: That is an important promotion. That puts you up in the sort of flag rank class.

BEAMAN: I considered it so. After I was promoted, I got an assignment as the DCM in Damascus. I left Manila and went directly to Damascus. I was due home leave and was a little concerned that I wasn't going to get it. I didn't get it for another year. In other words, it was three years that I was overseas, rather than two. But I had been selected as DCM. It was a step up based, I think, on various jobs that I had had for a while.

Q: You were there from 1967 to when?

BEAMAN: In Damascus?

Q: Yes.

BEAMAN: One month.

Q: I was going to say...
BEAMAN: We arrived, I think, in June. I guess it was early June, maybe late May.

Q: When you arrived, who was the ambassador?

BEAMAN: A fellow by the name of Hugh Smythe.

Q: What happened when you arrived? What was the situation when you arrived and then what happened?

BEAMAN: The day I arrived, the merchants were pulling down the shutters because the Army was angry. Somebody had printed an article (I forget whether it was in an Army journal or what) that said that God was dead. Of course, to the Muslims, this was anathema. There was public agitation about this statement. I arrived just at the time that all this was going on. I think what you're talking about was Syrian relations with the U.S.

Q: I think "Time Magazine" - this was one of these debates that was going on, the challenging and all. "Is God Dead" or something that was on the front cover of "Time."

BEAMAN: Yes. I arrived and the ambassador received me at the residence. It was a Sunday. He said that he had taken a long time to select me. He had gone through several files. I guess that was supposed to make me feel good. I was thrown immediately into a lot of problems. We could see war was shaping up, even from the time I arrived. There was probably going to be an outbreak of war with Israel. This soon happened, of course. This was in 1967.

Q: What was Smythe's background?

BEAMAN: He was an economic specialist with the USUN in New York. I did not personally meet him there. I was in the audience when he gave a talk to our Basic Officers Course. He always claimed he was regular Foreign Service. He wasn't, but it did not matter. He was an ambassador. His wife was a nationally renown special educator. I was told President Johnson offered her an ambassadorial appointment. She declined, saying, "Appoint my husband instead." What was the Department to do? It appointed him. Why he took so long to select him another DCM I don't know. Like in Port Said earlier, the job had been long vacant. In fact, I was in Manila, and the former DCM, Hugh Appling, was actually assigned to Manila before I left. I had a chance to talk to him. He warned me that Ambassador Smythe would be demanding.

Q: I take it that relations between the staff and Smythe weren't very good.

BEAMAN: Now that you have brought it up, I guess I can talk. I was going to deal with Damascus without mentioning his name. I am convinced that even in Damascus he was suffering from cancer (He died of cancer a few years after he retired in 1969). One illustration of this was given by the Syrian foreign minister who was a former doctor. At the height of developing troubles, when President Johnson was sending telegrams urging everybody to stay calm, let's not have a war out of this, we had to deliver this message to the foreign ministry. While the ambassador was reading it, the foreign minister kept looking at him. After he had finished, the foreign minister asked, "May I touch you?" This was unusual. He walked over and felt the ambassador's neck under his chin and ears, and told the ambassador, "You ought to get that looked into." The ambassador apparently knew what he was talking about, that it might be cancer. He said, "Oh, yes. I'll have it taken care of." The foreign minister went back, sat down, and then answered the demarche.

In Damascus, the one big problem was that Ambassador Smythe did not want to evacuate. Everybody else, Americans in other Arab countries, were sending their dependents out. Ambassador Smythe didn't want to do it. Finally, the rest of the staff came to me and said, "We want to send our dependents out." We went in to the ambassador, all the officers, and said, "It's time to send them out." Well, the ambassador angrily dressed us down: "You people tell your wives things, and they get excited" and this, that, and the other. But at the end, he gave a nod to start what I called an echelon evacuation of dependents. I did not want to send my wife and children out first. I did not want the ambassador's wife to be sent first. I wanted the small children and younger wives to go first. We had to get approval from the foreign office to leave Syria. So we started sending them over to Beirut, the younger families first, and then working up. The day the war started, my wife and children and the ambassador's wife were going right toward the area where, supposedly, the Israelis were or would be rolling over the border. They were delayed a little because Mrs. Smythe sent her driver to go get some jewelry she had ordered in the souk. They did, and they somehow came back to the embassy. The ambassador looked out the window and saw them. He rushed out, shouting, "Get out of here! There is a war going on!" I worried until evening when I could get in touch with my wife by telephone.

Q: They got to Beirut?

BEAMAN: They got to Beirut, yes. The next day, they and other American evacuees from several Middle East posts were taken to the airfield where PanAm chartered planes were waiting. There was no indication as to where each was going. My family was flown to Athens.

Q: How was it known that a war was going to start?

BEAMAN: There were several things. One was the usual criticism by Syrians and other Arab countries by radio, of Israel and the U.S. helping them. I think the Israelis went into Jordan first. Syria had broken diplomatic relations with Jordan, of all countries, because a Syrian man and woman were going across the border into Jordan presumably to assassinate King Hussein. The customs officials were examining the car when it exploded and killed a customs official. Of course, these people were immediately taken into Jordanian custody and questioned at length. So Syria because their people had been taken into custody, broke diplomatic relations with Jordan at a time when the war was imminent. It was primarily the acrimonious condemnation on radios that caused us to think war was coming. I was down in the souk one day, and I saw soldiers buying cardboard suitcases, a lot of them. What's this about? I immediately went to the embassy to put that on the record to add to a list of other indicators. Bob Paganelli was the second ranking political officer in those days. He later became ambassador to Qatar. He spoke Arabic well and kept phoning government officials to assure safety of the embassy.

Q: And later ambassador to Syria, too.

BEAMAN: Yes. He was an excellent ambassador.

Q: During the Reagan administration.

BEAMAN: Yes. In Damascus, we started getting messages from Washington saying: "Talk to the Syrians and try to get them to calm down and also deny that we're helping the Israelis." There was often bombast by Arab countries, but this time we felt it was serious. There usually was a lot of loud condemnation. This time it was being accompanied by troops mobilizing.

Q: And also the Israelis did a preemptive strike on Egypt, knocked out the Egyptian air force. This was after the UN had withdrawn its troops at Nasser's request from the Sinai.

BEAMAN: Yes.

Q: What happened to the embassy when the war actually started?

BEAMAN: First of all, we got our marching orders, so to speak. I was at dinner, so I wasn't at the embassy when the break came. The senior political officer was called over with the ambassador to the foreign ministry. The foreign minister delivered a message that we had 48 hours to get out. Of course, we let Washington know diplomatic relations were broken. By that time, most of the dependents were already on their way. It was only my family and the ambassador's that weren't. Then we started burning papers. I lived on a hill about 100 yards from the embassy, but I had to go down one street and backtrack to get to the embassy. As I turned the corner toward the embassy, there was a big demonstration going on. I rushed down. There was a big Syrian security officer telling our political officer, "We do everything we can to protect you and yet you're letting the Israelis know where you are." The smoke pipe on top of the embassy was glowing red. They interpreted this as our signaling the Israelis. Before we got out of there, the Israelis did strike at Damascus. I tried to get the female secretaries particularly to go down in the basement, but I couldn't get them to get as far back as possible. A few of us and the Marines were watching this from the top of the embassy. The Israelis came in and the first thing they did - on the hills were anti-aircraft guns and they came in and took out the anti-aircraft. It was right above us. It sounded like they were bombarding the embassy. The next thing they did, on the second run, was take out the oil storage tanks which were east of town. We could see the flames coming up. The third strike that they made was to bomb the airport. They really did a lot of damage, not necessarily on neighborhoods, but in strategic places. Some Syrians were standing on their balconies watching all this.

Meanwhile we were preparing to leave anyway. So, finally, we got everything lined up, and we left from the American school, not the embassy. I was the last one out of the embassy. When I walked away and looked back, the Italian flag was flying over the chancery. We left our administrative officer behind to work with the Italians. When I got to Rome, I worked with the Italians at the other end. Paul Deibel was the one left behind. When he got to Rome, he was a nervous wreck. There had been more bombing after we left.

In any event, on the evacuation, we were supposed to leave earlier than we did by a half hour or so and the Syrian police escort kept pointing up at the sun in the sky. It was well towards sundown when we got to the border. Our so-called "convoy director" was the economic officer. He refused to turn over the registrations of the embassy vehicles being demanded by the Syrians. So I listened to this and finally went and got the ambassador. I said, "You've got to come and put the convoy director right. The Syrians want the registrations and they won't let us go until they get them." When the ambassador came in, the Syrian officer stuttered, "Your man is excited." The ambassador said, "Give it to them." So we got to Beirut after dark. One of the problems in evacuating was trying to round up Americans. In the convoy, there were a few private Americans. Two of them were teachers at the American school. The American school had been collecting money for the next fall term. When we got on our way, these women suddenly said, "Oh, my Heavens, we left the tuition money in the school!" We could not do anything at that point. Also, somewhere along the line, they lost their air tickets. So we had to arrange to get new air tickets for them and advance them money to get to the States. It showed irresponsibility on their part.

Q: What about our consulate in Aleppo? Didn't they have problems?

BEAMAN: Oh, yes. That was the worst incident. I had been talking on the phone to Aleppo and one of the wives was saying that the husbands were up in the coderoom destroying documents. There was a big crowd out in front, a demonstration. They were concerned. I said, "Well, I'll arrange to call the foreign office on this immediately." Before she got of the phone, she said, "Oh, well, the police are coming now." She could hear the police sirens. So, I didn't think it was urgent, but I told Bob Chase, the senior political officer, and he in turn got in touch with the foreign office. Meanwhile, this mob had gotten into the consulate and had done some destruction. The main thing was what happened to the people. The men burned their hands going down a rope from the code room.

The mob destroyed things like stored Christmas decorations or looted personal items. But when the consulate reopened years later, bags packed with people's clothing were still sitting in a room. Officers and dependents headed toward Turkey. There was a military attaché who just happened to be there. He had been down in Damascus. He fainted right at the border and hit his head on the fender of the automobile. Of course, they had to take care of him. They finally got over the border, but they had the roughest time.

Q: Just to finish up this part, you went to Rome initially?

BEAMAN: Yes, I went to Rome. The ambassador after a few days went back to the United States, and I stayed in Rome about two weeks. We arranged for the Italians to take over the protecting power responsibility. This really had been arranged before we left.

Q: Yes. You mentioned that the Italian flag had already gone up.

BEAMAN: Actually, the Italian embassy overlooked the garden of our embassy, so it

was a really good arrangement. The Department had informed us before we left that the Italians would take the protection. So I went with Deibel and the budget and fiscal officer, and we talked about what needed to be done. For one thing, we had a lot of refrigerators and stoves in storage to issue to people who didn't bring them with them. There was also a USIS building downtown that needed protection. One of the interesting things that I had not known until the last minute was that our political officer lived under a Syrian official. A bug had been put in the walls. They had to work to get that out of there before we left. This must have been a "need to know" act because nobody had told me about it until I wondered what they were doing.
We were in Beirut. It was Friday by that time. In the mosques, the mullahs were saying, "Strike at all things British and American." Several of us were having lunch with a friend of mine, Adrian Middleton, who was the DCM in Beirut. After an aide brought him a message, he said, "Don't even finish your lunch. I think you all ought to get out of here." So we gathered our personnel and flew out. The budget and fiscal officer had a lot of gold coins with him in a mail bag. I can remember his going up into the airplane - clink, clink, clink, up the steps. The ambassador, when we got in and got settled, was furious because the Russians were evacuating on the same plane. Once we got to Rome, he came back to Washington, and I stayed behind with a few people to make the arrangements. Then I came back to the States also.

Q: Why don't we pick this up next time in 1967? You had been evacuated from Damascus. You've left Rome and you're now in the States.

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Today is October 12, 1999. In 1967, what did you do?

BEAMAN: There is one item on the evacuation I think I should mention. It's an illustration of all the strings that you have to tie together. Before I left Damascus, the ambassador insisted that I be made treasurer of the American school board, which I was. As I told you earlier, in bringing out the teachers, they had left the fees behind. But there was about $3,000 in a bank in New York. So, as soon as I got back to the States, I talked to the desk officer, and he referred me to some educational society in New York that handled matters about overseas schools. I made arrangements with them to take over the fund and administer it until such time as it was needed. I did that, and I gave the papers to the desk officer. But then later when the U.S. opened up diplomatic relations with Syria, I called the desk. I can't remember what year that was. I called the desk and told them about it. They had never heard of the arrangement. I said, "You've got $3,000 there to start your school with." They took it over from there, I guess. It was just one of those things.

Otherwise, while I was back in the Department, I spent about four months on the Philippine desk. I had recently been to the Philippines, and Richard Service was in charge of that area. He asked for me to fill in until somebody else came on the job. There were two main things that I did on the desk. One was preparing for President Johnson and Secretary Rusk little paragraphs for their "nightly reading," as they called it. If we had

anything that was important from the Philippines, we'd write up a short paragraph and then attach it with a lot of other paragraphs prepared by other offices.

But the second thing was that they wanted me to put a price tag on the cost of operations (State Department, AID, other agency) in the Philippines. Somebody in the Latin American Bureau was doing the same on Colombia or Venezuela. We would get together to compare notes on procedures. I spent a lot of my time trying to put an annual price tag on various operations. The only thing was, the other agency wouldn't cooperate.

I may have mentioned earlier, Ambassador Smythe had asked me to go with him if he were reassigned out. He was assigned to Malta, and he still wanted me to go with him. Tom Kresse was selected as administrative officer, and he also wanted me to be with him, which I did. Tom later retired to Greece.

There were problems, and I guess I might as well bring them out. As I noted, I feel the ambassador had cancer. I think it was eating at him, and he knew that it was, but whether he ever really got treatment, I don't know. He didn't want to leave his job, I think, to take chemotherapy. In any event, there was this situation that might have accounted for some of the odd things I'm going to talk about. He was an authoritarian type. As I told you earlier, President Johnson wanted to appoint his wife as ambassador. After Ambassador Smythe died, his wife did become ambassador to the Cameroons. But in any event, he got to Malta about a week before I did. I was assigned as DCM. Kresse was administrative officer. So, there were three of us moving in, which constituted half the embassy's U.S. personnel. As soon as I got there, and he had made his call on the prime minister. I asked him, "Have you made arrangements to talk to the leader of the opposition, Mr. Mintoff, after talking to the government officials?" "No. Mintoff is in Australia or someplace." Well, Mintoff came back from Australia very shortly. By that time, I was in the hospital with a very bad gall bladder affliction. I could have died because it was breaking apart. I was out for about three weeks. When officers would come from the embassy, I would say, "Has the ambassador made arrangements to call on Mr. Mintoff?" No, he hadn't. When I got out of the hospital, this was the first thing and the most important thing that I worked on. It took me six months to get Mintoff and the ambassador to meet and get acquainted with one another.

Q: Could you explain something about Mintoff? He is the only person from Malta whose name sort of still reverberates down the diplomatic corridor. Could you explain what his background was?

BEAMAN: George Borg Olivier was the prime minister. He was the Nationalist Party. Mintoff actually became head of the Labor Party by easing out a man, Anton Buttigieg, who had been a longtime activist. Mintoff's background was Slavic. His family came from someplace in the Balkans. Mintoff was a person who had very strong feelings like the ambassador. That is the reason that they did not get along. Mintoff did not like the Church. That was very obvious in talking to him. There were times that I had big parties, and I invited Mintoff along with George Borg Olivier. The prime minister would come but Mintoff never did. I spoke to Labor people about this and they said, "Oh, don't worry

about that. He won't even come to some of our parties. He doesn't like big parties. He thinks it's consuming booze and talking about things that are not important." He came into power after I left. What I'm saying is building up to that.
Anyway, we finally did get them together about June of 1968. I was with him. Mintoff's first comments after the "Hello" type of thing was, "I see you've been visiting a lot of priests." That was true. Then Mintoff offered a drink. The ambassador said, "Oh, I don't drink." They ended up drinking milk because Mintoff didn't drink alcohol either. So we did finally get them together, but it resulted in no continuing conversation. The ambassador never tried after that. In fact, he didn't talk much to any Labor Party people. I was the one who handled that, not because he directed me to, but because I decided I had to. Somebody had to talk to the Labor Party. The ambassador was very disturbed that I had not been there the first three weeks of the first month of his assignment. He wanted me there to help him. Later, he complained to the inspectors about this, which I didn't know at the time. I found it out later after he left. Kressie and I and the other officers really tried to lead him along to do appropriate things. He did go on a schedule of visiting every parish in Malta because the parish priests do represent sort of a local government. The national government was a Parliament meeting at night part-time. He always had to have me or the next ranking officer, Harry Glazer, along. Harry or I had to write up these visits, which really were not the kind of material that we ordinarily reported on. We kept making that point to the ambassador, but he kept insisting. Farther down the line after he had left, we stopped. Washington said they didn't want that type of reporting, but they didn't tell him. They waited until he left, and they told me.

The other early crisis was that he took a dislike to the naval attaché there. He wrote a very harsh letter about Commander Richmond that he wanted me to review. I read it and said, "You shouldn't send this in. This man has a career just like a lot of people. Why don't you just say something to the effect that you feel you could operate better if you had your own choice of a naval attaché?" Whatever he wrote I never knew because he never cleared it with me afterwards. He did get rid of Richmond, and then Commander Freeman came in.

State Department inspectors came in the summer of 1968, after we had been there about six months. The ambassador had a long list of comments for the inspectors, ranging from not enough light bulbs at the residence to the fact that I was not there at the beginning to help him. He also wanted a white ambassadorial limousine. The Department finally relented and sent one. It stood out from Malta's usually dark cars. A crisis, at least in my mind, occurred about the time the inspectors had finished. The ambassador had been talking to a man who wanted to bring in an American airline (not among the big airlines). Harry Glazer, the economic officer, and I reasoned that this American was sort of a schemer. He talked only to the ambassador, not to Harry, not to me. The Maltese government was not wanting to grant the request. One day the ambassador rushed through the connecting door to my office and said, "Listen in on the phone. I'm going to make a call." He called the prime minister's secretary, George Borge (The PM was George Borg Olivier; his secretary was George Borg), and the ambassador was pressuring to get approval for this airline. The secretary was saying, "Well, no. The cabinet does not want to approve it." Then the ambassador said, "The government can go

to Hell." That shocked me through and through. I didn't know what to do. The inspectors were still over at the Hilton Hotel writing their report. I went there and talked to Mr. Freer, who was the chief inspector. He admitted that was very bad, but then said, "What are you going to do about it?" So, I said, "Well, I'm going to Parliament tonight, and I'm going to see George Borg, the prime minister's secretary, and in some way I am going to apologize, saying his outburst was because the ambassador was concerned about various and sundry things, so he lost his temper." The inspectors felt that might be a good idea. George Borg later said, "Oh, we understand. Don't worry about it." Nevertheless, I continued to worry about the incident.

Then the final thing was that he was going to be replaced. Nixon had come in to replace Johnson. So, early in 1969, it was known that Ambassador Smythe would be replaced, but he didn't want to leave. Washington kept on his channel, asking him, "When are you scheduled? We want you to talk to Ambassador Pritzlaff, your successor." He kept putting it off. In fact, the Malta diplomatic corps wanted to have a party for him, but he told me he didn't want a party or anything. So the Department began calling me on my home phone number and pushing me to get the ambassador on the road. I said, "I can't force him out of here. All I can do is talk." Anyway, I used every idea I could to find out when he was leaving. He wouldn't set a date. But then the Department said, "Ambassador Pritzlaff is coming" and gave a date. He immediately got transportation documents and left. Since he wasn't going to be seeing the new ambassador, he left several pages of 70 numbered paragraphs of things that were wrong. He was alerting the new ambassador. There again, it ranged all the way from not enough light bulbs in the residence to warning him to keep an eye on the British because they were trying to horn in on our trade possibilities. It was sad. He really crept out of town. His diplomatic colleagues wanted to give him a good sendoff, and he didn't want it. They did get to him one day and presented him with a couple of silver cocks, decorative items. There again, one is usually very effusive at a time like that, but he wasn't. He just said, "Thank you" and left. So I was sorry.

I might mention also that Mrs. Smythe-

Q: Mabel Smythe.

BEAMAN: Yes. As I noted, she was a nationally-known educator in special education. I don't know whether she was full-time in Damascus. I wasn't there long enough. In Malta, she only came at the end of summer when school was out. In between times, he would look to my wife to handle what an ambassador's wife would do, which she did willingly, but in any event, it was even to the point of borrowing salt shakers and tableware from us in order to put on a party.

John Pritzlaff came and he was a breath of fresh air, you might say. He was willing to listen to recommendations. He had his own ideas, but he was willing to listen. He was a Goldwater Republican, a businessman from Arizona. He had never been in the Foreign Service. One of the interesting things in the first couple of days was that he called me in and said, "You know, I'm the appointed ambassador here. But if you were appointed,

what would you do first?" I said, "Well, call on various government officials, starting with the prime minister, and be sure and call on the leader of the opposition." Even with Ambassador Pritzlaff, it took us a few months to arrange for him to meet Mintoff. He met Mintoff at the latter's farm on the edge of the island where there were swimming facilities. It was in the winter by that time. It was cold. When the ambassador arrived, Mintoff said, "Come on. I'm just going swimming." The ambassador said, "Well, I didn't bring a swimsuit." Mr. Mintoff said, "I have plenty." The ambassador thus went swimming with him, and it was really cold. When he offered the ambassador a drink of brandy, the ambassador told me, "I took it." He made overtures to Mintoff later a few times, trying to get to talk to him. Mintoff did not respond, at least while I was there.

Anyway, one of the first things I did was to invite American businessmen and leading Maltese businessmen to my house, so that the ambassador could meet them without having to worry about the party himself. He could just be there and talk to them, which he did. Thereafter, he pursued a good course of periodically dealing with and inviting various businessmen to the residence.

On my part, under Ambassador Smythe, I started the practice every Wednesday, of having a luncheon for about 12 people. I tried to mix Labor MPs, Nationalist MPs, newspaper people, teachers, and others. That way, I could sit and listen to them and get ideas for reports written on what they felt on various subjects. I'd throw out a subject or if I didn't, they would start talking about various developments. It was amusing at times. Sometimes, I would have people at my table who had lived on the island and hadn't seen each other for years. I said, "I don't understand. This is a small island. You haven't seen one another for 10 years?" "No." It was proved later to me when everybody left and I was going back to the office. Here were guests out in the street, standing and talking to one another, trying to cover some years of memories.
Q: Let's talk about when you arrived about the state of relations between Malta and the United States. What was our interest at that point?

BEAMAN: One was to try to get American business firms to come in or at least promote commerce, but that wasn't the major task. The previous ambassador, Ambassador Feldman, had assiduously cultivated business people. The rest of the staff and I were trying to develop and to leave a good feeling about the United States. We would explain U.S. events and policies at every possibility. All in all, we had a good number of relationships. The U.S. Navy ships periodically came into port. They would do two things. One, crew members gave blood. Two, they would give books and educational materials to the Maltese. Or they would even come ashore and paint a school for them. The Navy did a very good job there. The feeling was very good, I would say, all the way through, except for one major event.

In the summer of 1970 (I left in December of 1970.), a black Navy sailor had killed a Maltese prostitute. That really started particularly the Labor group of people yelling about the sailors: "See what they do when they come ashore." That was one time that the minister of foreign affairs came to my office and asked that the sailor be turned over for trial. Meanwhile, I had been on the phone and was sending telegrams back to Washington

on the whole affair. They sent a Navy lawyer in, not necessarily to defend the fellow, but to just be there and advise us." That was one case where the feeling wasn't so good vis a vis the United States. That was primarily the government and certain anti-U.S. elements, not everybody. Actually, it was one of the friendliest posts where I served.

Q: Had the British navy pulled out of Malta by this time?

BEAMAN: Not at the time I was there. It happened. A few months after I left - I would like to have stayed on another six months because Mintoff came into power in about four months. When Mintoff came in, they started closing down access to the British and the U.S. ships. Malta had a shipyard. Some ships would come in for repair. Others would come in just to service other vessels. Either the British or ourselves would have a vessel that had dentists, doctors, a shipboard PX. Other ships would come in and their crews could get their teeth fixed or whatever. The British were doing the same thing. Right after I left, things began to change, and Navy ships were no longer welcome. Certainly Ambassador Pritzlaff was really trying to do all he could to foster good relations. I think he made a good impression, like Feldman had made.

As far as feelings of the people, I would say, on balance, except for a few things like the murder of the prostitute, they were very friendly. We could talk to government officials easily. It wasn't like in a big country where you had to go through layers of bureaucracy to get to the top people. You'd get right in to them. Quite often in the discussions, certain things would come up. When the new ambassador, Pritzlaff, was coming, I had a talk with Mintoff's chief deputy, a fellow by the name of Joseph Camilleri. He was the Labour Party's international secretary. I had lunch with him and said, "There have been problems with Mintoff and the ambassador that's leaving. A new one is coming in. We'd like to get off on the proper foot. I understand that on the floor of Parliament, Mintoff called Ambassador Smythe a 'clown.'" He said, "Mintoff was very worked up that day." The episode didn't appear in any English language papers, but it was in the Maltese language paper. We found out about it through our locals. We got on a good standing, at least with Camilleri, who was second in the party. Consequently, that and Ambassador Pritzlaff's manner of operating, I think, improved our relations with the top of the Labor Party. We always had good relations with the subordinates. In fact, I have mementoes that were presented to me by the Maltese Labor Party.

Q: What about Libya? Had Qadhafi gotten in there?

BEAMAN: That happened under Pritzlaff's regime. Qadhafi visited Malta after Mintoff became prime minister. I was later told that at official functions Qadhafi hogged the limelight. Stepping back a little, we had relations with a lot of American engineers who worked in the oil fields in Libya. Their wives lived in Malta. The men would go back and forth. Another thing that Ambassador Smythe wanted my wife to do was keep in touch with these "oil wives," as we called them, which she did. In any event, we had good relations as long as King Idris was ruling Libya there, but as soon as the revolution occurred, we had problems. One thing that helped create a problem were actions that the head of American schools in Libya took after Idris was deposed. A friend of his who was

Jewish, a Libyan, came to him and asked for protection. So this superintendent of schools spirited him out of the country. Malta was a place that had a lot of bands and repaired band instruments. The school in Tripoli had contact with these repair firms. The superintendent decided that he would bring over some instruments to be worked on. At the same time, he put this fellow in the box. It was called the "Man in the Box Case." The superintendent got it on an Air Force plane that was going to Malta. The British at the military helped him get the box off, but then they said, "You're going to have to take it from here." He then went out in the road and flagged down an empty Maltese truck that was going by and asked the driver to help him get these band instruments into a repair shop. After they had gone along a while, he told the driver and his assistant to stop. He told them to get out and walk up the road. Well, this looked like a hijacking. They looked back, and he was on the back of the truck opening this box. A man jumped out and ran across the field. Of course, as soon as the superintendent left, they got out of the area. They reported the incident to the police. The police found him. They told us what had happened. Anyway, we told the superintendent what he had done. He had misused a government vehicle, he had spirited a national out of one country and into this country without immigration and commandeered a truck. By dealing with the Maltese, we got them to impose only a fine. He had to come before the court which imposed the fine and turned him loose. We at the embassy paid the fine because I had already been in contact with the embassy in Libya, and they said that they would pay for anything. I had no compunctions about this commitment. The man was free. Then he was put up in a hotel and broke a mirror or something, so the hotel people were angry. The police were in regular contact with Harry Glazer and me. They called and said, "Your man is on the way to the airport." So we rushed to the airport and tried to talk him out of leaving, so that he would go back to the U.S. from Malta. He wouldn't do it. He got on the plane to Italy. There wasn't anything we could do to stop him. But we let the embassy in Rome know about the situation. He was going to some school conference there, and we told them to try to get him to return to the U.S. The end of the story was that he did go back to the States from Rome. After they had talked to him, and he left the State Department, a State Department security officer tagged him for arrest. He had to have paid another fine. But he brought his congressman into the case to plead for him. He really didn't suffer much except for reimbursing the U.S. government for paying his fines.

Q: How about the Libyan?

BEAMAN: If you mean the "man in the box," he went directly to the airport and caught a plane to Rome. The Libyan chargé, who was normally a friend of mine, was furious. He wanted the Maltese government to send the American back to Libya. We didn't want it. We beat them to the draw by getting him off by paying the fine. The chargé wasn't on very good speaking terms with us after that. We had good rapport with Maltese officials.

Q: You mentioned Ambassador Smythe and Mintoff saying he was a clown. Was there any particular reason for that?

BEAMAN: I don't know precisely why. Mintoff disliked the fact that the ambassador had been visiting priests. Of course, he did visit industries, too, but priests were the primary

visits. I don't know what the time sequence was, but the ambassador also took to wearing Nehru jackets. A lot of people who knew better would joke with me, "Who is that over there? Is that the Indian ambassador?" I would say, "You know that's Ambassador Smythe."
Q: This was during the end of the end of the 1960s when the avant garde were wearing these things.

BEAMAN: Right. If he wanted to dress that way, it was all right with me. After all, Shirley Temple Black, when she was ambassador in Ghana wore the local dress. That was one thing. The other was that Mintoff was just angry at various things that the ambassador had done vis a vis the priests or government officials. He may have resented that the ambassador made little attempt to keep in touch with him... I left Malta in December 1970.

Q: Where did you go then?

BEAMAN: I wished I could have stayed on. I tried to talk Washington into letting me stay on through the election because of the contacts I had made. But they didn't want that. So I came back to the U.S. The first job that was offered me was science attaché in Teheran. I had developed a good friendship with Herman Pollack. As a result of the work I had done, particularly vis a vis COMSAT in the Philippines by pushing through the Philippine receiving and sending station set up, he wanted to send me to Teheran. I told him that I was not a scientist. He replied that he did not want a scientist; he wanted someone who could manage a program. I accepted. Ambassador MacArthur had accepted me. But then I realized that my wife did not want to go back overseas. About that same time, the Department asked me to take another job. It grew out of Ambassador Hall's study of State Department administration. His study was in the late 1960s and into the 1970s when I got back there. One of his recommendations, among other things, was to bring all of the position classification activities, which had been decentralized to the individual bureaus, into one central operation. I was one of three officers who was qualified for the job. One was Idar Rimestad, who by that time was ambassador in Geneva and wasn't about to take it. Don Renard was political officer in Korea and didn't want to take it. Here I was, ready for assignment. I have to admit that I probably, if anything, had better qualifications than either of the other two. I told my prospective supervisor when I took it, "I'll be retiring in about two years. I'll build this operation up, but my wife doesn't want to go back overseas." So that's what I did. I finally retired in 1972.

Q: During this time you were working, what were you doing on classification?

BEAMAN: It was called the Division of Position Pay Management. What I had as my responsibility was classifying local jobs, classifying Civil Service jobs (not me personally, but my staff and I), and then classifying Foreign Service officer positions, and, of all things, classifying embassies. At that time the Department considered and, I guess, Hall recommended, there were too many high-ranking officers. They wanted my division to classify, regardless of who was in them, all the Foreign Service jobs in

addition to the Civil Service jobs and the locals. The local positions at that time were classified via correspondence sent in by the various posts. My staff would give answers to the posts without visiting the posts. I said at one time, "Why don't you go out and survey some of these posts." Well, we didn't have the money for it at that time. That later was what I did after I retired. I was hired as a consultant to do surveys in over 60 countries.

Another big project was aligning FSO classifications with grades we used in the ranking of Civil Service positions. FSO-1, thus, equaled about a GS-15 or a GS-16 on the Civil Service scale. As the project went on, I started getting criticism from two groups. One were the junior officers. They were saying, "You're cutting off our future. You're cutting out the grades that we might go into." The senior officers were saying, "You're downgrading us." I said, "No. You retain your present grade and salary until you leave that job." I had what I called "the echelon plan." I always used Vancouver as an example. I would say, "The consul generals' job in Vancouver should be an FSO-3. You've got an FSO-1 in there now. The next time, assign an FSO-2. Then the second time around, assign an FSO-3." That way, I felt that the shock would be less. Anyway, the whole staff worked hard to try to rank all these jobs. But it never went over very well. After I had retired and was teaching at a college, I got a call and the caller started asking me about this plan. They kept talking about the "Beaman Plan." I said, "What are you talking about, the Beaman Plan? There wasn't any Beaman plan." "Oh, well, you were in charge at the time, so we call it the Beaman Plan so that if the Hill raised any question, we could say 'Beaman is retired now.'" Anyway, we did classify the FSO jobs. Whether they really followed the echelon plan I doubt.

Q: I'm sure they haven't.

BEAMAN: No. I haven't looked at FSO jobs since retiring. Another problem was Civil Service jobs. They had been inflated, and they didn't match standards, particularly secretaries. I've said in later years that I retired because I got so tired of, one, driving to work in the traffic and, secondly, arguing about secretarial grades. Everybody that was of any rank wanted a grade GS-9 secretary. "Joe has a grade GS-9 secretary. Why can't I have one?" There again, we tried to apply Civil Service standards. There were a couple of major cases in classifying. One I thought of recently because Francis Knight (of the Passport Division) died. She was a grade GS-15 and she felt her job was worth GS-16. My supervisor told me, "You analyze it and come up with a recommendation, but get an outside opinion." So I took it to one of my former bosses, who was in charge of the local office of the American Personnel Society out of Chicago. That was O. Glenn Stahl. I talked to him about it. He studied it, and came up with the same conclusions I had. We turned it down and never got any flack, but my boss said, "On the Hill, she's got a lot of power, and she may seek support there." For some reason, she didn't. I went to the USUN because of Khrushchev, Castro, and other people's coming there; they felt their security jobs should be grade GS-15. They were GS-13 and GS-14. So, one time, I talked to a person who became President. That was George Bush. He was ambassador at the time. I analyzed all I could at the UN. I was about to leave, and they said, "Oh, you must go and talk to the ambassador." I think they expected him to put the pressure on. Strangely

enough, he didn't. He sat straight up. He had the bluest eyes that I've seen. He spoke in an official manner. We talked about 25 minutes. I explained the problem, and he explained his view. I said, "Thank you" and left. I think they expected him to pound the table and rant a little. I went over to the FBI. The jobs that they had at GS-15 were much stronger than our security jobs.

Q: There was no more undesirable job than going around and essentially breaking rice bowls trying to downgrade jobs. This is something I think they do, go after somebody who is going to retire in a short time.

BEAMAN: Perhaps. I later came back as a consultant and worked from 1976 to 1998 for the State Department and also Defense, Agriculture, and Peace Corps on classifying jobs and erecting wage scales for FSN jobs. There again, we had a book of standards that we were supposed to follow. It's been a fight all along. I always felt that I was, if anything, a little liberal compared to some of my workmates. Nevertheless, I tried to find a justification for my decisions. The thing that distressed me before I retired was: we'd get a call on Friday from some bureau and they would say, "The White House is sending Joe Dokes over for grade GS-15 to be sworn in on Monday." I would say, "What do you mean? I don't even have a job sheet for the job." "Oh, we'll send you one later." When I went to my boss on this, he said, "If the White House wants it, you've got to go along with it." So, I would approve it. Then sometimes I would have to fight them for weeks to get a job sheet out of the bureau. Meanwhile, a grade GS-14 or GS-15 or whatever was already at work in the State Department. No one seemed to understand that a job sheet is a pay document. It’s been a life of interest but pressure.

May I make a closing statement? This series of interviews has caused me to focus more clearly on what was happening in my Foreign Service career, the dream of which began as far back as 1933. I had a very good career, the kind of work I can happily recommend to an ambitious young person wishing to serve our country. As the text of these interviews reveal, the work is varied and gratifying, occasionally frustrating. Even though I consistently sought to do economic work, there were numerous assignments which provided me with broader knowledge and skills than, perhaps, I realized at the time. Near the end of my career, Herman Pollack provided a proper evaluation when he offered me the position as science attaché in Teheran. When I protested that I was not a scientist, he replied that he was not looking for a scientist; he wanted a program manager. When I checked the State Department’s final printout on my service, my specialty was listed as “Program Manager.”

Q: Well, thank you very much.

End of interview