Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection
Foreign Assistance Series

C. DAVID ESCH

Interviewed by W. Haven North
Initial interview date: August, 19 1998

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INTERVIEW

[Note: This interview was not edited by Mr. Esch.]

Q: Today is August 19th, and the interview is with C. David Esch, who has served in AID and in other international fields. David, let's get a quick overview of your career as a whole and then we'll go back to your beginning.

ESCH: Early on I worked in non-profit organizations and finished graduate school. There I met international people and from that point on is when I started getting involved with international aid. I worked with AID in Ghana through a RASA arrangement through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and worked in Pakistan as a Foreign Service Officer for four and one half years. Then I worked as a long-term contractor in Russia on an AID project. I have been in many other positions working with AID in different ways and as a contractor overall.

Q: When did you start out on international development work?

ESCH: I actually started in 1975 when, at the end of graduate school, worked on a sub-contract for the developments of these programs: ESP 1, 2 & 3, and design work for even ESP.

Q: *Let's go back to where you're from, where did you grow up and what kind of schooling did you have?*

ESCH: I grew up in Wisconsin. I was a town kid in a rural community of about 5,000 people. Over the years I've met many people from Wisconsin who have been involved with development work, so I think there is a factor within rural areas being attracted to International and being comfortable in working with it. After that I went into military service in New York City. I only went once overseas for thirty days to Europe.

Q: Military service in New York City? Doing what?

ESCH: Hospital Corpsman. I did hospital work in Washington, D.C. and through my years of undergraduate at the University of Oregon I actually had worked in Washington D.C. and one of the editors suggested I go to the University of Oregon.

Q: What was your major in college? What college?

ESCH: University of Oregon...Community Service in Public Affairs. As an undergraduate I was going to into medicine but I didn't do well at that so I switched to something I did quite well at. I did graduate work at Vanderbilt University after working for the Red Cross in service to the military and Vanderbilt Management School. I met a

number of people from international development and several professors who were working on AID contracts.(Inaudible passage) management and during management school is when I started meeting people who had worked with AID .(inaudible passage)(rest of first side inaudible).....we had the loudspeaker system as the radio, we had newspaper announcements and every couple of hours or so we would change time periods and we would have oil prices go up, we would have devaluations, we would have currency exchange problems, we would have natural disasters, we would have whatever it was we wanted to do to play out a normal kind of period because they really wanted to have policy level, and how does policy change over time? I've never seen this at all. The first one I understood went really well.

Something happened with the second one that they would never tell me what happened but they were so embarrassed about it that I was back in Indonesia on another assignment and they contacted AID to get AID to get me to come back to help them. They wouldn't tell me what really went on but my idea is that because they were so successful on the first one that they just didn't do much planning at all until the second one was pretty much a disaster. Well, we sat down, we talked about what we had done, how much planning we went through, different issues that they could think of or that they were willing to talk about, and the third one came out very well. The fourth one went well and the fifth one then I was back in concrete and we changed the whole design and it was much more towards trade and investment. So we developed a new concept. They had to work it out because I didn't have much consulting time to spend with them. I was on another assignment most of these other times. They went on to change it and they came up with special forms and committees and things.

I've interviewed several people that went through the training and the simulation, and their whole course they have, it's a month long course. People said things like you know that in that one you have to listen to your environment, because things keep changing in your environment. At one point one guy said that no one over fifty should ever play that simulation. I said "Why not?" He said people over fifty never listen to their environment. They don't know they're playing four years ago and they're not up to date with what the current situation is. That was one of the serious issues that we were trying to confront was that you have got to respond especially with investments and things. You have to be up to date as to what's going on in the world or you're way behind. In the transmigration part of the whole part was they were moving large groups of people and putting them on other islands and not having things like food or the ability for agriculture so they had mass starvation in several places at the time. World Bank had tried to bail them out and they were having real problems with some of that. They tried to simulate some of that, those issues and how to resolve them. They would do the simulation during the day and each evening they would meet and try to figure out what other options they could exercise, and what other ways they could have done things that day. So they did two blocks of three days each. I did it in three days each because I felt that if they went for a whole week and if they had a problem the whole week would be a disaster. So I did it in two short blocks of time with two weeks in between.

Q: That's a great deal of (inaudible) to put on the simulation, doesn't it?

ESCH: It does. You have to know what you're doing. After they had their disaster that's one of the things I pointed out to them was how much time we had spent talking about this. How much time we had spent planning this… Even though it wasn't written down, it was that we thought about all these issues and what we were going to do about them. We talked then about how do you speed it up and how do you slow it down when it starts moving too fast. What are your points of control on the simulation?

Q: Let's talk a little bit more on this approach to training, the idea of using simulation models.

ESCH: What I tried to do in this one was since this is your final course, taking the theme of transmigration and putting that through every module that was either to be taught or that they were going to seminar with. I did a lot more with seminars and with panels and things, so that by the time you got to the simulation you were prepared for lots of the issues.

Q: What were the modules?

ESCH: The modules were more or less traditional types of modules, such as things like delegation, things like project evaluation, things like policy development, policy planning; some of those kinds of things that I wanted to be done, so that people were telling the faculty or anybody (because they kept great records of each day almost) to put down where does this work? Why doesn't this work? How can we improve this. I mean go over the concepts and things. I pointed out that most of these people at senior levels don't use this. They don't do it. Somebody on their staff does it. What you've got to think about is how can they then try to get this to be more useful to people at their level. So try to use those modules to then prepare you in the idea of how to use project evaluation in transmigration, or how to you use project evaluation in trade and investment. What is that going to be in that kind of setting; that kind of issue.

Q: How did you present transmigration issues?

ESCH: Primarily we had people come in from the field and then there was always a mid-course tour of three or four days, so they would fly out someplace and actually go see and actually have people who were doing transmigration come in and talk about their experiences. I structured the visits, whether they actually ever really got structured or not, because I never was there to really do this. At least in my mind we did forms and things for interviews when you went out to the field. There were structured interviews that you could do around the issue. You could say ok these are they types of questions you would ask to gather larger sets of data and information.

Then you could return and seminar about it and talk about what else could be done, so that when you got the simulation...now that I talk about this it probably is a six weeks long course because it seems to me that the trip came in the fourth week and then we did the simulation right after they did the seminar because then you're really fresh from it.

Then you did the simulation during the last week of the whole course, so you did the two different pieces of simulation and try to take back and say ok, how would we be doing it different?

Some of them were...some of them were from different ministries, all different parts of the ministries. They were selected for the course because of their seniority and their positions.

Q: So what did they come away with? What understanding? What did they learn?

ESCH: It became so successful that it was said publicly on television at one point that this was one of the now premier institutions in all of Indonesia, and that other institutions should update and start doing simulations. When the Institute of Public Administration that I worked for at that period saw that or somebody reported it back to them, Emery Walsh wrote me a letter and said "It does live on and it does go on." This was several years later, in the late eighties, early nineties. I think it's probably had quite an impact. I don't think it's because of what I did, but I think because of the way that I worked with them that they took high ownership of it and responsibility and they made it theirs. It really was theirs, and it wasn't anything in the end that I did.

Q: What other types of training did you do?

ESCH: Bangladesh was a World Bank project in 1984-1986, still while I was working for the Institute of Public Administration. They were combining three training institutions: the entry level civil servant course, the mid-level civil servant's training institution and the most senior one into one training facility out at Savar which is about twenty-five miles out of Dhaka. We had a long term resident team there of three people working on the consolidation of those, but then also working with each of those training institutions on their curriculum. I happened to be out on a short-term assignment and was working on curriculum for the entry level course, and what I asked them to do if I could live out there with people, just because they did have these visiting faculty suites and things. It was just opening as an institution. They said no I couldn't do that and I kept saying "Why not? I didn't want to drive all this way each day back and forth and it's dangerous, especially when we work late. It finally came down to the fact that I heard from a secretary that the reason they wouldn't approve me is because they didn't have enough silverware and didn't want to have to get silverware for me to eat alone in their dining hall. I sent the message back to her boss that I had lived in Africa and I knew very well how to eat without silverware and that night I was approved to go out there. So it was a whole silverware issue as to why I couldn't live out there. We worked on curriculum, trying to make it more participatory. Their style is all lecture and it is almost eternally lecture. We tried to get them to take some responsibility.

Q: Training who?

ESCH: Training entry level civil servants, and coming into civil service what they would do is just lecture. Part of the way I tried to change that was not just to say you should use

more participatory, but their library was out of date and as many libraries that are out of date they did carry some classics. They carried some very good historical books on the civil service of East Pakistan. I went and read several nights books on the East Pakistan civil servants, which you could, at that time, still tell who had been in the East Pakistan civil service and who had come out of the Pakistani civil service. The people who had come out of East Pakistan were much more sensitive to an agenda, to getting something done, to checking back and asking who was responsible for this. When they ran a meeting you knew that someone was in charge and that something was going to get done here, where was on the Pakistan civil service side at that time, I saw that very often we were just having meetings and it would go nowhere. You wouldn't have any agenda and wouldn't know who was assigned anything. As an American you would come out asking all these questions and would wonder why do I have to ask all these questions - wasn't this part of a group process? The East Pakistan was much stronger, so one of the things I pointed out to them was how the old training used to take place. They used to have some real practical parts to that training, actually going out to districts and things. They were saying we cant do that and I was saying that there were other things they could do in that vein, to try to get some more participation and get some more practical pieces into the curriculum. They were doing the traditional introduction stuff of law.

Q: What did you introduce? What kinds of things?

ESCH: In that case I didn't introduce any new curriculum. I just tried to work with the modules that they were trying to do to get some more group discussions going, to get some panels and to get them to do it differently than they were doing. Not so much lecture.

Q: Essentially you were reforming the teaching methodology?

ESCH: As much as anything but you couldn't really say that because they said you were here for curriculum development, I remember that exact discussion more than once. You are not developing faculty, that isn't what we brought you here for.

Q: Did you develop any curriculum?

ESCH: I think that we developed some curriculum and changed some teaching methods in the long run. It was kind of a subterfuge idea.

Q: Did you have other assignments from IPA?

ESCH: Those two were the most. I think I did Somalia...yes Somalia was a piece of IPA as well.

Q: What were you doing in Somalia?

ESCH: Somalia was a management training course with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It was a contract with them. I went there for five weeks.

Q: Who were you training?

ESCH: Department of Agriculture, Department of Water, because there was a whole department for water management. There was Rural Credit and Finance and Livestock people, which was a separate ministry because it was such a big part of Somalia.

Q: What was the situation in Somalia when you were there at that time?

ESCH: It was before the serious difficulties, but you had the President and the military was very much in charge of lots of things. Times were difficult in the southern part. We worked out of Agriculture College just outside of Mogadishu. We had about thirty students. One of the students in that course was the person who, when I had done one of the U.S. Department of Agriculture courses here in Washington, myself and another trainer had on one Friday afternoon (because some of the trainers would leave people off at two o'clock on Friday in case they wanted to travel or something) we decided in our brilliance that we wouldn't let them off but would give them some very tough assignment that had to be done by four o'clock that afternoon. They all had these little projects and groups that they were working on. Then I went downstairs from a pay phone I called the USDA office in George Mason University in the law school and had the secretary there go into each project and pull somebody out, because there would be a phone call for somebody from that particular project. They would come out of the exercise, into the USDA office, and I would take on the role of something relevant to their project. Such as, if it were a Ministry of Agriculture project, I would be the Minister and would say "You know that budget on your project that you've been working on this last week? I want you to revise it and increase that budget by so much or decrease it by so much and I need it by four o'clock." Each group was getting conflicting assignments. The other trainer kept walking around the room and asking them about their assignment that we had given them for early that afternoon. They had conflicting assignments, they were getting this person calling them. As this one guy from Kenya said "I'm so and so from Kenya. I'm really not on this project. You do know that don't you?"

I said: "Yes, I know that you're not really on that project. But still, listen to me, what I need by four o'clock is... "They really weren't sure who I was, because I kept saying I was somebody else, like I'm the Chairman of the Board or somehow their boss, because I knew the projects quite well. And redo their charts or redo your project plan, or cut this by so much or increase that, or whatever. All of a sudden then I showed back upstairs after we'd given all these assignments out, and they're kind of looking at me as was that really you because there was only one person who took the phone call and they were running around and doing all this stuff and people tried to stop them at four o'clock and they were saying "No, we've got this deadline, we have this thing that we have to do". This one Somali, when we did the debriefing that day, he said "this is very unreal...this never happens". We had to protect him form the rest of the group, because all these people who were from other countries said "It always happens on Friday. It always happens just when you're ready to close." So when I met him in Somalia, he was like "It always happens on Friday, David." It was really great because he remembered that lesson

very well and that it had been a real lesson about how do you try to have a multiple agenda? How do you try to prioritize, how do you come up with these things, and that it doesn't take you two days to do a Gant chart; it can take you a few minutes if you have to get it done, to show somebody what's possible and to finalize it. A Gant chart is a bar chart. There was this experience in Ghana where this woman did bar charts beyond any dream you could ever have of the levels of bar charts that she used in delegation, I mean down to what somebody is going to do today. She was able to show that through this good planning and good delegation that she got more work out of each of her workers and how many more plans for the community she had developed, and how she had increased productivity. It was just a fabulous case study. My team came to me the week after we had done this follow-up with a letter that was going to the Minister of Economic Planning, reporting her in violation of Dr. Gant's original idea of Gant charting. They were serious that she was in violation and they should take action against her. I was just horrified and couldn't believe this, that what I had considered from our training to have been a major success story they were taking as a total violation of the theoretical point that Dr. Gant had made in the readings they had done when they were in the trainer's course. They were really going to get her.

Q: They took Dr. Gant as the Law?

ESCH: Oh yes, so kind of going back to the same idea of what was the environment, it was this highly structured, highly organized kind of thing, right out of the book. The other sad point was that I also heard after I had left by a year or so somebody wrote that she had died of cancer.

It is one of the problems in development that people do die earlier and so the needs of training and the turnover of staff is much higher, so it's hard to get these longer term lessons going. In Somalia we did a lot of the planning process and group dynamics kinds of things.

Q: Were there other training assignments? You were out there, what two years?

ESCH: Two and a half years.

Q: And you finished up there when?

ESCH: In either '86 or '87. They were going to close the Washington office and just consolidate into New York, because we were really down to about two of us in the Washington office, and it didn't make sense.

Q: What kind of an organization is IPA?

ESCH: IPA has done quite a number of AID contracts over the years and IPA was the first Institute of Public Administration in the U.S., in fact one of the earliest in the world. It has a history with Civil Service training and Civil Service development worldwide that's much beyond the building that's in New York City, which is basically an office

building…a small office building on West 44th. It's basically turned into now a consulting and some research firm just like other AID contractors.

Q: They do mostly domestic work?

ESCH: They do some domestic work with state and local governments, but while more of the work was international.

Q: But they got their regional reputation working in New York City?

ESCH: Yes, absolutely, starting there on the streets with Luther Gulick. I met Luther, just a wonderful person, very, very bright and very nice. Luther clearly was one of the leaders of developing civil service. I was up in New York recently, talking with people in the UN (United Nations) and the UN is not longer going to initiate civil service reform. They believe that there's been enough people trained in Public Administration and Public Management. These countries don't do political reform is because they don't have the political world to do it and the UN is no longer going to push that issue. If you want to push that issue from the local level, saying 'we want to do this in our country' they will clearly come in and help and give money and do that, but they're not going to have it as an agenda item to make a recommendation about it to any country anymore. That's a long process of change that I think is a very good indicator that training can have across the world, and I think that what a lot of the participant training has done, that AID has done, is that it has developed local capacity and has developed local people and lots of local institutions.

Q: So it's the International Assistance and Public Administration and Civil Service Reform that has passed its day?

ESCH: I think that in terminology it's passed its day. In fact I think there's a number of countries where it needs to be updated and needs to be done some more. I don't know if you need to go overseas to do the training anymore but clearly some of the people in local countries should be given more credibility that they could do the job that's there. I think that lots of people could do the job but there's not the political world to have them do it.

Q: There's a limited capacity in a lot of countries?

ESCH: I think there's a limited capacity in many countries, but I also think there's more capacity than lots of people realize in some of these countries. That it's there but it doesn't get used there. It's kind of like you can't be a hero in your own home...just because you went away to school doesn't mean you can do it for us. Yet I think they could. If you take the example I used in Indonesia, I think those guys could do it but they weren't given the credibility to do it. When they were really given the chance through the simulation they really did do it and did a really great job of it.

Q: That means changing something else?

ESCH: I think at times one of the things I've pointed out is that one of the ways that Americans or Westerners keep up is that we go in front of groups and actually have to perform in some way whether it's a teacher in front of a course or whether it's a researcher in front of a presentation.

I think the kinds of association meetings, the public forums that we try to hold, the racial meetings, the state meetings, the national meetings. I think very often in developing countries the only people who get to go are the big people. I think that's one of the things we've broken through in the U.S. are the regional local meetings that lots of people can go to and make presentation and are encouraged to that. In fact, we solicit each other's friends to support our conferences and our things. I think that puts you professionally on the line and that, in and of itself, helps keep you up to date. Whereas lots of developing countries, you did this course in the U.S. or you did this Pd.D. and you draw up to that date and sort of stop professionally. Some of it is because you don't have the resources to get the magazines and articles and that, but hopefully the Internet is going to start breaking down some of that. The Internet is cheap enough that if you can get a computer and access that you can correspond professionally and keep up with some people and articles easier. I think that's going to begin to change. I think that the meetings and having to do the presentations made you read up. I remember a guy, Arthur Delow, who was departing on an assignment to Latin America. He had several books on his desk when I walked in and I remarked that I was impressed by some of what he was reading. He said that he had to because he was going to Latin America and he needed to do this research when he got down there and needed to catch up. That's the kind of thing I think really does help, and I don't think there's enough of it in developing countries.

Q: After IPA what did you do?

ESCH: Actually moved into participant training. I had heard about a job and didn't think I would be interested in doing it, but as IPA was deciding to close I started looking elsewhere. I looked at the Office of International Training with AID. A woman named Donna Wolfe was running the office at that time and a guy named Dan Terrell was running the Field Services division of OIT (Office of International Training). I went to interview (because they were doing it again underneath a RASA, with USDA) with USDA and Dan Terrell, and in the meeting realized that Terrell and I know all these people in Indonesia, because he had served there at one period and had headed up training. I told him to just call them if he had any questions about my performance and he did. I got the job because I came very highly recommended by some of the local people that he really respected.

Q: What was your job?

ESCH: I was Field Service Advisor for Asia and the Near East, in the Office of International Training. I was physically located there and would go over to USDA because that was actually my employer.

Q: What year was this?

ESCH: This would be 1987-1989.

Q: How did you find AID at that point?

ESCH: These were the heyday of training. Donna had the benefit of a couple of IG reports that she took advantage of to get more resources and get more things done.

Q: This was during the Reagan administration under Peter McPherson?

ESCH: Yes, Peter was there when I first went over. She had brought some more resources to the office and the role of the office was somewhat changing.

Q: What were the ID's they were fussing about?

ESCH: There was one in reference to medical exams, because there were some Egyptians who had gotten off the airplane in New York City and went straight to the hospitals, where I think three or four of them had major operations at the expense of AID. Somehow it hit the front page or a major page in the New York Times, and upon investigation it was found that it really was true. That was exactly what had happened. They had manipulated the system to get their medical things paid for. The medical exam was there as a requirement but there was no system to check on that, so there was a whole procedure developed. We went out and did training about that. There also then was the idea of the Participant Training Management System (PTMS) and this was to give each mission a database of its participants. We were training mission staff to set this up and how to manipulate the data. Also, we worked with various missions on training costs and cost analysis. I worked on helping develop the training cost analysis. Paul White had taken a big crack at it at one point, it was a big complicated system, and Terrell had worked on it some. Also Joyce Keyser, who was a political appointment in the office at that time had taken a crack at it. Under a threat by Donna at one point, Dan and I had worked on it and couldn't get it, because we were trying to tag how to analyze costs for training and how do you come up with a format that will analyze those costs? All the forms were just so difficult to do. You'd try to do them and you'd have a little case study and discover that it doesn't work. One weekend I came in to the office and I used the 3M little sticky pads, and I wrote all the terms that we were working with in the training in trying to figure out costs. I put those little sticky pads all over my wall and then just started rearranging them. All of a sudden this format that still exists in the AD253 (Automated Data) the replacement for the handbooks, it still talks about it in there.

Q: Why were the costs for training so complicated?

ESCH: Because what the IG had found out in their work was that different contractors charge vastly different amounts for training costs. Some put lots of costs under technical assistance, and so therefore the training would appear to be very, very cheap or very low. For example, you have a firm like Development Associates or Development Alternatives

who's doing technical assistance in the field then actually delivers the training course in the U.S. for people. So they send people to the U.S. for four weeks. They develop the course and then they report the costs for that course in the U.S. They actually develop one of the other materials underneath the technical assistance, so the true cost of that course is not being seen. What the Office of International Training was trying to do is saying here's how you cost out a course. Here's all the factors you have to consider and put into the cost of that course. In the end part of what came out was that as long as it was a market driven course, in other words it was offered to anybody from anyplace, then that kind of cost would be a market driven cost, and so not nearly as difficult to break it all down. You did have to break it down when you were trying to deliver a course.

Q: That's an issue….delivering a course by a contractor rather than participant training where people went directly to a university.

ESCH: The marketplace changed quite a bit in the late 70's and early 80's , from only universities and a few training institutions (inaudible) to where contractors felt that they had the capability to deliver exactly the same course, and in some cases have exactly the same faculty. The faculty member who worked at the university or training school would go to the contractor if they had the work, or go to the university or training school if they had the work.

Q: But they still went to the university to get an advanced degree.

ESCH: There was not as much discussion about degree training as there was about these short courses and the wide variety. Also AID at that time took very serious looks about what it was costing people to go for undergraduate degrees or graduate degrees. There was great pressure from the IG not to send people to these high cost schools, such as Harvard or other places, or to send them to New York City, because you could do a similar degree in the Midwest much cheaper, much more reasonably. As long as you could get a quality course, why couldn't you use some of these lesser known institutions?

ESCH: Today not only has it gotten more expensive because of the whole cost, but you also have all kinds of pressures from other competing agencies such as USIA who absorb a number of their costs underneath their direct hires. Internally such as they do a lot of their arrangements by staff and not through a contractor. When the staff made those arrangements, those costs are not included in theirs. So when you get down to comparing AID costs to some other agencies costs very often AID will appear much more expensive, when in fact AID isn't any more expensive.

Q: What are other costs of training. How would you characterize them for somebody going into a degree program?

ESCH: Degree programs, when I was living in Pakistan, we were budgeting at around $25,000 per year per person. That would cover most cases, not all. That was kind of a ballpark figure we were throwing around at that time. The cost of education in the U.S.

had gone up considerably, too. You had both the cost of just training as well as the cost of the whole field has gone up.

Q: What other dimensions of the training program were you working on?

ESCH: When I was there in the field we'd do a lot of the data entry kinds of things and set up the PTMS systems but then we'd meet with some alumnae in some situations or go meet with Ministry people to do some planning and we'd talk about training costs and why it was costing so much with the government. We talked about training needs assessments and helped identify different people they could contract with to do training needs. We helped set up an alumnae association in a couple of places. We clearly met with a number of project officers with the training department of the mission, or with some of the contractors and talked about what some of the policies or regulations for AID were that they may or may not have been following; some of the reports or insurance or visas. Some of that included meeting with the embassies to explain why AID had to go with a J-2 versus a different visa. So there were lots of procedural types of things that I would help with.

Q: What about selection of fields of studies?

ESCH: Sometimes I got into some of that with some missions. They really varied from mission to mission as to what the history was in that mission or what the staff turnover has been. You had some of these training officers who had been with AID for thirty years or more and so they knew these rules inside out.

Q: These were mostly local?

ESCH: Oh yes, these were almost all. There were a couple of situations where the American project officer was the new person who didn't understand, so they'd use me as an American to try to convince them that this OFSM (Foreign Service International) knew what they were saying and that they knew the rules very well. I was willing to serve in that role very well.

Q: Were there any particular issues other than the ones you mentioned that you had to deal with

ESCH: One that relates to the Pakistan situation, which was my Foreign Service career primarily was the non-returnee issue; people who'd been returned home did lots to follow up in the U.S. with U.S. institutions.

Q: Was there a big problem with the Pakistanis?

ESCH: There was never a big problem but there was a problem that was there. Somalia had a big problem. When you have two or three percent you have a problem but you don't have a big problem. It's when it gets to like ten percent that you know you have a big problem and you have to do a lot right away. Pakistani's were always like two or

three percent and they were taking lots of people who were younger and people who were new in ministries. So there were always the risk that they might want to stay. I worked in Russia on a contract for AID there, where we did over five thousand and we only lost one person in the whole thing.

Q: I had the impression that the Indonesians were particularly good at going back to their.....

ESCH: The Indonesians were very good at going back. They had less than one percent.

Q: Why was there this difference?

ESCH: A lot of it is cultural and a lot of that is who they were picking in Indonesia. It's a very hierarchical system so you have to be up in the government or up in the civil service. Also remember as we moved through my career we moved into big private sector. When you move into a big private sector, which was where we really started losing them in Pakistan, you get a whole lot less loyalty to the organization. AID doesn't work with the largest of the large organizations because we assume that they can take care of themselves. So you're working with small and medium sized organizations, so there's less loyalty, there's more family issues and there's more economic issues going on that you may or may not know about.

Q: Apart from domestic instabilities?

ESCH: Yes. I think that Somalia's was both domestic instability and political instability.

Q: You said you worked in Pakistan quite a bit?

ESCH: Yes. In 1989 I left the Office of International Training and became a Foreign Service Officer. I went immediately after orientation to Pakistan.

Q: What was your job there?

ESCH: I was Human Resource Development Officer (HRDO) and worked in the Office of Education and Training with David Sprague. David ran the educational side and I ran the training side. At that time it was Aid's largest training project that they had ever had. Per month I was moving a million point five, a million point seven some months.

Q: Just for training?

ESCH: Just for training. That wasn't all just AID money. Part of it was that AID was doing administrative support to Pakistani's for the Pakistan government. We were getting money that we were moving also for the Pakistan government.

Q: Training in-country?

ESCH: No, training in the U.S. The Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Education both had participants that they were paying for, but we were providing the administrative structure for and carrying their visas for them.

Q: You weren't paying the training courses?

ESCH: We weren't paying the training courses. At that time in Pakistan we were moving the money, and talk about moving money. The banking system was so bad the a couple of times I physically had to go with the government person in the car to go pick up cash money of twenty or thirty thousand dollars. It had to move from one bank to another and they didn't want one person to go alone because it was actually being moved to a U.S. government account and we had to move it to another bank. They wanted me to be present to make sure nothing went wrong. Well how would I know with that much money. But it was really funny. We were taking a private car to do this even.

Q: How many people were we talking about in this training?

ESCH: We were talking, at times in the U.S. we had anywhere from four or five hundred in the U.S. at a time in both Masters and Ph.D. programs. We had a small program for undergraduates at community colleges for people from Baluchistan because there weren't enough from Baluchistan that could even make a Masters program. AID had decided, based on looking at leads they had looked at, and decided that undergraduates they weren't going to pay for, but they would pay for Masters and Ph.D. programs, so we were doing a number of training programs in that. There's a whole issue on the nuclear problem between Pakistan and the U.S. And I personally got very involved in that issue. It so happened that Donna Wolfe (this was in the days when I was with the Office of International Training) had really pushed for collecting the blue copies of the IAP-66A's which is visa form for AID participants. That particular blue copy was supposed to come to the Office of International Training but a lot of them weren't. What would happen is these AID FSN's would hold them until they had a whole slew or whole packages. They just wouldn't send them in on any regular basis so Donna had put a push on them. I very proudly brought Pakistan's one day to Donna and said "Look at what my AID mission in Pakistan did. Here's all these blue forms." There was quite a pile of them. She said "Just leave them here on the table. We're having a senior staff meeting and I'll show them that we're having an impact out there and we're working." Partway through their senior staff meeting I was called to come in there immediately. I went in and on the visa form it said nuclear energy. This was totally against the law! What is this and what's going on? I made the very first call to Pakistan and was working with a man by the name of John Champagne over in the Bureau at that time. Champagne helped me and we got Andy Herod, who was the Foreign Service Officer out there. We got Andy out of a party as I remember, and they spent all night looking themselves because they hadn't caught it. Their staff had typed it up but no one had caught that that's what they were doing.

Q: Were forms from the nuclear agency?

ESCH: Well some of them were from agriculture, some of them were from medicine, some were from other things but the question on the American side was "Are you sure that they're not going back to the nuclear agency?" There were these borderline things and some were really clear. Some were from the nuclear energy agency. What we did was immediately notified McPherson's office.

Q: You were arranging courses for them?

ESCH: Oh they were in school. They were in Ph.D. programs and things. The way it got caught was that Joyce Keyser, who was doing a lot of the programming for Partners for International Education and Training (PIET) happened to be sitting there bored in the meeting. She didn't have anything to do with Pakistan and she was just sitting there bored, just flipping through these and all of a sudden starts discovering these things. She said "I think there's an issue here that's really serious."

Q: What was on the visa (inaudible) out of this?

ESCH: They put down the title of the degree or the degree objective. The staff typed it just as they were told it was and so we had to transfer each of those people (first we had to identify them) and the Andy and those guys worked all weekend identifying how many there were, because we only had the visas that were being renewed at that time. The visas could have been around from an earlier period. Then we had to transfer them all to government of Pakistan funding. That was okay, we could manage them but we could not pay for them. So we transferred them all to Ministry of Science and Technology or Ministry of Education.

ESCH: It wasn't a problem legally, because you could come here as a private student and learn that. That was not an issue, but the U.S. could not support that. It was one of those things we thought may get in the news but it never did. Then I was working with Tunisia and discovered one day...there was a phone call that a man was working in the military...it was over a visa issue that the guy actually couldn't get a j-visa because he's actually military. He can't be in the U.S. on a J-visa, he has to be on a official military visa. And so "no, no he's an AID participant. What do you mean he's military?" "Well, he's active military and he's teaching at the university."

"So he really isn't in the military, he's really only teaching." "That doesn't matter. He's still in the military." That raised such ruckus through the troops in Washington that we had to transfer that man off of AID. He couldn't come. He was blocked from coming and so he came through the Ministry of Science and Technology Program for Tunisia and he went on their program which they administered. So sensitive to that issue, I got a phone call from the contractor for Education and Development, and voiced some frustrations one evening saying "we have these people going for training in the U.S. in ballistics." I said "What kind of ballistics are you talking about?" and I discovered that we were training military people under AID funding in the U.S. I just didn't ask the right question before.

Q: I'm surprised that the mission didn't know that.

ESCH: So we went back into this mode, this was only two or three months later. They identified those people and got them all out. I flew out then and as John Champagne said to me " I hope you land safely and they don't shoot the tires out because you're the bad guy. Rocky Staples was the Mission Director then and I no more than got more than fifteen minutes into AID at that time than I was called into Rocky's office for a meeting. This was a little bit by design because he knew I was coming. Rocky wanted to know why the Pakistani mission was being singled out for this special monitoring. I went through the history of how each of these was discovered, that it was totally by accident and fumbling. We didn't really try. It wasn't a part of anybody's monitoring system, it was a part of the system. He then understood what was really happening and that we weren't going after him in any way. He had some major problems with the size program that they have. I think that was one of the reasons why the Pakistan Mission wanted me to come out right away, when I decided to join the Foreign Service and there was a position available, was to help on some of those kinds of issues.

Q: Besides the training, what was you role as (inaudible) welfare?

ESCH: It primarily was training. That was the major....

Q: Local training too?

ESCH: Local training. We did quite a bit of in-country training and we had management training teams for both the public and private sector at that time.

Q: This was government training or government civil service type of training?

ESCH: It had been up till the time I got there, and then we were introducing private sector training and we did entrepreneurial training for both men and women on how to start up new businesses and how to run family businesses.

Q: Were you contracting with some institutions?

ESCH: It was with institutions that we contracted with, as well as we had own trainers and we had groups of consultants in other places.

Q: Local institutions?

ESCH: Local institutions and local consultants. Then we'd use some Americans when we first started a new course. We did things with the Civil Service Training Academies in all of the different regions of Pakistan, and then we did things with the Lahore University Management Sciences, I think it was. AID gave them money and then we used some of their faculty to run some of the courses. There were several other institutions in Karachi but I'm not remembering what the names were of those institutions. Some of them would come to a Training of Trainers on a particular subject or a particular topic. We started a

Trainer's Certification Program there, but I don't think that survived because it was really AID driven and AID funded. We tried to get some other organizations to take over, but there just wasn't the collaboration. There was collaboration with AID because we were an outsider, but not collaboration within Pakistan on some of those issues.

Q: How did you decide what training should be emphasized?

ESCH: Basically there was a huge training program for the Inspector General's Office of the tax department, and that was driven primarily by their interest to come up to some U.S. standards. They had approached the embassy and then the embassy approached AID. Others would be that they would hear that somebody was interested in some training and talk about needs. When we did some of the private sector things we went out and actually talked to businesses about what they wanted and what they thought they needed to get some other small and medium sized businesses. There were some very successful programs with how to start new businesses up and that was done by medium sized business entrepreneurs who ran that program They ran it very well and it got paying for itself quite well. Women entrepreneurs, women in leadership, things within NGO's, we did some of those kinds of programs as well.

Q: Using U.S. trainers, by and large?

ESCH: U.S. trainers and some regional trainers. We had a woman from India that used to come over and do some of the things with women because she had quite good experiences and models from India that were very applicable and materials developed from that.

Q: Were there any issues involved with anything you had to do with in that realm?

ESCH: Pakistani participants... I could tell you stories, Haven, for hours about the cross-cultural difficulties of bringing them to the U.S. There was the situation of the first group of the Baluchis who came to the U.S. and were in Jacksonville, Florida, and how the first time they came to the beach they chased women all over the beach... The whole group chased them. (Inaudible passage) learned not to take them to the beach in the first few weeks that they're in the U.S. You just don't do that. Their point was, anybody who is clad like that obviously is out to have a sexual relationship. Why else would they do that? …lots of those kinds of cross-cultural misunderstandings.

Q: Did you have a lot of cultural training and orientation before they left?

ESCH: We would do a two-day pre-departure program for everybody. If you were taking government servants from either Lahore or Islamabad or Karachi we did the two day program, but when we were taking people from Baluchistan or Peshawar we would do a three and four day program, depending on what we thought was needed to put in the requirement to get at some of the cross cultural issues, to get at some of the rules and things, this is how we're going to handle this. The long-termers we did almost a week, a five day program before they departed to come to the U.S. I had a staff of contractors at

thirty-five, I had five to seven people on the AID staff at times, and there were about thirty-five to forty people here in the U.S. doing placements and monitoring.

Q: It was a huge program.

ESCH: It was a massive program, it really was, and I think that it had major impact in Pakistan on people. For example, several of the Baluchis who came to the community colleges have some really wonderful stories about how the community colleges took them in, and took care of them and worked with them to bring them up to speed. They had no problems taking off once they caught up for the most part. We had very few serious problems with them. Then how they applied to come back to the U.S. to go for actual four year degrees. Part of it was somebody would say "If they could afford the four year degree, why didn't they go for the first two on their own?" Part of that is that the families had never had anybody who was college educated, and didn't see the advantages of doing that, but when the girl or boy would come back the would say "Hey, I know a lot more and I want to go get a four year degree."

Q: Were there problems of reintegrating in their home country after four years in the U.S.?

ESCH: We worried about that at times and we found that a number of them - well I left before the four year people were really back- but after being out for two years coming back they got pretty good jobs. Some of them went back to school because they didn't get the jobs they really would have liked to have gotten because they couldn't compete against a four year degree which they can't in the U.S. either. They could see the need for more training.

Q: What do you think of the impact of this program on Pakistan?

ESCH: I think that some of the moderation that you get on occasions was because of our program. I personally tried to look at the number of students coming to the U.S. whose parents probably came to the U.S. underneath our short-term programs. There's a direct relationship. There is a point that you can go back to in the middle eighties when you could actually see the number of visas being issued by the Brits drops off, and the number to the U.S. for students picks up, going to undergraduate programs. I really think that shift took place because we exposed the parents to America in short term programs. I think financially there's been a huge payback to the U.S. from that. I also think that business-wise there's been quite a few businesses that do business with the U.S. because they now know people here and there's a relationship there. I don't think that you always get the moderation in all parts of the government but you get some of that moderation in the government.

Q: What about the Pakistan government's performance?

ESCH: Leaves a lot to be desired at times.

Q: You mean the impact of the training and all?

ESCH: I think that there are individuals within those systems who have made some changes within those systems. I don't think that overall the systems have changed or improved. But then and again, if I think about the people in those training institutions, and the people those people are training today, compared to who trained them, I think you have more up to date people. You have people who are more aware of the world and you have a more holistic world-view being transmitted there. I think you have ...clearly a market for international products has developed there that wasn't there before AID and the whole Afghan war situation; a demand for products, a respect for products and an appreciation for them that wasn't there. I think there's quite a bit of impact on the size program that it was, and then if you realize that most of the money that was spent by AID comes back to the U.S. anyhow.

Q: I was also thinking about advancing Pakistan's development.

ESCH: I do think it has done that. Can I point to any specific major systems that have changed with that, I probably couldn't do that unless I went back and we did some database searches. The database still exists for all the Pakistani's; the Academy for Educational Development does keep that and uses that system to develop systems they are now using in the NIS and the E&A Bureau,. for tracking all participants. It's a very good system, much more user friendly than the things that were being developed under the Office of International Training. I thought it was a much better system. Part of it is the Pakistani who started it out was in itself probably a good system.

Q: What do you do with a tracking system?

ESCH: One is to report to AID and therefore to anybody else that you need to as to how many , what types, where they're from. We used them very often for follow-up meetings. We never did Alumni Association because I personally have very negative impressions of those. If Alumni Association starts locally with local energy, then it will last, but things that AID does or USYS does lasts about as long as USYS and AID does in the field. So, unless it starts up locally, I'm not one to say I'll start it because I've seen these things come and go so often that it's a waste of effort. I feel similar about newsletters. Newsletters last as long as you've got money and take a lot of effort to put out. Yes, they're nice but they're a major effort and I think the resources can be used better for some follow-up meetings and things to connect people up. The tracking system used to provide lists for the Ambassador or a director or deputy director when they were traveling, so they would know who was in that area and what businesses or organizations they were with. A number of times both AID directors and Ambassadors had meetings with small groups, only five or ten were encouraged. You didn't have to get all of these people involved, but if you just let some of them know that you're just checking back and seeing how they're doing. I used the list for a few trips myself. You would generate them for specific regions or topics.

Q: Did you do anything to try to help these people keep up to date because if you back off then you're isolated, and you don't have access to the development there for you?

ESCH: Basically at the end of each of the courses, AID was giving them money that we would set aside for either bringing in professional magazines and books relevant to their things, or access to e-mail. We were working on that in Pakistan at the time, because that was just starting up. Today I'd say that would be an excellent thing to be able to do. We used to bring in lots of magazines and books that got sub-distributed out from the contractor. One of the things in that whole situation was that lots of participants never understood that AID sent them. They understood that the Academy for Educational Development sent them because AID ran the program at both ends, which one do you remember? You remember the one that you call up if you have a problem. You don't call AID in that kind of a situation. So we had some people telling IG or evaluators that they never went for AID training. No, AID never sent them. The Academy for Educational Development, that great American organization, they sent them and that hurts, on the AID part.

ESCH: I sat through a number of their orientations and the stuff they hand out and things and they had it well identified, it was there, but I always put it back to that personal thing you know. Who calls you about the VISA? Who calls you about your placement or if you're in the U.S., what telephone number are you given? You're not given an AID phone number. I think that's part of what comes from that.

Q: Well, anything else on that...on your Pakistan time?

ESCH: No, I don't think so.

Q: Well, we can come back to it. After you had your tour in Pakistan, what was your next assignment?

ESCH: I returned to Washington and became the Pakistan-Afghanistan desk officer for the two countries and did that for about six months while I tried to pass my language requirements to stay in the Foreign Service. I spent a month in Guatemala since I was studying Spanish and once again did not pass the test. After the experience with the desk I left the Foreign Service.

Q: Do you want to speak about your experience at the desk?

ESCH: Yes. Pakistan and Afghanistan programs, while they were not large at that point, because they had come down quite a bit in size from their heyday, were still very high profile programs in so far as the Administrator's office went, and in so far as specifically the Regional Administrator for Asia went.

Q: What year was this?

ESCH: That was in 1993. I was on the desk from May until the end of November. There was a time coming back on Pakistan, closing out and the mission was trying to close out...

Q*: Why were you closing out?*

ESCH: Because of the nuclear issues and we had to close out by law.

Q: The whole operation?

ESCH: The whole operation except for some humanitarian assistance programs that did not deal with the government. Those have been running since then with NGO's.

Q: Closing the mission entirely?

ESCH: Closing the mission entirely. They did close it in the end of 1997, I believe, or the beginning of 1998. Wait that was in '93, let me back up. So it must have closed in '94-95 that it must have closed.

Q*: Was there much resistance?*

ESCH: The Pakistani's were very understanding, the ones that we had dealt with officially. Prior to my even leaving we were in the closeout phase. The Pakistani's were quite understanding that they didn't like it but they knew they had no choice. That was the way things stood between the two countries. They didn't hold it against people personally or anything, they were very sad to see people go.

Q: On the AID side or on the Hill or anybody?

ESCH: The Hill was very clear that we needed to go ahead and close out. That was where they were going to stand and that was where they were going to stay. They were open to the idea of providing some assistance directly to NGO's to assistance people in health and humanitarian areas. All this was to keep it small so as not to encourage the Pakistani's that we were changing our minds.

Q*: Do you feel this was very damaging to the work that AID had done before?*

ESCH: I personally, yes, because I feel that the moderate forces in Pakistan which AID had helped, and some of the people who were not of the elite group but still of the intelligencia group had a voice because the Americans were around and we were there and encouraged them through the projects and work and just our presence. I think that when the Americans pulled out, that what you had was their feeling much more isolated and much more alone. I think that some of the programs and projects for democracy, for governance, for participation such as in irrigation and some other areas, I don't think that you had that following.

Q: Were the Pakistan participants moved?

ESCH: Form the U.S., they were all transferred to the Pakistan government and they set up their own structure to handle them.

Q: Administratively?

ESCH: Yes. They all got phased out in a very orderly manner and fashion. It was a very total closing down. It was one of AID's largest missions ever. It wasn't the largest but it was one of the largest programs, especially during the Afghan war.

Q: What about Afghanistan?

ESCH: That program was always difficult because you were doing a cross border program and you were never really having Americans into Afghanistan, except in very rare exceptional cases. You were dealing with Afghanis who were taking things over, so things like payments for teachers for teacher training or teaching were always difficult on documents or evaluations of programs to see what was really done.

Q: You were carrying out a regular type program?

ESCH: We were trying to carry out a fairly regular type program and this was in the days before the Taliban made their moves or even developed, so there was real hope in several periods that peace would come and there would be a whole bunch of people ready to actually move back into universities and help out. I was very impressed by some of the teacher training that was done by AID in the sixties in the U.S. Some of the teachers were still around and AID was helping to upgrade them and bring them up to date.

Q: Go back and remind us of why we were operating in the country...why we couldn't be in the country.

ESCH: Primarily because of the internal war… At that time it became internal. Earlier it had been the Russians supporting the government in Afghanistan so we weren't there. We were supporting the Pakistan government and some of the groups in Afghanistan in their fight against the Russians. We turned, then, when the Russians pulled out and the groups started fighting amongst each other and different days or different parts there were moves to support or withdraw support in different ways from different groups. There were a lot of maneuvering. The hope was that one or two of them would join together and bring peace.

Q: The issue for us was primarily security?

ESCH: Primarily security but here was some intent on development as well, meaning that there was some effort to get people back to normal life, to get them out of Pakistan and to be there. That was part of the intent with the schools and clinics and things, because they

had become a great burden upon Pakistan-all the people who had become displaced people.

Q*: What was the effect of closing the Pakistan mission?*

ESCH: The whole refugee piece, a lot of the weight of that shifted to other international agencies. There was help through UN agencies and the U.S. government was helping through that but they could not do it directly.

Q: There was no direct assistance since the cross-border was closed.

ESCH: Yes, was closed off.

Q: Can you tell me about that?

ESCH: I think if I remember right, that the closing of the Afghan program was partially due to the economics of AID itself, and having to make a choice, and the people on the Hill went along with the choice. The Afghan program did not look like one that was going to turn around anytime soon, therefore it was in for a very long period. There was no political support anymore for that. They just didn't have much of a voice within Congress or within the agency.

Q*; Anything else inaudible.....in that position how did you find it?*

ESCH: I found it very good to be a desk officer, because you really do learn a lot about other agencies. In my position I had several things to do with the Treasury, several things to do with OPIC and Import Export Bank as well, because the closing down of the AID project was impacting some of the major investments by U.S. private corporations in the energy sector.

ESCH: Well, because AID's money had to be pulled out, the whole deal was very rocky. A couple of generator plants did not go on and only one did. They consolidated all their resources to do the one but not the other two. There were going to be three. The power sector was really impacted by AID's pulling out. Not that AID had that much money in it but AID's money was key to quite a bit of other money.

Q: Did you have a sense that (inaudible passage) in terms of dealing with the primary issue of liberation?

ESCH: Obviously not, since they blew up the bomb. I think most of us felt they were always very close and probably had the capabilities to do it, it just wasn't fully recognized or put together as parts. The others piece is: why is Pakistan, of all the other countries, singled out for that? We certainly have not terminated our assistance to Israel or any other country because of it. Only recently, after they blew up the bomb did we do anything with India, when in fact we knew India had the capabilities too for a long time.

Q: What made Pakistan selected out ?

ESCH: Well, it's always been curious to me as to how and why the U.S. Congress and popular press seems to have singled out Pakistan for that kind of sanctioning, and they did. Now once they blew up the bomb, it's a different situation today, but at that time it was hard to explain to Pakistani's and hard to explain to American colleagues here in the U.S. about why that was the way it was.

Q: Okay...then after you left the desk?

ESCH: On the particular day that I was told I would have to transfer to the Civil Service if I didn't pass the language requirements and the agency wasn't going to support me anymore on studying, I had the fortune of going to lunch with a woman who had worked on the Afghan program who was working for the Academy for Educational Development. They had put in a bid for a contract in Russia and AID had just changed the requirements for the Chief of Party. AID had reduced it from language capabilities, meaning Russian language capabilities, to no Russian language capabilities. She was asking if I would be interested. Well, happening on the very same day of coming out of one very discouraging meeting to go into that there was a possibility I could work with the largest training program that AID would ever have in Russia, in the former NIS. I checked with the IG and they said as long it was totally different contracts and totally different countries, there was no conflict for me to go work with Academy. I hadn't signed anything on contracts, fortunately, with AED. I put my name in with AED and AED was selected. Early in December of 1993 I went to Russia and opened up the office in Moscow.

Q: Chief of Party?

ESCH: Chief of Party. We went there in a great snowstorm and everybody said how bad it was, but since this was my first time in Russia, I thought it was normal. I didn't know any different. I worked with sub-contractors....

Q: *What was the situation in Russia at that time?*

ESCH: The situation in Russia was very much emerging from the communist period. Several of the people from the Pakistan program, including Jim Norris who was the Mission Director who I worked with in Pakistan, and several other people who had worked in the mission were called the Pakistan Mafia. I was clearly a part of that effort. We did work together, we had done a large program; we did know each other and we worked quite well together. I think there was a collaboration there that made things move pretty fast once they got things established. It was a very difficult situation in Russia at the time to get things done. It was hard economically to get things done, because things were costing a lot. For the Americans, we weren't sure it should cost that much, especially when you were coming from other developing countries. Why should Russia be so expensive, especially Moscow? Office space or apartments or other things... I remember AID approving the housing that I got because it couldn't be above a certain

height because the ladders in the fire departments didn't go above the seventh floor. AID was inspecting all the apartments at the time for all the contractors(Americans). Then you go back to the home office and say "Here's what it's going to cost you" with the three bids or four or five, depending on which house you're talking about. They would say "No way! The budget!" We came to realize we got letters from AID and AID was saying that this isn't within range.

Q: How much did you pay?

ESCH: I wound up paying around three thousand two hundred dollars per month for an apartment that was rather small...a one bedroom apartment. The Russians thought it was a very large apartment...a very lavish apartment.

ESCH: We were paying in foreign currency and we were paying to overseas accounts as most of the Russians were. In those days, we were dealing with dollars and American change in December of that year. The ruble requirements didn't come in until December 31. Most of the hotels and everybody else didn't think that it would go through on that day. The Western hotels held off until about three in the afternoon to tell you that you had to pay your bill that day in dollars or the next day you'd have to pay it in ruble conversion. It was a major shift which the Russians did take at that time.

Q: *What was this program you were managing?*

ESCH: The program was Participant Training. The AID officers and project people selected the participants and made the nominations. Then the Academy for Educational Development received the names from AID on an approval list, and we contacted them for visas, medicals and pre-departure procedures. We had staff that would deal with the AID project officers and deal with the participants. They came from all over Russia and all different sectors that AID was working in. Everything from new business development, disabled leaders, and bankers and insurance people, to medical school directors, garment manufacturing people, and deer herders from the Far West. We worked with all the contractors and all the grantees of AID who were going for training.

Q: Any dominant category?

ESCH: Private sector was the dominant category. Primarily geared toward private sector. Government was there but not nearly like it had been in Pakistan. This was a major effort to try to get people out of the country. We were trying to see how many we could process. The four year contract was collapsed to two and a half years, and in the two and a half years we did more participants than we had even anticipated. We did about four thousand five hundred participants in two and a half years.

ESCH: Three weeks before most of them were done. The first year we had quite a bit of difficulties because a lot of the training organizers in the U.S. who had been on the program were organizations who had done training with the Academy for Africa or Asia. They tried to deliver similar courses. Yet we had put in different kinds of requirements

but that wasn't what they heard. What they heard was they were going to do what they had done before and done well. The Russians really felt that they were being talked down to and felt they were not being given courses of the grade or of the level that they had anticipated. So with the feedback from the providers and from the participants, we really changed things around for the second year. By the end of the first year the evaluations were pretty consistent, so we ad to make some major shifts in how we dealt with providers. There was a gentleman named Patrick Collins out of county who did internal evaluations. Patrick did a wonderful job with all of the data. He put it all into one page and it pointed out what was a successful program within certain parameters, and what was an unsuccessful program within certain parameters. That really helped us to work with participants and participant parent organizations, to work with local providers who were providing follow-up training, and to work with U.S. organizations who were asking why we didn't get a contract or how do we get a contract or how can we improve? It was just page made so succinct and so user friendly to help work with the constituents. Participants would say that this wasn't good and then you could point out to them, "Here's what you didn't do. Here's how you fell in the negative category yourself. Some of them didn't return documents on time or didn't get their medicals done on time. Those were contributing factors. When you get into pushing them or get into a rush, or we made errors when we tried to make time lines too short, we could point out that here's how things happen. That was a very useful tool.

Q: What about the language requirement?

ESCH: The language requirement for all of our staff except myself and my deputy, who had also worked in Pakistan, was that everybody else spoke Russian. Participants were all in Russian and we hired translators in the U.S.

I once went to Turkey on three different trips in a month. We could travel on Turkish lira because we had counterpart. THY and Pan Am had an arrangement to accept Turkish lira, so there was actually no operating expense cost at all to travel, and whenever Jim wanted something I got on a plane and went. I got to know the Turkey (inaudible) over the three or four years.

Q: What were some of the main features of the program?

ESCH: Large (inaudible) support through balance of payment saved, so you had a policy dialogue component of the program. Again, mainly focused on exchange rate reform and those sorts of issues. Large TA program, the miracle wheats we introduced in Turkey. One of the places where the Mexi-pac really took off. We did a lot in the way of land leveling and irrigation in Turkey. I'll come back to that in a second because its sort of interesting. We built Middle East Technical University, Roberts College, one of the American School Hospital Abroad programs in Istanbul was there. We tried to at another university in Eastern Turkey, in Erzurum so it was a large university component. We spent a lot of money trying to get the Turks to do something with the State Economic Enterprises. It was a huge Bob Nathan team out there. I'd say the mission staff was about a hundred... eighty-five to a hundred. I think they had seven or eight economists full time

working on the staff. Larry Jones was the Program Officer at that time and most of the time I was there. There was an equally large TA. Rob Gleason was the TA. In Health we had a huge population program which is still going on, smaller stage now but still (inaudible) going into Turkey. Didn't do much in primary and secondary education, mostly university at that time. Art Hanley was the Public Administration Director. He had a big Bob Nathan team working on fixing up the State Economic Enterprises. I think at the time I started working....I should say also we had a major international consortium. It was the only OECD run consortium at that time. It was under the auspices of the OECD and we met twice a year.

Q: Who chaired it?

ESCH: The DAC chairman chaired it. There had been two, one Greek and one Turkish. The Greek one had died a long time ago, but the Turkish one was still very, very active. The Turks, till this day, go on sort of five-year cycles. They get their prices right and their economy sort of squared away, then the politicians can't hold back the spending and the economy begins to go downhill. They get debt rescheduling and start over again. If you look at the history from the 60's this is what happens. Every five years we were dealing with major debt rescheduling and intense IMF negotiations to deal with these issues. I worked throughout this period with an absolutely delightful guy at the IMF called Ernie Sturc. Ernie had dealt with Turkish affairs early in his career, and was now the Director of the Balance Payments department of the IMF, and had much wider and larger responsibilities. Because of the relationship he had established with the Turkish planners, the IMF let him stay on and he was the person who was dealing with all the exchange reform and the debt rescheduling. I, on the Washington side, developed a nice working relationship with Ernie. The AID image was a capital projects image. We had big Capital Project staff. They were well staffed in terms of quality of people. I've tried to remember who was the Director of that office when I first came in but it had in a junior capacity folks like (inaudible) folks like Rod Wagner; a whole team of folks from Morgan Guarantee and some of the other banks in New York as sort of a junior training program. These guys were sharp. On the project side they knew their business. Because Jim Grant wasn't of that sort, I think they decided to send Rod Wagner out as Deputy Mission Director, to oversee the project portfolio. The expectation was doing sixty to eighty million dollars in large capital projects in the future. There was a never-ending need for this kind of opportunity, and given the military relationship with Turkey, Congress was going to give them the money. I and others were convinced that none of that was going to work until they started getting their exchange rate sorted out.

It was during this period that the program began to switch much more to a policy dialogue where we became much more critical of where we put the project's capital money. With the IMF and the World Bank much more involved, exchange reform became the principal focus of our, if you will, conditionality at the time. Basically Rod left-he served two years-but left Turkey and frankly left the agency, and went back to a very successful career in the banking business. It was clear to him that the power was no longer going to be on the capital project side of the business. The power was shifting into policy kinds of questions. Jim Grant developed, in this frame of what was called the

assistance completion plan, which forecast to the Turks our expectation that if they got their policies right, we should be able to complete assistance by 1973. Which was in fact something they had said themselves in their planning documents, although they probably weren't serious about it. They had sort of forecast independence. It came pretty close. Obviously that's as much a political kind of things as it is economic, but when they reformed the exchange rate, their balance of payments improved very dramatically, very quickly. They did some other things right, and the politics wasn't bad...wasn't great but whatever.

Q: Was there U.S. political pressure, State Department type, on trying to influence your role and not pressing too hard?

ESCH: No. It was the backwater for NEA. I mean it wasn't unimportant, and you had a large military assistance program during that period. As long as that was secure. Of course you had the ambivalence because the Turks would always screw up something on the Cyprus side to make the Congress angry at them. It wasn't the same environment that you faced, say in Egypt or Israel if you wanted to deal with those AID programs, which had no bearing whatsoever to economic issues. You couldn't go extreme. We weren't going to bring down the government kind of conditionality, and the IMF was not involved with policy issues at that time. They were involved in loan stuff but not the policy.

Q: They're very much engaged in the policy now and process with the government.

ESCH: The Turks had an office in Washington, which was part of their state planning organization. It was only attached to the embassy. They took their orders from SPL and that was my counterpart back here. We met weekly to go over a whole range of things, and then I would have lunch with my counterpart in that office at least once a month. The subject of that lunch was almost always interest rate reform or exchange rate reform. This person was not of the rank to make those decisions and neither was I, but this tended to reinforce what Jim was doing out in Turkey at the same time. I had no illusions that this was going to happen tomorrow. I was more than happy to have a five to ten year perspective on what was going on.

Q: What was the impact of the program other than the microeconomic? Were there other areas where (Inaudible)

ESCH: Obviously a part of this was Turkey went from being a major food importer to being an exporter, during this period. The Mexi-pac, the new miracle wheat varieties were introduced by an AID technician who smuggled the stuff into the country. The Turks had all kinds of rules about everything. Turkey is a country, which believes in control. They keep track of everything and have rules about everything. One of the rules was that any new seed varieties had to be grown under very tight controlled conditions in Turkey for a period of two to four years before they could be used in Turkey. Well, you're not going to get anywhere very fast that way. One of the AID technicians brought fifty pounds of Mexi-pac in and started growing it in some of the experimental fields we

had in the program. All of a sudden farmers saw it and told other farmers. Within a year we had farmers coming and standing around the fields to look at what was going on, and it just exploded. The Turks never asked where the original seed came from and it exploded into a huge program. Within three or four years, Turkey went from a major importer to a major exporter of wheat.

Q: What was our role other than the seed?

ESCH: Mexi-pac requires a whole range of new cultural practices. You're dealing with dry land farming, and so land leveling was an important part of the program, so the water didn't run off. Various kinds of stubble mulching processes were used to keep the moisture level up. Also obviously fertilizer. One of the capital projects we were involved with at the time was fertilizer production. The Turks were making ammonium nitrate very inefficiently and we wanted to upgrade their fertilizer capacity. They, all of sudden, faced huge demands for increased nitrogenous fertilizers. That whole package we were probably moving close to sixty or seventy million dollars worth of Title I when I first took over, and within three or four years that had all ended. It was one of the more successful programs. We had a major technical assistance programs with the Ministry of Agriculture, in which we brought at least a third of all their senior folks over to the United States for a Senior Seminar kind of management program. Then we sent them back to Turkey and maintained that seminar kind of quality within the Ministry of Agriculture when they came back. In a relatively short period of time you had a large number of senior administrators, all familiar with the same kind of management way of doing things. It really made a huge difference.

Q: That's an unusual technique I guess, isn't it? The seminar approach?

ESCH: Yes. I don't know of any other cases in the countries I've been involved in where we did it in such an organized fashion. It was promptly a management approach which our USDA was itself using at the time. It was really an extension of something they had found worked very well. The key was to build the sense of comradery among these folks, so when they got dropped back in their own bureaucracy they had other people to interact with who had the same sort of management philosophy in trying to solve problems. Frankly the Turkish bureaucracy's objection was not to solve problems, but to prevent problems from happening and avoid being caught. We did the same thing in an earlier period, which I wasn't really involved in, with the highway department. The Turkish Ministry of Transportation and one of the western states, I don't think it was Idaho - it may have been Wyoming - had, when I came on board, already been six or seven years into an exchange program between the two. By the time it ended there had been enough training going on so almost all the senior managements in their highway department had some exposure to American education and the American ways of doing things. In later years, it was that experience which the Turks wanted to replicate and they even started using some of their own foreign exchange to send these folks overseas to get the same kind of jump start on management which they'd gotten from this old program. When I came on board the program was near the end of it, but in later years I went to a meeting with Peter McPherson. I was Near East DA then, but Peter had been asked to go meet

with Turkinozol, who, when I was working, had been head of the State Planning Organization in Turkey. He went on to become Prime Minister. He was over on a state visit and the AID program was down to nothing. What he wanted to talk about was starting a Participant Training Program again, using the Highway Department as a model, because he had been involved in that in the early years.

Q: Interesting. What about our work in Public Administration? What do you remember about that?

ESCH: Didn't do much. I shouldn't say that. It was sort of classic and much of the money went to paying Robert Nathan to put together a bookshelf full of volumes on what each individual state economic enterprise out to do to fix itself. They didn't do many of those things. Eventually they did spin off a lot of the state economic enterprises, and some simply died of their own free will because they were so grossly inefficient.

Q: We weren't emphasizing organization?

ESCH: We were pushing it and this was the whole process: to make them look and behave as though they were in a private environment. It wasn't necessarily pure privatization, but they were sort of independent managers with their own personnel systems and accounting systems, etc. These studies by Robert Nathan and associates were designed to enable them to do that. There was absolutely no political pressure elsewhere and of course a lot of those SCE's were half military. The plants were turning out tanks and guns and other kinds of military hardware, and also floor polish and a range of civilian goods. There was a major military component in terms of the desire to maintain the capacity to produce weapons, or if they couldn't produce them, to renovate American weapons. They had a huge business of trying to keep the Patton tanks we gave them running over time.

Q: What other aspect of public administration in regular government functions were we involved in?

ESCH: We trained a lot of Turks. We built Mid East Technical University as well as providing technical assistance to it. AID funds built the buildings, too. There was a Public Administration component of that program. We also provided a TA to Hacettepe University, but that was much more in the health area. Hacettepe was already a university and that became the leader in the population/ health/child survival kinds of activities.

Q: What was the health program at that time?

ESCH: Largely population.

Q: Population started at that time?

ESCH: Yes.

Q: Easily accepted by the country? How did they get started?

ESCH: Well, Dr. Doramagi who was one of the great names in Turkey at the period, became very interested. He had his own population interest at Hacettepe. Women's health, etc. Jane Grant became convinced that population was a terribly important thing to do. He had no entrée into that. Hacettepe could only take so much in terms of a national program. It was a private university. So he got working with the Ministry of health, and what the Ministry of Health said they needed was transportation. They couldn't get their health workers out into the countryside. If Jim would help them get them out, then they would add population components to the program that the health workers operate. I think it was for twenty-four million dollars. We had the first inter-uterine Jeep program in the agency. Jim, under the guise of a population program, came in with around twenty, maybe even twenty-four million dollar loan program, to provide the Ministry of Health with Jeeps. The big bucks were on the Jeeps. I wouldn't say it was a disaster. They used the Jeeps. They had all the problems with that kind of program. They didn't put money into maintenance. There were the classic sets of issues and the technical assistance wasn't always the greatest, but it was a start.

Q: What was the philosophy of the population program? Just the straight contraception distribution or was there more than that?

ESCH: It was largely contraception distribution, and we got into issues of manufacturing contraceptives in Turkey and quality control issues. I'm sure there were some religious components to it in those days, but I don't really remember major issues of that sort.

Q: No opposition or ....?

ESCH: I'm sure. But the leadership of Turkey was very much folks who had grown up with Ataturk. You were still living off a generation who were comrades in arms with Ataturk, so they still owned that vision of Turkey of being a Western country. It was fun. You could drive around anywhere in Turkey and there was always a picture of Ataturk in an office or hanging on a wall in a hotel. He was always in green...his face was always green, I don't know why, and he always wore a tuxedo or a business suit. You never saw him in local dress. He always had Western dress on. The army - to this day they're still overthrowing governments over there- was the keeper. Under the constitution the army was responsible for keeping Ataturk in green. That was their job. Leaders at that time were comrades in arms of Ataturk. There was a Muslim Brotherhood, and yes, there were locales of very devout religious belief. It was very conservative Muslim, but you did not see the veil over the head, etc. The girls went to school. Obviously there were issues, but there was a much better treatment of women in that sense than elsewhere. They wore Western dress at school. All the Turks I knew drank scotch, all the restaurants. I'm dealing with the sophisticated level in large case. It didn't have any of the Middle Eastern religious issues that you get into in Syria, Iran and Iraq.

Q: Do you think there was any sort of subsequent backlash to the impact of our program at all, or did it pretty much sustain itself?

ESCH: No. Obviously we had people then who were saying Turkey was too dependent on the U.S., and of course the Cyprus issue was there then. It's more now, depending on how we dealt with issue on Greece. We usually tended to favor Greece over Turkey, because of the political complexion of the Hill. There were time I will admit, that our program tended to deal with the relatively more sophisticated parts of the Turkish environment. We didn't work in Eastern Turkey that much. Erzurum University was the only major investment. Keban Dam was in Eastern Turkey but that really fed Western Turkey, it didn't feed Eastern Turkey. We didn't get involved in the Kurdish issue at all.

Q: Did you get involved in rural populations?

ESCH: Certainly rural, but the Anatolian Plateau kinds of populations. The Mediterranean kind of populations, but we didn't do an awful lot in animal husbandry. So the truly nomadic tribes which there were we didn't do an awful lot with.

Q: Poorer farmer?

ESCH: Well, through the Mexi-pac, yes.

Q: That was pretty wide spread in it's impact.

ESCH: Yes. We did a lot of dry land farming. This is a dry land farm, and irrigation.

Q: Small farms?

ESCH: Not by the definition of New Directions, but in Turkish context, yes.

Q: What could you do in three weeks?

ESCH: I think that the biggest thing that happened in three weeks was the exposure to another culture, another way of life and another economy. The training would be on top of that. Of course, as in most situations, some participants gained more from the training and some less. But I think most everybody woke up to the fact that Russia was closer to looking like a Third World country than it was a First World. The first year many of them came back just totally amazed that Americans lived in single family housing, and that these were not the richest people in the world. These were very normal, average people, in fact, many of them making a lot less than the Russians were, who were Senior government servants or senior business people. They really were just flabbergasted by that. On the same hand they could turn around and say "Why can't we do it? Why can't we do that kind of thing?" and it was like "Yeah. Why can't you? Just keep going." I think some of the real impacts of this particular program were that when the elections came up for Yeltsin in '95, that enough people had seen other things and been out, through the U.S. programs. I'm talking U.S. Information Agency, Department of Commerce programs as well as NASA was there, we had Treasury there, we had FBI. All kinds of different groups were taking people out as well as the (inaudible) community.

All the people getting out really did help people to see that they couldn't go back. They wouldn't be able to go back to the communist period or way. Yet, even staff in my office did not vote for Yeltsin on the first go around. They voted for him definitely on the second go around. They wanted to send him a message that they didn't really care for him, but in the end they would accept him instead of going backwards the other way. Most of the staff owned and had dachas from the Khrushchev period one way or another, through family or through their own. Because of the hard currency they were paid in partially, they were able to improve their dachas. They were able to improve how they lived. I think especially around Moscow, you had the emerging pieces of a middle class starting up. I think we very much contributed to strengthening many other regions, and that's been a long term trend in Russia. The regions are getting stronger and more independent of Moscow. I think that's a trend that the U.S. government has fostered and encouraged, and the Russians have grabbed a hold of.

ESCH: Lots of wonderful success stories. One was a woman who had started up an independent television station in her basement and was running it. She came here and did a short course, three weeks, in investigative journalism. She got so encouraged by that she went out and when she got home discovered that there was no bread in town. She used her investigative journalism skills and found out that reason that the bread wasn't there was because one of the very senior ministers in the government was selling off the flour on the side before it ever got to the bakery. She did an expose on him and got him ousted from the government and the bread started to flow. We had lots of smaller businesses that people had concepts and ideas, but when they came here to the U.S. they could see how somebody had done a small business. They went back and actually started up small businesses. NGO wise, I remember a story where a woman said she thought fund raising was begging, but after she went to a course in California, she realized that fund raising was a part of life with non-government organizations, and that you had to do it. She came back and she did fund raising within weeks of arriving home. She was able to buy three computers for her office, get people set up with being able to publish their own documents and manuals for training and do a lot more. Those kinds of transfers of skills when you only come here for three weeks, some people pick up quite a bit, some people pick up less.

Q: So what you're saying is it was cut to two and a half years, was that the end of the program?

ESCH: No. It actually was extended and it still goes on today. Each year after the large years was less people. I left in September of '96. The budget I had expended by the time I left was about seventy-four million dollars. At one point we even chartered a 747 and at another point we chartered a 737. We filled the planes with Russians. We had caravans of Russians across town, all arriving at the airport, a big process. We color coded them by which airline they were going to here in the U.S.. Some got met at Dulles Airport; we had some on United after that, some went on Delta. We put them with little color codes on their lapels and things. We had it all planned out. We never lost anybody and the entire program by the time I left between four thousand and five thousand people, there was only one known person who had not returned to Russia. We knew where she went. She

went to New York to be with her son. We had the address and reported her very early on to the Immigration Service as a non-returnee. Otherwise our verification system verified that everybody returned. We wouldn't interview everybody, but what we did was check with a random number of people within any group, to make sure everybody was saying everybody else was back. They traveled in groups because they were more mid-level to senior-level people within their organizations. They all had reasons not to leave.

Q: They all had jobs and positions?

ESCH: Yes, absolutely. The embassy was very tight and very difficult on people who were below twenty-one and weren't married. We had some NGO leaders and some people who weren't leaders that they were trying to develop that we had to special handle and go through. The embassy and the collaboration with AID was very good and very close, especially at a time when the visa office there was getting lots of public criticism for not giving out visas. I can personally say, because I helped handle the situation, that for AID there was great collaboration and support. I don't think in the whole time we missed even three or four out of all of those because of a visa issue. I don't mean that they stopped them for some security reasons, but I mean because we goofed up. There were some clearly that never came for training because of security issues that the U.S. had with them and their backgrounds. But for the most part, you never had to explain it to the Russians. It was really great. I had first started worrying about that, because in Pakistan when something like that would happen, the Pakistani's were like "Oh, really?" The Russians would say "I understand. Okay. Thank you." No further words. There was nothing about arguing. We never got into arguments. They knew what they had been working on and that it was sensitive.

Q: By now you were dealing with the relatively well educated.

ESCH: That haven was probably the most wonderful part about it, compared to working in so many other countries. I had five Ph.D.'s at one time on the staff. The participants reflected that kind of well-educated population. Well-read, incredibly literate people. One of the things that happened the first year with some of the training is that the Russians had read and knew about many concepts, but maybe they had misunderstood a term or an idea. I think in some of the U.S. training, what happened early on was they would say something and use it incorrectly, so the American trainer would think they don't know what they're talking about and start at a much lower level. What we encouraged at the end of the first year was that they would actually not start the whole course at a basic level but just that particular concept or that particular idea. Isolate out that and deal with that. Don't assume that everybody is at a very base level. Assume that everybody has got some preparation here, some ideas and things, and they're working in the field.

Q: Do you recall any common areas of misconception?

ESCH: Nothing, because there were so many different fields, so many different areas… There were things I remember in banking. They really didn't have a banking system, so you had people who had read about banking and things, but not really understanding.

How quickly it changed. In '93 we were doing banking for money exchange in Volkswagen vans downtown in Russia. By the end I had two bank machines where I could get either rubles or dollars in my metro station, and I could get it from my American account. They just skipped over checking and all these interim parts, and just absolutely caught up. You have kiosks all over the place for money exchange today. You have banks and you can move money and get things done. I'm sure even in the money crisis, I was reading that people were buying other currencies than the dollar even, because dollars were short recently.

Q: Did you find that people had difficulty getting back into their system, trying to put these new ideas into effect, given the people who didn't know about them?

ESCH: Once again, as in most cases with training, I think people who come from smaller organizations quickly were able to do things and have benefit from it. We had planned or budgeted a thousand dollars per person for follow-up programs in Russia. What we made the requirement was that the provider had to have a Russian and American combination for the delivery. So you'd have to have an American counterpart if you were a Russian organization, or if you were an American organization you had to have a Russian counterpart. Either way you had to have both to provide the follow on program. In some cases it was the say, World Learning which is an American contractor who was there. They bid on a program with another Russian organization, but they would use staff that was already in Russia. In other cases, people flew from the U.S. to Russia to help provide the follow on program. Generally speaking, the follow-on programs were an extension of the first program, or a reinforcement. At one point we had, someplace out in the Ural mountains, that when we did the follow-on hardly any of the participants who we had trained actually attended. All of these other people attended. Upon looking into it, what they had decided was (because they all came from a certain region and they all worked together very much) they didn't need not training. What they needed was their sub-ordinates to be trained in what they had been. So they thought they'd use the three or four days to catch their sub-ordinates up with us. "Don't waste it on us, but help us do this." It made lots of sense. It wasn't what I had in mind. It was a real surprise. The group from taxes, for their follow on what they wanted most was a translation of all the IRS forms that were brought back from the U.S. I used to say as things happened in taxes " Sorry to say, but AID did help them translate all those documents for doing it." There were different things that they wanted out of it. Some of them wanted very specific kinds of things; topics to be addressed or be expanded upon. A few times we were able to have the consultants within the financial limits stay an extra day and go visit people in offices, or come in a day early and visit offices. So you had some training. With a thousand dollars per person in making the U.S. requirement, it really wasn't a lot of money to be made. But some very good long term relationships came out of these. Some very good business relationships came out of these with the U.S. firms. I think that I've noticed that there were something like eight or ten sister cities relationships before '93, and now there exists forty-four across Russia. I've talked to sister cities to see if that was an impact of some of our training programs, and they of course (inaudible) technical assistance work. I believe that you probably can't prove it but certainly having trained as many people outside that country, when you come to sister cities, to sustain that over time it's going to

take people who are interested in it. Therefore I think it would be some of the participants in one of these programs that was encouraging or helping support that idea, especially on the Russian side. Or even on the U.S. side, because one of the requirements was that we did not use institutions just around Washington, and that we didn't use the traditional AID institutions. We had data bases that had to be searched in three to five bidders had to come in on every one, and clearly you'd get extra points if you were in states where we didn't have many participants.

Q: (Inaudible.)

ESCH: All across the country. Part of that was, I think, to get the Americans to get to know the Russians just was well as the Russians to know Americans. Of course some of them going to rural areas or smaller communities had wonderful experiences. Some of those who went to larger cities didn't always have the same kind of wonderful experience. We had a stabbing in fact in one large city, but that was rare and unusual.

Q: How did you find living in Moscow?

ESCH: That was the best thing I've ever done, meaning that I was in a lower class city. I was where the Bolshoi Theater was. I learned how to get very reasonably priced tickets, very quickly and easily, any night I wanted almost, to the Bolshoi. I also went to concerts at least twice every week. I really worked at that, especially my second year after we got things organized and down to routines. Fabulous art museums, and incredible amount of history that, from a Westerners standpoint I didn't know about. There currently is the Russian exhibit now at the Ronald Reagan building. I went through that recently, and quite a bit of that I had already seen, which is interesting. I mean not all of it, of course. It's like a whole piece that the American public has just not been aware of...that has been blocked from us for a long time. The impact of the church there and the role of the church, unless you were a Russian or a Slavic student you didn't know very much about it.

Q: *Did you get to know Russian people and pick up the language?*

ESCH: Yes, very much so. I picked up the language enough to get around and do things and enough people spoke English. My first six to nine months I didn't take a lot of Russian language lessons, but I got along quite well. It was amazing. Once again, you're in a big city and big city people will help you somehow. If you ask, people will be there. Russians are very helpful people and very friendly. They were just amazed at times at some of the conversations we'd have in the office about what we did, especially in the 1950's, for bomb shelters and all that. They just couldn't believe that we really thought they were coming, because that wasn't a part of what they talked about as people our age. They didn't have a memory of that. They had the memory of World War II, and the bombings that they had all gone through. It wasn't that the Americans may come here for some reason, but they didn't have the vision that they would ever come to America to blow us up. At least in the common person's view, that wasn't a piece of it. I think at

times both governments fed us information that the common people accepted but we didn't really challenge. This was an opportunity for both of us to challenge some of that.

Q: (Inaudible.)

ESCH: As I said, one of my colleagues, the deputy for the project, came from Pakistan and she was coming to Moscow with a six month old child. She was having difficulty with the child in the U.S., getting everything organized between Pakistan and Russia. I remember finding Jimmy Dean sausage and biscuits and frozen blueberries from Chili in the marketplace. I called her and said, "Cindy, it's all okay. You can come. We've got everything." In the first days you had to go to several stores to find it, but by '96 when I left, there were things in all kinds of stores and all Westernized. In some ways it was almost sad because we had brought McDonalds, we had brought Milky Way, we had brought MTV. I had multichannel cable T.V. in my apartment. We brought all these things and it wasn't quite the same Russia that it had been. But then the Russians didn't want it to be quite the way it had been, and I don't think I would have either. It changed.

Q: Expensive?

ESCH: Oh, very expensive. Western restaurants were very expensive. It wasn't unusual to pay a hundred dollars for a meal with drinks. Some of the behaviors in the office were interesting because it really was different than some of the other places I had worked. In many countries you're the boss, and when the boss speaks things are done. Well, in Russia the boss can speak, but unless the boss shows that he or she is very serious about this, it doesn't always stick. I had to learn a whole set of "When I'm Serious" behaviors so that I could communicate very clearly that "This is very serious " and there's going to be no discussion about this one for when you wanted something really seriously done. You'd be serious but sometimes you find that this wasn't done. You'd ask for it to be done but it wasn't so I learned a set of behaviors that communicated how serious it was.

Q: How did you behave to be serious?

ESCH: You speak loud. You look them right in the eye. You talk very directly to them and you call them to your office. Do not go to theirs. That I found was an interesting piece. I tend to do management by wandering around. If I gave out directions as I was wandering around, they didn't take it nearly as seriously as if I asked them to come in my office and have a discussion. When we first got there I was also the president of the Contractors Association. We worked with AID very well to try to get word out to all the contractors about some of the things AID was thinking about or doing, and help with common issues.

One of the things that most of us contractors found when we first got there was that the work patterns and work behaviors were difficult for Western organizations because the Russians say that they pretended to work and the Russians pretended to pay them. Therefore anytime during the day that you wanted to walk out of the office to go shopping, or stand in the queue, you just left the office. Most of the contractors made an

arrangement one way or another to have a cafeteria provide the food so they didn't have to go out and go to multiple restaurants. You'd give it as a benefit to them as one of their employee benefits. They were very reasonably priced meals to be able to do.

Dealing with taxes was a very common issue with the U.S. government and the contractors, especially how to deal with taxes. Of course, AID statements were always within the law but the practices between the law and what you found in reality with dealing with the different tax police and tax collectors and tax inspectors was always amazingly different We were encouraged to get together and share how we could handle these things and not talk to AID about it, since some of it was not within the letter of the law however, in the way that the Russians were practicing the law. We found ways to operate in a variety of different ways, shall I say. A couple of things that did happen were the mafia did approach us. The mafia approached us, the Russian mafia, which is a terminology in Russia, especially at that time, that was very ill defined and very vague. It was anything anybody didn't agree with. We were doing transits for Central Asia as well, so the AID offices in Central Asia , which were also run by the Academy underneath the same contract, brought their participants to Russia. We put them on Delta Airlines to the U.S. Delta Airlines did very well out of this contract, since they were the only American carrier from Russia with direct flights. They also tried to take them through Turkey, and take them also through Germany. They found that there were language problems and transit problems with most of the people who were coming up out of Central Asia. Russia was not a problem. Not that they liked to speak it, but didn't speak it or understand it or could read it. Therefore they had fewer problems. We were using a reasonably priced hotel.... twenty-five dollars per person per night, two to a room. It was out in the central part of town, and we thought that was good. It was fairly close to the airport, and that was good. We were using it quite regularly. Well, because we started using it regularly, these people were showing up with their per diem in their pocket, plus their own money. Then they would come to the U.S. and go to their training, and then they would come back with their gifts. When I mean gifts, some of them got to Moscow and bought more gifts, such as the refrigerator, or the washing machine, or the T.V., to take back to Kazakhstan. They would have lots of stuff in their rooms. They were using a hotel, and they only stayed there a night or they only stayed there overnight as they transit. Very often we had them stay because we had early on experience of too many delays in flights, because there was not enough petrol in some countries. You'd schedule the flights to connect very reasonable close and they wouldn't make it. So we started having everybody stay overnight one way or the other so that we didn't have problems. In Russia, when you book a ticket, you couldn't turn that ticket back in if a flight wasn't canceled. Because of the delay you didn't really cancel, the flight went and if you didn't have the people there you ate the ticket.

One night we got a call on an answering machine. A deputy of mine who was told that forty people were in one hotel room, and that the mafia was after them telling them that they would have to pay anywhere from five hundred dollars to a thousand per person. Different people were told different things. The threat had started at around four in the afternoon, and by this time, it was around eight or eight thirty at night, it had gotten very serious. I immediately told the deputy to "get two people from the staff, call them at

home. You all meet at the hotel. You guys get those guys out of there." I stayed at my place because with my English, I'll deal with the English world. I called Embassy Security immediately. I called the Radisson Hotel, where Clinton and Gore stayed, and made reservations immediately on my credit card for twenty rooms. The Embassy security person immediately got in touch with their police contacts and encouraged the police to help us handle this situation. When the police came to the hotel, the very first thing was that they went into for the first forty-five minutes or so, was accusing us of having created this problem because " You know, if you Americans weren't here this wouldn't have occurred. Therefore you Americans are the cause of this entire problem. You have done this to us and why have you done this?" You always have, in Russia, the thing about the countries of the former Soviet Union not being equal with the Russians. Therefore you have this looking down upon and "Why are you bringing these other people here? What are you doing?" So some of that was also going on. Some of the participants went to their embassies and stayed at their embassies, and they had come and picked them up. We had fifteen rooms, like thirty people, who went to the Radisson hotel. Of course, the next morning their flight took off and the whole problem was over. I had called my Project Officer after I got things moving, and I said "Here's what's happening. Here's what I've done." I said "I hope you support me because I'm going way over the per diem and the allowance rates for this." He said "I will sign anything to not have one person dead" because that's what we had all feared.

Q: That's what they were threatening?

ESCH: They were threatening death.

Q: If they didn't pay?

ESCH: Yeah. If they didn't pay they would not come out of there alive. With the stories we had heard and the things we had seen in Moscow, that's very possible. You never know when something just goes wrong, too. My side was that either AID will pay or the Academy will pay, but somebody will pay not to have a dead participant, I know. I thought I could get backing on this issue one way or the other, and I got full backing from all sides, with hardly no questions.

Q: Did you ever use that hotel again?

ESCH: Did not use that hotel. I got a signed paper from the Project Officer that authorized us to use higher class international hotels. Paid a higher per diem rate for the transits, and that took care of the security issue because they all have better security. One other time we got hit was the participants arrived and their luggage did not. They missed their flight that night, because they had six or eight hours in between and we had a hotel arranged for them. They missed the flight that night because their luggage wasn't there, and the next day there were no tickets to go back to the stands for fourteen more days. If you multiply fourteen days times the per diem that we're paying which were now the higher rates, it was going to cost AID a lot of money. When there no tickets on the one airline that goes, and not knowing if the other would even go, we were trying to make

contingency plans. The participants really wanted us to pay a seventy-five dollar per ticket surcharge that we heard we would get if we paid the surcharge. We were told this right outside the airline office by somebody. I knew that if we started paying any surcharge, we'd pay forever more. I said no we wouldn't do that and would just have to work this out somehow. People did not want to stay. They were very upset with me. These people who were Deputy Ministers and things were headed to their embassies to complain to their ambassadors. So we thought of a compromise and that was that " we would give you your passports and we will let you go and make any arrangements you want to. We'll give you the exact amount of that ticket and how you deal with this is that you'll sign a piece of paper that says you take full responsibility for yourself to return. I knew in AID language I could never really do, but they didn't know that. The Project Officer was fully consulted on this, and he didn't know anymore than I did what we really should do in this situation. Sure enough, the next day when we checked there was nobody left. We verified that everybody had returned on that night flight because the people in Kazakhstan had met them and they had all somehow gotten the ticket. Did they pay the seventy-five or did they get it straight or what did they do? I had no idea and it was once again all over.

Q: Decentralization is a good thing.

ESCH: Exactly. Those were the two time I got hit with the mafia very directly. Both of them worked out very good, with no increase in costs or no payoffs anyplace, unless you talk about the extras in the hotel, but it was all very legitimate.

Q: Anything else?

ESCH: I think that the follow-up program that we finally did turned out to be quite a good thing for AID going out to the different regions and things with a program that was connected to something they had done in the U.S. We also did a number of alumni follow on things. We never formalized the Alumni Association because I felt if you only went for three weeks, you just didn't feel that much loyalty to anything. Most everybody else agreed. AID really thought that. We would do some regional kinds of meetings so people from training different programs could kind of meet each other as well. Those turned out to be very successful and very well attended, which said that there was some interest and loyalty. I was really amazed at the kinds of things that you would see at one of those kind of networking meetings. The American ties, the photos, the banners, the shirts, whatever they brought out to show off that they had been to America. It was quite warming.

Q: After your Russian experience, then what?

ESCH: Came back and worked with the Academy for Educational Development as a Senior Program Officer and worked on new business development with Russia. I did proposal development writing and also went to Liberia in 1997 and did kind of a training needs assessment for former combatants, which was a very interesting experience because I hadn't worked in a war torn country before. I had to try to figure out whether AID should take some of these participants out of the country prior to the elections, or

whether they should leave them in the country and just provide in-country training. I, after having talked with enough Liberians, felt that AID should just leave everybody right there. The war had been too long before and enough time had passed. There were enough of these people who were being identified as "really bad boys" and the Liberians didn't want to reward bad boys. Or they felt they should be able to be able to bring them into their own families, not isolate them and give them training someplace else. Of course if you talk to the combatants themselves, a lot of them would have preferred to come to the U.S. Nobody in the system wanted them to do that, so we were going to make arrangements to send them to Ghana and to try to give them some technical training. But then people didn't want to do that either. They really wanted to come to the U.S. and go for a degree program. There wasn't enough money to do that, nor was there any political will to do that. In the long run, because the elections went well and nothing happened, AID didn't do the program.

Q: They didn't do the program at all?

ESCH: No. Did not do the program at all in the end. Training on technical areas but former combatants, especially the younger ones, were taken care of in some by the OPIC - Opportunities Industrialization Center- there and there's a college there that set up a technical training program as well.

Q: Cunningham College?

ESCH: No, Cunningham wasn't in yet. Booker T. Washington, down the way. The Alumni Association had set up a training program there. The European Union was helping them on that program. They felt that a whole lot of them who wanted to be trained had some opportunities to be trained in-country.

Q: Did you do anything else in that position?

ESCH: Global Training for Development, which we're still working on here today. Global Training for Development was the ....

Q: What's Global Training Development mean?

ESCH: It means that six contractors were selected for handling all of AID participant training. Those six then compete among themselves or are chosen by the AID offices, to do in-country training or overseas training on various topics or subjects.

Q: For no particular thing? Just whatever?

ESCH: Yes, whatever was the general contract for training. That particular piece I helped AED (Academy for Educational Development) market once they had won the contract, to AID offices all over the world. They won quite a few of those, of which three of them are held by AMEX, where I currently work as a Vice President. AMEX is doing work in Guinea with non-governmental organizations and in Senegal working with AID office to

host and hold some conferences for judges and for lawyers. In Banian, we're working with a company who is providing training support to AID contractors and AID itself for training workshops and conferences, and trying to just do some organizational development work with them.

Q: Let's back-up and take an overview of this, particularly related to your work in management and training and so on. What do you think is one of the most important lessons that you learned or you felt should be communicated on about that kind of process.

ESCH: Do you mean management worldwide or my...?

Q: Your role in doing the kind of work you were doing.

ESCH: I think that some of the things that I learned work and I think are effective and that is the kind of thing I mentioned that in Ghana where I was clear that it was their project, and I was there to help and assist them; that it wasn't our project and them helping us. I think that quite a few contractors and technical assistance people get those roles confused. I think that trying to leave behind something was one of the parts that I picked up from Pakistan. The idea of sustain ability. As you close down a mission it becomes clear what you're really going to leave behind. I think that too often we don't take that into consideration at start up. We should. What is it going to look like at closedown? I think that some of AID's current engineering concepts try to communicate that - what's the real outcome. That's always difficult to envision what that is, but I think we've got to have some of that and try to deal with those issues in the beginning so that there is something left behind and not just a bunch of white elephants or partially done things.

Q: What about in the area of management training and so on. What worked and what was the most important thing they emphasized?

ESCH: I think that trying to use local examples and local situations to make an analogy about something and not to use as much...I mean, you can use some U.S. case studies, some U.S. examples but you really have got to try to find local examples and local situations to use. It's very difficult for many people in developing countries to understand what an orchestra is, yet it's one of the concepts of management that we say in the U.S. "Just think of yourself as a conductor of an orchestra with all these different parts and pieces." If you've never heard or seen an orchestra, you have no concept of what that is. Many countries don't have an analogous kind of thing, so you have to use a whole different type of concept to present. Using the local situation more, once again you're trying to teach people how to fish instead of giving them fish. You're not doing it for them, but trying to get them to do it for themselves in the skills area.

Q: What about generalized use of your simulation? Was it applied generally?

ESCH: I think it could be applied generally. I think once again it's not the kind of thing you can come in and just give to them. It was the kind of thing they had to grab on to. I don't think that just designing or writing the training manual for simulation would solve many problems. I think that introducing the concept and idea, seeing if they pick up on it. If they pick up on it and take it for their own then it will be useful and be something that they could use.

Q: What in terms of content or subject aspect in a management area did you find was discussed or get absorbed or would represent the critical conceptual problems for people you were training in developing countries? Maybe there wasn't any.

ESCH: Yes. I was just trying to think. Generally speaking, when you try to figure out what do they need or what do they want, then you're kind of gearing it towards that, so there's a lot more acceptance because that's what they wanted to do. In any given group you always have some people that don't want to learn whatever it is that you're talking about.

Q: Can you think of some topics that relate?

ESCH: When you start talking about management a lot of people will ask you, in a needs assessment kind of thing, all about the finance or all about the harder subjects, the numbers, the projections and things, and not very much about the human aspects as much or the group dynamics aspect, or the organizational development pieces or the organizational culture kinds of pieces which I think impact work and work behaviors a lot. Those are areas that you usually are introducing to people. What was the terminology there coming back form the U.S.? Lots of people were coming back to Russia and one of the things we had to include in lots of follow-ups were things like delegation. They were just like "How do you guys do that really? How does it really work? You know you're supposed to give work to your subordinates, but why does it work in the U.S. and it doesn't seem to work here?" There was quite a bit of work on that and quite a few requests for that to be included as one of the topics in a general sense. I think that you can transfer the ideas of budgeting and the ideas of accounting, but unless you really know their accounting system, those general kinds of concepts just kind of stay general. You really have to work on working with them on their system and their way. Then you can help them improve that. I really didn't see many times where people made presentations or where I made presentations on the general concept of finance for non-financial managers. It's got to be specific to be really useful.

Q: Over the time that you were involved in this whole area of development management and so on, did you find the requirements changing from what was needed over time from way back in the early days to what you were finding now?

ESCH: The trends in management, from when we went through the team development and work group kind out of Japan called Quality Circles, the latest things come out and are there as a trend and as a popular topic, but I think that part of it is that you need to keep that awareness and use those and know about them, but at the same time you have to

keep back to the basic kinds of things that have been trends throughout. In other words, being able to do some kind of analysis of things and being able to ask questions. Being able to manage and work with people. Being able to get a job done. Those kinds of things are very consistent, no matter which kind of thing you're talking about is that latest trend.

Q: We were talking about management objectives and now we're talking about results? Are they the same thing?

ESCH: Results, yes. They're not exactly the same thing, but they're certainly connected so they're similar. Lot's of similarities to them and lots of connectivity. The latest concepts didn't just jump out. They kind of have developed over time. Being able to make those connections at times can be helpful to show people that there's connectivity to some other concepts that they've learned or worked with. The Americans clearly (and I'm clearly a part of that) the human side is as important to me as the whole quantitative side. Lots of Europeans who do training lean more towards the quantitative side. There is a bias in some of us. I wouldn't say all of us, but in some of the countries where I have been training, the participants have pointed that out, that we tend to focus more on the human side.

Q: Over the years, we used the phrase Public Administration and then it became Development Administration and then it became Development Management. Is there any difference? Or is it *euphemisms?*

ESCH: I think that when you start into Public Administration, especially in the early period - the thirties, forties, and fifties, as that whole field developed, it was much more administrative kinds of things. Meaning that you set up systems, and especially after World War II in the fifties and early sixties, you set up systems to either track, monitor, budget and do some statistical calculations of things. It was much more administrative; keeping the job going and keeping the job to get done. Whereas I think as you moved into Development Management and you moved into other areas, you were able to manipulate resources, You were able to control resources, you were able to make decisions about allocations of resources. Some of these things are not all given, but they're manipulated, and you couldn't manipulate them. So I think you saw an evolution of that kind of thing. That you had people who would administer what has been decided, but then you have managers who would decide what is going to be done. It was a real difference there.

Q: The idea of providing assistance and Public Administration seems to get a very think *negative reaction. How important is that because it's no longer required, it's passé?*

ESCH: I think that when you tend to look at government in any country, government has not gotten a good image, partially because government's doing some of the things that nobody else wants to do, such as take care of the water and sewage. So I think you get some of these negative things from the police department, or tax collectors, or licensing bureaus. There are things that need to be done to improve the quality of services and of life, if you get down to the police and some of that. Government has not always done that efficiently in most countries, and so some of the ideas of privatization and some of the

ideas that people are even testing now - the trend in prisons is not totally clear whether we're going to be able to go totally private on that issue of not…that kind of a trend tends to go back and forth. We haven't done all those things. When you say it's out of favor, I think that what you're observing is that even those of us who are involved in development come from countries where it's not so favorable. In other words, we haven't seen any place where there is a perfect government, so we don't have a model of what is great government. We've got a bunch of mediocre models that we say "could you come up to this level?" and yet where there has been major efforts in civil service reform and major efforts in civil service training, a few years later it doesn't seem to be there. It seems to kind of fade away rather quickly. The government grows, there's staff turnover, the economy goes a different way, so therefore as soon as the economy doesn't seem to go well the government is blamed for that. Then you have a change in the political side. I think you can point to a number of countries and specific organizations within that country that have really changed because some of the training, and some of the organizational development efforts that have been done through civil service reform or through management development.

I know in Pakistan, you can go to the IG's department and there is clearly long term effect there. They changed the structure of the organization through some management and interventions of the projects that I was working on. I know that true in other parts, where the University of Chicago has played big parts in parts of Latin America. I know U.S.C. has played major parts in some of the African countries with some of the people. I think there is great benefits from the tax program in U.S.C. My God, some of the people who have come out of there are in leadership positions. I'm sure they got real change within those organizations but would everybody turn around and say "Oh, that's the model?" No they say "Look at all the problems they've still got." There's a perception problem there that I don't know if you can clear up. I think that there's a need but I think it's going to be a need that gets met through trends. In other words, it may become more popular at another point in another way because something else comes along as a trend.

Q: During the Reagan administration, even before but particularly during that time, there was a big swing to the private sector in the wake of the government or anti-government. Where do you see a balance? Is there a balance between the relative roles? You've been training people in the private sector and you've been training with assistance through the government and so on.

ESCH: I think the balance and the place you could probably make the biggest impact would be at the local government level, and where at least in the U.S., is where most of the jobs are generated in medium and small sized businesses. If you can make the balance between government having enough hands on to make an environment reasonable for business people and entrepreneurs, and hands off enough to allow them the freedom to be creative and do business, is a balance. I think with sensitivity you can get there. How it's applied in different situations would have a vast range of possibilities. I think that cities like New York or Moscow or Bombay or Jakarta, I just don't hold a lot of hope that there are interventions you could do to change those systems significantly. I think you could change a department, you could change an area but I don't hold hope unless there's real

top management change that's doing it I think if you look at D.C., without the board coming in and Congress taking some firm hands, there wasn't much else that was going to change this city. It wasn't going to be because of a training program or because of a massive introduction of quality circles. You're going to have the same people doing the same thing and not doing any better. I think that having serious changes at the top leadership levels, you can have some possibilities.

Q: You seem to imply that there is (inaudible) in having programs that focus on the change of leadership. Can you do that effectively?

ESCH: I think that unless you have the purse strings as Congress did on the city, and that's one of the serious problems for Washington, D.C., I think if you had a change in the government structure in Nigeria who holds the purse strings for most of the local communities, unless they change the way they're doing business at the very top (I mean direct lines with money attached and real strings) some of the cities would have real troubles.

Q: Would donor assistance have any role in it?

ESCH: I think that for most countries, donor assistance is a small part but it plays very important scenes. I think it can introduce concept and ideas and suggest things. Unless there's the local political will to actually do whatever it is the donor wants to do, there's no hope that will survive beyond the money that the donor has put there. People will do any project almost that you want done, if you have the money, but that doesn't mean that when you leave that there's anything left behind. Unless they have the money or the resources or the political will to bring the resources to it, that there will be any sustain ability.

Q: Is there anything you can do to generate the political will?

ESCH: I think the whole collaboration idea of when you're doing design is trying to figure out what people really want to do; what do they see as priorities instead of saying "This is what we want to do. What do you think?" Kind of the concept of what they want to do and how can you do that with what you can do.

Q: That presumes that they want to do something?

ESCH: Yes. In some cases there isn't anything they want to do that you, as a donor, could even
fund. Today in Russia, with the exchange rate and the devaluation - I'm sure people don't want that done. Could you, as a donor, undo that? Sure, with great money, but you don't have that kind of money to do it so no, you can't do that. It depends on what they want done or what they want to do. It's got to be within the realm.

Q: Do you think the kind of programs you have been working with and the U.S. assistance programs have been effective over the years?

ESCH: I think the Education and Training part of the AID has been one of the most effective in the long run for building relationships with the U.S., for developing local capacities to do some things different. I think that has contributed a lot and has made a big difference in many countries. Much bigger than we'll ever know about, because once somebody goes through a training program or an educational experience that is long term, they do things differently. I won't say every training program has changed everybody, but many of them have influenced how people look and how people think.

Q: Do you think AID and people appreciate the significance of that today as much as they used to, or have they backed off?

ESCH: I think they've backed off partially because of the difficulties of doing it and the high expense of doing it. I think that the difficulties within AID of the paperwork and all the requirements have made people just weary of doing that. It's just too difficult to do. It's easier to just do an in-country program through your technical assistance contract than it is to do a training program through one of these generalized programs.

Q: But the payoff is…?

ESCH: I think that if you did it through your technical assistance contractor and did it specifically that's connected to a project, that would have the biggest benefit anyhow, because that would support directly. When they talk about time generalized training to AID's directives, you're stretching that a bit because the participants may or may not see AID again. One of the very sad experiences I had was in Morocco. I got on a bus and I heard a voice that I had heard before. The man was sitting in the seat in front of me but I couldn't see his face because he kept turning to talk to a friend. I finally reached over and I said "I know your voice from someplace." He said "Well David, I was in your class in management in Washington D.C." I was looking for somebody from Morocco, but he was actually from Mauritania and had received a Masters Degree in Kansas I think it was. I had a couple of conversations with him over the next few days, and he was pointing out that in AID Mauritania, some of the AID officers who had trained at the same school he had trained at, and gotten their Masters would come in and think that he was the stupidest person around. He said they just don't give you any credibility for the training, or that you learned something, and that you learned from the same people that they did in fact. That to me, is one of the sadder points about training. Sometimes we assume that people in other countries don't know very much.

Q: That's one of the biggest things that's evolved over time, that there are more of these people in these countries and we gave them the opportunity...

ESCH: Yes. Encourage more people to do more professional things where they have to prepare for an international presentation or conference or something. I think those can be very beneficial if they're put on the line, not to just attend, but put on the line to do presentations.

Q: Do you think the placement program in administration should be greatly expanded? I don't know what scale it is now but..

ESCH: It's on a decline. As far as numbers and the numbers you can capture, I think some of the AID people are really struggling with how do you identify an intermediate impact when it's training and what's your long range goal when making a connection to all that.

Q: This is to find your results.

ESCH: The results framework. I think that they struggle with that. I don't think it's impossible but I think that some of the models on how to do that are not very clear.

Q: This resulted in (inaudible)

ESCH: A long period. I think there's a real possibility that people will see that training has been one of the great things for me. I think quite a few of the more senior people within AID who are career people clearly believe that there's been great impact and great benefit. It's how to do it at a reasonable price that's the real challenge today. Part of it to use more of the regional resources and use more of the local resources instead of using always the Americans. Not as much opportunities of employment for Americans in this field, but...

Q: Any last thoughts?

ESCH: Nothing comes to mind right now. Thank you very much.

Q: It was a very interesting interview. Thank you very much. Let's insert back into the transcript here the experience with the Development Studies Program. Describe that program and what you were trying to do with it.

ESCH: In 1975 the agency was going in new directions, and one of the ideas was to set up a mid-career training program for the New Directions. They called it the Development Studies Program (DSP). In 1975 a group of people under Dan Creston, Dick Blue and team was working on what was the design going to be and how were they going to do it. The team contacted some of the professors at Vanderbilt and they had come down and did presentations, or talks or whatever they did. Some way or another I wasn't chosen to be included. Another graduate, a woman who was working on her Ph.D. program at Vanderbilt, K.C. Suarez, was asked to come down and she asked me if I would come along. K.C. asked me to come to Washington with her to do a presentation of what she was calling the Live Case Method. It would be a part of their human resources element of the DSP program. We came down and we did a demonstration of the Live Case Method , which I'll talk about in a moment. We were selected to then be sub-contractors for DSP I, II and III. What we did was each of the DSP programs were divided into teams and they were working on the different exercises as teams. We would take one team each day and we would do kind of a workshop with them. Individual by individual would come up in

front of the room with K.C., and in a very open space talk about a comfortable place they wanted to do some work. Most people would pick their office. In my office in Nairobi, it would be this. Here's the desk, here's the chair, here's where the filing cabinet is and here's where the telephone is, my pictures on the wall. So they would go around and actually lay out the office and we'd try to visualize what that was. She would ask them different questions about it, and at the same time I was doing the video taping. Then they would invite in two support people and they would give them roles so something could be going on, like a meeting or a discussion. K.C. and I had worked on , with AID career people, some very standard kinds of things that happened as problems. We would pick the appropriate problem for what the setting was. There would be a challenge for a person to quickly handle in about five or ten minutes, a situation. K.C. and I would then trade roles, and I would come into their setting, and into what was going on during their meeting. She would videotape that.

At the end of the session, after everybody was videotaped, we would then sit with each person individually and go over their videotape all the way, and talk about what were their other options. What other things could they have done. An example would be I would come in and be a senior officer to the person and say "We just got this from Washington, and the program office has to have a revised budget on what you're doing." We'd come up with some kind of a problem. We had the alcoholic who acted out. We had the outrageous student who returned from training and wanted to confront the AID officer who sent him for training in the US or someplace. We had the colleague who returned with jet lag and couldn't remember certain things. In some cases, I threw in an epileptic seizure because somebody was just being very intellectual about things. We had program problems like the problem with the cement, or the problem with the fertilizer, to try to get them to see how they would handle a situation that was an interruption in their work and not expected to happen. Some of the feedback that we got from Foreign Service officers later was that it was very helpful to be able to think of options, instead of being told just what to do or what could be done. A few of them that I talked with over the years said "You know I always think of, in most situations, what are my options? What else should I be doing?" People picked up on it and that was the whole idea of it. Not to say right and wrong, because Foreign Service officers are working in so many different cultures, but to be able to say "What other things could you do? What other choices did you have?" We got feedback that it was successful, but on the fourth go around they were revising it, and cutting down the budget and reducing the amount of human resources focus there would be and we didn't get another contract. We did do it with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Q: You were just doing one module and there's a whole program. You were just working on a piece of it.

ESCH: Yes, a piece of it.

Q: Do you have impressions about the studies program as a whole?

ESCH: Yes, I thought it was a very good program, and I think that it really developed over time into a much better program, because it got into some more case studies and focused more on policy later on. Some people called that really helpful and useful. Especially about the international aspects, and getting a broader picture outside of AID. So many things that you meet within AID are all focused on AID and you think the whole world is AID. There's other agencies other donors, and other people doing other things than AID is doing and what's some of that data? What's some of that information? What's some of those studies? It was a very good program to try to broaden lots of people's ideas.

Q: All right. That covers it?

ESCH: Yes.

Q: Good. Thanks

End of interview