

Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training  
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

**CONSTANCE J. FREEMAN**

*Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy*

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## INTERVIEW

[Note: This interview has not been edited by Ms. Freeman.]

*Q: Could you tell me a bit about when and where you were born and a little about your background, family, and education.*

FREEMAN: I was born on July 3, 1945, in Washington, DC, at Columbia Hospital for Women. My father had been wounded in the Second World War, on Guadalcanal, and was sent back to Washington after he'd recovered, and he was serving at the Pentagon at that time. The family story goes that the 3rd of July was an excruciatingly hot day, and that as seven o'clock in the evening approached, there was a great thunderstorm, and the thunderstorm brought me.

*Q: Sounds like Owen Glendower or something.*

FREEMAN: That is the story they drag out to explain all manner of things they want to explain. But it's been one of the banes of my existence to have been born at seven o'clock on the 3rd of July, because my mother insists that every birthday is red, white, and blue, and flags everywhere. Which is just fine when one is working for one's government, but when I was protesting the Vietnam War, it wasn't so comfortable.

Anyway, I was born in Washington, and six months later, we moved back to Minnesota, where my folks were from. The family story goes there that I, at six months, went in the car perfectly happy and cheerfully sleeping all day long, until we hit the motel in the evening, whereupon I proceeded to scream all night long. This is supposed to have been a warning for them of my tendency toward working long nights.

So I grew up in Minnesota, until I was 15, and my childhood was very much dominated by the political arena. When I was five, my father ran for attorney general of Minnesota, and lost. When I was seven, he ran for governor, and lost. When I was nine, he ran for governor, and won. When I was 11 and 13, he ran for governor, and won. And when I was 15, he ran for governor, and lost.

*Q: As a politician's child, what did this mean to you?*

FREEMAN: Politics was the family business. The family ran for elections, and it was usually identified as being in the plural.

My family, and in particular my mother, was very anxious to retain a family lifestyle. So, with the exception of campaign summers every other summer, Sunday was family day. And we spent it together, doing all kinds of things like skating and swimming and sailing and whatever. We stayed up certainly until eight or nine o'clock at night to have supper when my father came home, because she had seen too many families disintegrate for lack of a family life when they were caught up in the political arena.

But campaign summers, we campaigned on Sunday. And so, from my youngest age, I remember endless church picnics and mother-and-daughter banquets and a political cycle that just seemed to go on and on and on. In fact, I have trouble remembering names, and have had my whole adult life, and I blame it on the political upbringing, because I'd stand in receiving lines and dream my own dreams, and think up my own little stories, and just let it go by, because I learned to perform, but then, of course, I never learned to retain the names. So it was very much a political upbringing, and was very much involved in it.

When I was seven and my father lost the election, and I was old enough (I don't remember at five), I can remember him getting up in the morning and telling us that he'd lost. It brings tears to my eyes now because it was so hard for him. The most immediate way it hit us as kids was how were we going to deal with the other little kids, because up and down the block, the phrases that were going on were, "Sixteen rats, 16 cats, 16 dirty Democrats." And we'd counter with, "Sixteen needles, 16 pins, 16 dirty Republicans." Then the Republicans won, so we didn't like that at all.

*Q: Your father was still in this whole process when you were in high school.*

FREEMAN: Yes, he ran for governor when I was 15, so I would have been a sophomore in high school. He lost that election, but he had also nominated Kennedy for president that year at the California convention, and had been considered as a vice presidential candidate, although Johnson was chosen. And so, when he lost, there was much flurry and discussion about his joining the Kennedy administration, which he did subsequently do as secretary of agriculture. As a teenager with a boyfriend and a school and a life and all of those kinds of things, this was very traumatic, because I didn't want to leave home, and I didn't want to leave all of those things. In fact, I heard that he had been appointed secretary of agriculture on the radio. After school, I had gone to a friend's house, and we were listening to such songs of the times as Johnny Mathis, and it was announced on the radio that he had been appointed. But we dutifully all shuffled off to Washington in March of 1961, where he had joined the Kennedy administration.

*Q: I realize this was part of your life, but even as I do these oral history interviews, so many of the people I talk to (and I was of an age, too) were caught up in the Kennedy thing. It seemed to strike something. And I was wondering whether it got down to your age, or was this just a Dad-has-to-move type of thing?*

FREEMAN: The moving and the personal aspect of that was very difficult. As far as being caught up in the Kennedy furor, yes, absolutely. I identified even at age 15 that that was the first election campaign of my own adult political awareness, and the first campaign that I had participated in on my own, campaigning with young people's groups and handing out things and whatever. And so I was very caught up in the spirit of it all. And because my family was a political family, not just my father, or just my father and my mother, but all of us, the dinner table was filled with this kind of conversation. For me, this struggled against the fact that, by age 15, I felt a very strong determination to be my own person. I did not like being identified as the governor's daughter, or as the secretary's daughter. I think it all came about when the guy I wanted to go out with was scared to come to the governor's house, and the guy I didn't want to go out with wanted to go out with me because I was the governor's daughter. I think that's it. But it's been a lifelong thing that's only dissipated, perhaps, in the last decade, the determination to be my own person and to make my own way and not to trade on my father's reputation.

*Q: You might allude to this as we progress, but what about when you went to school. You were still a junior or senior in high school. Where did you go?*

FREEMAN: Bethesda-Chevy Chase, here in Washington, and I was a sophomore. I spent a little over two years there. We moved in March of my sophomore year. I had been attending the University of Minnesota's Laboratory School in Minneapolis, and going back to a public school was very hard for me. It was big; it was impersonal. They made me repeat classes I'd already had, because they were structured in a little bit different way. And I didn't like it. I didn't like it at all.

*Q: Were you developing any interest in international affairs while you were in high school, because, you know, this was the capital and a lot of people were...?*

FREEMAN: That goes back even further than that. Minnesota is actually a very cosmopolitan, international kind of an area, with American Field Service students everywhere. Even the churches. My parents had traveled a great deal as the first family of Minnesota, on various trips, Scandinavia and then to the Far East, promoting business for Minnesota, but also had gone to the then-horrible refugee camps in Korea. And so my mother had come back and done a statewide sweep to all the mother-daughter banquets in sight, raising money for the refugees in Korea. And I, of course, as the daughter, was in tow. So the international arena was very much a part of my consciousness.

I decided, toward the end of high school, however, that I could not have a career in international relations, because I found languages difficult. I had had a very back-and-forth, unfortunate learning experience with French - too many teachers, too many different schools, too many different methods - and I was convinced I couldn't learn a foreign language.

But toward the end of my senior year in high school, when I had already decided where I would go to college and that I would study political science and government and give up on international relations, I was chosen as an exchange student with the International Christian Youth Exchange out of my church. First, they wanted to send me to Congo, Brazzaville, which is relevant because I was subsequently Peace Corps director there many years later, and then they wanted to send me to Germany. So, instead of going on to college directly from high school, I went to Germany, where I lived with a German family and went to a German school for a year, and was able to learn German, because the alternative was not to talk for a year, and that didn't seem to be an alternative at all.

*Q: Where in Germany were you?*

FREEMAN: In a little town called Ratte von Wald. It's a little village in the Ruhrgebiet near Cologne, Düsseldorf. I went to school in Remscheid. It's all in that central part of Germany.

*Q: While you were there, obviously there was still a large NATO presence and the American Army was in that area. Did you get any feel about the American role in Germany?*

FREEMAN: When I was in Germany, Kennedy was assassinated, and my father was in the Cabinet, and so there was a tremendous outpouring to me, of Germans, of warmth and caring and concern for me personally and for our country and its loss. It was right after the "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech that Kennedy had made. And so it was very much an experience of being an American in Germany. Not so much the military; I was too far from that.

The exchange-student situation is one of learning what it's like to be a foreigner, and all

of the cross-cultural learning and experiences that go along with that. I was so struck and so taken with the dilemma of German youth at that time of dealing with the Second World War memories and the doubts and the questions - where were their parents and what had happened - nobody was talking about it then - that my undergraduate studies were directed into European studies, where I did a lot of work on National Socialism at that time. So the answer to your question is both yes and no, not so much military, but certainly the interaction between the two cultures.

*Q: So you came back after a year. Where did you go to university?*

FREEMAN: Toward the end of that year in Germany, I decided there was no reason not to study international relations. I'd learned a language, and so I could take care of that one. So I revised it, and I tried, at the last minute, the schools in Washington that I could possibly get into. And American University accepted me, even though it was a very late admission. And so I went to American University's School of International Service (SIS). I subsequently went to Denver's Graduate School of International Studies, so I always confuse the names. I started there in the fall of 1964. At that time, SIS was a very rigorous professional school with a quite specialized curriculum within the larger university. And it was a pretty rigorous curriculum, but it was very satisfying.

*Q: What was it pointed toward? Was it pointed toward the academic, or was it pointed toward what I would call Foreign Service work?*

FREEMAN: At that time, it was really a training institute, a professional school for foreign service. I think it was moving into something that was more academic, but the School of International Service was what it said it was. It had sub-concentrations that you could go into, but it certainly was expected that a lot of the graduates from there would in fact take the Foreign Service exam, at least do their first run on the Foreign Service exam as they were coming out.

But as 1968 approached, and my graduation approached, more and more of us were feeling strongly negative about the Vietnam War and were involved in the demonstrations around the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement and the shutting down of universities. And so most of us made the decision that we would not take the exam; in fact, "Who could work for that government when it was perpetuating that war?" And I was very much a part of that generation.

*Q: How did that affect you at the time? I'm a generation older; I was born in 1928, and actually I was a consul general in Saigon when you were protesting. Along with Bill Clinton, too, you know.*

FREEMAN: That's right. Bill Clinton's younger than I am, only just.

*Q: Did that change the sort of courses you were taking? Obviously, it changed your outlook at the time.*

FREEMAN: I took European studies, picking up from my German experience, and I took a minor in economics. I chose economics because it was either economics or journalism, and I enjoyed economics more than I enjoyed journalistic writing. But by my senior year, I took education courses, because I'd spent the summer between my junior and senior years visiting my boyfriend, who was a Peace Corps volunteer in Sierra Leone. And so I joined him in Sierra Leone, where I worked in a boys' school where he was working to set up a permanent record file system by hand. And then we hitchhiked all over West Africa, including through Nigeria in the middle of the civil war (not to be recommended, but it certainly was fun and exciting).

During that entire period, we were very into antiwar protests. It was particularly poignant and difficult for me because my father was strongly in favor of the war, as a member of the president's Cabinet. He was one of the (I tease him) last holdouts on the Vietnam War. Now we can laugh, although there's still some tension over it. There was great family tension over the Vietnam War, because I felt very strongly that it was wrong, and he felt very strongly that it was right. I did not march, because if pictures had been taken of me and the papers had made a big deal over me as his daughter, I felt that more harm would be done to him than the march would benefit from my body. But I resented having to make that decision, and I particularly felt badly when I would go home and hear him rail against the marchers. This was a very important thing for me, but I don't think it was very special. I think it happened all over; the tensions in families were very normal.

*Q: It's a whole generational thing. My wife was in college at the time I was in Vietnam, and she got caught up in this. This split right across. I think it's an important watershed, though, in American thought on how one looks at this. Was the academic world at American U., the faculty and all, pretty much against the war, too?*

FREEMAN: I think it was very split. And it got all caught up in the in locus parentis things, and in the lifestyle things. I was both working for the dean of students as the resident representative on a floor (and therefore forced by her to wear skirts at all times, including Saturdays) and as the student representative to the faculty senate, where we were trying to break down the in locus parentis-type regulations of lifestyle there. And that certainly caused some conflicts as well.

Sounds like I was always in trouble. I wasn't really.

*Q: No, no, you were a part of a generation.*

FREEMAN: Very much a part of my generation. AU was not active in the way that Berkeley was, or some of the others, in fact, but they did sit in.

I think the thing that hit me the hardest was, in the spring of 1968, I was student-teaching in downtown Washington at Roosevelt High School when Martin Luther King was assassinated and the 14th Street and H Street riots occurred. We were instructed not to go to school to student-teach. But my supervising teacher was not well at all, and I was terribly afraid that she wouldn't be able to handle the situation (arrogant thing that I was



at 21), and so I went anyway. It was quite an education to break through the National Guard lines and to hear the experiences of my students who were caught right in the middle of the riots. So, with Martin Luther King and then Bobby Kennedy and the riots in Washington, I really lived the summer of '68.

Many of those memories come back to me now because of the Chicago convention, which is just coming up again in Chicago. I was married in August. My ex-husband was in the Peace Corps, and he came back, and we were married about a week or so before the convention. We were scheduled to go to the convention with my parents right after the wedding, and at the last minute, he decided against it, which was probably a good thing, because we might well have been on the street. That would have been awkward, to say the least, when my father was there as a Cabinet member.

So it's these conflicts that sort of pockmark that period of time. And yet what I knew deep down inside at that time, and what [my father] knew, too, even if he wasn't admitting it, was that [he] would have been where I was if he'd been my age, because he came out of the intense political struggle of Minnesota in the 1940s, and so was a Socialist in his time. And so, in many ways, it was just simply the changing of the generations. And it was very rich in that sense.

*Q: There must have been a conflict for you with Hubert Humphrey, from Minnesota running for president. He was part of the liberal establishment of Minnesota, and yet kind to the war.*

FREEMAN: Humphrey and his family were close family friends, and he was like an uncle to me. That didn't mean I didn't have ideological problems, I had them with my own father, but certainly not to the extent that I would have opposed his candidacy or not voted for him. Bobby Kennedy had been my candidate, my ideological candidate, but I certainly supported Humphrey. But that caused some splits with my ex-husband, who felt strongly with the left that Humphrey had sold out on the Vietnam War. And so it was all very, very tough. I believed deeply that if Humphrey could get into office, he would in fact be able to help to get us out of that war, and that he was being loyal, and needed to be loyal, in the sense. But there was a lot of conflict there. It was an unhappy period.

*Q: I've always felt that your generation was responsible for putting in Richard Nixon.*

FREEMAN: Absolutely. Absolutely.

*Q: As a Foreign Service officer pragmatist, if I were prejudiced, I'd say it's great, but it knocked out a chance for a much better administration.*

FREEMAN: And I knew that at the time. I was a politician's kid, after all; I'd started counting votes when I was five. But it was very hard for me to convince my colleagues and friends of the time. We were very, very intolerant. All sides, at that time, were very intolerant of each other, and it caused tremendous splits. We were moralistic. We didn't see shades of gray; there was only black and white in our world. While I still think that

we wrought some important changes in that period, the thing that gives me pause, makes me feel somewhat ashamed of the period, was this intolerance. It was a nasty, intolerant process.

*Q: So you were married. What were you both going to do?*

FREEMAN: We were scheduled to go to graduate school, but my ex-husband came out 1-A in the draft. They withdrew his draft deferment, so instead of going to graduate school, we went and taught in a ghetto school in his local draft board district on Long Island, so that he got a deferment in that way. After a year of doing that, we decided we weren't willing to play that game anymore, either, and so figured out, by looking at the laws, how we hopefully could stretch this out until his 26th birthday. And so, again, very much a part of our times. As it turned out, they put the lottery in effect shortly after we went to Denver for graduate school. Denver offered us full scholarships, both tuition and stipends. And so, though we were easterners at that point and had tuition scholarships at other institutions, we decided to bypass the cornfields and go out to Colorado. He came out 18 in the lottery, so we spent much of our first year in graduate school haunting the mailbox. That, of course, was the year of Kent State. Denver went out on strike, and the campus was shut down when we marched on the president's house, and did our course work in between. We spent two years at Denver, and then, after that, I went to India to do my Ph.D. research, and he went to Africa to do his Ph.D. research. So, despite all the protesting, we did manage to get through our course work and go on with our degrees.

*Q: When you were at the University of Colorado, you were saying you were going after what, government?*

FREEMAN: This was the Graduate School of International Studies. Fortunately for us, because we had undergraduate degrees in a similar area, they threw out the program just before we got there, and allowed students to write their own programs, subject to faculty advisors and faculty boards and all of that. And so what I actually studied was the comparative economic development of India and China. I would have done Africa, but my ex-husband was doing Africa, and I didn't want to be in the same classroom. It was a very small environment. The irony of course is there, because I've done Africa much of my professional life. I had actually gone for a master's degree, but he'd gone for a Ph.D., and so, since I had to sit around for another quarter anyway, I decided I would take the Ph.D. exams. I didn't think I'd pass them, but I figured they'd give me the master's as a booby prize. But I passed them with distinction. I couldn't get a job, but I got a grant to do a Ph.D. thesis. So it was all quite serendipitous, in a way.

When I counsel or particularly talk to groups of students about how you form a career and how you channel, one of my arguments is that things evolve, and they don't always evolve the way you plan, and so you follow the flow, to some extent.

And that's certainly what I did, and went off to India for 1972, where I did Ph.D. research in villages on population.

*Q: Was this still comparing India and China?*

FREEMAN: Actually, I did a thesis on sociocultural barriers to the acceptance of family limitation - family planning. Motivations for large families and what you do about that. As a development economist, my degree was in development economics, ultimately. But population I viewed as one of the chief problems that face any developing economy, and certainly India. What I really wanted to look at was the interrelationship between women and large family size desires. But I was told in the early '70s that that was just a bunch of feminist bunk, that I couldn't prove it, I couldn't demonstrate it in an academic way that would be satisfactory, even if it were true. And so, in order to take a look at that, I had to throw a lot more things in, one, to get it approved and, two, to get it financed. It's kind of ironic when, 10 years or 12 years later, McNamara and the World Bank would say, "The major factor vis-à-vis population control is women." But this was the early '70s, and nobody acknowledged that it was a factor.

*Q: Where was the lack of acknowledgment coming from, from within the academic community?*

FREEMAN: From my graduate school, from my graduate school board. I got a Shell Foundation fellowship; they told me it would never be acceptable. From people in the population field who I wrote to about it.

*Q: It continues to be such an issue in the United States, abortion versus non-abortion. Was this a problem as you got into your Ph.D. work?*

FREEMAN: Actually, I was not looking at methods nearly so much as I was looking at motivation - why do people want large families? In this case, it was gender and the role of women. It was religion, Hinduism, which advocated large families, but was not against birth control. So, therefore, I didn't get into the birth control debate, the methods debate. And then it was economic variables. So, yes, to some extent, the abortion question would come up, but it wasn't nearly as big a question in the early '70s. Remember, in the early '70s, in most places, abortions were simply illegal.

*Q: India. When people deal with foreign affairs at different levels, I like to probe into it a bit, even if it's not right with the Foreign Service.*

FREEMAN: A lot of my career has not been.

*Q: We call this a foreign affairs rather than Foreign Service oral history. How did you find dealing in India? I've only dealt with Indian bureaucrats in various places, including Saigon, and I found them difficult, to be polite about it, the Indian government representatives. But how did you find this?*

FREEMAN: It's interesting, because shortly before I went to India, the Indian government, not officially, but unofficially, banned all researchers on population, and started to throw out of the country all the people at AID who were doing population

work. My thesis advisor happened to be in India at the time, and so he notified me that I had a problem. The India-Pakistan War also broke out just about this time. So it looked like I was not going to go to India to do my research. My moral dilemma was how to I write the application for my visa? Did I obfuscate the fact that I was going to do population research, or did I not? I did obfuscate it, since I obviously went. The second dilemma was how to get a visa when they weren't giving visas to Americans after the Bangladesh-Pakistan War, where the U.S. was accused of supporting the Pakistanis.

*Q: Tilting toward Pakistan.*

FREEMAN: Right. In that case, the minister of agriculture from India, who was a friend of my father's, intervened and helped me to get a visa. He stood surety for me. And so I did get to India. I got to India as a young student, wearing Indian clothes, determined to live as Indian a lifestyle as I could, because it was my one chance to learn that. They weren't allowing population researchers to go around very much, and what I needed technically was a police clearance to travel. So I went and stood in the lines at the police station in my Indian clothes, and got up to the guy and chatted with him, and said to him, "You know, I really can't afford to come back to Delhi to get permission every time I'm going to move. Do you suppose it would be possible for me to write you a letter instead of coming back?" And he said, "Sure." The example is that if you don't push the system, you can sometimes get around the system. And it was a lesson I learned very early on.

The other thing I learned about dealing with the Indian bureaucracy is that the Indians and the Americans have difficulty getting along with each other because they are both equally arrogant. The U.S. is arrogant for what it's accomplished lately, and the Indians are arrogant for what they accomplished in the [distant] past. But Indians really believe that they have the superior culture. So if you acknowledge that by your manner and demeanor (in other words, you are there to learn from them, not to teach them), it's wonderful, because they will teach you and take care of you. That stood me in very good stead when I was there as a Foreign Service officer, also.

*Q: What was the rationale behind stopping population research? Obviously, this is almost the major problem with India, at least from a layman's view.*

FREEMAN: The Indians believed, and believed I think rightly, that they knew enough on their own. It was the most advanced program in the world in incentive programs. It had done more work on motivation than anywhere else in the world. In fact, I was there to learn. And that they didn't need foreigners to do this. They could do their own. That they were tired of foreigners coming in and telling them what to do. They were tired of foreigners coming and gathering data and going back out and using it for their own purposes elsewhere. And they didn't need it anymore. It was also a part of the conflict with AID. AID had a humongously large presence there, and that became a target of the post-Pakistani War tensions between our two countries. I left a copy of my thesis in the Ford Foundation library in New Delhi for 13, 14 years, determined that I wasn't going to play that game. Then I went back, and I went to find it, and found it, and found out that in that entire time, it had been checked out once. So I took it with me.

You might say I went native while I was there, because I developed a *tableau rasa* mentality, that I would not judge and I would not react. I wouldn't react to the poverty, and I wouldn't make judgements about what was happening. I would take it all in and learn. I've been eternally grateful that I did, because I have a tremendous fondness for Indian culture, as well as a highly critical stance. It was difficult afterwards to take it out and deal with the emotions that went along with the kind of poverty that I had been living in when I was there, and seeing what people could not get out of. But it worked at the time. Many people become incapable of operating. I didn't want that to happen, because that wouldn't do me any good or anybody else any good.

*Q: What did you do, write your thesis, go back to Colorado to do the...?*

FREEMAN: I went back to Colorado and wrote for a while. My ex-husband joined me in India. He'd been in Africa doing his thesis, and we traveled around the world. Then we went back to the States, and we knew we had to finally get a job. We lived on scholarships and savings, very poorly, but we'd managed to survive traveling around the world. I went back to Denver because they offered me a fellowship to write my thesis and to write off the final year of tuition. I worked for the dean of the school, at that time, then I worked as registrar, etc. And so I wrote a third of my thesis. But in the meantime, my ex-husband got a job in Zambia, and so off we went to Zambia. So, in fact, I wrote most of my thesis on India while I lectured on economics in Zambia.

*Q: You were lecturing where?*

FREEMAN: At the University of Zambia. I went as a UNDP wife. There were lots of them around, but most were not feminists. So here I was again. I did eventually get a job at the university, where I taught almost everything you can teach in economics, because the student-faculty ratio was so poor that there was no choice. And they had almost no Zambians to teach, because there were only a handful of educated Zambians at independence. This was now '73 to '75, and Zambia had been independent for 10 years only. And so I taught comparative economic development of India and China in my Lusaka classroom, and wrote my thesis on India on the weekends and on holidays.

*Q: What was your impression of the Zambian government during this period?*

FREEMAN: When we first came to Zambia, it was quite prosperous. Copper prices were high and the stores were full of imports. I think the thing that struck us the most was the number of imports from South Africa. We had long boycotted any goods from South Africa whatsoever. Lobster was the key thing, but South African wine or whatever. And we found the Zambians all drinking it and using South African canned goods. During the time we were there, the bottom fell out of copper prices, the oil embargo went into effect.

This was a subject for great debate at the university. The university faculty was dominated by expatriate Socialists from Michigan, Wisconsin, the London School of Economics, and South African refugees. So it was a very Socialist-oriented institution.

My natural bent was in the direction of Socialist solutions, certainly African socialism. And that's where I started to lose it, because when I would lecture on comparative systems, comparative capitalism, socialism, my fellow faculty members would beat me up for saying anything positive about capitalism. I felt that this was being very paternalistic, and that our job was to give the Zambians the maximum amount of information possible so they could make up their own minds. This was particularly acute because our students were going directly into high levels in a government in the process of Zambianizing, and they needed to have choices, not to have us tell them how they should be operating in their environment. I don't know if that answers your question.

*Q: Well, it does, in many ways. Again, I was not an African specialist, but I have often thought that probably the most pernicious thing that happened to much of Africa was the damned Fabian Socialists out of England. The name escapes me, but the brother and sister who were the great Socialists at the turn of the century. But, anyway, was Tanzania and Nyerere held up as a great example of how great this was?*

FREEMAN: Yes, the University of Tanzania, the head of my department, the economics department, for a while, Ann Seidman, had as her base the University of Dar es Salaam, and that was the center of this African socialism. But I think that Tanzania was a very important case study. Nyerere did some extremely important work for the whole continent, because he took the model, and he applied it, and it did not work. But I'm not sure you could have known that unless you tried. And Nyerere was not corrupt, and he was genuine, and he was sincere, and he is still, in my eyes, an extremely great statesman. Now the model was a disaster, so there were a number of people who suffered. But, at least, as it collapsed, he backed off of it. Because we didn't know in those days, we really did not. If you read just the Socialist theory, particularly African socialism, this all makes a lot of sense, especially for countries that feel they've been exploited, first by the slave trade and then by colonialism. The problem is that state ownership simply doesn't work; other kinds of motivations are needed. And it is so easily corrupted. And so the two and two are three market system now is the appropriate turn. It's come sooner in some countries than in others. And in places like Kenya that supposedly stayed capitalist throughout all this period, they didn't really. Two hundred and forty parastatals, or state-owned companies, is not a capitalist system. But a lot of this was being debated during that time in Zambia. And I think that was a very important part of my personal formation.

Also, we were right on the border of Rhodesia and the Rhodesian War, and the Mozambique border, with all of the violence and fighters coming over the borders all the time, and from Namibia as well. So we lived right in the middle of all of that.

*Q: Did you get involved in the political activity that was going on, anti-South African, anti-white Rhodesian, that type of thing?*

FREEMAN: My ex-husband was the liberation-fighter officer for UNDP [United Nations Development Program] when he was there for a time. And so, yes, we did. I certainly was involved, in the sense that some of my fellow professors were ferrying people across borders at night and teaching during the day. Some of my very best students came from

Rhodesia and were Rhodesian and South African refugees. There was no way you didn't get involved in that at that time. Notably, we were at odds with the U.S. Embassy at that time. We were not very polite, upon occasion, and they didn't like that. I don't think they liked us very much. But when my father came to visit, they did, which created a whole lot of ironies. Once again, one was not moderate in that time. People were very opinionated and very passionate about what they felt, and sometimes not polite.

*Q: What about the government of Zambia? Kenneth Kaunda had been president for about 10 years at that time. How was he viewed?*

FREEMAN: I think he was viewed as not sufficiently Socialist, but mostly not very involved with his own country, and not very enlightened in terms of the economy of his own country. He was revered as the father of the country. He was revered as one of the great holdouts against South Africa. You remember the frontline states, and he was one of the great frontline-states leaders. But I think if there was a general view, certainly at the university, it was that Kaunda spent a great deal of his time working on anti-apartheid and South African and Rhodesian issues, and not very much time on his own country.

As people tried to figure out what his philosophy of humanism meant, they became somewhat confused. He told a story about what humanism meant, that he was on his way to the airport to get a plane to an important meeting, and he saw somebody whose car had broken down, and he stopped to help them, and he missed his plane, and he missed his meeting, and that's an example of humanism. Putting people before your meeting, in essence. That didn't strike people at the university as very sensible or a very good allocation of resources.

It was a time of great ferment. The Socialists were taking over the commanding heights, and were cheering the oil embargo, and were not dealing with the fact that it was going to hurt Zambia more than others.

*Q: On this thing, obviously you were coming out of what we would, I suppose, call the left spectrum in one part of this. How did you find your fellow professors and, maybe, students were looking at the example of the Soviet Union at that time?*

FREEMAN: It's so interesting, particularly with Africans, my experience has been that those who went to the United States for an education, particularly if they went to some of the Middle Western, more radical universities, came out rather Socialist, and those who went to the Soviet Union came out capitalists. And we had examples to prove it, of people who had been on both sides. The debate of the time was which Socialist model, Soviet or Chinese?

*Q: Good God, what a choice. How about the Swedish or something like that?*

FREEMAN: It didn't count. Remember, this is over 20 years ago, and this was a part of the left intellectual.

*Q: I find the left intellectual thing very interesting because it's a thought process that always escaped me, and I think many others, because it seemed to try to hold up the Soviet or the Chinese as the model, and they were really horrible regimes. I think this is important. I want to catch the thought process. How did you feel? In later years, anyway, but it also was quite apparent at the time, the Soviet Union was a horrible place to be a Soviet citizen, as was China.*

FREEMAN: I think there was a great debate going on at the time about whether it was really horrible or whether that was just the Western propaganda. Remember, we felt very deeply that our own country was not living up to its own obligations. It was a time of tremendous cultural ferment.

If you looked at it from Africa, most African thinkers, or those who purported to think for them, all these Western expatriate types like me wandering around, were looking for another model (in other words, African socialism) that would be built upon the communal history and philosophy that was somehow a part of the traditional village that was Africa. This, too, was visionary. Most countries were only about 10 years old, and nobody quite knew where they were going.

The Africans were going into positions of power by and large believing that they finally had access to the resources. And so it was essentially a distributive mentality, not a productive mentality. It was forgotten that you've got to produce it before you can distribute it.

And that's what's happening now, today. Everybody's dealing with the fact that you distribute and distribute and distribute, and you don't produce, and finally there's nothing left, and you've destroyed your infrastructure.

*Q: One of the things I've picked up is that so much of Labour Socialism coming out of England is to change the cutting of the pie, rather than to increase the pie. If you have a pretty small pie, nobody gets much at all.*

FREEMAN: That's what you've seen in country after country in Africa, that the pie has shrunk. So, therefore, the people in power have to take a larger portion of it to keep up with the Joneses of the regime before them. And finally there isn't anything to divide. The acknowledgment that that won't work any longer is a very salient part of second-generation leadership in Africa now. That recognition and the willingness to acknowledge that while the world might owe us a living for the horrors that were perpetuated against us, the world is not going to pay, so it's time to get on with it.

*Q: When you left Zambia, what do you think your teaching did for the future generation? What sort of legacy did you leave?*

FREEMAN: When I went back 10 years later, they were rabid Socialists. I actually taught a much more neutral view. I edged into, there are good things about capitalism. And many of my students believed that. Their goals were to go into government and



make money, make money, not just because they were selfish, but because they had vast extended families depending upon them as the first ones who were educated. As so, when I got to know some of them well enough for them to be candid with me, and I would ask them rude and direct questions, like what are you really going to do after graduation, and they would answer, it was apparent that they had their heads on their shoulders about where they going and what they were doing. But they were indoctrinated, and they knew that they had to parrot back what was expected in order to pass the exam. They had been educated in a British system, and that is a memorization process, and that is you give the professor what he wants to hear. And so, while I tried very hard to have discussions and individual thinking, and had some successes in it, by and large the institution was permeated by expatriate Socialists, and that's what the kids learned.

*Q: What about Kaunda, did you have to have a right-thought type of organization?*

FREEMAN: No.

*Q: He did not try to make everybody come out of a cookie cutter?*

FREEMAN: No, Kaunda's was much more humanism, and Kaunda's was a much gentler process. And already there was mumbling underground. Now the year after I left, there were protests against the government. I've forgotten the issue now, but I do know that they closed the university, and they arrested some of the professors, some of whom were my colleagues, and I knew them. It was quite a terrible period for them. After I left and finished my thesis, I went to work on the Hill. And I went back a year later as a Hill staffer, as a congressional staffer, and I'd been very fortunate that that hadn't happened when I was there, because I probably would have been right in the middle of it. Nothing in my background would lead you to believe I would have stayed out of the middle of it.

*Q: As a practical measure, when you later on had to, as you still are, dealing with Africa, you understand some of the molding and thought. You were part of the process, for better or for worse.*

FREEMAN: For better or for worse. And learned from it. In fact, those roots are very, very deep, and they keep coming up over and over again. The man who was my head of department for Zambia, Jacob Wanza, is now the governor of the Central Bank in Lusaka, and he'll be coming to speak to a program here at CSIS, at my invitation, next month, when he comes for the Bank and Fund meetings. Jacob and I have known each other for a very long time, through a lot of reincarnations, and when we talk to each other, we talk to each other as people who know where we've come from. I have been in and out of Africa now for 30 years, and it is in my blood. It had a profound influence on some of my most formative years and most formative thinking. And a lot of it happened right there, as well as hitchhiking through West Africa.

*Q: Why don't we stop at this point? Next time, we'll pick it up with what you did after you left Zambia in 1975.*

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*Today is the 5th of August 1997. Connie, we're now at 1975. You left Zambia, and whither?*

FREEMAN: I went back to the United States and went to Colorado and lived with a good friend for a couple of months while I finished doing the revisions on my Ph.D. thesis. Then I traveled across the country, stopping in Minnesota to type it with my aunt in a small town in northern Minnesota, because I couldn't afford to have it typed professionally. And headed back eventually to Washington, where I joined the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on the newly formed Foreign Assistance Subcommittee. That was established by Humphrey, Cates, and Javits in 1975, after a struggle to get IDA 5 through the year before.

*Q: To get what?*

FREEMAN: IDA 5, International Development Association legislation, the fifth replenishment. They'd had a terrible time getting it through, and all three senators felt that they needed their own staff to pursue various kinds of assistance legislation and assistance issues.

*Q: These are senators Humphrey, Javits, and Cates. Now Humphrey was a Democrat, Javits was a Republican, and Cates...*

FREEMAN: Cates was a Republican.

*Q: From New Jersey?*

FREEMAN: Yes, yes. And they were forming a new subcommittee. Dick Moose, who subsequently went on to do a great variety of things...

*Q: I'm interviewing him now.*

FREEMAN: Are you really. Well, he was the staff director. He was chosen first, and I came second, and ultimately they expanded that staff to five or six people. And so, from '75, November, until the summer of '78, I worked on that subcommittee. Humphrey died on January 13, 1978, and in a sense, the heart went out of that subcommittee.

*Q: Your connection, of course, with Senator Humphrey was as a Minnesotan, a child of Minnesota and all that.*

FREEMAN: A child of Minnesota, and our families were friends. In fact, as we speak now, my brother and Humphrey's eldest son are running against each other for the Democratic nomination for governor in Minnesota. And so all of these things get a little ingrown after a time.

*Q: So '75 to '78. Could you explain what were the issues and how did the staff work in this, because obviously this was a bipartisan group that was put together. How did this work in the Senate in those days?*

FREEMAN: In those days, the staff was neither Republican nor Democrat for the Foreign Relations Committee. And I believe that on the House side, too, it was nonpartisan. There was a sense that you were related to one side or the other, basically because you were identified by a particular senator for the staff. But every staff person had to be interviewed by a bipartisan committee of senators, and approved by them. And we all worked together on a bipartisan basis. So the idea that you had to have a staff director who was one party and his counterpart who was the other party did not exist. Dick Moose was, in fact, our first staff director on that subcommittee. I started in '75, November, Carter was elected in '76, and Dick Moose went to the State Department then to take up the position of, first, Under Secretary for management, and then Assistant Secretary for African Affairs. And he was followed by two or three other people after him.

But the essence of the subcommittee was to follow the foreign-assistance legislation and to have rigorous hearings on foreign assistance, development, the Third World, etc. And it handled all the military bills that related to, particularly, economic security assistance, development assistance, and the multilateral bank replenishment bills. We did not handle the IMF, but that was the only thing we didn't handle. We were a Young Turk staff, and we got our fingers into everything, much to the consternation of the main committee staff, who'd been around for a while. I thought we were a bunch of kids running around. And we were; I was 30 when I was hired there.

And so I traveled all over the world for the committee, at one point, particularly Africa, but I did India and Pakistan and East Asia as well. But I did a great deal of traveling in Africa. What I found when I went to the Hill was that coming out of Zambia, teaching at the University of Zambia, even though I did not have any academic background on Africa, I had studied India and China, I knew more about Africa than almost anybody up there. I found that very shocking. So the Africa portfolio, and in particular the economic side of it, ended up falling to me. And so I did a lot of quick, scurry studying/learning when I was there. Eventually, I handled the economic side of the Africa account. And Pauline Baker, who came in to work for Clark, who was the chairman of the Africa Subcommittee, handled the political side. At one point, we went on a trip in Africa together, and we were the first all-female staff... that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee ever authorized. And we had our problem with some of our male counterparts in the State Department and AID who didn't take us seriously.

*Q: Could you explain. I think it's interesting to develop this. Times are changing. But how did this manifest itself?*

FREEMAN: While I was traveling, not just that trip, but it manifested itself in a variety of ways. Number one, I wasn't allowed to travel alone. Before I went with Pauline, I always had to have a male counterpart. And while the committee frowned upon staffers traveling alone anyway, I had the distinct sense that they weren't about to send a young

woman off on her own. When I went out to travel for the committee the first time or so, and we arrived in a country, the embassy and the AID mission, by and large, treated me as if I were the secretary who was sent along.

And so I found that what I had to do was to use my title. By that time, I had my Ph.D., and so we would send cables out, and I would go out as Dr. Constance Freeman. The consequence of that was that many posts expected a male.

I arrived in Tanzania once, and the embassy had not come out to meet me, they'd sent a driver. And that was fine. I knew Tanzania somewhat; that was not a problem. But I didn't have any money, because you were given your per diem when you arrived, in local currency. And I looked and looked and looked and looked for this driver and couldn't find a him, and so I finally decided I would stand right in front of the airport there. I stood next to a Lebanese guy who was also waiting for a car, and we started to chat. And the Tanzanian driver walked up to him and said, "Would you by any chance be Dr. Freeman?"

And I said, "No, but I am."

We became fast friends. He drove me through that trip, because he was always trying to make up for the fact that he got my sex wrong.

I went on from there to South Africa. And over the loud speaker in the airport came, "Dr. Freeman, Dr. Freeman, would he please report to..." So this happened all the time.

*Q: Constance, looking at Africa during this '75 to '78 period, I speak as a non-African specialist, only what I've heard, but one has the feeling that with AID and appropriations and work in Africa, it was like a big playpen for the aid people, trying experiments, various things, many of which were fine, but there wasn't much follow through. Things didn't work. What were you seeing during this period in AID, and how effective was it? What were you reporting back to your superiors?*

FREEMAN: Overall, the new AID mandate of that period, which was instituted in 1975, started out on the House side, where they passed legislation to this effect called "New Directions," and it was designed to shift the thrust of AID from infrastructure trickle-down projects to projects that would get at the poorest of the poor, a phrase that was coined thereafter, or basic human needs, another phrase for the same thing, which became an international expression. So one of the things we did on all of our oversight trips was to take a look at the extent to which AID was shifting its gears to in fact new projects that targeted poor people, as opposed to infrastructure or training focusing on the middle class or the upper class. And that was a very uneven picture.

In the Philippines, in particular, I wrote a report that indicated they were not doing that, which was quite controversial.

In Africa, there was another thrust, because in the middle '70s, probably '73-'74, they had

consolidated AID posts, something that they've just done recently again, and tried to draw back from having representation in every country. And one of the most significant things that they did was to pull out of most Southern African countries. So that there were no AID missions in Zambia and Rhodesia, Mozambique. I think there was one in Tanzania, but not in Botswana. In other words, they had closed all of these AID missions down.

It coincided with the famous Nixon national security memorandum NSM 39, which was nicknamed "The Tilt Toward the Whites in South Africa." Remember, we're in the middle of the '70s now. At one point, we actually got our hands on a copy of NSM 39, and I can remember Xeroxing that madly on a weekend, so that we had proof that the tilt of the policy was toward the whites in South Africa and away from the black struggle.

I did several trips to Southern Africa, since I'd just come out of Zambia, where I'd been on the front lines, or my students certainly were on the front lines, of the struggle in Rhodesia. And so I was sent back on several occasions to do oversight, and wrote several reports on it.

We ultimately drafted amendments or a part of the committee bill that would have provided \$100 million to reopen the AID posts in Southern Africa, and to have a large program there in what would today be SADAC. This did not pass in the committee, and so, as a booby prize, we allocated \$1 million for a study. If you're talking about \$100 million, \$1 million sounds like a small amount of money. It was to send a signal that the committee in fact was serious about this, even though it was not able to go forward with \$100 million right then. The fact was that in 1976, '77, \$1 million for a study was a very large amount of money. Then it was our responsibility to make sure that the executive branch in fact commissioned the study, the '76, it was before Carter went in, and that it was used well. And that was a fairly challenging exercise.

*Q: When you say it was challenging, how did you oversee it previously? What were the problems?*

FREEMAN: The problem was that the executive branch at that point didn't want to do it at all. It was one of those congressional amendments that they hadn't asked for, they hadn't looked for, and they didn't really want to implement. And, two, it was the fact that we'd really, frankly, authorized and ultimately appropriated too much money for a study, but in the terms of the amendment, it couldn't be used for anything else. And so it was a process of nagging the executive branch to do something, and then trying to make sure that the people who were assigned to the study and the study as it actually came out (it was volumes and volumes, ultimately) was a good report.

It finally all came out after I had left the Hill, but as I saw it evolve, it was a look at how the infrastructure in Southern Africa could be revitalized to reorient the transport and communications and others aspects of infrastructure away from South Africa toward Dar es Salaam on through Mozambique, etc. We were also battling with the Benguela Railroad at that time.

*Q: When you say Southern Africa, in those days, what was Southern Africa?*

FREEMAN: Zambia, Rhodesia, Mozambique, Botswana, Basuto, Swaziland. Namibia was in essence a South Africa colony, but it counted in there. Angola, the Angola struggle and war was still going on. There was essentially a state of war in Mozambique as well. And Zaire was on the fringes of that. When I did my first trip, Dick Moose said to me that I had to go to Zaire. And I objected, saying I knew nothing about Zaire. He said you can't look at Southern Africa without going to Zaire. And so I did. That was the first time I was ever in Kinshasa. But I wasn't in a very good position to evaluate it. I pretty much had to believe what the embassy and the AID mission told me there, because I had no independent basis to make judgments. Tanzania was also considered Southern Africa, or certainly a frontline state at that time, because the liberation movements tended to have offices, bases, communications in Dar es Salaam, and so it was a very important point for the liberation movement.

*Q: Going through some of these countries, with Tanzania, Nyerere was a brilliant person as far as meeting people and impressing them and all, but his system did not hold up very well in the long run. Were we particularly interested in Tanzania at that time, or was this more a preserve of the European powers?*

FREEMAN: Right about that period, Tanzania expropriated some American property, and we closed down our AID presence, or we stopped disbursing in Tanzania. We had very mixed emotions on Tanzania. And again it depended upon which administration you're talking about, since my time on the Hill spanned two administrations.

But during the time that I was on the Hill, Nyerere's experiment with villagization, Ujamaa, was going full tilt, as it was when I taught at the University of Zambia. What I believe is that Nyerere gave us all a tremendous present, in that he not only believed in Socialism, he implemented it, through villagization and spreading of the philosophy and building up an infrastructure to implement it.

The fact that it didn't work, that he experimented far enough to show that it didn't work, while a great problem for Tanzania, sent signals to every other country in Africa and all kinds of other places as well that this model, as good as it looks on paper, doesn't work very well in practice. And so I admire him greatly for having the strength of his convictions to implement what he believed in. And also because Nyerere really wasn't corrupt. His system was eroded by corruption, because you've given too much power to government and the state. And there was a lot of corruption, although nothing compared to what was going on in Kenya, for instance.

But his contribution was tremendous, and his contribution continues to be tremendous as a wise old man and a man who facilitates agreements, the mediator. He's tremendously respected everywhere, to the point where, if you're at a meeting that he's chairing, a lot of people are unwilling to say what they think if it differs from him, out of respect for him.

*Q: You say we were beginning to shift away from white South Africa and looking, for one*

*thing, to help establish communication lines elsewhere for some of these countries. But you've sort of straddled Angola and Mozambique, both of which had just broken loose, or Portugal had let them go.*

FREEMAN: Yes, 1974.

*Q: And they were undergoing very difficult times, which continue to this day. This wouldn't strike me as being a very solid ground on which to build communication lines. Was that a concern?*

FREEMAN: Well, it wasn't very solid. But most of Southern Africa was in the thrall of South Africa, because all of their communication lines went down through South Africa. In Zambia, the amount of food in the Zambian supermarkets that came from South Africa was overwhelming.

*Q: When we're making our calculations of where to spend money, this was certainly in the middle of the Cold War, and Angola and Mozambique were at least involved with the Communists, particularly the Soviet Union, that must have been a concern, of how to balance this off.*

FREEMAN: That, of course, was the struggle between those who believed that the essence of American foreign policy in Africa was the Cold War, and that was the only defining feature, and other people who believed that fighting apartheid and working on basic human needs and development were equally important if not more so.

And when you look at the patchwork of the AID program during that period, and in particular that it was split between what we called security supporting assistance (now called economic support funds) and development assistance, part of what we were trying to do on the committee with our new directions and basic human needs was also to insulate development aid from the kinds of political decisions that were made by the State Department that were based upon Cold War priorities.

And since the Republican administration had issued NSM 39 that was a tilt toward the whites, it was very questionable in the minds of the liberals in the Congress whether they were ready to oppose apartheid in any way. So many of these things were pushed in over their heads.

During the first year that I traveled for the committee, we were not allowed to have State Department people in our meetings with us. That was the subcommittee's rule; that was Dick Moose's rule. You do your meetings on your own, because the people to whom you were talking would not be able to be candid with you if somebody from the State Department was there.

Congress was trying to push a different ideology and a different approach to aid onto the executive branch. Now that changed somewhat when Carter came in. Then Dick Moose moved over from being the staff director of the subcommittee to being assistant secretary

for African affairs.

But it was a great dilemma, and how much good you could do with that infrastructure. The Tanzania Railroad was built at that particular time. We were looking at roads. We were looking at the Benguela Railroad through Angola to get things out. We were looking at Beira port in Mozambique. Also looking at Lorenzo Marques, what was then Lorenzo Marques, it's now Maputo. And so it was in fact a dilemma. And in other countries, looking at the development assistance that would help people, regardless of the ideology on top of it.

*Q: One idea of helping people and the other of infrastructure, they're two philosophies. If you have infrastructure, it will raise the whole nation. If you help people, it usually ends up being only a sustaining handout. It keeps them going, but doesn't go anywhere. Was this a debate at your time or with your group? How were you seeing this?*

FREEMAN: We've seen it now go full circle. AID started doing infrastructure in the late '50s, and did mostly infrastructure into the '60s. In the early '70s, you had a shift from infrastructure and trickle down to trickle up, through new directions and, of course, through the four basic human needs. Then we went into the '70s, when you had some emphasis upon the private sector and some pull away from that bottom-up business. And now we're coming around full circle, if not to infrastructure, certainly to private-sector trade, emphasis upon success stories, consolidating the number of AID missions that we have, etc.

The fact is that none of us, through all of this period, have been able to find a formula for what works in all countries at all times, because the development process is a very individualized process, and it depends upon culture and sociology and politics and will and the stage of development of a country itself. That's been the frustration ever since Rostow's stages of growth. That was the formula. That one [formula] was going to work [everywhere]. And it never has. Increasingly, we are recognizing that it's an uneven process.

Even the current theology, which is economic reform, opening up to the market, attracting foreign investment, doesn't work in all cases, because there are countries that, no matter how good their policies are, are not going to attract investment, because they have neither people to create a market nor minerals nor other natural resources to mine. Other kinds of solutions then have to be found.

Back then, none of this was this clear to me; i.e., that there is no ready-made answer.

*Q: By this time, we're talking about the mid-70s, a lot of these programs had been in place for a while. One way you can do it is to say what program did you start with, what program do you have now. My understanding is that in some of these, you get a tree expert who's more or less in charge once the trees are grown, and then he leaves, and a dairy farmer comes along, you get a lot of cows, and the trees die. Were you able to look at the historical development, because you were representing the watchdogs of how our*



*money is spent, or were you caught up in the enthusiasm of the current idea of human needs?*

FREEMAN: I'm afraid it was the latter. We were very much a part of the new directions, basic human needs, this was what was going to work, the old pattern hadn't worked. And it became its own theology.

I don't think that congressional oversight will ever be in a position to do the kind of rigorous and detailed analysis of projects that you're referring to.

I think that it is virtually always true that AID programs and development and all those things, just as the development in this country and cities, frequently depend upon the individuals who are involved, what their talents are, what they believe in. We hope the tree farmer goes to a place that can grow trees, so that it works. I think what we believe now is that without an adequate economic support structure, most of the smaller projects--if it's schools, if it's health clinics, if it's tree farms, or if it's agricultural extension--will not survive over time unless there is something indigenous that's supporting it, a solid economic support structure and base. But that is also today's theology.

Some people would argue, well, fine, you open it up to the market, and you build that superstructure, and that superstructure is solid, but it never trickles down to the poor people.

*Q: The Ford administration was in, and then the Carter administration came in. This was a pretty big ideological change. Within Congress, what were some of the currents that were going on that you on the staff were feeling about aid, not just in Africa, but elsewhere?*

FREEMAN: The Senate Foreign Relations Committee was very supportive of the aid concept. It was the authorizing committee. It had a liberal overhang, if you will. The key Republican members on the committee were Cates and Javits, who were liberal Republicans. Percy was very active, and he was author of the Percy Amendment on Women in Development. Clark, of course, was a Democrat. In fact, the most active senators tended to be the Republicans, with the exception of Humphrey and Clark, who looked almost exclusively at Africa. They got into better sync when the Carter administration came in. The idea was to save the aid bills, to get them through Congress, and to fend off the detractors. And, just like today, one of the big arguments was that aid was going from too many spigots. We couldn't defend it. It needed to all be consolidated in one place.

This was one of Humphrey's deep concerns. And so we started on what ultimately became the Humphrey Bill, which was supposed to consolidate aid under one roof, ultimately the IDCA roof, which never amounted to anything. But this was going to take the multilateral banks out of Treasury, and the UN specialized agencies out of State, and put them together with the bilateral programs that were in AID, and pull the security assistance programs out of DOD, so that you got a superagency that handled all the aid

flows. Essentially, Humphrey wanted this so that he could defend it on the floor, and so that there wasn't all of this cross-hatching [?] and waste of time and energy and personnel and programs that negated each other. As this was being generated and developed, Humphrey died. As a result, there was a great scurry to put it together at the last minute. That was the so-called Humphrey Bill that came out of the Senate, and that's when the name IDCA was coined. While I was away at his funeral in Minnesota, my colleagues came up with this truly dreadful name, International Development Cooperation Agency. I can remember saying to them, "What time of night did you coin that, and on how much beer?" But it stuck. Humphrey died in January, and I left the Hill that summer. That bill didn't go very far in the Senate, so the House picked it up. And that's unusual. But the House International Relations Committee, it was then, eventually passed it. IDCA simply became one layer above AID, with a very small executive staff. I don't know if it's still on the books today; I think it's been cancelled out. But that was one of the first attempts to really reform and reorganize the assistance process so that it made more sense.

Another exercise was undertaken at the end of the '70s, which was congressionally initiated, and I was on the periphery of that one. And now we see it happening here. It's slightly different, but trying to pull USIS and ACDA into State and get AID working more directly in a cooperative way with the State Department. So it's an old battle.

*Q: Today we have some very strong ideologues on the right who are very strongly against foreign aid. Did you see that in the Senate at that time? I'm trying to catch the spirit of the times.*

FREEMAN: Yes, you saw some of it, but not nearly to the extent that you see today. For one thing, this was 20 years ago, and so you didn't have that 20 years of lack of direct, definitive, measurable results that people point to now. We were newer in the process. People still made the argument: Why do you send all that money abroad when we have problems at home? How is it going to benefit us? And unless you had a direct East-West answer to that question, it was a difficult question to answer.

I can remember feeling badly because I had to sell aid by how many jobs it created or the benefits that came back to the United States, because, in my mind, we did this because this was the right thing to do. We were wealthy, and we had many advantages, and most people in the world did not have those advantages. We were a leading country, and it was our obligation both to help them and to make this world a safer place for all of us. I felt that and believed that very, very strongly. So I was offended by having to write things that would support aid by how much would come back to the United States.

*Q: Also, did you find yourself falling back on the good old defense, well, if we don't do it, the Commies will get in there?*

FREEMAN: Oh, yes.

*Q: It was very handy for anything you wanted, right, left, or center. You could always use this. Did you find yourself getting into that?*

FREEMAN: To some extent, one always did. We certainly argued it in terms of using security supporting assistance for Zambia, for Mozambique. That was a quicker flow. We could reopen mission staff for that, where it was commodity imports. And so we used that spigot, as opposed to the development money.

But mostly we were very involved, our particular staff, in trying to protect the development assistance from being tarnished by political criteria. That was supposed to be pure helping people for the larger good, the long-term good.

People are making those arguments today. It's a little bit more crass. It says, if you don't do something about poor people, they will land on your doorstep as immigrants. If you don't do something about poor people and desertification and all of the terrible things that are happening, then your air is going to be polluted. It's a very direct parallel that's drawn.

We didn't draw it quite as directly then. People still listened to an argument that said we should do this because it is the right thing to do. Certainly, Hubert Humphrey did, and carried it that way. He was a great man to work for that way.

*Q: Did you get at all involved in the churches in the United States as a support group? This is the Christian, charitable thing to do. Did your bailiwick get you at least to give briefings and that sort of thing?*

FREEMAN: Oh, yes. When IDA 5, the fifth replenishment of the soft-loan window of the World Bank, went down in '74, the House didn't pass it. It came over to the Senate, and the Senate main committee didn't seem very excited about doing anything about it. And so, at that time, Dick McCall, who was not working for Humphrey, but working with him, and some of his colleagues (Dick is now at AID) put together what we called then, laughingly, the floating crap game, which was a whole group of NGOs (Non-governmental Organizations) and PVOs (Private Voluntary Organizations) who were supportive of aid as a lobbying group, and are forced to lobby for that particular bill and then to lobby for aid bills themselves. So it was very much a joint exercise. That loose coalition grew, and today it's much better organized than it was then. But that was more kitchen-table kinds of things. So, yes, indeed, I was involved with all of those kinds of [groups].

*Q: As you traveled around and worked in Washington, what was your impression of AID, the personnel, the staffing overseas and all?*

FREEMAN: Very positive. Very positive. Again, that was our game. That's what we were looking at. We were the Foreign Assistance Subcommittee. And we were well staffed and well taken care of. AID's congressional relations in those days were very good. And many AID people were anxious to do a lot of the things that we wanted to see them do, which was to have more basic human-needs projects.

Now there were cases in which this was not true. The Philippines was a case in point at

that time when I looked at that program, because they had a nice program ongoing that was doing infrastructure and doing the kinds of training that was hitting a middle-class group, and everybody was quite cozy. And what we were saying was, you're not doing enough to get down to the level of poor people who need the assistance. And they didn't appreciate that.

Anytime you're trying to force change, you're going to have some resistance. What we found was that we got a lot more resistance from the embassies, because, of course, the embassy was more politically oriented, and aid was a tool, and the aid tool was designed to fight the essential political battle, which was an East-West battle.

*Q: Yes, and also the middle and upper class were the people who were the important political areas to get to.*

FREEMAN: Sure.

*Q: What about staffing of AID. I haven't served anyplace with a large AID mission, but I've heard it said that sometimes the staffing and the infrastructure for AID itself, the Americans, consume a considerable amount of the money. Did you find that true or not, or was that a problem?*

FREEMAN: I think that's always been true. When you really look at where those dollars are going, the vast majority comes back to the U.S. I don't think we've been as clear on that as we are now, because we're trying constantly to justify aid for what it's doing directly for us in this country, and so we talk about how many jobs it generates and how many exports it generates and all this kind of thing. I think that was certainly true, because, traditionally, and in the '70s, it was a lot of experts, it was a lot of folks sent out from the U.S. to teach those people how to run their lives and do their agriculture and practice family planning and whatever it might be.

One thing we did not listen to then very well, and I still don't think we listen to it very well, though maybe a bit better today, is what is the reality of that country and the dynamic that's going on in that country? What is the culture? How does this fit? We don't use the local population in the way we need to use them to get insights into that. Now AID today does that quite a bit, and its local-hire staff is much larger and better qualified than it had been in the past. And so you've got an insight into the culture through them. But how much it's listened to, I'm not sure.

I think there is a real set of attitudes still which is them and us. And when it's them and us, it breeds a dependency mentality, which, in terms of Africa, comes out sounding like, from do-gooders, when you strip it all away, "Those poor people can't be expected to..."; i.e., attitude towards being children, or "They're so terrible that they never would." Now the former is even more damaging than the latter because it's very hard to detect, and I don't think people even know sometimes that they're taking that attitude. But the bottom line is that it breeds dependency, because the person it's being directed toward will frequently buy into it, both to their own immediate benefit and because if somebody else

is going to take care of it for you, it's easier than taking care of it yourself. And that's what we're trying to get away from more today, in terms of [promoting more] trade [and less aid].

*Q: This idea that maybe we should listen to the indigenous population more and get more feedback, was this a popular concept at the time?*

FREEMAN: I don't really think so. What was popular at the time, and I'm on shaky ground here [trying] to remember what I thought then, as opposed to what I think now. Were we questioning the way we were looking, which was really very paternalistic and very American: "We have the answer, and we'll go out and tell you poor, benighted people the answer." It really hasn't worked. In some cases it has, but most of the time it depends on the culture.

What we were very aware of in that era, or I was and my colleagues were certainly in graduate school, was a discussion about local indigenous culture, and retaining its essence, if not its purity. In other words, were we being cultural imperialists when we advocated or demanded punctuality in a culture where things go according to a particular flow? That was a debate that went on all the time. And the debate was going on: Do these people really want this? What do they want? A little bit of noble savage kind of stuff.

My own thinking is clearer today than it was then about the essential paternalism or dependency-inducing exercise that goes into this, and the fact that other people bought into that, and that that is ultimately damaging. Because today in Africa, we see progress being made in countries where the leadership has said, and I may even think, the world owes us a living because of slavery, because of colonialism, because of whatever, but they're not going to pay, so we'd better get on with it for ourselves. That's the new generation of leadership, in the '70s, Afwerke, maybe Kagame, and Kabila, we don't know. Anyway, that whole group of new-generation leadership that is going to set their own pace, set their own forms, and who are not old-line kleptomaniacs.

*Q: You say India was also on your plate. What was your impression of India and Pakistan at that time?*

FREEMAN: I'd spent a year in India during my Ph.D. thesis work, which we discussed earlier, and I visited Pakistan. I only looked at World Bank projects in India. By then, India had basically thrown out AID. I can't recall exactly the years, but in '72 and '73, they were questioning it. And certainly by the time I was on the Hill, it was pretty much out of India, because they didn't like this set of attitudes, we're going to tell you how to run the show, and we know better than you do what's right for your own country.

Pakistan had an active AID program at that time, and was getting a lot of security assistance. And so it was a somewhat different scene there. But the U.S. has always had troubles with the Indians, because we out-arrogance each other. We are both extraordinarily arrogant, for different reasons, but equally arrogant. And so, unless somebody is willing to give, we don't communicate.

*Q: Was the example of South Korea permeating the area? Just around this time, I was in South Korea, and we were all saying, boy, these South Koreans certainly take the lesson to heart. They not only take the ball, but they are running with it, way faster than we ever thought they could. Was this something that was floating around? Or were they considered an exception to how an AID program might work?*

FREEMAN: I'm not sure I can answer that question in terms of that time. They certainly weren't on my periscope, or if they were, it was in passing, and I don't recall it. I was really very immersed in the development process, in the basic human needs [approach], in the anti-apartheid, in the struggle in South Africa, in the Sahelian project and fighting back the desert, and I was very immersed in Africa.

*Q: On two things that you've already mentioned. One, can you talk a bit about how Zaire was seen at that time? Was the enormity of Mobutu's reign as apparent as when it had just collapsed? How did we feel about it, from the Senate staff perspective?*

FREEMAN: I think already we viewed (now, again, the "we" I'm referring to is me and the liberal types like me) Mobutu as a real pariah, and an example of East-West criteria gone riot, or of the price you pay for putting your assistance into support of the East-West struggle. But I have to reiterate that basically I was moving somewhat away from what was an African Socialist position. I mean, I taught basically Socialist economics at the University of Zambia, so I was very liberal. And other people thought that this was foolish.

*Q: With Zaire, was the East-West question so strong that we believed had to support Zaire or the Soviets might do something there? Did that sort of overwhelm everything?*

FREEMAN: Oh, I think so, yes. Mobutu was our chosen (we all know this from the papers now) out chosen leader to go against Lumumba and other Socialists who would go over to the Soviets and would take over Zaire. We coddled him, and he did everything we asked him to do vis-à-vis the East-West process, including supporting Savimbi in Angola and transporting arms and opening up channels. He waved the flag for the U.S., for the West, in the East-West conflict. He was a good soldier that way, and for that we turned a blind eye to all of his excesses, and we gave him a huge amount of money in aid.

*Q: Was there any problem in Congress about what was happening at that time?*

FREEMAN: It's hard for me to remember exactly, except my sense was, among us liberals, at least, it was just a block. You know, Zaire and Mobutu, isn't that truly the most egregious example of East-West policy run riot. Now, again, maybe I'm colored by what's just happened, but I know that, for me, Zaire and Mobutu have always been the bad guys.

*Q: In a way, unless I'm getting you wrong, there was a sort of backing away--well, we can't do anything about that, let's work on where we can do something.*

FREEMAN: Yes, you couldn't change that. There were certain realities about the East-West politics in Africa that you couldn't [alter].

*Q: Could you explain what the issue was in the Sahel during this period, and what we were looking at from the Senate perspective to do about it.*

FREEMAN: There was massive starvation from drought. It was a drought that started in 1968 and went on through 1974, six years. They developed at that time an organization called the Club du Sahel, and a whole series of integrated development programs that were supposed to help to combat drought over the long term, to build, [using] the emergency assistance that was being provided for people. In many ways, some of that has stuck, and some of the countries have developed mechanisms to help to fend off some of the worst ravages of drought. I worked more on Southern Africa and South Africa than I did on the Sahel, but that was a very big issue at the time. And I did one trip there, to look at projects such as the Dogon people in Mali, where they were growing vegetables out in the desert by carrying water in gourds from a river that was several miles away, basically making the desert bloom, and they were very impressive. We had very large AID missions and a big operation going on in the Sahel at that time.

*Q: You left about the middle of '78?*

FREEMAN: I left in the summer of '78. When Humphrey died, in many ways the heart went out of the subcommittee. The main committee had never really liked this bunch of Young Turks bashing around the world. Spockman took over as chairman of the subcommittee, in addition to being chairman of the main committee. The main committee staff began to control these young folks, like me, to an extent that made a number of us feel that it might be time to move on. And so, along with some others, I started looking at how I would leverage myself out of what had been quite a powerful staff position, certainly for that young a person, on the Hill, into the best kind of job that I could find in the executive branch. It's fairly classic Hill staff hopping.

*Q: This is the way the system works.*

FREEMAN: This is the way the system works. But, unlike some, my goal was to become a Peace Corps director. And I was recruited to be the Peace Corps director in Congo, Brazzaville. I was recruited both by ACTION, which was then heading up Peace Corps, and by the then-chargé, Jay Katzen. The one barrier there was that it was French-speaking, and I didn't speak French. But they were convinced, after a lot of toing and froing, to give me French lessons, which is something Peace Corps had not done before. And so my leveraging was not into a top executive job somewhere in AID or State, but it was to go back to the field, because that's what I wanted to do, go back to Africa. I had a long history with Peace Corps and really wanted to be a country director, and that's what I became.

*Q: You were a country director from when to when?*

FREEMAN: I started out in the summer of '78 doing language training. I was finally posted in January of '79 in Brazzaville. We were thrown out of Brazzaville in June. We spent that time both training volunteers to come in and building up a program. But Congo, Brazzaville, had a coup, and they moved left, and Sassou-Nguesso, who is currently in the press in the conflicts in Brazzaville, took over.

We could not go forward with our program without a country agreement, because we had been a [joint] program with CARE in an integrated rural development program. It was actually amazing, because the planning of this program was done hand in glove with the Congolese, who were fully qualified to do that. They had a wonderful consultant who came in. But in order for that to work in the bush of Congo (which was really *the bush*), we had to have a lot of tools and other kinds of things for our volunteers to work with. There was nothing there. Therefore, we had to have this partnership with CARE, and CARE could not obligate any money without a country agreement.

And so, right after the coup, when things had died down a little bit, we had to go in and push the government on the country agreement, which they had not yet signed. We had volunteers in Togo waiting to get on the plane to come down, having been trained in West Africa. I believe that because we were forced to push the Congolese government at that time to make a decision, that the Soviets weighed in, did not want a handful of Peace Corps volunteers wandering around the villages of this country, and the Congolese, as much as they kind of liked the idea of the program (certainly at the second- or third-tier level of the ministry they really liked the program because they created it) were not willing to buck the Soviets for 15 volunteers. And so their decision was, no, we will not sign your country agreement, and you may leave.

*Q: You were already in Brazzaville?*

FREEMAN: Yes.

*Q: What was the attitude prior to the coup and then after the coup?*

FREEMAN: I really enjoyed my time in Brazzaville tremendously. The Congolese were warm and open and caring people. They were an example of real equality. There were not tremendous divisions in wealth; everybody was dirt poor, is what it amounted to. But well educated, because Congo was the seat of the Free French in the Second World War. A high level of education. And also very, very Marxist.

*Q: Was it sort of French Marxist?*

FREEMAN: Yes, certainly. My deputy, Roger Meese, and I, it was just the two of us there building that program. We were literally constructing buildings, and finding housing in areas where no Americans had lived before. Building this from the ground up on almost no money. Volunteers should not have been in training before we had a country agreement. But the powers-that-be made that decision, and so we were pushed on



this and had to go forward. But it was a very creative environment for Peace Corps. And Peace Corps went back in 10 years later.

*Q: What had been the history of the Congo, Brazzaville? Was that the time we had severed relations?*

FREEMAN: Ten years earlier, in the '60s.

*Q: Ten years earlier, and things were really...*

FREEMAN: They jailed our diplomats.

*Q: So this was not a good situation. You say they were so friendly, why did they do that?*

FREEMAN: What happened was they jailed our diplomats, and there was a real falling out, and we pulled out of Congo, Brazzaville, on August 15, 1965, and only went back in, on October 30, 1977, when there was a move to the right. During that two-year period, the government was much less radical than it was after the coup. The French, I believe, had looked after our property, and we moved back into old sea-captain type buildings and embassies, etc. The then-chargé, Jay Katzen, was very anxious to have a deliverable as fast as he could, and AID couldn't deliver very fast, and so he was anxious to have Peace Corps, and have Peace Corps on the ground. When I was in Brazzaville, there were seven Americans in town. I was mistaken for a Cuban a number of times, just sort of standing around. People didn't know who we were or know anything about us.

But on a working level, with the under secretary for agriculture, this was a very congenial and warm and embracing kind of environment. And it was safe; there was almost no crime. I was living in a suburb where no white woman had ever lived before. And they were very questioning of that. They kept summoning me to the local party committee, to review me. And because I was the director, I had diplomatic status and it was not appropriate for me to go, so we kept sending our local staff guy. They kept saying, "What are you doing here? What are you doing here? What is this presence here?" And one day I finally told him, "Tell them I'm running a brothel, and be done with it." But that was simply the strangeness of the process.

When we were invited to leave, after they said they wouldn't sign the country agreement and they didn't want the volunteers, we had to get out of there as fast as we could. But we had to build-down our infrastructure; turn it over to CARE is what we did. We couldn't simply get on the next plane. It took two or three weeks, at least, to do this. Roger and I said to the Congolese who worked for us and to all of our friends, "We will understand perfectly if you no longer know us. It is dangerous to know us; they could take retribution against you." And, to a person, they stood by us, including great masses of people who saw us to the airport. That was the people-to-people relationship, as opposed to the East-West clash that went on about us.

*Q: Were you there during the coup? What type of coup was it?*

FREEMAN: I was there. They weren't shooting at my house; I wasn't right in the middle of it. It was sort of movements of troops here and there. There were also party committees and meetings and stuff coming through in the newspaper. It was a very yeasty kind of a period, flowing back and forth. It was unclear what was happening all the time. And while we were watching it, we were also rather deeply involved with constructing the office and other things like that, and not knowing how this would fall out, except knowing that we couldn't press the issues.

Also during some of that period, I was in Togo with my volunteers in training, so I met some of them.

There were lots of barricades that you had to go through, and my most exciting one was after the coup when they were consolidating this. I was taking some Congolese friends home on a Saturday night, because I had one of the few cars in our group of acquaintances. I had to go across the city into a suburb on the other side, and I had to drive back by myself. There were barricades up, and I had to run a barricade. There were soldiers who were standing there with guns up, and I was afraid I was really going to be accosted. A couple of our friends were in the military, and they said that I should just pretend that I didn't speak French. Well, I didn't give them time for that. There was movement in the bushes behind the soldier who had stopped me, and he turned around to deal with that, and I just sped right out of there. Now I was still pretty young and taking a lot of risks. That was a fairly risky exercise.

But it was with phenomenal sadness that I left that country. Just phenomenal sadness. We were caught in the ways of the East-West process, and there wasn't much we could do about it. We might have played our cards differently, in terms of how quickly we went in. If we could have waited six or eight months before we pushed the issue of a country agreement, we might have gotten in then. Ten years later, Peace Corps went in. Now it's out again because of the tremendous violence that's been going on in Brazzaville.

*Q: Connie, I think this is probably a good time to stop, because I like to stop at a...*

FREEMAN: At a good stopping point.

*Q: So I'll put on the thing here that you have been thrown out of Congo, Brazzaville, in 1979.*

FREEMAN: Stay tuned for the next exciting chapter.

*Q: We'll pick it up with, after Brazzaville, what.*

FREEMAN: Ask me about the POV decision.

*Q: And I'll ask you about the POV decision.*

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*Today is the 14th of August 1997. Connie, the POV?*

FREEMAN: The POV decision. Well, let's just say it's a story of bureaucracy. When the Congolese government decided they didn't want Peace Corps, and we were needing to leave as quickly as we could, which took a little while because we'd built up an infrastructure and had to break it down, we couldn't get any kind of a decision from Washington about where I was supposed to go and what I was supposed to do. Peace Corps had no obligation to keep me. They could send me to another post or whatever, but I didn't know, and I was getting very annoyed and very concerned about this, and was about to call them on the phone and push them in a direct fashion. But my deputy, who was very clever at the wiles and ways of bureaucracy, said, no, send them a cable and ask them what you should do with your POV, your privately owned vehicle. They'll have to answer that, because that's an administrative question that needs answering. And, sure enough, I sent them a cable saying what should I do with my POV, and they told me to return to Washington. So at least I got a decision out of them.

*Q: This is '79?*

FREEMAN: This would be June of '79.

*Q: So you got to Washington, and what?*

FREEMAN: I got to Washington, and they had decided they would reassign me, but they weren't sure where. There were three or four countries open. Cameroon was one of them, but we didn't really think they would send me to Cameroon, because there had been some difficulties with the prior director, who was a female of my color and in my age group, and so we were afraid that would be too close. But that wasn't really the problem. The problem was that the ambassador, who was a female, came in and said that she didn't want me. She didn't want me, not me Connie Freeman, but she didn't want me as a female, because, as one of the first female ambassadors who had gone out, they had sent her females to head every single other agency in the country. She didn't think that was particularly good for the image of the country, and she wanted a family person. As it turned out, Peace Corps insisted on sending me anyway, and she was wonderful to me. Mabel Smythe was the ambassador, and she never held that decision against me or took it out on me. She was totally supportive and cordial to me when I was there.

*Q: So you were in Cameroon for...*

FREEMAN: For two years.

*Q: So it was '79 to '81.*

FREEMAN: That's correct.

*Q: Let's talk a bit about the embassy. Mabel Smythe, what was her background, and how did she view the Peace Corps?*

FREEMAN: Mabel Smythe was the ambassador for about the first six months that I was there. And she was replaced by Hume Horan, who was coming from Saudi Arabia. This was long before he was ambassador there, but he was ambassador in Cameroon. Mabel knew Peace Corps and was supportive of Peace Corps, and was in the background and was very nice to me.

The problems that I had with Peace Corps, or my focus with Peace Corps, in that first six or eight months when Mabel Smythe was there, were internal, because the administrative system had collapsed in on itself, pretty much.

*Q: The Peace Corps?*

FREEMAN: Peace Corps. I had a group of volunteers without assignments, who were not very happy. So it was cleaning up the mess from the prior administration.

*Q: What had happened before? I'm not trying to point fingers, but just to get an idea of bureaucracy. What, in your perception, had happened before that caused this unhappiness?*

FREEMAN: What had happened a year or so before was that the American administrative officer left, actually to go and be what was my deputy in Congo, Brazzaville, and a local Cameroonian had been hired to be administrative officer. He'd been the cashier, but the director then in place didn't trust him. And so she refused to sign any cables of obligation. Cables of obligation go out every month, and that's the way you keep track of your expenditures. And the budget that had been done didn't really have anything in it or exist. In other words, there was a loss of trust and a loss of management within the post itself. Also, a new project had been put together that integrated rural development, which looked very, very nice on paper, but was only skin deep. So then there were volunteers who'd been brought in for training without postings identified for them or housing or real jobs, etc. Now the training people had done a wonderful job in trying to cope at the last minute, but there were lots and lots of problems. There were people who were posted to places where they didn't fit very well. They were all supposed to have motorcycles, and didn't. A lot of other things had had follow-through. Several new vehicles had been ordered, and they arrived shortly after I arrived. But they weren't in the budget, so there was no way to pay for them. So it was an administrative mess.

The problem was, I had no administrative experience. And the only person that I had was an administrative officer who was a Cameroonian and had been the cashier and was very good at that, but he wasn't particularly good at budgeting, because he hadn't done it before.

So we all sat around a table one Saturday morning and said, "Okay, here's the budget, here are the instructions, what do you think they mean by this?" And we worked it

through. We worked through the problems, and it took us about a year to clean out the mess that was left behind.

Fortunately, the man who had been an administrative officer in the Peace Corps before, was my deputy in Congo, joined the Foreign Service, and was re-posted to Cameroon in the embassy. And so, for the second year, while he didn't do it, he was there to back me up.

It was one of those classic experiences of learning by doing. I didn't know anything about budgeting and administration, but since there was nobody else to do it, I had to learn it, and learn it fast. We did pretty well, because by the time I left, it was running like clockwork. My then-deputy became the director, and he had been a part of that whole exercise of putting it back together. And so Peace Corps, Cameroon, was in pretty good shape after a couple of years.

*Q: You're in Cameroon. You had a sort of disarray, and also you mentioned there was some problem about assignments and all that. When you arrived there, did you have any idea of what you wanted to do? I'm not too sure how the Peace Corps sets its priorities. Could you talk about a Peace Corps director arriving and having to put things back together again, aside from the administrative problem, to accomplish the goals of the Peace Corps. What were you up to?*

FREEMAN: I think, with Peace Corps, as with most places, you can have grand goals and ideas, but when you hit the ground, the first things you have to deal with are the problems and the realities that exist on the ground. And you need to reorganize whatever it is that you find, so that it works better than it did when you found it.

There were two major problems in Peace Corps, Cameroon, when I came, and neither of them was programming. Programming would have been the area that I would have concentrated on. But the first one was this whole administrative mess, and the other one was morale, because there had been so many problems in the programs previously. The volunteers were cut off from the central office and were very angry about that. So I spent much of my first year traveling around the country, visiting volunteers at their sites, and reassuring them, doing what I could for them there, seeing their counterparts, going to their schools, giving them backup in their local villages and towns, counseling, taking care of problems on the ground, and also making them aware that the Peace Corps office in Yaoundé was there for them, and that if they had problems, we were there to help solve them, so that they started coming back in and using the [central] resources to deal with their difficulties in the field. Also, I did a lot of training and a lot of the [winnowing] of volunteers in the selection process. I went back to Washington to do that.

*Q: You're out in Yaoundé. How do you choose a volunteer? A volunteer arrives at the airport, and there he or she is.*

FREEMAN: Well, we had two different models at that point. They were experimenting with something that I thought was very good, but was too costly to continue. It was what

they called the CAST system, which was an acronym, and I can't remember what it stood for. They called in the potential volunteers for that program a month or six weeks before they were scheduled to depart, and put them through a month's training process and various kinds of screening and psychological evaluation and exposure, through all kinds of play-acting, to the kinds of things they would confront as Peace Corps volunteers. It was a mutual selection process. They had a chance to get a much better sense of what would be confronting them, and we had a chance to take a look at them. At the end of that time, as I recall, we deselected, or they deselected themselves, maybe about a third of the group.

When that particular group of volunteers that worked in cooperatives got to Cameroon and was in training and then went to their sites, they had a lot of cohesion with each other. And they did an extremely good job in very difficult positions, because they were coffee and cocoa cooperatives. They were the middle point between the farmer and the traders, mostly Lebanese. The cooperative was designed to represent the farmer, so that they couldn't be exploited by the traders, but, in fact, the cooperatives were often very, very corrupt. The volunteer was the assistant to the head of the cooperative. And so one of the things I was able to do in this CAST thing, this choice process, was to tell my volunteers that one of the things that they would need was some degree of moral relativity. That, we could argue, it was better to have the cooperatives than not to have the cooperatives. They performed an important function for the farmers, but they were by no means clean as the driven snow. And that if they didn't feel that they could operate in an environment where they would be seeing some corruption and rakeoff and misweighing and all of that, then they needed to think again about whether that was the program for them.

I was also able to talk with them about what exactly they were meaning to get out of this. At that time, most volunteers came in ready to save the world, but often had not thought through very carefully what their own personal goals were. And that was very important, because when you hit the three- or four- or five-month period in your village, the excitement has died down, and you think about 18 more months sitting there in this drab hut, and go, What am I doing here? Then they need to hang on to the thought, "I want to find out about the world, want to see if I want to go into international relations, need to learn French," whatever it is, but is a concrete personal goal for the volunteer there. The ones I was able to go through that with thought it through beforehand.

Another way we chose was when they didn't do this very costly gathering together of people ahead of time, but had a short, maybe a week's pre-training and then sent them out to Cameroon. There we trained them in-country, rather than training them in the U.S. They were not sworn in until the end of training. And so, while it was far more disruptive if they were deselected (whether they did it themselves or we did it; usually it was a mutual decision), at least we still had some intensive interaction with the volunteers before they went to their sites. That didn't mean we didn't have some volunteers who needed to go home before they completed their two-year tour, but not a whole lot in Cameroon. Cameroon was a very popular country for volunteers, because the Cameroonians liked volunteers, and there was a tremendous amount of diversity in the

country, and so they tended to have a very good experience there.

*Q: When you put a volunteer in, was the idea that they were going to be in that village for the whole tour, rather than to move them around?*

FREEMAN: That's right, because the point for a volunteer is to integrate into his or her local culture, to become as much like the folks in their village or town, for a time, as they possibly could. That was the Peace Corps experience.

Now one of the very interesting aspects of Cameroon was that Cameroon was probably one of the most sexually open societies I've ever lived in. That was in pre-AIDS days.

*Q: You're talking about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, which is...*

FREEMAN: Sexually transmitted.

*Q: Sexually transmitted and deadly. But this was prior to that.*

FREEMAN: Yes, this was 1979. It existed then, but we didn't know anything about it. And so we had all kinds of issues surrounding that very open sexuality.

One of the first that confronted me were a number of Peace Corps babies. These were volunteers who had had children with local women, what they called their "country wives." It was a Cameroon custom that if you lived with somebody for a while, they were called your country wife. This was extremely traumatic for the volunteer, particularly when the volunteer was getting ready to go home. What do you do? In fact, in Cameroon, at least the male volunteers felt that, to some extent, they were being tracked. They were considered very attractive and valuable as partners, and mulatto babies were valued. And so they would be approached by local women, or, you know, these were young folks, and their hormones were running wildly. Anyway, the big problem was, I'd say, "For goodness sake, use condoms," and they had a hard time with that, because to use a condom in Cameroon at that time meant that you felt the woman you were going to sleep with was a prostitute. And so there was tremendous pressure on them not to use condoms. So I instituted a system whereby the medical unit would provide some kind of contraception for country wives as well. That wasn't necessarily Peace Corps policy at the time.

*Q: Was this the sort of thing you did without going back to Washington and saying, gee, what a great job I'm doing here?*

FREEMAN: It was better than having Peace Corps babies, so we didn't ask a lot of questions. And then they might be male volunteers. I didn't have a single female volunteer who wasn't approached by her boss, at some point in her tour, for sexual favors. And it was even more difficult to figure out what to do to assist them with that dilemma, and even more, what to do to assist the incoming volunteers, the trainees. I was never able to develop a real training system toward that. The thing that seemed to work best

was to put the new female trainees together with the old volunteers and have them tell stories, because they each had a story of how they had handled it, and it gave everybody an idea, one, that you're not alone and isolated in this, and, two, what tactics you might use.

At the beginning of my tour there, in most Peace Corps experience in Africa, there had been no real problem with rape. Sexual relations frequently in Africa at the time were much more open than they were in the United States, and our theory was that Africans didn't really need to rape. But I had three rapes when I was Peace Corps director in Cameroon. That was one of the biggest problems that I had, because I had not been trained to deal with rape counseling, and that's very touchy stuff. In all three cases, I needed to provide support to the volunteer for at least a couple of days before I could get them out on an airplane and back to Washington, where they could be given some more expert counseling. That was scary, because what I said or didn't say had the potential to affect how they dealt with the problem and their life into the future. Since I wasn't trained, I just had to do the best I could. And they all three came back.

*Q: I think we are talking about a period now where this has become...I don't want to denigrate it, but an exquisite art about how you deal with rape. There are rape specialists and all that. Whereas before, all of us, myself included, as a consular officer, it was sort of by guess and by golly, which probably worked as well, if you were sympathetic, as all the other stuff. This is a personal point of view.*

FREEMAN: Well, I hope so, and I hope that those three women didn't suffer from the fact that I had no training at all to deal with that, and that all I could provide was a lot of empathy and encouragement to talk as much as they could about the experience they'd had. But that was one place where I felt that I was really inadequately prepared for my job.

*Q: As a consular officer, I didn't get this training, including all sorts of other sensitivity things that I think we've honed into fancy skills. I still come back to think that one's gut reaction is probably the best.*

*Now to the actual work. You had a morale problem and an administrative problem, but now you've got them on the ground. What were they doing?*

FREEMAN: I had volunteers in a whole variety of programs.

I've mentioned the cooperatives program, where they worked at offices as backups and assistants to the directors of the coffee and cocoa cooperatives.

I had teachers teaching math and science in Anglophone Cameroon. That was fairly clear. And then they did secondary projects as well.

I had rural development volunteers, who essentially were put into villages and towns and told to find a way to help rural development. That was the hardest one. That was the



program I'd inherited that was on paper and didn't really have a whole lot of content. They did a variety of things. Some of them did credit counseling or helped small businesses or whatever.

I had a health extension program, which was also difficult because they were supposed to be doing extension education on building latrines and why you should use them, or covering water sources and why you should cover them and be careful. That was a joint project with USAID, which was providing the materiel for it. And that was fraught with all kinds of bureaucratic difficulties, just coordinating the two organizations, which had very different ideologies and purposes and backups.

I had a couple of volunteers in the game parks, who were working with conservationists in the game parks.

I had another large and very successful program helping people in villages to dig and maintain fishponds. That was the whole pisciculture thing. They ran around the country on motorcycles and inspected their fishponds, and a lot of them made a very important contribution.

And then I had a couple of special-placement volunteers.

There were about nine programs ongoing, and they were doing all kinds of different things. Everybody was in a stage of pre-training or in-service training or training to depart, so a lot of what we did was to manage that. And we managed all the administrative things, like trying to get them living-allowance checks.

It was a very interesting, very exciting time when the volunteers' living-allowance checks were caught in the Paris mail strike at Christmastime 1979, and the January checks didn't arrive. After Christmas, nobody had anything, and they didn't get their checks. I was too new to realize that there were 10 tricks to the trade of how you could get partial checks out or you could get some cash out. I was simply told by the financial office in Paris that since we could not prove that the checks were definitively lost, they were only held up in the mail, they couldn't be reissued and we'd simply have to wait. At one point, I was supposed to go upcountry to visit several of my volunteers, and they threatened to throw me in a half-drained fishpond if I arrived without those checks. At that point, I figured out a way to get half of the checks.

But what the volunteers learned through that experience, and many of them came to me and told me this, was they probably got closer to their counterparts in their villages than they ever had before, because, for the first time, they really had nothing, and they had to depend upon other people in their villages to feed them and take care of them. It equalized the situation for them, because no matter how much you try to have a volunteer live on the same level as their counterparts, they're still looked upon by the people in their villages as wealthy and different and a way to get money. But when they were really poor and they needed help, it changed the dynamic of the relationship. And so a whole handful of them came to me, admitting reluctantly that that was one of the best experiences they'd

had during their Peace Corps time. Well, it was not my best experience.

*Q: Looking at the program, here you have, for the most part, still quite young people coming into the program to do these good things. Looking at it from your position in Yaoundé and even after you left, what do you think was the impact?*

FREEMAN: I think that for Peace Corps overall, the most important impact is the soft-option impact of people-to-people relationships, memories, understandings. It's a communication program. But you can't have a good experience about what it's like to live in another culture, particularly on the village level, or really understand the dynamic and the culture of the people there unless you're making a contribution, unless you're doing a real job. The debate always is: How much real development do volunteers do? As far as I'm concerned, that's not the debate. The debate is: To what extent do volunteers and their counterparts really learn to understand each other better? But they can't, without the job. To a large extent, the fishponds that are dug often get filled in again. The water sources are uncovered. The latrines collapse in on themselves. A lot of that happens. And the kids may or may not remember the math and science that was taught to them. A lot of them do. So teaching is the easiest, and it's the most straightforward, and frequently has the most long-lasting impact. And that's been the problem with development, [long lasting impact]. But that experience that the volunteers bring back to the United States, never again can they say that Africa is alien, far away, 100 percent those people, them and us. When you meet Africans as I do on a regular basis - leadership, private sector, government, whatever - so many of them have had exposure to the Peace Corps. They've had a Peace Corps teacher, a Peace Corps worker working in their village; they've had contact at the universities; they've had it in the cities, whatever, and that's been a positive experience. And so, for them as well as for us, it helps to erode the them-us concept, which I think is very important.

*Q: You've been around the government in various positions over time, have you found that the Peace Corps volunteers have inserted themselves into the body politic and have had an influence?*

FREEMAN: I think, increasingly, in AID and, to some extent, in the State Department, a Peace Corps or a Peace Corps-like experience is becoming part of the expected training for going into those jobs, certainly more in AID than in State. But there are lots and lots and lots of returned Peace Corps volunteers in the various international fields. It's almost a union card, because it's the unique kind of experience that gives you a feeling for other cultures, other places, and makes them less other. Now I myself was never actually a volunteer, as we know, having gone through this far. My teaching at the University of Zambia as a local hire was about as close as I got to it, except for being a director. So I'm one who had a Peace Corps volunteer-like experience. So it doesn't just have to be that organization. But this is something that I advise my interns here, if they're interested in Africa and want to work on Africa, and they have not had a volunteer-type experience, that this is invaluable to get a feeling for what a piece of the continent is really like, and, frankly, whether they want to continue to play with this or not, because it's far more real after you've done that than it is before. It isn't just a book thing.

*Q: Let's look at Cameroon per se. You were there '79 to '81. What was the political situation, economic situation, American interests?*

FREEMAN: We didn't have a huge presence there. We had some commercial interests out of Douala. Hume Horan traveled around the country a whole lot. Cameroon had some problems on the border with Nigeria. But it was the quintessential Francophone country, so we didn't have nearly as many commercial interests as we had in some other countries. So we were always trying to make a place for our business people. Cameroon had discovered oil, and it was managing its oil very well. Ahidjo was still in power. Nobody knew quite how much oil there was there. There was a lot of corruption. And we were aware of that in [the] Peace Corps, too. School teachers' salaries weren't paid for the first year that they taught. It got caught up in the system. I did not get involved deeply in the political/economic issues, or the embassy's issues while I was there. I was on the country team, and I served on the country team, but there has to be separation between Peace Corps and embassy and AID, and I was separate from that official U.S. government. I carried an official passport, not a diplomatic passport. And so, by and large, at those country team meetings, I kept my mouth shut, even when I knew things that were relevant to the discussion, because my information was privileged; it came from volunteers. I only contributed when it would have an impact upon the welfare of the volunteers or if it was really important. So, while I listened, that wasn't what I did, that wasn't what I was involved with, that wasn't my everyday set of thoughts and concerns. That was reserved for the volunteers. We had a very small staff and 150 of them, so I was pretty busy with that. But I did travel all over the country.

*Q: You say this was essentially a Francophone country. There was an Anglophone side to it, but essentially it was Francophone. One, were the French influential? If so, the Peace Corps must be anathema to them, in a way.*

FREEMAN: Not really, because the French have the French coopérant, so there were lots and lots of French volunteers, too. Now they didn't understand the Peace Corps volunteers, because French volunteers earned... My French teacher there, a young woman, her husband, who was in his 20s, earned more money on his coopérant living allowance than I did on my Peace Corps director's salary. It was also the exchange rate. So it was a different function. But they didn't particularly care about volunteers one way or the other. The French dominated the economy. They dominated the society. They dominated the clubs. They dominated the restaurants. It was very Francophone. Two of the districts were Anglophone. They're the ones that bordered Nigeria. And it was a very different atmosphere. The Francophones, be they Cameroonian or French, were very closed-mouth. It was very difficult to get to know them well. The Anglophones were very open. I always laughed that when I went up into the northwest province to travel, if I had fallen asleep in the Land Rover as we went over the border, I could tell as soon as I woke up that we were in Anglophone [country]. It just looked, smelled, and felt different. It was Nigeria, not Cameroon. When Dick Moose visited, he was coming through as assistant secretary, and we were trying to set up a dinner for him with some people who would really talk about what they thought and what was going on. I decided to

concentrate on Anglophones and not on Francophones, not just because of the language, but because I knew they would be more candid. And they were.

*Q: I interviewed somebody who was mentioning that, in Africa, you could tell on a border if you were in a French place, because the African elite all dressed very impeccably. Whereas, when you got to the Anglophone side, while not quite tweeds, it was a much more almost casual type experience.*

FREEMAN: For me, champagne was the symbol. You were supposed to entertain and to live and do all that you did on an equal level with your counterparts. That's true for volunteers, and we felt that we should carry that on at staff, too. Well, in Congo, Brazzaville, I had to break some of those rules to live just a little better than my counterparts. One air conditioner for the house, a covering for the dirt floor, and one fan were the three things that I had that my counterparts didn't have. In Cameroon, I couldn't possibly keep up with my counterparts. And I drew the line at serving champagne, which cost an arm and a leg. They served champagne at every party, and for breakfast and the whole business. And food was just incredibly expensive. It was a very, very expensive place to work. And [the] Peace Corps had no representational funds whatsoever. So I did a tremendous amount of entertaining, and it all came out of my own pocket.

*Q: When you left there, how did you feel about what you had put together in those three years?*

FREEMAN: Actually, I felt very good about what I was leaving behind. I left reluctantly, and basically I was fired.

*Q: This was a change of administration?*

FREEMAN: This was a change of administration, and I was a political appointee, because Peace Corps country directors at that point were in the plum book. I came from a liberal Democratic background, and Reagan came into office.

*Q: The name of Freeman must have come up on all the conservative Republican computers, didn't it?*

FREEMAN: As soon as Reagan was elected, I was actually in Nairobi on vacation, and I was really quite appalled. My staff was going to be gone over Christmas, so I stayed through Christmas, then I went back to Washington, and was in fact here for the inauguration, to look for a job, because I knew my days were very definitely numbered. [The] Peace Corps said they wanted me to finish my contract, which finished that summer, and I needed that time to wrap up the program.

I came back with two goals in mind. One was to find another job for myself, and the other was to get my deputy instated as director (which was almost never done in [the] Peace Corps; they usually went outside), to get him signed, sealed, and delivered as director, starting when I left, before the new administration could get its act together and

decide they wanted the post for somebody else. Because it had been such a mess when I came in, and we had rebuilt that post, I really wanted it to have a couple more years, to fine-tune what we'd built. And he was the best person to do that, because we'd rebuilt it together.

So I went back, and I interviewed at AID, and I interviewed at the World Bank, and did sort of executive-level interviews, and essentially came out of that with promises from both that when I came back in the summer, I would be hired--not hard and fast and written, obviously, but very, very positive responses.

So I went back to wrap things up and close my part of the operation, and to do this in an orderly fashion. I was exhausted at the end; that was a very hard job, Peace Corps. And I traveled for four or five weeks in Southern Africa, through all the places where I'd been before.

I got back to Washington in the fall, in September, and the World Bank had stopped hiring loan officers from outside; they were only doing it internally. And AID was frozen. So, from thinking I had a job, I went to being very unemployed.

Fortunately, in the process, when I'd come back in January, Len Shurtleff, who was at that time, I think, deputy in AFC in the State Department, had really leaned on me to apply for the State Department.

*Q: AFC being Africa...*

FREEMAN: Africa Central Office. I'd known him from both Cameroon and from Congo, and he leaned on me to apply for the affirmative action program in the State Department. I had resisted, because I was a one-level officer, as a Peace Corps director, and I didn't think they went that high. But I decided, okay, what do I have to lose. I did, and I sent them my resume. And State came back to me in what I consider classic State Department snobby fashion, saying, "You have applied to be a political officer in our highest mid-level cone, and we couldn't possibly do that. However, if you would like to consider a lower position in a different cone, you may send us another writing sample." Well, I was on a country team and head of an agency, and I didn't think this was a particularly polite response, so I threw it in the trash can. The next day, Len called me on the phone, and he said, "Did you get the response? Did you get the response?"

I said, "Yes, and I threw it in the trash can. I mean, what is this?"

He said, "Come on, Connie. Just get in. Just get in."

I said, "I don't have a writing sample."

He said, "I'm sure you have something somewhere. What about your country management plan?"

"Oh, well."

Anyway, I did reapply for a two-level [FSO-2] position in the economic cone, and I took the oral exam shortly after I got back. And that was fortunate, because, while I'm a development economist, and both the Bank and AID would have been more logical for me, neither one of them came through, and the State Department did. So I started a 15-year career in the State Department.

*Q: Before we move to the State Department, did you get any feel about any change in the thrust and attitude of the Peace Corps during the transition between the Jimmy Carter period, during which you were there, and the Ronald Reagan period?*

FREEMAN: In terms of policy?

*Q: Yes, how the Peace Corps was being treated.*

FREEMAN: In the early '70s, in the Nixon years, Nixon really had tried to eliminate the Peace Corps. He couldn't eliminate it up front, because it was too popular, so he tried to have it absorbed into ACTION. At one point, [the] Peace Corps became the International Programs division of ACTION. They couldn't even have their own stationery or their own name. And the stories are legion about the sabotage from within that went on with [the] Peace Corps against that policy, to keep the Peace Corps name and spirit and idea and ideals alive through that very difficult period.

When I joined [the] Peace Corps, coming off the Hill, there were still residues of that. This was [in] the Carter years, with [the] Peace Corps still very much a part of ACTION. And the struggle was: Who made the decisions, for instance, about who were going to be Peace Corps directors. Was it the head of ACTION, or the head of [the] Peace Corps? In my case, that was a struggle. And I was supported, in that case, by the head of ACTION and not supported by the head of [the] Peace Corps. Some of that started to dissipate over those years, and Loret Ruppe took over.

Now what did happen internally in [the] Peace Corps is that there was tremendous political vetting for anybody who was in an executive position. You had to have clean, solid, Republican credentials, to the extent that when I came back and was jobless, my buddies in the Africa Bureau at the Peace Corps let me come hang out and use extra desks and make telephone calls and [get] messages, which you have to do when you look for a job. They were very kind about that, but they refused to go down on the elevator with me if we were going to lunch. They made me go in another elevator, because they didn't want anybody from the 12th floor seeing them with me. Because I had such a definitive liberal, Democratic background, they were afraid they would be tarnished. There was a real witch-hunting kind of an atmosphere in that very early period.

And I had a hard time when I was unemployed, because I'd go and talk to many of my old friends and colleagues, and say, "Can you help?" And they'd say, "Yes, we'd really like to have you. And we've got some places where we could sure use you. But not with a

name like Freeman. We can't touch it with a 10-foot pole."

And so I was really a lot luckier than I even realized at the time that the State Department had an examination system that really couldn't be meddled with directly. My assignments were meddled with, after I joined State, still for those political reasons. But the examination system wasn't.

*Q: You came into the State Department in 1982. Where did you go first?*

FREEMAN: I was a mid-level entrant, so I didn't go through all the junior-officer assignment business. So I had to find my own job. I was supposed to go into the Africa Bureau to do congressional relations, because I'd come off the Hill, but Chester Crocker decided that he didn't need a Freeman around doing congressional relations. And so I was left jobless again. So I went and walked the halls and found a position in IO [International Organizations], where I was the desk officer for the World Food Program (WFP). After being Peace Corps director in Cameroon and working a 90- to 120-hour week, I found out within three weeks that I could do this job in about one-third of my time, with one hand tied behind my back. I mean, that sounds terribly arrogant, but there was nothing to do. There was a whole agricultural division in this office, and one person had the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), and I had the World Food Program, and we had a junior officer who had two small agencies, and we had a division chief who supervised us. I was used to working very hard.

Fortunately, he was a delightful and wonderful guy, and he really did teach me how to operate in the State Department. Many mid-level entrants don't do very well, because they've come out of backgrounds where they've had much more authority and responsibility than they will touch in the State Department for a long time. They don't know how to operate, and they don't go through junior-officer training, and they're deeply resented by people in the Foreign Service, because they didn't go through the trenches with everybody else. And so I feel very lucky that my first two bosses were able to teach me, to put me in my place, to cram me into pinstripe pants in a way that made it possible for me to continue in the Foreign Service and do well in the future. But some of those lessons were not the easiest.

*Q: Why were the assignments of such little moment that you had at the beginning? Was this IO, or was this not of great interest to anybody?*

FREEMAN: The office was overstaffed. That happens in State and everywhere, you know, it grows to meet a particular need, and then that need goes away, but nobody wants to give up [his] slot. We had an advisor for mid-level entrants, but there was no system to assign you, as there was for junior officers. So you really had to find your own job. I was recruited for that job to do a bunch of research and writing and evaluation of the food agencies, but there was no money to travel to do that. You couldn't do any real evaluations if you couldn't travel. So I went to two governing board meetings in Rome, and I did all of the administrative things, and I took off for 10 weeks to do French, and I filled the time. But I was pretty bored, and I looked for my next job.

*Q: Who was the head of IO at that time?*

FREEMAN: Gregory Newell. He was a right-wing Mormon, a very young man. He didn't know much.

*Q: I've heard people say that there were long lectures on subjects on which Mr. Newell could talk at great length, but it really didn't...*

FREEMAN: But what about international organizations. I was way down, remember. I was a two-level officer. I was a mid-level entrant. I was brand new. I was stuffed into a division of an office, International Organizations Development (IOD), which was a combined AID/State office, with both AID and State officers, an experiment that never worked very well. Also, still, my name stuck out, so nobody wanted to bring me to anybody's attention. They kept me buried.

*Q: Were you ever tempted to drop the name and use a married name?*

FREEMAN: I'd been married, and I had changed my name then and used the married name, and I happily and cheerfully went back to my own name. No, it was too far gone by then, because I came by my liberal credentials honestly; it wasn't just my father. I'd worked for Humphrey, Cates, and Javits; I was an antiwar protester, all the things we talked about before. I earned my liberal credentials. And a feminist, too.

*Q: How long were you with IO?*

FREEMAN: I went to [the] A-100 [class at the Foreign Service Institute] in March. I think I went in in April.

*Q: Of '82.*

FREEMAN: Yes, and I left in June of '83. It was a one-year assignment.

*Q: Did you get any feel for the international food organizations?*

FREEMAN: Absolutely. I learned a lot about them.

*Q: What was your impression of the delivery system and the effectiveness of it?*

FREEMAN: I think the World Food Program is probably one of the most effective international organizations that exist. It was then, and it continues to be to this day. Part of the reason is that it has a very carefully defined job. It delivers relief food, and it does development agricultural projects [using] food [as pay for work].

Ingram, an Australian, was appointed the head of WFP just before I came in, over the head of an American that we'd been supporting. He was coming to visit Washington, and



I was coming out of the field, where I'd been a part of a country team. So we were sitting in the planning meeting [for his visit], and the first question I asked was, "Who's going to be [his] control officer" because I was used to that in the field. Everybody looked at me, and my boss said, "Oh, well, you can be." And so that was the first thing I did in IOD.

In fact, that was very good, because it helped me to figure out how to get around the building, among other things. As a result of that, I developed a relationship with Ingram that was very positive, and I thought highly of him. It was a time when FAO was going through lots and lots of changes. Salma was reigning supreme. He was trying to dominate WFP, and I was glad Ingram was fighting the good fight on that.

*Q: Who was trying to dominate WFP?*

FREEMAN: Salma, who was the head of the FAO. The World Food Program is almost a subsidiary; it's tied into FAO's bureaucracy. And it has had greater or lesser degrees of autonomy, depending upon how the leadership and the administrative dynamics were working out at that time.

I learned a lot about how governing boards [work], and how long meetings can go on, and how boring they could be. And I learned a lot about following your brief and not getting outside of your brief, and working on an inter-agency delegation. So, in retrospect, there was a lot that went on there. It just felt very boring, because it was not the same level of activity that Peace Corps had been.

*Q: After a year, in '83, where did you go?*

FREEMAN: I went to India as the economic officer, third in line under the counselor in the New Delhi Embassy.

*Q: You were there from when to when?*

FREEMAN: That would have been from July of '83 until about June '85, so I spent about two years in India. I was the officer in charge of trade and the investment portfolio.

*Q: Which I would think would have been a very frustrating one, wasn't it?*

FREEMAN: Yes. Again, I didn't feel like there was a huge amount of content.

*Q: From what I've understood, although it's beginning maybe to loosen up a bit, India was not very amenable to foreign trade.*

FREEMAN: Or even AID. AID was just going back in then. I was also sort of the AID liaison officer, which was a logical job that I fell into, with my development economics background. We were four people in the economic section.

My colleague, who was sworn in as ambassador to Bangladesh today, had what I felt was

the poorer of the portfolio, because he was dealing with the Bank and with the Fund, essentially with the financial side. He had a special endowment they were trying to work on to [get] the last of the rupees that had been generated through PL480 food before they were completely used, as a part of either the Indian's budget or for the embassy. [He wanted] to get them into some kind of a foundation or endowment so that they could continue to generate an income to support some of the Library of Congress and other projects that had been done there.

What I did in India, the project that was most interesting and that ultimately got [me] promoted or off probation, was I worked on a tax treaty. I used to say the tax treaty had been in the works since almost the time I was born; it was that old. And we've continued to try to work on negotiating a tax treaty. And then I got the textiles portfolio. Textiles is a very nasty portfolio anywhere, and this was the middle '80s, and we had just established a new U.S. policy on textiles that was completely unilateral and violated both our multilateral agreements and our own bilateral agreements.

*Q: Textiles are probably the most political of all commodity arrangements, particularly on the Republican side, where this was part of the Republican southern strategy. I don't want to put words in your mouth, but did you have the feeling that this was domestically politically driven?*

FREEMAN: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. It had nothing to do with international relations at all. And that's why it was so egregious in terms of violating all of our agreements. Nobody cared about that.

But the hardest thing for me was, this thing started like in November, and we got people saying we should go and do calls. You know, call what? What is this, a diplomatic call? I didn't know anything more about textiles than that I wore them. Essentially, the calls were: "We are going to enforce a quota on you, pending negotiations, because you have sprung our computer, and your exports of men's and boys' shirts have exceeded one percent of the U.S. market. Therefore, we are enforcing a unilateral quota." But none of the language said that; it was a lot of technical language in the cable. And so I was supposed to go in and do these calls. The first time I went, I went with the commercial counselor, and he knew something about it, but it was still way over my head. By the third call, I was having to do it alone, because nobody else wanted to touch it. I still didn't understand, and Washington wouldn't tell me. I kept sending cables and calls and saying, "For God's sake, will somebody brief me on this?" And nobody knew, in the embassy, what it meant, either. Nobody could figure this out; what did it really mean.

I can remember, on this third time, going in to the same joint secretary, Saberwa was his name, and he started to holler at me again. I looked at him, and I said, "Mr. Saberwa, I am really sorry, but I am delivering this on instructions. I don't know what I'm doing. And I can't get Washington to tell me what all this is about. Could you explain to me why you're angry?" And he loved it. I like to say that the problem between the Americans and the Indians is we out-arrogant each other. And so the best way to get along well with Indians is to throw yourself on their mercy and say, "I am here to learn, please teach me."

In this case, there was no game-playing; I was there to learn. So Saberwa taught me textiles. He had been doing textiles forever. He knew every back-room agreement that had ever been made, every conversation that had been in the halls, etc., clearly from the Indian viewpoint, but he really knew his stuff very well. And so he taught me, because nobody in the U.S. would help.

Finally, when I went back on R&R, and I went around and did consultations and talked to people in USCRN, then they would talk to me. But nobody would send anything out on their cables or on the phone.

*Q: Why was that?*

FREEMAN: Because our new textile policy was so domestically driven that it did in fact violate both our multilateral and bilateral agreements. We were in the wrong, and we couldn't acknowledge that publicly. We'd only sort of do it in the back room. Nobody in the embassy in New Delhi and nobody in the consulates wanted to deal with this issue, so it went to the most junior officer in the economic section.

*Q: What was known in government terms as the flack-catcher.*

FREEMAN: That's right. I finally figured it out, with Saberwa's help and all kinds of documents and getting the agreements and poring through them. So I wrote the press releases, and I gave the constituent posts the language they could use to deal with inquiries. And we dealt with hand looms and all kinds of other things. Textiles was my biggest account there.

Then we had textiles negotiations. The team came through, and they were on their third country, and they didn't want to do any negotiations. They just wanted to close this down and go shopping, and what they wanted me to do was take them shopping. I sat at the table, on the American side, and wanted to crawl under it, because the behavior of the delegation was so egregious and so arrogant and so overbearing that it was truly embarrassing.

I remember I had a wonderful boss, George Kenny, and he was very good at figuring out how to train people. I came back and I was so angry, I was spitting-fire angry. And so he said, "Well, write it up. Write it down. If they're that bad, we'll send a memo to the DCM and have him make some representations in Washington." And I came back to him with what I'd written up. He looked at me and said, "You're repeating yourself. I need some substance here." By the third draft, I'd worked out the fury, and we had something we could send to the DCM. Nothing ever happened with it, because nobody was going to powder these textiles people. Everybody runs scared on the textiles people. So it taught me a lot.

On that delegation was a Customs guy, and he was trying to determine what customs to levy. There was an exception for hand looms. But hand looms were defined as something that could be made with a machine, but a machine that was hand- or foot- operated, not

electricity-operated. And so they were woven, and then there would be stitching on places around the side. This guy looked at this, and he said, "I cannot tell whether that's made with a machine run by electricity or a machine run by a foot pedal. They'll all have duties on them." In doing so, he put masses of factories out of business, or potentially out of business. And they all showed up on my doorstep, with all these poor little textiles workers. We were able to get turned around by the [time the] next high-level delegation came, by appealing to them that this had been far too arbitrary.

That was essentially the substance of what I did in India. Going to India was going home for me, in a way, because I had traveled the whole country doing my Ph.D. work before. Perhaps the biggest thing for me was to make the switch between my weekends and vacations, where I became very Indian, and my weekdays at the embassy, where I had to put back on my American clothes, accent, demeanor, and culture. So it was good experience in many ways.

*Q: How did you find the Indian bureaucracy at that point, and dealing with them?*

FREEMAN: The Indian bureaucracy wasn't so bad when you were there on an official level. Certainly, if you were the most junior economic officer, with the ambassador and the DCM, and really trying to get things done, that was hard. And it was hard when I was a student trying to move around the country. But I don't remember being unduly upset by the bureaucracy per se. But remember that I'd lived in India and traveled all over. My dictum when I lived there before was: "I assume nothing will work. If it works, I'll be ecstatic, and if it doesn't work, then that's just the way things go. That's the way it is." So I just don't remember that as being a real issue.

*Q: I realize you were in the economic section and relatively junior within this very large embassy, but during this, you might say, high-Reagan period, did you get a feeling about how relations were between the United States and India at that time?*

FREEMAN: They weren't great. Harry Barnes was our ambassador, and I think he smoothed a lot of that over. When I was there, we had thousands of congressional delegations. Vice President Bush had come through just before I arrived. We had Maureen Reagan there. We had lots and lots and lots of visitors. That's what I remember the best, the idiocy of control-officering everybody in the world, and everybody wanting to go shopping. That was always a problem for me. I couldn't take anybody shopping, because I hated shopping, so I didn't know where to go. I mean, it just wasn't my bag.

My great frustration, again, was textiles, because nobody tried in any way, shape, or form to see the Indian viewpoint on this, and we were violating our agreements. So I experienced it, lived it, and knew it in that context. But I don't remember feeling as deeply embarrassed about what we were doing in our policy as I have in some other countries in some other situations. And I don't think it was that bad.

*Q: There just weren't the issues. Vietnam had gone, and there was no particular India-Pakistan thing where we had to tip in one way or the other, although there might have*

*been the army using Pakistan as a conduit for weapons into Afghanistan, which might have...*

FREEMAN: But I wasn't really a part of that, remember. It wasn't one of the issues that was particularly pressing for me. I spent those two years really living, to the extent that I possibly could, as an Indian, and doing these economic issues that I had. I loved being back in India. I wasn't hugely challenged in my job. I spent my first three or four years in the State Department thinking this is really not hard enough, and being relatively bored. I wasn't in subsequent years.

*Q: That's often the pattern. You're marking time, or you're overwhelmed. When you were dealing with textiles and you had a delegation coming out, did you just keep your mouth shut, or did you say, you know, our agreement states such and such? Did anybody else raise the issue, or did they just go ahead, pound the table, make their points, and walk off?*

FREEMAN: The Indians could make those arguments for themselves. I didn't have to [do so] for them. The problem with our delegations was they didn't even listen. They pounded the table, and they essentially said, "We have the power. If you don't come to an agreement with us, we will continue to enforce these much lower quotas. If you negotiate with us, you might get a better deal. And that's it. We're not interested in talking about anything else." In all fairness, the Indians can go on and on and on and on. And these guys had been to four negotiations before. This was like their fifth country. They were exhausted. And they were trying to defend an indefensible policy. The only defense for the policy was U.S. domestic pressure. So I felt like crawling [under] the table. I don't remember how much I argued with them one on one. Probably not a great deal, because I was too junior, and I was the embassy control officer, after all. There was a State Department person on the delegation that came out, and I think I discussed it at length with [him]. State didn't have a lead role in this. This was USTR and company.

*Q: USTR is the U.S. trade representative. Why don't we quit at this point.*

FREEMAN: Okay.

*Q: I'll pick it up next time in '83?*

FREEMAN: We're into '85, and I'm about ready to leave India to go back and take over the Liberia desk in the State Department.

*Q: So we'll pick it up then.*

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*Today is the 7th of January 1998. Connie, you were on the Liberia desk from when to when?*

FREEMAN: I was on the Liberia desk from 1985 to 1987, but I also continued doing all the economic work on Liberia from the Economic Policy Staff Office from '87 to '89.

*Q: When you got in in '85, what was the situation in Liberia as you saw it at that time?*

FREEMAN: The political situation was a run-up. I took over in June, and it was a run-up to the Liberian elections, which were taking place, I believe, in October of that year. On the economic front, all donors except the U.S. had pulled out. And the economic statistics were showing rapid decline, and a very disorganized economy and government. Oddly enough, when I finally got to Liberia, I was very surprised to find that there were good, functioning restaurants, vibrant markets, and all of that. That was the non-governmental part; that was the private part of the economy, which we now focus on a lot more, but at that time, not nearly as much.

*Q: Doe was out of it by this time, wasn't he?*

FREEMAN: No, no, Doe was a part of it at that time. This was the election where Doe was in fact elected in '85, in what were supposed to be free and fair elections and multi-party elections. But as I coined it when I was responding the day after the elections to press and other inquiries, "They were free, not fair." People lined up for miles; they stayed for hours in line. The voting itself appeared to be reasonably well organized and free, but they counted the ballots behind closed doors. So it was not fair, by any means.

*Q: You say the other donors had backed out.*

FREEMAN: Including the World Bank and the IMF.

*Q: Now what was the reason for that?*

FREEMAN: I think it was a sense of disgust with Doe, with the government, and mostly with the complete collapse of the economy, and because they really continued to view Liberia as the business of the U.S. The U.S. was essentially the colonial power. In fact, it was. We didn't acknowledge that, but we were the only colonial power. And that it was our responsibility to do something about it, and they didn't need to mess around with it anymore. But we were really the last power there, and we were still providing a great deal of assistance.

There was a great conflict in Liberia. On one side were the people who cared deeply about human rights, who were outraged by Doe's kind of government, who of course felt that he'd taken over in not only a coup, but a very bloody, very ugly, very nasty one, and wanted us either to pull out or to pull him out or to sanction him seriously on human rights abuses. The other side felt that the primary concern was our facilities, because we had extensive facilities in Liberia at the time, and that it was necessary to protect those facilities. So it's a very interesting case of conflicting priorities.

*Q: What were our interests there? What were these facilities?*

FREEMAN: A VOA station, a fairly extensive intelligence-gathering operation, and a lot of American business. I'm trying to remember when Firestone sold off its plantation there, but we related to that. American companies were involved in uranium. So it was commercial, and it was government, and it was fairly extensive government.

*Q: Was there a Liberian lobby either in Congress or outside?*

FREEMAN: Big time. Big time. And they were all tied into the Liberian opposition. The interesting thing about this particular lobby was that the opposition in Monrovia, Liberia, would get on the phone at the close of business each day and call the U.S. There was only a four-hour time change, and so they would call their phone chains of opposition types in Washington. And overnight they would phone chain it all around, and then the protest for whatever had happened the day before would hit my desk first thing in the morning, long before the embassy could get any reporting out to me. And the only way I ever managed to deal with those barrages was to get into the phone chain myself.

*Q: How did you do that?*

FREEMAN: Well, I knew a lot of people who were involved in human-rights issues, and therefore I got on the list. So they would call me the night before to tell me all the outrageous things that had happened, so that I could be prepared for the protests from other people that would hit my desk, as desk officer, the next morning.

*Q: Can you give an example of the things that were happening?*

FREEMAN: Perhaps the most notorious thing that happened, and it happened off and on over a year, was the arrest and incarceration of Ellen Johnson Surley. Ellen Johnson Surley was recently the top opposition candidate against Taylor for the presidential elections that just took place about six months ago. But Ellen had been finance minister initially in the new government when Doe overthrew Tubman. [Tubman died in London 7/23/71; Tolbert was killed by Doe in a coup 4/12/80]. I'm trying to recall the exact trend of events, but I believe, if I'm recalling correctly, Ellen and Bakas Matthews and Amos Sawyer and a number of others who were key opposition people to Doe in 1985, in fact, participated in the very early days of the Doe government in various capacities, after he overthrew Tolbert in '80. I believe that Matthews was foreign minister for a while, and that Ellen was finance minister. But after a short period, probably within six months, they left the country. Ellen went to work for Citibank, for Equator Bank, for the UN, and for a whole variety of different institutions. And she became very well known in international finance circles. She went back to Liberia in '85 and went to see Doe and told him what she thought of him. And he put her in jail, detained her. The people that she had worked with, notably Equator Bank, sent out a letter-writing and rallying cry that elicited requests from, I believe, close to 15 foreign governments and heads of state to Doe to release Ellen from jail, even though she had insulted him, etc. And lots of other activities, too. So that, for several months, this was the exercise that I was in the middle of, because the U.S. Embassy was trying to get him to release her as well, and he was maintaining that

nobody could behave in the way that she behaved, and that he was within his rights to jail her. Eventually, he let her go, but she couldn't leave the country. Several months later, this was within the first year, '85-'86, she got involved in the same kind of shouting match with Doe, and he jailed her again. And we had to get her out of jail again. Eventually, she escaped the country, in mufti. She was disguised as a Muslim woman, and was smuggled over the border, I believe into the Ivory Coast, and flew back here. That was a classic example of the kinds of things that went on.

At the same time that we were doing the political things, we were trying to figure out what to do about the economic collapse. And since I was an economics officer, I spent a fair amount of time doing that.

*Q: What do you do with a country like this, where we have a sort of moral responsibility, but you have somebody who's pretty unacceptable, like Mr. Doe, but we have interests there. What do you do?*

FREEMAN: It's tough. One of the things you try to do is to get some of your best people out there working in the embassy, and particularly as ambassador, to try to see if you can't talk the leader into reason. Ed Perkins went out as ambassador the summer that I took over. Previously, Bill Swing was out there. We had some very qualified people.

Ed Perkins being ambassador sticks in my mind extremely well because I was on the airplane going to Liberia on my desk officer visit when they had a coup. Ed Perkins was in Washington. I always maintained that the Americans did not know about the coup and hadn't participated in the coup, because the reverse would have been true. They'd have had the desk officer in Washington, and the ambassador in place, rather than the reverse. But I went to Sierra Leone and stayed in Sierra Leone for a few days. I was visiting that countryside as well. Perkins came out but could only fly into Sierra Leone, as all the borders were closed in Liberia. We waited two or three days before we could get permission for the military plane to come from Monrovia and fly to Freetown and pick us up and take us back to Monrovia. That was a very exciting, intense time, because we were waiting for one of Doe's officials from the Liberian government to come and join us on the plane. We were getting close to one hour before darkness, and he wasn't showing up at the airport. Perkins had to make the decision about whether to go ahead and fly (because if you violated the curfew, it didn't matter whose permission you had, many of the soldiers were very gun-happy) or to annoy the president by not bringing along his official. Fortunately, the guy showed up at the very last minute, and off we flew. But it was a really superb example of the complexities and the dangers of poor policymaking there.

What do you do [in such a situation]? Ed certainly tried, and others tried, too. Subsequently, in the spring of '87, the head of AID, McPherson, headed a delegation that went out to try to negotiate a way to put that economy, the economic ministries, back in order in Liberia. The proposal to Doe that he accepted and that became his request was to send out a group of 15 operational advisors who would essentially become the key leadership in the economic ministries - the Ministry of Finance, Commerce, the Central



Bank, etc., because graft and corruption and stealing were so rife that nothing was happening. And I was on that delegation. Again, that was a very exciting experience, because of the high-level negotiations. I can remember calling back to Washington after Doe had agreed to request this group, and being very excited and thinking this was very important, and being laughed down by my colleagues who'd worked on Liberia longer than I had. They were saying, "You really think this one's going to work?" They didn't think so, and they were right. Ed Perkins was posted as ambassador to South Africa in the middle of his tour, and Jim Bishop went out as ambassador to Liberia. And within six months after the operational experts took over, he sent them home, because the Liberians figured out how to get around even expatriate management and leadership in the financial ministries. And if they weren't going to cooperate, nothing was going to happen.

So, ultimately, what happened in Liberia was that it blew up. A lot of people think that if we had simply been tougher on human rights, more insistent about free elections, etc., the coup and the period of strife might have been prevented; i.e., that the United States was responsible for this because it was our colony. I'm not sure.

*Q: That is a typical American reaction: If something happens, it's our fault, and there has to be a solution, and it has to be our solution.*

FREEMAN: My Monday morning quarterback orientation, knowing what I know now and what I've experienced now some 15, 16 years later, might recommend something quite different. And that is that one of the problems in Liberia was its dependency syndrome. All groups were playing to the United States. The view of the United States and the Americans was the thing that they used against each other. And they didn't grapple with each other over the real issues of building a country or satisfying the needs to have representation both from indigenous people and from the Americas, who were the descendants of U.S. slaves. Those are very tough problems. And those problems aren't solved by outsiders; they're indigenous problems. So maybe if we had had fewer facilities and less interest, or had done it differently, more of an advising than a dictating role, it might have made a difference. And maybe it would not have made a difference at all.

*Q: Were you at all, on the desk, looking at the government facilities we had there, and raising the question, maybe it'd be a good idea at some point to get them out of here?*

FREEMAN: I think that question was asked a lot. But it was asked at levels and behind closed doors that I didn't have access to, as a desk officer. Because there was a fair amount of those facilities that were related to intelligence, it was definitely on the q.t. and hush-hush.

But the more public (public in the sense of more general) issue within the State Department and AID, etc., was this conflict between protecting investment facilities and that set of American interests vis-à-vis standing up for America's morality, including human rights, democracy, etc., issues. And it was so passionate that it really did interfere with friendships. People got very angry with each other over it. It was a passionate,

passionate issue, not to the extent of the Vietnam War, but more of that genre than many things you've seen recently. People cared deeply about Liberia, on one side or the other.

*Q: Did you find, though, in dealing with Liberia, that interest there from people higher up was pretty much overshadowed by South Africa and Namibia and all that?*

FREEMAN: No. South Africa was really the issue at that time. Chester Crocker was the assistant secretary. But the second thing on the Africa Bureau's list was Liberia. So Liberia came [just] after South Africa. And we probably spent more time in the assistant secretary's office than any other group. Howard Walker, who was the office director for West Africa, which had 13 countries, something like that, used to say that he spent 60 percent of his time on Liberia. And I used to wish he'd go spend his time on some other countries, so that I could get about my work. But that's sort of classic. So Liberia was important at that time. It was a very busy desk. It was fraught with all kinds of problems. There was a crisis every other day. And so it was, for me, a really good desk to be on. I learned a lot.

*Q: Was there a Mr. Liberia in Congress, either somebody in Congress or a staff member or somebody who kept working on you?*

FREEMAN: Phil Christianson, who at that point was Kassebaum's minority staff director of the Africa Subcommittee, was one person who I dealt with quite a bit. He was very down on our Liberia policy, but Phil and I managed to develop a good working-together relationship. And there were a couple of other staffers like that. We were forever having to go up there to defend Liberia policy. And they didn't like it, because they heard a lot from the human-rights types. But I was able to diffuse some of that, at least on a day-to-day working basis, by developing personal relationships. It was very, very helpful to have been a staffer myself, so that I could relate to them and they could relate to me right away. And I didn't have the image of a pinstripe-panted, cookie-pushing State Department type to them (and they really like to pin that image on you). But I'd been there; I'd done that. I'd been on the other side, and I understood where they were coming from. And just that fact gave me additional credibility right away. And then I was able to present things and phrase things in such a way that they weren't viewed as suspect as they might have been otherwise.

*Q: Did these groups that wanted you to do something really have any particular solution?*

FREEMAN: Get rid of Doe. The most tense and interesting one, in fact, was when we took out Marcos, and we took out Baby Doc.

*Q: We're talking about Marcos...*

FREEMAN: Marcos, president of the Philippines, and Baby Doc from Haiti. In both cases, we helped to remove those leaders from their countries and found a place of sanctuary for them, so that we got rid of them and could proceed. And many, many

people wanted us to take out Doe. But the difficulties that were confronted in finding a place for Marcos to go, and in particular a place for Baby Doc to go, argued against doing anything like that for Doe, because Africa simply didn't have that kind of priority in American foreign policy. But I was beat upon a great deal on that issue, both by the Liberian opposition and the human-rights lobby that supported the opposition here.

*Q: Were you looking at this as an option, waiting for a time when Doe would be face intense public unrest? Because that's what got rid of both Duvalier and Marcos; it wasn't us saying get out.*

FREEMAN: I don't think that the U.S. government ever took seriously the idea of taking Doe out or helping him to get out. I don't think they were ever willing to expend those kinds of resources, both in terms of money and reputation, for Doe. It wasn't important enough; it was Africa.

*Q: What did you see as the alternative to Doe at that time?*

FREEMAN: There were a number of other people running for election in '85. Amos Sawyer was one of them. He had been active both in the Tubman [Tolbert?] government and in the very early days of the Doe government, and was a professor here at an American university, Iowa, I think, or something like that. He was one of the candidates. Bakas Matthews was another one, who had a lot of popular following. Byron Tar was another one. And there were a couple of others. So there was no lack of people who were angling for the job.

And I think there was probably no question that all of them were better educated and better qualified, in the pure sense of paper qualifications, than Doe to run that country. But they didn't represent the indigenous people to the extent that Doe claimed that he did. He came from a tribe, the Krahn tribe, that was particularly militant and had a very low level of education, etc. Some people use the word "primitive." I don't like that, but they were fairly unevolved in a Western cultural or educational sense. Doe tried. He studied while he was in the presidency. He had long, long conversations with both Perkins and Swing. Dick Moose, when he was assistant secretary, shortly after Doe took over, was trying to get through to him using the Peace Corps volunteer who'd been his teacher, and other kinds of things like that. So we really tried to influence him, and also we supported his attempt to get a better education. But the man never quite made it beyond being a military leader and a super-thug.

*Q: Was Charles Taylor anybody in those days?*

FREEMAN: Charles Taylor, at that time, was in jail in Boston, because he was under extradition orders to be sent back to Liberia for graft and corruption. He escaped jail and returned to Liberia, so, as I like to say, he extradited himself. But that charge against him still exists in the Massachusetts courts, so that during the General Assembly last fall...

*Q: At the United Nations.*

FREEMAN: At the United Nations. When he should have come here for the United Nations' meeting, his parliament ruled against his coming, because they feared for his security. I believe he could have come and stayed within the five-mile radius of the United Nations and not gone anywhere else, because he can still be arrested for escaping from prison. That's what Taylor was doing. He went back to Liberia, and he went off in the bush, and he started organizing an army, and training people in the Ivory Coast, I believe, and getting Libyan support for it. But we didn't focus a lot on him. He was an element in a chaotic situation. I think, if anybody had told me that, in 1997, Charles Taylor, after a six-year war, would be elected president of Liberia, I wouldn't have believed them.

*Q: By '87, were we doing anything economically, or was this about the time we were beginning to give up on them?*

FREEMAN: No, the spring of '87 was when we went in with the McPherson mission, and agreed to send in the 15 operational advisors. That was a last-ditch chance to try to put the economy back in order, or to help them to put their economy back in order. I don't remember all the numbers now, and we would have looked at somewhat different things, but the budget deficit was huge. There was a real paucity of [hard] currency. They were minting Doe dollars, which were these great, big, huge coins, and the joke was that it kept all the tailors in business, because the coins were so big and so heavy, and dollar bills were disappearing rapidly because people were hoarding them (Liberia had used the dollar bill), that everybody's pockets got holes in them from carrying these coins around. There were lots of other indications of oppression, and pressure on the bauxite mines and certainly on the rubber plantations. Somewhere in that period, Firestone sold out, so that it no longer had an American presence. That was a takeover situation. And Liberia's outside income was decreasing and focusing on the ship registry business. So the economy was going to hell in a handbasket during the whole period. And it was unrelieved. Our operational experts couldn't do anything. And while we gave a fair amount of aid in the country, that was barely making a dent.

*Q: Did the Cold War intrude there at all, outside of intelligence-gathering? Were we concerned that maybe the Soviets were going to pick up the tab and do something?*

FREEMAN: That was always the question, and, in particular, would they turn to Libya and get Qadhafi in there. Once again, in that period, everything was defined by East-West [issues]. Now Liberia was our bastion, and so those people who wanted to maintain close ties, protect facilities, see if we couldn't cajole Doe, all of that, used the Cold-War arguments: Liberia always votes with us in the U.N.; it's a bastion against Soviet encroachment; if we don't support Doe, they might. It was that whole set of arguments. But it wasn't like being in a Somalia or a Sudan, where there were real divisions, or a Tanzania, which we just abandoned because it was Socialist, after all. Liberia was ours.

*Q: You then, in '87, moved over, but still you were doing...*

FREEMAN: I moved up one floor and stayed in the Africa Bureau. And I took over the whole assistance portfolio and the Economic Policy Staff Office.

*Q: For Africa.*

FREEMAN: For Africa.

*Q: You did this from '87 to...*

FREEMAN: To '89. We covered the whole continent in the Economic Policy Staff Office. We had a director, Walt Lundy, and two of us at a one [FSO-1] level. The commercial officer was also the deputy, and I was in charge of all of the assistance accounts, which were very active at that time, and so that was quite a load. And then there were a few others. That office was a resource office for the rest of the bureau on all of the economic issues, because frequently desk officers come out of cones other than the economic cone. Economic officers tend to go to EB (Economic Bureau), and so, in Africa, that kind of support on the economic issues was needed. I dealt regularly with AID. We had a weekly or biweekly meeting with the leadership of the Africa bureaus in AID and in State, and I was the secretariat for that. A lot of policy decisions were made there. Then we divided up pariah countries, and so I kept Liberia.

*Q: This was the end of the Reagan administration. Did you sense a change in attitude toward aid for Africa by the people in charge at that point, as opposed to how it had been earlier on?*

FREEMAN: I can't say that. I don't think so. But I think that may be a case of not seeing the forest for the trees. I was embroiled right in the middle of it.

At just about this time, the special fund for Africa went through on the Hill. I can't remember exactly what it was called, because we don't have it anymore, but essentially it took the Africa money and put it in a pot, so that it couldn't be earmarked from within, and it went through Congress as a pot, and that was a very positive thing for Africa. I think there was a fair amount of sympathy on the Hill for assistance to Africa.

There were the ongoing issues. We could never compete with Israel and Egypt, but the importance of African assistance was growing, and it was getting an acceptable slice of the pie, vis-à-vis Asia.

*Q: Was Africa sort of sliced up into spheres of influence, like Tanzania was left to Scandinavia, Germany, and other places like that?*

FREEMAN: Yes. Yes.

*Q: Could you give me an economist's aid view of Africa, of who had what?*

FREEMAN: Let's back up just a little bit to [make] a contrast of this period with the

Nixon period. In the middle '70s or so, we consolidated our aid in Africa, and essentially moved out of all the Southern African countries, and consolidated it into a small group of countries. When I was on the Hill, we worked to open that back up. That was a part of the tilt-toward-the-white exercise. By the late '80s, the coverage of Africa was fairly extensive. And the division between political aid and development aid was shifting, so that more money was going into development aid, and less money was going into more strictly security-supporting assistance funds.

I had a chart of what everybody was getting, which was very complex, because there was development assistance, there was political assistance, there was PL480 Title I and II and III at that point, and there was a whole series of military-assistance bills. And so the programs were fairly complex. The AID presence was all over the continent, too.

How was it divvied up? Tanzania sticks out, of course, and I'm trying to think of who else. We had a pretty big presence in [the] Sudan and in Somalia still, during that period. I don't think we were in Ethiopia except for famine relief. Very [small in] Tanzania, as I said, and I'm trying to think of the rest. I think really, in essence, we were in most countries. It was the level that we were in that was affected by the politics. We were also just at the stage where we were trying to begin to reward countries who were undertaking structural changes. And there was a special fund to do that. AEARP comes to mind (boy, I'm digging back) as the acronym for a special fund that would give special budget support to countries viewed as undertaking key economic reforms.

*Q: On this, were there any particular areas of concern? Obviously, Liberia had to be one. But were there any other areas, or was it a fairly steady progress?*

FREEMAN: A big area of concern was SADACC, Southern Africa Programs with the Southern Africa countries, because, of course, it was the whole struggle in South Africa. That was both a SADACC fund (that's with two "Cs;" it's only one "C" now) and assistance to the surrounding countries. The Angola conflict was certainly going great guns, and that was a big problem. I believe, at that time, we were starting to really back off of Zaire. But Zaire was a very difficult mixed bag, because of the Angola conflict. Kenya [had] a big and relatively stable aid program. We hadn't focused on the problems there yet. Certainly, Sudan was very, very shaky at that time, and that was largely political aid. We pulled out of Nigeria. Nigeria was a big issue, because we had pulled our aid out of Nigeria, and there were arguments that we should be going back into it. We were going back into Nigeria, in little bits and pieces, through population programs, where they would be centrally funded [helping] organizations that went into Nigeria. I went to Nigeria and looked at this in '89, I believe. I think we still had money in the Sahelian program as well.

*Q: You mentioned population programs. The Reagan administration, at least when it first came in, was rather strongly opposed to birth control and things of this nature. How was this going, toward the end of the administration?*

FREEMAN: There were restrictions on who we could give to, depending upon their

stance on abortion. That was certainly in place.

The thing that sticks in my mind about the population lobby the most is a little bit of a deviation on the theme, but in 1988-'89, there was a big movement on, on the Hill and among the NGOs, to rewrite the Foreign Assistance Act.

We'd gone through this exercise at the end of the '70s, when I had been on the Hill, with the so-called Humphrey Bill that had ended up in IDCA, which was essentially a management level above AID that was supposed to coordinate all of the assistance-giving agencies. It eventually just collapsed, but the need to clean up the Foreign Assistance Act was still there, because it was desperately barnacled. And AID, as a consequence, was barnacled. A barnacled law creates a barnacled institution.

Starting in '87 and going into '89, there were endless meetings and conferences and proposals produced by a wide range of people in the NGO, PVO, and congressional communities of how to streamline foreign assistance. It was centered on the efforts in the House. And they came out with...oh, who was the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee?

*Q: Hamilton.*

FREEMAN: Hamilton, thank you. They came out with the Hamilton proposal, which was probably one of the best examples of how you could rewrite the Foreign Assistance Act to make it succinct, to get rid of the vast majority of earmarking, to provide latitude for AID to make decisions. It was really a masterful piece of work. I had worked informally, and formally, on this, because I had a number of friends from the Hill who were working on it. And they'd finally gotten all of the lobbies behind this bill. They thought they were all committed, what we called the floating crap game of PVOs. They presented it, and at the very last minute, the PAF lobby broke ranks, because they were afraid that if their money wasn't earmarked, they wouldn't get it and they couldn't cover their overhead. With them breaking ranks, many of the [other] PVOs and NGOs that were involved broke ranks and went back to lobbying for their own earmarked money in the legislation. And that attempt to streamline the Foreign Assistance Act went down the tubes, too. But it was a serious exercise, and it's something that I both cared about and spent a fair amount of time working on.

*Q: Liberia. What happened during these two years you were still keeping a watching brief on Liberia?*

FREEMAN: Jim Bishop was the ambassador. The operational experts tried to streamline the economy. They were [opposed and] deceived; people ran around them to do things. Finally, Jim Bishop sent them home, before their contracts were over, because they weren't accomplishing anything. And that program cost something like \$15 million; it was outrageous. The Liberian economy was grinding down further and further and further. I don't remember pivotal events or notable events of that period exactly, but it certainly wasn't getting any better. Taylor was organizing on the borders.

*Q: Toward the end there, was the Cold-War factor fading away, as far as an argument?*

FREEMAN: I think it was beginning to. But, you see, the real changes in the Cold War...let's see, when did the Berlin Wall go down?

*Q: Late '89.*

FREEMAN: You see, the impact of that on Africa and aid policy was much more in the '90s. By that time, I was in Kenya and working on the specific Kenya issues, which were not Cold-War issues. So I was just watching that from a distance. So I think the answer is, no, I don't think that we really saw serious signs of that going on.

*Q: You went to Kenya when?*

FREEMAN: I left the Economic Policy Staff after a two-year stint, and I then went over to the Economic Bureau, where I was deputy in the Food Policy office. I did Uruguay Round negotiations. I was the State Department's member on the DCC (Development Coordinating Committee), which allocated PL480 Title I aid. And I did that for 18 months.

The economic counselor position in Kenya opened up in early September of '90, and I heard about it right away. It was unexpected; the incumbent went home on compassionate leave. It's a job I had always wanted to do. As long as I had been in the State Department, I had looked longingly at the economic counselor position in Kenya, as much as anything else because, compared to where else I had served in Africa, that was my reward post, that was my bennie. And so I started to lobby for that. The Economic Bureau didn't want to let me go, but finally did, so that I actually went to Kenya in January of '91.

*Q: And you were in Kenya from '91 to...*

FREEMAN: Ninety-one to '95.

*Q: What was the situation like in Kenya when you got there?*

FREEMAN: It's symbolized by the fact that one of my colleagues said to me that they were afraid that I would get bored, that three years in Kenya would be too long. Kenya was originally one of the only two real capitalist countries in Africa. Kenya had been our friend. Kenya was developing well. The big argument was: Was Kenya really about ready to join the NICs [newly industrialized countries] of Asia, or was it too far behind? Could you apply those standards? But what we didn't realize was what terribly desperate shape the economy really was in. And it was falling rapidly. I got there in January, and it became really apparent by September.

*Q: This is a question that's very pertinent today, because during the last year, the whole Asian economy seems to have collapsed. How is it that you can have people like yourself*



*and your predecessor and bankers and everybody else come to a country and think things are going along all right, and then all of a sudden they discover they're not? Can you explain this?*

FREEMAN: In my own case with Kenya, one of my excuses is that I was new, I was just getting to know the economy. I was very aware of the fact of the corruption, right from the beginning. The first major cable I wrote was on an airline scam, the Aniset deal, and that was in March. I was gone during that summer for a couple of months, back to the States on a set of family issues that took me away, and came back in September. We were alerted. I think everybody saw signs of an economy that was beginning to crumble and beginning to be in serious shape all along. Donors were getting more and more disaffected with Kenya, because the Kenyan government promised a lot and delivered very little. But donors were deceived for a long time, because they wrote wonderful program documents and project documents. They presented well. It's a very sophisticated place. Also, Kenyans themselves, particularly folks in the government, are very good at presenting a facade, and presenting to you what they would like you to believe, and having you think that's a full picture. They're very good at this, and it's only if you really dig that you get behind this facade.

The reason we were alerted was, a young AID economist did a series of computer runs on the statistics from the budget. The budget came out in June, but he was playing with this in late August and into September, to see what he could come up with. And what he came up with were some very serious indicators of a decline in the economy. [The] rate of capital accumulation was going down rapidly, for instance. That's the one that sticks in my mind.

So, shortly after I got back from the States, he came to me and he said, "I think this economy is in very serious trouble, and this is why." And he ran through the series of indicators with me. I agreed with him, so we went to the DCM, Michael Southwith, and said, "We think this economy is in much worse shape than anybody thought it was before." And he agreed. That was maybe the third week in October. And we agreed that something needed to be done.

The big donor meeting to allocate aid was coming up at the end of November, so we went around to talk to all of our fellow missions. The essence of our message was, "We're very uncomfortable with where this economy is going. Here are the economic indicators that show that it's going in a bad direction. There is clear evidence that the Kenyans have promised a lot and delivered little." A guy named David Gordon, who currently works for [the] ODC [Overseas Development Corporation], had written a brilliant political economy paper a year or so before, documenting the fact that the Kenyans promised a lot and delivered little, through the whole period of the '80s, and we used that as our intellectual backing. With the exception of the British, almost all the other key donor missions, not the Bank or the Fund, but bilateral missions, agreed with us.

Gary, the young AID economist, was convinced that if we suspended program assistance, (cash assistance for budget support, not project assistance - he didn't want to interrupt

projects - but the budget support, which they had already programmed as going into their budget), if you suspended that \$350 million, you'd get attention fast. And within four months or so, the Kenyan government might come around and begin to honor their promises. And that is what the delegations went to the donor meeting with.

The whole campaign that we orchestrated from the embassy was, locally, with our fellow diplomatic missions [and elsewhere], with Washington, asking them to intervene with diplomatic missions, with other governments in Europe through the capital-to-capital access, through a whole series of cables that documented this, and got all the delegations on board. But we still did not think that we would pull it off at that particular meeting. And so, when it came through, we were amazed and delighted.

What happened was, they suspended [the] \$350 million of program assistance. In the public, up-front, in the meeting room, the reason for this was lack of adherence to promised economic reform, and the way they'd get the money back was to start to do that. In the corridors and in the halls, all of the discussion was political, so that today people say that the aid suspension was done to try to force the government to come to terms with multi-party democracy. In fact, that's not true. That was in the corridors. It could not have been true, because consulting economic groups chaired by the World Bank traditionally have not been allowed to deal with political issues.

The Kenyan government's reaction to this, in the beginning of December, was two-fold. One, they arrested two of the worst of the culprits, in terms of corruption and also political suspicion, Miwadenougi, and put them in jail, but only for two weeks, and didn't charge them. Two, they repealed 2A, the section of the constitution that called for a one-party state, declared a multiparty state, and then underwent a transition that moved up to the elections, which took place in December of '92.

Unfortunately, the economic impact was to increase the economic disintegration throughout the year, when the campaigning was done for multiparty elections, because two major things happened. One, the level of degree of graft and corruption increased tremendously. It was the time of the Goldenberg scandal. Two, in connection with that, a great deal of money was created to finance those elections, both through shipping in- bills and by creating money through the banking system. So that, by the January after the elections, the economy of Kenya was in much worse shape than it had been the year before.

*Q: Had this been anticipated?. You know, you make an economic decision and it has repercussions in the political. And you say the corridor talk was political. Was this a battle that was going on in our embassy, too, political versus economic?*

FREEMAN: Yes. Yes, it was. I think it's always fought out to some extent, which comes first, chicken or egg, democracy or economic development and reform. It was not fought out with the passion it might have been, because the economic counselor and the political counselors got along with each other. I stayed out of the political realm virtually entirely. I used to say, I don't do politics or windows. One of the reasons I stayed out of it was

because there was such a battle going on between State and AID about who was going to do the democracy account (AID was paying for it, but State felt that the political sections in State should take the lead because they have the training, etc.), that I didn't want to get involved in that. And I had my hands full on the economic front.

I also had serious concerns and questions about this multi-party democracy and democratization portfolio per se, because I could never figure out what kind of democracy we were trying to export. Was it Minnesota? Was it Tammany Hall? What model of the U.S.? Was it Texas? Was it California? I thought that it was a little bit disingenuous to try to insist that other countries undertake a theoretical model that we couldn't identify for them in our own country. But the only way to deal with that, since it was *the* thing of the period, was to stay out of it. And so I stayed out of it pretty much. But I had my hands full on the economic front, and there were clear indications that that was serious.

The ambassador, Smith Hempstone, is a folk hero in Kenya for representing multi-party democracy and democratization and [having an] opposition, etc. And he was really beaten upon by the government [whose government, U.S. or Kenya?], and that was the big story going on in 1992. He was not interested in economics, and if one reads his book that was recently published, *Rogue Ambassador*, he hardly mentions economics in the whole book. So this whole economic initiative that we had undertaken, and continued to follow very carefully and built the groundwork for in '92, was completely ignored by the political types.

During the whole time I was in Kenya, starting probably right after the aid suspension, I wrote a cable every two weeks reporting on what had happened vis-à-vis the aid suspension, our economic initiative, reform, corruption, etc. It was pretty much an analytical cable, and it became widely read throughout the bureaucracy, to the point where I finally produced it [in] unclassified [form], because it was too difficult for people to use otherwise. It's a wonderful record of all the vicissitudes of that process as we went through it. It was hard to write, because it was very analytical, and the discipline of [doing it] every two weeks sometimes really got me down. But I'm really glad that I did it.

I was very involved in Kenya in the move toward economic reform, very deeply involved with journalists and others who were tracking down corruption. I felt that I was a part of that process. So I was both reporting on it, to the embassy and to Washington, and influencing decisions that were made in the government and by people who were influencing the government. [Again, whose government?] And it was very exciting.

Right after the elections, the economy collapsed further. The IMF could not renew its grant. And by March, Moi told the IMF and the World Bank to leave. He didn't want them anymore. He didn't want them meddling in his business. So between March and April, there was a lot of shuttle diplomacy that was going on back and forth, to try to convince him that was a bad plan. Eventually, Kim Jaycox, who was vice president of the World Bank for Africa, came and conferred with Moi. And what they agreed to was to

change the terms of the suspension just enough so that if Kenya undertook some reforms, they would get some money. The Kenyans had been objecting that they were supposed to go 100 percent before they got a cent back. They also had spent a great deal of time blaming the suspension for everything that went wrong in the country. So they gave it a lot more weight than it in fact had. \$350 million is not that much money in a country that size. So that broke the gridlock. The World Bank was able to make its first [loan since] suspension. And Mbabade, who's currently the finance minister, began to be able to move toward reform. They started to go after Goldenberg, which was the big corruption case, and Exchange Bank. And by August, they had a new governor of the Central Bank, Cheshirum, who is very serious.

*Q: This was August of...*

FREEMAN: August of '93. I went on home leave in August and September of '93, and by the time I got back, the attitude of the World Bank and the IMF people was totally different from when I left. They were optimistic. They felt that these guys, through the finance minister and the governor of the central bank, were serious about what they were doing, [and] maybe had some clout. We were all afraid that their heads would be chopped off if we favored them too much, because the government would react against them, but we were on the road to reform.

In fact, in an 18-month to two-year period, Kenya opened up its exchange rate so it was freely floating, took off price controls, let interest rates float, took off a number of agricultural controls, and in essence undertook all of the most basic economic policy reforms that have to be undertaken to open up an economy.

What Kenya did not do was get a real handle on corruption. That is true today, and that is Moi's issue of today. It's very difficult to do, because the big cases of corruption all lead right to the circle around the president. So he will cut off the hands of those who feed him, if he does that.

*Q: Were you under any constraints about reporting about Moi and his ties to these people?*

FREEMAN: No. Not particularly at all. I reported what I knew and what I saw, what I heard. The only constraint I had [occurred], in the end, when I was trying to make the cable unclassified. But then we'd do it in another way. It was very open in the press. When I arrived in Kenya in '91, nobody said Moi's name out loud, and the press was really restricted. By '93, it had opened up. The kinds of things the magazine, *The Economic Review*, was able to say, for instance, were truly amazing. Now they were very careful. Moi was still shutting down newspapers and confiscating issues, and some presses were raided, so that they had to shut down. But by and large, his government was moving against those publications who would have been in court in the U.S. for slander, and they were very egregious. But if you carefully documented it, or you made sure, as Peter Waretere, who edited *The Economic Review*, did, that if you didn't have all your facts or you hadn't verified them all, you couched what you were saying [carefully], it

went through. And so it was a very active and a very vocal environment by the time I left in '95.

*Q: When you left in '95, in your opinion, whither Kenya, economically?*

FREEMAN: I was quite optimistic, as I am still, because basic fundamental economic policy reforms had been undertaken.

The problem was that the investment response had not been nearly as fast as we had hoped it would be. That is the carrot: "You undertake these reforms, and foreign investors will come in. You need capital, and therefore this is what you have to do." But they weren't coming. And the reasons they weren't coming [included] corruption, an inefficient court system, and just fear, fear of getting embroiled in this. They were coming into the stock market, because you could run from the stock market fast if you had to. But the concrete, real, direct investment, to build factories or invest in things, was not being done. I was more optimistic then than I am now about infrastructure, because the last few years have been very hard on the infrastructure, and nothing really has happened to rebuild it.

The encouraging thing is, even given the very chaotic political year that Kenya has just been through in '97, ending with chaotic elections and Moi back in office, they never backtracked on the fundamental reforms that they undertook. They've still got a freely floating currency, they have free interest rates, they don't have controlled prices anymore, etc. But they've hit a plateau. It can't go any further, in terms of reforming and developing the economy, unless they grapple with corruption.

*Q: As far as investment, was public security a problem, too?*

FREEMAN: Yes.

*Q: One thinks of Kenya as not a place you want to go to, because there's a lot of thievery and attacks.*

FREEMAN: Just in Nairobi. Just like South Africa, where it's in Jo-burg. There are isolated cases in game parks and stuff, but that seems to me to be luck of the draw, kind of normal. There were riots on the coast, but the riots were definitely not targeted on tourists. The only couple of tourists who got involved got involved by inopportunity. That was Kenyan-on-Kenyan. So I think that companies consider the crime situation to be a deterrent, but it's way down the list of the things they consider. If there's money to be made, and the conditions are ripe for that, they'll work their way around the crime issue. And [you] can. I lived there for five years, and I had a couple of incidents, but nothing that was too serious. So crime is a problem, but it isn't top of the list. It is top of the list if you get into any kind of dispute and you don't have any fair protection from the courts or the legal system. You can be robbed blind by the police, which gets into crime, too. You are asked to make very significant, far-reaching bribes. And you can't do that because of the American Corrupt Practices Act. You fear that you're going to lose everything from

the exchange rate dropping. Basically, it's an insecure country because of corruption.

Then there's infrastructure. The infrastructure has collapsed in on itself. Until something is done about that, Kenya is infinitely less attractive for investment purposes.

*Q: When you left there in '95, what did you do?*

FREEMAN: Came back to Washington and went back to the Department as the director of the Economic Policy Staff Office. I stayed in Kenya as long as they would let me stay in Kenya, because I was deeply involved in all of this. I loved living in Kenya; it was a good time for me. And I lived in Kenya longer than I'd lived in any one place in my entire adult life, because it's been this itinerant career. But when I finally needed to go back, the one job I was really interested in was being director of the Economic Policy Staff Office. I was really pleased that that came through for me.

The office had begun to collapse in on itself. Most directors stayed for a short period of time, and went on to postings that they were waiting for. It turned out that I left after 10 months, too, but that was clearly not my intention. My intention was to rebuild that office as a service office to support all of the bureau in its economic work in Africa. And that's what I did for the year that I was there, until I came here.

I started work there in August. I went off to Africa on a trip at the end of September, early October. And in November, I was approached by CSIS here...

*Q: CSIS being...*

FREEMAN: It's the Center for Strategic and International Studies. About whether I was interested in becoming director of African studies here. And I told them I wasn't available, certainly not for a year or so, because I'd just undertaken this new job. But they wanted to interview me anyway. So, basically I came to interview here on a lark, knowing that retirement loomed at some point. I had six years left, something like that, because I was promoted in Kenya to OC level. But I came over to do this interview for practice. They were finishing their list, and they decided, after the interview, to make me an offer. So I returned in '95, went to work after home leave in August, and this offer was made in December. It was frankly just too good an offer to turn down, because it was a retirement job, and I was just barely eligible to retire with 20 and 50. I had said I could not possibly come before summer, and that seemed to rule me out, but when they called me after the interview, they said they would wait for me until summer.

I went through a fairly extensive polling exercise with my friends both within the Department and outside, saying, "What should I do? I am not ready to leave. I am happy in this job. I want to extend as the director of the Economic Policy Staff Office. But I'm going to have to do something when I retire from here, too, and I'm barely 50. Should I take this opportunity now when it's offered, or should I not?" And, to a person, they said, "Go for it. You won't get another chance like that."

*Q: All right.*

FREEMAN: That ends us, doesn't it.

*Q: It does.*

FREEMAN: You've taken us through the end.

*Q: Thank you. Thank you. This is great.*

*End of interview*