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Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR THOMAS MANN

Interviewed by: Joe B. Frantz, LBJ Library
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INTERVIEW

Q: This is an interview with Mr. Thomas Mann in his office in Washington on November 4, 1968. Joe B. Frantz is the interviewer.

Mr. Mann, tell us briefly about your career; how you came to be in the State Department; and something about your background.

MANN: I was born and reared in Laredo, went to public schools there, and graduated from high school.

Q: Did you grow up bilingual?

MANN: Yes, I think in my generation we all did. We spoke Spanish on the playgrounds and in the streets. We spoke English, of course, in school and in the home, in my case.

I went to Baylor University in 1929 and graduated five years later -- going most of the summers as well as the winters --with two degrees, one an A.B. and one an LL.B. In that period I married a Waco girl, Nancy Aynsworth, and we moved to Laredo to start practicing law in 1934. I practiced law for eight years.

Eight years later, after '34 -- whatever that was -- Pearl Harbor came and I wanted to do something besides practicing law. I went with two of my other young married friends to Corpus Christi to try to get in the Armed Forces. That was the nearest recruiting place, and was turned down on physical grounds.

Then later, I believe his name was Dean Ritchie of the Law School of the University of Virginia, came by my office and asked whether I would be willing to negotiate some tin contracts in Bolivia for the Army. He was looking for people who were bilingual and who knew a little civil law as well as common law. I said I would do that and came to Washington expecting to be sent to Bolivia on a rather temporary mission, and when I got here I was assigned to the State Department. I suppose I'm one of the few people in the world who never applied or never thought about coming into the State Department and who ended up there.

I started out, then, in Montevideo advising the Ambassador on how to freeze trade credits which had been built up by the Axis powers and consulting *and* advising, too, on other facets of economic warfare. Then I was brought back to Washington and stayed for a time here. Then I was sent to Caracas. Walter Donnelly was Ambassador there. I stayed there for awhile as political officer and petroleum attache.

Then I was brought back again to Washington and served as Deputy Assistant Secretary to Edward C. Miller, Jr., who was Assistant Secretary at that time under Mr. Truman. Dean Acheson was Secretary of State. I also served before that -- I forgot to mention -- under Nelson Rockefeller when he was Assistant Secretary of State and under Spruille Braden when he was Assistant Secretary of State. I was Braden's Special Assistant, somewhat more junior during the time of Nelson Rockefeller's time there.

Then, except for one assignment to Greece, I was assigned back and forth between the State Department and Latin America. In addition to Montevideo and Caracas, I served in Guatemala, El Salvador, and in Mexico -- the last two posts as Ambassador. I served in Greece as Counselor of Embassy. Twice, I think it was, I was Assistant Secretary in charge of Inter-American Affairs; once, as Assistant Secretary in charge of Economic Affairs; and once, as Under Secretary for Economic Affairs.

Q: You left the State Department then in '65 or '66?

MANN: '66.

Q: You're now with the Automobile Manufacturing Association?

MANN: Correct.

Q: You've had a varied career, most of it of course oriented toward Central and South America, and have seen quite a number of changes in that period. To get personal for a moment, when did you first meet Mr. Johnson? Was it here or on a junket?

MANN: I met Mr. Johnson in a casual way when he was a Congressman. I think perhaps he won't remember this, but [it was] on the train going between Washington and Texas. But that was a very casual acquaintance. I occasionally saw him, of course, when he was Senator, as many people did here in town, and formed a respect for him -- for his energy and dedication and ability.

Q: During that period of the '50's when he was Majority Leader, foreign relations were not his primary concern.

MANN: No, he was working, as I remember, primarily in military and other fields at that time.

Q: So you wouldn't have had much-

MANN: He wasn't on any of the committees in the Senate that I customarily appeared before during those years. I think the first serious private conversation I had with Mr. Johnson was in 1961, just before I was assigned to Mexico or shortly after -- I'm not sure which, whether it was before or after. We talked at that time about what the problems were in Mexico and what our policies ought to be. Then the next time I had occasion to see him was when I was brought back from Mexico as Assistant Secretary of State.

Q: Did you feel that he played any role in your appointment to Mexico as Ambassador?

MANN: I don't know.

Q: He didn't sound you out about it at that time? You just discussed the Mexican situation?

MANN: We did. We did not talk specifically about whether or not I should be appointed or whether or not he was going to recommend me for an appointment, as I remember.

Q: Now, one of the first things he did after he became President was to bring you back, right?

MANN: I might add that's not very meaningful. When the President talks to you, he doesn't always tell you exactly what he's thinking about; and I think that's normal and very desirable.

Q: Did he show a pretty good grasp of Mexican affairs at that time, or was he there to learn?

MANN: He understands Mexican affairs and did then very well, I think perhaps better than any President we've ever had in my twenty-four years in government.

Q: Do you think that's because of his next-door relationship or special affinity?

MANN: I think so. I've heard him talk about the time he taught school in-I think it was Pearsall, wasn't it?

Q: Cotulla.

MANN: In Cotulla, which is right near my town in LaSalle County. You can't get much closer to Mexico than that, really. Then of course the large Mexican-American population in the State of Texas, I think, gave him insights too. He understands them and likes them and is interested in them.

Q: While you were Ambassador to Mexico, did you have occasion to visit with him in either an official or unofficial capacity?

MANN: We corresponded some about problems and about trends when he was Vice President. I did write to him occasionally about some problem. For example, the Chamizal was a domestic political problem, as well as an international problem, and the Vice President encouraged me to go ahead with that.

Q: I want to come back to that in a minute.

MANN: I doubt that we would have attempted anything without that kind of moral support here at home base. I do have the impression that during the time I was in Mexico, he followed events in that country and in Latin America in general rather closely.

Q: You were the Ambassador when President and Mrs. Kennedy came to Mexico?

MANN: Yes, I was.

Q: Did the Vice President take any part at all in preparation for the visit?

MANN: I don't recall that. He certainly didn't come down to Mexico at that time. Mrs. Johnson came down later on a private visit with her brother, sort of a vacation. There were large advance parties that came down -- security people and that sort of thing -- and I don't remember whether the Vice President would have been interested in that. That was sort of routine work anyway.

Q: Where did the Chamizal -- the idea of settling this century-old dispute originate, as far as you can ascertain? With the department here, had there been intermittent pressure that was renewed?

MANN: Yes, the answer to the first question, or the last question is that the Chamizal had been discussed off-and-on for a hundred years and even more intensely for fifty years, I suppose, since the award, without any real progress having been made toward the solution. My own personal association with it began some years before -- I don't remember how many.

Q: Was that your desk here in Washington?

MANN: Yes, I suppose I was then Deputy Assistant Secretary, probably during Mr. Miller's time. The Counselor of the Mexican Embassy at that time was Vicente Sanchez-Gavito, and I remember we talked --

Q: Gavito?

MANN: Sanchez-Gavito. I remember we talked at that time about the possibility of some kind of an arrangement; and we went together, at that time, to El Paso and looked over the ground and explored a number of possible solutions. I explored with the people in El Paso what their wishes and desires might be.

That effort came to naught for two reasons, really. There was opposition on the part of the U. S. Boundary and Water Commission -- of that time -- to any settlement. The Mexican government backed away from active negotiations, I suppose, because of domestic political problems there in the country. So we dropped it.

Q: What held it for so long? Largely local sentiment, or unconcern?

MANN: It was an issue highly charged with emotion. It was very difficult for either side really to talk about the merits of the issue without getting involved in some of the emotional issues about what had gone on in the past, and who was right and who was wrong, and what the juridical aspects of the question were, and that sort of thing. We really succeeded by not talking about the past and beginning to look toward the future.

When I was assigned to Mexico, we had done some preliminary sounding on a very informal basis and without committing anybody between the foreign office and the Embassy. So when President Kennedy came, the Mexican government let it be known that they were now prepared to negotiate some kind of a settlement. The two Presidents, President Lopez—Mateos and President Kennedy, touched on this in their conversations in a very general way. The two Presidents authorized Mr. Manuel Tello, at that time the Foreign Minister, and myself to see what we could do to come up with concrete proposals for a settlement. We started work. We worked quietly and fortunately without any publicity -- otherwise I don't think it would have been possible to reach any settlement --

for more than a year. We drew maps. I went to El Paso three times and consulted with people there.

Q: Whom did you consult with in El Paso? Who had to be --

MANN: The first man that I went to simply on the basis of personal friendship -- was Sam Young, who was chairman of the board of the El Paso National Bank. He got together his board of directors and they included people from many sectors of El Paso life -- lawyers; Judge Hardy, I remember, was probably the American, who had spent --

Q: Is this Norman Hardy?

MANN: Norman Hardy, who had spent most time studying the legal aspects of the issue and had been very much, prior to that time, opposed to any concessions. He was on the board. I remember a real estate man who probably had some property in the area -- and others.

Q: I was going to ask you -- the real estate people as a group felt they had a stake in this?

MANN: Yes. I think the feelings were very mixed in the beginning, and I didn't try to sell the people at El Paso any particular plan. I laid out a map and asked them whether they thought -- if a settlement could be reached by redrawing the lines in the way shown on that map -- that would be good or bad for their hometown. That's the way we started.

Q: You said you quit paying so much attention to the past and worked on the present. In your maps did you go back to historical maps, historic lines of the boundary, or were you just working on a compromise basis?

MANN: Well, the map that we started working with showed the river -- I think it was an aerial photograph as it then was, and the boundary as it then was -- with Cordova and the Chamizal tract; and superimposed on that were possible new boundary lines which gave part of Cordova Island, which was Mexican territory, to the U. S. in exchange for land farther down the river and which gave a substantial part of the Chamizal to Mexico.

The question I think in the minds of all of us -- all Americans at that time -- was whether the net result of redrawing the line would be detrimental or beneficial to the people of El Paso, first of all, because they were the ones directly involved. So we talked about many facets of it and after that, I went to the El Paso Chamber of Commerce. I went to the county officials, the city officials, quietly -- no publicity. We talked about it some more and got their ideas about what an acceptable settlement might be like. Then toward the end, of course, we even talked with the people who resided in the Chamizal area.

Q: They were primarily Mexican—Americans, were they not?

MANN: Yes, they were.

Q: Did this involve, then, a resettlement program?

MANN: Yes, it did.

Q: Most of them did choose to resettle rather than go into the Mexican side?

MANN: I think all of them did.

Q: Did they show any opposition—the settlers themselves -- outside the inconvenience of moving, did they have any kind of historic or nationalistic feeling on it?

MANN: Yes. Toward the end, the people who were most vocal in their opposition to it were the Mexican—Americans in El Paso, strangely enough.

Q: How do you account for this?

MANN: Largely because some of them lived in the area, I think.

Q: When you go into a city like El Paso and you're proposing to --

MANN: I must say -- to leave that last statement in balance—that the LULACS and other organizations supported this from the beginning. I'm talking about a local situation.

Q: Your opposition isn't organized opposition?

MANN: I met with a group, I suppose two or three hundred people, who lived in the area; and there was some organized opposition to it on a small basis. I remember we debated before the press in Spanish -- because not many of them spoke English—what the issues were and why we thought we should make a settlement. My impression was -- we did not take a vote -- my impression was at the end of that two hour discussion that we had more than 50 percent of the people with us. I can't be sure of that, but that was my impression, and in the town of El Paso itself, I think a much larger percentage.

Then on the basis of that, once El Paso was convinced that this was in their interest, Judge Hardy went with me to Austin and we talked with the Governor and with the Attorney General whom I found in Laredo.

Q: This would be Governor Connally?

MANN: Governor Connally; he was recovering I remember from an operation and received us in the hospital and gave us his support. The Attorney General likewise. Then I went to Houston and talked with representatives of the press -- the Texas press -- from Dallas and Ft. Worth and Waco and other places, as well as Houston, and showed them the maps. All of this was done without any publicity. I think that's the most interesting thing! We didn't exacerbate prejudices and feelings until we were pretty close to an

agreement. We got a lot of support there. In fact, there was no opposition to it in Texas. Then once Texas was convinced that this was the right thing to do, there was no difficulty up here in the Senate.

Q: Did you settle primarily on a basis of right, or did you have some other benefits that accrued?

MANN: I sold it primarily on the basis that the U. S. had entered into a solemn treaty with Mexico, ratified by the Senate fifty years ago, wherein we had agreed to accept the arbitration award, I think the phrase is, "final and binding and without appeal." I expressed the opinion that we had every reason to live up to our treaty obligations. We live in a contract society, and the U.S. above all has a great deal to gain by encouraging a respect for law and respect for contracts, and that this issue was more important than the few acres of land involved. And it wasn't a big tract.

Q: Did the Mexican government, or the Mexican negotiators, feel that they were having to make certain concessions in this also that were equivalent?

MANN: Yes sir. That was really the hardest part, aside from our domestic political problems, that was of course the hardest part.

Q: Did they have the same selling problem in Juarez that you had in El Paso?

MANN: They had the same emotions -- probably even greater emotions -- to deal with than we did here at home, so that it was a problem of negotiating a fair agreement on the basis of give—and—take. We didn't get everything we wanted, and they didn't get everything they wanted. We negotiated hard on that, and I think what came out of it was something which was good for Juarez, good for El Paso, and good for Chihuahua, and the State of Texas.

Q: I think they're going to get a nice park there one of these days.

MANN: Yes, I think they will.

Q: What did happen? Had the Mexicans, as well as the United States, just come to that point of mutual respect where they thought something final ought to be done? Why did it come to a head at this particular time? I'll agree with you it was fifty years overdue, but why now?

MANN: I think we had an extraordinarily dedicated and talented Foreign Minister who thought that this should be done, and I felt strongly that it should be done in the broader interests of both countries. We are neighbors, and this had been a thorn in our side exploited by nationalists and Communists and everybody else for fifty years. A constant source of friction in relations we thought ought to be removed. There are a number of other small tracts, up and down the river, that I'm hopeful can be settled too. The title to those is in dispute. They're not really different from the Chamizal. Occasioned by river

changes and the juridical question is whether the changes were abrupt or whether they were gradual. Sometimes these changes are neither all that abrupt nor all that gradual and then you get into courts. None of these, fortunately, are surrounded with the same emotions that were built up in this hundred-year old debate.

Q: And particularly between two cities—

MANN: Between the two cities, between the two states, and between the two countries.

Q: Then you came back to Washington after that was settled. Did Mr. Johnson send for you personally? What brought you back?

MANN: He telephoned me and asked me to come up to Washington. This was a few days after he took office.

Q: The press indicated that this meant a more realistic policy toward Latin America. Were press reports correct, or would you care to comment on that?

MANN: I don't know whether the word realistic tells you very much. I hope I'm realistic. I hope also that Mr. Johnson and I shared a belief that ideals have their place in American foreign policy. It's really a question of balance. We're living in an age, I think, of revolution. We've been seeing the same kinds of disturbances in Latin America for twenty -- five years that we've seen here in the U. S. A. in the last few years.

Q: We've finally imported them.

MANN: I think the question is how the U. S. should deal with a wide range of problems; how we can best help to promote Democratic growth; how we can best help promote economic and social progress in the area. I suppose the words realist and pragmatist *and* that sort of thing stem from perhaps a difference of opinion on whether we should, in effect, espouse revolution without defining what kind of revolution we're talking about. I think in the Latin American mind, one who talks about revolution is understood to be saying that he favors violence in the streets and disorders. I thought we should favor orderly evolution and be careful of what we said and orient our program so that that would be made clear. If there was a difference, perhaps that was it.

Q: One of the first things you ran into was the Panamanian difficulty. Would you care to outline that and give a critique of just what went on?

MANN: I think it was a very few days, perhaps less than seven, after I had taken charge.

Q: They didn't give you much time to unpack, did they?

MANN: The shooting started in Panama. The President called a meeting -- a number of us there -- and talked on the telephone with the President of Panama, and sent Mr. Vance

and Mr. Martin and myself and one or two others down to see if we couldn't arrange a cease-fire with the President of Panama.

Q: Had you known Mr. Vance or Mr. Martin previously?

MANN: I had known Mr. Martin and I had known Mr. Vance for a very short while. I had known Mr. Martin for a good long while. He was the foreign service officer. I knew him in London.

Q: Were these two picked by Secretary Rusk or did Mr. Johnson select the men, do you know?

MANN: What I don't know is what Mr. Rusk said to Mr. Johnson or Mr. Johnson said to Mr. Rusk. All I know is that Mr. Rusk was, of course, there at the meeting and concurred in everything that was done. But I think the President was deeply involved.

Q: So we left you on your way to Panama.

MANN: It's a rather romantic story, I think. We got to Panama and went to General O'Meara's house, who has since retired -- a very fine man.

Q: Where did you go, to the Canal Zone or to Panama?

MANN: The Canal Zone. We landed in the Canal Zone, and the first question was how we could get to the National Palace from where we were through the disorders. The Panamanian government insisted that it wasn't safe to go directly. It wasn't a very great distance to the Palace, a few blocks; that we would have to fly --

Q: I was there in the beginning of '65 and saw some of that area which was still gutted and un-repaired.

MANN: That it would be much safer to go to the Panama City's commercial airport which is some twelve or fifteen miles away. So Mr. Vance and I alone went to the other airport and we were met there by some of the officers and men of the Guardia Nationale. They put on quite a show-I think, myself, designed to impress us that this was a very serious situation and that not only our lives were in danger, but the Canal Zone was in danger and that the Panamanian people were determined to take over.

Q: What kind of a show -- you mean by the number of people that turned out or --

MANN: Well, they were heavily armed and we were told to go into a room so that we would be safe. Then they telephoned to the first checkpoint to see whether it was safe to go to the checkpoint -- all of this theater, which I think was laid on. I didn't feel in any great danger.

Q: Good staging.

MANN: Good staging -- all theater, to prepare us, I think, for the talks. Then at each checkpoint, the soldiers would come up and mutter something about the gringos or something. I think that was part of the theater. We would go to the next checkpoint and repeated the same procedure. Then when we got to the Palace, we were asked to sit down by a large plate glass window which opened out into the square. People seemed to congregate immediately -- and again, I think, by a prearranged plan in front of the Palace -- and began to throw rocks and yell and scream at the plate glass window so that we had difficulty in talking above the noise. I thought it was rather strange that we would sit there by the noise and by the window instead of a place where we could have talked more quietly.

Q: Was the window within reach of the people's throwing arms?

MANN: Oh, yes. The rocks were bouncing off. I don't mean to be overdramatic, but it was noisy. I repeat: I don't think it was dangerous. I think this was all theater. We talked then, and the President was very intransigent and referred in the opening sentences, I think, to the Chamizal settlement and said that he was glad that I was there because I had arranged the settlement of the Chamizal. I said to him that the situation was exactly the opposite -- 180 degrees opposite -- that in the Chamizal the U. S. was living up to a treaty obligation, and that in Panama what they were proposing to do was to disregard any obligation; that I thought the cases were poles apart and that what we did in the Chamizal supported respect for treaties, including the one we had with Panama. We started from that and we had to go back to the airport the long way around to report to the President on that conversation. We received instructions the next morning and relayed those to the Foreign Minister the next morning at a hotel near the Zone. We didn't have to go back through that long route.

Q: It's a long way to get downtown.

MANN: I'm convinced myself -- I was then and still am -- that the crisis was largely inspired by the government for domestic political purposes in the hope that the United States would become frightened and cave under that kind of pressure. We took casualties. About a hundred soldiers were shot. I think only two died, and perhaps one of those as a result of a fall, but there were a good many casualties. I don't remember the exact number. Things were rather tense for awhile. But after two or three days when it became clear, I think, to Mr. Chiari that we didn't want to negotiate with a pistol at our head, and under pressure of that kind. Well, the National Guard was called out and restored order in about two hours. I have no doubt they could have done that in the beginning had they wanted to.

Q: The Panamanian National Guard is really a fairly effective local force, then?

MANN: Yes, it's an effective local force. The proof of it is they had no difficulty in restoring order once they finally moved. They don't seem to have much difficulty in restoring order now.

Q: No, I noticed that. Do you think that there was a serious feeling that they might get some real concessions out of the Canal Zone?

MANN: Yes. I think they hoped for a series of commitments which would, in effect, I have greatly impaired our position there -- very sweeping concessions, which we did not make.

Q: What kind of concessions?

MANN: My memory is not that good. I'd have to go back and read the messages back and forth, and once you've done that you still have to interpret what they really mean. But they were obviously after concessions revolving around sovereignty and perpetuity.

Q: Have they shown any greater desire to cooperate because of the threat of a second canal through some other area, or have they felt pretty sure that they would win?

MANN: I don't know. I've been away two and a half years and, as you know, Mr. Bob Anderson negotiated a draft treaty and I think he could answer that better than I can.

Q: We'll wait on that then. Were you involved in the Santo Dominican crisis?

MANN: Yes sir, I was.

Q: Would you care to detail that -- how it erupted? It followed your line of peaceful evolution as against violent revolution.

MANN: There were numbers of basic issues in the Dominican crisis. We had, first, a question which divided Americans here at home, on whether, in effect, the U. S. had any security stake in another Communist regime taking over the island of Espanola. I think everybody agreed that whoever controlled the Dominican Republic would also control Haiti. I thought we could not in the interest of our own peace and security -- particularly after the experience in October of 1962 -- permit another Soviet military base, on the island Hispaniola. Now aside from that question, there was a parallel question about whether there was any Communist danger. Some people thought that Bosch was a liberal man who was well-motivated and who could be depended on to control the Communist paramilitary components of the rebel movement; and that if the rebels came to power, the Communists would not emerge within a reasonably short time as the real leaders of the country. Now, that is a matter of subjective judgment. I won't go into detail about that now. That was one issue.

Another issue was whether the U. S. was frustrating the will of the Dominican people. If Bosch was a popular hero, was our policy, in effect, preventing them from making a choice? I suppose the critics of the policy were convinced—in fact I know they were convinced -- that Bosch was the choice of the people and that this was a good revolution that was coming about. We were convinced that Bosch, while at one time very popular,

had lost a lot of his popularity as a result of the way he handled himself when he was President.

Q: You mean a lack of strength while he was President?

MANN: Just a lack of minding the store, running the affairs of the country well. He didn't run them well. He was a very bad administrator, more of a poet than a politician. In a free election Balaguer, assuming Balaguer and Bosch were the two candidates, we thought Balaguer would beat him roughly two to one. That was the unanimous opinion of the intelligence community here, some of the press statements to the contrary. So the President took the position, and I think very correctly, that this was something that the people ought to decide in free elections. We were not there to impose any kind of a system, or any particular ruler on them; that they ought to decide in free elections.

When the elections were held, I think a lot of people must have been quite surprised that Balaguer -- in spite of the fact that there was a third candidate siphoning off votes from him -- did win almost two to one. The reason for that is, of course, that revolutionaries -- I use that word in quotes -- are usually a small minority, and very vocal. They know how to manipulate the mass media, but the great majority of the Dominican people wanted order and peace, and that's what they voted for.

Q: How do you account for the fact that in Latin America so often in the military, or a proportion of the military, is quite extreme leftists, whereas in our country and some other countries, the military tends so much toward the right? I will grant you that a lot of Latin American militarists are extreme right also, but the Communists always seem to have a fair proportion of military support. This isn't a bunch of poets altogether.

MANN: In the past that has not been true of the area as a whole. There are exceptions. A small part of the Dominican army rebelled, and certainly were led by a leftist, [Col. Francisco] Caamano [Deno]. But looking at the area as a whole, I would say that the Latin American military is much more professional now than it was twenty-five years ago and much more nonpolitical than it was twenty-five years ago.

That's the history of the past. I wouldn't want to say how it would be in the future, because the Officer Corps comes from the people. They come from humble origins. They go to military academies and work their way up through the ranks. They're subject to more or less the same propaganda and the same ideas that everybody else hears. I think we'll probably see more and more Latin American military officers having decided views about political issues and doctrines of various kinds. I wouldn't be surprised to see nationalism become a big factor.

Q: We have the recent examples of Argentina and Peru, for instance.

MANN: There are many currents that work down there, and they cut across each other. It's a very complex thing and we're talking about a great number of people in a great number of countries. I think it's very hard to generalize. It's hard to predict about the

future. I wouldn't try to do that, but in the past they have considered themselves the guardians of the independence and the order of the hemisphere. Most people would say that this makes them ultraconservative. I don't share that view myself, but I think they're, on the whole, a pretty decent group of people. Like all large groups of people, you find the good and the bad amongst them.

Q: Back to the Dominican situation. At what point did the President decide to order the troops in?

MANN: You remember that we were talking more about the Communist issue which was the decisive one toward the end. The crisis didn't start on that issue. This was another issue between the critics and those of us involved in that crisis.

The U. S. has an obligation to protect American lives and property abroad. As the shooting became more widespread in the capital city and order began to break down, a good many Americans asked to be evacuated, and a good many foreigners, too -- people who were neither Dominican nor American. They gathered at the Ambassador Hotel in the outskirts of the city near the sea; and we actually evacuated a thousand people, mostly women and children, before any soldier ever set foot on Dominican soil. What happened was that both the rebel side and the government side told us they could no longer be responsible for the safety of anybody moving from the evacuation point to the Port of Haina, which was away from town. Because our orderly evacuation without any military presence, except for the ships offshore was interrupted by this, it was decided to land about four hundred and fifty men to secure a little polo field as a pad for the helicopters to land on. We couldn't get to the main port. We couldn't get to llama. So the only way we could take these people out was over the open roadstead -- the beach -- and to do that we had to take them out in helicopters to ships lying offshore.

Q: So you, to a certain extent, had a protective function at the outset? I presume the question was discussed at the time of what this would do toward provoking Latin American nationalists feelings against the United States?

MANN: Yes, before you leave this other point. Because it was a big issue, I do want to make clear that in the first hours of the crisis and the first days of the crisis, everybody in the U. S. government hoped that it would not be necessary to intervene at all with troops - - that is, to put troops ashore. Whether that's intervention or not is a technical question. There was good reason for hoping that this would never become necessary because the Dominican military, the bulk of the armed forces, were anti-rebel. It was only when it became apparent that they were leaderless and unable to pull themselves together and that the whole thing appeared to be crumbling, that the President decided to move troops in.

This was later in the period, and very often statements that the President made, at a certain time period after things had changed at a different phase of the crisis, were applied to some earlier or some later phase. Of course, this is an old political trick, but I don't think any serious student of the crisis would be fooled by that.

You approach a crisis of this kind in stages. You don't foresee exactly how things are going to develop. You can't do that. So you decide what has to be decided at the time it has to be decided and you hope for the best. Then as events go on, the situation changes. Then you have to take other decisions so that the statements that the President makes ought to be related in time to the period of the crisis in which he made them. Then they fit together and hold together very well. If you insist on taking a statement out of its time context, which was done to confuse people here, this I think presents a very confused story about what was going on.

Q: Did you make any conscious attempt to nullify the charges of over-reacting?

MANN: Oh, yes, but emotions here at that time -- people didn't have exactly open minds on the subject. Starting in 1964 when I first came back, it was perfectly obvious to me that what you might call the "Kennedy wing" of the Democratic party was out to attack, and they were looking for any basis of attack. It wasn't a question of sitting down and rationally talking in an objective way about some problem. When people get that emotionally involved in any issue, they don't listen very well. They don't hear very well.

Q: Did you go to Santo Domingo during the crisis?

MANN: Yes, I was there.

Q: What did you do?

MANN: We went down and tried to arrange for a cease-fire.

Q: Who's "we"?

MANN: Cy Vance and McGeorge Bundy and, I think, the Assistant Secretary at that time. I was then Under Secretary of Economic Affairs. Vance and I worked primarily on Imbert and the military; McGeorge Bundy worked primarily on the rebel side, trying to find some basis for bringing them together. That was not a successful effort.

Q: How do you approach an effort like that?

MANN: You approach an effort by trying to identify what the issues are and then trying to find a reasonable ground where both sides can meet. The issues were all couched, on the rebel side, in the usual language of democracy, but in my opinion what was really at stake was which side was going to control the military and the police -- which side was to exercise the real power. I became convinced after two or three days that nothing would satisfy the rebels except control of the armed forces and the police. I thought I knew that this was something the anti-rebel side would not yield on. So I came back home a little early.

Q: So you had two rigid sides there?

MANN: Two rigid sides. And that was I think the real issue -- the power, who was going to control the power.

Q: Was that just too early in the game --

MANN: That was not ever debated. What was debated was whether Bosch was still the constitutional President, and whether the Constitution that he ruled under was still in force, or whether the other Constitution that had replaced it after he was overthrown was in force. You get involved in all these juridical arguments, but what lay behind all that was this one central issue.

Q: Did you have any direct dealings with Bosch or was he, to use the current phrase, on the outside of the ballpark during most of it?

MANN: Well, I don't think anybody thought I would have a great deal of influence with Bosch or the Communists and I stayed away from all of them.

Q: Did others in the State Department work with Bosch or try to?

MANN: Yes.

Q: Directly?

MANN: McGeorge Bundy worked with him and Vaughn worked with him, I think. I think Vaughn went with Mac on that -- Jack Vaughn, who was then Assistant Secretary. Martin, who was a former Ambassador, worked. There were a large number of people working on it.

Q: Let's go back to when you were Ambassador to Mexico. You were there during the Cuban missile crisis in October of '62. Did this take any particular explanation to the Mexican government of our country's policy?

MANN: Oh yes, it did. I had instructions, which were carried out, about what our position was and what we hoped the Mexican government's position would be.

Q: Was there a real concern in Mexico about the possibilities, or were they pretty casual about it?

MANN: No, I think there was genuine concern. It came at an awkward time for them. The President of Mexico was coming back from a trip to the Far East and, if I recall, the Foreign Minister was with him when the crisis broke. I dealt with the acting Foreign Minister.

Q: Who was that -- do you remember?

MANN: Gorostiza -- very fine man; and he was telephoning his President in the air and on the ground, wherever he could catch him -- for a period of a day or two. Of course we were telephoning here back to Washington. The Mexican position on that was very forthright. Once they were convinced that the missiles were there -- that they were offensive missiles -- they supported us. They naturally wanted to be sure; they wanted to see what evidence we had.

Q: They did tend to believe the intelligence photographs though that showed the --

MANN: Yes, I think that's really what convinced everybody -- those photographs.

Q: That these were not something doctored or --

MANN: No, they couldn't very well have been doctored. A responsible government wouldn't dare do a thing like that, and everybody accepted that these were actual photographs of missile sites. That is what convinced everybody that this was not a maneuver or a trick of some kind.

Q: Did you have much of a problem in the Dominican crisis working with the other Latin American governments? I know that you enlisted the cooperation of the OAS in this.

MANN: Mr. Bunker was Ambassador to the OAS at that time. We had a bare two-thirds majority of the votes in support all the way through. The Latins were divided on this, one-third opposed, and two-thirds supported. We needed a two-thirds majority under the charter to take action.

Q: Did you shift out of the position of Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs to the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs because it was a promotion or because of some policy change?

MANN: My impression is that the President wanted me on the seventh floor, but here again, I think he's the best one to answer that.

Q: What change in duties did this bring on?

MANN: It was a different job. The economic job, whether it's Assistant Secretary or Under Secretary, is worldwide and you deal with the whole range of our economic relations with other nations in the world: trade; to some extent, aid policy; the GATT. We had in those days, I suppose it's still true, never less than four negotiations for civil aviation agreements going on simultaneously. So the whole gamut -- the commodity field -- everything that has to do with everything economic in the world.

Q: Did involvements like the Dominican Republic and the one in Viet Nam -- did these hamper your economic negotiations?

MANN: We had a staff and, while I worked on the Dominican crisis. I stayed in my office and kept up with what was going on in the other field, too.

Q: No, I was thinking more not so much an internal problem, as the external one of dealing with some country that --

MANN: An Under Secretary or an Assistant Secretary does not always actually negotiate himself. You couldn't do that. The job is essentially to make sure that our negotiators are in the correct position and to make judgments on counter-proposals and things of this kind, and then to present recommendations to the Secretary and the Under Secretary about how the negotiations should end. That work had to go on. During the crises that come along, what happens is that people sleep two or three hours at night and they just work around the clock, get very little sleep.

Q: I was wondering whether some country would be loathe to work out some sort of contract negotiation because of our position with regard to a particular concern.

MANN: No, that kind of a question never arose.

Q: Would you care to comment on why you left the State Department?

MANN: Yes, I don't mind. I left the State Department for the same reason I explained to the President. I had always intended to retire, for many reasons, when I was fifty years of age. I did send in my first letter of resignation when President Kennedy was President and I was Ambassador to Mexico. A large part of that was just plain fatigue. The foreign service is a grind. In top jobs, in the department, and in the field, it's necessary to spend ten to twelve hours a day in the office. Then on top of that, you have to go out every night to at least two parties. When you keep up a pace like that for twenty years, you come to the point where you want to see your family, see your friends, and live a normal life. I got very tired of the social end of it, not the working end of it. That always fascinated me. The reason I left at the time I did though was sheer physical fatigue and doctor's recommendation that if I didn't slow down, I wouldn't be around very long.

Q: There is the cliché that I've heard all my life, probably you too, that it really doesn't matter who's the Secretary of State or President -- that there's a State Department bureaucracy that carries on regardless. Would you care to comment on that?

MANN: I don't think that's accurate. The President sets the policy. They set them in different degrees. President Johnson is a man -- President Truman likewise was a man -- who personally followed the pros and the cons and made a lot of the decisions. General Eisenhower, with a different background, was a man who relied a great deal on staff for the recommendations, but he nevertheless made the decisions. I'm sure it isn't correct that the bureaucracy or the foreign service actually makes policy. An energetic knowledgeable Secretary of State has no difficulty in controlling decisions. He has all the power. All he has to do is control it. Now if he's not aware of what's going on -- and it's a fast moving world -- decisions nevertheless have to be made on those by deadlines. A

Secretary of State who doesn't organize himself in such a way that he knows what's going on may lose control. But certainly Cordell Hull, John Foster Dulles -- people of that kind never had any difficulty in controlling policy.

Q: You think Rusk has stayed on top of policy?

MANN: Yes, I do. I don't think Rusk interests himself in as many questions -- this is a matter of how own individual preference -- as other secretaries I've known. He doesn't cover as wide a spectrum.

Q: He concentrates on the few that interests --

MANN: On fewer problems.

Q: What does he do? Leave the --

MANN: This is a matter of personality and individual preference.

Q: He leaves the other problems to the Assistant Secretaries?

MANN: I wouldn't say that. If he wants to come in on a problem, he's briefed every day. He has printed material and everything else telling him what's going on, and if he wants to get involved in something, he does. But, obviously, nobody can become involved in everything. There is a matter of selectivity and a matter of selecting your staff and giving them general guidelines as to what you want done. Now, maybe this is what you call a cliché. Maybe it reflects the fact that no Secretary of State can decide personally every question that comes up, and I think that's true. I think that's true even more so of the President. But to say that you can't control the direction and all the important decisions is not right.

Q: It does make a difference. Do you subscribe to the theory that President Johnson was a tyro on foreign affairs and lacked the overall familiarity with foreign relations because he had been so tied up in domestic affairs as Senate Leader -- lacked, say, the familiarity that people like Eisenhower and Kennedy had?

MANN: Did you use the word "tyro"? I'm not sure I understand -- what does that mean?

Q: That he came rather cold to foreign affairs -- had to grow up in them.

MANN: No, I thought, myself, President Johnson's handling of foreign affairs was very professional and very well done. I had no disagreements with his foreign policy during all the time that I was there. [He had] an extraordinary perception of what the real issues were. There isn't all that difference between domestic politics and foreign politics. Foreign affairs is essentially international politics. Now, it's true you have to understand a different set of people and how they're to react to problems, but it belongs nevertheless in the arena of politics. In my experience people who are well-trained in domestic politics

make much better Ambassadors, for example, than somebody, let's say, who comes out of the cement business or something else and has never had contact with people. So I would say Johnson was as well prepared for foreign affairs as any President we ever had, as much experience in political affairs, domestic and foreign, as anybody we ever had.

Q: Were you involved in the development of the Mekong Delta in your position as Under Secretary for Economic Affairs?

MANN: No, I didn't really get into that because the Vietnam thing was handled by a special group. I had very little to do with Vietnam.

Q: Let's go back, Mr. Mann. You went to Guatemala as counselor to the Embassy in 1955. This was right after the overthrow of the Communist-oriented regime, right?

MANN: Yes. Two or three weeks after. I came from Greece.

Q: Did that present special problems?

MANN: Well, the Castillo government, the man who overthrew Arbenz, was riding the crest of popularity at that time. He had a lot of support from the people. The biggest demonstration that local people said ever took place, took place spontaneously to welcome him into the city. The problems were those of helping him organize an economic program and a social program to deal with problems of the country. We worked, during the time I was there, largely in the economic and social field.

Q: Would you care to comment on whether the revolution against Arbenz was CIA-directed, inspired?

MANN: No, I wouldn't comment on that even if I knew, because I don't think one should. But I will say that I really don't know a great deal about the pre-revolutionary period because I was in Greece for a year while all of this was going on.

Q: Is there conflict between the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department? Do they work independently of each other, or do they try to fuse their efforts?

MANN: You know, this is the same kind of question we were talking about a minute ago. If you have a strong Assistant Secretary or a strong Ambassador or a strong Secretary of State, there is no problem with control. It's where people abdicate their responsibility that the troubles come. I never had any trouble in controlling any bureau or embassy that I was in charge of, and that goes for the CIA. I think they're a very valuable service, and their main function is information gathering. If one were to imagine where we would be without the CIA, then I think you'd begin to see things in perspective. Of course, they're never able to publicize their successes, so people get a distorted view.

Q: Their secrecy makes them suspect of course.

MANN: But it's the best intelligence operation, I believe, in the world, and this is something vital to our own security. We simply must know what other countries are doing that affect our vital interests and maybe even our survival. They do a superb job in that. I think it's a mistake to get them involved in political action too much. I think, for example, I would never vote myself a large-scale covert operation of the kind that took place in the Bay of Pigs, because I don't think that suits the American character and our political system. I think whatever we have to do we ought to do out in the open and we ought to do with our own forces.

Q: You were in Mexico at the time of the Bay of Pigs?

MANN: No, I was on my way to Mexico at the time of the Bay of Pigs, but I had served four years as Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs before the Nixon-Kennedy race. I think it was in September or October just before the elections in November of that year that I was brought in charge of Inter-American Affairs.

Now, when I came in there, I learned for the first time in about September-October that there was this force in being -- being trained to invade -- and I wasn't able to get a decision or a clear idea about whether the new Administration wanted to scrub it or to see it through. My personal opinion -- I left on April 1, and my personal opinion is that what happened was that we fell between the stools and we couldn't decide one way or the other. That's a long story.

Q: Things had almost gone too far to pull back, I gather?

MANN: They had never gone too far if the Administration had wanted to pull back. You could disband the force, and that would have been better than putting them on the beach and leaving them there, in my opinion. I think we did the worst thing. We fell between the stools. I would personally think that, having gone that far, we should have seen it through. I think that it wasn't a bad plan. If we had seen it through, it would have worked, but that might have required some U. S. support. We were not prepared to do that. We were not used on all kinds of definitions and questions of what was intervention, what was legal, did we have an inherent right of unilateral self-defense -- all these very technical questions. While these were being debated, we lost out.

Q: Do you think sometimes that we are over-solicitous of the feelings of our Latin American neighbors when a crisis arises and it hampers our acting intelligently for fear of criticism?

MANN: Yes, I do. I think that we would get respect and support if we did what was right, assuming always that we are acting in a reasonable way and in a lawful way. I think the worst thing we can do is to do what we did at the Bay of Pigs. I want to say parenthetically I don't think President Johnson had any control over this. I wasn't in the White House at that time, and I don't think this was anything that he was responsible for at all. I think it was indecision, largely due to the fact that there was a new team there. The President had just taken office.

Q: He had a situation and didn't know what to do with it.

MANN: That's right. I don't think he had time to really understand what all the issues were.

Q: Along that line, I spent our summer of '65 in Chile. Then the Dominican Crisis -- and I remember one Chilean professor said to me, "Of course I am denouncing you, but I think you're doing the right thing."

MANN: This was, I'm sure, the sentiment amongst many, many Latin Americans. I've never seen our prestige as low as it was after the Bay of Pigs, not because we helped put the men ashore, but because we failed. That's important.

Q: To move ahead, were you involved at all in the sort of Chileanization of the American copper interests, either when you were Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs or later Under Secretary for Economic conditions?

MANN: Yes -- involved on the periphery of that. The negotiations, of course, were carried out by the companies and the Chilean government.

Q: What was your capacity -- mainly advisory?

MANN: My memory isn't too sharp on that. The question [of] the relationship and tax structure and that sort of thing between the Chilean government and the Chilean copper industry has come up so many times over the last twenty years that I have difficulty --

Q: It kind of runs together.

MANN: Yes, it does.

Q: Do you have the same problem with the Peruvian fishing rights and Peru's and Ecuador's claim for the outer bank?

MANN: Yes, I have memories, about the issues; I always remember the issues very well. We worked on all of those problems. I did.

Q: This will get you in the realm of prediction. Do you think that you can reconcile the conflicting claims where international water ends and begins?

MANN: This may be an irresponsible thing to say. My own conclusion was, after battling with these for a long time, is that part of the problem derives from the fact that part of our fishing industry wants to fish off of our own shores -- close in -- and they want to keep other people away. Another part of our fishing industry like to fish out on the open seas. We, I think, some day ought to sit down and decide whether our interests would be served by extending our own territorial waters out a good ways. After all, we have a large

littoral, Atlantic and Pacific, whether they would better be served, on balance, by sticking to the three-mile limit or some modification of it closer in.

I doubt very much that we can have our cake and eat it too. I doubt we can be fishing on the high seas and restrict, in some way, the Russians or the Japanese fishing on the high seas, say, off of our shores. Taking a hard position against Ecuador and Peru and then taking what seems to me to be an equivocal position in terms of when other people come in close off our shores. Do you understand what I'm talking about?

Q: Yes. You really need to work out a multilateral arrangement, don't you?

MANN: We need a philosophy. We need to determine where our own interests lie first and then to try to negotiate that out. The trend certainly is toward extending the marginal sea out several miles from shore, many miles from shore. That's the trend, the modern trend; and we have not gone along with that.

Q: Were you involved in the negotiations with the IPC in Peru?

MANN: Yes, I talked with President Belaunde about that. Our position on that was that confiscation of property -- defined as taking somebody else's property without paying for it -- is bad, and that if there was a serious dispute about the validity of the title of the IPC, that this was a legal question and ought to be submitted either to the World Court or to arbitration. But that it was wrong for any government unilaterally to simply confiscate property. That was essentially our position.

Q: Did you get the feeling that President Belaunde was talking for domestic consumption in talking about expropriation or that he was sincere?

MANN: Now, expropriation is recognized in international law. Expropriation implies the payment of prompt, adequate, and effective compensation. We never object to expropriation of American property. This is traditional in policy. What we object to is confiscation. Expropriation, if you think of it as something similar to what we think of here as the law of eminent domain, then you've got the perspective. But the government doesn't come and take your house because they need a roadway and tell you to get out, or because they need it for a park or something else. They pay you for it.

This was never an issue with Peru. The issue was whether they were simply going to seize this property. The history on that is rather long and perhaps tedious, but essentially it is that, in the early part of this century, the British owned that field. The question came up about whether their title was valid. I don't know exactly what the origins of that legal dispute was, but the Peruvian Congress authorized this legal question -- validity of the title -- to be arbitrated. There was an arbitration. I don't remember who the impartial arbitrator was. It went against the Peruvians and in favor of the British. Then, several decades went by and the IPC bought and paid for this oil field. It wasn't a large sum of money, but it was property. Then the same people who had opposed this -- I think one

family in particular who owned the newspaper there and should be nameless -- had conducted a crusade --

Q: I can fill that in.

MANN: -- for -- I remember the name -- for twenty years or longer that the whole arbitration award was invalid; and therefore the IPC had no title whatever. Not only should compensation not be paid, but the Peruvian government should demand and receive from them the value of all the oil which had been taken out of the subsoil.

Now this again is a lawsuit. It's a legal question. We didn't say that they were wrong or right, but we said, "Let's submit it to the World Court. Let's submit it to somebody who is impartial, and let's get a decision." The answer we got was that the domestic political situation is such that we can't do that. The only alternative is to either expropriate and pay, or to confiscate. Now that was the kind of issue we were talking about.

Q: How successful do you think the Alianza has been?

MANN: I think it has been reasonably successful. Man is not perfect. We're not living in a perfect world and once we understand that -- progress is going to be gradual slow, and sometimes painful. Sometimes we're going to take a step forward and half a step backward.

Q: Do you think domestically too much was anticipated in the way of results?

MANN: Oh, yes, I do. I think we delude ourselves sometimes by thinking we're going to do too much too fast.

Q: What about the Peace Corps in Latin America?

MANN: I think the Peace Corps has a place in Latin America. It has done a good job within its own area. I don't think it's the most important program we have in the area.

Q: Did you work on the Central American Common Market and on integration in --

MANN: Yes, I guess I was one of the first ones to work on that when I was in Guatemala and Salvador -- that early. For very practical reasons they needed industry. They had a high unemployment rate and rather a stagnant economy. A number of people came in interested in founding small industries until they found out that the market wasn't large enough to support an industry. I began talking to the two governments when I was at both places about the population explosion and the need to have a domestic market which was large enough to support industry and create jobs and pay taxes. Having worked a good deal on the common market in Europe before, I was fairly familiar with it and did a lot of work on that in those days. Then when I was here in charge of Economic Affairs, in charge of Latin American Affairs, I supported it all the way through. I don't think the market's large enough yet. I'd like to see them take in the Caribbean Islands --

independent countries there -- and eventually become part of a larger market, either with Mexico or with all of Latin America.

Q: In South America on this matter of economic integration, particularly of the west coast countries, whom did you work with principally in South America?

MANN: Excuse me, come again on that question.

Q: In the attempt to get integration going -- economic integration going in South America --

MANN: Well, in the early days you had to do sort of a selling job. You talked to the Presidents and to the Ministers, and there was an organization in those days called -- I think it was called -- ODECA, and they had a little headquarters in Salvador and they had a Secretary General and a small staff and we talked to them. You explained what Europe -- the six were doing and the seven, the outer seven -- and the benefits to them and the ways in which some of the disadvantages could be softened, the abrupt competition. Above all, the advantages of competition over monopoly, and basic economic things of that kind and tenets of that kind. Then, as things get going you deal with a different group of people because then you have machinery set up, and you help set up the Central American Bank, and begin to work on concrete problems of various kinds.

Q: I was thinking, particularly, of South America and the efforts at integration there which pose a different set of problems, one being the great distance.

MANN: Yes. The Latin Americans always had this grand design of one great common market; I'm not sure that their definition of a common market is identical with ours because they really haven't totally accepted the idea that competition is good. But they went down this road and we didn't discourage it.

I personally believed and said so to many of them that it would be much more practical to start with regional common markets, and I think they themselves are coming around to believe that now. I hear there's a movement going -- I'm two years out of date -- a movement going now in Grand Columbia, which has historical roots as you know. If you can get one Central American common market going, you get one in Grand Columbia and you get one down South going. Brazil is so big that they don't have the same problem, say, as Salvador. Then these could be merged some day if that is what they would like to do.

Q: Do you think this Trans-Andean -- not Trans-Andean -- but on the other side of the Andes, road is necessary for that kind of integration for the west coast countries?

MANN: I've never been a great proponent of the Trans-Andean Highway on the other side of the mountains. Belaunde's scheme?

Q: The one coming down the east side.

MANN: That big circular thing, and bending up around into the Orinoco Basin. I think that's a good thing. I have a lot of other things I would give a higher priority to.

Q: It's not a necessary step toward regional --

MANN: It's just a matter of priorities, and when you do it -- certainly it has got to be done some time -- but that's going to cost an enormous amount of money.

Q: It has already cost an enormous amount of money. Well, I'm going to close out on you right now and reserve the right to come back, because we've got a lot of problems that I think we might like to go into in somewhat more detail later.

MANN: All right, fine.

Q: I will alert you next time. Another fellow who might come is Paige Mulhollan whose specialty is diplomatic history.

MANN: Okay.

End of interview