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

WALTER K. SCHWINN

Interviewed by: David Courtwright
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INTERVIEW

Q: This is an interview with Walter K. Schwinn. Today is June 24, 1987. This interview is being conducted by the Foreign Service History Center of the George Washington University. The interview is taking place at 637 Prospect in Hartford, Connecticut at Mr. Schwinn's apartment. The interviewer is David Courtwright of the Department of History of the University of Hartford.

The first part of this interview deals with Mr. Schwinn's early life, education (University of Wisconsin, AB 1922, Harvard University, AM 1923), work on the "Manchester Union" in Manchester, New Hampshire, the "Springfield Union", Springfield, Massachusetts and the "Hartford Courant", Hartford Connecticut. It also covers his time during World War II in North Africa and Western Europe as running an economic intelligence unit.

The transcription begins with the end of World War II and Mr. Schwinn's entry into the United States Information Service in 1946.

[Note: This transcript has not been edited by Mr. Schwinn.]

SCHWINN: After V-J Day it became apparent that the future of the foreign economic administration and hence of my unit was, you know, dubious, so I flew back to Washington to find out what to do. Particularly how to advise my staff, who'd been, you know, very loyal all this time and, you know, what do we do now? Should we go home, should we...?

And I got back to Washington, oh God, the confusion in Washington in October, November 1945. It was hard to believe. So I knew a decision was made, except that it was clear to me that it was a negative decision so far as the unit as a unit was concerned. So I didn't even attempt to get back but sent word that some members of the staff should feel free to find employment where they wanted to stay in the occupation forces. And they all had an advantage. They were on the ground, they were all experienced, and so they were all snapped up in various units of the occupation forces. The gals knew the documents very well. They could all know where to find this and that. So this staff of mine was picked up rapidly by the various people involved.

Q: Who picked up Walter Schwinn?

SCHWINN: Well, I was back in Washington at this time, and I came up to Hartford at Christmas time 1945. I had friends up here, very good friends, it was fun to be with them at Christmas, but also to look around a bit. And I talked to my friends at the Courant and

saw who was there, and I decided that I'd probably do better not to try to reestablish myself at the Courant. Well, those reasons were there. One, that I'd become much more liberal even though I was politically current, and I didn't want to go back to making all the compromises that I felt I had to do when I was on the Courant.

Q: Why do you say that? Was it your experience during the war that had made you more liberal? And more liberal in what respect, with respect to foreign policy?

SCHWINN: I just felt freer. Not under any constraints, considering what the Republican Party tried to get, I didn't want to have that kind of constraint on me. I thought it would be better if I could work more freely. Also, Bill Stone, my sponsor for my first job, was there, and he was then involved in setting up the.... See, everything was such a chaotic thing. All the wartime agents were being liquidated, all to shift into new slots. The OWI, the Office of War Information, was being recreated as the United States Information Service. Bill Benton was the Assistant Secretary of State doing that, and Bill Stone was on his staff.

Now Bill said, "Stick with us. There'll be job for you."

Well, that seemed to me preferable, getting back to the old stand.

Q: And specifically, it was the Republicanism of the Courant and the fear that you would be in some way fettered as an editorial writer that was decisive.

SCHWINN: Well, yes. And Mr. Sherman, who'd been my chief for so long, was getting older, and wasn't going to be around all the time. And it is hard for me to express how tolerant he was of me. I was kind of a maverick at times and did not always respond to his wishes, but he never told me, "Look Schwinn, you'll do this or go."

Q: Let me ask you a question about one tiny puzzle. In those days Hartford was a two newspaper town. And you didn't consider working for the rival Times?

SCHWINN: No. I mean, that would not have suited me.

Q: That would have been tacky.

SCHWINN: Yes. I was loyal to the Courant. After all, it was the most distinguished and the oldest, and all that sort of thing. It had more prestige.

Q: So you're back in Washington. Before I talk about the State Department, I want to mention briefly that about this time, I believe, you were awarded the Medal of Freedom. Is that correct?

SCHWINN: That's right.

Q: In 1945 or '46?

SCHWINN: Well, it came to me when I was in Warsaw in '47, I think. Stone had put in for it sometime in '45 and spoke to me about it, and I shrugged my shoulders and said, "Okay."

Q: And the medal came with what citation, specifically for your work during World War II?

SCHWINN: Yes. For my contribution to the war effort as a civilian. The Medal of Freedom was given by the War Department at that time to civilians who had made significant, as they thought, contributions to the war effort. A lot of it went to people who had helped the Underground in France and Germany. A lot of awards went to those persons.

Q: Well, oh yes, foreign nationals.

SCHWINN: Foreign nationals and civilian personnel, particularly in these operations of dropping individuals and supplies and all that sort of daring-do.

Q: So even though you were technically Colonel, you were still regarded as a civilian.

SCHWINN: Oh, yes.

Q: Now you mentioned Warsaw. You were assigned to the embassy in Warsaw in 1946, I believe, as First Secretary and Public Affairs Officer.

SCHWINN: That's right.

Q: How did that come about?

SCHWINN: Well, I was back in Washington in early '46. And Stone, working with this group, put me on ice, so to speak in a job in the State Department in its Public Affairs section.

And he said, "Look, I don't know quite what you may be asked to do, but if you'll stay on this little job, we'll see what else comes up.

Around late in '45, '46 rather, he came to me and said, "Look, we want to establish an office in Warsaw, and we'd like to have you head it. Will you do it?"

And after thinking it over, at first I thought, "Oh God, I don't want to go to Warsaw yet. I said, "Okay, sure." So I took the oath of office on I think December '46 or early '47, and then went over to Warsaw.

Q: Now he said "establish an office." Can you get any more specific than that?

SCHWINN: Well, we wanted to have a first-rate running United States Information Service in Warsaw. It wasn't there at that time. There was a beginning. There was a little library. But it wasn't fully staffed, and they wanted somebody to take charge, organize the operation, and hire the personnel and, you know, take over. And that's what they asked me to do. Furthermore, at this time, USIA was regarded with some suspicion and distrust by the US Foreign Service. I mean, here was a new operation being grafted on to its established functions, and so part of the unspoken thing was, "Get along with the Embassy. Establish yourself, establish the operation. Get your Polish staff organized, do something more with the library, and carry out lots of functions."

So, that's what I was asked to do. And what I did... you asked me a question, I'll answer it...what I did there.... The library was going and well run. A very good Polish woman... I must say we had a first-rate Polish staff. Just tops. They all were drawn to the United States Embassy for employment. I mean, they wanted to be associated with it. And so we had really the best foreign staff, I think, in town. And Madam Poniatowska ran the library, and she did a superb job. She knew what her clientele wanted, what books to order, how to arrange this operation, get the most out of it.

And it had its problems. I remember so well, one day, toward the end of the day, I was called by Poniatowska and went down to her office, and she had there this young man, seventeen, eighteen years old. I'd noticed him before. Good looking blond, sturdy little Pole. And he'd been in the library daily, in the technical section. And he was a student at the university, and he'd found our technical books, I forget just what category, very interesting. There he was in tears. "What's wrong?" "Well," he said....Now the library was situated on a street that ran into main avenues at both ends. And he said, "Well, I left the library today, and a policeman at the corner stopped me and said if I didn't stop coming to the library, I'd lose my standing at the university." And he said, "How can this be? How did you let this happen?" And I said, "My boy, I can't do anything about your police system here!"

Q: Now I wanted to ask you a similar question about the staff. You say you had an excellent staff. Weren't those staff members subject to the same kinds of pressures?

SCHWINN: Do you want to hear a story about that?

Q: Sure.

SCHWINN: Roza Zelazowska, who died last year, unhappily, was my Polish secretary. I had an English, I mean American gal, working for me, but Roza was my contact with the Polish staff and the Polish world in a way, I mean, outside. A survivor of the Polish uprising, the Warsaw uprising. She had been a courier and made her way around town through the sewers. Marvelous gal. Spoke fluent German, fluent French, very good English, Polish.

I noticed one day that she was not up to her usual standard, and she was moody. So I called her in after a week or so, and I said, "Roza, something's troubling you. What's wrong? Anything I can do? She said, "No, there's nothing you can do."

"Well," I said, "I just don't like to see you in this mood, and if I can do anything...if you'd tell me what it's about...?"

"Well," she said, "I've been called by the UB [that's the secret police], and they've demanded that I tell them what you're up to."

But I said, "Roza, please, tell them everything. All you know about. Where I go, what I do," and so on.

And she rose herself, and she looked me straight in the eye, "Do you think, Mr. Schwinn, that I would cooperate in any way with these bastards?" (Laughs)

Well, it was a matter of pride to her that she would not cooperate. Well, you know, she made her way out of Poland the hard way. Many Poles left, often by paying bribes to get across the borders and this sort of thing. She got to the Foreign Office and said, "I want a passport to go to Rome to join my sister. They said, "Impossible." Finally, they said, "Well, maybe, maybe it'd be possible, once you're in Rome, if you'd be willing to be helpful to us occasionally, we think we might be able to get a passport for you." She said, "No, thanks. I don't want a passport in those terms." But they sort of kept at her, waiting six months or so - this is after I'd left - and finally, one day, they called her in, and there was the passport in her name, lying between an officer and her. He picked it up, flipped through it and showed it to her and said, "Here is your passport. All you have to do is to just agree to be a little cooperative. Just be willing to talk to us occasionally. That's all we ask."

She shook her head. And he picked the passport and flung it in her face and said, "Get out, you bitch." I mean, in other words, she would not be moved in any way, she was just like steel. And so she went down to Rome and some of us helped her, and she got a job in the embassy there, lived until this last year. Marvelous woman. And, I must say, one of the big experiences was to know the Poles. Superb people. Stubborn, proud and not at all willing to be cowed. They are, I mean, they have to be cowed, but they're awfully hard to cope with. And nobody, not even our President, generally, has been able to make them yield sufficiently to meet their standards.

Q: How about you? While you were serving in Poland between 1946 and 1949, did you feel that you were followed by the secret police or harassed in any way?

SCHWINN: I wasn't harassed, but I was followed steadily. It was... it could be very abusive. One of the first Congresses of World Peace was held down in what was called Wroclaw. That was the old Breslau of eastern Germany. Wroclaw. This big international

conference for peace, I mean all...delegates from all over the world, including the United States, assembled to.... You see, the Germans, I mean the Poles, I mean the Russians, lacking the Bomb at this point, tried to counter the effect of our possession of the Bomb by waging this very intensive peace campaign worldwide to mobilize public opinion in favor of peace to blunt, so to speak, the edge of the atomic weapon. And so this was the first big congress, and it was later that Picasso made his famous dove that was used as the logo all over the world as a sign of the peace movement and on and on.

Well, I went down to cover it for the Embassy and took a very good young man, American, who spoke Polish very well-he later became Ambassador to Poland, many years later, I must say- and Ed Symans, who also spoke Polish, I think the three of us went down. Of course, tagging us was this little car with two Poles, everywhere we went. Everywhere. And finally, in a bar one night, there they were sitting over there. I went over and I said to them, "Join us." (Laughs)

Q: Did they?

SCHWINN: I said, "We're together so much, don't you think..." (Laughs) Oh, they were alarmed at this, you know. (Laughs) So...

Q: You didn't fraternize with the enemy?

SCHWINN: No, I couldn't fraternize. So...yes, I mean I was aware of that all of the time, I mean this is part of the condition of life.

Q: Let me follow up with two questions. First, did things get worse in terms of surveillance and tension with the Polish government between 1946 and 1949?

SCHWINN: Oh, yes. My dates aren't firm on this, but when I got to Poland early '47, I used the date '46 because that's the day I took the oath in Washington.

Q: Right.

SCHWINN: It was not too difficult to meet, and to an extent socialize, with certain Poles, I mean, intellectuals, upper middle class, ex-nobility, Balkan contacts with the Americans.

Q: That would have before the declaration of the Truman Doctrine in the spring of '47?

SCHWINN: That wasn't the crucial thing, although that came along and that...if I may interrupt my own statement.... When that arrived by wire -- we had a wireless new broadcast from Washington -- when that arrived, I got that translated into Polish fast, and that began a weekly Polish news bulletin which went out to a long list of people. They had to discover all kinds of ways to have them mailed and delivered because we

discovered that if we had our own envelopes the sacks simply stood in the post office and were not distributed.

So one of the Polish guys, Josef Dobosz, devised the idea of buying all kinds of different envelopes, having them handwritten addresses on them, and mailing them in different post boxes. So more and more of this got through. Well, that was the beginning of our Polish news bulletin every week. I interrupted myself....

Q: We were talking about the worsening relations, and you said that the trigger was not the Truman Doctrine speech, it was...?

SCHWINN: No, no. It was when the Commies in power finally effected the merger of the Communist Party with the Socialist Party and thereby eliminated a source of potential opposition and established one-party rule. That was the sign, and it was after that that many of the persons who had accepted your invitations, who'd even invited you out, began to pass you on the street, or to slip a note somehow-"You will understand."

Q: Yes.

SCHWINN: Now that's when the Iron Curtain really fell. Now we were more or less isolated from, I mean we kept very suspicious of those who still remained in contact because why would they do that, you see?

Q: Well now, as someone in the information business, how did you respond to this deepening chill in relations? What did you try to do about it, anything?

SCHWINN: Well, just tried to keep going, keep the library operating, keep the Polish bulletin being distributed.... One of the more important duties of the staff was to brief the Voice of America on a, sometimes on a daily basis as to what would be suitable for broadcasting in. You just tried to keep going, that's.... And I must say that we never lost touch with the library entirely. That was our best measure, visible measure, was that there were still Poles who, despite the chill, would be willing to keep coming in. But most of them were older, older persons who had less and less to lose.

Q: Less to lose. That's very interesting. That's extremely interesting.

SCHWINN: Yes, I mean....

Q: Another question I wanted to ask you, you had a close-up look at the Nazi regime, or certain aspects of it during World War II, and you say that you came away from World War II somewhat more liberal in your political outlook. Then you had a chance to have a close-up look at a communist state. Did you therefore become more conservative in the late 1940s?

SCHWINN: Well, mind you, one could not be in Poland - '46 to '49 - without becoming a hard-liner. I mean, the evidence was so clear, so firm, so....

Q: A hard-line anticommunist.

SCHWINN: Yes, that's right. I mean, it was simply - you could not ignore it, or you couldn't excuse it.

Q: Right.

SCHWINN: And so...I must say, I mean the wave is over now, but then there was the revisionist histories of why we were in the Cold War. You know the students at...guys at Yale and Harvard and Stanford that could write books saying, "It's our fault and not theirs?" (Laughs)

Q: Right.

SCHWINN: You know.

Q: You need to translate that gesture. I think you made a gesture that was something like "malarkey."

SCHWINN: "Baloney." (Laughs)

Q: Yes.

SCHWINN: I mean...you could not experience that thing without becoming a hard-liner and remaining a hard-liner. But furthermore, I went back to Washington in '49 to become Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and found myself in an administration, with 200 in the administration, very liberal but also very hard-line.

Q: Right.

SCHWINN: So, I was in a harmonious situation. (Laughs)

Q: Right. So in that regard you were essentially a Truman Democrat?

SCHWINN: Exactly. Acheson Democrat.

Q: Or a John F. Kennedy Democrat, or a Johnson Democrat, or a Scoop Jackson Democrat?

SCHWINN: That's right, yes.

Q: I mean obviously you were not alone. There were many Democrats at this time who became and continued, during the 1950s, '60s, and into the '70s and I guess up to the present time, who continued to be staunchly anticommunist, and yet liberal in terms of their domestic outlooks.

SCHWINN: Well, it's a disturbing thing for a guy like me, it was a very disturbing thing to witness the McGovern candidacy. I mean, George McGovern is an admirable person, but his attitude for foreign affairs was just, to me, lamentable. A departure from all I'd learned, that I thought, the hard way. I mean, not responsive, not.... Should I go on with this?

Q: With your critique of McGovern?

SCHWINN: No...well, his attitudes.

Q: Sure, please.

SCHWINN: And this attitude could carry us through the Korean War. That was easy. I mean, there was an aggression, a boundary, and we'd been attacked mercilessly by Chinese forces. So, I mean, again you're on solid ground. So when Vietnam came along, you still felt to be on solid ground. However, the Vietnam experience was the one that began to make you realize that anticommunism was not a sufficient guide to foreign policy.

By this time I was out of the government, safely in retirement here in Hartford. But it took me quite a while to realize that we'd made a fundamental mistake in Vietnam, that anticommunism is not a sufficient reason for coping with that situation the way we did. We had failed to take enough account of the indigenous reasons for our failure, that we had not learned the lessons the French had to learn. We'd not learned the lesson that we had to look very closely at the indigenous circumstances before making too big a commitment.

Q: That we should be anticommunist, but we should avoid being tainted with colonialism.

SCHWINN: Precisely. Or not taking account enough of why a situation exists in another country. It's not simply enough to say, "Well, the Commies are going to take advantage of it." They may. I'm almost to the point now where I'm saying, "Well, let them take advantage and see how it works." I mean, this is not yet fully thought out, but I wish there were somebody around town that I could talk to...should I go on in this way?

Q: Sure. Go ahead.

SCHWINN: ...about the problems I see in Nicaragua. I think, I'd like to see us [and again, this is surely not an adequate answer]...but the basis of the Monroe Doctrine is still, in my view, sound. And I would sort of think, make it known, that anytime the Soviet Union, or

anybody else alien to America, establishes a military base, we will say, "We won't permit it. We'll blow it to hell tomorrow." But aside from that, say...say the Commies want to take over, let them try, see what happens. It won't work.

Q: That reminds me of the saying that the Soviet Union is the only country in the world surrounded by hostile communist states.

SCHWINN: Yes.

Q: That colonialism can backfire for them as well.

SCHWINN: Yes. I'm sure that the problems in Nicaragua will not be solved by our military intervention, whether as now being run or even more formally. I mean, that those problems are indigenous to Nicaragua. And while we can advise, encourage, warn, do all the sort of thing that the royalty in England is entitled to do to the Prime Minister (laughs), all we can do is that, we can't do much more. Maybe feed a certain amount of economic and military aid. After all, military assistance in the '50s was designed to be a shield to economic development - locally managed. So, military assistance is not an outrage, it's okay in certain circumstances. But I think the limits are very marked, and as I say, I'd be sort of content to say, "Let the Commies try." We have a good case of that in Cuba, where, I mean, an economy's bogged down. A people are oppressed. It's a miserable state of affairs. Is it a threat to us?

Q: But isn't the answer to that the story of the woman who had the passport flung in her face, that we ought not to let people be treated like that if we can possibly avoid it?

SCHWINN: I don't think we can avoid it. I think there are limits to what we can do. I mean, there was no way for any of us to help Roza in that situation. She had to do it herself. No intervention on my part or anybody else's would have gotten her that passport.

Q: As long as we're talking about containment policy and the Cold War, let me go back to the period of the late '40s and the early '50s. You became in 1949, as you said, Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs in Washington, working out of the State Department. What did that position entail?

SCHWINN: Well, this was 1949, Truman had just come into power, and Acheson...

Q: On his own. He had been elected, `48.

SCHWINN: That's right, '48, yes. And here was the OWI, still floating around in a way, unattached - or, rather loosely - attached to the Department of State. Mr. Acheson did not have a high regard for the "information function" as a part of diplomacy. He did have a high regard for intelligence, and he regretted - I think it's present in his book - he says he regrets that he did not be able to take a hold of the CIA and attach it to the State

Department. Well, I think he was very desirous of not having much to do with the information.

So here was the Assistant Secretary of State charged with carrying out the information function and organizing it under many difficult circumstances. Not much support from within the Department. And I was called back. Stone was the guy set up the idea of getting me back to help to set up what he called a Policy Office. How did the Department of State convey policy to an information agency even within its own...how did we tell the Voice and publications and other people the policy to be followed? This was particularly true with the Voice, which is still in New York.

Q: The Voice of America.

SCHWINN: Yes, the Voice of America. And manned very largely by emigres and so on who had their own ideas of what policy should be. Now the hope was that something would be established that would...a policy agency which would make all these things work together with the political desks in the Department of State. Stone [a guy I like very much, to whom I owe a great deal in my life] by this time was on McCarthy's list, and the Department...well, in a way it was not very brave, but it couldn't handle too many problems at once, and so this kind of shut Stone off out of the policy area, at least, into other jobs, and he became unavailable to me as a guide.

Well, here I was, completely new to the Department of State, which is a hell of a big bureaucracy with all kinds of skilled bureaucratic operators in it, and I was not one of those. And I got the assignment to set up the Policy Office. They tried to get Wally Carroll back - Wally Carroll was the big guy in OWI, but he was down in Winston-Salem, very comfortably publishing a newspaper down there, so he wouldn't come. And many times the more experienced guys in the old OWI...generally speaking, a lot of people were glad to get back home to their original jobs and didn't want to get back in the government again. I mean, they were simply weren't attracted.

Well, I plugged away at that. Only moderate success, I should say. And, oh God, I spent lots of time...every week I went up to New York to talk to the people at the Voice, and trying to listen less and less. (Laughs)

Q: Can you give me a specific example of a problem or a disagreement or an issue you had to resolve? You went up to New York to speak to someone at the Voice, and what was the issue?

SCHWINN: I can't think of any specific issue we had any specific quarrel about, but I went up hopeful...I mean, through Paul Nitze, whom I'd known on the Speech survey, I was permitted to sit in on the meetings of the Policy Planning staff of the Department. Paul had just taken over from George Kennan. So here was a source of policy in the making, and which I thought I could convey ideas back up to the Voice and around information agencies generally.

Basically the Voice didn't want to be bothered. It was happy running as it was, and they didn't want (laughs) anybody coming in presuming to tell them what a good policy would be. It was just that they were contented and getting along all right. You know, they didn't throw me out, but I wasn't very welcome either.

Q: Now, let's try to refine what we mean a little bit by the word "policy," what a good "policy" would be. Are you referring to the content of information broadcasts, etc., disseminated by the Voice of America?

SCHWINN: A lot of it was just a matter of emphasis. I'm trying to think of an example....

Q: Walter, when the tape ran out on the other cassette, we were talking about your negotiations with people at the Voice of America and how you would ask them, for example, to tone down the stridency of this or that.

SCHWINN: Also, to make them aware, as they might not otherwise have been of the potential conflicts that lie in foreign policy. For example, you have in Vietnam a problem of pushing in certain directions. People wonder why we got so deeply involved in Vietnam. One reason we got involved was our concern for the French because along in [again, I'm not sure of my dates] '51 or 2, we began to be aware of the need for incorporating German forces into NATO forces. This for the French was not an easy thing to accept. It would have made it more difficult to accept had we not shown sympathy for their position in Vietnam.

Q: Correct.

SCHWINN: Now these things have to be considered together when you make a speech. And it was my purpose to try to harmonize, or to indicate, problems where one line might conflict with another line, and you had to take steps to harmonize them. Not easy to do all these things. And yet, foreign policy for the United States at that time had these inherent contradictions in them. It wasn't simple. So that was...well, one of the problems I was trying to deal with was how to make people aware. If you do one thing, you may do something else at the same time. So....

Q: If I might comment, it seems to me to be a recurring theme in all of your observations in this interview, is namely the need for complexity and realism and nuance in foreign policy.

SCHWINN: Precisely, yes. It's not easy, I mean.... Just to quote, by the way, I was out west Hartford some of the day and there was, at the confluence of Main Street and (inaudible) Avenue, a large demonstration against nuclear war. Okay, who's for nuclear war? But anyway, I thought, "That issue's all over." We're already committed to some kind of degree of things and some degree of détente, if you will, with the Soviet Union, that just seems to be the tendency. And I went, "What are these people talking about

now? It's getting a little more difficult. It's no longer just enough, you know, to say I'm against nuclear war. What are you going to do about the Russian army, the conventional forces?" (Laughs) If you get rid of all the missiles.. all this is complex, it's never simple. We can't put the genie back in the bottle. (Laughs)

Q: Unfortunately, we can't. Let me pursue this business about nuclear weapons and U.S.-Soviet relations. September of 1949, the Soviet Union explodes an atomic device.

SCHWINN: Right.

Q: Within a short time or over the next two or three years there are increasingly strident right-wing attacks on the Truman administration in general, and the State Department in particular. How, from your vantage, did this affect the morale and the operation of the State Department?

SCHWINN: Well, the McCarthy hearings, the McCarthy agitation, was of course a very serious thing for the Department and for the people in it. I know very well because I became involved in this way - I mean, this jumps ahead a bit, do you mind?

Q: No. You became involved in what sense?

SCHWINN: As time went on in this job I had, my frustrations didn't diminish, they tended to mount, particularly since the Assistant Secretary of State for whom I was then working was sort of cut loose by the Department generally, and he had to go out and agitate before Congress on his own.

Q: Are you referring to Stone?

SCHWINN: No, I'm referring to a man named Barrett, who was Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs. I was his boy, I was on his staff, but he was always involved in getting congressional approval for this, and congressional approval for that. And I didn't have much contact with him, frankly. I mean, I was sort of free-floating, and I decided I wanted to get out, particularly after Mr. Dulles came in. Then I was really aware that I'd had my day at the Department.

Q: Because you were a Democrat, or identified with the Democratic Party?

SCHWINN: No, I mean I just felt not at ease, see. The successor to Barrett was not a very good guy, and I thought, "It's time to go, Schwinn. It's time to get out." And so I made known that I was looking for a foreign assignment. But it came out that I wasn't available because I had derogatory information in my file. You know what I mean.

Q: In other words, you had been tarred with the brush of McCarthyism.

SCHWINN: Somebody had made allegations. And there was a file that was carrying an allegation, and I wasn't permitted to know what it was.

Q: Let's pin this down a little bit more. This was 1952...

SCHWINN: This was now '54.

Q: '54. All right, so it's fairly late in the game.

SCHWINN: Fairly late, yes.

Q: Because McCarthy's star was about to fall in '54.

SCHWINN: Well, it probably was, but the file was still there. (Laughs). And I said, "Look, let's clear it up right away." And I talked to Denny Flynn, who was a security officer at the Department, and I said, "Look, can't we pull..." He said, "Walter, I have so many much more important cases ahead of you that I won't really get to you for two or three years."

Q: The file was physically in the possession of...

SCHWINN: The security officer. As a matter of fact, this must have been around '52, you're right, because in '53 a guy whom I was not too well acquainted with but who knew me and all was assigned Consul-General out in Singapore. And he wanted a Public Affairs officer out there. And he invited me to come.

I said, "Gee, I'd love to go," although the job was lower than what I wasn't entitled to, in a way. Anything to get away. I said, "I can't." He said, "Why not?" and I told him. "Let me see what I can do," he said.

So, he went to Denny and the first thing I knew, Denny called and said, "If you're free next week, you can have your interrogation." So, I...

Q: In other words, to clear your name.

SCHWINN: That's right.

Q: So that actual interrogation occurred in 1953.

SCHWINN: Or maybe '54, again...

Q: Slightly later.

SCHWINN: Yes. In any case...

Q: You weren't actually stationed in southeast Asia until 1954.

SCHWINN: That's the reason I picked probably as early '54 then that the interrogation took place. In two days, two guys and a gal doing her stenotyping...

Q: Let's stop and review chronology very briefly. You knew that you wanted another position and were growing dissatisfied by 1952.

SCHWINN: '53. After the Dulles came in. Then he brought in an assistant secretary whom I found very difficult to deal with and I realized that.... And furthermore, there was a new guy in the Policy Planning staff where I maintained a connection all this time, and I wasn't invited to the meetings anymore. So, I began to think, "Well, my day in the department is over, let's go."

It was '53 that I said I'd like to go, and that was when I made it known that I'd like to go, and they said, "You can't."

Because under the rules at that time, you could not be promoted, change jobs, or go out in the field as long as that derogatory information was in the file.

Q: In the course of the interrogation, did you find out the nature of that information?

SCHWINN: Yes, I did.

Q: Which was...?

SCHWINN: Well, it was an allegation about when I was still with SHAEF, that I had intervened to prevent certain developments just like Stuttgart.

Q: Certain of what activities?

SCHWINN: Intelligence activities. It was very easy to prove. The allegation was that I had prevented people from going to Stuttgart because I wanted to maintain the information until the Russians came. All you had to prove was that there was never an intention that the Russians should take over Stuttgart. So as soon as that was shown, then the whole case collapsed.

Q: Did you ever figure out who planted the information or for what reason the information was planted?

SCHWINN: I have a pretty good idea, but I don't think I want to go into that.

Q: Could you mention the reason? To get at Stone?

SCHWINN: No. This was because I had enforced a law against the guy who didn't like the enforcement of the law.

Q: Can you tell me, who was the, so to speak, the official plaintiff? Was this something that McCarthy had actually pursued?

SCHWINN: No, no. This was a guy who...well, I have to go back a bit. When the intelligence activity in SHAEF faded out because the war was over, ending, I was invited to take ahold of a job screening civilian intelligence people into the theater. So, all of the sudden, everybody, Commerce, Agriculture, Treasury-God knows, every agency in Washington, and a lot of private ones-wanted to go to Germany, some just to see the sights, others because they thought they had missions. Well, the commanders in the theater [you know, there are three different set-ups in the field, the American...] didn't like to have too many people wandering around, just made it a problem of transportation and security and so on.

So, I, who was a civilian, was invited to...General Betts, Deputy G-2, asked me to do it, and so I took over this job of screening people to find out what they wanted to do, how well they wanted to do it, whether everybody had been covered, and so on. And so my staff had to file all the reports we could get hands on, just to make sure that people weren't going to cover the same ground again, and again, and again, or if they were going to add to it, then to communicate with, let's say, Patton's headquarters to see if they would let the guys come in or not, or what conditions were, then arrange for the transportation and go in there.

Well, this one guy wanted to go to Stuttgart because he wanted to look at some files, but at that point, Eisenhower and De Gaulle were in difficulty because Ike didn't want the French First Army to go through Stuttgart to take up another position. What his reasons were, I'm not quite sure, but anyway the rule went out, "No Americans should go to Stuttgart." Everybody wanted to stay away. And to this guy I said, "I'm sorry, you can't go."

Q: And so he bore a grudge.

SCHWINN: Well then he said, "I have [this and this and this]," and I said, "Fine, you can do that." So he got him a driver and a car and off he went. Then he came back and bragged to me that he'd gone to Stuttgart.

So, I went up to General Betts, and I said, "What do you want to do? Should we enforce the law or not? I mean, here's this guy who I told he couldn't go, and he's gone, he's back here bragging about it. Now, do you just want to let it go or do you want to do something about it?"

He said, "Give him orders to go home right away." So I called him in, gave him the order, I said, "You're leaving tonight for America."

"What!" (Laughs)

Well, he didn't like it. I think he was the guy that planted this information.

Q: It seems logical. Now, I'd like to ask one more question about your State Department years in Washington. Can you generalize from your personal experience, do you have a sense that there were many other people who were intimidated, frozen in positions, discouraged, silenced, even dismissed because of similarly irrelevant or misleading information?

SCHWINN: I think so. Again, I couldn't put a figure on it. I can't think of many persons I knew personally, knew really all that well. I heard of guys and that sort of thing, but at this date I can't tell you, "Yes, Joe Jones, Bill Smith..." and so on. Generally speaking, there was unease, concern, and you heard about guys going through the mill and not coming out of it. I mean, I was lucky, in a way. I was able to demonstrate very easily the basis to this charge was false. So, I...that was....

Q: And once you did that, then the way was purged to Singapore.

SCHWINN: Absolutely, yes.

Q: Is that the name of an old Bob Hope movie, "The Road to Singapore?

SCHWINN: I guess it was. (Laughs)

Q: And so Singapore was just an accident, I mean, it was a safe port in the storm, someplace that was away from Washington....

SCHWINN: It was out of town, out of Washington and away, although as I say, I could've in normal circumstances demanded a job higher. I was very lucky. And I enjoyed it.

Q: In Singapore did you do much the same thing as you had done in Warsaw?

SCHWINN: That's right, although the emphasis changed there. As a matter of fact, I was assigned to the Consulate-General in Singapore, the Consulate in Kuala Lumpur, and the Consulate in Pinang. So I lived in Kuala Lumpur, which was a charming little town at that time, tin mines, the rubber...just a few other diplomatists around-Australia, India, France-just a handful of us, and living was very good, very comfortable, and I knew nice people....

But the job there, again, changed, and one of the nice things about the way the information agencies run at that point, you weren't told from Washington what to do specifically. If you were a Public Affairs officer, you made a decision as to what was important to be done and spent your money that way.

Well, here it was in 1954, and the Korean War barely over, all the guns were silent, but Malaysia had a very large minority of Chinese. Particularly a large, young population, I mean 20 and under in school, and to them the pink-red dawn over to the east was very attractive. China was rising to its feet. It was no longer on its knees to every Britisher and American and Frenchman...it was standing up, standing tall. (Laughs) What do you do? It was kind of comical to think now we're in such close relations with Communist China, but then we regarded this as an enemy. On the same scale, I was now operating on the other side of the Communist world. So we put almost all our money and emphasis into dealing with the Chinese in the middle schools, in the colleges-what to do to impress them. Do two things: impress them with the virtues of the United States, and also to draw them away from their fascination with Maoist China.

We had a nice little guy, Jimmy Anderson, who was down in Washington with his wife, who was the Information Officer and.... Well, we sought out these things, trucks which carried films, books, literature, all up and down the peninsula on a regular schedule, stopping at the high schools-middle schools, they're called-for a day and a day and a half, running films.... Then we had great good luck in discovering the enormous power of athletics on the young mind. And we had basketball coaches basketball was pretty high in Malaysia - come out and spend weeks at a school, teaching the kids basketball, American-style, swimming stars coming out and working in the pools.

Q: Who sponsored these people?

SCHWINN: USIA.

Q: USIA. And the books and the movies and so forth that you circulated were all USIA?

SCHWINN: All USIA, yes.

Q: Did you have the opportunity to tailor anything to the local situation, or were you using more or less standard films and books that were simply translated? Or did you have a chance to do something creative?

SCHWINN: Well, I don't think I had a film made specifically for Malaysia, but it came in Chinese, in Mandarin Chinese. It also came in Malay, but these were the films that were in general stock. But they were good films, I mean, they served the purpose. We discovered one thing-again, Jimmy Anderson was very smart about this-he said, "We must always have something going at four in the afternoon until six at these schools." I said, "Why?" "That's the time when these Commies try to set up their meetings with the kids. And if we can compete with the basketball coach at four o'clock, or a swimming coach, or a good film, they won't go to the meeting."

Q: Were these separate Chinese schools or were these integrated schools?

SCHWINN: These were separate.

Q: Separate Chinese schools.

SCHWINN: See, one of the shortcomings, shall we say, of the British rule in Malaysia was that they were so conscious of the need to stratify the Malay rulers and Malay people, that they brought out these Chinese laborers to do the tin mines and rubber things without wives for a long time. Then [came] wives, and of course then children, no money for the schools-the Chinese had to build the damn schools and run them.

Well, we were so concerned about the Chinese, that it took me a while to realize that we had to do something about the Malay population, too. Then we hired a couple of Malay boys, very bright kids, to do a newspaper for the Malay population, and particularly for the east coast. You see, the Chinese were all along the west coast of Malaysia, where the tin mines and rubber plantations are...and, of course, the Chinese, they were just so damned energetic and enterprising.

This did not affect my work, but it was interesting to me: most of the crime was Chinese crime. So, the decision was made to get more Chinese in the police force because they had the same problem we have here. The Malays arresting Chinese. Get more Chinese in the police force. God, they just had a hell of a time getting the Chinese to join because young Chinese men would say, "Why should I join the police force? I could make more money selling cigarettes in the street." So, all this kind of difficulty presented itself, and, of course, I keep wondering now what is happening in Malaysia because I have sensed that the Malays have really taken over more and more, and they're more fundamentalist. And this means the fundamentalists on the east coast are calling the tune. This is going to be hard for the Chinese to accept, and hard for the economy to accept because it's the Chinese that run the entertainment industries, run the bus system, run the transportation industry...it's all Chinese.

Q: Now, the newspaper that you mentioned was aimed at a Malay audience.

SCHWINN: That's right.

Q: Did you edit that paper yourself?

SCHWINN: No, I left it to the Malay boys.

Q: What I was driving at was whether or not you were drawing on your previous experience as a journalist in this.

SCHWINN: No. No, all I did was to...once the decision was made, that we had to do something about the Malays and this would be a good thing to do, I sought out advice among governmental people whom I knew as to who would be a good person to do this,

and got these two names. They were bright kids. Indeed, one of them has since become a minister (laughs) in the Malay government.

Q: Who was that?

SCHWINN: I forget his name now, it was several years ago. But, he....

Q: He was upwardly mobile.

SCHWINN: He was upwardly mobile. But he knew what to do, and so I said, "You have so much money, you have so much staff, get it done."

Q: Now, for most of your professional life, out of government or in government, you have been involved in the shaping of public opinion in one way or another. How do you determine to what extent you had succeeded? Let's take the example of the Chinese, which I find very interesting. How did you measure, or did you attempt to measure, the impact of your activities on the Chinese students?

SCHWINN: We had no funds for surveys, and so it just was what we felt.

Q: Did you ever worry that your attempts might backfire and be perceived as simply propagandistic or meddling?

SCHWINN: No, no. Now mind you, the British Raj was still there, so you didn't have an indigenous government to worry about. You had sympathy and support from the British. But the example of what Jimmy Anderson told me about interfering with the Commie meetings was as good evidence as I can now think of that we were succeeding in diminishing the attendance, of causing the kids to have-you know, "What shall I do?"

Q: You could count the number of students shooting baskets as opposed to the number of students reading the Red Book.

SCHWINN: Well, I don't think we ever saw the Red Book. Again, the British were not encouraging this. Any guy that would carry the Red Book around would have trouble. But we knew that a large number of the kids were shooting baskets and assumed if they weren't, they were at least open to go to the meeting.

Q: Now, you were stationed in that part of the world from 1954 to 1957 and then, in 1957, you were assigned as Consul-General in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. How did that change come about?

SCHWINN: Well, I'd been two years in Malaysia and that was very enjoyable. I thought it was time to move on, and the guy who brought me to Singapore, he'd gone back to Washington by this time...

Q: Please repeat his name.

SCHWINN: Barry.

Q: First name?

SCHWINN: Dick.

Q: Dick Barry.

SCHWINN: Lampton Barry was his name, but it was Dick. I think I dropped him a note and said, "I'm getting ready to leave here, what do you recommend?" You know, just "Be helpful." Well, Saudi Arabia was one of the least desired posts in the Service, and of the two posts....

Q: Why?

SCHWINN: Of the two posts in Saudi Arabia, Dhahran (laughs) was even less favored than Jeddah. Hot, inhospitable, very limited social intercourse...rugged. I didn't hear from him, but all of the sudden, a telegram came, saying that I was being considered for that post. It was the sort of invitation that if I screamed loud enough, I wouldn't go, and I said, "Dandy, I'll go." Again, I think a bachelor could function in Dhahran somewhat better than a married couple, although the married couples I had were great. Stu Kennedy, who's running this thing, was there on first post with his wife Ellen. Now there was marvelous pair of youngsters, and full of beans and energy.... One wife was not very good, but Ferebee Lewis and Dick were just a marvelous pair. But I think, in a way, having a wife could be a complication, and I didn't have a wife, and I was free and I was at the right age....

Q: Especially for an assignment you had characterized as rugged. That could be a handicap. So, you went there in....what part of 1957, do you recall?

SCHWINN: April, April 1st.

Q: Now, one of the most important developments during this time was, while you were serving as Consul-General, you personally negotiated a new treaty with Oman, replacing a treaty that was very old, in fact dating back to 1833. What was the background of this new treaty, how did this negotiation come about?

SCHWINN: Well, as I recall, I was not advised of the background of this treaty when I was in Washington in January, February 1957 for my briefing when I went out. I might say, at that briefing (laughs) it had its chaotic aspects because I arrived for my briefing the same day that Waldemar Gallman arrived, who was Ambassador to Iraq, for his consultation, and the same day that King Saud of Saudi Arabia arrived for a State visit. (Laughs) So, the Arabian Peninsular Affairs people were kind of excited.

And I was simply told that one of the things I would have to do, was called upon to do, would be to do this treaty. I'd never done a treaty....

Q: So, it was in the works already.

SCHWINN: Yes, it was in the works. My understanding is that Herbert Hoover, Jr., who was then Under Secretary of State, number two position-Deputy Secretary of State-was the inspiration for it. He was, as you know, a geologist, like his father, and as a geologist, obviously interested in the oil industry. At that time, Cities Service was doing exploration in Dohfar, down on the southern coast of Oman, and had not yet come into anything. But the Jones Brothers, who owned Cities Service, were very large stockholders and very much interested. It was Herbert Hoover, who conceived the idea that if there were going to be Americans working around that area, there ought to be something more solid behind them than this ancient treaty written on ship, a clipper ship, by a traveling merchant (laughs), with the Sultan.

So the decision was taken that there should be a new treaty negotiated, or the old treaty renegotiated, and that the Consul-General in Dhahran was the guy to do it. There were rather curious aspects to the assignment of the Consul-General to Dhahran to do this because Dhahran was right next to Dammam, where the Emir of the Eastern Province sits, the ruling guy of that area. And it was just a year or two since that man, the Emir, had sent an armed force under one of his friends, Turki bin Utishain, down to claim the Buraymi from the Sultan of Muscat. I wasn't fully aware of all this, of course, until I got there, and then I realized how the Sultan would like to have the man who represented the Emir come down and talk to him, and how the Emir would like to have me dealing with his enemy. In that case, that was....

Q: That little complication occurred to no one in the State Department?

SCHWINN: I don't know. I have no idea because when I got there, on the way out I stopped in Beirut. And I'd been told that a very able young man, H. Earle Russell, would be my Arabist. I spoke no Arabic, of course, but he would come down, whenever I went down to Muscat, he would come down from Beirut and be with me down there. Remarkable, good boy. Now dead, unhappily. So...what should I say now?

Q: Well, let's see now, you conducted these negotiations.... Let's deal with chronology first. I have some specific questions, but...so you knew, when you arrived in, I believe, April of 1957, you knew that that was your most important task, did you begin immediately?

SCHWINN: I can't remember when I made the first trip, but it must have been not earlier than May, maybe more like June. Again, I had never been a Consul-General. I had to make myself known to ARAMCO, to the Emir, to the other distinguished people around...and I went over to Bahrain, which was just across there, to make contact with the

British. The British then were not represented in Saudi Arabia at all. So, I went over to talk to the political agent and establish relationships there. So, again, you see, Muscat was, in a way, under British protection, so it was desirable that I clear my decks with him and he know that I was going to be back and forth, and he would know what's up.

Q: Now, once you had made those contacts and established the ground work, you negotiated personally with the Sultan Said bin Taimur. Is that correct?

SCHWINN: That's right. I went down first with Russ, and we took along with us (laughs), optimistic as the Department was, a guy from the Foreign Buildings operation, Larry Berz, because he thought we may as well get started thinking about where we'd put up an office building down in Muscat on the basis of this treaty. Well, of course, there was no hotel in Muscat, no restaurant, and arrangements were made to stay with the missionaries. Dutch-Reformed.

Q: These were medical missionaries, I believe.

SCHWINN: Medical and religious. Medical was the more important, by far. Wells Thoms and his wife Beth were just simply, unbelievably good persons. They ran in Matrah, the harbor next to Muscat, the medical mission, and it was with them that we all first stayed when we went down there. Russ and I then-well, I guess I took Larry along with us the first call-so, the Sultan would see all of us. Russ and I then stayed [I think Larry went out], and we discussed how we'd proceed. The Emir proposed that we would come down, he would invite us down from time to time, and we'd go down and spend a week or two weeks at a time, meeting every other day, at eleven o'clock, for an hour. So you see, this was going to be long.

Q: Why was it done in that fashion? Why that time frame? His convenience?

SCHWINN: His will. I mean, I said to him, "What is your wish? How would you like to do this?" And this is what he proposed. He had it in mind, he didn't stumble, he said it once, "This is the way I would like to do it."

I might say, one of the first things I learned...I'd set up the date to go down with his foreign minister, an Englishman, who'd been serving in the Sudan previous to his arrival in Muscat. At that time there were a lot of Britishers floating around (laughs), cast out from their original bases in the empire, eager to find little jobs here and there. And a man whose name I can't remember now, but I soon discovered that he was of no importance in the negotiations at all. The Sultan made the plan that he would conduct them personally with me and Russ, who was in attendance. So we went back. Meantime, I had received from the Department a text of the treaty about this high.

Q: The text of the proposed treaty?

SCHWINN: The proposed treaty. It was this high. And a briefing book.

Q: If I might translate your gesture, about two or three inches high.

SCHWINN: That's right, yes. And also I had a briefing book of equal height, maybe a little bit more, for me, explaining every aspect of the treaty. And I left this draft with the Sultan who'd consult it. I think we went back about three or four weeks later during July, as I recall, and the way I remember being received by him in this palace by the sea, looking out over the harbor [volcanic harbor, the base of obviously a great blowup], steep walls which took the sun mercilessly, made it very hot. All along these walls were the names of ships that had visited, and he said, "This is my visitors book." (Laughs)

I remember so well, we made our salutations, exchanged complements, and he turned to me and he said, "Mr. Schwinn, you must understand something. You are the representative of a great power. You're backed by the State Department, and the Legal Department, all apparatus," and he said, "I am just me."

"Therefore," he said, "this document appalls me. I don't know quite what to do with it."

Well, I said, "Do you have any preference as to how we proceed?" He said, "I'd like to have your advice as to how we go."

I said, "How would you like it if you and I were to sit together and you had read certain of the provisions, I would explain them to you as best I can? [I didn't want to reveal to him that I had a big briefing book (laughs) which was telling me as well as him.] I'll explain the meaning of these things to you, and you can indicate approval or disapproval as we go along."

He said yes, that would be agreeable to him. Mind you, he spoke very good English. He'd been educated at the prince's school in India and so had a very good grasp of English. I might just say about him, he's a very short little man-he was, he's now dead, of course. Quite shy. Not given to a great deal of exchange, he was much more open, open to jest a bit, and he was never that way. There's that, and furthermore, we always met at eleven. Well, that meant it ran only an hour because at noon, of course, he had his prayers. And the end of the interview was always indicated by the appearance, almost on the dot, of a servant with coffee in little cups. So one hour was it until the day after next. Well, of course, progress...as I recall, very rarely did he raise suddenly his objection to a specific paragraph.

Q: So your task was essentially one of explication.

SCHWINN: Explication and explanation. It wasn't till almost the end, I mean after a year and a half, well, that we got into some real substantive problems.

Q: Specifically?

SCHWINN: Well, let's get it down....

Q: All right, go ahead.

SCHWINN: We had an interruption in July because he had a rebellion on his hands in the interior, up in Nizwah where the old enemies, an imam, Talib, and his brother, Ghalib.

Q: Walter, you were just saying that the Sultan had a rebellion on his hands.

SCHWINN: Yes.

Q: And this had led to a pause in the negotiations?

SCHWINN: Yes. The rebellion was put down only with the assistance of a British force of about 500 men skilled in mountain warfare-because they had to go up the hill to winkle out Sulayman bin Himyar.

Q: Were these Gurkhas?

SCHWINN: I'm not sure. I just don't know. Maybe, I just don't know. I might say that I kept in touch with the British on Bahrain at this point, and the political agent there at that time, who had control of the whole British establishment in the Gulf, was a man I knew from Washington, Bernard Burroughs. Bernard Burroughs was always very precise in whatever he told you, but he didn't tell you much. My effort to learn more about this rebellion and the size of the force and the problems and all were not very successful. But in any case, it took several weeks for the operation to be executed, carried out, finished, before we were sent back to Muscat. I forget, I wish I knew how many times Russ and I went down.

I ought to say something about Russell, not that anybody cares but me maybe, but he was an admirable boy. We'd come back from these sessions and have lunch with the mission. At this time we were living in Muscat with the preacher there, who had services every Sunday. And we came back and had lunch then, and I would sack out after lunch. We lived in a squared, screened are on the roof of the house, overlooking the city, and it was rather primitive-two cots side by side and a little table in between and a john next door. Well, I'd come in and sack out, and Russ would sit down and start typing. He would do a memorandum of conversation. He would do a dispatch, he would do a telegram. All three items I wanted to get back to Washington. And I'd find a slip of paper saying, "I'm out playing tennis." (Laughs)

Well, I would then read everything....

Q: How old was he, if I might interrupt?

SCHWINN: Oh, Russ at this time was in his early thirties, late twenties, mid-thirties. He'd been through the language school in Beirut, so his Arabic was excellent. Not needed much because the Sultan spoke English. But he made contacts around the town in a way that I couldn't.

Well, I would then walk down to the cable and the wireless office with the telegram which was encoded because I'd gotten permission from the Sultan to encode messages to send over, and then it would go up to Dhahran, and Dhahran would decode and recode (laughs) and get it on to Washington, and then, things would come back that way. And Russ was very good at decoding, it was the guidance we got, which wasn't very much because there was not a problem.

I forget when we shifted from Muscat to Salalah, in Dhofar. I just might say that I regretted leaving Muscat, but the Sultan decided to move, I think almost permanently, his headquarters to Salalah, in Dhofar. Now this had one handy thing, it was not far from where Cities Services was doing exploration, but it made difficulties in my getting down there. Hitherto, I'd had to fly across to Bahrain, pick up Middle East Airlines, go to Sharjah in the UAE. Now, I had to fly across to Jeddah in Army Air Force planes, then fly Saudi airlines to Aden- closed up now, of course, then wide open-where Bill Crawford met me. And there we'd come into an airplane from the oil company and fly me over to Salalah. We lived with the oil people there. Also, there was a very nice British guy there whom I'm still in touch with, St. John Armitage and his wife Jennifer, and there you'd get a drink once in a while. (Laughs) Also, I must say, the British Bank of the Middle East in Muscat was also cordial at five o'clock in the afternoon. They'd give Russ and me a drink. I didn't want to carry liquor into the place, I just didn't want to have anything happen that would jeopardize in any way the operation.

Q: At what point did the negotiations move from Muscat?

SCHWINN: I can't tell you exactly. I think after Christmas of...

Q: Of '57?

SCHWINN: '57, yes. Because it was after that that we were then going down to Salalah. And I wish I could remember, except most of the negotiations were in Muscat, but quite a few were in Salalah.

Q: And the mode of the negotiations continued much as it was?

SCHWINN: That's right.

Q: One hour of explication and conversation...

SCHWINN: That's right. And I always was unhappy with this cut-off at twelve because I knew he had to go to prayers at noon-noon-time prayers were the important thing-and it

prevented me from doing other business with him than the treaty. You know, talking about the situation in Muscat, and in Oman, because when that coffee was served, you drank it, you had to go.

Well, we finished up, and it was in Salalah that we began to run into minor, they didn't prove too hard, problems. I don't know how much of this would be classified still or not, but I must say that one thing he was concerned about was the provision for the free exercise of religion. He was permitting the Dutch Reformed Church to carry out religious services in Muscat, and he was willing to permit that to go on, but he said to me, " I don't want preachers standing on the corners in the market and agitating my people."

Well, I said, "I don't think that would ever happen, and I'll see what assurances I can give you that it would be discouraged. I don't think the United States government would say, `We can't forbid it' because that would interfere with the free exercise of religion which we're trying to guarantee. But I think that they can give you some assurance." So, something came back from the Department that satisfied him.

The other problem, the subsidy, that gave him a problem-or, gave him no problem, he was simply firm about it-was that we'd proposed that any dispute with the United States should be settled by arbitration or at the World Court. Then I realized, of course...you see, the Buraymi problem had ended up with an arbitration procedure which had gone sour because he and the British contended that the Arabs, and basically the United States which was supporting them, had offered bribes to the arbitrators. He had that in mind. The Buraymi dispute never was really settled. It simply ended in this disagreement. I think in Geneva it was, or maybe The Hague, I'm not sure. That was before I was in Saudi Arabia. But the Buraymi dispute ended in an argument over an arbitration proceeding, and he didn't want to have any more of that. He didn't want to be committed to arbitration or the World Court.

Well, the Department came back and said, "Try again." I told them, "I don't think there's any possibility because of this history, that he would ever consent to it." So I tried again the very last day we were negotiating. He said, "I'm sorry, I cannot accept that idea at all." So there's no arbitration provision in the treaty or World Court provision.

Q: To this day.

SCHWINN: Again, I don't know what Qaboos may have done, his successor. I don't know how Qaboos may have dealt with that situation, or if he had to deal with it at all. Qaboos has had his own version of "glasnost." (Laughs) I mean, he's opened up so much there.

Q: That leads to another question I wanted to ask. It's not clear to me, although I'm no expert on the Middle East, it's not clear to me why the Sultan, his father, wanted to negotiate this treaty in the first place, given that he was a social and religious conservative. Surely as an educated man he must have realized that if Americans started

running around the country and oil companies came in that that would bring change with it.

SCHWINN: Well, he did ask me at one point whether or not we would supply him with arms. Of course, I referred to the Department, and the Department said, "We will sell him arms if he wishes. We will not give him a grant of arms." He had maybe that in mind.

Q: His concern with arms was appropos the recent rebellion?

SCHWINN: I don't know. His armed forces were under the control of the British. Colonel Wakefield, I think, was the guy who trained his armed forces. I never inquired what arms he wanted, what kind of arms, because it just never got that far. The Department was so insistent that they would not give him a grant, which is what he was after. And mind you, he was not at that point a rich sultan, he had royalties from Cities Service, but that was all, and he had income from the sale of dates and that sort of thing. But he was not rich. So a grant would have been useful to him, if not critical. He was not part of our program for grants, but we would sell arms. The Department didn't indicate that it was one kind of arms, but they would sell them to him. He sort of sadly shook his head, "So sorry." Those were the extraneous things.

Q: Let me ask you a piece of history that you may or may not be aware of. He had been approached before you became Consul-General, is that correct? You knew, when you went there in 1957, that you would carry on these negotiations. That implies that he had agreed to them before you went to Saudi Arabia.

SCHWINN: Yes, I guess so.

Q: Did he ever say anything in the course of the negotiations or make clear to you when and why he agreed to renegotiate the treaty?

SCHWINN: No, he never did. And I didn't, of course, ask him. I didn't pry into the reasons. I just assumed he was agreeable. I think he wanted to curry favor with the United States. He was under the protection of the British, obliged to them. But I think he liked to have another wing, and I think that he....

Q: Did he sense that British power in that part of the world was rapidly declining?

SCHWINN: He was an intelligent man, and I think he drew conclusions. Again, he never indicated anything of that kind. I don't know whether he read the New York Times or not, but I think that he was aware that the way things were going in the Persian Gulf and in India.... I must say, just speaking of the procedures that I followed.... Although the foreign minister never appeared....

Q: The British fellow.

SCHWINN: The Sultan's foreign minister.

Q: No, no. The Sultan's foreign minister, who was a British fellow.

SCHWINN: Yes. He never appeared. But after every session, either that afternoon or the next day, I called on him and gave him a rough precis. I also called the British Consul-General and gave him a rough precis because I thought it important that nobody suspected that we were doing anything underhand or contrary to British interests or anything like that. I didn't give him a copy of the treaty to read. It was up to him to get that if he wanted it. But I told him at least, "We talked about this today, and this is what happened."

Q: And ultimately the treaty itself became a public document.

SCHWINN: That's right, yes. So I was very careful on that. Also, when I got back to Dhahran, I went straight up to Dammam and told the Amir (laughs) what had gone on. And also I stopped in Bahrain. I mean, I touched every possible base.

Q: What was the Amir's reaction?

SCHWINN: He just was interested. It got very interesting. Sulayman bin Himyar and Talib and Ghalib all appeared at Dammam, living on the hospitality of the Amir. So, every time I went to dinner at the Amirate, I'd be seated on the Amir's left, and there they all were, three arranged on his right. (Laughs) We bowed to each other. They came to call on me one day. I don't know what they wanted, I had nothing to offer them. You could see how many tangles there were of the interrelationships. The Amir's enemies, the Sultan on one hand, and the Amir's friends, Talib and Ghalib-they were all tangled relationships.

Q: While we're on the subject of the treaty, let me ask one or two other questions. You said that the Sultan had minor reservations. You mentioned the question of religious proselytizing, and you also mentioned the business about arms. Were there any other sticking points in the negotiations?

SCHWINN: No. The arbitration problem.

Q: I'm sorry, the arbitration problem, and also his disappointment in not being able to receive a grant of military assistance.

SCHWINN: Of course, that was apart from the treaty.

Q: That did not involve a provision in the draft of the treaty?

SCHWINN: No, no. It simply was that as we got toward the end, he thought it was probably a good time to raise this question, and he did. The next time I saw him I could say, "Sorry, the answer is no. If you want to buy some (laughs), we're glad to sell."

Q: Did you get a good impression of him as a man? What was he like?

SCHWINN: Well, he was very shy, or at least very reserved. All the time that Russ and I were with him, back and forth, only once did he offer hospitality. That was very formal- "Would we come for dinner on a certain night? Black tie, please." And we appeared.

I don't know what's going on now, but in those days, we were living outside the wall. If you went inside the wall after dark, you had to carry a lighted lantern. You've probably read about that in some of the books. Not a flashlight-a lighted kerosene lantern. Russ and I must have looked rather comical in our black tie (laughs), carrying a lantern as we trudged through the streets to the Sultan's palace.

But that evening, again, was rather formal. The Wali of Matrah was there. Just the four of us. We had agreeable conversation, but nothing light. (Laughs) It was all measured tones. After dinner he entertained us by...not shooting things, but showing us his collection of revolvers. He was a great marksman. He brought those out, and we looked at them and admired (laughs), and "oohed" and "aahed," and God, I had nothing to say about revolvers. (Laughs) That was the last thing in my history that I could talk about. So, he was shy. He was greatly reserved, his smiles were...he rarely laughed aloud, to my memory. He didn't lean back and, "Ha, ha, ha'd," he just would smile.

Q: Would you say that behavior was characteristic or uncharacteristic of most Arab leaders in the region?

SCHWINN: I would suspect it was most characteristic, yes. The sheiks that I met - again, I met them just once or twice, so I'd expect them to be reserved in the first meeting. The Amir, Al Hasa, became much more "unbuttoned," so to speak, as I got to know him, and he would chuckle from time to time. I remember, I came back from Il Khali once. I'd spent Christmas in Jerusalem, traveled around there. When I came back to make my first call after two weeks, I said to his secretary, who always interpreted for us, "I want to play a little joke on the Amir today." I just said "a little joke" to the interpreter.

Well, when I sat down, I said, "Your Highness, I've come to make an apology to you." The Amir looked a little uneasy. He didn't want to hear anything like that. I said, "I've offended the laws of Saudi Arabia." He looked even worse, like I was going to talk about liquor. I said, "I've offended the laws of Saudi Arabia by bringing in a weapon. I'm going to surrender it to you." And I brought out little paper knife in the shape of a sword. He was so relieved that he didn't have to hear an apology of an embarrassing nature. (Laughs) He really laughed out loud, and he brought that up more than once when I saw him. He said, "I still have your weapon here."

Q: I used to play bridge with an Egyptian physician, and I once asked him about the question of liquor in the Nizwahic world. He said that there was a great deal of hypocrisy, that in fact, the wealthy and the leadership drank, but did so discreetly. Was that your experience?

SCHWINN: Well, in Saudi Arabia, no. The Saudis are the Wahhabi sect, which is very conservative. I'm not aware that any Saudi drank, so to speak, on the premises-in Saudi Arabia. I brought liquor in from Bahrain, and it was managed quite well. I would bring it in on a little plane, and then my driver would come up on the tarmac, which wasn't permitted, but he did take the locker out and put it in the car. I would go up and talk to the customs director.

Once, my driver, Nur, didn't appear, and this foot locker filled with gin was taken up and put on the counter in the customs place. The customs director said, "No, leave it here." And he was unhappy as hell. He didn't enter into conversation with me at all, just strode up and down. Then in came Nur, late, and he [customs director] could see he was aghast, and the customs director called him over. Of course, I can't understand Arabic, but I realized that Nur's hide was being taken off (laughs) strip by strip by strip. He put it in the car and we drove out.

It was about a mile and a half or two miles from the airport to the residency. Halfway up I said to Nur, "What did the customs director have to say to you?"

"Oh, he's very unhappy with me. You know, he doesn't like me at all!"

I said, "That's obvious. What did he say?"

"Well, he said (inaudible)."

"Nur, tell me exactly what he said."

"He said to me, `Don't ever let this happen again. This box here on this base is an embarrassment to all of us.'"

In other words, he knew.

Q: So it was a matter of face, not of the presence of the liquor.

SCHWINN: Well, I got a call one day, when I was back up here in retirement and it turned out to be the customs director. He was down in New York, and he'd love to see me. So, I made arrangements to go down, and he was at a hotel on Lexington Avenue. I went up to the desk to get his number, and someone gave me a great bear hug. There he was, smiling and happy, and he said, "I'd like to have a drink." So we went over and sat down in the cafe. I said, "What would you like?"

"I'm going to have a martini." (Laughs) It was very nice. We both had a martini. Just beautiful relationships.

I'd called ARAMCO, and I said, "Do you know the customs director's in town?"

"Oh, yes indeed. We're having a lunch for him."

I said, "May I come?" (Laughs)

They said, "Sure, come along." So we went up to Delmonico's and joined ARAMCO for lunch that day.

Q: Let me go back to the treaty, if I may.

SCHWINN: I'm sorry to get so far ahead.

Q: No, no. That's all right. That's actually quite interesting. It's one of the things that had crossed my mind in thinking about this interview. It also relates to what you said earlier about the reputation of the assignment as being a rugged or difficult one, partly I suppose, because of the stricture against alcoholic beverages.

What happened after the treaty was ratified? I believe it was ratified finally in 1959. And did you notice any changes?

SCHWINN: No. To the best of my knowledge there were none. I was on my way home for home leave-three months-when the treaty was before the Senate. As I heard afterwards from the guys on the Saudi desk, it went through everything very easily. After all, there was hardly any change in it from what the Department had proposed. The only question raised was on the Senate floor by Jack Javits, the Senator from New York. He wanted to make sure that nothing in it could be interpreted as discriminatory against Jews. That was a problem always in that area about....

Q: Discriminatory against Jews or against Israelis?

SCHWINN: Jews and Israelis.

Q: It's hard for me to imagine what provision of the treaty might have been.

SCHWINN: Well, I don't thing there was anything there, but Javits was just making sure for his constituents and himself. Among other things, ARAMCO had lots of problems with B'nai B'rith in New York about its hiring policies. Obviously, ARAMCO could not hire Jews to work in Saudi Arabia. Obviously, B'nai B'rith insisted they ought to try. One of these conflicts, again, that must made life so difficult. So, Javits, just representing his constituents, made sure that nothing in the treaty could be interpreted as discriminating against the Jews. But that was the only question raised about it. As I say, there was no reason to raise any because the only thing that was not there was this arbitration and World Court thing.

Q: Were you present in the Senate when it was discussed?

SCHWINN: No, I was on my way back home at that time.

Q: Well, if there was not a great deal of change after 1959, was there a great deal of change after 1970, when the Sultan was overthrown by his son, Qaboos bin Said? The reason I ask that question is because I know that you had a chance to go back, although as a private citizen, but nevertheless to go back to the country in 1977. What changes did you observe then?

SCHWINN: Oh, incredible changes. In the meantime, oil had come in, you see. Qaboos had taken control. Incidentally, Qaboos did to his father, what Taimur did to his father. Each son each deposes the father. I don't know whether Qaboos had sons, but if he does, the day is coming [laughs] when he will be deposed. This is the way they manage these changes.

No, I was completely disoriented in Muscat. The old palace had been torn down, and a great big wedding cake put in its place. I mean, it saddened me a great deal to see this. I liked that old palace. It had charm, and it was old, and here was this splash of white granite going across the whole frontage of the harbor. I just think it's too bad, but Qaboos is a young man.... Muscat is surrounded by hills. The harbor and all that is part of an old volcano, so it's very restricted in the space.

Q: It's like Hong Kong.

SCHWINN: Like Hong Kong, yes. So Qaboos has decreed that buildings inside should take advantage of the grounds available, but most of the building is over the hill in what is called Matrah and that area. Well, of course, that's changed enormously because when I was there, the road to Miswah, which the Sultan wouldn't permit me to go up [I usually got the car to take me], used to just be a camel trail. They got the camels down to the interiors. Well now, the camel park there that I used to see day after day with hundreds of camels squatting there, bringing the goods in, taking the goods out-gone. Motor cars gone to Miswah, the British Bank of the Middle East was up high....

Q: So the country is rapidly being Westernized. Or at least the infrastructure of the country?

SCHWINN: Yes, that's right. I must say, I think there are two churches there now, so practiced religion goes on, although it's primarily Protestant. There may be a Catholic [church], I'm not sure.

Q: So the assurances you gave to the Sultan were in fact honored, if that's the right word. There was relatively little missionary penetration after 1959-has been relatively little.

SCHWINN: So far as I know. I think that the Dutch Reformed had been there since the middle of the 19th century, also in Kuwait, the Dutch Reformed began. There's a little

cemetery down near the harbor. It has the remains of the first missionaries and all who came out there. I was very fond of the missionaries there. The Thoms' were great people, just marvelous to us. But many of their services have been taken over by the state, and I think the hospital is now a state hospital. They worked for the state rather than for the Church. One of the guys that built up quite a reputation as an archeologist is now the State Archeologist and is Archivist and all that sort of thing. He's the guy who's now on the payroll. (Laughs) It's great that the history of Muscat is being assembled, but I'm unhappy to see everything taken over that way.

Q: Even the lanterns.

SCHWINN: (Laughs) Even the lanterns, yes. I think they've gone.

Q: Let me return to Saudi Arabia. Your service did not end with the ratification of the treaty. In fact, you continued with the Foreign Service until 1961. I would like to quote you a passage from a 1985 memorandum you wrote about your stay in Dhahran, which you kindly shared with me before the interview, but since it may not be available to whoever's listening to this tape or reading the transcript, I'll quote the memorandum.

"With a small staff of virtually no Arabic speakers, the consulate was not in a position to undertake extensive reporting on conditions in Al-Asad. Moreover, ARAMCO, for its own purposes, gathered detailed information on such matters as the state of the local economy, the size and character of the labor force, including foreign labor, and the existence of political activity, indigenous or foreign. Many reports by ARAMCO were passed to the Department of State from the Embassy in Jeddah, who received them from the ARAMCO representative there."

My first question is, how did ARAMCO get all this information?

SCHWINN: Well, ARAMCO established a first-rate government relations staff. I don't know how many Arabic speakers they had. Just guys, Americans, and I guess some Arabs, but Americans, speaking Arabic, reading the press, talking to people. One man whom I still see lives just up the road here in Massachusetts, every day went to the Amirate, whether he had anything to talk about or not, just to sit in the majlis, make himself available to the Amir. He got on very good terms, you see, and would get information that way. So it was more having a first-rate staff of Arabic speakers, readers...also having people all over the province, running refineries, digging wells, pumping things. What's up? There in the business of foreign labor. They're hiring people.

Q: Was there any one person in charge of this information gathering at ARAMCO? Or any one bureau within the company?

SCHWINN: I think maybe the government relations staff had that responsibility. I think so. I don't know, though.

Q: Now as you say in you memorandum, this information was then selectively shared with the State Department, or rather with the Embassy. This prompts me to ask whether or not ARAMCO had a decisive role in shaping policy in Saudi Arabia, given its control of information.

SCHWINN: Yes. Shaping American policy?

Q: Yes.

SCHWINN: I would say...this sounds like Charlie Wilson. I would say, "What's good for Iraq goes good for the United States." (Laughs) What's good for the United States is good for ARAMCO. The interests were so parallel, so much identified-not entirely, of course, but a big overlap. Our interest, probably, in Saudi Arabia stemmed from the creation of ARAMCO. A very large part. Without ARAMCO, our interest might have been very different there. ARAMCO and oil, they overlap so much, it'd be hard to say they are identical. No, they obviously are not, but I think there's so much overlap that the policies.... I'm not aware, for example, of any great conflict between ARAMCO and America and the United States.

Q: If my memory serves me correctly, was there not a controversy over the fact that the royalties paid to the Saudis were deducted as business expenses?

SCHWINN: Yes, yes.

Q: And therefore, that money did not go into the U.S. Treasury. So there were some areas of at least potential conflict.

SCHWINN: I remember that. It was not an area of my interest, particularly. I'm just not enough of an economist to...and originally I think it was fought in Washington rather than out in the field.

Q: It was not a State Department issue?

SCHWINN: Probably IRS rather than State Department. Obviously, it would be interesting. ARAMCO hired excellent people. I forget the name of the guy who worked down in Washington for many years, but a very good operator. (Laughs) A first-rate type. Obviously, they represent their own interests and that sort of thing. ARAMCO, you see, was made up of four companies: Mobil, Texaco, SOCAL, and New Jersey. So all these companies had an interest into how much they were getting out of it. They'd fight for their interest just as much as they could, as they would if they were in the United States. Of course, that wasn't really a Saudi problem in the sense that the Saudis weren't involved.

Q: No. The Saudis were interested in royalties, but not whether it came off their taxes or not.

SCHWINN: Yes. And as I say in that memorandum, the beginning of OPEC was under way.

Q: Let me quote that passage. "The overall trend in U.S.-Saudi relations, between 1957 and 1961, was [and these are your words], in my opinion, a slow drift downwards," quoting from memorandum. "Individual relations remained friendly, even cordial, but during those years Abdullah Turki began the agitation for a higher return to the Saudis of the profits from the sale of oil, agitation that eventually led to the creation, under other auspices than his, of OPEC. The United States' support of Israel was a constant source of quiet tension. The prestige of the United States declined somewhat after the Soviet Union sent Sputnik into space. In 1961, the Saudis withdrew their permission for virtual absolute control of the airbase by the United States. This was due primarily not to hostility to the U.S., but to fear of possible nationalist agitation inspired by Nasser and other Arab extremists for Syria and Iraq."

Now, in this quotation you mention several factors behind the "slow drift downwards," in U.S.-Saudi relations. Which of those factors do you consider most important?

SCHWINN: The support in Israel is a constant there. As the situation developed, it seems to me that the American appearance of even-handedness between the Arab world and the Israelis disappeared. It seemed to me the tilt toward the Israelis steadily increased. In '56 for example, when Eisenhower stopped the Suez war, that was an even-handed operation. (Laughs) It seems to me that since then, and particularly after my time, the tilt steadily was in favor of the Israelis, rather than the even-handed approach. I think it went down, again, after my time, much more in the 1973 war, I think, when Kissinger really threw everything we had into defeating the Iraqis. Just throwing everything we had to demonstrate that our war material was better than the Soviets, and so on. That's the constant.

OPEC, of course, brought us.... ARAMCO worried, and I think the government worried, about the Turki agitation, and saw this thing coming as a source of real trouble. I think that the legal department at ARAMCO had this always on its agenda, you know, always there as a problem. It didn't come about seriously, of course, again, until `73-`74, when the embargo hit us very hard. But there it was, and I think it was real trouble. I think those two things, but...what were the others?

Q: Oh, the fear of agitation inspired by Nasser?

SCHWINN: Well, undoubtedly it was a blow when we lost full control of the airbase. Our role their became.... I don't know. That happened just as I left, and I don't know exactly how the Air Force worked itself out in the control of the airbase.

Q: When tape number two ended, you were talking about the fact that the United States lost control of the airbase shortly after you left, or about the time you left in 1961?

SCHWINN: Lost absolute control, yes.

Q: That there had been a token...

SCHWINN: There had been a token Arab, Saudi, in charge, but it was really a token. Of course, I don't know all the inwardness of the Saudi regime, but it has always been a rather uneasy one. After all, it's a small country in population, and while its status is improving, it's still largely nomadic, still largely uneducated. That's changing very rapidly, I think, but not enough, I think, to give its rulers supreme confidence. I think that the outward appearance of the ruling house looks rather wealthy, they can do what they please, they have all this. I think actually they feel unsure, particularly since the Iranian Revolution. All the time, back even then, I think that there's always been a little uneasiness, insecurity, on the part of the Saudis. As our policy has tilted more away from the Arab world, their insecurity is even greater. They don't feel quite so confident, and particularly in these latter years, when our-if I may say-our policy in the Gulf has simply become so erratic as to be undependable.

Q: Well, that leads to my next question, so I may as well go ahead and ask it. You really are in a very unusual, in fact almost unique, position to try to answer this question, since you've had experience not only as a diplomat in the Middle East, but as a journalist and a news analyst and an editorial writer. It's a big question, if you want to break it down into pieces, but the question is, what have been the principle strengths and weaknesses of American foreign policy in the Middle East since the 1950s, when you first gained personal acquaintance with the region?

SCHWINN: The greatest weakness, I think, has been the lack of even-handedness in dealing with the Israelis and the Arabs. As that has disappeared, the Saudis have been less secure, less confident, less [un]certain, and with reason, as to how much they might depend upon...I mean, I'm not an expert in arms. I don't know how much the Saudis ought to be given arms or how much they ought not to be given arms. But, it seems to me we're now at a constant struggle between the Executive and the Congress as to supplying arms. Should the Saudis have AWACS? Yes, no, yes, no. Should they have certain kinds of missiles? Yes, no, yes, no. It must be very hard for the Saudis defense minister to make plans, particularly as he looks across the Persian Gulf and doesn't know what in the world may come out of that situation.

I think it's a weakness that the United States has not made a more active effort to end the Iraqi-Iranian War. Obviously, we just made a mess of our relations with Iran. Nobody knows, nobody ought to know, can know, what our policy really is. Do we want to make friends with them or are they enemies? We should be in a position and we're not, to take a stand that would say, "Now look, can't we bring this thing to an end?" Our influence has been so eroded by fantastic policies run by amateurs for their own interest, that you don't know where to go. I wouldn't know, if I were in the Saudi Foreign Ministry, the Saudi Defense Ministry, what to count upon, and particularly in a very uncertain world there in the Gulf. And what's true to the Saudis must be even more true of the guys who are trying

to run the United Arab Emirates, or that gutsy little guy, as I see him, Qaboos, down in Muscat, running risks on our behalf. I don't know why he does it. I don't know what...there he is, sitting in the Straits of Hormuz, with Chinese Silkworm missiles across from him, and yet he does more in many ways than the Saudis do. He gives us more privileges, takes more chances. And yet he has a very small country. The Saudis are way advanced than him. And God, the people in Lebanon or Jordan are millenium ahead of where the Muscatis and Omanis are. And yet, Qaboos takes his chance.

Q: So would it be fair to say that while you were active in the Middle East, you observed a gradual deterioration in relations with the Arabs? Since then, the deterioration has been even more pronounced, and the situation is even more uncertain than it was?

SCHWINN: Indeed. Indeed. Yes, and particularly, I still think, in the last couple of years.

Q: I have a couple more questions I'd like to ask about your experience in Saudi Arabia. Can you give me a kind of general description about your responsibilities and your daily activities when you were not negotiating the treaty with the Sultan? What were your usual responsibilities and duties? What would be a typical day at the Consulate?

SCHWINN: I just want to say one more thing. In addition to the treaty, I was responsible for plans affecting Americans from Dar es Salaam to Dacca. This was plans regarding upheaval and that sort of thing.

Q: You mean a potential evacuation of Americans?

SCHWINN: That's right, yes. So that took a [good] deal of time, and also I was out of the country a good deal. That was just one more factor.

Q: That's rather interesting and surprising.

SCHWINN: What I don't know is how much classified this still is.

Q: Well, let me speak in general terms. With whom were you planning, with ARAMCO, with the Air Force?

SCHWINN: ARAMCO, and the Air Force, and the individual missions-Kabul....

Q: Looking at the contingency of a Nasser-style uprising or...?

SCHWINN: Any kind. How do people from Kabul get to Peshawar, from Peshawar to Isalamabad, and Isalamabad to Amritsar and on.

Q: They could have used you in Tehran in 1979.

SCHWINN: (Laughs) Matter of fact, that whole effort was misguided, as was demonstrated in 1958. Was that when the Iraqi revolution took place?

Q: I'm sorry. Let's back up for a minute. "That whole effort"-do you mean the effort to prepare plans for evacuation?

SCHWINN: Yes. [It] came to a halt when Baghdad was taken over, and the young king, Faisal, was killed, and what's his name -- Nuri as Said -- was killed.

The plans we had just didn't work because, obviously, they wouldn't permit Air Force planes in, [and] they wouldn't permit ARAMCO planes. The only thing that they could do up there was to get U.S. planes to come-where, into Turkey was it?

Q: Yes, Turkey. I think at that time Turkey was part of NATO, but go ahead.

SCHWINN: The whole effort fell apart. While we continued to plan-as I say, I was out of the country a good deal, from Dar-es Salaam down in Tanzania to Bangladesh-what was then East Pakistan-and India and Kabul....

Q: It's not obvious to me why that responsibility fell to you as Consul-General in Dhahran.

SCHWINN: Well, because ARAMCO was there with a large group of potential evacuees, and the Air Force was there with some airplanes. And it wasn't far over to Eritrea, where we had a base to take people to.

Q: Oh, I see. So it was a matter of logistics and geography.

SCHWINN: Yes. At Kagnew Station we had this warehouse full of food, bedding, all kinds of stuff.

Q: But once you did this, once you prepared these plans, they more or less sat on the shelf.

SCHWINN: More or less, yes. Except, it was awfully hard to keep them up to date. It was a job I didn't do too well, I think, but it fell to me to try. Now, when I wasn't doing that or the treaty...you really want a day? Want to see if I can recap it?

Q: A typical day in the life? As a person who was not involved personally in the Foreign Service, yes, that sort of social- historical detail would be of interest to me.

SCHWINN: Well, I had this rather pleasant residence. It wasn't the most elegant, but it was okay. I had a staff of three boys. I would wake up in the morning-at that time I smoked heavily-and had breakfast around eight. This may sound vainglorious, but I was in the position to ease a lot of things. One, I'd brought my own automobile out. I hired my

own chauffeur. I hired my own gardener. My representation money I split among the staff. It was very small, but I wanted to encourage them to use it, and I could pay for my own entertaining.

Well, I'd have my breakfast, my cook would serve it. I forget what it was now, but we had a lot of papaya. I had raised my own papaya. We had good food from the commissary at the airbase and from the commissary at ARAMCO. We were permitted to draw on both. The food was okay, very good. We had a lot of good steak and frozen chicken, and, you know, anything you wanted. Frozen vegetables, lots of them. We had the local fruits.

I would then be driven down - I might have walked, but it was really pretty hot. Temperatures there, except in January and February, ran up around a hundred every day, you see. My car was air-conditioned, so Nur would drive me down and drop me at the office around eight. I would speak to the Marine guards, wish them "Good morning" and "How was the night?" The communicators were already in, and whatever traffic had come, I would look at. I'd sit down and read whatever telegrams and all had arrived. I forget how often the pouch came, about once a week is my recollection. So I had that to go through.

We had staff meetings fairly often, but the staff was so small that usually we all sat next to each other in just an aisle there, so it was just to drop by and talk. Kep Lewis was my deputy for a long time, an admirable guy, and he was very good at keeping the operations going day to day, to day to day. The operations weren't difficult. The Consulate-General had been set up primarily to service ARAMCO, as the thousands of people kept coming in. It was set up forty-odd years ago to keep their passports valid, to render services as required. But again, ARAMCO could take so much off our backs.

Q: That seems to me to be the point that keeps recurring, is that....

SCHWINN: Did my memo speak about-it did speak about the welfare cases, didn't it?

Q: Yes, that in a sense, the consulate, if not redundant, was almost, in a way, peripheral, except of course for your more critical special activities, such as negotiating the treaty.

SCHWINN: Well, we made a mistake at one point in not to keep looking after our welfare people enough. The guys, mainly ARAMCO personnel, who were in the jug for one thing or another. Because ARAMCO looked after them so well, we said, "Why bother?" Except when a guy got back to the States and raised hell with his congressman that nobody from the consulate had looked after him. So, we set up a plan at once, that no matter what happened, one of our boys would go up every week, talk to him, see if there was anything we could do, make sure that he was getting.... See, ARAMCO was bringing him food every day and making a report back, "So and so case number three was visited yesterday." So, we got that straightened out.

We had problems of ships coming in to Rastanurra who'd touched at an Israeli port, and what to do about them [to] get them off the hook because that was forbidden by the Saudis. If they'd touched at an Israeli port, they couldn't touch at our ports. So we had that problem. One time a ship showed up, running out of fuel. It had touched at an Israeli port. Happily, COMIDEASTFOR, based then in Bahrain, bailed us out on that one. It gone done.

COMIDEASTFOR was one of my regular calls. I went over to see the British about every two weeks just to keep in touch. Very good reciprocal relations happened that way because, since the British weren't represented in Saudi Arabia, they would often call on me. I addressed Imperial war colleges four times (laughs) on what was going on in Saudi Arabia. [I addressed the] Canadian War College once.

Q: Were you strictly going through channels on that? Did you receive the approval of the State Department to do that?

SCHWINN: Never thought of it until you mentioned it. I just did it. Why should I...?

Q: Well, it's only that that the State Department might have worried about how that activity was perceived by the Saudis.

SCHWINN: Well, I don't know that the Saudis knew about it. I never thought of that, frankly. I was trying to be obliging. I mean, I cherished my relationships with the British over there, and they seemed to want it, so....

Q: So it was not a big deal.

SCHWINN: Yes. Besides, as I recall, relations between the British and the Saudies weren't that bad. I mean, it had to be handled with gloves. Not like between the Sultan and the Saudis. (Laughs) Not that bad.

So, I'd drive back up from lunch. Sometimes [I] had one or another of the staff for lunch. I tried to keep in touch with the Marines because, God, they were living a hard life. A lot of strong young men down there, virile as hell, and cut off from nearly any social contact with gals. The secretaries didn't want to be identified with the Marines.

Q: That's an interesting detail. The secretaries-meaning the single women who worked...you mean, single Arabic women or....

SCHWINN: No, we had no....

Q: American women.

SCHWINN: Yes.

Q: [They] did not wish to be identified with the Marines?

SCHWINN: They didn't snub them, but they didn't go out of their way to....

Q: It was considered declasse.

SCHWINN: I think they would regard it as so, yes. A little social difference. The Marines were very good boys, again simple lads-nice ones, responsible.

The work day ended at 4:30 pm or so, and there was always something to write, some cable to respond to, some report to get done. After dinner I often would try to take a walk, when the day would cool off a bit. I'd try to walk down the road a while and get some exercise, although I weighed about twenty pounds more then than I do now. I'd have people in. I entertained the Amir once, rather elaborately.

Then, of course, we were always on call. I cannot tell you how often, at five o'clock for example, we got a call from the Amirate, "The Amir wishes to have you for dinner in half an hour." I would have to get one or two of the boys - the other officers - to go with me. And that wasn't a very pleasant assignment because they had to leave their wives and sit around in this dull meeting, I mean this dull…. When the King was there, it was every night. He'd have us come for a week. And not merely in Dammam. [You] were expected to be there.

Now those dinners were really quite a bore. I hope no Saudi hear's too much of this, but at sunset time, in other words, four o'clock in the afternoon or seven o'clock at night. You'd come after sunset, after their evening prayers. Majlis was this large room, where there were overstuffed chairs all around. The Amir would eat in the center-or the King-and as the ranking American, I would sit at his left. He had his own people on his right. Below me would be my own staff, plus then all the ARAMCO personnel also were summoned in the same way. There we sat.

Q: So the Saudis perceived you and the ARAMCO personnel as essentially a unit.

SCHWINN: Well, not essentially a unit so much, but we were certainly complementary.

Q: Certainly in social terms.

SCHWINN: Yes. Complementary. Of course, I outranked them because of my official status, but not in really standing with them. (Laughs) The president of ARAMCO was a more important person than I was. (Laughs) They made sure of that.

A huge slave would appear [with] a coffee pot this big and a fistful of little cups. He was remarkable. He could take that coffee pot, this high....

Q: About three feet high and pour it into....

SCHWINN: And pour a stream of coffee. (Laughs) Of course, I was lucky because I was at the head of this line, on this side, so I got a clean cup. But after four had been served, he'd put them all back (laughs) and start serving the next....

Q: This prompts another question. A good midwestern progressive like you finds himself in a country in which there is slavery and in which the role of women is, to put in mildly, circumscribed. How did you feel about that?

SCHWINN: Well, obviously I don't favor slavery. I like emancipated women. But, if you're in that situation, you can't do anything about it. There's no use crying. It's part of the situation you're dealing with. I, frankly, am a little questionable about human rights. I think there's just a point beyond which you shouldn't attempt to go in telling other people how to manage their lives. Imprisonment is one thing, womens' rights is another. I just don't think you can tell the Saudis that they ought to unveil their women. I just don't think you can do it.

Q: Well, I wasn't asking this in policy terms. What I was really asking is your personal reaction.

SCHWINN: Well, obviously, you'd prefer that they weren't that way. But on the other hand, when I was back there in '77, I stopped at Dhahran. In the course of a week I was staggered. By this time oil money was flowing like hell. Dhahran and Dammam and Al Khobar were all completely changed. Great big hotels, boutiques and shops.

Well, one night the Consul-General invited me to go with him and his wife to the apartment down in Al Khobar of a big contractor-Arabic-who was entertaining some Americans. Businessmen. I was shocked, frankly, to enter that room and find whether the wife, or the consort, or the mistress, or concubine sitting there with a dress cut to here.

Q: Very low cut.

SCHWINN: And boys passing trays of martinis. See, I was so accustomed to the other kind of pure life of the Saudis, that this offended me in a way. Yet, if that had been in Miami, it'd been fine. (Laughs) But in Saudi Arabia....

Q: It was shocking. It seemed out of context.

SCHWINN: It was out of context, that's exactly the word, because you just didn't see a wife, when I was there, back in the old days. [Did] I describe my day enough?

Q: Yes, yes. It remains only to ask why you retired in 1961?

SCHWINN: [It was] mandatory.

Q: Age.

SCHWINN: I was sixty years old. They had to put me in a straitjacket (laughs) to get me out of the place.

Q: So, if you had had your druthers-to use another midwestern expressions-you would have continued in the Foreign Service, and specifically would have continued serving in that part of the world?

SCHWINN: I'm proud enough to say I'd go where I was sent. I wouldn't have minded at all, an experience in Africa. That would have pleased me, if I could have had a tour of duty...Sub-Saharan, particularly. That would have been agreeable to me.

[As a] matter of fact, when I was back on home leave in '59, the Saudi desk guy sighted me out on being sent to Khartoum as number two. Well, I said, "Whatever you will. What you want will be fine. I'm not going to push for it." One reason I didn't push was the Ambassador there had a reputation of being a martinet. And I, who'd never been a DCM, just wondered whether I could meet his requirements. After all, I was very comfortable where I was in Dhahran. So, I chose to go back. It wasn't pushed. I said, "Now, let's leave it stand as it is."

Q: As a footnote to that, though, you did have one other official duty. In 1965 you returned to Poland as the director of an exhibition of graphic arts, is that correct?

SCHWINN: Yes.

Q: How did that come about?

SCHWINN: Well, Dick Davies, who had gone with me down to Wroclaw, as I told you earlier, for this international peace conference...he was a young officer on first duty, first post, back in 1946. He was at this time in 1965 a deputy director of USIA, in charge of Eastern Europe. And this big graphic arts exhibit, a handsome show-God, just a beautiful show, [with] all kinds of top flight guys, Ben Shawn-I forget, it covered acres it seemed to me. And we had a huge staff of Polish speakers, and a full-fledged print shop which was turning out prints to be distributed. Dick was in charge of that.

All of the sudden, in January of '65, I got a call from him from Washington. He said, "Look, I'm in trouble. I have this exhibit and no director. Will you go?"

I said, "Great. I'd love to." I'd just accepted the presidency of the Mark Twain Memorial office, but I said sure, I'd love to. So, I did. It was a good experience. I was happy to be back in Poland, seeing people again. Enough of the old staff was still around, so there was a lot of "embrazos" and backslappings and that sort of thing. But also, I enjoyed this experience. We were a month or more in Krakow and a month or more in Warsaw, and then we spent the last month or so in Szczecin, which was Stettin, where the Nazis had

launched the campaign against Norway. That was a very odd thing, to find that German-Lutheran town taken over by Polish Catholics. (Laughs) But that was a good experience. I enjoyed it very much.

Q: Now you mentioned the Mark Twain Memorial. I'd like to conclude the interview by asking you to briefly describe your activities, especially your cultural and educational activities in Hartford since your retirement in 1961.

SCHWINN: Well, I came back to Hartford...I thought for a while I might stay in Washington, but I then realized that that would be a sometime thing. Friends would be in for a couple three years and then out again, and I wouldn't have a stable life. And I have my old friends up here. After all, I came here in 1929.

Well, I came back to Hartford...I thought for a while I might stay in Washington, but I then realized that that would be a sometime thing. Friends would be in for a couple three years and then out again, and I wouldn't have a stable life. And I have my old friends up here. After all, I came here in 1929. And so, I thought, "I'd better get back to Hartford, where they are."

Polly Peck, whom you remember, was an old, old friend, and she said to me one day, "What are you going to do?" It so happened that, with my annuity and a little bit of Social Security and a few dividends, I didn't have to be gainfully employed. So [I said], "I don't know. Whatever comes."

I did some work for what is now the World Affairs Center. I set up its executive program series. I set that together. Then Polly said, "Well, we need people at the Mark Twain Memorial at the Hartford Art School." So I said, "Well, okay." So I joined the Memorial and became a trustee in '64, and then in '65 they elected me president. I was president for five years.

Q: You also, I believe, served as a trustee not only in the Hartford Arts School but in the University of Hartford itself.

SCHWINN: That's right. The Hartford Arts School was not my prime interest, but it was good. There were good people around and a good problem in many ways. They had two trustees assigned to the regency, so I was one of those for six years.

Q: Now, I have tried in the course of this interview to take you systematically through you life and career-your journalistic career, your diplomatic career, your experiences in the Middle East and since your retirement. However, it's highly possible that I've overlooked some matters of importance. So, at the end of this interview, as at the end of every interview I've ever conducted, I would simply like to ask you whether there is any other pertinent information you wish to add?

SCHWINN: I can think of nothing, David. Of course, I could fill in detail, after detail, after detail, but it wouldn't add much. I think you've done a very good job of covering the important elements in my career.

Q: Well then, on behalf of the Foreign Service History Center, I would like to thank you very much.

SCHWINN: Well, thank you David.

SECOND SESSION, July 17, 1987, in Mr. Schwinn's apartment, West Hartford, Connecticut.

Q: The second session of this interview has been prompted by two things. First, I asked Mr. Schwinn if he would index the first session of the interview so that he could go over it and check the spelling of various names and so forth. He was kind enough to do that, but in listening to the tape again and in indexing the tape, several other details and comments occurred to him. He asked me if he could add those details and comments. Moreover, shortly after indexing the tape, he received a group of documents from a friend, a group of documents pertaining to the negotiations in Oman. Those documents also refreshed his memory on certain points and made it possible for him to provide further detail. So this session is essentially a way of allowing him to provide the further information. Walter, please proceed.

SCHWINN: On tape one, side one, in my telling about my going to Harvard, I failed to mention that one of the professors there who was most influential, then and in my later life, was Professor Irving Babbitt, who taught Comparative Literature and was a great authority on Rousseau and Romanticism. His explication of the errors of Romantic attitudes as personified by Rousseau were in my mind for many years after that.

Secondly, I'd like to point out that when the economic intelligence operation was set up, it was the intention that it should be a joint UK-US operation. But in Algiers at SHAEF, there were no British representatives, that is to say, no economic intelligence representatives. So, in Algiers I operated with strictly an American background and forces. When we got to Italy, however, in Bari and in Brindisi, the British supplied three or four or five persons, skilled in economic intelligence, who were very helpful indeed, particularly in the interrogation of prisoners of war. From then on, when we got back into SHAEF-AFHQ was in Algiers, SHAEF was in France-the British were then fully staffed. We had a joint team out in the field which I conducted, and we had a Britisher sitting back in the headquarters. But I just want to make sure that that's well understood because it was a very happy team. We worked very well together. We had somewhat different interests: the British were more interested in documents than we were, and they went after them zealously. But it was very successful, I think, the joint operation. I still see, these forty years later, some of the old British team when I go over to England.

On tape one, side two, I'd just like to point out that the George Marshall Library, in which there's a document I composed about the history of this little unit, is at Lexington, Kentucky, Washington and Lee.

Then I'd also like to emphasize that Mr. Acheson, as Secretary of State and previously Under Secretary, was very desirous of incorporating OSS into the Department of State. But he was never interested anywhere, and by his attitude generally, in taking OWI in-the information services. I would refer anybody who's interested to the book, Present at the Creation, page 257 and thereafter, as the story of this effort to get the OSS into the Department. If OSS had gone into the Department, there might never have been a CIA.

I spoke about the attitude of the old Foreign Service officers toward USIA. They were naturally rather suspicious and uneasy about this strange group of guys without their experience and background and lacking their status. Coming in, we looked at the group a little suspiciously. As years went on, I'm happy to say, the rapport between the Foreign Service and USIA is very close, particularly due to working in the field.

The policy staff, which Bill Storm asked me to be a part of, was intended to be quite a group [of] five or six persons. But the recruitment of persons after the war (laughs) to take jobs back in the government was not easy. We did get a staff found, but I was the one that was there several weeks, sort of floating around by myself, and became the sort of center of the staff, although I think somebody else might have been better qualified for the job than I happened to be.

You asked me in the last interview about the kind of policy problems we dealt with. I gave you, I think, an inadequate answer. Running over the tape, I thought of an example that I think suits the purpose better. As the Cold War began and developed, there began to be a body of opinion in the public, in Congress and in the Department, that information programs should develop a very strident, bellicose attitude towards the Soviet Union. However, there were people who had a different view, of which I happened to be one. I came to this view, among other things, because of my experience just before I left Poland.

One snowy night, rather late, there came to my apartment on the edge of town a Pole whom I'd been acquainted with but had not seen lately. He'd been in the foreign service of Poland before World War II. He traipsed all the way out to that apartment and came to say good-bye, but also to say something else. What he had to say was this.

"When you're back in Washington, you'll be an expert on Poland."

I demurred. I said, "I will not be an expert on...."

"Yes, you will. Anybody who's been here will be an expert on Poland. And I urge you, do not let the United States take any policy which calls upon us to do something unless it is prepared to carry through." In other words, don't get us in a state of expectation and then not deliver.

So, when it became how strong should the Voice be, what kind of exciting language to use, I always felt, "Play it moderately, quietly. Be firm, be strong, get the facts out." That's what's most interesting, "Get the facts out. I think it was wise.

In '52, Mr. Dulles launched a campaign of "liberation" for Eastern Europe. Mr. Nixon castigated Mr. Acheson for what he called his tiredly Communist containment school. So it was that kind of difference. I think the wisdom of the other policy was demonstrated in Hungary in 1956, when they rose. There were three days during which the Russians did not act. Presumably, they were waiting to see what we were going to do. We did not nothing. We could do nothing. There's nothing one can do in that situation except to use force.

Q: Walter, before the tape ran out, you were recalling the experience in Hungary and how the Soviet Union had waited for a period of three days and done nothing and then proceeded to crush the rebellion. You drew a moral from that experience?

SCHWINN: Well, the moral was that however strongly one feels about the wickedness of international communism, particularly Stalinist communism, it would be completely unwise for us to do anything that would create in Eastern Europe expectations that we cannot fulfill or were not prepared to fulfill, except by great cost-force. That was typical of the kind of policy problem one had to deal with and get a consensus. It was never fighting back with each other, it was simply exposing people to different points of view and trying to get an idea of the best course the United States should pursue. I think the VOA pursued a very good course. [They] did not create that kind of expectation.

Q: Now, let me pursue this a little bit. Ordinarily, one would expect, especially among professional diplomats, that the rhetoric and reality would be matched, that one would try not to overplay one's hand or overstate one's case. Yet, there were apparently pressures to inflate the rhetoric, to maintain a kind of verbal hardline. Why was that? Was it fear of being called soft on communism by political opponents in the United States?

SCHWINN: No, not entirely. There was some of that, but the people I'm thinking of, I don't think I want to name the names, had gone through the experience of trying to deal with Stalinism. They knew what a difficult thing it was, what a frustrating thing it was. Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, lots of places there where people had put forward their best efforts [and had] been knocked down. I think they came back mad. (Laughs)

Q: There was a lot of anger.

SCHWINN: I mean, "Damn those guys!" I don't blame them, except that I think that they lost their perspective a bit and just were a little too eager to vent their frustrations, their anger. I must say, I think the Voice conducted itself very well, on the whole. It was headed at that time by Charlie Thayer, who was a brother-in-law of Chip Bowman, and

he'd had experience in the Soviet Union. So, he knew how bad it was. He kept a good controlling hand. I would not have you think that I, or any of my colleagues, was always trying to play it soft. During the Korean War, for example, the Chinese Communists mounted a big campaign charging the United States with using germ warfare, or chemical warfare, I forget which one of those obnoxious kinds of warfare....

Q: Outlawed by international law.

SCHWINN: That's right. A colleague of mine [I didn't have much to do with this, a colleague had most to do...] had a big campaign to persuade the Chinese to let the International Red Cross examine the whole situation, which they didn't do, of course. But that was a vigorous, hard-hitting campaign, and I cited it only because I don't want anybody to think that in those days everybody was saying, "Oh, don't be unkind to the Russians." (Laughs) Not at all. I mean, when it was justified we would hit. But when, as I say, we might create expectations that couldn't be fulfilled, then "calm your anger." So, that I think, is a better example of the kind of problems we were coping with, than the one that I gave in the previous tape.

You asked me previously about my knowledge about McCarthyism in the Department of State. I don't think I gave as full an answer as I might have because I was aware of the plight of some of the individuals who were involved in a very serious way. For example, I was acquainted with, and worked with, John Patton Davies, one of the China hands, who reported accurately that the National government in China was not going to survive unless it changed. It didn't change, and it didn't survive. (Laughs) And you know, he was finally compelled to leave the Department. That kind of political thing was very common and hard to deal with, but there were also cases where people took the opportunity to work off their grudges against other individuals. One was a very close colleague of mine, who one day was simply notified that he was suspended from his job. He couldn't go back to his files, and he didn't know what the charges were. He was out for several months until the thing was cleared up. I had access to his files. He asked me to find things in the files (laughs), but he couldn't. He couldn't come into the building.

Q: Because he was judged to be a security risk?

SCHWINN: He had an allegation against him. One of these derogatory information charges, such as I had later on.

Q: Since the individual was exonerated and subsequently reemployed, I think it would be all right to use his name, if you wish.

SCHWINN: I'd rather not. I don't know what he would think. He's a very good friend of mine and still down in Washington in retirement.

I was fortunate enough to get some documentation about the negotiations in Muscat and Dhofar the other day, and they clear up certain points. One is the initiative for the treaty

with the Sultan came from the Department of State. Now as I said in my earlier interview, I think it was Herbert Hoover, Jr. who was concerned about an oil company drilling out there and didn't want these guys running around without better protection. It was the Sultan then, who, when asked to reopen the consulate, said, "Yes, but I'd like to have the treaty renewed." So, he was the one that asked for a new treaty, not the Department of State. All they wanted to do was reopen the consulate. One had been open, off and on, all through the nineteenth century. What was his purpose? I think his immediate purpose was to get rid of a clause in the earlier treaty of '33, that set a limit of 5% on the ad valorem value of imports into Muscat. This had been done, anyway, back in 1833, and it still couldn't go above 5%, and I think he would like (laughs) to charge more from time to time. I think that was the basic reason of why he wanted it.

So, all this was in 1956, before I was out there. My predecessor had these discussions with the Sultan, and he conveyed the information back. He might well have negotiated the treaty, except for the fact that he'd already been on the post for three years. His wife was not very well, and he was frozen in the job in 1956, because at that time, when the Suez Crisis came out, all officers in that area were told to stand pat, until they could see what happened. And it was very hard for him to wait until I got assigned and out there, otherwise he might well have done it. As I say, he was a far more experienced officer than I. Not any older than I, but he'd been on more posts. So it fell to me to do it. I can cite some dates, if you think it would be useful?

Q: Sure, go ahead.

SCHWINN: The first meeting that I had with the Sultan was on June 22, 1957. That was myself, and Earl Russell, and Larry Berz with the Foreign Buildings Operation. We stayed until June 24. We had two sessions, and that was chiefly about just how we were going to proceed in the future, and so on. We were scheduled to go back in July, but then the rebellion took place in the Jebel Akhdar, and he had other things on his mind-to suppress that rebellion. (Laughs) So we didn't meet again until September 26. In the meantime, in order to keep the negotiations going somehow, I wrote him a long and detailed letter, explicating the provisions of the treaty that he'd indicated some interest in, merely just so we didn't have a complete blank there.

We got back in September, and then we had six sessions, and I began to really get the shape of things, the problem we had in dealing....

Q: These were the one-hour sessions that ran from eleven to twelve?

SCHWINN: Well, as I discovered, they were usually ten or ten-thirty to twelve, a little longer than my memory told me. So, they'd been discussions in the problems he had. Perhaps this would be a good point, now having gone through this documentation, to give you some idea what I think of the character of the Sultan and what made him tick.

The basic thing is he was an absolute ruler, absolute. No legislature, no cabinet, and no departmental set-up. He had a finance guy, and he had a minister of the interior, and he had a foreign minister, but no sense of a bureaucracy in the sense that he met with them and they told him things, or they gave him advice. He had absolute rule. Whatever he said was it. And he didn't seek advice very often-this I got from his British consul-general there-that he didn't use advice. He had an uncle older than he, he had a half-brother, Tariki. There were several other people around the town, but my information is that he didn't consult. The Wali of Matrah, a very nice, capable man.... The Sultan was it. That was the reason why he was suspicious of anything that might infringe upon his complete, absolute authority. There were things that he didn't disagree with in the treaty, and he kept saying, "I don't mind that, but I don't want to write it down and have it limit my capabilities." He was an absolute ruler.

Let me make it clear, in all my observation, that he was not a tyrant. I think he had genuine concern for his people. He knew that they were primitive, his country was primitive, and I think he felt a responsibility for their welfare-a genuine.... Now, of course, we don't believe that one man can determine what's good for another man (laughs), but in his view, he was capable of determining what was good for his people. He was very careful about their religion. He didn't want to have that tampered with. They were Muslims, and he was going to see to it that they remain Muslims, and so on.

Furthermore, he was a little xenophobic. I don't think he regarded other foreigners, including other Arabs, as quite as good as the Omanis. He always had a little, special place for them, and certainly he would not think of equating Christianity and Muhammadism. That couldn't be done, there was no question. Sharia law was very important to him. When we were talking about the Consular convention, and the right of a consul to offer protection to an American, he said, "We mustn't interfere with Sharia law. I keep a little record of all cases involving foreigners. I keep that apart from the cases involving Omanis. But still Sharia law is divinely inspired, and it must be adhered to. Not that he was going to cut off anybody's hands, but he was not going to have it denigrated, either.

Also-this was an extension of the treaty-I think that he was quite unconvinced. I kept emphasizing to him the idea of reciprocity, that this treaty would be good for Oman because it would encourage investment, encourage people to come and deal with him. He said, "Oh, I don't...if there's anything here they want, they will come. Otherwise, it doesn't make any difference!" (Laughs) He was just totally indifferent. He said, "If they want to come, if we have something they want, they will do it, and no amount of guarantees will make any difference." As I said earlier, he never wanted to commit himself, particularly in writing, because that limited his authorities, limited his capability of doing what he thought would be best. Well, that's it, I think, unless you have questions to ask about it.

Q: Only one occurred to me-whether you observed this trait in other Arab countries, this fear of putting something down in writing.

SCHWINN: I don't think so. Of course, the relationship between ARAMCO and the Government of Saudi Arabia was very elaborately written down. (Laughs) However, the Sultan would approve that. He would like to make a deal with anybody that comes in like that, but he wouldn't ever have that binding on somebody else. Most-favored-nation treatment, that sort of thing. He'll make a deal with Cities Service, and then if Occidental comes along, he'll make a deal with them, and not necessarily have them the same. He'd make sure that he wasn't committed to a broad principle which you have to apply to everybody. He didn't like everybody. (Laughs)

Q: We were tracing the course of negotiations on a chronological basis.

SCHWINN: We got back, not in July as we'd agreed to in June, but in October, if I recall correctly. We'd planned for July 22, and it didn't take place until September 13 and ran for two weeks. As I said previously, that was complicated by an official visit by the COMIDEASTFOR with his ship, and my being obliged to get a LIFE reporter and photographer (laughs) into Muscat. The Sultan was very reluctant to permit that. He didn't like journalists. PARIS-MATCH sent some guys in once, and he showed it to me, and he said, "The reason I don't want journalists here is this." Big photograph of the entrance to the palace with what PARIS-MATCH called "his esclaves" (laughs) in the doorways. He was offended, and he didn't want to hire that kind of thing. I must say that I briefed the boys, the two young men, very well, and they behaved very well. They made no trouble. They came in with the admiral....

Q: Did that story subsequently appear in LIFE magazine?

SCHWINN: I'm sorry to say it didn't. (Laughs) All the effort we put in.

Q: Was he offended by that?

SCHWINN: I don't know. (Laughs) I never mentioned it to him. I just assumed that he was probably just as pleased that it didn't take place.

The second round we had six sessions. The foreign minister, as I say, was there, but he didn't take any part at all. We accomplished a lot in that. We covered quite a bit of ground. Meantime, after the first session, I sent back to the Department rather lengthy descriptions of what I thought the prospects were, and the Department, very kindly, modified a lot of its positions to meet the requirements there. Of course, some of them were sheerly the Department's draft treaty which just hadn't been edited carefully enough because all the business about exchange, well, he had no currency of his own. (Laughs) The British handled all his money, so they tossed that out very quickly, but the Department was very responsive. Not in all things, but it tried to make things agreeable to get something done.

This session, we were there two weeks, and by this time we were getting to be rather familiar sights on the streets and in the city of Muscat, and people were very good to us.

The man who ran Petroleum Development Oman, Sir William Lindsey, gave us a car and driver, and had us for dinner. I think we used his office for typing and that sort of thing. You couldn't have kinder and better attention than we got at that time.

I've just noted here that at the first session he had a problem with expropriation and customs. That was very difficult because he was very proud of his customs service, and his customs service brought in a large part of the revenue (laughs) of the state.

Q: That suggests that his concern with the 5% ceiling on the ad valorem duty was a rather important consideration.

SCHWINN: Furthermore, he felt proud, and he brought out and showed us a well-printed volume for the customs regulation of Oman. I mean this was like, "I'm rather civilized in this field," and he didn't quite like all the language that the treaty had about customs being uniform, and notification of changes, and all this sort of thing. Then the International Court came up, and then he had quite a bit of a problem with the Consular Convention. The rights of a consular officer, how free he should be to deal with...for example, under American law, a customs officer is permitted to represent a foreigner on an American ship. If they get in trouble in the harbor, he has authority over them. Well, these foreigners. As I say, xenophobia. He wasn't quite sure he wanted Americans looking after other than Americans.

Q: Now, I assume that one of the problems here is that the treaty you were negotiating was a great deal longer and more complex than the original 1833 treaty.

SCHWINN: Well, the 1833 treaty was on one page. (Laughs) This was a volume about an inch thick.

Q: In other words, here was a person who started out essentially wanting to modify a percentage in the 1833 treaty, who was having to deal with all these new and unfamiliar points, so that his concern, and his desire to have things carefully explicated, and in some cases limited, was therefore quite understandable.

SCHWINN: Oh, yes, yes. I didn't find him stubborn. From his point of view, he didn't want to change his customs regulations. They suited him very well. Why should we say it should be otherwise? In a way, he had the same feeling about the Court. He kept referring to [I never knew the document] Oppenheim's International Law, and he said, "That's sufficient. That should be all we need. Just refer to that." Well, of course, that wasn't quite what the Department of State felt was adequate. That went September to almost the fourteenth.

Q: The fourteenth of....

SCHWINN: September. The fourteenth to twenty-fourth, ten days we were there. We had six sessions in those ten days. Given the fact that we had this interruption of this official

visit of the COMIDEASTFOR, it was making good time. I think I mentioned in the other tape that Russ and I went back to Bahrain with the Admiral on his flag ship, and that enabled us to go through the Straits of Hormuz and see what they were like because even then we were aware of this choke-point.

Well, then almost eight months elapsed because the next negotiation was February. Again, you send back to the Department commentary, recommendations and proposals, and it has to go through that mill. I suppose in this case, there's not merely NEA, the area that is legal, economic. So all those chaps have to get involved. So it was almost six months, February, when I went back. That was a month long. We were there for eight sessions, and that was really, really getting down, getting drafting language. (Laughs) Russ was very good at all that, as I say, encrypting things and then gave me the cable, wireless, and then it got up to Dhahran, and Dhahran then encrypted it again and sent it to the Department, and it came back and down. (Laughs) We were at the end of the line, you see. But it went very swiftly. I must say, almost every time we were there, he usually started off saying, "This is so long and so complex." But you let him say that, and you sympathized with him, and then he'd say, "Well, let's get to work." (Laughs) I think he just wanted to get if off his chest once in a while.

I have noted here that religious issue, the problem of freedom of expression of religion, and customs, and consular matters, and then, of course, the World Court all the time. Finally, we got down to the World Court, which was the last thing. That was the third round, and that was in February. It wasn't until May that we went down to Salalah, which is in Dhofar, on the Arabian coast, and wound it up. It was four audiences down there. That's when he brought up matters not related to the treaty, matters of economic assistance, arms, and so on. Two sessions on the Court. The Department was quite firm, and I remember to Russ I said, "He won't buy." And they came back and said to try again. (Laughs) So, you try it again, but you run out of arguments. I finally said to him, "I'd like to make you understand this. Would you prefer no treaty at all to a treaty with this provision?" He didn't give me a direct answer, but he looked very unhappy. You don't push that. He didn't answer. I tried to get him to say it, but he didn't. So then, after that, in May he was off to the U.K. and stayed until October. (Laughs) You see the big gaps that would take place in between?

Q: Yes.

SCHWINN: Then we went back again for the final windup, which was simply a matter of signing and all, and there were no particular problems. He had a preference for, I forget exactly what it is, but there's a way of having the treaty appear, with seals on one side, seals underneath, and all that sort of thing. He'd signed a treaty with the British which he liked, and he brought it out so (laughs), we decided to do it that way.

Q: And he decided to acquiesce on the World Court issue?

SCHWINN: No. It's not in the treaty.

Q: Oh, that's right, I'm sorry. I had misremembered that detail from the first interview.

SCHWINN: No, we had to drop it. The Department said, "Try again, but if you can't succeed, drop it." Of course, I'd told them previously that I think the reasons were all this trouble about Buraymi and the arbitration.

Q: Walter, do you have any recollection of the ceremony itself for the signing of the treaty?

SCHWINN: Yes. Earl Russell, who'd been with me previously, could not come down to Salalah, and so another big young man, named Bill Wolle, came over from Aden, where he was the Consulate over there, and was my Arabist for the final session. He later became Ambassador to Muscat. (Laughs) The Sultan was in a very good mood, he was very much pleased. We put the papers out, and it took quite a while to, I forget, organizing them all and having where I signed and where he signed, and where my seal was and where his seal was, and where the ribbon went (laughs) and all this sort of thing. This had all come from the Department, and he had checked the Arabic text. So we met.

The palace at Salalah was not bad. It was on the Arabian Sea there, nice flat country. We sat and we signed. Then we had cold drinks, exchanged complements, I think rather heartfelt. (Laughs) I felt that I'd gotten to know this little guy pretty well, and he seemed to be friendly to me. Well, that was it. He then presented me with this silver coffee pot over there as a token. I thanked him very much for it. I had nothing to give to him. I think he rather expected something, too. He told me in one of the earlier sessions, he pointed out to me that Theodore Roosevelt had given him a plaque or a seal or something, and I think it was rather a broad hint (laughs) that he'd like to have something from this administration. But there was no response to my suggestion to that, so I had nothing to give back to him.

He did sit down at that point. We had quite a chat, and I was interested in his telling me about his son, Qaboos, who was then 17 years old and he just sent him to school in England. I think I reported this in the earlier tape. He was very proud of his boy. He said, "The school's been very well recommended. There's a few Sudanese boys and there's a few Pakistani boys, and his English is very good indeed. He's writing very well." He spoke of him with pride. I think I said in the other tape that 13 years later (laughs) he was overthrown. The boy picked him up and sent him off to India, then to the Devonshire Hotel in London. That's where he spent the rest of his days.

Q: Well again, I would like to thank you for your time and your input, and I'll go ahead and end the second session of the interview.

End of interview