

BAHAMAS

COUNTRY READER TABLE OF CONTENTS

Maynard Wayne Glitman	1959-1961	Vice Consul, Nassau
Moncrieff J. Spear	1970-1973	Consul General, Nassau
Ronald I Spiers	1973-1974	Ambassador, Bahamas
Keith L. Wauchope	1973-1974	Desk Officer for Haiti, the Bahamas, Netherland Antilles & French West Indies, Washington, DC
Rozanne L. Ridgway	1973-1975	Deputy Chief of Mission, Nassau
William B. Schwartz, Jr.	1977-1980	Ambassador, Bahamas
Andrew F. Antippas	1981-1983	Deputy Chief of Mission, Nassau
Cecil S. Richardson	1983	Chief Consular Officer, Nassau

MAYNARD WAYNE GLITMAN Vice Consul Nassau (1959-1961)

Ambassador Maynard Wayne Glitman was born in Illinois in 1933. He received his BA from the University of Illinois and his MA from Fletcher School of Law and diplomacy MA, and served in the U.S. Army in 1957. His postings abroad include Nassau, Ottawa, Paris, Brussels, Geneva and Vienna, and served as the ambassador to Belgium. James S. Pacy interviewed the ambassador on April 24, 2001

Q: Afterward, you worked in the International Financial Affairs Office in 1958 and then in 1959 you went off as Vice-Consul at the Consulate General in Nassau, in the Bahamas. Could you talk to us about problems in protection US citizens and your major accomplishments personally and whatever else you may wish to comment on, such as supervisors?

GLITMAN: We had a relatively small posting in Nassau. We had three officers: consul general, consul and vice-consul, myself at this point. Ben Houck was the Consul and at first, Roger Tyler, then Gus Barnard served as Consul Generals. Ben had a very good bedside manner with visa applicants and so on and I learned a lot from watching him deal with these cases.

Then there was a lot of protection and welfare. Cruise ships would come over every weekend from Florida and almost it seemed every weekend I would get a phone call on Sunday morning. I would pick up the phone and say, "Yes, Mr. Kemp, what do we have for today?" Mr. Kemp was the undertaker. I am probably exaggerating in my memory but it seemed there were a number of times when he would call, almost all these on Sundays. I would have to go and make sure that the next of kin were notified, sometimes inventory the effects that had been left behind, make an arrangement for the body to be shipped back. And you had to be careful with the folks when you sort of acted as an intermediary. There were some sad, sad cases, but I won't go into them.

There were also other problems. Some of these involved American citizens who got into trouble. One example, a somewhat interesting case, was when the police called me and said they were holding some Americans. The problem was that one individual had been caught cashing bad checks. He had hired a captain, a crew, a ship and a prostitute to accompany him on his voyage to the Bahamas, and when they got to Grand Bahama he went to the bank and put in a check. The bank looked at this name, checked with his home bank, yes the company had an account etc., gave him the money and he and his crew sailed off, this time heading for Nassau. When they landed at Nassau he tried to do the same thing. Went into the bank with the check, but this time the bank didn't just see whether the company had money, it made sure that he had the right to sign checks. It turned out that he did not. At this point he was still drunk, I walked into the police station, he was happy as could be and not really aware of what had hit him. The police in effect said that he, as far as they can tell, the captain, the crew, and the prostitute, had made off with whatever money there was and there was no way that they could prove that. This guy was in trouble. We did our best to see that he was treated fairly under British law, which was our job. They did treat him fairly, I forget what sentence he got. That was a strange case.

Another one, which was unusual, again these always happened on weekends it seems. This one was definitely on a weekend. Police called me and said, "You have to come down, we have a murder case." I drove down to the police station, which I should note was next door to the Consulate General, and across from the post office and the place where I would get my Saturday and Sunday paper, so I had to drive that same road everyday. I sometimes felt I didn't need to drive, the car could find the way itself. In any case, I showed up outside the police station and I looked up, it had a balcony there and a railing. Hanging over the railing were bloody clothes. That was my introduction to this one.

I went up and police said that the circumstances were that two Americans, and again a prostitute they had picked up, had stolen a boat in Miami and had taken it on some voyage to find a tropical island where they could all cavort, or whatever. They ran out of gas and they saw a little island called Cat Cay, I think it was. There was no water on it, but they saw it and landed on it. Later, they noticed a boat on it. It was a fishing boat, American captain, taking some people out fishing in the Bahamas. These guys were on the island at that point. They got to the island, gotten off of their boat and the fishing boat comes in to the area and sees them, they motion to it. One of the guys on shore swims out to the fishing boat, he's got a pistol with him. The other one is on shore with the prostitute, and he has a rifle. When the guy swims out to the boat and gets on board, he pulls his pistol out and the charter boat captain reaches for his shark rifle. Near very close to piracy, more or less, the pirate shot the captain and killed him. He then took the

captain's body, the fishermen, and I don't remember if the prostitute stayed with them or not, but they were all deposited on the island, where again there was no water, no food. The two guys who had stolen the boat then took the captain's boat and sped off again.

What they didn't know was that the fishing boat captain had notified the Coast Guard as soon as he saw the stolen boat at Cat Cay. The Coast Guard was aware that people appeared stranded on Cat Cay. The U.S. Coast Guard handled the search and rescue for the Bahamas. So they did eventually catch these guys and brought them to the Bahamian authorities. That is when I showed up. They had them under lock and key in the jail in Nassau. My job was again to ensure that they got a fair trial under British law. I learned something about the Felony Murder Law. What that came down to was that not only was the guy who pulled the trigger guilty of murder, but his accomplice on shore holding a rifle aiming in the general direction of the boat was equally guilty. It was a felony, a murder was created and he was equally guilty. The charter boat's captain's wife came, and we made sure that she got what she wanted, which was a front row seat. She sat there through the trial, I went to the trial a few times and again guaranteed that they were treated fairly under British law. And they were. They both were hung. British justice was swift. The captain's widow wanted to be there at the hanging but the British would not permit that. In any case, it was a sad situation. As Ben Houck, the Consul there, said to me, "This will kick the intellectualism out of you." The work had impact, you get to see how life is for a fair number of folks in the world.

Q: Very interesting commentary on life in the Consular Service.

GLITMAN: I have another case that was kind of interesting. There was again a phone call, this time from the psychiatric institute. They had a woman there, an American citizen, who was placed there because she was bothering one of the leading merchants and convinced that he loved her and that she had been incarcerated at his request, I guess it was that way if I remember correctly, so she said to me that she could "prove her love" for him. My task was to get in touch with her family to see if we could find some way she could be induced to leave at home. Eventually I was able to persuade her that the best way would be for her to leave, get a nurse to accompany her and get her back to the U.S. where her family could help her out. It was a strange experience in one way, and that is that the doctor had put me in a room with her and she immediately began asking for scissors. Because she wanted to do some knitting or sawing. A little pause for concern. So we got to experience that, too.

Q: I gather you had family there, your wife and one or two children?

GLITMAN: Our second son was born there, in the Bahamas.

Q: Would you like to make a comment on life in Nassau?

GLITMAN: I don't like hot weather for starters, nor does my wife, and that place I refer to as 80-80. Eighty degrees in temperature and 80% humidity. It was pretty steady like that. There was a time, and I don't want to knock it because many people go there for holidays, if you like that kind of climate, but there was a period there from about Christmas till about late February when it was just glorious, beautiful spring, not too hot. We were there at the time when it was really

relatively undeveloped. There is a place now known as Paradise Island, across the harbor from Nassau, then it was known as Hog Island. I've seen photographs of it today, enormous resorts. At that time, two or three times during our three years we rented a motorboat and went down to the other side of there, not the side facing Nassau but the side facing the ocean. I am not exaggerating, there were beaches two-three miles long and nobody there but us. But not any longer from what I've seen in the pictures.

It was 21 miles long and seven miles wide, and we spent two years without getting off the island. And then we went to Miami for a long weekend. I think we were on every paved road and just about every dirt road on it. Lots of little places, a monastery hidden away up in the hills, with wonderful honey they produced, things like that that you find out about. There was a fair amount of socializing. As you can see I spent a certain amount of time with the police, so occasionally we would be invited to their parties. They were British and wild. I remember on one occasion a rugby game broke out, in the middle of the party. They were good fun.

Q: Unless you had something else you wanted to add about Nassau, we can move on...

GLITMAN: I could make a couple more comments about consular work in general. I had issued a fair amount of immigrant visas and most of the time I was pleased to do it. There were some cases, this was at the time of the arrival of Castro and some of the people that came out of Cuba during this period had pretty bad reputations. Since they were with the police, they had no police records, and there was no way you couldn't give them a visa. Because there was nothing there to prove misdeeds other than their reputations. And the law says you can't just go on hearsay, you have to have a proof. On the other hand there were lots of really wonderful people to whom I gave visas. Intelligent people, people with professional skills, good business managers and so on. I felt we were really gaining a lot from the Cubans that came in at the time.

But in a more down to earth issue, there was one Haitian who came for an immigrant visa, and he made it, he had all qualifications and I gave him the visa. He left for the U.S. It was soon after I got to Nassau and he came back after a year and half, two years to thank me and to show me that he had opened up his business and was doing well. I was just delighted to know that.

I did a lot of work for the Commerce Department as well. Sometimes there were people who had swindled American firms and I was a bill collector in a way, but that was a part of our job. I was glad to be able to do that. Especially if we were successful in making their complaint, and getting back the money they were owed.

Q: This was your sole consular assignment?

GLITMAN: As you can see it was a rather full one. I also had to do the books, we had a local foreign service national who did the book keeping but I had to oversee that, which wasn't fun because you were personally responsible for the errors. I had to do decoding in the old fashioned way. Then it had to be very pain-staking work, you had to get everything just right, there wasn't any fancy machinery. Changing the locks on the safe was another task that I had. In a small post like that you do just about everything at least once.

Q: Then we move on to you becoming Economic Officer in Embassy Ottawa, specializing in international trade and financial and trade policy issues for years 1961-1965.

MONCRIEFF J. SPEAR
Consul General
Nassau (1970-1973)

Moncrieff J. Spear was born in New York in 1921. He received degrees from Cornell and George Washington Universities. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and joined the Foreign Service in 1946. Mr. Spear served in Germany, the Philippines, Yugoslavia, Thailand, Vietnam, the Bahamas, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in 1993.

SPEAR: After a great year [in the Senior Seminar] I found myself again on the move, this time to the Bahamas, as Consul General.

Q: The Bahamas was just approaching independence at that time, was it not?

SPEAR: Yes, that's true. I was down there from 1970 to 1973. In 1973 the Bahamas became independent. The post, though a Consulate General, really operated like a small Embassy because, although it was a British Colony, we did not report directly to the Embassy in London, except on matters that really involved the British interest in the Bahamas. The post came under our Bureau of American Republic Affairs, ARA.

I think that one of the more interesting developments there was a very lively lobster fishermen's war. A number of Cuban refugees had settled in the Miami area and were accustomed to fishing along the sandbanks in the Bahamas area. As the Bahamas were approaching independence, they wanted to adopt this idea of an "Economic Zone," similar to the one which President Truman had declared for the United States [in 1945], a 200-mile limit which we claimed and where we sought to protect the fisheries there. As a result, this led to lively exchanges. Fishing wars being what they are, there used to be gunfire between the patrol boats and the Cuban fishermen. We found ourselves in a long series of negotiations with the Bahamians and with Government House, the British, on this whole matter. It really was only resolved after I had left.

The other, main point that we had was that while this small country was moving to independence, it only had about 127,000 inhabitants, scattered through all of these 800-odd islands. American tourism there was simply overwhelming. There were about 1.2 million Americans who visited the Bahamas every year. Needless to say, this kept our consular staff, which comprised more than half of our entire organization there, very busy looking after all the Americans who seemed to find more different ways of getting into difficulties than we had ever even imagined.

Q: What was the problem with drugs then?

SPEAR: It was just beginning to get started. This was the end of the 1960's. American college students would come over there for Easter break, bringing some of the marijuana then widely used on American campuses. Marijuana use began there in relatively minor fashion, but it spread among the Bahamian youth, unfortunately. There were some efforts to smuggle marijuana through there, but the whole traffic of "hard" drugs up out of Colombia and South America really only began several years after I left.

Toward the end of our time there our efforts were directed toward getting geared up as an Embassy and looking toward the independence celebration.

Q: How did your role as consul general change when independence came?

SPEAR: Well, I was chargé d'affaires there for a brief period, until Ron Spiers came down as Ambassador. Our main activity was trying to arrange negotiations on the military bases, most of which were left over from the World War II period, when they had been part of the old [1940] destroyers-for-bases agreement, which President Roosevelt concluded with Prime Minister Churchill. The Bahamian Government would be taking over a lot of these bases, and there were very few of them that we wanted to continue to use. So we had teams down from Washington and were carrying on very active negotiations right up until independence, when we were able to get these matters worked out--or at least the ones we were most interested in--and arrange for subsequent negotiations on the rest.

We certainly had a very active social life there, too. Prince Charles had come to represent Queen Elizabeth, as they used to say in those days "giving small islands away." What used to be known at Government House as the "flotsam and jetsam of Empire," which Britain was still trying to shed. We arranged to have the U. S. Navy "Blue Angels" [aerial acrobatics team] do an aerial demonstration for the independence celebration.

I was only there for a few days before the pressure began to mount to get on to my next assignment in Vietnam. Ambassador Martin, who was now our new Ambassador, had asked me to come and join his staff there.

RONALD I. SPIERS
Ambassador
Bahamas (1974-1974)

Ambassador Ronald I. Spiers was born in New Jersey in 1925. His career included positions in The United Kingdom, the Bahamas, and Washington, DC, and ambassadorships to Turkey and Pakistan. He was interviewed by Thomas Stern on June 3, 1992.

Q: In 1973, you were appointed as U.S. Ambassador to the Bahamas. How did that come about?

SPIERS: By 1973, I had served four long, trying years in PM. I remembered the joys of living and working in London. So one day I told Ken Rush, then Deputy Secretary, that I was running out of steam and that it was time for me to go overseas. At about the same time, the Department's personnel system got hold of me and said that it wanted to nominate me Ambassador to Mauritius. I barely knew where that country was. I felt that there must have been a better assignment. I went to see Bill Porter, the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, and Curtis Tarr, Under Secretary for Security Assistance. I was told that all that was available was Malaysia and some other post. They seemed so far away and of marginal interest. By sheer luck, the Bahamas became independent in mid-1973; it was close to Washington and the first Ambassador would have to establish an Embassy and negotiate base agreements. I thought that might be fun. In any case, it sounded attractive to a worn out bureaucrat. So I volunteered for the Bahamas and the Department said OK. In mid-1973, the Ambassadorial pickings were slim, although there is a tale related to this assignment, which was not told to me till later and had something to do with my assignment to London.

By 1974, Kissinger had become Secretary of State. As I said, I had known him for sometime. I heard that he became outraged when he heard that I was in the Bahamas. I later found out from Al Haig that in 1973 the White House wanted me to become Ambassador in Morocco. Haig asked me why I had not wanted to go to Morocco. I told him that no one had ever offered me the opportunity to go to Rabat. Subsequently, I discovered that Bill Hall, the Director General, had decided that Morocco was too important to be offered to a relative newcomer to the Foreign Service; so on his own, as far as I know, he never had transmitted the White House's suggestion to me. Hall was from the "old school" and felt that people should serve in the hardship posts before being elevated to important positions. The story goes that when Kissinger and Haig found out about this Hall ploy, they told Hall that he was going out as Ambassador to Mauritius. Rather than doing that, Hall retired. I don't know whether the story is apocryphal, but Al Haig swears by it. He has told me that story several times.

So I became the first U.S. Ambassador to the Bahamas and found it interesting because I had to establish relationships with a new government in a sort of hidden corner of the British Empire. The British had not sent their best talent to govern the islands, e.g. the Duke of Windsor. This was a black nation which had over a period of time developed considerable resentment against whites; that was reflected by the new government, which became a challenge as we tried to develop relations. We had had Consuls General there since 1831; it was one of our oldest consulates. Our representatives had tended to mix primarily with the white, wealthy community. When I got there, I refused to join the Lyford Key Club, which was on the eastern side of the island in a billionaire's colony. Blacks and non-whites were never permitted there. When the Prime Minister heard that I had refused to join the Club, he called me and reacted very favorably. That enabled me to develop some friendships with the native population.

The only irreplaceable U.S. military facility overseas was in the Bahamas. It was an underwater testing facility which we used to test submarines and torpedoes, particularly their noise levels. The facility was located in the "Tongue of the Ocean" between New Providence and Andros Island in an area that is not replicated anywhere else on earth. The U.S. military viewed it as an indispensable overseas facility. So I was involved with issues dealing with that facility.

There were other problems that arose, so that there was enough work to keep me busy, particularly since this was a new embassy which always raises new issues. Roz Ridgway was my DCM. I stayed in Nassau about a year. As I said, I enjoyed my tour and it was a good post for my children, although I would not have wished to be the second Ambassador in the Bahamas, as Sey Weiss was. I was the only career officer who was ever posted as Ambassador to the Bahamas; it is a highly desired post by political appointees. The present Ambassador is a former Senator.

As I said, when Kissinger became Secretary in 1974, he questioned my assignment. Furthermore, Washington wanted to move Annenberg out of London. The general view was that he had served his term, but he didn't want to leave. He had first agreed to leave, then changed his mind. A search had been made for a replacement for Annenberg, but nothing seemed to click. So Kissinger decided that I should return to London as Chargé, which delighted me.

KEITH L. WAUCHOPE
Desk Officer for Haiti, the Bahamas, Netherland Antilles & French West Indies
Washington, DC (1973-1974)

Ambassador Wauchope was born and raised in New York, graduated from Johns Hopkins University and, after a tour in the US Army in Vietnam, in 1966 joined the Foreign Service. His specialty being African affairs, Mr. Wauchope served in a number of African posts, including Ft. Lany, Asmara, Bamako and Monrovia. In 1989 he was appointed Ambassador to Gabon, where he served from 1989-1992. In his several Washington assignments Ambassador Wauchope dealt with personnel, cultural, Latin American affairs and Sudan affairs.

WAUCHOPE: Yes, well, when the tour was winding down, we prevailed on our Assistant Secretary, John Richardson, to try to get us decent onward assignments. They did put a word in for me to serve again in AF, but once again I was deflected and I ended up going to Caribbean Affairs. I was to take over the desk for Haiti and the Bahamas. The concept was sold to me, as "Well, it's very much like Africa." Well, it isn't like Africa at all, and that was the first thing that I learned about it. I accepted the assignment as it was at least a desk officer position. This was in the days of Nixon, I was there in '73 to '74 and this influenced our policy in the region. I was given these two portfolios and they were both pretty active. First, the Bahamas was scheduled to become independent on July 1st, 1973 and I arrived in the midst of the preparations. Haiti was a constant headache for us from a variety of reasons. It was an interesting job. It was very dynamic; no more long lunches. One thing you could say about Caribbean Affairs; there are no specialists in Caribbean region. It's an office staffed by officers who are passing through to some other area. In many cases Latin America, but not exclusively.

Q: It's sort of an in-between assignment?

WAUCHOPE: Exactly. A collection of cats and dogs. In ARA/CAR there were the former Spanish-speaking colonies, the English-speaking former colonies, the French-speaking, and even

the Dutch-speaking. So there was no linguistic specialization to serve in the office. Likewise, we had an eclectic group of people on the desk as well. John Burke was the office director, later to become the ambassador in Guyana. Unfortunately for him, it was at the time the Jonestown mass suicide, and that was the end of his career. He was a very intense, serious individual, and he took all the responsibility very seriously as well. This was a challenge given all the insane issues that we had to deal with. The second thing about the Caribbean was its proximity to the United States which changed everything. Not only does it change the menu of issues, but just by its proximity to the U.S. changes attitudes of the government. There was continuing reference to the Bahamas being only 50 miles from Florida. Bimini is the closest island. So, issues like law of the sea and Soviet submarine activities in that area were considered important. The flip side was that all the elements of American society at one time or another seemed to have a presence or an interest in the Caribbean. Organized crime was active there; Robert Vesco, the fugitive financier pitched up in the Bahamas. Howard Hughes had three floors of a hotel on Paradise Island in the Bahamas. There were all manner of money laundering activities, and there was narcotics smuggling. There was a flow of illegal immigrants and refugees arriving from that region. All these activities loomed much larger because of the region's proximity to the U.S. U.S. programs and policies were much more intensive than almost anything we were doing in Africa. We had to adjust to that reality, and we used the proximity rationale to engender support for our efforts in the Caribbean.

Q: Let's talk about the Bahamas. I mean, basically the Bahamas, it was all geography, wasn't it, the fact where they were and being off to one, I mean as you say, people were using it for a multiplicity of purposes.

WAUCHOPE: Absolutely. The Bahamas is a very interesting place in a lot of ways. It's a chain of 700 islands where life is good and the inhabitants all seem to live and work remarkably well together. The British had something of a prize in that part of the world. They had agreed with the local leaders that they would move toward independence. Lyndon Pindling, who was the head of government, had been in local politics for some time under the semi-autonomist political arrangement that existed. He seemed to be an upright individual. Given the Bahamas' proximity to the United States, was like the United States in many ways. A number of Bahamians, including government leaders, served in the American military, and many of the elites had been educated in the United States and had worked in the United States. They were very close to us in their political orientation and they weren't much given to the radical approach. Tourism attracted tens or hundreds of thousands of Americans, as well as Canadians and Europeans. On Paradise Island which is the second most populace island was the center of the tourism trade, and especially of gambling. When there's gambling, there's almost always organized crime and sure enough the American organized crime was represented there. We had an extensive array of connections with the Bahamas, which were important enough that the U.S. couldn't ignore them. Bebe Rebozo, a close friend of Richard Nixon, had a place in the Bahamas which the president had visited many times including while he was president.

Q: Bebe Rebozo?

WAUCHOPE: Bebe Rebozo.

Q: He was the confidant of Richard Nixon.

WAUCHOPE: Exactly.

Q: In fact, his only friend.

WAUCHOPE: He well may have been. I think he made his money in real estate in southern California, and yes, they were great buddies. So, we felt that when the new Bahamian ambassador, who was named L. B. Johnson and known as LBJ, went to the White House to present his credentials, that he would get more time with Nixon because he had spent some time in his country. He got no more than anybody else. He came in with eight other ambassadors and was whisked through with a brief photo op, an exchange of letters and boom, off he went. In any event, we were soon disabused of how benign the situation was there, as it turned out that Lyndon Pindling was on the take, and he was protecting Robert Vesco stole some \$250,000,000 from shareholders of Overseas Investors Services which in those days was a lot of money. Vesco quietly had taken up residence in Grand Bahama.

Q: He was wanted in the United States.

WAUCHOPE: He was wanted in the United States. Among other things, the U.S. government wanted to get Vesco for securities fraud as he had bilked thousands out of their life savings. The SEC in particular really wanted to take action against Vesco. I worked with the general counsel of the SEC, Stanley Sporkin, who was determined to try to find a way to get Vesco. He was successful in seizing the assets of Vesco's, which are not only his accounts that they could identify, but also his other assets. He owned several planes and several yachts among other assets. The SEC set up operations to seize these yachts by sending agents aboard as crew members and when they set out to sea, they'd take over the yacht in the name of the United States government, sail it to the United States and sell it. We heard that Vesco became so paranoid that when he flew on his own plane, he had an armed bodyguard who was knowledgeable of aviation, armed with navigational maps, sit next to the pilot to be sure he was going to the proper destination places. Vesco was concerned that his pilot might be have been co-opted by the Department of Justice to bring Vesco to the United States. So, the government had gotten under his skin at least to that extent. In any event, Justice finally developed a case to extradite Vesco to the United States for wire fraud. The Bahamian government cooperated to the extent that Vesco was served with a subpoena, but as the Bahamas had just become independent, and it had to figure out which extradition law would apply. They decided to use the British extradition treaty, which had a wire fraud provision. We were advised that to pursue an extradition case in the Bahamas you had to be represented by a queen's counsel which is a senior attorney versed in commonwealth law It turned out that there were only two queen's counsels in the Bahamas and Vesco had hired them both. He tied them up before Justice could figure out what was going on. The Justice Department finally arranged to hire a queen's counsel, but he was from Uganda. We were pretty skeptical from the outset as the U.S. had a Ugandan queen's counsel pursuing an extradition case for the United States against a guy who is deeply entrenched in the Bahamas. Vesco was obviously spreading money around, and we wondered, what were our chances? We pursued the extradition, but I must say, I had a sense that is effort was as much for the record, for appearances sake, as anything else. I had a strong sense that the

Nixon administration did not want to bring Robert Vesco back to the U.S.; they just wanted him to go away. While the SEC seemed to be quite serious about getting Vesco, Justice always seemed to be a day late and a dollar short in the pursuit of Robert Vesco. Predictably, the Ugandan queen's counsel was whipsawed by the locals who knew all of the officials around the courthouse. The final decision was that the 1937 extradition agreement provisions on wire fraud did not encompass the crime with which Vesco was charged. . It had not been defined in 1937. Our extradition request was dismissed. As part of this exercise, under pressure from the U.S. the Bahamian government summoned him to come down to the police station to be photograph and possibly fingerprinted. He was then he was released on bond and he returned to his compound. He apparently thought he had bought the government so completely that he would never even be pulled into the police station. So, he was very annoyed. As soon as his extradition proceedings were completed, he flew out of Bahamas and ended up in after that. He was no longer our problem. The Desk was involved in transmitting much of the supporting information for the extradition, but the strategizing was all Justice. Vesco flew the coop and that was that. The SEC general counsel, Stanley Sporkin, later became the general counsel at the CIA, having gone there with SEC Director William Casey, the Reagan friend, and he's later became a federal judge on the DC bench. Ironically, Sporkin was presiding over the women's class action suit against the Department, and seemed to rule against us at every opportunity. The word was that he did so because in his days at the CIA, State blocked a number of Casey's more bizarre initiatives. I must say, Sporkin struck me as being a very serious individual, and he knew a hell of a lot about Vesco and he was genuinely intent on getting Vesco, and I always wondered what he thought about how Justice pursued that extradition.

Another thing that we used to get involved in was fisheries issues because of the proximity, the number of islands and the length of the Archipelago. Inevitably, there were conflicts between American fishermen and Bahamian fisheries enforcement. We would get cases where an American flag vessel would go into Bahamian waters and they would poach lobster in particular; the Caribbean lobster, which is mostly tail.

So, in any event we were involved in he fishery issues. Most of the American fishermen involved were Cuban exiles who had fled to the United States claiming to be political exiles. They then bought fishing boats, had them registered as American flag vessels, and then went back to poaching the same waters they had when they fished out of Cuba. The Bahamians were at a great disadvantage because of the size of their fisheries zone, and they had only six enforcement vessels, of which only half were operational at any given time. The U.S. Coast Guard would contact us about issues of hot pursuit of American flag poachers, seeking guidance. One evening I was preparing dinner and I got a phone call and it was the State operations center. The operations center was patched to some Coast Guard people in Norfolk, and from Norfolk they were talking to a commander of an American Coast Guard cutter. The captain described the situation, "There is an American flag fishing vessel that is being pursued by a Bahamian enforcement vessel, which is firing across its bow. The U.S. flag boat is not heaving to, and our coast guard vessel and the other two boats are in international waters. But the Bahamian and the U.S. flag vessels just left the Bahamian exclusive fishery zone in hot pursuit. What should we do? Should we interpose ourselves or should we fire a warning shot across the Bahamian's bow or show we not intervene?" I knew this conversation was being recorded because you could hear the beep every 15 seconds. Remember the Simas Kudirka case where the guy and the captain...

Q: This is a Lithuanian who had escaped and the coast guard had put him back.

WAUCHOPE: He actually made it to a coast guard vessel and the coast guard captain allowed the Soviets to come aboard, beat him senseless and drag him back to their ship. The captain claimed he was in contact with the State Department. He claimed that the State Department gave him conflicting and unhelpful advice. So from that day forward the coast guard recorded every conversation they had with the Department of State. So, hearing this beep I thought to myself, I am not going to fall into this trap. I said to the captain, "Okay, let's review the situation. You outlined the situation as follows. Am I correct in my understanding of it?" He said, "That's correct." I said, "What do your standard operating procedures tell you to do under these circumstances?" He said, "Well, I should intervene between the two vessels." I said, "Is there any circumstance that I should be aware of that would have you deviate from this standard operating procedure?" He said, "No, there wasn't." I said, "Well, I would suggest you follow your standard operating procedure." Well, as it turned out, the American vessel outran the Bahamian enforcement vessel and it didn't come to any confrontation per se, but I was pursued that this was one of those situations that I just didn't want to freelance. So, I put the burden back on the person on the scene, which is the way it ought to be in any event. These incidents continued, and there was some effort to control the Cuban exiles, but once again their exiled community felt that that was an obstacle to their economic opportunity. The Bahamians were being badly used simply because they couldn't possibly control their own fishery zone. It was not traditional American fishermen. It had been mostly these Cuban poachers who had been doing this before. So this situation kept us on our toes.

Another event that was indicative of how The Bahamas was different from other nations was the celebration of the Bahamian independence. Immediately there was an issue about U.S. representation at the event, which shows the differences about how our relations with countries that are close by versus those that are more distance. There was a group that called itself the Friends of the Bahamas, which was a group of Americans, who were very senior, prominent people. The two central players in this were Congressman Pogue, or Chairman Pogue of the House Agricultural Committee and Congressman Flood of the House Arms Services Committee.

Q: From Pennsylvania.

WAUCHOPE: From Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Prior to independence, they had engineered an AID project as an acknowledgment of an independent government. They decided that there should be a \$10 million beef cattle project on Andros Island, which is the largest island in the Bahamas. This was a \$10 million project. I thought a cattle project on Andros Island for \$10 million; when I was in Chad we were trying to get about \$150,000 to have water well points to bring the cattle into the capital to the Fort Lamy. We couldn't get \$150,000 and here's the Bahamas that has no history of beef cattle production of any sort. We looked into it because there no cattle activity or any animal husbandry experience. Why Andros Island? Well, just because it's big, and it should be able to offer good pastures. When they examined the soils, however, they found that there was an overlaying volcanic crust that couldn't be broken with a tractor or a plow. You had to bulldoze it to crack this crust and to pulverize it sufficiently to make it into pasture. I mean the whole undertaking was an absolute boondoggle. When the \$10 million was

examined carefully, it did not make any sense. When Prime Minister Lyndon Pindling looked at this project, he said, "Well, this is great; \$10 million. When do I get the check?" The answer is, well, it doesn't quite work that way. It turned out that the Congressman Pogue represented the district in Texas where the Western Institute of Science and Technology, WIST, was located. The other half of the project was given to Penn State Wilkes-Barre which Congressman Flood represented. So, the \$10 million was split between the two congressional districts. So when they went to the Bahamas for independence, they insisted that that they put on a big show for their friends in the Friends of Bahamas group. I think Nixon's friend Bebe Rebozo was involved in that as well. Congressman Flood was one of the old barons in the House.

Q: He had a magnificent mustache.

WAUCHOPE: Absolutely. Of course, he fell on hard times eventually, but he was in his heyday at this point. So, he said, I want to take these friends down to the Bahamas. He said to the Department of Defense, specifically, the U.S. Army, "I want six helicopters to ferry my people around to the various events for independence." Just like that, the army said no problem. We'll have six helicopters for you and support services. When we learned that Flood wanted six helicopters we were appalled. The ranking dignitary at the independence celebration was Prince Charles who was conferring independence on the Bahamian people in the name of his mother, the Queen. We asked, "What's the Prince's entourage?" The Brits said, "It's modest, but he's got a helicopter." There was no way we were going to agree that Flood have six helicopters. So, we went back to DOD and said you cannot provide Flood six helicopters. DOD said, "We're not going to tell him no. If you want to tell him no, you go ahead and tell him." So we did. I went to Flood's people and said, "You cannot upstage Prince Charles. That is simply not acceptable. It will be a major gaff." I dealt with an assistant named Steve Elko; what a bandit he was. They fought and fought and fought, but eventually they lost. The Department prevailed on the issue and he went to Nassau with no helicopters, but he did get the royal treatment nonetheless. In any event, Steve Elko later went to jail for influence peddling, manipulation, extortion, etc., when Flood lost his seat. I remember he was brought to trial for illegal activity, he was considered to be non compos mentis. He was too senile. He sat as chairman of his committee up until a few months before he went on trial and he was determined to be incompetent to stand trial. Regarding the Andros project, to my knowledge there are still no cattle on Andros Island today. It was a non-starter, but it was a way in which these two Congressmen could channel money to their congressional districts, which they successfully did.

Q: Welcome to Washington.

WAUCHOPE: Well, you know, it just was that kind of a situation with the Bahamas; everything seemed to have a different cast to it by virtue of the proximity to the U.S. You could make an argument for support of the Bahamas that you couldn't make for other nations or regions because of our security concerns. I think that security was the underlying consideration. If we don't provide them what they need, it could create problems for the U.S.

ROZANNE L. RIDGWAY

**Deputy Chief of Mission
Nassau (1973-1975)**

Ambassador Ridgway was born and raised in Minnesota and educated at Hamline University. Entering the Foreign Service in 1957, she served abroad in Oslo, Manila, Palermo and Nassau (Deputy Chief of Mission). She had several top level assignments including; Ambassador for Ocean and Fishing Affairs (1976-1977); Ambassador to Finland (1977-1980); Counselor of the Department (1980-1981); Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany (1982-1985). In Washington, Ambassador Ridgway played a major role in dealing with issues concerning the Soviet Union and other European issues. This interview was conducted by Willis Armstrong on June 4, 1991.

RIDGWAY: I did leap at it, and I took the DCM course. I learned so much from that. I was so grateful for that one week of being told about values in the Foreign Service, our values and values in other professions. Just to have somebody . . . without saying right or wrong, I've never forgotten them saying, "There is no set of correct values, but you should understand your own institutional values." A week of that, a week of looking at case studies, and a week of being told how to keep the channels open with your ambassador. And the other little technique was, if your in-box is overflowing, you must be doing somebody else's job.

Q: A good point.

RIDGWAY: And I would remember that occasionally in the Bahamas, and sure enough, I would be re-writing stuff and it wasn't mine to re-write. It was for other people to learn how to write. So I took just a few little guides from that, but they have been very, very good throughout, and then off to the Bahamas. And it was a wonderful assignment. I did all kinds of things. Ron Spiers was just a terrific ambassador. He has all the right dignity and presence to be an ambassador, but when the day came to get the furniture assembled, he went and assembled the furniture.

Q: With you. He told me about that.

RIDGWAY: We got on the phone and called everybody, and we got everybody else involved. Jean [McCoubrey, principal secretary] was there.

Q: Was she?

RIDGWAY: The word was out, "the ambassador's car is at the embassy. What's going on?" Well, he was down there putting this furniture together. .so we all turned up, we all helped put the furniture together. We got a nice little embassy out of it.

Q: Yes, because this was the opening of a whole new embassy. That must be an exciting thing.

RIDGWAY: Well, it was a little place, but we did a good job. It was also a black government which was very suspicious of an American embassy which, as a consulate general, had only

white ties, which played golf at all of the white clubs, accepted all of the memberships. Ron dropped every membership, didn't make a big thing of it. He didn't stand up and say "I want to tell the black community we no longer belong to white clubs." He just quietly dropped them and waited. Made sure that we did all the right things, went to the Parliament, called on the right people, and within about four months, they caught on to the fact they had a real pro. And then we got to know the government. It happens.

Of course, things have changed in the Bahamas. It's the same government. They've never left office, and things haven't developed quite as happily as we might have wanted. But he really gave us every chance to get off on the right foot in this newly independent country, [he was] an ideal choice for it. He left after a year and was succeeded by Sy Weiss.

I don't know to this day why I then didn't become a case study in the DCM course of failure because I, he and I, have laughed about it since, but we were totally different people. I not only knew the Foreign Service which he didn't know because he was Civil Service, but I knew the embassy, which he didn't know, and I may not, in fact, looking back on it, have been as cautious as I should have been about making sure that it was his embassy and not mine. I'm aware now of what can happen if you've been a DCM before, and how uncertain new ambassadors can feel. Whatever it was, I survived it and nothing bad came of it. It could have.

Q: Yes, it certainly could have. Were you chargé for a while?

RIDGWAY: Not for very much, for an hour, for a month.

Q: Because that seems to cause trouble.

RIDGWAY: That is not a male-female thing, that's a proprietary kind of thing.

Q: It becomes "my embassy."

RIDGWAY: I think I let go of that part, but there was still the fact I'd been there longer, I'd served with the previous ambassador, I knew the Foreign Service, I knew the Bahamians, I had wonderful friends in the Bahamas, and I was just very comfortable there. And as I say, [those] usually [are] the ingredients of disaster for DCM's.

Q: I understand DCM's have a forty percent failure rate.

RIDGWAY: It has to be all on personal meshing. No doubt.

In the course of that year I was called by the department and told I was going to the National War College, and I was also asked to sit on my first promotion board. So I came up here for the promotion board, the junior officer eight to seven board, and I stopped in at personnel and told them I wasn't going to the National War College; I wasn't interested. That I had had three years of political-military affairs. They didn't have to tell me what a uniform looked like or what the issues were. They said, "Well you've been selected for training so, how about the Senior Seminar?" So as an O-3 I was selected for the Senior Seminar.

I returned from the Bahamas exactly after two years in the Bahamas, from September of '73 to the end of August 1975. And in some respects, it's probably the assignment that has made it possible for me to survive the last years because when I took my medical--I turned forty in the Bahamas, had a wonderful fortieth birthday party; I'm told they still talk about it--but I came back and took my medical, and Dr. Antal, who is still the doctor I always request, said if you looked at the numbers you would have thought I was twenty-five. I mean, I was slim, trim, healthy; golf, tennis, swimming every morning; citrus fruit, light foods, fish; and an eight-hour a day job; lots of outside interests; a beautiful home to live in; nice people who've stayed friends over the years, you know, the Spierses and Genta Hawkins, down at Haiti now, people I really liked; and it was a bankable kind of thing for the years of high pressure and the like.

Q: One question I have on the DCM-ship. Isn't an ambassador permitted to bring his own DCM in?

RIDGWAY: Yes.

Q: But Weiss did not wish to bring his own. Or how did it happen?

RIDGWAY: It was recommended that I stay. He didn't know many people in the Foreign Service. I don't know why he asked me to stay. I don't know how I survived.

Q: But you did have a bit of a period of strain you felt?

RIDGWAY: No, we never had a period of strain. No, just looking back on it, I thought, "My God, how did I ever get through that?"

Q: You said you could have been a case study for the FSI course.

RIDGWAY: It just never turned out; it didn't turn out that way. Because I was in a constant role of having to explain both the Foreign Service and the Bahamas to someone who is very strong, very talented, a national reputation in arms control matters, arms matters, political-military affairs, still has that kind of a national reputation. And here I am, telling him what time a car can go and what time a car can't go; who the people are he should meet. Normally would not have gone well.

Q: Would you subscribe to this idea, that a DCM's job is to make his ambassador look good?

RIDGWAY: Yes, but making your ambassador look good means making your country look good. It's not as if--I can use a crude phrase here--it's not a kissing of the backside. It's to make sure that that person, whatever skills they bring, uses the best of those skills to make the country look good.

Q: So, you were going off to the . . .

Ambassador Ridgway was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2002.

RIDGWAY: Let me just end the discussion on this part of my career. I was coming to the end of my ARA assignment. I went to see my career counselor. His advice, and that of his colleagues, was that I should take a position in FSI as the A-100 course coordinator. I told them that was the last thing that would interest me. The career counselor did not give up; it was pointed out that the job was at my grade level and just perfect for me at this stage of my career. I said, "Thanks, but no thanks" and returned to my ARA office.

Soon after, Ron Spiers called me and told me that he had just been named ambassador to Bahamas. The Bahamas were to become independent in September, 1973. He would be our first ambassador. He went on to point out that he had had only one overseas assignment, as politico-military counselor in London. He added that he knew of my work from my RPM tour; and, just as importantly, he recognized that I had had experience in several embassy functions. He said he needed my experience and asked me to join him as his deputy. It didn't take me long to recognize that being a DCM (deputy chief of mission) was far better than what career counseling was considering. I said almost immediately that I would be delighted to join his staff, and soon began to wind up my ARA responsibilities and to learn about the Bahamas.

I went to the Bahamas with Ron Spiers. We did face some very interesting issues during my 1973-75 tour. Ron was my ambassador for the first year; he was succeeded by Seymour Weiss, who had also been the director of PM. We were accustomed to viewing the Bahamas as "British." We used to turn to the Brits to get advice on how we should behave vis-à-vis the Bahamians. Secondly, over time, the Bahamas had become a "luxury" post, not in terms of housing or office space, both of which were barely adequate. People used to refer to membership in the Lucaya Club as an illustration of a lifestyle; that club is viewed today as one the world's finest clubs, as it was then. Then there was a sailing club, a yacht club, and the golf club. Membership was restricted to white clientele. I think it is fair to say that from the beginning of our representation until Ron and I got there, the Consul Generals (Turner B. Shelton was the last one) missed all of the political aspects of life in the Bahamas. Incidentally, I had run into Shelton before, when he was our ambassador to Nicaragua and a great friend of Somoza's on Law of the Sea issues. It was easy to miss the political and economic dimensions of the Bahamas if you were sitting out at one of the clubs, enjoying "life." It was easy for the American staffs to believe that the United Bahamian Party, which was totally white, represented the future of the country. In that way, the CG missed every election prediction.

When Ron came, he told the staff that the new embassy would have to make a "statement." It would have to show the new black government, whose leadership incidentally, came from the Progressive Party, that we were aware of the political realities in the Bahamas.

The new prime minister was Lynden Pindling. We were to make it clear to the government that we were interested in the future of the Bahamas as a new country, and not as an appendage of their colonial masters. Ron dropped his membership in all of the fancy clubs. For about six months after that the black community just observed us to see if this sea change in our attitude was for real.

In that six-month period, we had to deal with a couple of significant issues. One had to do with “hot pursuit,” which was closely connected with the Law of the Sea. The Bahamas is an island nation. Under some old arrangements, the U.S. was permitted to just run in and out of Bahamian territorial waters in pursuit of criminals, such as drug dealers and smugglers without first having to seek any kind of permission from the Bahamian or British authorities, and we had become accustomed to doing just that. Large parts of the U.S. Navy really thought that this unfettered access should continue. It felt it should have the rights of archipelago passage, which would allow them to navigate at will through all the passages between the islands. That right of archipelago passage is still an issue today wherever the “nation” is a conglomeration of islands, such as the Philippines, Indonesia and the Bahamas. However, and quite naturally, these island nations want to know who is navigating in their waters.

Then there was the issue of their territorial seas, which, I believe at the time, was only three miles. The Bahamas was not one of the “bad” guys, claiming waters far from their shores. They, however, opposed us on the archipelago issue. Fortunately, the Coast Guard contingent responsible for the waters between the U.S. and the Bahamas was headed by an admiral stationed in Miami. I knew him as “Red” Wagner. He was very sensitive to the issue and very respectful of the Bahamas as a newly independent nation. He was not about to sail in Bahamian waters without respect for Bahamian policies, just because we had been doing so when the Bahamas were part of the British Empire. He and his staff kept in close contact with the Bahamian authorities whenever his ships were chasing some suspects. On a couple of occasions, he was denied access to their territorial waters, on which occasions the Coast Guard did not violate those Bahamian wishes. It was therefore, with the Coast Guard’s help that we rebuilt relationships with the Bahamian authorities. When I left, the cooperation between our two countries was very good. The more difficult problems, which stemmed from a major increase in drug trafficking and corruption, arose after I had left.

Quite apart from wishing to have good relations with a newly independent country, we had to face issues which arose from the very important military bases that we had in the Bahamas. Among them was one which was part of an underwater detection system set up to protect our vessels. These bases were originally part of the deal for the “loan” of 50 American ships that Roosevelt worked out with Churchill during WWII, some time before we joined the fray. As a result of that “loan” we were given perpetual rights to these bases by the British and they became part of our Cold War defense system. These were really stations, rather than bases, which were links in various U.S. under water detection systems. Today, when the Soviet threat has passed, people are trying to figure out what to do with these stations; one suggestion is use them for a whale detection system.

I should note that as DCM, I was also the Consul General for the Turks and Caicos Islands. I went to these islands to negotiate for another station, or link, in our warning system. Another important base was off Andros Island, where the Andros trench is over 6,000 feet deep. We used these waters to test the noise generated by our submarines. We wanted to retain the right to continue this testing program.

It is interesting to note that the Defense Department, while wishing to maintain all the rights it

enjoyed during the British rule, was not willing to give the Bahamians anything in return. We had enjoyed these rights free of charge from the British; we were not about to give up those free rights just because they were under a new jurisdiction. The Bahamians viewed the issue somewhat differently than the British, who were also a member of NATO. Finally, to “secure” our “rights” we put together an assistance package, but had trouble obtaining Congressional approval. After I left, Congress did give its approval.

It was an interesting time to be in the Bahamas. We changed offices and moved into newly leased space. We had to acquire an ambassadorial residence and housing for the staff. I had a lot of administrative-management responsibilities. Most importantly, I helped Ron establish a new relationship between the Bahamas and the U.S., moving from relations with a colony, which was often managed by an American political appointee (all undoubtedly well intentioned, but viewing their appointment perhaps not as a substantive job), to relations with an independent nation, which were managed by a professional diplomat.

At about this time, the administration named Elliot Richardson to be its ambassador to the UK. On his way to do some bone fishing, Elliot stopped in the Bahamas. He saw Ron and asked him to join him in London as his DCM. Ron knew London and had worked on many of the UK-U.S. issues over the years. The DCM job in London was certainly more challenging than that of an ambassador to the Bahamas. In many respects, Ron had achieved the goals he had set out for himself in the Bahamas, so he agreed to join Richardson in London.

Ron was replaced by Seymour Weiss, who had been a member of the Civil Service for many years, and whose last job had been director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs. I worked for him for a year in the Bahamas, following the same issues that I had worked on during Ron’s term.

Q: Talk to us a little about the status of a new country in 1973.

RIDGWAY: The British had been in the Bahamas for many years, and they continued to have a major presence in a governor general, who had an impressive house. There had been a long “training” period to prepare the Bahamians to take over the management of their own affairs. Bahamians had been sent to Canada and to the UK for training. The new chief-of-protocol, a brilliant man, had done all of his training in Ottawa under the Canadian chief of protocol.

Before independence came to fruition, the Bahamas had already established a parliament; so in fact, they were really ready to become an independent nation. The British left gracefully with full honors. The only ones that didn’t understand the changed nature of the political situation in the Bahamas were the Americans, who had predicted that the first election in the free nation would produce a white government. That undoubtedly was the view from the golf course, where Americans spent much of the time. The leaders of the new government, all black, were well-educated, well-trained, and ready to take over. They all had had years of experience working in the British administration. The smooth turnover can be attributed to the careful transition program that had been pursued for many years.

Q: Did you have to do much to overcome any problems that Turner Shelton and his staff had left

behind?

RIDGWAY: Not really. When we arrived, Shelton had already departed. He had in fact been our representative to the “white” Bahamas. We focused on the new government, which as I said, was primarily “black.” As I said, Ron just dropped all the memberships in the “white” clubs, which undoubtedly offended many whites. It was the right thing to do. Eventually, the black government, which did include whites, began to view us as having appreciated the changed nature of the management of Bahamian affairs.

Q: Did Cuba play any role in the Bahamas?

RIDGWAY: Not really. The only time that it would be included in conversations was when someone would pass through with Cuban cigars for Henry Kissinger. We had pre-clearance in the Bahamas, which meant that some of the cigars were confiscated by Customs, which really upset Henry.

Robert Vesco fled to the Bahamas, as did Howard Hughes. When U.S. authorities tried to get Vesco extradited by using an old British treaty that dealt primarily with wire transfers, we participated in helping out the legal authorities, but we were not part of the case. Justice used our physical resources to try to make its case. In the end, they were not successful in the Bahamian courts.

Q: You indicated that the black community initially watched us to see whether our attitudes had really changed. By the time you left, what was the mood in the black community?

RIDGWAY: I thought it was quite positive towards us. I used to measure it by the volume of invitations that we received, which rose steadily, and included invitations to such events as the burning of a mortgage on a church, or a church celebration of some kind – “Bringing Greetings” as it was called. We would be invited to “Bring Greetings” on certain occasions; we accepted most of them. Ron would “Bring Greetings” on some occasions; I brought the same on one occasion. I remember that the Southern Baptists held their international convention in the Bahamas once while I was there – a plurality of Bahamians being Baptists. That convention was attended by a huge number of American Baptists. We “Brought Greetings” on that occasion. There was a wonderful small Catholic Church in Nassau, headed by a monsignor who was trying to build a Catholic community on the islands. That also gave rise to invitations, which we would accept.

Our efforts were intended to convey to the Bahamians that we understood that the Bahamas was a new nation which would now be viewed differently by the U.S. than it had been when it was a colony. We also wanted to convey that we understood that the leadership of this new country was primarily black, and that we would do our best to pursue our interests with a respect for the major changes that had taken place in the country. The most effective avenue to achieve our goals was to be engaged in the community, instead of spending our days on the golf courses with white players or at the many other clubs with whites-only memberships.

Q: Did you have any problems with our naval stations?

RIDGWAY: No.

Q: How would you characterize the Bahamas overall?

RIDGWAY: The Bahamas was a very gentle place. I don't know what the situation is today. There were three horrible murders while I was there. We all agreed that this was not likely to have been committed by a Bahamian; that was not the way they behaved. In fact, it was a kid from Milwaukee, who was mentally challenged. When the authorities combed through his apartment, they found all kind of black magic images. He just went to the Bahamas and murdered people.

Bahamians were gentle. They were sweet. The people were at ease with themselves. They had their own view of their place in life. I am told that all of that has now changed. However, we are talking about the late 1970's before the drug invasion, before Columbia, before drug trafficking brought all the bad stuff into the country for trans-shipment. In the 1970's, the country's principal earnings came from "sun and sand" and some fishing. I always seemed to end up in situations where fishery was a central issue. In the case of the Bahamas, it was spiny lobsters, rather than tuna or shrimp. This is not to say that one could not foresee that over time, the Bahamas would have to face some major issues. Young people cannot be asked to accept that their future lay in waiting on tables or changing bed linens. In the late 1970's, that was pretty much what the future held.

Some Bahamians tried farming. I remember tromping through a prospective avocado grove with the minister of planning. I don't know whether that ever got off the ground. I also saw a farming operation on Andros, which AID tried to establish with a \$10 million grant, which was part of the assistance package developed in exchange for the base rights. I don't know what happened to that project. I don't know whether the Bahamas became self-supporting in the meat and vegetable area. It had to feed not only its own citizens, but the huge influx of tourists as well. I have been told that over time, drug money corrupted the government and the society as a whole. The young people, given a choice between making an easy buck or being paid for working in a service industry, went for the easy buck, which was not surprising. I would guess that over time, our relations with the Bahamas soured somewhat as a direct consequence of the drug trade.

Q: You left the Bahamas in 1975?

RIDGWAY: Correct. I left in the middle of some negotiations over spiny lobster fishing rights. Cuban-Americans had, as Cubans, fished for spiny lobsters off the Bahamas when the islands were part of Great Britain. When the fishermen moved to Miami, nothing had changed, as far as they were concerned, and they insisted on fishing as they always had. To complicate matters, there was a legal dispute over whether spiny lobsters were a fishery that was coastal in its nature or whether it was an international matter. The issue was whether the lobsters, when they moved, were in constant contact with the continental shelf and other similar theoretical questions. The dispute was creating open warfare; our Coast Guard was concerned that the Cuban-American fishermen were leaving Miami ports armed to the teeth to defend their interests and were continuing to take the spiny lobsters. You could just about predict when open combat would

break out, because the spiny lobster does migrate, or at least moves in great numbers. You could easily see the long trains of spiny lobsters moving in the clear waters of the Bahamas, it was easy to know where the fishing was going to be rewarding.

The Department of Commerce, NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), and the national fisheries service sent a team to the Bahamas to negotiate lobster fishing rights. I ended up being the embassy's action officer, because I knew a lot of the officials involved from previous encounters with fishing issues. However, my tour of duty ran out before the negotiations were concluded. I was going to the senior seminar, starting in the fall of 1975, and I left Nassau at the end of August.

Q: Did the spiny lobster issue get resolved?

RIDGWAY: It got resolved when we agreed that our fishermen would have to buy licenses to maintain their fishing rights. I think the tensions haven't completely abated, and I suspect that there is still a lot of poaching.

WILLIAM B. SCHWARTZ, JR.
Ambassador
Bahamas (1977-1980)

Ambassador William B. Schwartz, Jr. was born in Georgia in 1921. After receiving his bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina, he served in the United States Navy from 1942-1946. President Carter appointed William B. Schwartz, Jr. Ambassador to the Bahamas from 1977 to 1981. Ambassador Schwartz was interviewed by Donald C. Leidel in April 1995.

SCHWARTZ: In any event, I did help him when he ran for the Presidency, and -- I laugh about it -- when people ask me how I happened to be appointed, I tell them President Carter was looking for the best man he could find, so he called on me to go to the Bahamas. Of course, my association with him and with people close to him obviously influenced my being asked to go to the Bahamas. But I was totally surprised. I hadn't asked for it, didn't expect it, didn't want anything, frankly. In April of 1977, after he was already in the White House, I was at our winter home in Longboat Key when I got a telephone call from the White House and President Carter asked me to accept the Ambassadorship to the Bahamas. This came as a total, complete surprise. But I did; that's the story of how I was appointed.

Q: That was in April of 1977...and when did you go to the Bahamas?

SCHWARTZ: Well, that's interesting. If I may deviate for a moment, the Bahamas had had an interim ambassador who had been appointed under the previous Administration. He had left the Bahamas. I guess it was back in December of 1976. When I was appointed, there was no ambassador there. The deputy chief of mission was acting as ambassador. I was asked to go in April, but my confirmation didn't take place until September. So the Bahamas was actually

without an ambassador until I went there in October of 1977. The best I can recall without my notes, we went there on October the eighth of 1977.

Q: The confirmation was probably delayed by the summer recess, I would guess.

SCHWARTZ: Yes, that was it. The confirmation was delayed by the summer recess. I am told there wasn't any problem with my personal credentials.

Q: What did you do between April and October? Did you spend time in the State Department, in briefings and taking courses?

SCHWARTZ: Ambassador Leidel, I was very fortunate. I did go to Washington on several occasions at the request of the State Department for some briefings. But I suppose the most fortunate thing that happened was that the present Prime Minister, Peng Li, had had a previously scheduled personal appointment and meeting with President Carter. It was scheduled for possibly July or August of 1977. He was going to Washington to meet with President Carter, and the President asked me to be on hand for that meeting. So I actually had an opportunity to meet Prime Minister Peng Li and his Foreign Minister in Washington prior to my actual confirmation as ambassador.

Q: Did you go through a series of briefings through the Department?

SCHWARTZ: I did. I had several briefings with the Department. I actually had a two-day seminar with several other pending ambassadors to learn some of the ropes of what they expected of ambassadors. Mrs. Schwartz went with me on that occasion, and she spent a few hours getting some briefings.

Q: Were you satisfied, generally, with your preparation?

SCHWARTZ: A number of years after the fact, I have to say to you, and I don't mean this at all by way of criticism, that frankly there was a good deal lacking as far as information concerning what to expect and about personal record-keeping. But that's all been changed since then, I am told, on the recommendation of several people who went through and had some experiences where they felt the State Department might possibly give better information. I don't mean that as criticism, because my understanding is that today they do an excellent job. But we didn't get much specific information as to the kinds of things we could look forward to.

Q: Could you summarize, when you arrived in the Bahamas in October, what you considered to be the major issues, the crux of what you recall as being significant in terms of U.S. relations with the Bahamas, in terms of your role, your relationship with the leadership in the Bahamas?

SCHWARTZ: Well, this is 1995, and I went to the Bahamas in 1977. So, that's 18 years, and I'm 73 years old, and I'm trusting to memory. Suffice it to say that the Bahamas was not a critical country as far as relations with the United States was concerned. It wasn't the Middle East, and we didn't have any major problems, thank goodness.

The Bahamas, though geographically close to the United States, is a foreign country. The Bahamas had been left without a U.S. ambassador, as I mentioned earlier, for almost a year. The government of the Bahamas was a Black government who had come into power several years prior to that and were proud, as they had a right to be. They were anxious to stand on their own, but at the same time be recognized by the United States as a foreign government due the same attention and respect as any other government.

I found my reception to be an extremely cordial one. I think, to a great extent, that was spearheaded by the fact that I was able to meet with Prime Minister Peng Li and his Foreign Minister and the Bahamian Ambassador to the United States prior to my going there.

The drug problem was an intense one for the United States. The Bahamas was a gateway for drugs. I suppose one of the major things that our government was interested in was attempting to decrease the flow of drugs through the Bahamas into the United States. The Bahamians were interested in seeing tourism, which is their major industry, continue, and were interested in promoting that and in seeing the United States recognize that and help in any way possible.

We didn't have any major critical issues at the time that I went there. I arrived in the Bahamas October eighth or ninth and had the good fortune of meeting Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip four or five days after that on an official visit of theirs. I was thrown into that. Fortunately, I had already presented my credentials to the Governor General, and that was the takeoff for my experience in the Bahamas. It was a wonderful experience. The Queen was there for several days, and she also came a year or two later for the celebration of the Bahamians' Bicentennial. But that was the kick-off.

Q: Would you characterize the relations between the Bahamian Government and the U.S. Government as positive and cooperative? Were there problem areas?

SCHWARTZ: No, they really were positive and cooperative. There was some reluctance on the part of the Bahamian Government to being told by the United States that it wanted this done or that done. This was true in the drug enforcement area. When I first went there, we had no DEA office. An agent from Miami who would come over periodically. It was during my tour of duty there that we established a DEA office, which took some doing and convincing. The Bahamians didn't want the United States imposing upon them restrictions and requirements without not only their consent, but almost without Bahamian participation in it. They didn't want to be taken for granted. But the relationship between the two governments has been excellent, and I think remains so.

Q: Are there any other areas that you would care to comment on in terms of relations with the host government or its leaders or personalities that you recall that would be of special significance?

SCHWARTZ: You may recall that Vesco was in the Bahamas for quite some period of time. He was *Persona Non Grata* in the United States. He was there while I was there. The Shah of Iran was also there while I was there. Both of these situations required some hand-holding and some soft gloves with the Bahamian Government. But there were no major incidents involving either

person. We didn't have any major crisis while I was there. I joke about it and tell people that I kept us out of war during the period I was there. But we had cordial relations and it was, obviously, a fabulous experience for me.

The Bahamian people respect the United States, and yet they want the United States to understand that they are a country unto themselves, that their proximity to the United States doesn't mean that they are part of the United States.

Q: Ambassador Schwartz, would you care to comment on the Embassy staff supporting you, in terms of their own qualifications, cooperation, whether they were State Department or DEA? Did you feel that you had adequate support? Were there any special problems? Also, how did you feel morale was at the Embassy?

SCHWARTZ: Well, first of all, I would say this. You know there's been a tremendous amount of conversation over the years, and there still is, about career ambassadors versus non-career, pros and cons, the attitude of the career Foreign Service personnel toward non-career ambassadors. I must say that the staff in the Bahamas was extremely cooperative. I found them well qualified and happy. The Bahamas was a lovely spot to be. It wasn't all sun and roses, but at the same time for many of the staff who had come from other locations, it was quite a wonderful change. The staff was fine, and the reception of the staff was fine.

The DCM who was there when I arrived, Rush Taylor, couldn't have been of more help to me. He was due to leave shortly after I arrived. When he left, Terry Shankle became my DCM. Terry recently passed away, but he was, just prior to his death, head of the Foreign Service Association. That shows the respect with which he was held by his peers.

The staff was fine. The Bahamian staff was excellent. I really don't have any complaints at all. We did have a very large Customs contingency, because we have a pre-clearance unit in Nassau and also in Freeport. Consequently, the Customs people had a large staff. They were good. I didn't have any complaints at all.

Coming out of a business environment, sometimes I did feel our Government was a little "fat," so to speak, in how the accounts were done, personnel-wise. It's a little difficult oftentimes, to get answers from the State Department in Washington. I suppose that's to be expected.

Q: Do you recall roughly how many people were in the Embassy, both Americans and Foreign Nationals?

SCHWARTZ: I think we had somewhere in the area of 28 or 30 when I went there, not including the pre-clearance unit of Customs, which was a large contingent. That did not include the Marine contingent, either. It's since grown, I am told. I've been back to the Bahamas on many occasions, and I did at one point keep in pretty good contact with them. I understand the staff has grown considerably.

Q: Did you have any Congressional visitors while you were there? Was there any special Congressional interest in the aspect of relations with the Bahamas?

SCHWARTZ: We had a couple of Congressional groups come in. We had helped the Bahamians with an agricultural experiment at Andros Island, one of the outer islands. We had a couple of groups come in who were interested in that. Senator Claiborne Pell used to visit the Bahamas with a little regularity because he had some family who were there. And we had several others, but there were no major situations that I can remember. I know we had a number of visitors, but I don't think they were on official business.

Q: Any special relation of interest with U.S. press there?

SCHWARTZ: Of course, the media was always interested in the Vesco situation and the Shah situation.

Q: Ambassador Schwartz, could you summarize what you consider your greatest accomplishments, frustrations, disappointments during your tenure?

SCHWARTZ: Well, I suppose one of my greatest accomplishments was establishing a DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) office in the Bahamas, and the results that were obtained from it. You may recall that drugs and addiction, the flow of drugs into the United States, was a tremendous problem then. It still is today, but it was even worse then. The Bahamas was the launching pad for the entry of drugs into this country, because of the many outer islands that the Bahamas have which make it so easy for small planes to land on and transfer contraband to boats that could come on into the coast of Florida. Through the cooperation of the Bahamian Government, and through our own efforts, the DEA Office was finally obtained, and it really did a great job in stemming the flow of drugs. That was a great accomplishment.

I might comment that after the Carter Administration left, the Reagan Administration, through its Vice President at that time, George Bush, the DEA office in our Embassy in the Bahamas, was made much larger. President Reagan gave Vice President Bush the responsibility, you may recall, of handling the drug problem, and he did a great job with it.

Another thing that was done, frankly, was to mend the relationship between our Government and the Bahamian Government. Although there weren't any severe problems when I went there in October 1977, the Bahamian Government had been without an American Ambassador for over a year. They felt like second-class citizens. When they finally did get an ambassador, and I was able to have a very close, personal relationship with the top people in the Bahamian Government, I think that created a far better atmosphere, which led us to get the cooperation of the Bahamian Government in the DEA situation and also in some other problems. The fact that the Shah of Iran was allowed to go to the Bahamas was a result of our Government being able to call upon the Bahamian Government. We had to help find a haven for the Shah and his party, and as a result of our good relations with the Government of the Bahamas, we were able to do so.

Frustrations and disappointments were minimal. I suppose the greatest frustration was, coming out of a business environment, for me to have to go through the bureaucracy of our State Department to get results, get things done and to get answers to questions that in my judgment

took longer to accomplish than it should have. That's our system. I'm not critical of it, but it was frustrating.

Q: Anything else you care to add, Ambassador Schwartz?

SCHWARTZ: I don't think so. It obviously was a tremendous personal satisfaction for me to be able to serve our country. Even though the Bahamian Government is not a crisis situation, we do have an ongoing relationship with them. They are an important partner of ours; they are close to this country; they represent an extremely critical area. We maintain military activities and bases in the Bahamas. I considered it an honor and a privilege to serve, and I appreciate what our Foreign Service does for our country far more today than I did before. I admire the career people. They are self-sacrificing and they do us a lot of credit. It was an honor for me and Mrs. Schwartz to be there.

Q: Thank you very much, Ambassador Schwartz.

ANDREW F. ANTIPPAS
Deputy Chief of Mission
Nassau (1981-1983)

Andrew F. Antippas was born in Massachusetts in 1931. He received a bachelor's degree from Tufts University and entered the Foreign Service in 1960. His career included positions in Africa, Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Korea, Canada, and Washington DC. Mr. Antippas was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on July 19, 1994.

Q: You went to the Bahamas. That's Nassau, isn't it?

ANTIPPAS: Nassau. There was no Ambassador at the post when I arrived there in July 1981.

Q: How long were you there?

ANTIPPAS: It was to be a four-year assignment as DCM: two years, followed by home leave, and then return for another two years. In fact, it turned out that I was chargé d'affaires there for the best part of two years. A political appointee was assigned as Ambassador. There's a lot to say about the Bahamas, which says a lot about how the State Department, the Foreign Service, and the White House work. I would say that the Bahamas was my most interesting assignment by far.

Q: Let's talk about that. What was the situation in the Bahamas when you went out? Was there any particular thing that you were supposed to concentrate on?

ANTIPPAS: I originally figured--my God! The Bahamas! People tend to confuse Bermuda and the Bahamas as being the same sort of place with people running around in "Bermuda shorts" and swinging golf clubs. I figured that the biggest problem I would have as chargé d'affaires or

even as DCM in the Bahamas would be practicing my tennis backhand. I figured that it was really going to be a two-year or four-year vacation. I had known some people who had served in the Bahamas and so knew a little bit about the place, particularly when I was in the Consular Affairs Bureau as special assistant to the director.

We had had an American who had been sentenced to death for murdering an American tourist in Nassau. The murderer was apparently insane. I remember the great effort that was made by the Department to save this clown's life. The Bahamian Attorney General said, "Hell, no." And they hanged him. I also knew that we had tried to get Robert Vesco out of the Bahamas.

Q: Vesco was an international financier cum crook.

ANTIPPAS: He had ripped off \$220 million from the IOS [a U. S. private investment service] and an investment fund. So it was more of a law enforcement kind of place, but very much consular oriented. In fact, in Bangkok one of the visa scandals which I had helped to uncover was a fraudulent immigration visa racket worked out of New York by a Chinese-American lawyer and the American Consul in the Bahamas. The Consul was going into his office early in the morning and writing up phony immigration visas. He was subsequently tried and convicted of fraud, due in part to the evidence which I helped to uncover in Bangkok. So I had a little knowledge of the Bahamas and I thought that it would be an interesting place to serve.

The biggest bilateral problem that we had when I arrived in the Bahamas was the completion of the negotiations on the military base agreement. In the 1940 50-destroyer deal...

Q: This was an agreement reached with Great Britain.

ANTIPPAS: 50 [World War I] destroyers were exchanged for 99 year leases on bases in the West Indies, including the Bahamas. Britain gave us 99 year leases on a variety of locations in the Caribbean which we could use for military bases. Most of those bases were not particularly useful after World War II. The facilities in the Bahamas were, particularly for the space program, because we set up tracking stations for Cape Canaveral (Cape Kennedy) in several downrange locations through the Bahamian archipelago. In fact, all of the way down through the Turks and Caicos Islands, which are part of the same archipelago. As important as the tracking stations, was a naval test facility in the body of water between Andros and New Providence Islands.

When the Bahamas became independent in 1973, we were to start paying for the use of the facilities. The tracking stations were of declining interest because, as technology changed in the space program, particularly the use of satellites, we didn't really need these stations as land-based facilities down-range from Cape Kennedy. What was of particular importance though was what they called the "AUTECH" facility, which is an acronym for the "Atlantic Underseas Test and Evaluation Center."

In fact, the body of water between New Providence Island, which is where Nassau is located, and Andros Island, the largest island in the Bahamas, is almost a land-locked lake. It is up to 6000 feet deep. Because it is mostly surrounded by land masses, reefs, and sand bars, it is like a giant test pool. It was ideal--in fact, unique in the world--for its clarity, depth, and size to allow the

sound-testing of submarines. The most important thing about using submarines is that they need to be silent. Even nuclear vessels make noises with equipment and propellers. You could run a whole naval battle group in that area. They did a lot of "war gaming" there. It was only two days' steam from Norfolk, VA. So it was a very important facility. The U. S. Navy very much wanted to improve the infrastructure there but couldn't do so because we hadn't completed the bases agreement. The Carter administration had been involved in negotiations with the newly independent, Bahamian Government over the terms. It was thought that we had finally worked out the rental agreement.

So when I went to the Bahamas, my instructions were to find out where and when they wanted to sign this agreement. The Reagan administration was now in office. One of the first things that I did, when I assumed charge of the Embassy, was to send a diplomatic note to the Bahamian Government saying, "I've been instructed to ask, etc, etc." I received no response, which I found very curious. Obviously, this was a fairly big deal, in that we were going to be paying the Bahamian Government something like ten million dollars annually for the use of these bases. The payments were not to be retroactive either. Moreover, we couldn't improve the bases until we had a signed agreement, because Congress wouldn't allow us to do so. That is one part of the larger story of the difficulty I encountered over the next several months.

I arrived in Nassau in mid July 1981. I discovered that all was not sweetness and light between the United States and the Bahamas. It turned out that the Foreign Minister felt that he had been "hornswoggled" in some fashion, as far as the agreement on the payment schedule was concerned. In a word, what he wanted was a guarantee that over the 10-year life of the agreement, the Bahamas was going to get their \$100 million under the payment schedule. On our side we said that we could not "guarantee" \$100 million because of our legislative budget arrangements and budget cycle. There's no way to "guarantee" that the payments will be made during the life of the agreement. In other words, we could not legally "guarantee" payments of \$10 million per year for 10 years. He was "sore" about that. He felt that the Bahamas might be cheated.

Anyway, it was really kind of an academic point. However, to show you how these guys operated, the Attorney General of the Bahamas was concurrently Foreign Minister. This made it kind of complicated, because he was the guy we most frequently dealt with in the Bahamas.

Q: What was his name?

ANTIPPAS: Paul Adderly. I crossed swords with this individual on numerous occasions. He was a little bit "nuts," actually, but an absolutely brilliant and knowledgeable individual. He understood how the U. S. Government worked. He was a pretty good politician for the Bahamas but he really was a case. Some of the American VIP's who visited the Bahamas and whom I escorted to call on him were just "flabbergasted" by his attitude.

Anyway, on the base agreement issue I was absolutely stunned to find that the man would not answer a direct question about what his problem was. Here I was, the new American Chargé d'Affaires. What I didn't know about the Bahamas would fill a book. There was a new American administration in office in Washington [the Reagan administration]. All of the arrangements had

been made under the previous administration [President Carter]. He knew that. I would come and ask him a simple, direct, bilateral question. He would not even answer the question, even when I asked him directly, to his face. I would ask, "Can you tell me what your problem is?" He wouldn't answer. It became very, very frustrating, to say the least. However, I didn't consider it a personal failing on my part.

Over time I began to discover that there were other problems for the United States in the Bahamas.

After my first 90 days at post I sat down and wrote a 10-page telegram, describing my impressions of what our relations were with this country. I have a copy of this report. I managed to get it out of the files before I retired. I thought that it was a rather good report. I described all of the problems and the attitudes which I had encountered. My conclusion in this cable was, "The Bahamas is no friend of the United States."

This was before we had even begun to realize the enormity of the narcotics trafficking which was taking place in the Bahamas. We already had some idea of the "money laundering" that was going on, since the Bahamas was an offshore banking center. I was also beginning to discover, to my horror, how big a transit area it was for illegal immigration into the United States. Even then, the Haitian problem was becoming a major difficulty, with boats pitching up on the beaches of Florida, hundreds of people drowning, and all of that.

I discovered that the Bahamian Government really wasn't being terribly helpful in these areas. And because of the "narcotics traffickers," American citizens were running into trouble. We had the case of a legislator from the State of Michigan who mysteriously disappeared from his sailboat. Everybody on board was apparently murdered. The boat was found, floating empty. The belief was that they'd run into some drug traffickers who killed them. It was becoming very troubling.

Q: Was there an inherent kind of anti-Americanism or was it because of these other interests?

ANTIPPAS: There were two parts to the problem. First, I arrived in Nassau in July, 1981. The Ambassador appointed under the Carter administration had left on January 20, 1981, and he hadn't been replaced. The Pindling government was getting the distinct feeling that the new, Republican administration was "less friendly." It was very much a "black-white" thing. You have to understand that there is a very definite relationship between the American civil rights movement, particularly as Black Americans see it, and the efforts of the Bahamians to obtain independence. Pindling, in fact, had defeated a white minority government.

Q: Pindling is...

ANTIPPAS: Lyndon Oscar Pindling, known among his supporters as "LOP," or "Ping", was the Prime Minister of the Bahamas. He had taken power, initially, under the self-government program in 1966. The British couldn't wait to give the Bahamas its independence. The country became independent in 1973, and he became Prime Minister, since his party, the PLP [Progressive Liberal Party], was pushing a black agenda or black accusations against a white,

minority government. There was a close connection with the American civil rights movement. Many leaders of the American civil rights movement used to come to the Bahamas. It wasn't by chance that the Congressman from Harlem, Adam Clayton Powell, used to "hang out" on Bimini Island, the westernmost island in the Bahamas Archipelago--50 miles due East of Miami.

There was a distinct feeling that the Republicans were "anti-black," and certainly anti-Pindling. After all, it was during the Nixon administration that Pindling had refused to surrender Robert Vesco, when we had asked for Vesco's extradition because of the stock fraud in which he was involved. It was very clear to all observers that the Pindling administration had taken a political decision not to let Vesco go. The Pindling administration was probably not far off the mark in thinking that the Republicans didn't admire them. The fact that there was no American Ambassador at post for six months was viewed with a certain concern on the part of Pindling.

I remember my first call on Pindling. It took place around the first week in July, 1981, when I went to see him with my predecessor. I had gone down a little early, just after I completed my year at the National War College, to take a look at the post. My predecessor and I had an "overlap" of several weeks.

This call on Pindling coincided with the decision to hold a seven-nation meeting in Nassau of Foreign Ministers of the countries covered by the "Caribbean Basin Initiative" proposed by President Reagan. Alexander Haig, the new Secretary of State, was going to attend the meeting, at which he was going to present the "Caribbean Basin Initiative" or "CBI". Since the Secretary of State was going to visit the Bahamas, prudence dictated that I should be on hand, no matter how many eggs were broken in the process.

As it turned out, the Reagan administration couldn't have cared less about the Bahamas. They just happened to use Nassau as a location for launching the "Initiative." There wasn't even going to be provision for the Secretary of State to meet Pindling. We proposed to use their conference hall for three days, as it were, and didn't even plan for the Secretary of State to call on the Prime Minister. I made a distinct effort, using some of my contacts in the Executive Secretariat at the State Department, to make sure that time was found in the Secretary's schedule to meet Pindling. I figured that Pindling would feel a bit sore at us, and slighted, if Haig didn't call on him. I know that I would have felt slighted if I had been in Pindling's shoes. So they managed to cut 30 minutes off Al Haig's tennis game to give him some time to see the Prime Minister of the Bahamas. I thought how clever I had been to manage to handle this little problem!

When I went to pay a courtesy call on Prime Minister Pindling with my predecessor, I was absolutely stunned when Pindling wore an Hawaiian-flowered shirt (People were very relaxed in the Bahamas.). I showed up in my dark suit! After the niceties had been completed, he leaned back and said, "I wonder what kind of trouble I can cause you---to get your government's attention." I gulped. I wondered what this man was talking about. Then he launched into a litany of complaints of how the United States had "slighted" the Bahamas and hadn't been very friendly. (He particularly mentioned that the United States hadn't appointed an Ambassador.) One of the things that the Bahamian Government was really sore about was that the Internal Revenue Service had decided in 1980 to refuse to allow deductions for American organizations and groups holding conventions outside the United States. In other words, if you were a

professional person and went to a convention overseas, you used to be able to "write off" the costs...

Q: I remember the Northern Virginia Lawyers Association meeting in Athens, when I served there. I wondered what this was all about.

ANTIPPAS: That's right. Of course, that really stopped the conventions and hurt tourism in the Bahamas. They were sore as all get out about that. At this initial meeting, Pindling mentioned all sorts of other, real and imagined slights. I remember saying to him (I was sort of "leaning forward in the foxhole."), "Prime Minister, tell me what's bothering you, and maybe we can put the systems together, because I may know how to push the buttons." I didn't mention that I'd gotten him an appointment with Al Haig or anything like that. I was trying to give him a message, "Look, I don't have anything against anybody. It's important to me that I do well in this job." I guess I was setting myself up for a good case of "clientitis," but that's the kind of thing I had to do. If you're going to be in charge of a Foreign Service post, you need to work with the local government.

Q: The whole idea is to take care of some of the problems.

ANTIPPAS: Anticipate the problems and take care of them, because that's what you're there for. The folks back home really don't understand what the situation is. Your position is like the flea in the elephant corral. Pindling huffed and puffed at that point, but his remark was kind of a "shot across my bow." I began to appreciate that we had some problems in the Bahamas that I didn't know about.

After the first few months in Nassau, it became apparent to me, based on the intelligence that I was receiving from the desk and my friends in the Bureau of American Republic Affairs, that there was not going to be an Ambassador appointed for a long time, given the way the matter had been handled. Several candidates had been put up. One of the initial problems with the Reagan administration was that a number of appointees couldn't get clearance from the SEC [Securities and Exchange Commission]. This candidate for the position of Ambassador to the Bahamas had problems with his financial background. So I realized that I was probably going to be on my own for quite a long time.

Now, I should mention at this point that I didn't have all that many friends in the ARA Bureau. I had never served in ARA before and was not a Spanish speaker. I really didn't belong to that particular group in the Department. However, the Executive Director of the Bureau at that point was a friend, and Assistant Secretary Tom Enders had been my boss in Phnom Penh. I had a couple of other "friends at court." The desk officer was a bright young man, a Naval Academy graduate, intelligent and energetic.

Under the circumstances, I had a personal decision to make about how I was going to proceed, as a Foreign Service Officer. I had two choices. First, I could "sit on my hands," keep the lid on in the Embassy, manage the office, but avoid doing anything liable to get me into trouble. On the other hand, I thought that I might never again be given a chance to manage anything, because that's the nature of the Foreign Service. I might as well try to do something in the Bahamas. I'm

the guy in charge. I'm "Mr. United States" in Nassau. It's quite evident that we've got some problems here. There are American interests at stake, so why not? What can happen except that I can fall on my face? So I decided that I was going to be an "activist" chargé d'affaires.

The only instruction I had been given by Tom Enders, the Assistant Secretary for American Republic Affairs, was, "Look, you're going to get a 'political' Ambassador. I want you to be a 'strong' DCM. Go down there and lead that place." That is the only instruction that I had. It was kind of a revelation to discover, when you're a professional Foreign Service Officer, how it is when you're sent out and put in charge of an Embassy. Being in charge of a constituent post is entirely different. In the case of managing an Embassy, you're the man. It doesn't matter what the size of the Embassy is. The paper work is the same. The basic issue is how much attention the "front office" [the Bureau] is going to pay to you. Are you in a place that's going to get people's attention, or what?

While I wasn't exactly going to go out and look for trouble, I soon discovered that in the Foreign Service you don't have to do anything to get into trouble. Just the fact that you're there means that lightning may strike, because you've become the lightning rod.

That was very instructive. I found that during the first six months at post some of the issues which came up were very intense. I developed a lot of mental and physical stress, given the problem that I had with the Foreign Minister--the Prime Minister, less so. The stress was so great that my back "went out." I developed a back problem. It reminded me so much of the problem that Mike Rives had 10 years before in Phnom Penh. He had the same problem with his back. He was under so much stress, being "under the gun," regarding this policy in Cambodia, that his back "went out." The Assistant Secretary told Mike Rives not to leave the post for treatment, because there was no one suitable to be put in charge.

I faced the same kind of problem. Fortunately, my next door neighbor at the East End of the island, where I lived, was a British doctor. He gave me some muscle relaxants. I became so relaxed that my eyeballs almost fell out! I felt that I could only work standing up. I couldn't sit down. I read my telegrams standing up. I arranged a desk where I could work standing up. The stress was enormous. That was a very intense experience for me, from that point of view.

By the time I wrote this 90 day review of the situation to the Department, I had an American citizen come to me, at the Embassy. He owned property on an island about 35 miles West of New Providence Island, where Nassau is located. The name of this island is Norman's Cay (Key). It was a privately owned island with a marina and an airstrip on it. It had been developed over the years. A number of the properties on it were owned by American and Canadian people who came down there for the winter. It had a very nice [scuba] "dive" location, fishing was good, and it was relatively close to Nassau. This fellow owned three or four bungalows on the island. He had developed it so that they were right off the runway of the airstrip. People could rent the bungalows and fly in. They could actually park their airplanes right next to the bungalows. He came in to complain to me that Colombian drug traffickers had moved in and, in effect, taken over the island. They were intimidating the owners of property down there, so much so that he really didn't have access to his property. His complaints to the Bahamian government hadn't resulted in any action.

It turned out that a year or two before that [1979 or 1980] the Bahamian police had raided the island but had been unsuccessful in arresting the Colombians, who had managed to escape or "paid people off." No large amounts of drugs were found. I took this complaint under advisement.

Then I made my initial trip to the Turks and Caicos Islands. The Turks and Caicos Islands are still a British colony. Under the arrangement we had with the Department the DCM in Nassau is accredited to the Governor and Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands, because we have an Ambassador in London. So the Ambassador in Nassau is not accredited to the Turks and Caicos Islands--the DCM is. So, since it was part of my "turf," I decided to go down there and take a look at this place. It was a three-day jaunt to get there--there was no direct way. I went over to Grand Bahama Island and took the U. S. Air Force courier aircraft, which used to make the run down to the various tracking stations. They took me down to the Turks and Caicos Islands. However, to get back, I had to take an Air Florida flight back to Miami and then from Miami back to Nassau. I made that trip and met the Governor, the people in the Turks and Caicos Islands, and looked around the place.

I flew back to Miami and was met at Miami International airport at planeside by a Drug Enforcement Administration agent, who took me into Miami to a hotel. He sat me down and talked to me all night about the problems they had on Norman's Cay with the Colombian cartel, which had taken over the island. What, in fact, the DEA wanted to do in the Bahamas, was to raid the island to apprehend the Colombians "in the act," as it were, because large quantities of cocaine were being transshipped there. This was the beginning of the major transshipment of cocaine into Florida. This was in 1980-1981.

I was a bit taken aback by what he was proposing because this would have involved taking American helicopters and DEA agents, with Bahamian police, and landing in what would be a "hot LZ" [coming down in a landing zone defended by hostile elements], and possibly "shooting it out" with the Colombians. I said, "I think this is not allowed under the Mansfield Amendment." The Mansfield Amendment doesn't permit American law enforcement agencies to do this kind of thing. However, I said that I was very sympathetic with what he was telling me, given what I was beginning to learn about the nature of the problem on Norman's Cay. I said that I wasn't sure that the Bahamian government would "buy" this, given their attitudes about law enforcement cooperation with the United States. On the other hand, I wasn't sure that the United States government would want to do this.

However, I said that I would "check it out." I said that this wasn't something that I would really want to write up in a cable and send up to the State Department, because I thought that it would be immediately shot full of holes if I did that. I said that what I would like to do is to take the first opportunity to talk to Assistant Secretary of State Tom Enders, face to face, and see if I could get his verbal approval.

I knew that Enders would be coming down to Miami in early December, 1981. At the time the Rockefeller Foundation had what they called the Caribbean-Central American Committee. The committee met annually in Miami, and chiefs of state from Central American and Caribbean

countries attended to talk about issues of mutual interest. Since this was the first year of the Caribbean Basin Initiative, I felt sure that the Assistant Secretary would be there, and I would get a chance to talk to him. The DEA agent agreed with that and left it to me to proceed. I did meet Enders very briefly when he came to Miami for this meeting. I didn't really have time to discuss the matter. That's another thing that you discover when you're trying to get the attention of your boss, when you're chargé d'affaires. Sometimes it's a major problem to have the chance to talk to your man in the front office of the bureau, unless he happens to come through your area on a visit. This reminded me of my experience years before in Douala, Cameroon, which I mentioned previously, when Assistant Secretary of State G. Mennen ("Soapy") Williams came through Douala one morning, en route home from the Congo. I only learned about it when the UTA (French Airlines) representative called me.

Tom Enders asked me, when I met him at a cocktail party, "Are you having fun?" I said, "Yes, it's great. Can I talk to you?" He was distracted by someone, and I never did get a chance to talk to him.

However, I did meet another person, John Upston, a political appointee in ARA [the Bureau of American Republic Affairs] who had the title of "Caribbean Coordinator", a Deputy Assistant Secretary level position. He apparently had a lot of experience in the Caribbean area and had worked in the State Department, off and on, over the years. We struck up a friendship. The chemistry between us was good. He was very interested in what I had to say about what I was seeing in the Bahamas. We were able to set up a dialogue, both by phone and when he came down and visited us on several occasions. He was very sympathetic about what I was trying to do. It turned out that he and I--and I'll get into this later in the story--managed to get past the bureaucracy in getting permission to do something effective in the drug war in the Bahamas.

I had discovered by that point that we had an American Embassy but had no resources with which to fight crime or even to get an appreciation of how big a problem it was. I would get, for example, a message from the U. S. Coast Guard, saying, "We understand that Robert Vesco's yacht is in the marina at Nassau. Can you check it out and see if he's there? You can very easily tell which boat is his because there will be a grand piano on the fantail." Well, how in hell am I supposed to do that from an Embassy automobile? This was the only vehicle I had to get around in. Here I was, the chargé d'affaires in an archipelago. If I needed a boat, I had to go out and rent one. It was a little hard to find yachts of escaped financiers if all you had was a car.

Then we began to appreciate the fact that, when you have problems like the one at Norman's Cay, how do you go down and find out what the situation is there? How do you fly in? I didn't have any travel money for this. I didn't have an airplane.

I finally managed to get down to Norman's Cay because the FAA [Federal Aviation Administration] would fly in from Florida from time to time to do what they called "ramp checks." The FAA would fly into an airport and just check the registration numbers on the aircraft there. They checked on U. S. registered aircraft parked at airports in the Bahamas. You could tell very easily which ones were being used for "drug hauls"--they didn't have seats in them or might have rubber fuel bladders in the back instead of seats. What the drug traffickers

would do was use all manner of aircraft, initially flying in marijuana and then, of course, transporting large amounts of cocaine.

Yachts were coming through all the time. The Bahamas is a major tourist cruising area. From time to time people would tell me stories about drug trafficking. A cabin cruiser or something like that might observe a DC-3 transport aircraft dump out hundreds of bales of marijuana. The traffickers used to wrap the marijuana in garbage bags in 40 and 80 pound quantities. The bags would be water tight and would float only about an inch or so above the surface of the ocean. The bags were green and hard to see. One person told me that he was on his boat, sailing toward Nassau. He saw a DC-3 circling a nearby area and pushing out bales of marijuana. The crew then "pancaked" the aircraft in the water, stepped out on the wing, were picked up by motorboats, which then picked up the marijuana and let the plane sink. He said, if that happened, you really didn't want to be there. Three things might happen, if you came across this stuff floating in the ocean. First, the "dopers" [marijuana smugglers] could catch you, and you'd be in trouble. Secondly, the American Coast Guard could catch you. Thirdly, the Bahamian Coast Guard could catch you. Any way, you'd be in trouble. So this could become a very serious citizen protection problem. I recall that in 1982 we had one major case like that.

We were beginning to discover that large amounts of narcotics were flowing through the Bahamas, and the Bahamian Government wasn't very helpful in solving the problem. When you would confront them with this, their basic reaction was, "Look, you can't stop this traffic with all your armed forces and law enforcement resources. How do you expect us, with our tiny little Coast Guard, and only one air traffic control tower in the whole archipelago, to control this sort of thing?" They were right of course. The problem was that they were not going to allow us to come in and do it for them.

So, I found that I had a problem getting around the country. How could I get an appreciation of this problem if I couldn't even get to the places where this sort of thing was happening?

To go back to the Norman's Cay story, I hitched a ride with the FAA guy on one occasion. I asked him if he would fly me down to Norman's Cay, because I wanted to see what was going on there. In the late fall of 1981 two things had happened. First, I had received the formal complaint from the man who owned bungalows down there. In effect, he had been "run off" his property by the Colombians. Secondly, I was informed by the Bahamas desk in the Office of Caribbean Affairs in the State Department that a number of American citizen property owners on Norman's Cay were going to take out a full-page ad in 10 international newspapers, including the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, and the Times of London, complaining about the government of the Bahamas doing nothing about this problem at Norman's Cay. They had been forced off their property.

I told the desk, "Look, please contact these people, whoever they are--I don't know who they are--and ask them to hold off and at least give me a chance to raise the matter with the government of the Bahamas." My instinct was that if the ads were published, there was going to be "egg on my face," because I was the local "whipping boy." I wanted to say to the government of the Bahamas, "This is the problem. What are you doing about it?"

I wasn't having much luck with the Foreign Minister/Attorney General in talking about the base agreements. The retiring Commandant of the Coast Guard came through the Bahamas on a trip to various locations to bid farewell to the local authorities. I took him on an official call on the Foreign Minister. The Foreign Minister really gave us a hard time. He really lectured this four-star, U. S. Coast Guard admiral about what he called the "fecklessness" of American law enforcement efforts. He even made some adverse comments about the quality of American youth joining the armed services. I could see that the admiral was really doing a "slow burn." We were both pretty angry by the time we left that interview, with the gratuitous insults of the United States made by the Bahamian Foreign Minister.

Then we were driven to call on the Governor General, whose name was Sir Gerald Cash, or "Gerry Cash" to his friends. He was a wonderful man--the epitome of the friendly Bahamian that most Americans associate with the islands in the old days. A call on him was always the last call we made with a visitor. He was sort of an antidote to all of the bashing we had had. He would bring our blood pressure down about ten degrees because he was so decent. I remember that in the car for the short drive over to Government House, I said, "Admiral, you look pretty 'ticked off' over what the Foreign Minister was saying." He said, "Yeah, you kind of looked as if you were ready to go over the table with this guy, too." I said, "That was a pretty incredible display of arrogance," which, of course, I dutifully reported to the Department. I would bring in high-level visitors when I called on senior Bahamian officials. They would always agree with my request that they make such calls. I was becoming more and more conscious of the fact that these Bahamian officials were sore that there was no resident American Ambassador and that they were being slighted. At least, if I brought in "heavy hitters" [senior officials] from Washington...

Q: The problem about assignment of an Ambassador was that the White House...

ANTIPPAS: Just couldn't get its act together.

Q: Rather than that we were trying to...

ANTIPPAS: Send a message to the Bahamas. I'm convinced that this was not the case. The White House just couldn't decide on someone. You'd think that people would be lined up to go to a "soft touch" place like Nassau. But, generally speaking, it was true that people interested in serving as Ambassador to the Bahamas had problems getting clearances from the SEC [Securities and Exchange Commission].

Q: If you've got sleaze, where do you put them?

ANTIPPAS: Exactly. And where can you put these guys where they won't do any harm? Again, this was a misapprehension because there were definite American interests in the Bahamas that would have been helped enormously by some competence.

Anyhow, in the midst of the problems I was having with the Foreign Ministry, my wife and I were invited to dinner by the Board of Directors of the Morton Salt Company of Chicago. Morton Salt had a major salt operation down on Great Inagua Island in the Bahamas. This is the place--as you may have seen in the press--where the Marines were practicing their landings for

the operation in Haiti. Great Inagua Island is very close to Haiti. Its only redeeming feature is that it has nothing on it except salt. There are enormous salt pans [where seawater is evaporated by the sun, leaving the salt]. Morton Salt has an industrial salt operation there. The Board of Morton Salt would come to the Bahamas every year for their annual meeting at a club on the Western end of New Providence Island.

Anyway we were invited. The Bahamian Prime Minister was there. Everybody who was anybody was there. Again, that was a revelation to me because as I sat there, the chairman of the Board of Morton Salt stood up and proposed a toast to the Queen, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, and the Prime Minister of the Bahamas. We sat down and waited for the Prime Minister to reciprocate and offer a toast to the United States. The Prime Minister sat still. He didn't get up or toast the President of the United States. I really almost "lost it" at that point. I almost took my wife by the arm and said, "We're getting out of here."

I wondered to myself, "What should I do? This guy has just insulted the United States." It was very clear what protocol required at this point. Anyway, I decided not to make a fuss. I decided to corner the little bastard and I would "put it to him." His game was that his flunkies would surround him at the end of the evening. He would rush out of the room, and nobody would get a chance to talk to him. But I cornered Prime Minister Pindling before he could get out of the room and I said, "I need to talk to you." He said, "OK, give me a call and come over and see me." I must say that Pindling was very good about that. He would always take my telephone calls, and I could see him when I asked, unlike the Foreign Minister. If I needed to see the Foreign Minister about anything, it would take as long as two weeks to set it up. There were only three career diplomatic chiefs of mission in Nassau: the American, the British, and the Haitian. You could have a meeting of the Diplomatic Corps in a telephone booth, yet it would take two weeks to arrange to see the Foreign Minister. It was rather frustrating, to say the least.

Anyway, I went over and called on Prime Minister Pindling. I said, "Look, I have a couple of things to raise with you. First, I'm getting complaints from American citizens who own property down in Norman's Cay that they're being 'pushed around' by Colombian drug smugglers. They want to put a full-page ad in the international press. I've asked them not to do this until I could make representations to the government." At this point he said, "Who are these people who are going to put a full-page ad in the papers and what are their names?" I said, "I don't really know who they are. I got this information from the State Department." He said, "That's all right. I'll find out who they are from the Land Register."

I thought, "Boy, I'm not about to say who these folks are." I knew a couple of them. One of them was a Vice President of Salomon Brothers Corporation who happened to be a close friend of Assistant Secretary of State Tom Enders. Another one was the fellow who had come into my office to complain to me. He was from Florida.

So I said, "Shall we talk about Norman's Cay?" He said, "I don't know anything about Norman's Cay. As far as I know, the police are doing their normal duty." I said, "Well, there is a problem down there."

Then I said, "Look, the other issue is the base agreements. We need to sign the base agreements so that you can start getting the rent checks." I said, "I can't get any answer out of your Foreign Minister." He said, "What? My understanding is that you [the United States] are the problem." I said, "No, we're not the problem. We're ready to sign. You just tell us where and when you want to sign, and you'll start getting your money." It was clear from the expression on his face that this was news to him. He said, "Well, I'll check into that." I went home, feeling rather self satisfied. I had done an "end run" around the Foreign Minister.

Q: Did you mention the lack of a toast?

ANTIPPAS: No. I decided that, since I didn't walk out on him, I wouldn't do that. I'll mention another story that happened a year later.

This is a lesson to future diplomats on how you handle situations like this: should you take umbrage and what should you do--particularly if you are not the Ambassador? There is a difference between being a chargé d'affaires and being the Ambassador. Your "clout" is entirely different. You have to be careful not to "shoot yourself in the foot."

I was angry. I felt slighted on behalf of the United States. I felt that we, as a people, were being slighted. I felt satisfied at having raised these matters with the Prime Minister. Within a matter of days I received a diplomatic note from the Foreign Ministry, saying that, in fact, they were ready to sign the base agreement. So I dutifully sent the text of the diplomatic note to the Department. I really didn't understand it--a lot of it was legalese gobbledygook. I hadn't steeped myself in the text of this agreement because I'd been assured by the people in Legal Affairs in the State Department and the desk that we had an agreement.

Patting myself on the back, I dutifully sent over the text of this agreement and informed the State Department that we were close to signature. I felt, "What's so hard about this diplomacy stuff?" I was solving problems left, right, and center. Well, "boom !!!". I got a message back from the Department which said, in effect, "The Bahamian Government is 'sand bagging' us. They want to change the text of the agreement. They want guarantees about their \$100 million that, over a period of 10 years, or whatever the time period was, they are going to be guaranteed \$10 million a year. We can't do that for American domestic legal reasons." So we found ourselves back at square one. But at least I had an official piece of paper out of the Bahamian government, which I put in front of our Bahamas desk.

Another interesting thing happened at this time. It shows the trials and tribulations of trying to run a Foreign Service post. As I mentioned, the Bahamian desk officer, whose name escapes me at the moment, was really an excellent young man. Suddenly, he disappeared from sight. He was no longer in the State Department. For a couple of days I couldn't find out where he had gone. I had really depended on this man for intelligence, getting things done, and all of that. To their great embarrassment, the Department admitted to the fact that my desk officer had just been arrested by the Arlington County, Virginia Police for "pimping" for his wife! His wife was an Uruguayan national and apparently was prostituting herself. And they arrested him for pimping for her. I thought, "Oh, God, I can't believe that this is happening to me! It's just incredible!" My

best friend at court at the State Department had just been arrested and bounced out of the Foreign Service.

Q: This shows that you really have to pay Foreign Service Officers a higher salary, I guess.

ANTIPPAS: I just couldn't believe it. This bright, young guy. It was incredible. So there was no desk officer. In fact, the Department assigned a young woman who was a consular officer as Bahamas desk officer. She happened to be the wife of a man in AID with whom I had worked in Cambodia. So I more or less knew them. But she really wasn't terribly competent at that point. She didn't know how to be a desk officer. A desk officer has to know how to "push buttons" and get things done, aside from knowing the substance of the issues. Obviously, she wasn't just dealing with one country. She had a whole sheaf of Caribbean countries to deal with. I needed someone who knew what he was doing up there--for my own self protection. And I'll describe what that meant.

We're now getting toward the end of December, [1981]. I'd already had my little experience with the conference in Miami. I didn't get much help from Tom Enders, the Assistant Secretary, in terms of mounting a formal presentation to the Government of the Bahamas to do something on the law enforcement side.

Q: Particularly on Norman's Cay.

ANTIPPAS: Norman's Cay was a particular problem. It was quite evident that we needed to do something. We had problems in the Bahamas, and the United States Government really didn't know anything about them. Law enforcement was becoming a major difficulty in our relations with the Bahamas. We in the U. S. Embassy were not equipped to do much of anything about it. We didn't have the manpower and we didn't have the access to the means, except from time to time when a U. S. Coast Guard cutter would come into port. For example, I had learned that the Haitians were using the Bahamas as a kind of "moving walkway" through to Miami.

Among other visitors we had in Nassau was the Deputy Commissioner of the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Al Nelson, a political appointee. He later became Commissioner of the INS. I was informed in advance that he was coming down for a short vacation.

As was my practice, when a VIP [Very Important Person] came to town, I'd go out to the airport, meet him, and escort him to his hotel. I figured that they didn't particularly want to be met. However, we had one Senator and member of the Foreign Relations Committee who came to town. He was a Democratic Senator from Nebraska and had been Mayor of Omaha. He has since died of a heart attack. He came down for a tennis weekend or something like that. I met him at the airport. He said, "You didn't have to come out and meet me. I didn't particularly want to be met." I said, "Sir, when a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee comes to Nassau, you're going to be met." I drove by the Embassy and the Residence and that sort of thing. I said, "This is just for your general education. By the way, why don't you people do your job as far as appointing decent Ambassadors is concerned? Why do you let the administration get away with appointing 'losers' to a place like this?" His answer was that it was not worth it to most Senators to fight a President on those kind of appointments unless the nominee was really a world class

loser. Anyhow, we had a nice chat and became very friendly. He'd invite me to lunch when I'd come to Washington. It was my practice to meet people like that, because it's one of the little things that you can do when you're the boss.

The previous Carter Administration Ambassador to the Bahamas came to town from time. This guy had not been particularly active. Ambassador Charley Whitehouse once said about the Foreign Minister or the Finance Minister of Thailand, "I had to hold a mirror to his mouth to make sure that he was still breathing." The previous ambassador was something like that. When the previous Ambassador would come to Nassau, I would send the car out for him, as a courtesy. I figured that it didn't take much of an effort to show a little bit of consideration. I'd never forgotten the lesson I'd been told about Richard Nixon after he had been Vice President. He was traveling around the world on behalf of Pepsi-Cola.

Q: He'd been defeated in the election for Governor of California [1962]. He was considered a "loser."

ANTIPPAS: Absolutely a "loser." He was working for Pepsi-Cola and was traveling constantly. The story I've been told is that he was not particularly well-treated by the Foreign Service. He'd come to a given capital, and the Ambassador and everybody else would "cut him dead." Except Marshall Green, when he was Ambassador to Indonesia.

Q: And Henry Tasca.

ANTIPPAS: Right. They took care of former Vice President Nixon. As a consequence, when he was elected President in [1968], these guys were taken care of. That lesson was not wasted on me. As a matter of courtesy, it doesn't take much effort. I wasn't all that busy, so why not go out and meet these people?

Q: Let's return to finish the Norman Cay matter.

ANTIPPAS: All of these things are kind of intertwined. It's very hard to separate them from each other, because, as they developed, my experience in the job also came into play. You kind of have to "rock back and forth," from issue to issue. I'm covering these matters chronologically, because that's how I can best remember them.

In January, 1982, there was still no Ambassador in sight. No Ambassador was going to be around for a long time. We had a problem with the base agreements, which were "hanging fire." There was a growing appreciation that there was a crime problem in the Bahamas, which largely came down to a law enforcement issue. However, the Embassy was really not equipped to do anything about it. American interests and American citizens were being hurt by this attitude [on the part of the Bahamian authorities]. The Bahamas were not really a safe place to visit, yet we had something like two million Americans visiting this place every year. However, even if I had wanted to, I could not ignore the problem of law enforcement in the Bahamas, if I were going to do my job. I decided that, by guess or by God, I was going to try to do something.

As I understood the problem and given the experience I had had to date, you have to convince the "front office" of the Bureau of American Republic Affairs to help you. How could I do that? One, by trying to get more people assigned to the Embassy. Give the "front office" an appreciation of the problem and then see what could happen.

In early February, 1982, I received a phone call from someone who said that Prime Minister Pindling was going to Washington to attend the Congressional Prayer Breakfast. He said, "I just wanted to let you know that."

I had already had the experience in October, 1981 of the Foreign Minister going to New York for the opening of the General Assembly of the United Nations and not telling the Embassy that he was going. It had been my experience that whenever a Foreign Minister would go to New York for the UNGA, the American Embassy would be told. I was a little put out about that. Not only did he fail to tell me that he was going to New York, but I read about his speech at the United Nations in the newspapers. I wasn't even "clued in," so I was a little bit annoyed about this. I found it rather strange that the Bahamian Government took this view that cabinet ministers could "swan off" officially and unofficially to the United States and not tell anybody [in the Embassy in Nassau].

So I called Prime Minister Pindling on the phone. I had learned that he would take telephone calls without too much difficulty. He wasn't all that much concerned about protocol. I said that I had heard that he was going to Washington for a visit. I said, "Anything I can do to help you?" He replied, "Well, I have some "buddies" who got me invited to the Congressional Prayer Breakfast. Why do you people treat the Bahamas this way," alluding to the fact that we had no resident Ambassador and why we treated them in a slighting manner. I said, "Listen, while you're up there, if you agree, I'd like to try to make some appointments for you to see some people and get to know the new team [i. e., in the Reagan administration]." The Reagan administration had been in power for a year at that point. Aside from meeting Secretary of State Haig, he really hadn't met anybody else in the U. S. Government, to my knowledge.

Pindling said, "No, I don't think so." I said, "I don't know where Secretary of State Haig is." I think that at that time he was probably "shuttling" somewhere, perhaps in the Middle East. I don't think that the Falklands Islands crisis had yet started. I said that I didn't know where the Secretary of State was. However, I said, "The Deputy Secretary is in Washington, and he would be delighted to meet you if he knew that you were in town." Pindling said, "No, no," sort of dismissing this idea out of hand. However, I went ahead and, using my contacts in ARA, managed to get an appointment for Pindling with Secretary of State Haig, who, it turned out, was to be in Washington during the period when Prime Minister Pindling was going to be there. It was harder to get the \$200 in travel funds for me to go to Washington to be there for the appointment. My instinct told me that I had better be there.

Normally, when a chief of state or chief of government goes to Washington, the American Ambassador or Chief of Mission is also there as a courtesy. There would be no problem arranging that. However, a chargé d'affaires is in a different position. I told the Department, "Look, I think that I ought to be there."

Q: Particularly with a "prickly" guy like that.

ANTIPPAS: Exactly. Anyway, I managed to convince ARA to come up with the \$200 for a round trip ticket, Nassau-Washington. I went up to Washington in the same plane with Prime Minister Pindling. It was the coldest month in 100 years. It was the week that the Air Florida plane crashed in the Potomac River.

Q: It hit the 14th St. Bridge or almost did.

ANTIPPAS: That was when we were in these meetings. I arrived Sunday night in Washington and stayed with my friend Upston, who was the Caribbean Coordinator--not that I couldn't afford a hotel, but he invited me to stay with him in Bethesda. I drove into Washington with him and went to the State Department on Monday morning. The appointment was scheduled for Tuesday. I went to the Office of Caribbean Affairs to make sure that the talking points were prepared for the Secretary. I dressed rather casually. I had on a tweed jacket and slacks. I figured to wear my more formal suit for the meeting the next day. The new Bahamas desk officer didn't know anything and hadn't prepared anything. So I had to sit down and prepare talking points for the Secretary.

We got a call from the Secretary's office. His assistant said, "The Secretary has a conflict in his schedule. He has to go to the White House on Tuesday. Bring your man in around today at 5:00 PM." I said, "What!!" Then, I thought, first, I have to find Prime Minister Pindling and make sure that he will come. I called the Bahamian Embassy, and they agreed to bring him to the State Department at 5:00 PM. Of course, I wasn't wearing my regular "burying and marrying" suit. I was going to be meeting with the Secretary of State in a tweed jacket!

I have never forgotten my first boss in the Foreign Service, in the Office of International Conferences, who was an old-line Foreign Service Political Officer. He was a great guy--an FSO-2 at that point, a very senior officer who had just come out of the Congo. I remember that in my first efficiency report he wrote, "Mr. Antippas sometimes comes to the office dressed in a sport coat." [Laughter] That was the Foreign Service as it used to be--not exactly "stiff upper lip," but there was a dress code. I thought, "There's no way I can get home to Upston's house to change my clothes. I'm going to be involved flat out to the last minute, getting these talking points processed through the system."

Anyway, we went up to meet with Secretary Haig at 5:00 PM. Haig was very affable. I don't know whether he remembered me or not, but I think that he recognized me from my Cambodian days. So Pindling, Tom Enders, this guy Upston, and I were there for the meeting with Secretary Haig. Pindling started "taking off" after the United States, with his litany of complaints about this, that, and the other thing. He was particularly angry with the Embassy.

The political season in the Bahamas was already starting. Parliamentary Elections were coming up in June, 1982. My Political Officer, who acted as my deputy, and I had agreed that I would go to the governing party political convention. He would cover the opposition political party convention. We knew them all, but I said, "We'll be even handed."

I was watching the opposition political party convention on TV, at home, with a friend of mine visiting from Washington, who was a staffer on the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U. S. House of Representatives. I had invited him to stay with us. The opposition political party convention was being held in an older, smaller hotel, but it was great for television.

As I watched, whom do I see sitting at the head table but my Political Officer. I almost fainted. I almost died. I said, "What in the hell is he doing there, sitting at that table?" If I could have called the hotel to get a message to him to get the hell out of there, I would have done so. I died a thousand deaths that night. And, obviously, the government party was watching that TV program, too. I said that I knew that they were going to be sore, wondering what an American Embassy officer was doing, appearing in at the head table at the opposition party convention.

The next morning I tore a strip off this Political Officer. I said, "Why were you sitting there in such a prominent position? You should have been behind a drape." He said, "What could I do? They marched me in and sat me down there." They said, "We've got a chair for Andy, too--over here." I said, "What are you trying to do, kill me?" I said, "You should have gotten up and walked out. I would rather that those people were 'ticked off' at you. You have driven a nail in my coffin."

Well, at his meeting with Secretary Haig, Prime Minister Pindling complained about the activities of the American Embassy, which was supporting the opposition party. What he said amounted to, "It ain't right."

Pindling didn't mention the base agreements. I had written in the guidance I had given the Secretary, "Don't get drawn into a conversation about the base agreements. Ask Pindling to go to a meeting tomorrow with Assistant Secretary Enders to discuss the base agreements." It would have been too hard to get the Secretary of State up to speed on this issue. I could get Assistant Secretary Enders ready for such a discussion. I suggested that the Secretary simply say, "I'd like you to talk to Assistant Secretary Enders about other issues." Haig followed my suggestions very well.

One of the other problems we had had a few days before this trip to Washington was that a U. S. Coast Guard cutter had spotted a motor vessel in international waters near the Bahamas. The vessel had no flag, no markings, and apparently no radio equipment on board to respond to the attempts of the Coast Guard to contact it. It looked to be about the size of a typical drug boat. In international waters the Coast Guard challenged vessels of this kind. The cutter chased this boat for a couple of hours, trying to get it to stop so that they could board it, check it out, and find out whether it was carrying contraband. By the time they stopped it and put a boarding party on it, they discovered that it was a Bahamian mail boat traveling between the islands in the Bahamian archipelago. When the Coast Guard boarding party left the boat, both vessels had drifted into Bahamian territorial waters.

The Coast Guard cutter had not followed the established SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) and signaled Washington--Coast Guard Headquarters and the State Department--and the Embassy that it had had this encounter. I can still remember the name of the Bahamian vessel, the "MV (Motor Vessel) Geleta". During the chase the crew of the "Geleta" threw a garbage bag

overboard. The Coast Guard Cutter retrieved it, and there was a small amount of marijuana in it. The captain of the cutter thought that they were on to something, and they kept chasing the "Geleta." It turned out that the crew of the "Geleta" was a feckless bunch of Bahamians. They had no radio, didn't fly a flag, and had no markings of any kind. It looked like a drug boat, but it wasn't. But, the captain of the "Geleta" returned to Nassau and screamed bloody murder to the Bahamian Government about "high handed" U. S. Coast Guard activities. So they were all worked up. I had egg on my face. There was egg on the Foreign Minister's face, because he didn't know about it.

The protocol procedure on this was that Washington would inform me, I would call the Foreign Minister day or night and either tell him that a "drug bust" was going on, that we were about to board a Bahamian vessel, or something like that. He would then give his "OK." I must say this about the Foreign Minister/Attorney General. On such occasions he was good about that. In fact, I had to call him at 4:00 AM a couple of times to tell him that DEA was about to jump on somebody on Bahamian territory and was it all right with him? There were issues of "hot pursuit" and so forth. He was agreeable to things like that. It was only on the more formal things that he was giving me--or giving the U. S.--a hard time.

Anyway, I could appreciate the fact that the Bahamian Government had "egg on its face" because of the action of the Coast Guard cutter. The Foreign Minister was sore. I had not taken any steps to apologize for this because the Bahamian Government hadn't complained to me. Maybe I should have apologized. We were still trying to figure out what had happened when this trip to Washington came up.

During Prime Minister Pindling's call on the American Secretary of State he complained about what the Coast Guard had done. He went on and on. Anyhow, bless Haig's heart! He kind of smiled and said, "Well, you know, sometimes there's an excess of zeal, but I'm glad to see that the Coast Guard's on the job." He cut the ground right out from under what Pindling was complaining about. Pindling was obviously not getting any joy out of Haig on this matter. When we were leaving, after this one hour meeting, Haig "winked" at me. I kind of rolled my eyes in response. As I walked back to Ender's office with Pindling, Tom said, "Well, your guy really sandbagged us."

On the next day Pindling met with Enders at 9:00 AM. Enders was late for the appointment because Mike Wallace [TV personality] was harassing Enders about U. S. activities in El Salvador, which was the ultimate undoing of Enders. He was "fired," when Judge Clark took over as Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs over the issue of policy toward El Salvador.

Enders came to the meeting late. We were engaged in small talk while we waited for him. It was very cold on that particular day. Enders said to Prime Minister Pindling, "Well, Prime Minister, what's the situation?" I had called the Embassy in Nassau that morning and talked with the Political Officer to see how everything was going and to make sure that there had been no "blow up's." There was no news of great relevance from the Embassy in Nassau. So in response to Enders' question, Pindling leaned back and said, "Is it customary for the United States Government, in discussions with a foreign government leader, to make public announcements

about the agenda for meetings he's supposed to have and comment on the substance of the meetings that he's undertaking?" There was a great silence. Enders looked at me, and I looked at him. We wondered what he was talking about. Pindling went on in that vein for a while. I slipped out of the meeting room and called the Embassy in Nassau to talk to the Political Officer. I said, "What is Pindling talking about? What's going on?" The Political Officer said, "Oh, in the 'Nassau Guardian' this morning there was an article to which apparently our Public Affairs Officer had contributed. It said that Pindling was meeting with the Secretary of State and would be discussing various pending issues."

Evidently, Pindling had decided to get up on his high horse and ride this issue for all it was worth. He was angry, he was ticked off, he felt he had been insulted, pushed around, or whatever. Nothing was mentioned in the press article about the substance of the issues. I figured out eventually that this was all a "setup" by Pindling. The only thing that had gone right was that, because of a conflict of scheduling, he was going to "dump" all this on Secretary Haig. As it turned out, he only dumped it on Enders. I figured that, if Pindling had dumped this on Haig, I would still be explaining what the hell had happened 10 years later. Thank God we didn't let him see the President! I'd be folding blankets some place.

Pindling was very clever. He understood very well how the United States Government worked. When I got back to Nassau, I tore strips off both the Public Affairs Officer and the Political Officer. I said, "What the hell were your guys doing? Why were you so inept? I was up there in Washington, holding the fort, and you guys let these people walk all over us. You should have said, 'No comment'--on anything."

The Political Officer decided to request a transfer after that. It was fairly early in his tour. He was a nice guy and very bright, and we had had a good relationship. He really screwed up twice and drove at least two nails into my personal coffin.

The Public Affairs Officer was the first USIA [United States Information Agency] officer assigned to Nassau. Until that time USIS [United States Information Service, the overseas service of USIA] just had a local, contract employee to handle USIS activity. The Public Affairs Officer was "certifiable"--he was mentally unbalanced, very unhappy to be there, and his family wasn't with him. He became a major management problem for me. I had a good excuse to "fire" him and get rid of him, because he had really screwed up in this instance, and nobody would have faulted me for it. However, I decided that I would not do this. I would look better if I "rehabilitated" this character, rather than use my obvious authority and "fire" him. And as he was the first USIS officer assigned to the Embassy, "firing" him would not look good. In retrospect, I should have "fired" him, because he did me "dirt" subsequently, when the Foreign Service Inspectors came. He "bad mouthed" me to the inspectors, unjustifiably so.

When you are placed in this position and are faced with decisions, you have to choose what to do. Should you be a "good" guy or a "tough" guy. To this day I'm not quite sure whether I made the right decision--whether I should have "fired" these two guys, "fired" them out of a cannon, or what. But that's what you're faced with.

Let me just finish this story. In early February, 1982, while I was up here in Washington, D. C. with Pindling. I went over to the National War College. They had an afternoon seminar, and I had some free time. I went over there to cadge a free drink at a reception later in the afternoon. Somehow, I ran into a guy who was the Assistant Inspector General of The Department at that time. He had been one of the senior officers who had inspected the Embassy in Nassau in 1980.

One of the management problems I had in the Embassy in Nassau was that it still had essentially the same Foreign Service Local and American complement as it had when it was a Consulate General, prior to independence. While that wasn't too bad on the substantive side, on the administrative side it was "murder." We were not a Consulate General. We were an Embassy. I was very concerned about the fact that I didn't have an American citizen Budget and Fiscal Officer. I had an American Administrative Officer, but he did everything. He wasn't a Budget and Fiscal Officer. One of the things that I had been pushing was how to get another position out of the Department and have a Budget and Fiscal Officer assigned. I was concerned about my own personal, financial responsibility for fiscal matters. For example, we had a local employee assigned to the Consular Section who worked on the preparation of passports for issuance. She had "ripped off" [stolen] the receipts for passports to the extent of about 800 Bahamian dollars, because the Consular Officers were not observing the proper receipt procedures. A Budget and Fiscal Officer would have caught that. As it turned out, there was no loss of money because we managed to hold back this employee's pay and then we fired her. That was simply proof to me that we had a Bahamian local employee who was doing the Budget and Fiscal work, while we, the American employees, really didn't know what was going on. I thought that I was the guy who was going to go to prison at Ft. Leavenworth, given the experience I had in connection with the visa "scam" in the Embassy in Bangkok. I was nervous about this.

So I asked the Assistant Inspector General, "How do I handle this? You noted this problem in your 1980 inspection report. You said that the administrative side of the Embassy in Nassau needs more support. Can you tell me how to go about getting another position." Now, the Executive Director of ARA was a friend of mine. I could call him up and talk to him any time. I also spoke to Ambassador Robert Miller who had been in charge of Indochina matters during one period when I was in EA who was in charge of "M/MO" at the time...

Q: "Management Operations."

ANTIPPAS: Management Operations.

Q: Let me stop here to turn the tape over.

ANTIPPAS: He finished his career as Ambassador to one of the African countries but was in charge of Management Operations at this time. I could call him up, talk to him, and ask how we could get an additional position. I said that I needed help down in the Embassy in Nassau. So having pushed even personal connections and all the "buttons" that I could push, I still was getting no action in terms of an additional position. There was supposed to be a "floating" Budget and Fiscal Officer who was nominally based in the Embassy in Kingston, Jamaica, who was supposed to come around and check the books. However, the guy had never shown up in Nassau in living memory. The Assistant Inspector General said to me, "Look, you can request a

"special inspection" at any time, just on administrative affairs, to reinforce the need for this position. I recommend that you do that." So that was one thing that I did.

During this same time my friend Upston, the "Caribbean Coordinator" in ARA, told me that the South Florida business community was so concerned about how crime had taken over in South Florida, particularly following the "Mariel" boat lift [the flow of Cuban refugees to the United States in small boats in 1980], the influx of Haitians, and the "narcodollars" that were flowing into South Florida, that, in their view, it was becoming like the "Wild West." They felt that local authorities were losing control of the situation in South Florida.

The business community, led by the President of Eastern Airlines and former astronaut, Frank Borman, had asked President Reagan to "send the troops in," that is, to send Federal troops in to help to restore order. President Reagan agreed to help in the establishment of a South Florida Task Force on Crime and he put Vice President George Bush in charge.

So Upston, the "Caribbean Coordinator," and I went over to call on Bush's chief of staff, Admiral Dan Murphy, just to introduce ourselves and talk about the "crime problem" in the Caribbean. I tried to explain to Admiral Murphy that he couldn't really understand what was happening in South Florida if he didn't know something about what was happening in the Bahamas, which was sort of the "Ho Chi Minh Trail" of narcotics, illegal aliens, and other skullduggery which had a definite impact on what was going on in South Florida.

The South Florida Task Force on Crime was established. I unilaterally enlisted my Embassy in Nassau in the task force. I wasn't invited. I just said, "I'm joining up." I used my own travel allocation to go to Miami periodically to sit in on Task Force meetings and report on what was going on in the Bahamas. With that we managed to follow through on the DEA proposal for the operation against Norman's Cay, although by that time DEA had withdrawn its request to make a "hostile takeover" of Norman's Key to arrest the Colombians.

There was still a proposal on the table about using American helicopters and aircraft to carry Bahamian Police on drug raids--in other words, to facilitate the delivery of Bahamian law enforcement personnel. During the Carter administration Prime Minister Pindling had made a request to the American Government for \$25 million in assistance, including communications equipment, boats, and helicopters. Of course, people in Washington just laughed themselves sick when they saw this request. Two years later we finally delivered two "Boston Whaler" boats with spare engines to the Bahamian Government.

Q: These are small...

ANTIPPAS: Small, outboard motor powered boats. They're good for use on the open seas, but they didn't amount to \$25 million in "goodies"--and this was another issue that Prime Minister Pindling was angry about. He felt that we kept hammering the Bahamas for assistance with our problems with drugs, but we wouldn't give the Bahamas any help. I'll tell you, I was one embarrassed character when I went down to hand over these boats to the Bahamian Police.

We finally obtained agreement that we would present a proposal to use American transportation assets to carry Bahamian law enforcement people. I thought that it was rather problematical that

the Bahamian Foreign Minister/Attorney General would accept this proposal, particularly since he was no friend of mine at this point. However, we put the proposal together. I drafted it on behalf of DEA and sent it on to the State Department. Upston, who happened to be the only guy in ARA at that particular time, dealt with it. He talked it over with Assistant Secretary Enders. However, Enders by that time wouldn't sign his name to anything. He indicated to Upston to "deal with it as you see fit." This proposal had not been vetted with anyone else in the State Department or with the law enforcement community more generally in Washington. Upston simply sent me back a one-line cable, signed "Haig" and saying, "Proceed as you see fit."

So the ball had been lateraled back to me. I felt, "Well, let's go for it." I put the proposal up to the Foreign Ministry, fully expecting that the Foreign Minister was going to reject it out of hand. I thought that he would not agree to let the Americans come tramping through the Bahamas. Much to my surprise, the Foreign Minister agreed that we could do this.

Q: Why not stop at this point? Would you explain what we're talking about, so we'll know when we resume?

ANTIPPAS: OK, we're talking about the establishment of what we called, "Operation BAT." This doesn't stand for the mammal. It stands for "Bahamas, America, Turks and Caicos." This was the first time in American history that American transportation and other equipment assets were used to take foreign law enforcement people to fight crime.

Q: We'll pick it up from there.

ANTIPPAS: OK.

Q: Today is October 18, 1994, Andy. You were talking about Operation BAT. Please continue.

ANTIPPAS: OK. As I said, I was really surprised that the Bahamian Government agreed to use American transportation assets to take Bahamian police on operations against the narcotics traffickers.

We're talking now about 1982. It was very clear to me that the Bahamian Government was very much involved in drug trafficking. The Foreign Minister/Attorney General was not. I don't think that he was corrupt. I think that he was "certifiable"--he just had a loose screw. He was brilliant, an intellectual, loquacious, honest as the day is long, but not intellectually honest.

Q: So the Bahamian Government agreed to this proposal. Can you figure out why they accepted it?

ANTIPPAS: I think that it was like the appointment of the Ambassador. I think that they "blinked." They lost their nerve in terms of not permitting the Americans to do what we wanted to do. I think that they could not openly refuse the United States to exercise the right of "hot pursuit" and chase the "bad guys." The situation was getting very grim in the United States. The

amount of narcotics coming into the United States was enormous. The money laundering operation was on a very large scale in the southeastern part of the United States.

I remember a statistic that I heard. At the time of the economic recession of 1980-82 the only Federal Reserve District in the United States that had a positive cash flow was South Florida. Buildings were going up, and money was changing hands in a big way. The "bad guys" [the drug traffickers] were "buying" entire local governments. Of course, I'm not talking about the Haitian situation, which was also complicating things. It really was a very fragile period of time.

Don't forget. Nothing starts at "ground zero." A lot of people, particularly in Florida--I'm thinking now of Broward County--had very "hard feelings" toward the Bahamas, particularly toward Pindling and company. They could clearly see, from across the Straits of Florida, the nature of the problem. Of course, the Federal authorities just weren't dealing with it. I think that the Bahamians came to understand that they had better watch their step.

The Reagan administration was doing some very unconventional things in terms of indicting people. For example, they started the practice of telling international banks that if they wanted to do business in the United States, they would have to open up their secret files to United States prosecutors. That really "blew" some minds at that time. A lot of countries were very uncomfortable with that. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher [of Great Britain] as well as the government of Canada were very unhappy and uncomfortable with this action by the Reagan administration.

I remember that the Bank of Nova Scotia was told in no uncertain terms, "We want to know what you've got on your books in the Bahamas. If you want to do business in the United States, this is what you're going to have to do." Well, this was quite a departure in terms of respect for sovereign immunity. I think that was one of the reasons why the Bahamian Government accepted our proposal. Before I get into a discussion of Operation BAT, I'd like to talk about the appointment of the Ambassador.

I mentioned that when I was assigned to the Bahamas, I was told by Assistant Secretary Tom Enders to expect a political appointee as the Ambassador. He wanted me to be a "strong" DCM and run the Embassy. He couldn't tell me when we'd get an Ambassador. It might be a matter of weeks, it could be longer.

So I went down to Nassau simply with the expectation of "doing my job." However, it became very apparent, after several months, that a number of people had been selected for appointment as Ambassador but were not being "cleared" for one reason or another. Given the way things were developing, we weren't going to have an Ambassador for a long time.

The Bahamian Government deeply resented the fact that no Ambassador had been appointed. They looked on this as a deliberate slight on the part of the Reagan administration, intended to send a very clear, political message to the voters of the Bahamas. There was an election coming up in June, 1982, and the United States Government was apparently displeased with the Pindling administration. In the view of the Bahamian Government that was the reason why there was no American Ambassador assigned to Nassau. Of course, the Bahamian opposition really beat the drum on this. I was sitting in the "hot seat." I was having people and politicians come up to me

and say, "Why isn't there an American Ambassador here? Why are you guys doing this to us?" This makes it hard to explain this failure to appoint an Ambassador by saying, "Well, that's the way it is," and that it is not anyone's fault.

Finally, we got the word that Professor Lev Dobriansky who, I believe, had taught at Georgetown University, had been nominated to be the Ambassador to the Bahamas in the late Summer of 1982. That is, the request for agrément was put to the Bahamas' government. Dobriansky had a very long record as a conservative Republican. He was of Ukrainian background, had something of a reputation as a Ukrainian "freedom fighter," and was very anti-communist in his views. In fact, when he finally arrived in Nassau, set up shop, and hung up his pictures on the wall of his office, it really looked like the political spectrum to the right of Genghis Khan. There were pictures of Park Chung Hee [of South Korea], Chiang Kai-shek [of Nationalist China]--you name it. All of these anti-communists going way back. His daughter, Paula, became a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the State Department and was an NSC [National Security Council] staffer at one time. She's very bright.

When Dobriansky's nomination as Ambassador was surfaced, it was about at the same time that we were cranking up Operation BAT--the spring and summer of 1982. I received instructions to request agrément and passed it on to the Foreign Ministry. The Foreign Minister was aghast. He didn't like it. He didn't like Dobriansky. He said that he wanted to get a collection of his writings. He looked at Ambassador Dobriansky's record and said to me, what am I going to talk to this man about? What does he know about the Caribbean or the Bahamas?"

More than that, I think that the Bahamians were a little apprehensive about how the Cubans might take this appointment. It might look to the Cubans that we were kind of surrounding Cuba. The Bahamas had had its own problems with Cuba. They had a patrol boat strafed and sunk by a Cuban MiG fighter [Soviet made aircraft] in 1980. The Bahamians were very nervous about Cuban activism. There were some people within the Pindling government who were trying to come to an accommodation with Cuba. We're talking now about a period of increased tension in the Caribbean. Grenada was seen as a place where the Cubans and Russians were "up to no good." There were even reports that missiles were being emplaced in Grenada.

After I requested agrément by diplomatic note, I waited and waited and waited. I thought, "If this nomination is going to go the way of the base agreements, we're going to have a problem." The Department was starting to "prod" me about obtaining agrément for Ambassador Dobriansky. I was receiving cables, asking "What was the status of agrément?" Assistant Secretary Tom Enders called me up one time and said, "What's the problem down there and what are your recommendations for action?" I replied, "Tom, they really don't want this guy. I recommend that we do nothing. I'll go in and push if you want. However, if I go in and push, they're liable to say 'No.'" Adderly had done this once before with a nomination from the Ford Administration. I said that they really object to him, more on ideological grounds than anything else. Enders, in turn, was being "pushed" by the White House. Like every good Foreign Service Officer who wanted appointment to another Embassy, he didn't want to irritate the Director of Personnel in the White House. So the pressure came on down to me.

I remember attending a party on Paradise Island at the house of Kevin McClory, the producer of the last James Bond film in which Sean Connery acted. Connery was also a resident of the Bahamas. I was at a party at McClory's house one night. Two of Pindling's cabinet ministers were there. I was on speaking terms with them, and they were friendly enough. However, both of them were as corrupt as the day is long. They actually were sort of charming "rogues." They were very much "in their cups" that night. They came up to me and said, "Why are you sending this guy Dobriensky to us? We don't want him." Obviously, they had listened to the Foreign Minister at a cabinet meeting. No one, not even the Prime Minister contradicted the Foreign Minister. I said, "Listen. I'm only the messenger. If you don't want this guy, you just tell me, and I'll pass the word back. It's not up to me to decide things like this."

Subsequently, in a matter of weeks, the Bahamian Government "blinked" and gave their agrément to the appointment of Ambassador Dobriensky. Evidently, there was some concern in the Bahamas about the U. S. as "big brother" and how "big brother" could really hurt the Bahamas if it chose to. I think that that's what happened on "Operation BAT". I suspect that they probably thought, "Well, let them do what they want. They're not going to have a hell of a lot of impact," based on what we were proposing, which was to assign a helicopter or two to the Bahamas to carry out the mission. In fact, if you look at what we started out with, it was not very prepossessing.

The DEA managed to rent or acquire in some fashion a very much used Army HU-1 "Huey" helicopter from some depot in Texas. It was painted black, but you could still see through the paint a 1st Cavalry Division patch and a Red Cross. It had probably been used as a medical evacuation helicopter in Vietnam. DEA had provided only one pilot and no crew. Every "Huey" helicopter I flew in Vietnam and elsewhere had a crew of four people to run it. I discovered that DEA had only one guy to run this whole machine, moreover, a single engine aircraft. It was a UH-1G model, I think. The UH-1H, I think, was a two engine helicopter. This meant that if the DEA helicopter "crapped out" in flight, you had a problem. Initially and for the first several months I went on several of the flights, just to see how things were done in taking the Bahamian police on some of these missions. I must say that I was very nervous about the fact that the helicopter could not land on the water. There's a lot of water in the Bahamas, and some of it is very deep.

Q: Well, the first six feet are the most critical. After that, you don't have to worry about it.

ANTIPPAS: Exactly. Eventually, they managed to put "floats" on the helicopter. But the helicopter could only operate for 100 hours before it had to be "rotated back" to the U.S. for a major overhaul in Florida. There were no facilities for major maintenance in the Bahamas. Florida is more than 200 miles away. So the number of missions you could actually fly with a "one lunger" Huey helicopter was very limited. On top of that, there was the questionable ability of the Bahamians to go out and arrest anybody. We had already had some experience with this and knew that some of the senior police officers were corrupt and would signal the "bad guys" [the drug traffickers] that they were coming to make a raid.

So we began the operation, running it out of the DEA office in the Embassy in Nassau. We brought in some communications equipment to talk to the helicopter. We would set up missions

but wouldn't tell the Bahamian Police where we were going until we got the cops on the plane and were airborne. It was that kind of situation.

As I mentioned before, on Andros Island, the largest island in the Bahamian archipelago, due West of Nassau, we had "AUTECH," the Atlantic Underwater Test and Evaluation Center. Collocated at AUTECH was a [U. S.] Customs Department radar, aimed to the Southeast, in other words, aimed down the "Slot" or the chain of the Bahamas toward Cuba, so that it could detect aircraft that would come up the "Slot," around Guantanamo and between Hispaniola and the North coast of Cuba, heading for Florida. Unfortunately, this was a military radar, operated by the Customs Department. It was not continuously on the air. It wasn't manned 24 hours a day. Frequently, we would find that an aircraft was coming up from Colombia, making the run up the "Slot." We would call over to AUTECH to see if the radar was on. Sometimes, the operator wouldn't be around. We would have a real problem because we very much needed a vector [a heading]. By the time the "bad guy" was flying along the North coast of Cuba, we had to guess what the direction was. Was he heading for the State of Georgia, for the Florida Keys, or where? We needed to know. If we were going to send a helicopter out to intercept this aircraft, we had to know where he was headed.

After Admiral Murphy set up the Federal Task Force in Florida, I used to go over to its meetings. I handled all of my own contacts with the Coast Guard, the DEA, the FBI, and, most importantly, with Admiral Murphy's office. When I would have problems with U. S. Customs, such as not having the radar "operating" on Andros Island, I would call Admiral Murphy and say, "Damn it. We have a [suspected drug smuggling] plane in the air now. We don't know where he's going because the U. S. Customs can't seem to get their act together." And so on. Anyhow, that's how we handled this matter.

Once we got a DEA flight "team" on the ground, I decided we would position the helicopter at the Police Training College in Nassau, located on what used to be called Oakes Field, which was once the airport in the Bahamas. We had built that airport during World War II as a landing point for the aircraft which we were ferrying through the Bahamas to Europe or Africa. Until the 1960's it was the commercial airport in Nassau, until they built the international airport farther out on [New Providence] island. The Bahamian Police had set up a police training college at Oakes Field. It had a secure area. I decided that we would put the DEA helicopter at the Police College, because I was afraid to leave it out at the international airport, for fear that the Colombian drug traffickers would sabotage it. The Colombians would be out at the international airport servicing their own aircraft. If the DEA helicopter were there, without much of a team to protect it, it would be easy to sabotage it. If the DEA helicopter were at the Police College, it was more unlikely that a Colombian would come by and pour sugar in the fuel tank, or something like that.

The next requirement was the need for communications. It was very evident that we didn't have the means of talking to the helicopter very well while it was in the air or talk to the U. S. Navy Base in Guantanamo, which also had a radar. It was also difficult to talk to AUTECH, which is where the U. S. Customs radar was located. More importantly, once the DEA and the Bahamian Police were out on a mission, we couldn't talk to them and had no way of knowing what they

were up to. If the helicopter went "down," we wouldn't know that it was "down" or where. One of my biggest chores became the effort to try to get some communications equipment.

It turned out that one of my instructors at the National War College was an Army Lieutenant Colonel with whom I had become very friendly. He was originally from New Hampshire and taught "American political history" at the National War College. Anyway, he was very helpful. His assignment after the National War College tour as an instructor was in the office of the Secretary of the Army. He was put to work on problems like the one I had encountered-- assistance to civilian law enforcement. I got in touch with him. He became my "prime mover" in trying to get some surplus military communications equipment in place at the Embassy so that we could communicate with the law enforcement world. We were then just going through the hassle over the "posse comitatus law" between the U. S. law enforcement community and the Department of Defense over assistance to law enforcement organizations.

For example, U. S. Navy vessels would come into Nassau twice a month, on the average. Nassau was a major port of call for ships coming out of Norfolk, VA. It seemed that if we didn't have a Navy ship in port, we'd have a Coast Guard vessel. I went aboard an awful lot of ships, doing my "thing" as chargé d'affaires. I entertained some of the ships' officers and got to know them. For example, we once had a visit from the USS INGERSOLL, a Navy destroyer which carried both guns and missiles. It was one of the newer types, built since World War II. The skipper of the INGERSOLL was a very friendly Navy Captain. When I went aboard, they gave me a tour of the ship, including the Combat Command Center. They told me how, using radar, they could vector weapons systems and could "play war games" to keep up the skills of the crew. I asked them, "Do you guys ever do anything when you see a drug airplane fly overhead? It must happen all the time. Do you do anything about that? Do you tell anybody?" The Captain said, "No, we have no requirement to report on this kind of activity. Even if we should see, for example, an aircraft making a drop [of some kind of packages], we wouldn't tell anybody. There's no requirement for us to do anything about it."

It "blew my mind" that we had all of these assets floating around there playing "war games"-- kind of like computer games--to keep up the training of their crews. One of these aircraft could be offloading a month's supply of cocaine, and the Navy ship wouldn't tell anybody, much less chase them or anything like that. Some of the skippers on these Navy ships were very sympathetic to the view that they should be doing more about that.

I remember that the INGERSOLL had to "clear port" one day because of a conflict in the cruise ship schedule. They had to make room at the pier. They had to get permission from Norfolk. Normally, a Navy ship doesn't leave port once it comes in. It stays for a couple of days and then leaves. "Clearing port" early is an added expense and some trouble, but on this particular occasion they had to "clear port."

The skipper said, "Would you like to bring some of your people from the Embassy on board? We'll just take a little ride outside the island." I said, "Sure, why not?" The skipper said, "Well, where should we go?" I said, "There are a couple of islands about 30 miles North of here which, I know, are major dropping points for drugs. Planes come in and drop the packages. Why don't we go over there and take a look?" We did. I got a whole bunch of people from the Embassy who

wanted to go out and take a ride one morning. So the INGERSOLL showed up off this island. They put a long boat over the side, and we went out to take a look. I think that we scared the hell out of somebody.

Anyway, it was clear to me that the Defense Department wasn't really "on board" on this drug enforcement effort. Of course, the argument on the military side was that this kind of activity detracts from their primary mission, which is training for war. It's kind of like the debate which we're having today about whether or not the military should be carrying out "peace-keeping" missions which detract from their fundamental commitments. These "peace-keeping" missions also cost a lot of money for fuel and so forth. At that time the argument was that the military were prevented from law enforcement activities under the post Civil War "Posse Comitatus" Act. This act was passed as a result of the occupation of the South by the Union Army. It provided that the military would not carry on law enforcement functions. So the Defense Department used to take cover behind that law. Eventually, the "Posse Comitatus" Act was modified to allow the military to take on law enforcement missions. In fact, after the Cold War was over, as you may recall, the military went around "looking for a mission." They needed to justify their existence and their assets. But at the time, in 1982, we had this frustration of really needing to have our armed forces to go out and chase the drug traffickers.

All things come to those who wait and try. Eventually, the military decided that we needed more than this "one lung" helicopter with one pilot with very limited "loiter" time. It was becoming very clear to the law enforcement community that there was a lot happening in the Bahamas, and we weren't dealing with it.

For example, at one time the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] reported that they were doing a "surveillance" flight over Bimini Island. Flying at about 10,000 feet, at night, using night vision equipment, they watched a drug aircraft being unloaded by the Bahamian Police. It was quite clear to everyone that we had to do something about tightening the screws in the Bahamas.

A plan was devised to deal with this situation. One of its major components was to station several radar "blimps" in the Bahamas. One of them had already been emplaced in Key West, 80 miles Southwest of Miami, which kept an eye on military aircraft activity, particularly in Mariel [Pinar del Rio province in Cuba]. The "blimp" or "balloon" in Key West was called "Fat Albert." The Reagan administration proposed to put additional blimps in strategic locations in the Bahamas where they could monitor drug aircraft coming through the Bahamas. The Bahamian Foreign Minister/Attorney General was less eager to do that. He gave us a hard time. However, Congress was very much in favor of it. There were several Congressional Committees which were eager to have these blimps emplaced. Hearings were held on this and other proposals in 1983. In fact, a Congressional Committee of 21 Congressmen came down to the Bahamas to look the situation over, meet with Prime Minister Pindling and company, and come to some conclusions.

Q: I would like to stop and ask a question here. 21 Members of Congress come down for a visit. Obviously, there is a chargé d'affaires in charge of the Embassy. You brief them...

ANTIPPAS: I briefed them. I took them around. In fact, I went over to Key West with them to look at "Fat Albert."

Q: But a Congressman is going to say, "OK, Mr. Antippas. Are these guys in the Bahamian Government 'on the take?'" How did you respond?

ANTIPPAS: I said, "They are." I said, "Basically, these people aren't friends of ours. They're helping us [to some extent] because they have to help us, but, basically, we're having a very hard time here. Our efforts haven't been that successful." A lot of the Congressmen knew this. Don't forget, we had people in the Congressional group like Rep. Mike Barnes, who used to be the Congressman for Montgomery County [in Maryland]. He headed up a subcommittee on Latin American Affairs. We had Rep. Dan Mica, a Republican Congressman from Ft. Lauderdale or somewhere on the Atlantic coast of Florida. He knew very well what was going on. The Congressional delegation from Florida was very well informed. The Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Rep. Dante Fascell, who has since retired, talked to me about Prime Minister Pindling in scatological terms.

Q: So you weren't telling them anything "out of school" on this.

ANTIPPAS: You would have to be really disingenuous to wring your hands and say, "These are great fellows." Nonsense. Actually, the Bahamian government had a number of objectionable people who were not friends of the United States. They hurt us in many ways. A lot of things were hanging fire because of their obduracy, going way back to the effort to arrest Robert Vesco.

I have to tell you about my effort to get an aircraft for the Bahamians. As I said before, the Bahamians complained bitterly that we were putting all this pressure on them to do something. As Prime Minister Pindling told Vice President Bush in Miami in December, 1982, in my presence, "You have all of this ability in the United States, and you can't stop the drug aircraft or drug boats from coming in. We have one control tower in all of the Bahamas, no Air Force, and not much of a Navy. How do you expect us to stop the drug traffic?" Vice President Bush got very angry about that barbed comment.

As I mentioned before, the Bahamian Government had given the Carter administration a shopping list of \$25 million for equipment which they wanted to support the anti-drug effort, including helicopters, boats, weapons, communications gear, and other things. The Carter administration replied, "No way we're going to give these guys this equipment because it's very clear to us that the Bahamians aren't going to do anything with it." There was also the view that helicopters were a very expensive proposition to run. Unlike fixed wing aircraft, they are really expensive in terms of maintenance, apart from the training of air crew. They're certainly very useful, but their cost effectiveness is really questionable under the circumstances.

A friend of mine in the Department who was very interested in aviation contacted me and told me that in the aircraft "bone yard" in Florida there was a Grumman "Widgeon" seaplane which had just been retired by the Department of the Interior. Interior had used this plane to make resupply flights from Miami down to Ft. Washington...

Q: In the Dry Tortugas, where Dr. Samuel Mudd...

ANTIPPAS: The Dry Tortugas. Samuel Mudd was the best-known prisoner. It was really "back of beyond" and a long way from anywhere. I guess that the Interior Department decided that it couldn't afford to keep this plane going any more, so they retired it. This fellow told me about it. So one day I took a trip over there to take a look at this thing. The aircraft "bone yard" was located South of Homestead Air Force Base. I thought, "This would be perfect for the Bahamas. That's exactly what they need--a seaplane which could be refurbished." It would allow them to carry Bahamian Police as fast as a helicopter, although they were not quite as effective. More importantly, it could land on water and could deliver the police where they were needed. It would do the job and was a lot cheaper than a helicopter.

I "sold" the Department's Bureau of International Narcotics Affairs. At that time the Assistant Secretary was a Republican political appointee from New York state who later went on to become a federal judge. He was quite helpful. It turned out that the desk officer in INM [Bureau of International Narcotics Affairs], who was handling the Bahamas, was a consular officer whom I knew. He was also very friendly and helpful. I said, "Look, you've got to get this plane for me. The Department of the Interior will give us the airplane. If you can scratch up \$40-50,000, we can refurbish the engines and plane. We would need some money for pilot training--and we'll get the Bahamians to fly it."

The military advisers to the Bahamas at that time were still the British. The Commodore of the Bahamian Defense Forces was a serving Royal Navy officer who was very friendly to us. He had always been very accommodating. His second in command, who actually ran the logistics base on New Providence Island, was a retired Royal Navy officer. He was also very friendly to the United States. He had an American wife.

They had an Royal Navy flying officer assigned to the Bahamas, who flew a "leased plane" for the Bahamian Defense Forces. I worked out a deal. I said, "Look, if I can acquire this plane, would you agree to use it? I'll look stupid if we go to the expense of acquiring this airplane and then you guys won't use it." I said, "We will arrange to provide flight training on seaplanes for a Bahamian pilot." Obviously, the British weren't going to be there forever. They agreed that they would do this. The wheels were set in motion, I got the money, we got the plane signed over to the State Department, and we actually had this plan moving toward fruition. We actually were going to get this aircraft.

Before that happened, we had this Congressional "flying circus" come to Nassau--21 Congressmen who decided that they were going to "put the screws" to the Reagan administration's efforts on drug enforcement. I think that it was Congressman Glen English of Ohio who was the head of this special Congressional committee, who came to Nassau with his 20 colleagues. We had meetings. We went around and looked at this, that, and the other thing. As I said, we went over to Key West and looked at "Fat Albert," the blimp. Then he decided to have hearings in Miami, to which I was subpoenaed to appear, as the chargé d'affaires in the Bahamas. The Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics Affairs was also subpoenaed to testify before this committee. Congressman English took the Assistant Secretary "over the hurdles" for the fact that IN/M had done so little for the Bahamas, in terms of providing them with resources. The

Assistant Secretary just "took his lumps." Congressman English even took me "over the hurdles" and said, "Is this the best that the United States Government can do for the Bahamas--to give them a 40-year-old airplane to chase down the 'bad guys?'" Of course, I tried to explain what the situation was.

The hearing was over, and we were walking out of the building. Congressman English came up to me and apologized. He said, "We have to do that. It's politics." Actually, it had been a very useful session.

As I'll tell you subsequently about my adventure in getting "kicked out" of the Bahamas, I actually came out of these hearings, "smelling like a rose." I had tried to do something of utility. I looked good and the Department looked good.

Anyway, Operation BAT finally didn't get the seaplane because the British "double crossed" us. They said that they didn't want the airplane because they were under pressure to get the Bahamians to buy a British aircraft for their use--but land based. It had no ability to land anywhere except a runway. There were very few runways available. This was totally counter to what I was trying to "sell" them. To get to most of the places where the "bad guys" congregated, you either needed a helicopter or a seaplane. The drug traffickers were using air drops and "cigarette type" speedboats, which can go 60 miles an hour. We needed an aircraft to catch them. There are no ships which can chase these boats, even though the U. S. Navy put into service in the Caribbean area several hydrofoils. One of them, the USS TAURUS, once visited Nassau. I looked a little bit stupid because we had an airplane which we couldn't use. I don't know what happened to the old Grumman "Widgeon." I don't know whether the Department used it elsewhere or everybody kind of "fell on their swords." I never forgave the British for that. I did have one other idea that I was working on. There was an island South of Bimini Island. Bimini is the closest Bahamian island to Florida and a very natural, staging point for all kinds of "shenanigans" going on, aimed at the United States--illegal aliens, narcotics, money laundering, you name it. They even had banks on Bimini Island for money laundering.

South of Bimini there is an island, basically composed of sand. I think its called "Ocean Island". It was mostly man-made and had digging and earth-moving gear on it to mine the sand of which it is composed. This sand is called, "Aragonite." [According to the dictionary, aragonite is calcium carbonate in orthorhombic crystals with less distinctive cleavage and greater density than calcite]. This is industrial sand which is mined for making glass for automobile windshields. The island was owned by an American company which mined the sand and shipped it to industrial locations.

You didn't have to be a tactical genius to figure out that we had to do something to stop these speedboats, which were the primary means of moving high value narcotics into Florida from the Bahamas. What would happen was that there would be air drops of narcotics on various islands in the Bahamas, anywhere from Bimini to the East. "Cigarette" speedboats would just run into Florida at night, with a load of cocaine. Aircraft were also used, of course, to smuggle drugs, but speedboats were being used, more and more. We had to do something to stop these boats, as they were crossing the Straits of Florida.

By that point, in the spring of 1983, Ambassador Dobriansky had been appointed and was about to arrive in Nassau. I had this 21-member Congressional delegation visit us and give us the benefit of their wisdom, as well as "dump all over us." The U. S. military had acceded to the Reagan administration's desire to give us more assets for our efforts. So a Special Mission Air Force unit with helicopters, from Hurlburt Air Force Base in Florida, was designated to send some aircraft to the Bahamas and to "set up shop." The unit was under the command of an Air Force lieutenant colonel. These aircraft were equipped for night time operations. They had night vision equipment, and the personnel knew how to use it. They had the latest model helicopters to do this.

We moved them into the Police Academy at Oakes Field and began to run some more effective operations, because we had a greater capability. I pretty much directed this whole effort. I had a good relationship with two DEA agents who were assigned to the Embassy. They were very accommodating and understanding. However, they were essentially intelligence operatives. They really would not have known how to manage this kind of operation. For example, I was the one who said that we had to have rubber "fuel bladders" brought in and set up because we couldn't take the chance that the "bad guys" would adulterate the fuel. We'd have to have our own fuel supply, which we could test and could guard. We wouldn't depend on commercial fuel. These DEA guys would not have thought of that.

It was my idea to move this whole operation closer in to the Embassy. Oakes Field was not far from the Embassy. Think of it. If you had to run an operation, if you suddenly got word that there was a "bad guy" flying up the "Slot" and you had to drive all the way out to the international airport to mount up your helicopters, since we didn't man these planes unless we had a target, it made a lot more sense to operate from closer to the Embassy. I was able to arrange that.

The U. S. Air Force was very accommodating and very helpful. We found housing for them. They were on "per diem" and were doing very well. I didn't get the impression that the Drug Enforcement guys were resentful that I, in fact, was running the "drug war" in the Bahamas because, by that point, I had been chargé d'affaires for almost two years. There was no question of who was running the Embassy, even though the Ambassador was just about to arrive.

It was my thought that we needed to station one of these helicopters closer to the Straits of Florida, so that we could actually "run down" these speedboats as they came across. I had in mind setting up a base on Bimini Island, as well as a base on this sand island, of which I spoke just now. I flew over and "made a deal" with the management of the sand island that we could station some fuel there so that the helicopters could refuel, if necessary. The management of the sand island would arrange to guard the fuel. We didn't think that we would station helicopters on the sand island, because conditions there were not very good. There was a lot of blowing sand. It would really be like desert operations. It was not a particularly hospitable situation. But we really didn't need to station helicopters on the sand island. But we could set up on Bimini. The deal that I worked out with the Royal Navy officer, who was the Commodore of the Bahamian Defense Force at that time, was that we would construct a helicopter pad in Bimini. He would assign a patrol boat and armed guards to protect the helicopter pad, so that we could base our helicopters

there. This was really "Apache" [hostile] country. There were enough of the "bad guys," so that if you're going to set up a military base, you'd better be prepared to guard it.

Payment for fuel was a manageable problem. The Commodore had to operate his forces anyway, but he didn't have money for fuel for his boats to go back and forth to Nassau. So I worked out a "deal" with IN/M [in the State Department], which was very helpful to me, that they would pick up the "tab" for the fuel for the Commodore's Bahamian Defense Force. He would station troops there to guard the helicopters. So we were all set to start operations, flying out of Bimini Island and this sand island to chase down the "bad guys."

The Commander of the U. S. Coast Guard District [Seventh Coast Guard District] was Rear Admiral "Deese" Thompson, who was very helpful. He had begun his career, flying seaplanes like the Grumman Widgeon in the Bahamas, back in the 1950's. I had complained about not having the means to check out the waterways in the Bahamas. He arranged to have shipped over to me in 1982, a 17-foot, aluminum hulled, "buoy tender," with a 125 HP Johnson outboard motor. It would really move. So one day they towed this boat over, behind a Coast Guard cutter, and said, "Here's your boat."

You could fill a volume with what I didn't know about boats. I learned "OJT" (On The Job). Of course, there was no operating money whatsoever in the Embassy for this boat. Some delicate inquiries were made to the ARA Executive Office, but I was told that there wouldn't be any money for this purpose. So I would somehow have to run this thing out of the Embassy budget. There was no money to keep this boat in a marina. Since the DCM's house in Nassau was on the waterfront, and I had a beach in front of the house, I just anchored the boat right there. For fuel I used the budget for the automobile assigned to me. We used this boat to cruise around and check on the Haitian boats which were cruising through there and to keep an eye out on the "bad guys." Now and again the marina owners were very understanding and would let me keep the boat in one of their slips for a couple of days.

One evening my son and I went down to a marina to check on the boat. I was walking back toward the marina office, and this Latino-looking individual, carrying two large bags of groceries, was walking down to where a very large "cigarette" boat was docked. The "cigarette" boats were really fast. This is the kind of boat that President George Bush has.

I had a Coast Guard baseball type cap on my head, which said, "U. S. Coast Guard Cutter ACUSHNET" on it. I had a lot of baseball caps. It happens that the ACUSHNET is a "light ship." [It carries a light which can be seen for miles; it is anchored in a relatively fixed position off the coast.] I can still remember the expression on this Latino's face when he looked at me and then looked at my hat with the name of the ACUSHNET on it. I smiled at him and said, "See you later." Hopefully, I ruined his evening for him.

A helicopter could chase a "cigarette" boat and keep an eye on it. A Coast Guard cutter could come out to meet it from Florida. The cutter could stop it, but you needed a helicopter or a seaplane to follow it. There was no Coast Guard ship fast enough to catch one. Even a fixed wing aircraft might have a problem staying with on of these boats, because they are so fast. However, a helicopter probably could follow it.

There was a policy decision that we would not go out armed. We weren't going to shoot at anybody, either in boats or in planes, because of considerations of boating and aircraft safety and all of that. Still, the Coast Guard would be prepared to shoot back at the "bad guys" if they did something stupid.

Anyway, we were all set up to launch the new phase of Operation BAT, which was to extend operations when I was "fired." Ambassador Dobriensky arrived in March, 1983. He "fired" me in June. I really thought that he was going to be a "law and order" type of Republican--a conservative Republican. Our understanding had been, when we had met in December, 1982, that he would let me "run" the Embassy, and he was going to do whatever he wanted to do--write his memoirs or whatever...

Q: Or push for Ukrainian independence.

ANTIPPAS: Or whatever. Actually, I liked him. He was a nice, old guy. Mrs. Dobriensky was something else, but he wasn't a "bad sort," actually. I thought that we had a pretty good relationship. Of course, I was keeping in mind what I had been told early in the game that if you're going to be chargé d'affaires for a long time, don't get your hopes up about staying on. It doesn't really work.

Q: The rule of thumb is that you almost have to get rid of the old DCM, because it doesn't work.

ANTIPPAS: You get big ego's involved, and I knew that. But operations against the drug traffic seemed to be going so well. We were really beginning to build up a head of steam. I had a great relationship with Vice President George Bush's office and the law enforcement community. In December, 1982, after the meeting in Miami, I went up to Washington to meet Ambassador Dobriensky and Assistant Secretary Tom Enders and find out what the Department had in mind for me to do next. Tom said, "You know, the Bahamians want you out of Nassau. Prime Minister Pindling wants you out." He said, "What do you want to do?" I said, "Well, there isn't much available in the way of assignments. The only assignment available would be Principal Officer in Martinique. Frankly, from what I've seen happen to guys who go to Martinique, that's got to be the end of the line." You know, nobody ever goes on to anything after [serving in the Consulate in] Martinique.

Q: That's the Siberia of the State Department.

ANTIPPAS: It's sort of a "golden handshake." I had known a couple of guys who had gone to Martinique. In this business and for the benefit of this exercise if you don't watch what your peers and your seniors do with their careers...

Q: You have to keep an eye on their number and your number.

ANTIPPAS: So I have done that over the years and I thought that there was no future in the Foreign Service after serving in Martinique. I wasn't planning to retire at that point. I was having a great time, running this anti-drug program. I thought, "I'd just as soon stay here and give

Pindling heartburn." Enders' view was, "OK, you can stay as far as I'm concerned. Pindling is not going to dictate our personnel management."

So I went back to Nassau having made a commitment to the new Ambassador that my basic function would be to make his mission a success. If he looked good, I would look good. That's what I would work towards. I made it very clear to him that he was going to be the boss. However, I had been running the Embassy and knew how things worked. We had had a lot of problems. The Bahamas were attracting additional attention in certain areas. I thought that the Ambassador and I had an understanding. He had agreed that I would stay on as DCM for two more years. But I had also seen that happen to Mike Rives in Cambodia some years before. Nothing in this world is ever certain. So I returned to the Bahamas in early 1983 and did my job, which seemed to be beginning to work out quite successfully.

Ambassador Dobriansky finally arrived in Nassau in early March, 1983, after many "false starts." In fact, he took over three months to arrive in Nassau. The delay was becoming a very definite embarrassment. When the Governor General of the Bahamas, Sir Gerald Cash, a very good friend of ours and of the United States and probably the most decent person in the Bahamian Government, began to complain that the new Ambassador had not yet arrived, I thought that we were in trouble. I felt that I could expect Prime Minister Pindling and company to be angry.

By the way, Pindling had won the elections of 1982--he really "stole" them. So he was all set for the next five years. I told the Ambassador that he really should come down to Nassau as soon as possible, as his continued absence was becoming a major political problem for the Embassy.

For one reason or another Ambassador Dobriansky made one excuse after another about not coming down to Nassau. Whether it was renting his house in Washington, or his wife didn't want to come--whatever the problem was--he didn't arrive until March, 1983.

One of the great annual events in the Bahamas is what is called the Out-Island Regatta, which takes place in Georgetown, in the Abaco Islands. Many of the sailboats in the Bahamas get together there and have races. It happens just about Easter time and is a great time for parties. Prime Minister Pindling invited the Ambassador to attend the Regatta. It turns out that is when Pindling "did me in." He was able to have some "quiet" time with the Ambassador. In effect, Pindling told Ambassador Dobriansky, "Look, I can work with you, but Antippas has to go." That message came across pretty clearly to me.

The Ambassador did not take any action immediately. It was not until the Foreign Service Inspectors came in May, 1983. We were inspected and, as I predicted earlier, the "gigs" [criticisms] showed up on the administrative side. I had said earlier that if I didn't have another American employee here to help out [on the administrative side], how on earth could we keep our accounts clear? The Inspectors came up with 48 specific criticisms of the administration of the Embassy. The Ambassador used those criticisms as evidence that my management techniques were a failure and, therefore, I had to go.

The senior Inspector, Nancy Ostrander, who had previously served as Ambassador to Suriname, spoke to me. She said, "Look, I don't know what the new Ambassador is thinking about, but you've got a problem with him." I replied, "Well, I guess I'm really not surprised, under the circumstances."

After the Inspectors left, the Ambassador called me into his office in early June, 1983, and said, "Look, you'd better find yourself another job. I think that we need to make some changes here and I need a new man. We have systemic problems in the Embassy." He loved to use words like that. He would talk in large terms, like cartoon balloons. He would just "bury" you in words. You would have to listen to him very carefully to understand what he was saying.

I was so shocked that I didn't even clean out my personal files, as I should have done, including all of the memoranda that I had written, cables, and so forth. I just kind of left all of this stuff there in the Embassy in Nassau. I just walked out. I was dismayed by this kind of treatment.

Q: He was a professor?

ANTIPPAS: As I mentioned previously, he was a Political Science professor here at Georgetown University.

I was quite shocked when he "fired" me. I shouldn't have been. As it turned out, Vice President Bush's former Press Secretary, Peter Teeley, happened to be in my office that day. He had just left Bush's office and was writing a book on narcotics trafficking in the Caribbean. He had put in six months of research at Harvard University. He had come down to Nassau to collect material for his book. He happened to be sitting in my office on this particular day. My wife was also there at the same time, when I walked in from my morning meeting with the Ambassador. I was in a daze. I said, "You know what this guy just did? He just 'fired' me." I had asked him at least to let me stay on until December, 1983, so that I could get back into the assignments cycle and also because my children were in school. But the Ambassador was adamant. I had to leave as soon as possible. June was the worst possible time to look for an assignment.

Q: All assignments were in place for that year.

ANTIPPAS: Except when somebody "drops dead," which is always a possibility. That was my hope, so I said, "Obviously, I'd better get the hell out of Nassau." I also had in mind that the Ambassador hadn't been at post long enough to do an efficiency report on me, so maybe it would be best for me to leave before the Ambassador had time to do a negative efficiency report on me.

A U. S. Navy sponsored meeting had been scheduled at Key West to review Emergency and Evacuation [E&E] procedures. I was scheduled to go, as was the Administrative Officer, to prepare a plan on how we would evacuate the post, should the occasion arise. This was several months before the situation in Grenada became a problem.

I told the Ambassador that, under the circumstances, I didn't think that I ought to go to the Key West meeting. I said that I should arrange to leave the post as soon as possible. If I couldn't stay

in Nassau, I had to find another assignment in the Foreign Service. I was due for home leave at the time and actually had the tickets for my family and myself.

However, the Ambassador said, "No, I would really prefer that you would go to this conference. You could leave in July," or something like that. I was really upset at this point, when I started thinking about it. I figured that Prime Minister Pindling had "done me in," and the Ambassador had let him get away with it. As far as I could see, the Ambassador hadn't even gotten anything in exchange for getting rid of me! If you're going to throw somebody to the wolves, at least get something for it, like the base agreement. I had already worked out a deal on the base agreement. I think I should talk about that before I discuss how I was "run out of the Bahamas."

I have already said that, early in my tenure as DCM in Nassau, I had discovered that we had a major problem with the Bahamian Government--particularly the Foreign Minister over the base agreement because he wasn't guaranteed 10 years' income for the bases. We couldn't guarantee that because of our budget process.

Anyhow, in 1982 I took the occasion to invite Ambassador William Middendorf, the American representative to the OAS [Organization of American States], to visit Nassau. He had been Ambassador to the Netherlands in the Ford Administration and had been Secretary of the Navy.

Q: Yes , I've interviewed him.

ANTIPPAS: Bill Middendorf was a banker. I had met him when I was leaving for the Bahamas. He had just been appointed American representative to the OAS. He said, "Listen, find an excuse to invite me down to the Bahamas." Well, I remembered that. So I invited him down to the Bahamas, because it was part of my personal program to invite prominent personalities down there to show that we really didn't hate the Bahamas. I invited Bill down, and we talked about the base agreements, because he was quite familiar with the issue from his experience in the Navy. I said, "What can we do to 'sweeten the pot' a little bit or to 'sweet talk' the Bahamians into accepting the base agreements?"

Anyway, to make a long story short, Bill Middendorf had helped enormously to get the U. S. Navy to make some accommodations to the working group which allowed us to get approval to sign the base agreements. That was all "in train," as it were, at the time I was "fired" as DCM in Nassau. It was one of the things that kind of "blew up" in our faces, along with all of the arrangements we were making on Operation BAT.

After I was "fired" and left Nassau, the Ambassador decided to have a "chat" with NBC [National Broadcasting Company] television. NBC was in the process of doing an expose on the "cocaine connection" in the Bahamas. The Ambassador made these arrangements on his own hook, without telling Washington and without having the Public Affairs Officer or anybody else in the Embassy help him or protect him. He talked for three hours on videotape with Bryan Ross of NBC. He said some outlandish things, which NBC, of course, showed on television on the day after Labor Day, 1983. The Ambassador told Ross, "Law enforcement isn't the only issue that we have in the Bahamas. We have this base agreement which is still pending." That was absolutely the wrong thing to say. It blew everything out of the water. It was almost hilarious if it had not

been so stupid. It was a prime demonstration of how political appointees can be their own worst enemies. The Ambassador almost got himself "fired" because of this thing. I think that he was very close to being forced to resign by the White House, except that Presidents don't like to do that sort of thing.

The NBC expose, which was called, "The Vesco Connection in the Bahamas," alleged that the Bahamian Government was being "paid off" by Robert Vesco on behalf of the Colombian drug cartel to let them use Norman's Cay, which I mentioned earlier. The television program stated that there were drug airplanes flying out of Norman's Cay into Florida and that the original "connection" had been Robert Vesco, who had allegedly funded the initial Colombian operation in the late 1970's. The program was apparently based on "leaks," probably out of the State of Florida law enforcement community. I don't think that the "leaks" came from the federal law enforcement community. I think that it sounded like what the Sheriff of Broward County had said to me. The Sheriff had told me that Robert Vesco had been "paying off" Prime Minister Pindling and company. Vesco was allegedly also in "cahoots" with the Colombian drug cartel.

On the day before the NBC television program on the Bahamas was aired, my friend Kenny Cartwright, from the Bahamas, called me in Boston where I was visiting my brother. Kenny was still in Nassau. He said, "Watch NBC tomorrow morning. On the NBC 'Today' show there's going to be an expose on the Bahamas. I've got a problem because they're going to mention my name as being involved in narcotics trafficking." He asked, "What can I do to protect myself?" He said that Glenn Campbell, who was the DEA agent in Nassau, "knows very well that I am not involved. I knew that myself. It's going to be very bad if my name is mentioned. It can ruin me." I advised him to send a telegram to the chief of the DEA office in Miami, whose name escapes me now, indicating that this NBC show was about to be televised. I advised him to tell the DEA chief that he absolutely denies any involvement in drug trafficking and that he is willing to take a polygraph ["lie detector"] test to prove his point. I said, "I suggest that you send a copy of that telegram to NBC immediately, showing that you have done this. That may dissuade them from mentioning your name." However, in any event, Kenny Cartwright's name was mentioned prominently.

On the next morning, at 7:00 or 8:00 AM, this segment showed up on television with Bryan Ross questioning Prime Minister Pindling of the Bahamas. It was sort of "in your face" journalism. He had walked up to Pindling in the street in Nassau, pushed his microphone on his face, and said, "Are you being 'paid off' by the Colombians?" I thought, "Boy, am I glad that I'm not in Nassau."

This telecast caused a political "firestorm" in the Bahamas. In statements to the press and in speeches at political rallies, Prime Minister Pindling started to blame me for the allegations made in the telecast. He said, "This is all because of "Antippas". "Antippas leaked this material to NBC because he was angry that he was not made Ambassador to the Bahamas". When Ambassador Dobriansky came to Nassau, he 'fired' Antippas." In fact, Dobriansky "fired" me because Pindling had told him to "fire" me. So on and on it went. It became more and more a matter of allegations like that. Pindling appeared on the NBC "Today" show with Jane Pauley and Bryan Ross. It was a very acerbic, frigid kind of session. I have video tapes of these interviews some place in my files.

U. S. Government policy was that we didn't want to create any problems with the Bahamas. This had been my own instinct. I felt that it doesn't serve any purpose to pick a fight with the Bahamian Government. It would just give them an excuse not to cooperate with us. In fact, that is what I told Bryan Ross, when ran me to ground later on in Grenada. At first I refused to talk to him. Then I agreed to. I told him, "Look, I may be very sympathetic with what you're trying to do--your motives and all that. I certainly agree that a number of figures in the Bahamian Government are as corrupt as the day is long. I also think that some of the things you reported in that story were not right--the references to 'air conditioned hangars full of cocaine,' and all of that stuff. If I had been in charge of the Embassy when you came to Nassau, in July, 1983, you would not have gotten in the door. Not only would I not have talked to you, I wouldn't even have let you in the Embassy, because it was not my job, as a representative of the United States, to cause an uproar in our relationships with the Bahamas and give some of the leaders of the Bahamian Government an excuse not to cooperate with us," which is what happened. They stopped cooperating on the drug side and they also stalled the signature of the base agreement for another year before they finally sat down and signed it.

I had gotten to know Kenny Cartwright earlier during my stay in Nassau. He was a white businessman who was doing very well. He owned car dealerships and property. Later on I rented a house from him which my family lived in. Initially, I looked at Kenny Cartwright with something of a jaundiced eye. I had gotten to know him because our wives were in the same bridge group. Kenny's wife was of Colombian background and had been married to Kenny for some years. We met these people socially. My wife was telling me about his wife. I thought that I should stay away from these people because he had the absolutely classic profile of somebody involved in drugs.

But I was wrong, actually. He was simply very much a hard charging, Bahamian businessman who knew how to make a buck. As Nassau was a very small community, he had gotten to know a lot of people. One of the things that he had done was that he had either sold or rented property to Robert Vesco in the Abaco Islands. I think that he either sold Vesco a house or a half interest in an island there, which, of course, was suspect in some people's minds. I asked DEA to run a "whole name check" on him before I started seeing this guy socially. We got to know each other. He had a couple of yachts.

On Easter weekend, 1983, we took our families and went down to inspect Norman's Cay, which, by that time, had been abandoned by the Colombian cartel, as a result of the pressure that we had put on them the previous year through Vice President George Bush. I had been able to arrange for a surveillance of the island by an AWACS [Airborne Warning and Control System] aircraft. The Vice President was able to hand Prime Minister Pindling the substance of this surveillance at their meeting in Miami in December, 1982. He insisted that Pindling had to cooperate with the United States. I think that Pindling got the word to the Colombians that they had to leave Norman's Cay, and they left. They just walked out, leaving groceries sitting right on the table. I found open bottles of Ketchup sitting on tables there in the houses which I inspected.

Anyway, I didn't advertise my presence there. We went down to Norman's Cay with an American doctor who lived on the island part of the time. We inspected every house--some 20 of them--on the island. I found evidence--drug paraphernalia--including boxes with the leaflets

which the Colombians had dropped on the 1982 Bahamian independence day parade in Nassau. These leaflets said, "Nixon, Reagan, DEA--Go Home! The Bahamas for the Bahamians!" They had stapled money to some of these leaflets, which they also dropped on Bimini and on Grand Bahama Islands. They had Bahamian \$100, \$50, \$20, and \$10 bills--which are equal to U. S. dollars--stapled to these leaflets. I learned from a grocer in Bimini Island later on that people came in to buy groceries with the money still stapled to the leaflets. The drug traffickers apparently just tossed these boxes of leaflets out of the plane door. One of the boxes apparently hit the [horizontal] stabilizer, damaging the aircraft so that they had to land. The Bahamian police knew who carried out this operation, and they arrested the Bahamian pilot. I also found plastic envelopes in which the Colombians packed cocaine. I found a duffle bag--not a military regulation size bag but a smaller size used in packing cocaine. I found a number of pistol holsters and a set of Sears Roebuck golf clubs which were cut off so that the heads of the clubs were sticking out of the bag. The bottom part of the bag was empty so that you could load things into it--drugs or money or whatever.

I took all of this stuff with me, along with bags full of telephone receipts from the office of the yacht marina, which had been "trashed." The receipts recorded phone calls from Norman's Cay to Florida, Georgia, and other places. The whole island was "trashed." There was nobody there. Boaters would come and look around, but there was nobody living on the island at that time.

We took this stuff onto the boat and hid it in the bilges so that the police wouldn't see it immediately if they stopped us. I laid out this material in my office on the following Monday and asked the Ambassador to come and see what I had brought back from Norman's Cay. I must say that I was somewhat surprised at his "low key" response. He was not impressed with any of this stuff, which showed the massive use of Norman's Cay by the Colombians.

I called DEA Intelligence in Miami and told them that I had all of this evidence and asked them to send someone to come over and look at it. They could look at it, but they would have to leave it here, because I was afraid that it might "disappear" if they took it over to Miami. I kept this material in the Embassy vault. This subject came up later, in 1988, when I had to testify in Jacksonville, FL, against Medellin Cartel founder Carlos Enrique Rivas "Joe" Lehder, for the U. S. Prosecutor, when I described what I had done with all of this evidence.

My family had returned to the Bahamas in August before the NBC expose. I had arranged this with my wife, since the kids were already in school. We didn't want to go back to Washington, just having come from there. We agreed that I would try to find another appropriate overseas assignment and would "camp out" in Washington with friends. She would stay in Nassau. If I didn't land another overseas assignment by Christmas, we would "bite the bullet," kick the tenant out of our home in Washington, and settle down there. That probably would have been the smartest thing for me to have done, from a professional point of view. I probably should have stayed in Washington at that time.

Anyway, I made this arrangement with my wife. She went back to Nassau. We rented a small house from our friend, Kenny Cartwright. I moved out of the DCM's residence and moved the family into this small house. I went back to Washington and took a trip, visiting friends in New England. I was "working the telephones" a lot, trying to find an assignment. The DCM job in

Athens was opening up. I tried to get the Principal Officer's job in Bermuda. The Ambassador in Barbados asked me if I'd like to be DCM down there, because I had gotten to know him. I agreed. Unfortunately, the Ambassador had turned in his own resignation, so the personnel system decided not to go through with this assignment, as ARA had its own candidate for the DCM slot in Barbados. Nothing was really working out. The Executive Director of ARA said, "Well, you can't hang around Washington doing nothing. I'm going to make you Deputy Director of Mexican Affairs." I said, "Well, that will be interesting, because I've never been in Mexico and I don't speak Spanish. I should bring a whole, new perspective to our relationship."

This was at the time when John Gavin, the actor, was the Ambassador to Mexico, and, I think, George High was the Country Director for Mexico--a very decent guy and a very competent officer. But the one thing I remember from the two months or so that I spent in Mexican Affairs was that, basically, the "desk" wasn't running anything. Ambassador John Gavin was running our policy toward Mexico, given his close connections with President Reagan. Gavin was running things "his way" and was breaking all sorts of crockery in the process. He put a relatively junior officer in as Mission Coordinator, more or less bypassing the DCM. It was a little tough for a career guy to swallow to see how the "pecking order" in the Embassy in Mexico was being disjointed. The one time that I met Ambassador Gavin, I found him to be very personable, charming, and all that. I immediately thought of the movie, "Psycho," which he had starred in back in the 1960's. However, I didn't find working on Mexican affairs very satisfactory under all of these circumstances.

Around Labor Day in 1983, before I went to work on the Mexican Desk, I went back to Boston to visit family members and went up to Vermont to visit Jim Engel, a former Ambassador and friend of mine, who had served in Cambodia with me and then went off to be Ambassador to Benin, in West Africa.

Q: He lived in Peacham, Vermont. I interviewed him up there.

ANTIPPAS: I went up to spend that weekend with him and then went over to York Beach, in Maine, to see another friend. Jim and I had been good friends. I had known him in Vietnam. He had asked me to be his DCM [in Benin] at that time, when I was on the Cambodian desk. It didn't happen because Jim White, who had come out of Benin and was later Ambassador to Morocco, I think, had appointed a new DCM in Benin. Again, this is the kind of thing that you're not supposed to do, in the great scheme of things. You normally let the new Ambassador appoint his own DCM. I remember that Ambassador Jim Engle was a little irritated by that. I've often thought of how different my career would have been had I taken that job in Benin, because, as it turned out, the guy who went out as DCM for Jim Engle remained as chargé d'affaires for a good part of his tour there, because Jim pulled himself out.

Maybe I should back up a bit and tell another story, because it is indicative of the trouble you can get into as a chargé d'affaires, if you're not careful. On July 4, 1982, as was the custom in the Bahamas, none of the members of the Bahamian cabinet came to our reception. The Governor General came, representing the Bahamas, but not one cabinet member--not even the Foreign Minister. Can you believe that? With only three resident diplomatic missions in the Bahamas the

Foreign Minister couldn't find time to attend. Obviously, it was a deliberate snub of the United States. I was furious, fit to be tied, and very angry at this kind of treatment.

The Bahamian Independence Day celebration is on July 10. We had a staff meeting at the Embassy, and I decided that, under the circumstances, we couldn't fail to show up at the Bahamian reception. However, they had sent us 10 tickets to the grandstand, where all of the VIP's [Very Important Persons] and the Diplomatic Corps were seated. The way the system worked was that you drove up in your car in front of the grandstand, got out of your car, walked up to the grandstand, and sat down. This was all done in front of everybody. So I thought, "Screw these bastards! I'm going to send the most junior guy in the Embassy in our smallest car. He will sit alone in the middle of this 10-seat section."

My friend, John Upston, the Caribbean Coordinator in ARA, happened to be visited the Bahamas at that particular time. He sat in on this staff meeting. Remember, this guy is a political appointee but had been around Washington for a long time. He said, "Don't do that. It'll never be understood. These guys will complain to Washington, and you'll look bad. You've got to go." As I thought about it, I thought, "Whom am I going to be hurting? I'll be hurting the Governor General," who, in fact, is the man who presides over the independence day celebration as the representative of the Queen of England. I would be insulting him. So I swallowed my pride, and the whole Embassy staff attended this celebration.

The festivities were held in a park near Ft. Montague, which the American Marines took in 1777, during the Revolutionary War seizing all of the gun powder there. The USS NASSAU, a Marine Landing Ship, is named after this event. When we were getting ready to leave the grandstand at the end of the celebration, out of the corner of my eye I saw some papers fluttering over in a corner of the field. At first I thought it was garbage blowing in the wind. I was about to get in my car when a journalist came up to me and showed me this leaflet. He said, "What do you think of this?" This was the leaflet I mentioned before. I did a double take when I looked at this thing which said "Nixon-Reagans DEA leave the Bahamas for the Bahamians". A plane had just dropped these over the city, aiming for the independence day celebration. You often reflect on what you should have said in such a circumstance. Anyhow, I said, "Well, I don't think that the Bahamian Government shares that feeling," or something like that. After I had given the matter some thought, what I should have said to this journalist was, "We must be doing something right if they would do something so stupid as to drop leaflets on the Bahamas independence celebration!!" It didn't take a genius to figure out who had done this. It was the Colombian drug cartel.

In fact, as I was talking to this journalist, I saw that somebody was showing another leaflet to the Foreign Minister, who was down in front of us, several rows away. He was laughing uproariously. Later on, those leaflets became a prize possession in the DEA office in Miami-- they even made Xerox copies of them. It was almost like a badge of honor.

In July, 1983, my family and I were in the U. S. on home leave, before Judy and the kids went back to Nassau. I was trying to sell a house, having a medical exam, and so forth. As I mentioned before, July 10 is the date of the independence day celebration of the Bahamas. I had a good relationship with the Bahamian Ambassador to the United States here in Washington, Reginald

Wood. He had been permanent Secretary in the Bahamian Finance Ministry before being appointed Ambassador. Kenny Cartwright and his family came up to the U. S. for a vacation and to look at schools. They were putting their daughters into school in Baltimore. We got together, as friends do. I said, "Look, I'm invited to the Bahamian independence day celebration at the Embassy." I told Cartwright, "Why don't you come along? It's your Embassy, your celebration. Let's go and have a drink on the Bahamas." So we did, and everything was friendly.

Well, it turned out that the Bahamian Ambassador reported back to Nassau that Antippas had turned up at the Embassy reception on Bahamian independence day with Kenny Cartwright. Unbeknownst to me, Kenny was probably already in "bad odor" with Prime Minister Pindling. It was apparently known that Kenny had taken me down to Norman's Cay to investigate the island. I wasn't sure whether this was known to Pindling or not. If so, Kenny would be in "hot water" with Pindling. Of course, Pindling could be vindictive. He knew how to hurt people.

When Kenny Cartwright's name was mentioned on the NBC "Today" show, Pindling said, "Well, you know Kenny Cartwright," implying that Kenny was part of the problem. The fuss that took place because of the "Today" show caused a real problem in Washington. Admiral Murphy, Vice President Bush's chief of staff, later appeared on the "Today" show to talk to the NBC people about the implications of this. Of course, he tried to smooth it over.

When I met Bryan Ross of NBC later on in Grenada, I told him that I had been subpoenaed before the Congressional Task Force on Narcotics of which Representative Glen English, of Ohio, was chairman. English had summoned me to testify about what I had done in the Bahamas and what was going on there. I said that I would testify but I stipulated that it would have to be in Executive Session. I explained to the Committee staff that my family was still in Nassau and that it might endanger them if my testimony were reported. They agreed to that, and I did testify in Executive Session.

Q: May I ask you a question. Here you were, a serving Foreign Service Officer and you're asked to testify before a Congressional Committee. How does this work? Does the Department of State give you any instructions or anything like that? What did the Department do?

ANTIPPAS: The Department of State did nothing. I wrote out my statement, describing what I had tried to do in the Bahamas and the efforts I made to bring resources to play and get the Bahamian Government to cooperate, to shut down the Colombian cartel activities on Norman's Cay, and so forth. I didn't show this statement to anybody in the Department. Nobody asked to see it.

Q: But they knew that you were going to testify before this Committee?

ANTIPPAS: The Department knew that I was going to testify. I think that everybody was thinking, "Let Antippas go out and hang himself." I think that they expected me to go up there and fall flat on my face. One of the reasons that I was so shocked for being "fired" by Ambassador Dobriensky in the Bahamas was that I had done, I think, quite a good job, and I had a pretty good reputation with people in Congress. In my statement, I made it clear that I had left Nassau unwillingly, but I had left. Statements made on NBC certainly didn't reflect my feelings.

I felt that we should be doing as much as we can to interdict the flow of narcotics into the United States from the Bahamas. I've looked at my statement several times since then, as I still have copies of it. I could have done it better, but this was prepared in a hurry. I made it CONFIDENTIAL because my family was still down in Nassau. I think that I came out of those hearings, "smelling like a rose." I was complimented and was certainly not hurt by that.

It turned out that video coverage of me coming out of the Committee hearings was shown on TV in Nassau. This drove Prime Minister Pindling and the Foreign Minister "up the wall." They probably knew exactly what I was saying, even though none of my testimony was published. It was not "leaked," and its confidentiality was kept.

I had left Nassau in fairly good odor. I wasn't in trouble when I left. I just left--no press conference, no reporters, no nothing. I only told the Police Chief and the Governor General why I was leaving. I said, "I'm going to leave my family here. I'd like you to keep an eye on them. I'm just leaving. I'm not saying anything. It isn't in my place to say anything. The Ambassador has the right to choose whomever he wants as his deputy. That's it." And I was gone in a week. Of course, I came back to Nassau in August, 1983, to settle up my house and move out of the DCM residence, but I left quietly.

After it became known that I had testified before the Congressional Task Force on Narcotics, Prime Minister Pindling realized that my family was still in the Bahamas. At first I did not know how he found out. However, Ambassador Dobriensky was sending telegrams to the Department, not only to ARA but to "M" [Management], claiming that I was the "leak," that I was the "problem," and that I was causing political problems for the Embassy in Nassau because of my activities. I am not sure of exactly what he alleged, because I only saw some of his statements. The Ambassador was in trouble with the White House because he had compromised the narcotics campaign. The Bahamians were making it very clear that the NBC television program angered them and were beginning to drag their feet on law enforcement cooperation with us. In fact, the Ambassador was the source of the public affairs problem for the Embassy by his talking to NBC. He had really done the dumbest thing of all, which was to open up this "Pandora's Box." I wasn't in the Bahamas. I could truthfully say that I didn't know a thing about the NBC program on the Bahamas until I saw it myself on the day after Labor Day, 1983.

To show you what a fool Ambassador Dobriensky was--and I mean a fool--I have a copy of a SECRET EXDIS [Exclusive Distribution in the Department of State] cable in which he discussed this whole issue with the Under Secretary for Management. I was still in ARA and was able to go down to the Caribbean desk and see the cable traffic. In one of these telegrams the Ambassador took various "potshots" at me. But one of the things that he admitted in the cable was that he told Prime Minister Pindling that my family was still in the Bahamas. And he told him where my family was in the Bahamas--of course, breaching my family's and my rights of privacy. This was one of the decisions which one has to consider about what to do about something like that. My first inclination was to raise "holy hell" and bring a lawsuit against Ambassador Dobriensky for doing this. But obviously this would not please the White House and would compromise my family's privacy. They were in Nassau as private citizens, and not as the dependents of a U. S. Government employee. They had moved out of the DCM residence and were in private quarters.

When Prime Minister Pindling discovered where my family was, the next thing I knew was that my wife was being summoned to the Bahamian Immigration Department to justify her presence in the Bahamas. They started harassing her. I wasn't worried about their physical security, although the house was robbed once. We think that it was the Haitian gardener who did that. The Pindling government forced my wife to leave the Bahamas on two occasions to reapply for visas. My children were half scared to death with agents coming to the house. It was about the time that our pet dog was run over in front of the house. The kids were really concerned. My wife was verbally "abused" by the Bahamian Director of Immigration, who was the sister of the Deputy Prime Minister. In 1982 I had helped this woman's son get a scholarship to The Oral Roberts University in Oklahoma. They are all interrelated there. It's amazing how quickly things turn around.

My wife called the Embassy for assistance, but Ambassador Dobriansky refused to provide any consular assistance to help her in her problems with Bahamian Immigration. It ended up that it cost me \$1,000 for my wife and \$50 for each child to let them stay in Nassau until Christmas.

Ambassador Dobriansky continued to send "zingers" to the Department against me. It shows you how "dumb" the Ambassador is. I held off doing anything about all of this, because taking on an Ambassador at his post abroad doesn't do anybody's career any good. Fortunately, a very good friend of mine in the Office of the Legal Adviser who handled Latin American affairs sent an instruction to the Embassy in Nassau, telling the Ambassador to stop criticizing me, since I was no longer in the Bahamas, and instructing the Embassy to assist my wife in her dealings with the Bahamian Immigration Department. The Department saw that the Embassy was getting out on a limb by not providing my wife with appropriate assistance. That took a little of the "heat" off my wife. Of course, our mutual friend Richard Morefield, who had accepted the post of Consul General in Tehran after I had turned it down and who became a hostage when the Embassy was taken over in 1979, was in charge of the Office of Caribbean Affairs at the time. He kept telling me, "Get your family out of the Bahamas. You can't tell what might happen. This is too dangerous." I discounted the danger. I didn't really think that they were in any danger. Harassed, yes. I didn't feel that the Bahamian authorities would be "dumb enough" to harm my family.

The Ambassador was going after me in a pretty hot and heavy way when the Department told the Ambassador to "lay off." He was in enough trouble as it was without trying to blame someone else for his obviously patent stupidity. One of the things that he had not known--and he had not given me a chance to discuss this point before I left Nassau--was that I had asked the Director of the Federal Task Force on Narcotics in Miami for a letter to the Department describing my assistance to the Task Force. I said to the Director, "I'm the chargé d'affaires in the Bahamas. One of the problems of a guy in my position is that nobody knows what I do here. I don't have very many supervisors. I've got a boss in Washington, but he's there. It's always helpful for people who deal with and work with me to send some kind of memo into the "system" to indicate what I have done. So if you think that I have been of any use to you guys here in Florida, I wish that you'd tell somebody about it." I left it at that.

It turned out that he had a letter drafted, praising me "to the skies" for the collaboration which I had provided to the Task Force when I was chargé d'affaires in Nassau. He sent it up to Admiral

Murphy, the chief of staff of the Office of the Vice President, to sign. Murphy decided to give it to Vice President Bush to sign. Bush sent the letter to Secretary of State George Shultz. In May, 1983, when I was having some problems with the Foreign Service Inspectors, I received a "back channel" copy of Bush's letter to Shultz. Before I had a chance to show it to Ambassador Dobriansky, he "fired" me. So the Ambassador never saw this letter. Of course, I was naive enough at that time to think that this might make a difference. I thought that the Vice President might call the Ambassador and ask him, "What do you think you're doing, 'firing' Antippas?" But the system doesn't work that way. The Vice President isn't about to get involved in anything dealing with the White House. This is something that any Foreign Service Officer who aspires to do anything must understand. The Vice President's staff and the White House staff are really very much in a confrontational situation. Very seldom do those two staffs cooperate.

In fact, Admiral Murphy, who is now my "boss" in the consulting firm I work for, has talked about this issue with me on a number of occasions. He was talking about former Secretary of State James Baker, when Baker was President Reagan's chief of staff during the first Reagan term of office. However, Baker had been suggested to President Reagan by Vice President Bush. Baker was a Bush supporter when he became chief of staff of the White House. Admiral Murphy was saying to me the other day, "You know, Baker never did a thing for us [in the Office of the Vice President]. He never gave us any extra office space or 'goodies.' The confrontation was always there." This tendency had probably been underlined when Lyndon Johnson was Vice President and was "dumped on" by the Kennedy White House staff. Or when Vice President Ford became President. The White House can be a real "shark tank." So don't be naive and think that, because you have some relationship with the Office of the Vice President, this is necessarily going to do anything for you in the White House.

Obviously, this unsolicited letter from Vice President George Bush was useful to me. By the way, I had to "find" the letter. It had gone astray. I was prudent enough, when I returned to the Department from Nassau, to ask Personnel where this letter was. It wasn't in my file. They found the letter somewhere and put it in my file. In mid-October, 1983, I was promoted to be a member of the Senior Foreign Service, which was very satisfying. I thought that this was the result of the letter which Vice President Bush had written to Secretary of State Shultz regarding the assistance I had given to the South Florida Task Force on Narcotics. If I hadn't found this letter and had it put in my file, I probably wouldn't have been promoted.

Q: This is probably a good point to stop. We'll pick up at the point where you're back in Washington, looking for a new job, in the summer of 1983.

ANTIPPAS: On the beach.

Q: Today is December 12, 1994. Andy, we're back in the summer of 1983, and you're "on the beach," as it were. What happened?

ANTIPPAS: I can't remember how we left it, but I had been suddenly "unhorsed" in the Bahamas--very unexpectedly and shockingly. I was out of "synch" with the Foreign Service

assignments cycle. I left the Bahamas in June, 1983, to come back to Washington and look for a job in the Foreign Service. I knew that I couldn't afford to waste any time in doing that, especially at that level. After my two years as chargé d'affaires and chief of mission, I was really in a special category. I knew that openings would come up. People drop dead, break legs, and do all sorts of things like that. You never know when a job might be opening up. I came back to Washington to "politic" for a job that might get us back overseas again. As I said before, pending some other assignment, my wife and kids went back to the Bahamas, because the kids were already in school, rather than returning to Washington and throwing the tenants out of our house.

CECIL S. RICHARDSON
Chief Consular Officer
Nassau (1983)

Cecil S. Richardson was born in New York in 1926, and graduated from Queen's College. He served in the US Army from 1944 to 1947, and overseas from 1951 to 1952. Entering the Foreign Service in 1956, he was stationed in Dakar, Saigon, Lagos, Niamey, Paris, Accra, Brussels, Quito, Tehran, Lima, St. Paolo and Bahamas. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on August 5, 2003.

Q: What did they offer you?

RICHARDSON: I got back and I didn't have an assignment. I was in the Department without an assignment. I went around knocking on doors, I went to see Dick Morefield.

Q: Dick.

RICHARDSON: Dick Morefield had been my last ConGen in Iran and a hostage. He said well, yes, I've got something for you if you think you can work with a troglodyte.

Q: With a what?

RICHARDSON: A troglodyte.

Q: Oh, my God.

RICHARDSON: And I said well, I don't have any other job. I would not have had any difficulty working with anyone, yes I'll try it. And I did. And so I went to the Bahamas. But, the problem with this is, that person's daughter is now a high-ranking State Department official.

Q: Let me just turn this off. Well you went to the Bahamas where he was the ambassador, I take it.

RICHARDSON: Yes.

Q: How did that, I mean we don't have to, I mean people are people and public officials, you know we don't have to handle this with kid gloves. How did this affect the embassy and consular work in the Bahamas?

RICHARDSON: Consular work, it didn't. This was a political, social-political attitude. But, I'll tell you what affect it had on me. Before I got there, he had kicked out his DCM and had appointed the Head of the Consular Section as DCM. Shortly after I got there, within a year, he kicked out the DCM, former Consul General and a new fellow came in and then after a year, he became dissatisfied with the new DCM and he was trying to get rid of him. My fear was that he would ask for me because I seemed to be the only person of rank that he liked. So that tells you ... it didn't affect the consular work. But, it did cause me some concern.

Q: Well, how, what were the issues in the Bahamas?

RICHARDSON: Drugs. The Bahamas, the only time of prosperity in the Bahamas is when there is a serious shortage of something in the United States. During the Civil War, it was smuggling guns and ammunition, supplies. During prohibition it was booze and since World War II, it's been drugs.

Q: Well, I've heard you had Roz Ridgway. She was down there earlier and she was saying this was the port drugs hit.

RICHARDSON: Yes.

Q: And this was just when the Bahamas got independence, she was, I think DCM and it was, the big money and all hadn't yet hit and it was a solid, capable young government, but all held ...

RICHARDSON: But it's so corrupt, that type of money is terribly corrupting.

Q: Well, were you concerned about the money getting, corrupting our staff in the consular section.

RICHARDSON: There was no way the visas were the problem. The Bahamas regarded themselves as the 51st state. They'd go see an ophthalmologist in Miami, the same for gynecologist. And you'd go to Florida to have your baby so there were no serious visa problems for Bohemians.

Q: Were they throwing Americans in jail for drug business or not?

RICHARDSON: Yes, but they were mules.

Q: Peru.

RICHARDSON: In Peru. Those were people, obviously they were small time entrepreneurs, they were coming down to buy a kilo to take back to make a little score for themselves. No, these were mules. Welfare mothers, single mothers on welfare who'd be paid to come over, collect the

package and bring it back.

Q: So what happened to them?

RICHARDSON: They were, they'd be arrested or better yet they'd be permitted to board the plane and they'd be arrested in the States in the hopes that the information they could give would lead to the person who hired them. One, now I did have one fellow who swallowed a couple of condoms full of cocaine, but this was for personal consumption.

Q: Yes.

RICHARDSON: Well, the plane was on the runway, about to take off, when one of the condoms ruptured and he went into a frenzy, a drug induced frenzy, and died right on the runway with his wife there. Now, whether his wife was privy to his activities or not, I had no idea, but I had one dead American and fresh widow on my hands for the weekend, because I couldn't even get the medical examiner to certify to his death until Monday and this was Saturday. So I took her, I took the widow home with me.

Q: Did ...

RICHARDSON: But that's the only drug death, I know I had many other deaths. Over 2 million Americans visit the Bahamas annually so they get into all kinds of mischief. I had one tourist, we found him dead at the bottom of the elevator shaft in one of the big hotels. And we don't even know how it happened. How did he get under the elevator? They never found a defective door, you know where they could say oh well, something happened, the door opened and he stepped into a void. They never found that a defective door. We had rapes. Well, these things happen. We had people die on the cruise ship on its way to the Bahamas.

Q: Do the cruise people take care of these mainly?

RICHARDSON: Yes. But they unload the body at the first port that they come to.

Q: Well, did, how did you find, were people in trouble with the police, were they helpful?

RICHARDSON: I always suspected the police were pretty corrupt, but they were courteous and friendly, and you see what we would be dealing with wasn't anything that threatened them in any way. And so they could afford to be gracious. We didn't give them a lot of trouble. We had one person in prison for murder. I visited him regularly.

Q: Was Robert Vesco still around?

RICHARDSON: No, I think he was in Cuba by that time.

Q: Much to your relief.

RICHARDSON: [Laughter]. Well, where, I did have one bad moment, well of course there had

been this man in Colombia had taken over an island for trans-shipping drugs ... I've forgotten his name and that was a big scandal. They'd finally gotten rid of him, that was before I had arrived. But a man came in and had his passport renewed, nothing wrong with it, we did the usual check, everything was clean, he takes his passport and he leaves. The next day I read in the paper that he is the object of an indictment for a multi-million dollar sugar swindle in New Orleans. [Laughter]. But that broke after I renewed his passport.

Q: Well, how was the morale of the embassy with this difficult ambassador?

RICHARDSON: Oh, no problem, it was the DCM's who caught it. And maybe his relations with the Department. But he wasn't difficult for the rest of us. There was one really bright, the Economic/Commercial Officer, his name is now engraved on the wall there at State ...

Q: He was killed at Grenada.

RICHARDSON: Yes. And he was impressive, I think it was only his first or second tour. He was impressive. He had just married a local girl, a Bahamian girl, and his next assignment was Grenada and he was visiting the Chief of Police when somebody came in to kill the Chief of Police and he was killed. What a pity because he was, as I said, he was an impressive young man.

Q: Well, Cy this is probably a good place to stop, you left the Bahamas in 1983, where did you go?

RICHARDSON: I inspected for 4 years.

End of Reader