

## BRAZIL

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Robert Corrigan	1941-1944	Auxiliary Vice Consul, Rio de Janeiro
Frank Oram	1941-1942	Foreign Service Auxiliary Officer, USIS, Rio de Janeiro
	1942-1946	Deputy Director, Coordinator's Office, USIS, Sao Paulo
Alan Fisher	1942-1945	Photographer, Inter-American, City Unspecified, Brazil
	1945-1947	Assistant Attaché and Photographer, City Unspecified, Brazil
	1947-1955	Motion Picture Officer, USIS, City Unspecified, Brazil
John Howard Burns	1943	Vice Consul, Belem
	1944-1947	Staff Assistant to the Ambassador, Rio de Janeiro
Aldene Alice Barrington	1943-1948	Assistant Trade Commissioner, Rio de Janeiro
Randolph A. Kidder	1944-1946	Consul, Belem
	1946-1949	Political Officer, Rio de Janeiro
	1949-1952	Officer in Charge of Brazilian Affairs, Washington, DC
William Belton	1946-1948	Consular Officer, Porto Alegre
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	1951-1955	Ambassador's Aide/Visa Officer, Rio de Janeiro

Samuel D. Eaton	1950-1951	Economic Officer, Rio de Janeiro
John J. Ewing	1950-1953	Officer for Binational Center, USIS, Porto Alegre
	1955-1960	Director of Binational Center, City Unspecified, Brazil
Ruth McClendon	1950-1952	Clerk, Consular Affairs, Sao Paulo
Clarence A. Boonstra	1953-1955	Agriculture Attaché, Rio de Janeiro
	1970-1971	Deputy Chief of Mission, Rio de Janeiro
William C. Trimble	1954-1956	Minister-Counselor/Deputy Chief of Mission, Rio de Janeiro
Stanley I. Grand	1955-1956	Transportation Officer, USIS, Rio de Janeiro
Richard P. Butrick	1955-1959	Consul General, Sao Paulo
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John Hugh Crimmins	1956-1960	Transportation/Communications Attaché, Rio de Janeiro
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Barbara Shelby Merello	1960-1961	Junior Officer Trainee, USIA, Rio de Janeiro
	1961-1962	Cultural Affairs Officer, USIA, Sao Paulo
Leonard J. Saccio	1960-1962	Economic Minister/Director, USAID, Brasilia
Eugene F. Karst	1960-1962	Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIA, Rio de Janeiro
Henry E. Mattox	1960-1962	Visa Officer, Sao Paulo

A. Lincoln Gordon	1961-1966	Ambassador, Brazil
W. Garth Thorburn	1961-1966 1971-1973	Agricultural Officer, Sao Paulo Agricultural Attaché, Brasilia
Lewis W. Bowden	1961-1964	Consular Officer, Brasilia/Rio de Janeiro
Lincoln Gordon	1961-1966	Ambassador, Brazil
Virginia Edwards	1962-1964	Secretary to Assistant USAID Director, Recife
Wade Matthews	1962-1964	Vice Consul, Salvador
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Robert E. Service	1963-1965	Vice Consul, Salvador Bahai
Patrick E. Nieburg	1963-1965	Information Officer/Policy Officer, USIS, Rio de Janeiro
Donor M. Lion	1963-1967	Assistant Director, USAID, Brazil
James L. Morad	1962-1964 1964-1965	Student Affairs Officer, USIS, Rio de Janeiro Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Fortaleza
Clarke M. Brintnall	1964-1965	Cultural Student for the U.S. Army, Rio de Janeiro
Noel Marsh	1964-1966	Program Officer, USAID, Rio de Janeiro
Clint A. Lauderdale	1964-1967	Personnel Officer, Rio de Janeiro
Samuel W. Lewis	1964-1966 1966-1968	Executive Officer, USAID, Rio de Janeiro Brazil Desk Officer, Bureau for Latin

		American Affairs, Washington, DC
Stuart Van Dyke	1964-1968	Mission Director, USAID, Brasilia
Marshall D. Brown	1965-1970	Assistant Program Officer, USAID, Rio de Janeiro
Mark Lore	1965-1966 1966	Rotation Officer, Rio de Janeiro Rotation Officer, Brasilia
Earnest Wilson	1965-1967	Auditor, USAID, Brazil
Frank Carlucci	1965-1968	Executive Officer, Rio de Janeiro
John W. Tuthill	1966-1969	Ambassador, Brazil
Louis P. Goelz	1966-1969	Consular Officer, Sao Paulo
Alan Fisher	1966-1972	Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS, Brazil
J. Phillip McLean	1967-1968	Regional Officer, Latin America, Washington, DC
James R. Meenan	1967-1968	Program Auditor, USAID, Rio de Janeiro
Howard L. Steele	1967-1970	Agricultural Economics, Piracicaba
Herman Kleine	1967-1969	Deputy Mission Director, USAID, Rio de Janeiro
William Belton	1967-1970	Deputy Chief of Mission, Rio de Janeiro
Alexander F. Watson	1968-1969 1969	University of Wisconsin, Madison, Brazilian Studies, Wisconsin Foreign Service Institute, Portuguese Language Studies, Arlington, VA
Richard H. Melton	1968-1970	Political Officer, Recife
Stephen Low	1968-1971 1971-1974	Political Counselor, Brasilia Deputy Director, Brazilian Affairs Washington, DC
Robert Corrigan	1968-1972	Consul General, Sao Paulo
Curtis C. Cutter	1969-1970	Principal Officer, Porto Alegre

Richard E. Johnson	1969-1971	Political Counselor, Rio de Janeiro
Arthur F. Blaser, Jr.	1969-1973	Financial Attaché, Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro
John Hugh Crimmins	1969-1973	Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Latin American Affairs, Washington, DC
Alexander F. Watson	1969-1970 1970-1973	Political Officer, Brasilia Principal Officer, Salvador da Bahia
David L. Hobbs	1970-1972	Labor Officer, Sao Paulo
William M. Rountree	1970-1973	Ambassador, Brazil
Stephen F. Dachi	1971-1972	Peace Corps
John D. Pielemeier	1971-1973	International Development Intern, USAID, Rio de Janeiro
Richard A. Virden	1972-1973 1973-1974	Branch Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Belo Horizonte Information Officer, USIS, Sao Paulo
Frederick L. Chapin	1972-1977	Consul General, Sao Paulo
Alexander F. Watson	1973-1975	Brazil Desk Officer, Washington, DC
Anthony G. Freeman	1973-1976	Chief of the Political Section, Sao Paulo
Fred A. Coffey, Jr.	1973-1976	Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Brasilia
James W. Chamberlin	1974-1976	Portuguese Language Training/Consular Officer, Sao Paulo
John D. Caswell	1974-1976	Political Officer, Rio de Janeiro
Clark M. Brintnall	1974-1977	Assistant Army Attaché, Brasilia
William Jeffras Dieterich	1974-1977	Press/Information Officer, USIS, Sao Paulo
Richard E. Johnson	1974-1978	Deputy Chief of Mission, Brasilia
Robert W. Zimmermann	1974-1979	Bureau for Latin American Affairs, Washington, DC

David E. Simcox	1975-1977	Political Counselor, Brasilia
James F. Mack	1975-1977	Political/Labor Officer, Sao Paulo
Arthus S. Berger	1975-1976 1976-1978	Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS, Recife Director, Cultural Center, USIS, Rio de Janeiro
Margaret J. Barnhart	1976-1980	Consular Officer, Rio de Janeiro
Greg Thielmann	1977-1979	Consular Officer/Staff Assistant, Brasilia
Terrell E. Arnold	1978-1980	Consul General, Sao Paulo
Frederick A. Becker	1978-1980 1980-1981	Political Officer/Staff Assistant, Brasilia Brazil Desk Officer, Washington, DC
Douglas G. Hartley	1978-1982 1982-1984	Consul, Salvador da Bahia Deputy Principal Officer, Rio de Janeiro
Dale M. Povenmire	1978-1981	Labor Attaché, Labor Department, Sao Paulo
Robert M. Sayre	1978-1981	Ambassador, Brazil
McKinney Russell	1978-1982	Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Brasilia
George B. High	1978-1982	Deputy Chief of Mission, Brasilia
George A. McFarland, Jr.	1978-1982	Political Counselor, Brasilia
Clarke M. Brintnall	1978-1983	Office of International Security Affairs, Department of Defense, Washington, DC
Kenton W. Keith	1980-1983	Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIS, Brasilia
Langhorne A. Motley	1981-1983	Ambassador, Brazil
John C. Leary	1981-1985	Consul General, Sao Paulo
Edward L. Lee II	1982-1985	Regional Security Officer, Panama City, Panama
Leslie M. Alexander	1983-1985	Principal Officer, Porto Alegre

Clarke M. Brintnall	1983-1985	Military Attaché, Brasilia
Alexander F. Watson	1984-1986	Deputy Chief of Mission, Brasilia
Stephen F. Dachi	1985-1988	Consul General, Sao Paulo
James W. Chamberlin	1986-1988	Science Officer, Brasilia
Harry W. Shlaudeman	1986-1989	Ambassador, Brazil
Stanley Zuckerman	1986-1989	Minister Counselor for Public Affairs, Brasilia
Mark Lore	1987-1992	Deputy Director of Brazilian Affairs, Latin American Bureau, Washington, DC
	1992-1995	Deputy Chief of Mission, Brasilia
Robert E. Service	1989-1992	Deputy Chief of Mission, Brasilia
Richard H. Melton	1989-1993	Ambassador, Brazil
John D. Pielemeier	1991-1994	Family Planning Program, USAID, Brasilia
David E. Zweifel	1993-1995	Consul General, Rio de Janeiro
John D. Caswell	1993-1995	State Department - Latin American Affairs, Washington, DC
	1995-1998	Political Section - Deputy Chief, Brasilia
Theodore Wilkinson	1994-1996	Political Counselor, Brasilia
Gilbert J. Donahue	1994-1997	Deputy Principal Officer, Sao Paulo
Nadia Tongour	1994-1997	Senior Political Officer, Rio de Janeiro
Lacy A. Wright	1995-1997	Deputy Chief of Mission, Brasilia
Greg Thielmann	1995-1998	Deputy Principal Political Officer, Brasilia
Luke Kay	1998-2000	Consular Officer, Rio de Janeiro
Richard A. Virden	2002-2004	Deputy Chief of Mission, Brasilia
Lawrence Cohen	2002-2005	Political/Military Affairs Officer, Brasilia

**GERALD A. DREW**  
**Desk Officer**  
**Belem, Para, Brazil (1928-1930)**

*Gerald A. Drew was born in San Francisco, California in 1903 .He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley. He toured in Para, Jordan, Bolivia, and Haiti. The following are excerpts from correspondence and journal entries.*

*An essay about his good deeds by Elie Negrine - May 27, 1971*

*[Note: Elie Negrine was an Egyptian of Greek/Jewish background who emigrated to Brazil in 1928, at the age of 24. There he encountered Gerald A. Drew, the U.S. Consul in Belem, Para, then 25 and serving in his first Foreign Service Post. These reminiscences were occasioned by Drew's death in September 1970, which Mr. Negrine read about in the Washington DC papers. I have edited them for greater readability, but have not tried to condense. This essay was sent with a cover letter to Robert W. Dean, then the desk officer for Brazil at the State Department, who forwarded it to me, one of Gerald Drew's three daughters--Judith Drew Wilkinson]*

Foreword - March 1919, a few months after the signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918. It was a Thursday afternoon, and the principal of Aghlion High School proclaimed the rest of the day off, and took all the students and teachers to the American Cosmograph, one of the best movie theatres in Alexandria, Egypt, to see the cessation of World War I hostilities and the triumphant arrival of President Woodrow Wilson to Rome, Paris and London. Prime ministers Lloyd George of England, Georges Clemenceau of France, Vittorio Orlando of Italy, and Elefterios Venizelos of Greece were also featured.

I was sitting next to the history, geography, French, and science teacher of the junior high school class, and in front of him sat the principal of the school, Hugo Farfara, a Jewish Italian intellectual who was also a lecturer at the Free University of Alexandria. Mr. Isaac Beaty, the teacher, seeing President Wilson descending from the coach in Paris, told the principal, "Here comes the president of the United States with American diplomats, innocent people to deal with the conniving foxes," meaning the four prime ministers mentioned above, "who for sure will not hear his advice, and a German revenge may take place in twenty years. Since the American Independence--July 4, 1776--American diplomats have been above reproach, having an overdose of honor and dignity in serving their national interests and God's commandments at the same time." At that time I was a boy of fourteen, and wanted to come to the United States, a desire I realized fifteen years later--March 24, 1934. I realized how true his words were when I became acquainted with four American diplomats whom I consider great Americans.

I owe a sincere debt of gratitude to retired Ambassador Roy Tascoe Davis, who in 1931 helped me secure a position as room clerk and cashier at the Central Hotel in Panama City, Panama. I am also grateful to the American Consul in Panama City, O. Williams, who reassured me, after I had lost all hope of entering the U.S., that if I could locate some relatives in the U.S. to send me affidavits, he would try to have the American consul in Athens grant me a visa in two to three

years. I am also sincerely grateful to the Honorable Lewis Hoffacker, presently American Ambassador in Yaounde, Cameroun, who, when he was the [U.S. State Department] desk officer for Egypt in 1956, helped me bring my relatives from Alexandria as refugees/escapees. And my sincerest gratitude goes to the late Ambassador Gerald Augustin Drew, whom I had the privilege of knowing in Belem, Para, Brazil, from 1928-1930, as he was starting his career in the Foreign Service. The following true story is dedicated to him.

Unable to receive an immigration visa to enter the U.S. in January 1928, as a second best I decided to emigrate to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. I had no trouble securing a position as interpreter, in the different languages I learned in Egypt, at the Hotel Avenida, one of the ten leading hotels in the city at that time. At the hotel I met many American guests to whom I explained my difficulty in obtaining an immigration visa to enter the U.S., but none of them could help me, as none was a member of the U.S. Foreign Service. Several months after I had saved enough money, I decided to venture into the Amazon River part of Bolivia. The travel schedule was to take me through Belem, Para, where I was fortunate in meeting the American consul, Gerald A. Drew.

The day I arrived in Belem, after registering in a boarding house, I took a walk around the city. As I passed by the Grande Hotel, I saw a former guest of the Hotel Avenida, accompanied by the American consul. My acquaintance told Mr. Drew of my desire to come to the U.S. The next day, after walking around the city, I noticed the sign "American Consul" and decided to enter and ask whether my registration with the American consul in Rio a few months earlier could be used from Villa Beni, Bolivia, where I was planning to go. As I was requesting this information from the clerk, a Brazilian, a young man with a blond mustache, who was sitting in the adjacent room with the door open, invited me to come into his office and take a seat near his desk. He started the conversation "You are Mr.?" and I replied "Elie Negrine." This was the first time I was addressed as "Mr." by a distinguished gentleman. He continued, "You were born in part of Greece during the Ottoman Empire's occupation and have an Egyptian *laissez passer*. You arrived yesterday from Rio de Janeiro." I answered "Yes, sir."

Continuing the conversation, Mr. Drew said, "You were very lucky to have found a position in a leading hotel a few weeks after you arrived as an immigrant from Alexandria, Egypt. Do you realize immigrants are not always able to find suitable positions with good pay and good meals, like the one you had at the Hotel Avenida? Why did you leave such a good position to go to Bolivia?" My reply was, "Could it be a friend of yours brought this to your attention?" He replied, "You guessed right; a friend of mine and a friend of yours, who cautioned you not to leave your position at the Hotel Avenida and venture into the Amazon area." Hearing these words, I knew who had told him--an American, Mr. Arthur Smith, who was a guest at the Hotel Avenida. "Is Mr. Smith in Belem?" I asked Mr. Drew. He answered, "Yes, and he's staying at the Grande Hotel, and he wants to see you."

Mr. Drew continued the conversation: "The Amazon states and the Bolivian and Peruvian sides of the Amazon are depressed areas. Instead of buying the passage to Bolivia, buy a passage back to Rio de Janeiro and I will be glad to advance you a hundred or two hundred milreis to have for expenses before presenting yourself to the manager of the Hotel Avenida, who for sure will be glad to have you back, or to the manager of another hotel. After working a while you can mail it

back to me." Such generosity! I wondered, Was I in the presence of a mortal or a disguised angel? I asked, "In whose presence do I have the honor to be?" The answer was, "I am the American consul, Gerald Augustin Drew." I politely declined his offer. "Mr. Consul, please forgive me for not accepting your generous offer and for not following your suggestion. My heart is in the United States and there I want to go." His answer was, "We have a quota and you must wait your turn. I cannot help you in this. First come, first served." I departed from the American consul's office more determined than ever that someday I would enter the United States, where there are kind-hearted people.

A week later I left Para, en route to Bolivia, and when I arrived, as I was warned by Mr. Drew, I found the Amazon side of Bolivia a depressed area. There was no hope for substantially paid employment, and I didn't have the capital to venture in business. I returned to Para. Struggling to find a job, I became acquainted with a certain Mr. Patrick, a Yugoslav who was editing a city directory and asked me if I could find subscribers. This I did. After finishing his book, Mr. Patrick found employment as an assistant to Mr. Drew at the American Consulate. I found a job in a factory which was starting to manufacture rubber tires for automobiles. The pay was five milreis a day, or five times 12.5 cents in U.S. currency at that time, 1928.

The factory was just starting up. The entrepreneur was a Syrio-Lebanese man, Philip Farah, and the technician an American, Mr. Burell. One day Mr. Drew visited the factory and saw me at work cleaning machines. To the surprise of Mr. Farah and Mr. Burell, Mr. Drew came toward me and spoke a few words, saying "I am glad to see you working." The entrepreneur was unable financially to continue his experiment and the factory closed. I found another occupation, unloading coal with a Greek skindiver who with his helpers had brought up to the surface a small cargo boat that was sinking. The American consul, passing by the dock, saw me at work, although I didn't see him this time. At his office Mr. Drew told his assistant, Mr. Patrick, "It hurts me not to be able to grant a visa to a hard-working person on account of his place of birth, Greece, when I am granting visas to people of lesser value. And he is not the only one I can't help."

In Santarem, Para, the Ford Motor Company had a concession to explore and manufacture rubber products. The interpreter at the Grande Hotel, the only first-class hotel in Belem, resigned his position and went to work for the Ford Company. The next day I presented myself to the hotel in hopes of securing the position left vacant. As I was standing near the room clerk, Mr. Drew was going out to his office and left his key with the clerk. Naturally, I greeted him, taking my hat off. The hotel manager, Amaral dos Santos Pinho, noticed the American consul's response to my greeting, raising his right hand lightly with his customary smile, which made him the most respected representative of a nation. Later the manager asked Mr. Drew if he knew me. The American consul replied, "He is one of the many whose heart is in the United States but the immigration quota prevents him from entering." Mr. Pinho misunderstood Mr. Drew's statement and answered, "If he can't enter the United States, for sure he can't work here." Mr. Pinho had returned from the U.S. after completing a college education in business administration three months earlier, and succeeded the former manager, Mr. Alberto, who secured a higher position in a first-class hotel in Rio de Janeiro.

Mr. Drew, on hearing this statement, was shocked, and asked Mr. Pinho, "What have you learned

in the United States? Not only have you not learned the value of a human life in the U.S., but you forgot the Brazilian motto of 'Order and Progress.' This man is not rejected nor unwanted in the U.S. We have a quota, and according to his place of birth he has to wait his turn and receive his visa in order to enter the U.S. My assistant, Mr. Patrick, recommended him to the president of the Jewish Community, who wanted to help him, but he refused any handout, submitting himself to work for a tenth part of the salary he was earning in Rio, and working hard. His hard work is the best recommendation a person can give."

The next day the hotel manager came to my workplace and had a talk with my employer the skin diver, who asked me to stop work, take a shower, change clothes, and go with Mr. Pinho to the hotel for a clerical position. He wished me good luck. Arriving at the hotel, Mr. Pinho asked me to go to the dining room and have lunch. After finishing lunch I was to go to the front entrance and stay with the room clerk. The American consul, coming in for his noon lunch, saw me at the desk and with a smile wished me good luck, adding, ""Now you can be as happy as if you were a clerk in a Manhattan hotel." I replied, "Thank you, sir." Mr. Pinho had told me on our way to the hotel the conversation Mr. Drew had with him, and added, "I admit that I had seen little of the United States as I was occupied with my studies, but I hope to go back and acquire additional education."

At the Grande Hotel the food was wholesome and nutritious; Mr. Antonio Martins, the proprietor, offered me a nice room so I could be present whenever a ship arrived and go to it to greet the passengers. It wasn't hard work; most of the passengers were destined for the Grande Hotel. My earnings were good, but with all this, Belem, Brazil, was not the United States, and the Grande Hotel was not located on the ground of that great nation. After seven or eight months I managed to save enough money to pay my passage to the U.S. and have two to three hundred dollars for expenses on my arrival. One day, arranging the magazines in the reading room, I noticed an American magazine with some historical articles, and the American flag. I said to myself with a sigh, "*Oh, bon Dieu*, or Oh, Good God." Mr. Drew was behind me, though I hadn't seen him; but hearing me and seeing what I was looking at, he said, "Tomorrow when you pass by my office, step in; I want to talk to you." The next day I did go to his office and he told me to write to Rio de Janeiro and transfer my application for a visa to his office. This I did, and a week later I received an answer, went to the American Consulate, and gave Mr. Drew the letter.

The American consul told me, "I shall take a chance on your case, and both of us will be the winners or both of us will be the losers. I shall recommend you to the American consul in Athens, Greece, the only American official who can grant you a visa. " My answer was, "I am very grateful to you, Mr. Drew." As we waited for the answer from Athens I nearly faced a dilemma, but Mr. Drew came to my rescue.

The former interpreter who had gone to work for the Ford Company concession was disliked by the Brazilian workers, and the Belem press started to criticize him. The Ford Co. had to let him go, or he was forced to quit. Mr. Pinho approached Mr. Drew to ask him what he thought if he were to reinstate the former interpreter in his former position and place me on a floor to clean rooms. He added that the former interpreter was a European and that I was from southern Europe or the middle east. Mr. Drew again asked him the same question: "Mr. Pinho, what have you learned in the United States? How would you feel if Mr. Alberto, your predecessor, were to

return and Mr. Martins gave you the job of waiter?" The hotel manager answered, "Mr. Drew, I am very sorry to have had such an idea, and I apologize for not learning what the United States is about when I was there."

Before telling me the answer from Athens, Mr. Drew tried his best to get me not to take it to heart. One day, doing him a small service, Mr. Drew handed me a twenty milreis tip. "Mr. Consul, I haven't done anything to deserve this tip," I told him. "Tips are part of your earnings," he answered. I thanked him. Another time, he was invited to dinner by a well-to-do Greek businessman who was married to a Brazilian, and whose children couldn't speak a word of Greek. He asked me to go with him. I answered, "Mr. Drew, you are the American consul and I am almost a servant." He replied, "And with these ideas you want to go to the United States? Let us suppose you were in the U.S. and I asked you to come see me at my office in the State Department Would you refuse to come because you might be working in a hotel or a restaurant?"

Mr. Drew kept his word. In 1952 I phoned him at the State Department, mentioning my position as a guard with the U.S. Government Printing Office and reminding him of our acquaintance in Belem in 1928-1930. He invited me to come to his office, and when I got there, acted as if he were seeing a long-lost brother. He spoke of his stay in Belem, and of his friends and acquaintances of those years. As I was leaving, Mr. Drew asked me if he could help in any way. My answer was, "Yes, sir, wish me luck to stay in my present position for twenty years, until I retire." "I hope you'll make it," he replied.

Let us return to Belem, at the time Mr. Drew asked me to accompany him to the Greek businessman's house. After his question I decided to go with him. The host was a Cypriot by birth and had come to Brazil just like any average immigrant, without any money. His son was American-educated and being the same age as the American consul had much in common with him. After dinner they both went to a combined office/library for more conversation, and I stayed with the host, who told me his life story and how he made good in business, cautioning me that Brazil is a land of opportunity for a person who believes in working. An hour after dinner the host's son drove us back to the hotel.

A week later the American consul asked me to come see him at his office. Sitting to the right of his desk, facing him, I noticed a sheet of paper and a pencil on the desk, as if it were there for me to use. Mr. Drew took a letter out of a file and handed it to me to read. "Fifteen thousand Greeks waiting to receive visas ahead of me. Three hundred to be admitted every year." I stopped at that paragraph and did what Mr. Drew was expecting me to do. I wrote down fifteen thousand and divided it by three-hundred. The answer was fifty years of waiting. Reading the end of the letter, "Assure Mr. Negrine this office will give every consideration to his application," I had a big laugh. As I wrote down fifty plus twenty four, my age at the time, it equaled seventy four. What surprised me was Mr. Drew seemed more hurt than I was. He told me, "Forget the United States; Brazil is also an American nation with a great future for hard-working people. Only an extraordinary event would open the doors to the many thousands ahead of you, and to you. If there's any way to help you, I will." My answer was, "Mr. Drew, you have been very kind to me. Thanks to you I have the position of interpreter with the Grande Hotel, and thanks to you I was able to save enough money to leave Belem, as the climate is not too favorable. I am very grateful to you and shall never forget your kindness." He replied, "I'm glad you feel that way." I left his

office with a handshake.

This took place two weeks before Christmas 1929. I continued working at the Grande Hotel until March 15, 1930, when I left Brazil for Central America. I was unhappy not to be able to see Mr. Drew and thank him again before leaving. Mr. Drew had jurisdiction of the American consulate in Manaus, the capital of the bordering state of Amazonas, and was out of town at the time of my departure.

From Belem I went to Managua, Nicaragua, having made a few short stops in French Guyana, British Guyana, Trinidad, and Panama. In Nicaragua I remembered Mr. Drew's advice: America is a land of opportunity when a person works hard. Nicaragua is in Central America, and I decided to sell ice cream from a pushcart. My earnings were good, but ten months after I'd started the business, on March 31, 1931, an earthquake shattered my hope of a future in the Central American nation. I came close to losing my life, but was lucky to have my money deposited in a bank, so I was able to leave for Panama City, Panama. There the American Ambassador, Roy Tascoe Davis, helped me secure a position as room clerk and cashier at the Central Hotel; and the American consul, Mr. O. Williams, promised me that if I could find some relatives to furnish me affidavits he would do his best to convince the American consul in Athens to grant me a visa.

While I was working in the Central Hotel, the insurance company discovered my family in Alexandria, Egypt, and my oldest brother answered all questions about me favorably. As we started to correspond, relatives in the United States were discovered and affidavits were sent. Mr. Drew's statement that only an extraordinary event would open the doors to the many thousands of Greeks ahead of me on the list of aspirants to enter the U.S. did come true: It was the Depression, and many of those ahead of me chose not to come to the U.S. My turn became available, and the letter Mr. Drew wrote on my behalf in 1929 spared me from going through the usual rigorous investigation. The American consul in Panama City told me when he granted me the visa in 1934, "You should be thankful to Mr. Drew, the American consul in Belem, who highly recommended you to the U.S. consul in Athens." I replied, "Mr. Drew was a godsend to me and to many other people, whom he helped to the point of saving their lives." Mr. Meyer, the consul who signed my passport, said, "I heard of Mr. Drew helping sick people after he was transferred from Belem to Central America." I was glad that others knew of the kindness of Mr. Drew.

After I arrived in the United States, life was hard. After struggling for almost three years as a vendor, I joined the U.S. Merchant Marine, and after Pearl Harbor was attacked I joined the U.S. Navy. It was during my Navy service that I heard even more about the kind deeds of Mr. Drew. When the news came out in 1944 that he was appointed U.S. consul to liberated France, I was stationed in the South Pacific theatre, and heard one of my commanding officers tell another officer, "When Mr. Drew was in high school he used to help students who had difficulty with their studies." I wrote Mr. Drew a letter, and he answered me: "I am very happy to learn you are an American citizen and serving in the Armed Forces."

It might be interesting at this point to review briefly some of Mr. Drew's subsequent career, including his last appointment as ambassador [to Haiti, 1957-60]. according to local papers and

to people who have been beneficiaries of his good actions.

In Haiti as the U.S. ambassador, Mr. Drew faced a critical situation, and a short review of Haitian history would help us understand the serious condition he was in. Regardless of having two thousand whites of foreign nationality working there, Haiti has since its independence from France in 1804 been a black-oriented nation, with restrictive laws in economic matters for non-black people. In spite of this, many white people contributed to the development of the nation economically and culturally. From 1915, with the U.S. Marine Corps occupation, conditions for white people in Haiti became more favorable. From July 1931 to March 1934, the period I was working as room clerk and cashier at the Central Hotel in Panama City, many Haitian residents of foreign nationalities registered at the hotel in transit for the United States or for visits to their native lands. Many of them--Syrians, Lebanese, Greeks, and Scandinavians--were businessmen, and their trips were to purchase goods for their businesses.

The American occupation lasted up to 1934 [at which time Drew was ending his first tour of duty in Haiti, as Second Secretary at the U.S. Legation, 1931-34]. Relations continued to be friendly with the United States, in spite of the fact that after the Marines left the relaxation of restrictive laws for non-Haitians started to become less relaxed. In 1951 President Paul Magloire encouraged foreign capital investments, and in such circumstances the restrictive laws were relaxed but not abolished. At the time Mr. Drew was accredited the American ambassador to Haiti, Paul Magloire was overthrown and the restrictive laws for foreigners were back in effect. Foreseeing the danger, Ambassador Drew helped many Americans, Haitians, and people of other nationalities to escape. [In 1957, when Drew arrived in Haiti, a triumvirate which included Dr. Charles Duvalier had replaced Magloire, and Duvalier soon ousted the others and consolidated his power as the infamous "Papa Doc." During the unsettled time of the triumvirate, a Lebanese American businessman named Shibley Talamas was clubbed to death at a police station, ostensibly for violating the curfew. The Haitian government eventually paid reparations to the family, but the "Talamas Case" soured relations with Haiti for many years.]

At the time he was ambassador to Jordan [actually he was the first U.S. minister to Jordan, 1950-52], Mr. Drew to the best of his ability protected Jewish people residing at that time in Arab countries. He cautioned the Arabs that the Arab nations have much to gain by having a Jewish nation among them, and if at peace with each other, Arabs and Jews would grow together culturally, industrially and economically, not needing any great power to assist them. He reminded the Arabs that Arabs and Jews were of common ancestry, similar to Americans and Canadians; and if both were to adopt the Latin alphabet, they would be able to understand each other just like the U.S. and Canada. While he was U.S. minister in Amman, he influenced other Arab nations to relax their anti-Jewish laws enacted in 1948 during the establishment of the state of Israel.

In Hungary [1947] and Greece [1947-50, on loan to the U.N. Special Commission on the Balkans, or UNSCOB], Mr. Drew took care of American-born citizens whose parents had let their offspring's citizenship lapse. Mr. Drew helped them establish their U.S. birth and return to the U.S. from their ancestral countries. One of his greatest concerns was with the survivors of Nazi concentration camps. Mr. Drew went beyond his duty as a representative of the United States; instead, he acted according to the Christian precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as

thymself." He went to the rescue of many people, helping them return to their native lands; or, many of them having had relatives murdered by the Nazis and not wanting to return to their native lands, helping them come to the United States or to other Western nations of their choice. His name became dear to many--Greeks, Hungarians, Jews of different nationalities--whom I met in the United States and Canada. Our gratitude to him is beyond all words.

At the time Mr. Drew was appointed U.S. consul in liberated Paris, I was serving with the U.S. Navy in Noumea, New Caledonia, as a petty officer specialist first class. My duties were as translator with the counter intelligence and base censor's office. New Caledonia is an overseas territory of France situated in the southwest Pacific Ocean and comprising the Island of New Caledonia and a number of other islands. New Caledonia Island is about 875 miles east of Australia, and has an area of 6531 square miles. The population in 1962 was 78,000, including about 25,000 Europeans, and Noumea's at that time was estimated at 33,000. During the war Noumea's population was smaller, but numbered three to four members of U.S. armed forces to one Noumean--according to professors at the French College in Noumea.

My favorite entertainment in those days was to go to the French Court in my spare time and hear the lawyers debating civil and criminal cases alike. I made some friends among the French judges and lawyers, and one day I was invited to Maitre Coursin's--an elderly retired lawyer--for dinner. There were about six other guests, some of them recently returned from military service with De Gaulle's Free French armed forces. All of them had returned to their positions with the privy council, or the governor's second office.

At the table Mr. Drew's name came up in the conversation. One of the guests had spoken to him in Paris, and had the kindest words for him. "He does not act as an American consul; he acts more as a physician trying to heal the wounds of people who had been oppressed by the Nazis. Escapees and survivors from concentration camps are his first concern. He pays attention to how food, supplies and medical care are handled. Another guest said, "He's a good Christian." Another said, "No, I think he's a Jew in the way he's helping Jewish survivors." A priest who was among the guests then took the floor: "Gentlemen, as I understand it according to this conversation, whether this gentleman Mr. Drew is a Jew or a Christian, for sure he has the noble characteristics of the Jewish person whom we worship, Our Lord Jesus Christ." I didn't say a word, but hearing such comments I was as happy as if they were made about my own father or dearest brother.

Now let us return to Belem, Para, Brazil, where I had the privilege of being in contact with Mr. Drew for twenty months. I was told of his kind deeds even before I met him. According to the waiter, Nicasio Martinez Call, who usually waited on him at the hotel, when Mr. Drew arrived in 1927, after getting acquainted with other nations' consuls and Brazilian officials, he started arduously working to help people. Mr. Drew spoke Portuguese perfectly and needed no interpreter; however, for a guide, he would take with him the waiter, who was a Spaniard from the province of Galicia, where the dialect is similar to Portuguese, or sometimes another hotel worker. They would visit the poor sections of the city, noting the various diseases that people were suffering from. At that time the Rockefeller Foundation was very active in the area, and often Mr. Drew would invite to dinner a physician, officials of Para, and officials with the Rockefeller Foundation to discuss the possibility of bettering conditions among the poor of

Belem. He offered to submit the many cases in writing to health agencies in the United States to get some diagnoses; and thanks to answers from the U.S., some of the diseases were controlled and started to diminish.

At that time Air France and the NYRBA line, an independent American airline which was later absorbed by Pan American Airways, made frequent flights to and from Belem, and [medical and public health] information soon came from the U.S. and was quickly put to use. When people learned how their suffering was relieved, Mr. Drew's title changed from "The American Consul" to "The Good Consul." In less than a year he became the most respected person in Belem, and people passing him in the street would doff their hats and greet him with a respect equal to that given the governor of the state or to the president of Brazil.

Mr. Drew's desire to help people did not extend just to masses of people, but also to individuals, and he often paid physicians out of his own pocket. On Christmas Eve of 1929 I was invited to dinner at the house of Mr. Martinez Call, who not only was a waiter at the hotel, but was also my companion in going to the docks to greet passengers destined for the Grande Hotel. At dinner Mrs. Martinez Call acted happy and couldn't stop repeating thanks to the kind consul, the good consul. Martinez explained, "My wife couldn't eat; her stomach was upset and no doctor could help her. I told Mr. Drew of her sickness and he asked me what she eats. As I was telling him he took notes, and asked me to take her to Dr. Roffe, his physician. I took my wife to this doctor and after a month she was cured, eating a new diet with plenty of vegetables and soup once a day. And here we are eating a good dinner, and thanks to the kind consul my wife can eat very well." Mr. Drew paid the physician's fee for her and for the wife and mother of two other employees.

With his fellow consuls of other nations, Mr. Drew did not flatter wealth or boast of his own position (representing the most powerful nation in the world) or achievements. The other consuls were the Bolivian consul, dean of the consular corps, who was approaching seventy; the British consul, a man in his forties, who never missed an opportunity to boast that he was the consul of the mightiest empire in the world; the French consul, the Comte de Legue, who dreamed of France's past greatness; and the Peruvian consul, who was a very busy man, since Brazil and Peru had a lot of business with their Amazon River border. Other consuls, not always nationals of the nations they were representing, were businessmen and honorary consuls.

Mr. Drew always considered the Bolivian consul the first among equals. The city of Belem had at that time a good system of trolley cars, but from the suburbs or beyond it was not easy to get a taxi. Mr. Drew, considering the health and age of the Bolivian consul, asked him when far from home to let him know, and he would send a taxi or a friend to take him home. Mr. Drew's relations with the French consul resembled a comic cartoon of those days, "Bringing up Father," in that Mr. Drew was a young man of twenty five or twenty six, and if it hadn't been for his mustache would have looked younger. The French consul was in his mid-fifties, and had a heavy workload. French Guyana, which bordered Brazil, was a penal colony, and convicts often escaped to Belem. Brazil and France didn't have an extradition treaty. Brazil granted asylum to the escapees, but if any of them misbehaved, Brazilian authorities would deport them on the Amazon River vessel *Oyapock*, which once a month made the trip to the French Guyana border, the Oyapock River. From the Brazilian side the deportee was taken by the Brazilian authorities in

a small boat to the French side.

Not all the deportees to French Guyana were still prisoners. After serving part of their terms in prison, some of them were released, provided they stayed in the colony on probation until the end of their terms, after which, if their conduct merited it, they would be permitted to return to France. During their probation period they were free to work, and many of them became well-to-do, even wealthy, by the colony's standards. They could marry, and some of them married sisters and daughters of the gendarmes, and some went to France and returned with wives. Free to travel, many of them took trips to France or neighboring countries.

One day, when I was at the dock to greet passengers of a transatlantic vessel, the Oyapock was docking at the same time, returning from the trip to French Guyana's border. To our surprise, my co-worker and I heard someone calling "Grande Hotel! Grande Hotel!" We rushed toward him, he asked to come to our hotel, and we got him a porter and a taxi to take him there. When we got back to the hotel, this gentleman, Mr. Francois, was already in his assigned room. The next day he went to the French consulate, probably to fix his passport, and the French consul, visiting the hotel two or three times in subsequent days, was cool toward him, making believe he didn't see him. A few days later Mr. Francois visited the American consul's office, requesting information about manufacturers in the U.S. so he could get in touch with them when he returned to Cayenne, the colony's capital, for his business. Soon after, Mr. Drew, coming from his office for his noon meal, saw the Frenchman walking toward the dining room, and invited him to sit at his table. According to Mr. Pinho, the hotel manager, who overheard the conversation, the French consul later asked Mr. Drew what he thought of Mr. Francois. Mr. Drew replied that Mr. Francois was a gentleman, a businessman in a French colony, and one of his citizens who was entitled to his protection. The French consul took the American consul's words into consideration, and the next day he came with Mme. de Legue and invited Mr. Francois to dinner at their home. After that the French visitor and the French consul became good friends, and parted with regret that they couldn't see each other a little longer.

One of the most interesting stories about Mr. Drew's tour in Belem was how he managed to turn the Comte de Legue from an unhappy to a happy man. One day the French consul came to the hotel very upset and unhappy. He started a conversation with the hotel manager about how life is nothing but disappointment. Mr. Pinho had had his share of disappointments, and his words were no consolation for the French representative. It was like a hungry man telling another hungry man, "I am hungry." Fortunately for both of them, Mr. Drew came in then, and the Comte de Legue rushed toward him for advice as a father might rush to his adult son who had surpassed him professionally. Mr. Drew obliged and took both of them into the adjoining room where guests and visitors could relax and converse. They separated after about fifteen minutes and half an hour later they met again and went into dinner. A few days later Mr. Pinho told his friends how Mr. Drew cured the French Consul by telling him that regardless of how many times we face disappointment, people need to get along with other people; and if we were to take to heart every disappointment, then every disappointed person should try to live by himself; and if he were to try, it's doubtful how long he would live. Mr. Drew reminded the French Consul of Aesop's Fables and the poems based on those fables by Jean de la Fontaine (1621-1695), who wrote to the Dauphin (heir to the French throne) "I am using animals to represent people in a comedy of a hundred different acts, and the stage is the universe." Since they were originally

said by a Frenchman, Monsieur de Legue repeated these words often to his friends.

Although resembling the comic "Bringing Up Father," the relationship of Mr. Drew and the Comte de Legue was far from comic. M. de Legue's thinking followed the pattern of the 1920s, which did not follow the French motto of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." Evidently Mr. Drew taught the French consul about equality and Mr. Francois about fraternity. In Cayenne, while I was waiting a few days for the vessel Biskra to take to British Guyana, I visited Mr. Francois in his factory. He was very courteous, receiving me and two fellow passengers. He spoke of Mr. Drew as the one who taught the French consul, and taught him at the same time, how to respect his fellow men. Mr. Francois was born in Cayenne at the time his father was a gendarme, and reared in France. He admitted that when he returned from Belem he changed his attitude toward his workers, most of whom were free, but not able to return to France, and others who were paroled to him by the penal authorities. He was paying the penal institution twenty to forty francs a month for each one, and some wages for their livelihood. This was the general practice in the area then.

When he heard of people going hungry, especially people traveling through northern Brazil en route, eventually, to the United States, Mr. Drew was disturbed. It was not as if they were American citizens and it was his duty as the American consul to help them until they returned to the U.S., when the U.S. government would take over and reimburse him for their upkeep. Rather, he helped these people in the spirit of God's commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" and "thy neighbor" is any person in need. Many times these people, living in small hotels and unable to pay for their meals, would try to be contented with coffee and bread in the morning and fish and bread in the evening. When this was brought to Mr. Drew's attention, he would immediately send word to the restaurant manager to feed these people two nutritious meals a day and he would pay the bill from his own pocket. Some local businessmen, such as Lebanese, Spanish, Jewish, or Portuguese, discovering that some of the beneficiaries were of their race or creed, would ask the restaurant manager to thank the American consul, and they would take over helping these people find work, or to leave Belem for larger cities where there would be more opportunities for work.

Mr. Drew's generosity was extended to everyone in need, regardless of race, color, creed or national origin. During the mid-twenties the Ford Motor Company acquired the concession in Santarem, Para. The rumor somehow spread in the British West Indies that American standard wages were being paid, and one day in 1929 fifteen to twenty black West Indians, British colonial subjects, disembarked from the Amazon River vessel Oyapock, hoping to go to the Ford concession for work. They embarked a few days later for Santarem, and two months later they returned with patched faces and broken noses. They had quarreled with the Brazilian workers and the American company had to let them go. The Ford concession was not an American colony, and the Ford Company's American management had to obey the nation's rules by paying minimum wages of five milreis a day. This applied to native Brazilians and foreigners alike, although if an employee had a special skill he would receive higher wages. The British consul, seeing them returning from the Ford concession, didn't want any part of them, wanting to be on good terms with the Brazilian people.

Two to three weeks after their return, the West Indians were threatened by hunger and eviction

from their sleeping quarters. Mr. Drew, seeing their plight, stepped in to help. He consulted with Mr. Pickerell, who was a businessman and formerly the American consul in Belem. Pickerell was amazed to hear Mr. Drew's decision to help the unfortunate West Indians, and heartily joined him. Mr. Pickerell immediately sent word to the manager of the restaurant that was feeding them to serve them nutritious meals, and to tell the West Indians that their upkeep was guaranteed for a few weeks and that he wanted to talk with them at his place of business. He asked them if they wanted to return to their homes. They said No; they wanted to join their relatives who were working for British utility companies in Rio de Janeiro and in several other parts of Brazil. The American consul and Mr. Pickerell jointly intervened with the Brazilian Coastal Navigation Company for reduced fares for the men. Several weeks later Mr. Drew and Mr. Pickerell received letters of thanks.

Rescuing people from danger was another of Mr. Drew's activities. One hot day in January 1930, a vessel of Panamanian registry arrived in Belem with a Greek captain, Greek and Spanish officers, and a mixed crew of Greeks, Asians, and two Blacks from a Portuguese colony in Africa. Someone approached me and asked if I were the Hebrew who could speak Greek. He addressed me in Greek and I replied Yes in the same language. He asked me if I would go with him to the Maritime Police to help him interpret to the officer the case of the two African Portuguese who went to him requesting asylum, as they wanted to leave the ship. I agreed. The maritime police officer felt very sympathetic to the Africans, though he was a white Brazilian of Portuguese parents, and allowed them to stay there for the night, as the Greek captain refused to advance them any money without an official settlement. The captain asked me if I could meet him the next day at the same place, the maritime police. I replied, "No Sir, you have Spanish officers on the ship who could handle the case better than I.

When I returned to the hotel, Mr. Drew asked me what the Greek captain wanted. When I explained, the consul immediately phoned the maritime officer, who told him the two Africans were not under arrest, but were staying there because they didn't have the money for a room in a hotel. Mr. Drew told him he would take care of their hotel room. He phoned the proprietor of a small hotel-restaurant, asking him to go to the maritime police office and take the Africans to his place and feed them. The next day the captain, hearing the American consul was interested in their case, paid them every penny of their earnings and asked the maritime police officer to send one or two policemen to escort the two Africans back to the ship, where they wanted to pick up their belongings, to prevent any attack on them by the Asian or Greek members of the crew. Two weeks later the two men left for Recife, Pernambuco, where they had relatives.

Gerald A. Drew's death in September 1970 was a great loss to the United States. In addition to being a fine diplomat and noted [if unpublished] historian, he was an enlightened political scientist with much knowledge on the formation and stabilization of new nations. One time, before the end of the academic year, some college students in Belem went to Mr. Drew and asked him if they could meet with him to ask a few questions regarding history, forms of government, and the creation of a nation. When Mr. Drew was told how many students wanted to come, he told them there was no room in his office for so many, but he would arrange to have them come to the movie theatre located in the Grande Hotel, which was in use on weekends only. Antonio Martins, the proprietor, was so happy to let Mr. Drew use the auditorium that he offered complimentary coffee and cake and placed the waiter Nicasio Martinez Call at Mr.

Drew's disposal. I was invited by the students to join them; naturally I was an observer and listener. Mr. Drew asked them to bring certain reference books, such as encyclopedias and histories. At the time Mr. Drew was fluent in Portuguese, as well as Spanish, French, and English.

Most of these students, unlike their American counterparts, were not used to working their way through college with janitorial, cafeteria, or library jobs. Mr. Drew was asked what life was like after graduation. His answer was, "Life is an uncompromising competition, similar to your struggles to pass exams with high grades. But humane feelings and conscience must prevail. The respect of the rights and property of one's neighbor is the basic foundation of peace." Mr. Drew reminded the students that the United States (1776-1929) and Brazil (1822-1929) were both young nations, although strong and powerful. It would take many generations for the ingredients of the melting pots of both nations to blend, Brazil with its Iberian Portuguese heritage and the United States with that of England and northern Europe. He gave examples of how the nations of Europe, especially the big powers, are of mixed ancestry. He asked them to open their reference and history books to see that his statements were correct.

At the end he was applauded, and each student was served coffee and cake, just like the coffee hour after a Sunday service in most churches. The students surrounded the American consul, expressing admiration for the United States. Our great nation was built by great Americans, and Gerald Augustin Drew, the American consul who later became an American ambassador, was one of them.

**ALDENE ALICE BARRINGTON**  
**Assistant Trade Commissioner**  
**Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1934-1940)**

*Aldene Alice Barrington was born in 1902 in Grand Forks, North Dakota. She received a teaching certificate from the University of North Dakota. Her Foreign Service career included positions with the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of State in Colombia, Brazil, and Argentina. Ms. Barrington was interviewed on January 3, 1995 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

BARRINGTON: I was sent to Rio, and I think that was about 1934. I was assigned as Assistant Trade Commissioner.

Q: *What was the life in Rio like?*

BARRINGTON: So very different from Bogota, climatically and otherwise. The people openly welcomed Americans. They were generous, thoughtful, and fun-loving. In their clubs, restaurants and other places they made you feel at home. One had occasion to meet various outstanding Brazilians and to become friends. I made enjoyable close friendships there, including Dr. Eugenio Gudín and his wife. He was Finance Minister to Brazil and was at the Bretton Woods Conference and all that. Every time he came to the States after I was in Washington (he died a

short time ago), he would always get in touch with me. Very kind, charming, stable people. The educated, upper-class Brazilian comprised a Portuguese-oriented minority of the population. In the relatively underprivileged class one found an African heritage due to the former slave labor imported to work on sugar plantations. By and large Brazilian laws did not militate in any way against the black population. The former slaves were given their freedom without going to war.

Brazil has a very interesting history in that Dom Pedro, the King of Portugal, came with his court to Brazil when Napoleon threatened to invade Portugal from Spain. That set a pattern in those early days of outstanding Europeans settling in the country. One later had the opportunity to meet and to appreciate their descendants.

Rio is a beautiful spot, but can be hot and humid. Of course, there was no air conditioning in those days. In the old days, in the summer, the Court all moved up to Petropolis, which is at a cooler elevation and today is less than an hour from Rio. We had a very attractive Embassy in Rio, friendly with everybody. It was delightful.

*Q: Who was the ambassador at that time? You were there from about when to when?*

BARRINGTON: I spent a total of almost ten years there.

*Q: Up until the '40s.*

BARRINGTON: There were several different ambassadors.

*Q: Any particular stand out in your mind, either as characters or people?*

BARRINGTON: Caffery was there a while; Donnelly was my Commercial Attaché for a period. Caffery always took Donnelly any place he could. Caffery was married there. I was at his small, private wedding. Did you ever know Fred Larkin, head of the State Department's Building Operations? It was said he worked in cooperation on the building appropriations which were under the control of Congressman John Rooney. Fritz Larkin was quite a character, quite a character -- capable and with a fabulous sense of humor. He used to come down there quite a lot when they built the embassy residence, etc. He always had interesting, witty stories to relate about residential problems and desires of ambassadors or their wives around the world. Now the capital of Brazil is no longer in Rio.

*Q: What was your main concern in your work?*

BARRINGTON: The main concern...I don't know, I had so many reports to get out. It was promoting trade, in every aspect that you could. Many reports concerned the increasing industrialization and local production of commodities, protective tariffs, commercial laws, government controls, etc.

*Q: How was Brazil as a market?*

BARRINGTON: Well, it loved things American. A number of American families lived in Rio

and other centers -- southerners who immigrated to Brazil during and after our Civil War. Also, British and other old time European settlers had married into Brazilian families. I recall Dr. and Mrs. Monson, longtime residents of Rio. Out of college with a law degree, Dr. Monson originally went to Rio as a consular officer. Subsequently he established a well-known Rio law firm and raised his family there. It was a cosmopolitan, friendly and law abiding city -- very interesting. One had no fear of street violence, whereas today, with its drugs, one doesn't go out in Rio with the same care-free confidence.

*Q: How did you find access for getting information for your reports?*

BARRINGTON: No difficulty. None at all. I handled chemicals. I always handled chemicals. It was kind of an involved subject, and it seemed to me that nobody knew much about them, especially the men; so that they gladly gave the subject to me. Consequently, I learned an awful lot about chemicals. I had to. It was quite an industry there, and it was growing fast. Also, their first steel mill was built and other important manufacturing activities which meant curbing some of our exports. Brazil was coming along beautifully, from an industrial point of view. We helped in that, and they were very open to any cooperation and suggestions that we could give them and that they could get from American companies. We had many American firms trying to get into the market. And they did.

*Q: Was part of your job to take American businessmen around and introduce them?*

BARRINGTON: Oh, yes. Of course. Also, getting the local businessmen to come to the Embassy to meet an American representative -- to help them both ways. I had rather close connections with various locally established foreign chemical firms. One was essentially a German chemical outfit in good standing that was selling German chemicals which arrived in Brazil despite war conditions.

One of the difficulties that you personally had, in that hot climate, was caused by the absence of dry-cleaning establishments. They would say, "Oh, yes, we dry clean," but the garments weren't really dry cleaned but maybe, spot cleaned. So I knew this German chemical man who was able, despite the war, to bring in chemicals, and knew that carbon tetrachloride was a dry-cleaning liquid; I would get several gallons for my personal use through his courtesy. I lived in an apartment house that had a huge outside area on the top floor, and I would do my dry cleaning there. Everybody was jealous and wanted to get this liquid. It led me into a little difficulty, because Mrs. Jefferson Caffery heard about this; she wanted some of this imported chemical, which was in short supply. So I, after a little hesitation, contacted this amiable German. He said his company had some on hand and that he would be very pleased to send some to the Embassy.

*Q: Why not? Time has passed.*

BARRINGTON: When the chemical came (I don't remember how much Mrs. Caffery got) I think the cost was in the low \$60's. She hit the roof. She said it was too expensive and she just would not have it. She didn't talk to me directly. All was through her assistant. I just didn't know what to do. I didn't want to tell the supplier, who went out of his way to help. But he sensed the situation and said, "Don't worry. It is quite all right. I will send my man to pick it up." At a

forthcoming Embassy reception, Ambassador Caffery went out of his way to casually apologize by telling me that, "The quantity was more than she could handle."

Q: *Was there still, as in Colombia, the same problem of graft?*

BARRINGTON: Oh, yes. I will tell you another story. This was when Getulio Vargas was President. A cabinet member (I think he was head of the Education Department) went to him and said, "You know, the salary to support my large family is just a little less than I would like it to be, Getulio."

And Getulio looked at him and said, "You are head of a Department; what is wrong with you?" You know, why aren't you taking advantage of the privileges? It was just part of the game sometimes.

Q: *Were you there when World War II started?*

BARRINGTON: Yes.

Q: *Did that have any effect?*

BARRINGTON: Definitely.

Q: *How did it impact?*

BARRINGTON: We had felt we might eventually get into the war; so we were helping the British as much as we possibly could. When the British ships would come in to port, the British colony would invite all the sailors to a bowling club that had been founded by the British years before in Rio, and then recruit Americans to come and help them in a social evening.

On one occasion, I found myself sitting at a dinner table next to a quiet young sailor, age 18 or 19, who appeared shy and wasn't conversing very much at all. They didn't serve hard liquor, just beer, but with several beers he got a little more communicative. We had been warned not to ask pertinent questions relating to war activities. We had been collecting all sorts of magazines and books to put on the ships. When the young man started talking, it was with a strong, "Limey" accent. He said that after joining the ship it was six months "before he saw a white woman." I quote him to give you an idea of this youthful chap. To draw him out a little bit more and make him feel at home, I said, "Well, do you have a lot of magazines on board?"

He said, "Yes," and he looked squarely at me. "We have two -- one fore and one aft."

You see, the magazine on a ship is...

Q: *Oh, yes, an ammunition magazine.*

BARRINGTON: Exactly. Unknown to me, apparently the British call our magazines "reviews, periodicals" or something. They apparently don't use the term, magazines.

We cooperated where we could before we got into war. At times, that meant going down to the Embassy in the early morning, before the offices were open; there would be some of our merchant marine chaps who had been rescued after their ship had been torpedoed nearby. They were waiting for the consulate to open. Most Brazilians were sympathetic to our sentiments during the war.

*Q: What happened to the German businessmen at that time?*

BARRINGTON: Well, a number of them were married to Brazilians, and they remained calm. The sons of purely German couples were encouraged by Hitler clubs to enroll in the German army, with prepaid transportation costs, etc. A number of young Germans did leave Brazil to fight, including the son of a German maid I had at one time.

At times, in some of the public places, such as restaurants or nightclubs, there would be a German group that would start to sing some Hitler songs, and then there would be an opposing group with British or American loyalties. There were occasions when there was some friction between the two points of view but the situation was usually under control.

I remember an amusing incident -- after Pearl Harbor -- concerning myself at the Gevea Golf Club where I was learning to play the game. Since Brazil being neutral at the time, both diplomatic German and Japanese were members. I shot a ball which hit a man playing in an adjoining section. My lady companion insisted golf etiquette impelled me to apologize to him. I was astonished to discover he was a Japanese. On returning to the Club House the news had preceded me and in the Lounge Bar everyone drank to my health!

*Q: Were we doing anything as far as trying to impede the German commercial effort at that point, or were we still neutral?*

BARRINGTON: We were ostensibly still neutral, but we felt that we were going to get involved. It was an interesting period.

**HENRY S. VILLARD**  
**Consular Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1935-1936)**

*Ambassador Henry S. Villard was born in New York on March 30, 1900. He received a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and did post-graduate work at Magdalen College, Oxford University, England. His career included positions in Iran, Brazil, Venezuela, Norway, Libya, Senegal, Mauritania, Switzerland, and Washington, DC. Ambassador Villard was interviewed by Dimitri Villard, his son, on July 18, 1991.*

*Q: In 1935 you were assigned to Rio de Janeiro and subsequently to Caracas, Venezuela. What were your positions and what did you do at that time?*

VILLARD: The assignment to Rio turned out to be an unfortunate one. I was sent there as consul particularly to make a study of foreign exchange problems which were causing a good bit of difficulty at the time. Unfortunately my chief, the consul general, did not see fit to give me time to make such a study and assigned me instead to issuing passports, visas, performing notarial services, duties which any clerk could have done. It was the way he happened to run his office. I thought I was being assigned to the embassy, but such was not the case. I spent some time as consul, but I did not feel that I was serving any useful purpose for the Department or the embassy either. The embassy had put in a request that I be transferred to it, but the Department turned it down. I then decided that I would try to extricate myself from a situation that was not in accord with what I had expected. I felt that after four years of political work in the State Department I was qualified to do more than the jobs that I was doing. So through friends of mine in the Department I obtained a transfer to Caracas. Caracas turned out to be a very different post.

**PARKER T. HART**  
**War Department**  
**Belem (1940-1943)**

*Ambassador Parker T. Hart was born in Massachusetts in 1910. He received a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College in 1933, a master's degree from Harvard University in 1935. He also attended l'Institut de Hautes Etudes Internationales in Geneva, Switzerland in 1936 and Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in 1936. He entered the Foreign Service in 1938. Ambassador Hart's career included positions in Brazil, Egypt, Syria, Washington, DC, and ambassadorships to Saudi Arabia and Turkey. He was interviewed in 1989 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

Q: *You then went on to Belém, Brazil, for quite a long time.*

HART: That is right. I had a very short assignment in the Department for just a few months in the new Division of Cultural Affairs before I was sent to Belém. I was there for approximately three years, but I was asked to go first to Rio de Janeiro to be briefed on the embassy scene. It was all consular work; Jeff Caffery was the chief of mission at the time. I made some very warm Service friendships there, particularly with Phil and Minette Williams who became very close friends of mine. He took me under his wing as a fledgling and helped me get started.

I then went back up to Belém. There I had been asked by the War Department to do some scouting on infrastructure and landing beaches. They were afraid that Hitler's forces -- his Luftwaffe -- which seemed to be invincible might come down to Senegal. There was an African program in the Nazi plan of conquest and it was thought that they might cross over to Brazil and try to see what they could do there. Brazil was totally defenseless. They didn't have any forces of any consequence.

Later on I was sent to the Upper Amazon to the Rio Branco in the far north in open savannah

country to see if there was anything to the rumor that the Germans were interested in building an airfield from which they could bomb the Panama Canal.

**ROBERT CORRIGAN**  
**Auxiliary Vice Consul**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1941-1944)**

*Ambassador Robert Corrigan was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1934. He spent part of his youth in Latin America. He received a bachelor's degree from Stanford University and entered the Foreign Service in 1941 as part of the Auxiliary Foreign Service. His career included positions in Guatemala, Panama, Brazil, and an ambassadorship to Rwanda. Ambassador Corrigan was interviewed in January 1988 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

*Q: What was the distinction between an Auxiliary Foreign Service officer and a Non-Auxiliary Foreign Service officer?*

CORRIGAN: Well, the Auxiliary was just theoretically a temporary corps to fill a need that was then seen; there weren't enough Foreign Service officers, but an auxiliary was a lower order of being in that he had not entered through this very rigorous examination process. And hence, I suppose, couldn't expect to rise very high.

*Q: I am interested in what was a Foreign Service officer, a vice consul, doing during the war, say in Rio. Was there anything beyond the normal work that you did at that time?*

CORRIGAN: Once assigned to the Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, I suppose one could have been assigned to almost any kind of work, e.g. strictly consular work. Some of these officers were economic analysts. It turned out that Jefferson Caffery, then ambassador to Brazil, wanted an additional junior officer in his office to do any kind of jobs that came along. I found this extremely interesting, and hit it off very well with him, fortunately, and remained three and a half years working closely with him and his top people, including people like the then DCM John Farr Simmons and later Paul Daniels.

*Q: What was Jefferson Caffery's operating style? He is a well-known figure, of course, in the Foreign Service.*

CORRIGAN: Yes. For somebody really interested in him and the practice of diplomacy, I commend to you an article I wrote on him entitled, I think it was "Mr. Diplomat." In any event, it appeared in the Foreign Service Journal in November 1967.

He had a very interesting style. He was a taciturn man, rather shy really socially. He didn't like small talk, except with a few intimates in social surroundings. Normally he was reserved, and people, indeed, took his reserve as being aloof and unfriendly, which he really wasn't.

I remember one instance, for example, at a Fourth of July reception, where I was in the receiving line with him. My task was to find out who the guests as they came through, mostly Americans, on that particular occasion, and then introduce them to the Ambassador. Well, I was surprised when time and again he would fail to say the man's name, and yet I knew he knew the man's name. He just didn't have that facility, that hail-fellow-well-met type of thing. I think that was one of the reasons why he developed a very close friendship, and almost a dependence on in a certain way with Walter J. Donnelly, who himself later became a very successful ambassador to Costa Rica, High Commissioner to Austria, and later High Commissioner to Germany. Donnelly and Caffery were teamed for over 15 years.

Donnelly was a very handsome, attractive, ebullient, out-going Irishman from New Haven, Connecticut, who had the American business community in the palm of his hand as it were. They just thought he was the greatest fellow to come along. So, he complemented Caffery very effectively in this way. But Caffery's style lent itself to the actual business of diplomacy, which is getting the government to which you are accredited to do things the way you want them to, to vote in international bodies the way the United States would like them to, to act in other words, ways either beneficial to or not detrimental to U. S. interests. That was his main job, and here he was an absolute star.

He realized that in any given community, whether Brazil or later when he was in France and Egypt, in any community, in any government, there are only a relatively small number of really powerful people; people who really call the signals and call the tunes. He always managed to establish a very close working relationship with such centers of power. That was his style. When he wanted something done, when he wanted to persuade the government to go this way or that way, he would go quietly and talk it over with these people, whose respect he had already gained, and then he would persuade them. And more often than not, that government acted in a way that we considered constructive and responsible.

**FRANK ORAM**  
**Foreign Service Auxiliary Officer, USIS**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1941-1942)**

**Deputy Director, Coordinator's Office, USIS**  
**Sao Paulo (1942-1946)**

*Frank Oram entered the Foreign Service in 1940 as an auxiliary officer of USIS. His career included positions in Brazil, Spain, and Argentina. Mr. Oram was interviewed in April 1989 by Allen C. Hansen.*

ORAM: In September 1941 I was assigned to Rio de Janeiro first and then to Sao Paulo. The first two cultural officers assigned in the Foreign Service Auxiliary were Bill Cody, who had a long distinguished career in USIA and Herschel Brickell. They were the first cultural attachés in the U.S. Foreign Service. Brickell was assigned to Bogota, Colombia, and Bill Cody was assigned to Asuncion, Paraguay.

*Q: Was this the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs at that time, or did that come later?*

ORAM: The Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs was created in 1940 by President Roosevelt who appointed Nelson Rockefeller as Coordinator, much to the dismay of people like Sumner Welles, who considered Latin America his own private preserve as Under Secretary of State.

The Rockefeller authority included establishing information programs, cultural programs, binational centers, libraries, and what later became known as the technical assistance activities -- called *servicios* -- in agriculture, health, and education. It is a historic fact that, before we ever got into the war, these important functions were already in existence in Latin America and provided a basis for later expansion in the Point Four Program. The Inter-American Treaty of Buenos Aires in 1936 had included a very strong provision for cultural cooperation among the American republics.

*Q: I find that very interesting -- the mix between cultural, information, and technical assistance - - because USIA, in later years, has always shied away from anything to do with technical assistance, leaving it for AID.*

ORAM: Rockefeller had this broad mandate, and since it was under one authority and funded through one budget, the various parts were all easily fitted together.

*Q: You didn't see any conflict between...*

ORAM: Not when the headquarters in Washington was one office. When it is two or three, that is something else.

*Q: Were you overseas then, at that time, with the...*

ORAM: Yes. I was assigned first to our Embassy in Rio, then to Sao Paulo where I was named Deputy Director of the Coordinator's Office for Sao Paulo and southern Brazil, the industrial heart of Brazil.

*Q: That must have been quite a big operation.*

ORAM: Yes, it was.

*Q: You were involved then as Deputy Director in the cultural, informational, and technical assistance aspects?*

ORAM: The Sao Paulo office was responsible for the information, cultural, and some educational exchange programs. The technical assistance programs were headquartered in the Ministries of Agriculture, Education, and Health in Rio. The operating responsibility country-wide was vested in the Coordinator's Office in Rio, but there was very close collaboration with

the Sao Paulo office.

Q: *You mentioned in this note about FDR and the battleship.*

ORAM: It just shows how times change. FDR went to this 1936 conference in Buenos Aires to personalize his "good neighbor" policy, and he arrived in a great big battleship. That was thought to be quite the style. That was the way to do it.

Q: *Times have changed.*

ORAM: Of course, this was 1936, three years before the first Pan Am Clipper crossed the Atlantic.

Q: *Then in 1942, you also note here about Brazilian troops going to Italy.*

ORAM: One of the big tasks, of course, was to convey to Latin America generally, and most particularly to Brazil, the nature of the war that was going on and to get Brazil into the war. Finally, in August of 1942, Brazil did join the U.S. There were a number of enticements, including a U.S. commitment to a \$100 million steel mill (big money in those days), but Brazil did get aboard. The Brazilian Expeditionary Force was formed and sent to Italy. Vernon Walters, or "Dick" Walters as he is known, then a young Army officer, was assigned to the Brazilian contingent as liaison because of his language abilities, and that is where his very illustrious career began to take off.

Q: *So when the Brazilian troops went to Italy, that in a sense was evidence of the effectiveness of the Coordinator's program.*

ORAM: No question about it. Also our Ambassador at that time, Jefferson Caffery, was the perfect example of the traditional ambassador, quite removed from operations and all that sort of thing. His work with Getulio Vargas was very important.

Q: *Vargas was the President at that time.*

ORAM: The President of Brazil, yes.

Q: *What year, then, did you leave Brazil and come back to Washington?*

ORAM: Early 1946.

**ALAN FISHER**  
**Photographer, Inter-American Affairs, USIS**  
**City Unspecified, Brazil (1942-1945)**

**Assistant Attaché and Photographer, USIS**

**City Unspecified, Brazil (1945-1947)**

**Motion Picture Officer, USIS  
City Unspecified, Brazil (1947-1955)**

*Alan Fisher was born in New York, New York in 1913. He started his photography career working for New York World Telegram. Mr. Fisher began his government career in 1942 as a photographer for Inter-American Affairs. He served in the USIS from its beginning and has worked in Paris, Brazil, and Vietnam. Mr. Fisher was interviewed on July 27, 1989 by G. Lewis Schmidt.*

FISHER: It was an assignment of a lifetime. Al Murphy said, "Just take anything that looks good to you." Those were my instructions for Latin America. I spent two years instead of two months in Latin America on a contract for Nelson Rockefeller, and I photographed Brazil, basically the war effort, industry, prominent people, politicians, and so forth.

I went over to Chile after a year and a half; I was sent to Chile to cover the break in relations with the Axis, and after three months there, I was fortunate in getting there in time to cover the break. Florence came with me as my interpreter. She spoke Spanish; I didn't. Then she went back to Brazil, and Vice President Wallace came down to visit Latin America. I was assigned by Washington to cover him for the combined American press. I spent a month with him, then went back to Chile for a month, and then back to Brazil.

By that time, I had been reclassified to be 1A, and I got a call from Washington. I said, "I will be right back."

Q: *1A meaning in the draft.*

FISHER: Yes. I had been 2B -- essential war worker. The day I got back to the States, they decided that men over 29 were not wanted anymore, particularly married men, and I was automatically reclassified to 2B again.

I was given a choice then of going back to Brazil or going over as a war correspondent with the Brazilian Expeditionary Force.

Q: *At this point, let me ask a couple of questions to clarify exactly what you were doing with the Nelson Rockefeller program, the IIA program. Were you doing entirely photographic work in connection with things Brazilian, or were you trying to get out any information about the United States and its relationship with Brazil?*

FISHER: My job was strictly a one-way job. I was photographing and writing stories to send back to the United States to acquaint the Americans with Latin America. At that time, the war wasn't going too well, and our fallback position was Latin America. We were doing a lot of things in Latin America to help the Latin Americans, such as helping them build a steel plant out of Rio, bringing in equipment for them to manufacture airplane motors, heavy equipment, tractors, and so forth, raising the level of food production, and trying to raise the health

standards. We were doing this all throughout Latin America, and one of the things I was to do was to photograph this effort, write stories and send them back. The Agency would then distribute them through the wire services, so they were getting a great play. But this really was a fallback position for us. In the event that we did get driven out of the States, we would fall back to Latin America. So there was some strategic importance to what I was doing, but it was all the other way. In other words, I wasn't disseminating any information about the United States in Latin America.

I was also covering stories for the two slick magazines that the coordinating office put out in Latin America, EM/GUARDA, which was for Brazil in Portuguese, and EM/GUARDA, which was in Spanish for the rest of Latin America. That was really much like the forerunner of Life magazine -- the same format, big slick color, a very, very good-looking publication, and a very popular magazine in Latin America. So that carried stories of the American war efforts and battles and American military activity.

*Q: Did you write any of those stories?*

FISHER: No. No, my pictures were used for that. They were in-house stories out of Washington, but there many of my pictures used for that. It was 1945. Then I was still a CAF-12. We were not Foreign Service. At this time I was still a photographer listed as an assistant attaché in the Embassy. I worked in the press section rewriting stuff and so forth.

Then in 1947, the Foreign Service Act took us all in under the Foreign Service umbrella, and I became motion picture officer at the Embassy. That was to distribute USIS films. That was an interesting situation, because before that, we became the United States Information Service. Regardless of what we were called in Washington, we were USIS abroad.

*Q: Always that way, throughout the world.*

FISHER: Always that way. We were then taken into the State Department, which really was a very restrictive time for us, because we did an awful lot of things. If you recall, in order for a State Department or Foreign Service officer to get ahead, he could get ahead if he never made any decisions, because he might make a wrong one. Whereas USIS people stuck their necks out all the time. There were never any administrative procedures for us to operate. I remember we were operating mobile units in Brazil and there was no way that I could get an advance for a local employee to send him on a trip. I personally had to advance him the money. When he came back, he turned in his voucher, he would collect it, and he would give the money back to me.

*Q: In sending out the mobile units, to which locations did you send them, and exactly what were they showing? Just showing pictures, or were you carrying on a general informational program at whatever points you were operating?*

FISHER: We had different objectives depending upon where you were in Brazil. In the first place, we had mobile units wherever we had roads on which to operate. This was back in the late forties, and the roads in Brazil -- e.g. the road from Rio to Sao Paulo -- frequently got washed out. It was a dirt road. I once had two mobile units up on that road that were stuck for about three

weeks. They couldn't move, along with trucks that couldn't get through and so forth.

We were doing a lot of health work in Brazil at that time, working with local authorities to try to raise the health standards. We had a series of Walt Disney cartoons on health, which were made specifically for the coordinator's office, and they were extremely helpful because they were simple. I recall one on building an outdoor privy. We showed it along a railroad right away and up in an area in Minas Gerais, which is a neighboring state to Rio. We showed this film and then lent the films to the various health organizations up there. It was very interesting that several years later, people would come back and report that they had seen these little Disney latrines all over the place.

*Q: Selling America to Latin America.*

FISHER: That is right. But we did things. For example, remember there was no television in those days, so we were the big entertainment feature in the interior. We had mobile units that had generators, had light stringers and public address systems, and we would send them off into the interior on a tour. They would pull into a town where there was no electricity -- there wasn't much in the rural areas in those days.

The first call would be on the mayor to say that we just going to show films in his town and hoped he would be present. He said he would -- always. We would put up light stringers in the public square -- there was always a public square. Then we would go around town with a public address system on a truck and say, "As soon as it gets dark, we are going to have movies in the public square." Just about everybody in the town would show up. We would start the generators and light up the public square, and the people would see their square lit at night for the first time in their lives. Then they would show films. A lot of these were health films, some were newsreels. We were getting 16-millimeter copies of the MGM newsreels from the States. Some were just other instructional films, or maybe a travelogue on the States -- a tour by Greyhound bus. We had many films, and they were all in the Portuguese language so that the people understood what they were seeing.

Reactions were varied. I have photographed a number of these, did some special reports on them, and have pictures of people on horseback, watching the movies. I had a report of someone who got so excited when he saw a newsreel of Hitler, he pulled out a pistol and shot at the screen. Wonderful things like that happened!

But the interesting thing is that in these towns, if they had a movie theater, it was operated with a portable generator, and always 16-millimeter. One of the things that the operators were always instructed to do was to make sure that they were not giving any competition to the local operator. They would check with the movie theater owner who, in most cases, would say, "I have this film. I am showing it for a week. I don't get anybody anyway. I will shut down my theater tonight and you can have the entire audience." And they would do that, so that we would get full cooperation from the town. They just loved us to come and show films. Again, I say, no television. That was the only entertainment they had.

Then when television started in Brazil, our films were very popular on television. It was only

then that they began to worry about television rights for them. I remember we had a television station start in Rio, and I discussed with the general manager the use of our films. He said, "We need material. We don't have any material. Can we use your stuff?"

I said, "Well, I don't have rights for you to show on television, but I don't have a television set. So if you borrow them and show them on television, I don't know whether you used them or not, because I can't see them. If someone complains, I will have to bring the films back." That was the arrangement we worked by. But we felt, "Wow, we got in on the ground floor with television." But we learned that as soon as that space that we were using our films for became salable, we were out. And that is the history of television with our films. If that space is salable, either we buy it to show or somebody buys it to sponsor our film, but it doesn't get on for nothing.

One interesting story was that I had ordered an American jeep for use in the interior, and it came without a top. Shortly afterwards, I had the visit of two men from the motion picture service in Washington, Harry Keith and Doug Baker.

*Q: I know both, too.*

FISHER: Doug is now a dependent husband. They came down to visit me, and they had visions of sitting around on the beach in Copacabana. I said, "No, I am going to set up a trip for them in that jeep that the motion picture service sent me without a top." So they arrived and I gave them a day of rest, and then I took them off into the interior in that jeep, with no top, and it started to rain. They complained. I said, "Boys, you didn't send me a top." Well, they came down and I had them out there for four or five days. Harry Keith came down with a terrible cold. Doug weathered it well. Finally, when I put them on the plane to go back, they said, "Alan, you can bet nobody is ever going to come down to check your operation again." Motion picture work was very interesting.

*Q: At that point, you were not producing any films yourself, were you?*

FISHER: Not at that point, but shortly thereafter, when Frank McArdle was information officer at the Embassy -- a wonderful guy. Frank had a long history of McCann Erickson; I knew Frank from the early days of the coordinator's office, when Dick Hipplehouser was the head of the office. Connie Eagan was there and Jack Wiggin or Johnny Wiggin, and Frank McArdle, Francis J. McArdle were both our radiomen. After he was info officer there, he then went to PAO Sao Paulo, then went as PAO Lisbon, where we visited them later on. We were very good friends.

*Q: Hadn't he been previously with one of the major ad agencies?*

FISHER: McCann Erickson, yes, in Africa. I don't remember where it was. South Africa. Frank suggested to me -- "Mac" we called him -- "Why don't you get into some local production here? I think we can get some money for it."

When I was a photographer in Rio, I knew all the local photographers and the newsreel men, and there was one newsreel outfit that was good. They put out the best newsreel in Brazil, and their

chief photographer was a good friend of mine. So I got together with him and I said, "How about doing a few documentaries?"

He said, "Fine." And we did, for example, the SS Trigger. The submarine Trigger came on a goodwill trip to Brazil, and we did a documentary on that. I took Herbert aboard the submarine, and we made a dive, so that Herbert could show that the gauge is registering depth and so forth.

Q: *Was that his surname or was that his first name?*

FISHER: Herbert Richers.

Q: *Oh, yes. He was the one with whom Turner Shelton later was dealing for some major film activities in Brazil.*

FISHER: Through me, yes.

Q: *Through you.*

FISHER: Yes. We had a great program going, but one particular time when we went down in the submarine, we had made arrangements with a Brazilian Navy tug to meet us 30 miles out after we had surfaced, because the Trigger was on her way back to the States. The Brazilian Navy tug was going to meet us at a pre-arranged spot 30 miles out, take us off, and bring us back. We surfaced, and there was no tug. We waited for a while. No tug. We saw a Brazilian fishing boat, so we headed towards it, and the guy started to zigzag. He thought we were chasing him. He zigzagged all over the place, and finally we stopped him. We said, "What are you afraid of?"

He said, "I thought you were going to attack me." I learned that the way to avoid it is to zigzag. We finally made a deal with him for \$75 to take us back, so we transferred to that little fishing boat, off went the sub, and we went back. Halfway back, we met the tug coming out for us, but we were already halfway back. We stayed on the boat.

Q: *Had you already made the dive by that time?*

FISHER: Yes, we finished the dive. We finished the film.

Another time when we were doing a film, I took Herbert up to the Amazon to do a film on the health program up there. We were out on the Amazon, going upriver to visit some of the little hospitals that our joint health service had built with the Brazilians.

Q: *Was this an AID project?*

FISHER: No, it was SPHS, Special Public Health Service. It was funded jointly by U.S. and Brazil, and it was a very good program. It operated in many hospitals in communities along the Amazon River, plus other areas in Brazil. They were worked on malaria on occasion, which the Rockefeller Foundation had done a lot of before. They were attending to the needs of the sick, mostly malaria, and dispensing a lot of Atabrine and so forth. We were up on the Amazon, and

Herbert thought he might use the gangplank as a water ski. He dropped the gangplank over and rode it, got his hand tangled up in the rope and dislocated his wrist. We kept quiet about it. We finally managed to get it fixed up at the next hospital we stopped at. But we tried to hide the fact that it happened, but the captain told, and we were admonished for our frivolousness. At any rate, we did a pretty good film on that.

Then later, a year or so later, we got into another operation which was a classified operation, and I don't know whether we get into that here or not, but it was a good one. Herbert Richers then became a big-time motion picture producer.

*Q: Alan, you mentioned a confidential project that you wondered whether we should put on tape or not for various reasons. I think I would like to record it at this point. It was apparently done confidentially at the request of the Brazilians and not the U.S. Government, and it may be that even now it shouldn't be released. So, I would like you to put the story on tape, and then I will check it out. If it still is considered advisable to delete it, we will delete it from the final draft.*

FISHER: This was a newsreel operation which Herbert Richers, the cameraman, and I started. Again, it was at Frank McArdle's encouragement that I was doing this, and I proposed to Herbert that he start a newsreel of his own, a good part of which we would finance. The rest of the financing would have come through theater rentals, or if he wanted to sell parts of it the way the regular newsreel operated, it would be okay with us.

So Herbert started a newsreel which was basically a good newsreel with a lot less materia paga, which the Brazilians call "paid material" in it, which the newsreels in those days were loaded with. If you wanted a story in a newsreel, you could get anything in a newsreel, provided you paid for it. We were to have at least one story a week in the newsreel which was a pro-American story. It might be a project we were working on in Brazil, or it might be something we wanted to bring in on international news. Whatever it was, Herbert ran it. Then he was always to look for other stories for the reel which would reflect well upon the Americans or support some basic American policy. Herbert and I would meet every week for lunch. We would go over the makeup of the newsreel, determine what was being done; I would approve the script, and it would go out to theaters. He released in every major city in Brazil. Unlike many Brazilians reels which played (I've seen newsreels in Brazil in the interior five years old), his, within something like three weeks, were out of circulation. So that his reel was always a fresh reel, and people really liked it. They looked forward to it. This, again, was before television, so the reel was like our newsreels in the States. I brought equipment in for him, I brought in sound effects, and even sent him up to the States once for some special training. But it was a very successful project and it continued up until the time I left. Shortly thereafter, I believe the Ambassador objected to this classified operation and it was stopped. I don't really know.

*Q: It went on even after you left.*

FISHER: Yes.

*Q: By that time, Turner Shelton was claiming responsibility and credit for it, and he was making a couple of trips to Latin America to talk with Herbert Richers, broadcasting his particular role*

*in the operation.*

FISHER: Yes. On that particular project, I had marvelous support from Washington, I must say. Turner was very supportive and Ada Pimpleton. Do you remember Ada?

Q: *Yes, I remember Ada.*

FISHER: Ada was head of the foreign production operation then and was good. Ada gave me all the support I needed. It was a pleasure to operate under such conditions.

**JOHN HOWARD BURNS**  
**Vice Consul**  
**Belem (1943-1944)**

**Staff Assistant to the Ambassador**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1944-1947)**

*Ambassador John H. Burns was born and raised in Pauls Valley, Oklahoma. He attended the University of Oklahoma and entered the Foreign Service in 1942. His career included positions in Mexico, France, Brazil, ambassadorships to the Central African Republic and Tanzania, and Director General of the Foreign Service. Ambassador Burns was interviewed on May 1, 1995 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

Q: *You were there until about 1943, was it? And then you went to Brazil. Where did you go in Brazil?*

BURNS: Belem, at the mouth of the Amazon River.

Q: *You were there for about a year and a half. What were you doing there?*

BURNS: With the capture of Indonesia by the Japanese, there had been an almost complete termination of supplies of natural rubber to the allied powers. Great strides had been made in the development of synthetic rubber but there were still a number of important needs (one of them was airplane tires) for which synthetic rubber could not then be used. In an endeavor to increase the production of natural rubber in the Amazon Valley, the U.S. created the Rubber Development Corporation (RDC) which, at its height, must have had one thousand or more American employees in Brazil, most of them in Belem and Manaus.

There was also a large U.S. air base at Belem, a "Naval Observer" and a squadron of navy PBVs.

All of this made Belem a very busy place during the war years and there was a lot of every variety of consular work.

*Q: Were the planes still flying down to Brazil and then across?*

BURNS: Yes, there was a great deal of official and military travel through Belem. The Pan American flying boats, called "Clippers", made regular stops on their flights between the U.S., North Africa and Portugal.

*Q: How about protection and welfare? Was that a problem?*

BURNS: Not really. Both the military and the RDC took care of their own personnel. The latter even had its own airline. Belem was a busy port and we had the normal amount of merchant shipping problems.

*Q: You then moved to Rio, where you served about three years. One of the great men of the Foreign Service was Ambassador there, wasn't he, Jefferson Caffery?*

BURNS: Ambassador Caffery left for Paris the same day that I arrived in Rio from Belem. During the years that I was there the Ambassadors were Adolf Berle and William D. Pawley.

*Q: These were two political appointees of some caliber. How did you find them?*

BURNS: I had been assigned to Rio as staff aide to Walter Donnelly, the Economic Counselor of Embassy, but he was himself transferred very shortly thereafter; before the arrival of Ambassador Berle, as a matter of fact. The latter asked me to serve as his staff aide and I had the same title, but quite a different job description, under Ambassador Pawley. I had a most congenial, and interesting, working relationship with both of them. They remained friends of mine as long as they lived.

*Q: Could we talk just a little about Berle? What was his background?*

BURNS: Well he had graduated from Harvard at age 16 for one thing and later from Harvard Law School, presumably before he was twenty although I am not certain about that. He was a prominent New York lawyer and came to Washington with President Franklin Roosevelt as one of the latter's so-called "brain trusters", serving for a number of years as Assistant Secretary of State. Those were the days when the title Assistant Secretary of State really meant something. I have never encountered a mind like Mr. Berle's. It was awesome, to use a term recently overworked by adolescents, as was his flow of language. He could dictate a speech of considerable length and, after it was typed, never change a word. Fortunately he had a secretary, Louella Livengood, who could take dictation as fast as he could talk.

*Q: From your position, how did he deal with the Brazilian government?*

BURNS: To begin with Brazil felt complimented that such a prominent man, and one so close to President Roosevelt, would be sent there as Ambassador, as they were by the earnest, and surprisingly successful efforts both the Ambassador and Mrs. Berle made to learn to speak Portuguese. Here I might parenthetically note that both of them were impatient with Foreign Service officers, and their wives, who made little or no effort to learn Portuguese. Their

Portuguese teacher lunched with them every day and conversation was exclusively in that language. Other guests who could not speak Portuguese simply did not participate.

For a number of years Brazil had been under the dictatorial rule of Getulio Vargas. He had cooperated closely with the United States during the war, permitting the establishment of U.S. air bases in northern Brazil and even sending a division of Brazilian troops to participate in the Italian campaign. At the conclusion of the war, Vargas, probably with a certain amount of U.S. encouragement, announced elections for a certain date. But as that date approached there was increasing evidence that he was preparing to cancel, or at least postpone, them. Ambassador Berle found occasion to make a speech, to an important group, in which he referred to the coming elections as having been guaranteed by "a man whose word the United States has always found to be good". Rio newspapers the following morning banner headlined: "Sensacional Discurso do Embaixador Berle"; it rocked Brazil. It was not, of course, solely responsible but certainly played an influential role in Vargas' departure from the presidency soon thereafter. Mr. Berle also resigned not long afterward. He had never envisaged a lengthy tenure as Ambassador, in Brazil or anywhere else.

*Q: I am sure Berle knew exactly what he was doing.*

BURNS: I am sure that there was never in Mr. Berle's life an occasion when he did not know exactly what he was doing, which does not mean that everyone else agreed with him. I was never sure how far up the line he had informed Washington of what he intended to say; he would never have gone through any sort of "clearance" procedure. It all seemed crucially important at the time and it is curious how details have faded from my memory, when I have such a clear recollection of small things, such as some of the ones I mentioned about Juarez, and Bill Blocker.

Between the departure of Ambassador Berle and the arrival of Ambassador William D. Pawley, I was moved to be in charge of the Consular Division of the Embassy, work which I enjoyed very much. Although, for some reason, it has not enjoyed what might be termed the "cachet" of the political arena, it has always seemed to me to be probably the most worthwhile work of the Foreign Service.

*Q: Fun too.*

BURNS: Yes, that too. You do things that really matter to other individuals and I was very content running the Consular Section, which was in another building near the Chancery. Nevertheless, shortly after Ambassador Pawley's arrival he called me to his office and said that he wanted me to return and do the same work that I had done for Ambassador Berle. In doing so he compared himself rather unfavorably with Ambassador Berle and "his brilliant mind" in a manner which I interpreted as somewhat slighting to the latter. I said, "One thing you should know; I am a great admirer of Ambassador Berle" to which he replied that he would always respect that and that I would never hear from him any reference to Ambassador Berle to which I could take exception. And I never did. But the two held very different views toward Latin America and the U.S. role in those countries.

*Q: Could you talk about how a staff assistant is used by two different ambassadors?*

BURNS: Well, for Ambassador Berle I was just a staff aide, making appointments, keeping his calendar, doing personal errands, that sort of thing. Being unmarried I got around Rio quite a lot and he used to say he liked to use me as a "sounding board". He always encouraged everyone to say just what they thought and he enjoyed discussions of almost any subject, with almost anybody. Being around Adolf Berle was a constant mental stimulation.

My work for Ambassador Pawley was entirely different. I was a personal assistant rather than a staff aide and wrote almost everything he signed. I also had a much grander office, not the small one immediately adjoining his that I had occupied during Ambassador Berle's tenure. Every morning I would be at Ambassador Pawley's desk as he went through his mail -- most of which I would previously have opened -- and he would hand me papers, saying, "Tell this person this, or that", but mostly just, "Answer this." No one did that sort of thing for Adolf Berle. But don't infer that I did not develop great personal fondness for Ambassador Pawley. I liked him immensely.

*Q: Could you talk a little about his background?*

BURNS: It was quite a glamorous one. He had made a great deal of money building airplanes, at a factory he owned in Bangalore, India and he had, in fact, been one of the organizers of The Flying Tigers, along with General Chennault and others. He brought along to Rio several personal limousines and his own airplane and crew. He ran a very grand Embassy and he entertained lavishly. While he made no effort to learn Portuguese, he spoke Spanish fairly fluently and, as you know, Portuguese speakers can understand Spanish although that does not seem to work the other way around. He was popular with the government and with everyone else, a very likeable individual; and exceedingly generous.

He greatly enjoyed entertaining prominent visitors and we had a heady run of them: General Eisenhower, General Mark Clark, under whose command the Brazilian division had served in Italy, Henry Luce, the publisher of Time-Life and a personal friend of Ambassador Pawley and any number of others, finally culminating in the Rio conference for the Inter-American defense agreement, which brought the battleship Missouri, President and Mrs. Truman and daughter Margaret, Secretary of State Marshall, Senators Connally and Vandenberg and any number of others of the "top brass" of Washington to Rio. Also along, naturally, were a regiment of the "media", among whom was the well-known radio news commentator, Eric Sevareid. Actually the Rio conference produced little in the way of news and Sevareid, who had been in and out of the office a good deal, called down one day from Petropolis, the small town in the hills above Rio where the conference was being held, saying, "There is not a thing going on up here, how about my coming down and staying with you at your house on Ipanema Beach?", which he did. He had been, of course, the CBS correspondent in Paris before we entered the war and the long talks I had with him about his experiences were the most memorable part of the Rio conference for me.

*Q: What was the political situation in Brazil during this period? Vargas was more or less toppled?*

BURNS: Yes, at least he left office. Forty years later, I cannot recall the details of the circumstances under which he left might be an indication of the lasting importance of events which, at the time, are regarded as vitally important. It seems too that General Dutra, Chief of Staff of the Brazilian Army, became acting head of government. At any rate, elections were held in which General Dutra was the successful candidate.

*Q: How did Pawley relate to military government?*

BURNS: He got along just fine.

*Q: He had no particular ideological...*

BURNS: His ideological bent was strongly conservative, even though he was appointed by President Truman. He subsequently became quite close to Eisenhower and was a great supporter of the Eisenhower administration.

*Q: How did we look upon events in Argentina, with Peron?*

BURNS: There was a fundamental debate in the U.S. on the question of the extent to which we should work with whatever government might come to power in other countries, especially those in this hemisphere, or try to influence, by whatever means, the formation -- or removal -- of those governments. It was not a new debate. It had been -- I might say has been -- with us ever since the Spanish-American war. Ambassador Pawley advocated non-interference, as did Ambassador Messersmith in Argentina, and, thus, finding a working relationship with Peron. Ambassador Berle, of course, had been of the opposite persuasion.

*Q: Do you think this was just fortuitous or was the feeling that these changed ambassadors were there for a reason?*

BURNS: I don't really know what was going on in Washington. President Roosevelt, although he had announced the so-called Good Neighbor policy, was not really interested in Latin America, nor, really, was President Truman. It has always been regarded by Washington as a sort of side show, and Latin Americans know it. Truman had made the changes in Ambassadors, sending Pawley to Brazil and Messersmith to Argentina. Messersmith's predecessor, Spruille Braden, had been outspokenly anti-Peron.

*Q: I heard there were mobs in Argentina shouting "Braden No, Peron Si".*

BURNS: I have no doubt that that was true. Incidentally, during the Rio conference, when all the brass were assembled, Eva Peron stopped by on her return from her much-publicized trip to Europe, went to the conference and sashayed around a bit. Certainly she attracted a lot of attention but nothing more.

*Q: Were you there the whole time Pawley was there?*

BURNS: We left about the same time. He was away a lot and I believe went back for his formal

farewell after I had left for the U.S.

*Q: What was your impression of the Embassy in Rio, the staff and all?*

BURNS: From the day of my arrival I was conscious, and increasingly admiring, of the role played at the Embassy by a group of women, all U.S. citizens, who were permanent residents of Rio -- some of them holding dual nationality by virtue of having been born there. They were all happily married, with families, and to call them, as a group, the cornerstone of the Embassy would be to understate their importance. They were all completely bilingual in Portuguese, widely acquainted throughout the Brazilian government and knew exactly whom to call on for whatever purpose. Five of them stand out in my memory: Lucy Faber, who had been secretary to Ambassador Caffery and who became secretary to the Deputy Chief of Mission when Ambassador Berle brought his own stenographer with him; Anne Martin, who took over the non-stenographic work for Berle (of which there was a great deal as he was an "activist" Ambassador); Susan Barbosa, who essentially "ran" the consular section even not nominally in charge (as I was for a few months); Edith Cole, secretary to the Economic Counselor and Roxie LeCoufle, secretary to the administrative officer. The importance of the role that these women played became increasingly evident, to the Embassy if not to the Department, as they were "encouraged out" by new personnel policies which reduced their salaries and allowances. They were replaced by nice American girls, sent from the U.S., who could take dictation and type but who were otherwise helpless in Rio. They neither spoke a word of Portuguese nor tried to learn and they had to rely upon the above-mentioned five, and the local staff, for assistance in all aspects of their personal life: housing, shopping etc. The same had been true at Juarez, where the bilingual assistance of the resident American staff had been the most important single element in the effective operation of the office. It was an opinion which I expressed at the time -- as forcefully, that is, as an officer of my low rank could -- and it is one that I never changed.

To restate it here is one of the reasons that I welcomed this interview. Obviously there are many areas of the world where resident Americans are not available for clerical employment, but there are many -- notably Latin America and Europe, and increasingly, I suspect, in the Orient -- where there are, and not to find ways to integrate them into the staffing patterns has been, and is, to deprive the Foreign Service of what could be a uniquely valuable asset. However, to voice such an opinion is, I recognize, to be shouting into the bureaucratic wind.

*Q: It is supposedly in the name of security, but that is silly. I have had both local employees and Americans as my secretaries and there is no doubt in my mind that you are three or four times better off if you have somebody who is either native to the place, who had been doing it for a while, or who is a dual national. They know the territory, they understand the sensitivities, and all that, which the Americans don't; and they are a lot of trouble to maintain.*

BURNS: Paranoid attitudes toward security have been responsible for a number of mistaken personnel policies.

**ALDENE ALICE BARRINGTON**

**Assistant Trade Commissioner  
Rio de Janeiro (1943-1948)**

*Aldene Alice Barrington was born in 1902 in Grand Forks, North Dakota. She received a teaching certificate from the University of North Dakota. Her Foreign Service career included positions with the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of State in Colombia, Brazil, and Argentina. Ms. Barrington was interviewed on January 3, 1995 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

Q: *And then you went back to Brazil.*

BARRINGTON: Then I went back.

Q: *I have you there from 1943 until 1948.*

BARRINGTON: I think that's right. That's right. You have got those dates better than I have.

Q: *It seems like an awful lot of our effort in Latin America was keeping up what amounted to the blacklist, keeping Italians and Germans from getting supplies or anything else through the neutral countries of Latin America. Was this a major part of your work when you went back to Brazil? You went back in 1943, so we were in the middle of the war at that point.*

BARRINGTON: Well, we were pushing our available supplies, important to Brazil, in every way we could because it was vital to them at that time. Brazil was sympathetic to our war effort and, as you know, later declared war on Germany and also sent troops to aid in the conquest of Italy.

Q: *Were we also working to identify and blacklist firms dealing with Germans and Italians?*

BARRINGTON: When you say blacklist, there is not much now in my memory about it. However, I feel sure our efforts included the curtailment of activities of black-listed companies which exported to Germany and Italy.

Q: *Well, this may have been more on the political side, not on the commercial side.*

BARRINGTON: Yes, it would have been. Our Military and Naval Attachés were very active during this period. You will recall that northeast Brazil provided the takeoff for our planes in the North African invasion and conquest.

Q: *During this 1943 to 1948 period, was there any particular changes in what you were doing?*

BARRINGTON: I was mostly doing the same thing. The same thing. Doing more of it. We tried to supply Brazil with needed import requirements and help increase the local production of essential products.

**RANDOLPH A. KIDDER**  
**Consul**  
**Belem (1944-1946)**

**Political Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1946-1949)**

**Officer in Charge of Brazilian Affairs**  
**Washington, DC (1949-1952)**

*Randolph A. Kidder entered the Foreign Service in 1938, three years after graduating from Harvard University. Mr. Kidder's career included posts in Canada, Australia, Vietnam, and an ambassadorship to Cambodia. Ambassador Kidder was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1989.*

*Q: Then you were involved very much in Brazilian affairs from 1944-1952? First in Belem 44-46, and then in Rio from 1946 to 1949, and then you were officer in charge of Brazilian affairs from 1949-1952. How did you get to Belem in the middle of the war?*

KIDDER: I went into see whoever was Chief of Personnel in the Department of State. I can't remember now who it was, when we came back from Australia. He didn't say anything much, we just chatted, and then he looked at the world map behind him and said, "you know, I think they need somebody in Belem." It was just as informal as that, and that is where I went. It was the first job I had as Consul, before that I was Vice-Consul, and the first time I was in charge of an office. In those days we had a big important air base in Belem, as we did all down the Brazilian coast. There were two vice-consuls and a representative of the FBI in Belem.

*Q: That's right, the FBI had responsibility for what we would call CIA activities now, but for Latin American the FBI...*

KIDDER: ...that is correct. We had a very congenial fellow, there and myself and the two vice consuls...we had no Americans on the clerical staff so we did our own encoding.

*Q: What were your prime concerns in Belem?*

KIDDER: The reason I was sent there and the reason the office was there was to manage relations between the base and the city. The first two officers in charge at the military base were old timers, and there were no problems. There were a few problems when the third one came down. He hadn't had that type of experience, but there was never anything very serious. Our relations with them were excellent. There were other American organizations there at the time: the AID mission; and that played a very important role and so did the USIA mission.

*Q: What was the attitude of the Brazilians? They were in and by the time you were there they already had a division in Italy, but it was really the only Latin American country to make a significant contribution to the war effort. Why Brazil? --rather than Mexico or some other place.*

KIDDER: I guess that was a Brazilian decision of course, and it is a major country and they wanted to play a role in the world. They were ambitious, and of course it had many connections with Portugal and Spain and Italy. A great many connections with Italy. They just felt they had a role to play.

*Q: When you went down to Rio, that is, where our embassy was; what type of work were you doing? You were there in 1946-49, the war was over...*

KIDDER: ...primarily political reporting. There was one thing I never had and always subsequently deeply regretted --I never had any real economic work, and I think I paid for it in the long run.

*Q: I know this has always been a problem; we tend to turn this over to a specialist rather quickly, and it means that one can almost avoid doing this and we suffer. But what was the immediate post-war situation in Brazil?*

KIDDER: It was very, very friendly; there was a lot of American thinking about what businesses could be established, either unilaterally or bilaterally. Jack Tuthill was economic counselor, and I was political counselor; He was a very able officer.

*Q: He later became Ambassador, we interviewed him too.*

KIDDER: He did a great deal, he and Jack Reinstein who followed him, working with the Brazilians on economic and business affairs. I didn't touch it really.

*Q: On the political side, what was the situation in Brazil at that time?*

KIDDER: Well, the Brazilians were extremely friendly in the first place. My wife and I had the advantage of coming to Rio already speaking Portuguese. My wife is a very gifted linguist, I am not, but we did have a good command of Portuguese when we came to Rio, which helped a great deal. It was a pretty good idea, having one serve in a consulate before they got o the embassy.

*Q: I think it makes excellent sense.*

KIDDER: I worked with the foreign office and had very good relations with all of them. It was a little rough. We worked US office hours, 9-5, but the Brazilians didn't stop till 7 or 8. It made office hours very long, but we enjoyed it thoroughly.

*Q: What type of government was in Brazil at that time*

KIDDER: Vargas was there part of the time, and it was never a political democracy in any sense, in any of the time I were there.

*Q: Did we have any particular problems or issues that you would get involved with?*

KIDDER: I don't recall any issues at all in those days.

*Q: How did they view developments in Europe, were they particularly interested?*

KIDDER: Oh they were very interested, in those days Brazil was more focused on Europe than on the United States, very definitely...that is where their interests lay...most didn't speak English, but they were starting to learn it then. They mostly spoke French as a second language.

*Q: You had several ambassadors, non-career men, the first one was Adolf Berle. How was he as an ambassador?*

KIDDER: I didn't serve with him basically, except for a very short time, because I was in Belem. I had very little to do with the Embassy. I did make a trip with him and his wife, who was a remarkable woman, on the Air Force attaché's plane, as I recall, a trip up through the Amazon, so I saw a good deal of him, and I found him to be an extremely congenial, intelligent man.

*Q: There was a feeling then that he was in command of the situation and was not there as a social appointee?*

KIDDER: No, nothing like that.

*Q: How about William D. Pauley, who was there '46-'48?*

KIDDER: He was quite a different story. We all had quite a rough first year with him till we all got to know each other. Then I became extremely fond of him and his wife. I think he learned an awful lot, learned to be a good ambassador.

*Q: What was the problem, wasn't he taking the time to learn?*

KIDDER: Oh yes, I think he was, he didn't learn the language, I think he spoke some Spanish, but he had had a lot of experience in the aviation business. He established routes for Pan American, so he knew a good deal about business, but he didn't know much about being an ambassador. It took him time. But he got along well with the Brazilians, as I say we on the staff grew very fond of him and his wife.

*Q: Then you had Herschel V. Johnson, from '48-'53. Was he there while you were there?*

KIDDER: Yes he was there, he was a very congenial fellow; he was not an "up" type, but he had had a lot of good experience. We got along well.

*Q: I gather William D. Crowley was a rather ...maybe this is the wrong term: flamboyant character.*

KIDDER: that is the wrong term...

*Q: Rather a hard charging?...*

KIDDER: He was, he did his business, and went hard at it, but he was very congenial, I think we were all very fond of him by the time he left.

*Q: How did you deal with the foreign ministry? Could you talk to middle level, upper level there, and were they able to make decisions or did everything have to be referred up to the top?*

KIDDER: No, we had good relations with the foreign office, at all levels. I became quite frustrated, I was a political counselor at this time, and the political section underneath me was divided into three sections, one handled European affairs, a second handled South American Affairs, and a third had Asia and all the rest. They were all three of them very able officers. I began to feel frustrated because I found that Cecil Lyon, who was the long-time minister, had his relationship up and the section chiefs had their relationship, too, below. I became quite frustrated because I wasn't quite sure where I was.

*Q: This is often the trouble for someone at a supervisory level, because you don't want to cut your subordinates...*

KIDDER: That's right, they had clear responsibility for certain sections. Actually, at that time there were nine officers in political affairs.

*Q: Later, you were going to be at the other end, but did you have any feel for what type of supervision you were getting or instructions, from Washington?*

KIDDER: I don't have any clear recollections at all. I don't believe there were ever any major problems.

*Q: ...probably it was significant that there were not people in Washington trying to fine tune what you were doing there.*

KIDDER: No, we were lucky to have Cecil Lyon there as the number two, because he had had a lot of experience in many places.

*Q: I might add we have interviewed Cecil Lyon and Jack Tuthill. But you didn't have any trouble contacting or getting in touch with the Brazilian government, or Foreign Ministry at all?*

KIDDER: No, we had no problems at all that I recall. We got along very well with them. I saw them quite often.

*Q: Were we keeping them informed of the rather dramatic changes in Europe and in our relations with our ally the Soviet Union, and all that...How did they react to this?*

KIDDER: As I recall, they had very good channels of their own, all over Europe. Their people were very experienced.

*Q: They had a professional foreign service, unlike some of the Latin American countries which used it as a form of exile or reward?*

KIDDER: It was a well built and well organized professional foreign service they had. The people you met with...most of them spoke French as their second language, and some spoke English. By that time I spoke Portuguese anyway...

*Q: Did you have any concern about the left in Brazil? Was this something that we were considering at that time?*

KIDDER: We followed it very carefully, but we had no real concern because it wasn't about to get in a position of power.

*Q: Then you came back to the Department in 1949, where you served from '49 to '52 in charge of Brazilian affairs. What was the situation? This would have been the second half of the Eisenhower years. What was the interest in Latin America at the top that you gathered at the time?*

KIDDER: I think it was quite high. Eddie Miller had been in charge of Latin American Affairs in the Department for quite a long time and had broad experience in Central and South America. He spoke both Brazilian and Spanish. We worked very well with him and we had regular staff meetings, both small ones and big ones. It all went very smoothly and we had access to all levels we needed. Relations with Brazil were good all this time.

*Q: So you didn't have any of the frustration of feeling the area didn't count, no sense of "Look at us down here"..which has happened from time to time.*

KIDDER: Sure, but I never had that feeling.

**WILLIAM BELTON**  
**Consular Officer**  
**Porto Alegre (1946-1948)**

*William Belton was born on May 22, 1914 in Portland, Oregon. He received a bachelor's degree in political science from Stanford University. Mr. Belton entered the Foreign Service in 1938 and served in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Canada, Brazil, Chile, and Australia. He was interviewed on November 19, 1992 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

*Q: Where is Porto Alegre located?*

BELTON: Porto Alegre is the capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul; it is the southernmost principal city of Brazil.

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

BELTON: This was between the regimes of Getúlio Vargas, who had been sort of the dictator of Brazil. The president at the time we were there was Dutra.

Q: *You were there from 1946 to 1948?*

BELTON: Yes.

Q: *What was the consulate doing? How did you deal with the Brazilian authorities and what were your major concerns?*

BELTON: Our major concerns were representation of American interests, in the sense of watching out for any Americans who got into trouble, promotion of American business interests, political reporting on the local situation -- primarily to the Embassy -- and from my personal point of view, a very active series of reports on the agricultural situation. It kept me busy full time.

Q: *How did you find the Brazilian authorities at your level?*

BELTON: Cordial and easy to deal with. They had just participated with us in winning the war; it was an advantageous situation at that time.

Q: *They were very proud of the Brazilian troops that had been in the Italian campaign.*

BELTON: The Brazilian troops had done a very good job in Italy in particular. Rio Grande do Sul is heavily populated by people of German and Italian origin; so there had been a strong Nazi movement and sympathy there for the Axis powers. It took Brazil quite a while to get into the war, but when they did, they took active measures against these people, even to the extent of prohibiting the use of the German language -- I guess Italian too, but I particularly remember German, in everyday usage. There were lots and lots of people in those days who, because they lived in closed communities, didn't speak any other language than German. They were automatically violating the law by just saying "*Guten Morgen*" to their wives and children, because they didn't have any other way of communicating. This was dramatized for us a bit when we first got there and before we had acquired any real competence with Portuguese when Judy went to a shop and tried to communicate in Portuguese and was told by the shopkeeper, "It is all right, you can speak German now, it is all right." Her only alternative was English but they didn't speak any English. When she continued with her poor Portuguese, they became irritated because they thought she was still afraid and trying to hide the fact that she knew German.

**G. HARVEY SUMM**  
**Consul/Administrative Officer**  
**Bahia (1949-1951)**

**Ambassador's Aide/Visa Officer  
Rio de Janeiro (1951-1955)**

*G. Harvey Summ was born in New York, New York. He attended City College of New York and received a degree in business administration. Mr. Summ entered the Foreign Service in 1948 and served in the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Ecuador, Cuba, and Angola. He was interviewed on March 5, 1993 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

Q: *Then you moved after a year to where?*

SUMM: Bahia, Brazil, a consulate.

Q: *In Brazil.*

SUMM: That is right. Northeast Brazil.

Q: *What were you doing there?*

SUMM: Everything. It was a two-man consulate.

Q: *Now Bahia is where?*

SUMM: Just south of the bulge that extends out toward Africa.

Q: *It is called Salvador.*

SUMM: Interchangeably, yes. Bahia is the way I usually referred to it. I had consular, administrative, political and USIA duties. I started the USIA program. The idea always attracted me. I ended up being invited to two PAO conferences in Rio because of my interest in USIA work and was twice offered USIA jobs in various other countries. But I turned them down because I had my eye on becoming a political officer.

Q: *What was the situation, political, economic and all in Bahia at that time? We are talking about 1949-51.*

SUMM: The main thing that happened was the presidential elections of 1950. Getulio Vargas, who had been dictator of Brazil for 15 years up until World War II, was now running for election in open free elections. So I was trying to provide the Embassy with information on how the elections were going in our consular district.

I remember interviewing the candidate for governor of Bahia. I had an interesting connection in Bahia that ended up playing a great role in my future life. There were a group of anthropologists from Columbia University in Bahia doing community studies. It occurred to me that they would be very useful contacts to tell me what was going on outside the capital city. I used to get together with them. The head of the group was an anthropology professor from Columbia who

eventually became my brother-in-law and helped launch me into an academic career. We became very close friends. I was able to predict how the election would go locally. I thought Vargas was going to win. Incidentally my predictions were at odds with those of the Embassy, but I think I was closer to the pulse of things.

*Q: That often happens, particularly in a country as big as Brazil which is very hard to cover from the capital. What was your impression of how the government was run at the local level?*

SUMM: Not well. Not very efficient. I have become a Brazilianist since then and have written books on the subject. They bear out my experience of over 40 years ago. The approach of local officials was slovenly. The society consisted of a very small elite and a large number of very poor and unwashed people. The elites didn't really give a damn for those underneath them, which is still much the case today.

One can attribute this to the tropics or racial background. I don't think it is a cultural trait on the part of Brazilians.

*Q: One can look at this. It has always been an interesting thing of wondering why so much of Latin America just hasn't been able to put things together. Argentina is a prime example.*

SUMM: The most egregious example. But all throughout the hemisphere that is the case. I think it has mainly to do with the Iberian background; it goes back as far as Rome where patron/client relationships, family ties, personal involvement, sentimental attachments are all more important than efficiency and getting things done.

There is something to be said for that kind of approach to life, but it does not usually yield positive results in terms of development. Of course, this has been a continuing frustration to Latin American countries, particularly vis-a-vis the US, when they see how much we have been able to achieve in development terms in a much shorter period.

*Q: Who was your Ambassador at the time?*

SUMM: Herschel Johnson.

*Q: Did the hand of the Embassy rest pretty heavy on you or not?*

SUMM: In the public affairs realm they were very supportive, as I have indicated. In the political realm, with some of the political reporting I did on local events, there were encouraging notes from people in the Embassy. And, of course, most relevant, is the fact that the Embassy asked to have me transferred there.

*Q: You transferred to Rio in 1951. So you served there until 1955. What were you doing in Rio?*

SUMM: I was originally supposed to go as the junior member of the political section. This was at last what I had looked forward to. But, what happened was, the Ambassador's aide had just been unexpectedly transferred and I was drafted for that task.

*Q: The Ambassador was Herschel Johnson. Could you tell us how he operated and his view of Brazil?*

SUMM: A lovely man. I remember an official-informal letter that he wrote back to somebody in the Department talking about the fact that we would always be able to depend on the Brazilians. This, I think, encapsulated his world view. At the time I read it, my own view was somewhat more reserved. I foresaw that there would come a time when Brazil would no longer be satisfied to be our loyal ally. But at any rate that was his approach. He was well in with society. He knew all the key people. He let his top officials operate effectively. I think the Embassy was reasonably well informed during my period there.

*Q: Vargas was again President and this time elected?*

SUMM: Yes.

*Q: From your vantage point how did you view the Vargas government during that particular period?*

SUMM: I ended up being there at the time Vargas committed suicide in 1954, so I was able to follow the wave of corruption that grew there, largely, I think, without his knowledge. Let me try to distinguish between the domestic and foreign relations aspects of it. For two reasons Vargas was no longer effective in the fifties as he had been in the forties. One was that he was older and two, he had to operate in a free society and was subject to criticism. This I think got under his skin. Previously there had been censorship. So things began to go downhill to the point where he committed suicide. That is on the domestic sense.

In the foreign policy sense, I think he was a pragmatist. We knew he had flirted with the Axis in World War II, but he saw that his ties with the US were more important to him. Dean Acheson, Secretary of State, visited during the time I was there. The visit went well and was cordial as far as we knew. So, from our point of view Vargas was a reliable ally, whatever his personal views might have been.

*Q: What was your impression of the Embassy? How it ran, etc.?*

SUMM: Let me divide this into two phases. Under Herschel Johnson I thought it went splendidly. He was a fine Ambassador. Then along came James Kemper.

*Q: Who was James Kemper?*

SUMM: James Kemper was a rich insurance man from the Midwest -- Kemper Insurance, political appointee. This had a particular relationship to me because I was the Ambassador's aide. Now was I going to become Kemper's aide? A fortuitous event occurred. We had an inspection in 1953 when the new Eisenhower administration came in and they were looking for ways to cut staff.

*Q: We went through a RIF program -- reduction in force.*

SUMM: I remember the inspector talking to me and asking me how much time I spent on my job as Ambassador's aide. Since I was a restless sort of person, I was not all that happy in that job, although I learned a great deal. I spoke honestly to him and said that I felt the job could be eliminated altogether or somebody could do it on a part-time basis. So, his recommendation was that the job be eliminated. This ended up in my being transferred to the consular section as visa officer, just as Kemper came along. I was very happy not to be part of his entourage.

He was miserable for the Embassy. He propositioned officers' wives, offering to set them up in apartments. I remember a staff meeting where he invited us to inform on each other. This was the McCarthy period; so if there were disloyal Americans on the Embassy staff he was going to rout them out. This was revolting stuff. Fortunately I was far removed for the most part from his machinations.

He eventually came a-cropper on his own, which is nice. While home on consultation he stopped off in Boston to see a business friend. The price of coffee had gone up and housewives were complaining and an interviewer asked Kemper what he thought was going to happen to the price of coffee. He said that it wasn't going to stay up like that; that it would come down. This was during the 1954 congressional elections and he was trying to help a congressional candidate who was a friend of his. Of course, when the Brazilians heard of this and thought that if the Ambassador thinks the price of coffee is going to come down then he must know something. This time the Brazilians protested vigorously and Kemper was moved.

*Q: What were you doing in the consular section, visas?*

SUMM: Yes, visas.

*Q: Were there any particular problems?*

SUMM: I guess the only problem then was that there were Brazilians coming up by the carload to buy appliances and take them back. We were overwhelmed by the workload. But after all they were bona fide non-immigrants and there was no reason to interfere with that. It was just a matter of keeping up with them. I enjoyed the work.

There was one security problem. I had heard that a prominent Brazilian novelist was going to apply for a visa, and I came up with some derogatory information on him. I went to the public affairs officer and said, "Look, according to the rules we are going to need a waiver for this guy. If not, I am going to have to turn him down." I think because of the McCarthyite atmosphere prevailing there, the PAO was unwilling to stick his neck out and make the kind of argument that would be necessary for a waiver. So I did have to turn the guy down. We got flak for it. I saw the problem coming, but unfortunately couldn't do anything about it.

*Q: So that somebody will understand this in a different era, when you talk about derogatory information, what are you really talking about?*

SUMM: The local CIA station had picked up information from confidential sources which, I think in his case said that he had signed the Stockholm Peace Petition and that he had made statements favorable to organizations which were on the Attorney General's Subversive List.

Q: *These are mainly communist organizations.*

SUMM: Yes, and looked at today, they seem so ridiculous.

Q: *I know, I worked in the same field at the same time.*

SUMM: But given McCarthyite allegations against members of the State Department, we had to make sure we were covered. You didn't go out violating instructions because it might be your head. You had to follow the law to the letter.

**SAMUEL D. EATON**  
**Economic Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1950-1951)**

*Samuel D. Eaton attended Drew University in 1940 and served in the Army Air Corps in 1943. He entered the Foreign Service in 1947. His first post was La Paz, Bolivia. He also served in Brazil, Thailand, Peru, Spain, and Ecuador as Deputy Chief of Mission. In 1979 he served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs. This interview was conducted by Charles Stuart Kennedy in October 1990.*

Q: *I'd like to hear about the class. How did you all see the world and America's role in it?*

EATON: Well, we were a rather large class compared to many of these classes, I guess, we were somewhat over forty. This was in September 1947, I believe. We viewed the world, of course, in the immediate post-war period. Attention was focused on Europe, on reconstruction, already on relations with the Soviet Union, on what one would do with Japan.

Our class was asked, after a week or two, to present to the director of the course, whose name was Mr. Roudebush, our preferences for a post. I thought about this, and I had some interest in Latin America, because a cousin had expressed an interest in it and I had high regard for him, and because I wanted to go to a smaller post where I would have more action, and because I needed money to pay off my college debts and I wanted to go to a low cost of living area, and also I was a farm boy and I would be more comfortable in a small post than a big one. So I presented as my preferences Bogotá, Colombia, La Paz, Bolivia, and Asunción, Paraguay.

A few days later, Mr. Roudebush called me in and he said, "Sam, I have noted your preferences and I really wonder a bit about them, because all of your colleagues, without exception, have asked for Paris, London, or Rome. You know, I think you might want to think about this a bit, because it really might reflect on your judgement and therefore affect your career." So I thanked

him for his comments and said I would think about it and then I'd come back to him in a day or two. So I did think about it, and I couldn't see that my reasons for my selections had changed. But I thought I would do something to humor the process, so I changed the order of my preferences from Bogotá, La Paz, Asunción to La Paz, Bogotá, Asunción. I took them back to him and said I had taken his comments seriously and I had changed my preferences, and I gave them to him. Well, the result was, I went to La Paz.

*Q: You left La Paz in 1950. Where were you assigned then?*

EATON: We were assigned to Rio, and that was a rather uneventful assignment. I found, though (and this may be of interest to young people who are considering the Foreign Service as a career), that a lot of foreign affairs was economics. And I didn't know how to deal with that type of issue except in a very perfunctory way. My background had been European history and I had had almost no economics. So, while I was in Rio, I asked for economic training and was granted it.

After Rio, I spent a year at Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, which was a happy choice, because the class was small enough so that I, who was ignorant in the field of economics, could have direct access to the professor. Their professor of economics, whose name was George Howe, was a really outstanding teacher. He brought me from nothing, in the world of economics, to a position where I could deal with macroeconomic issues with people from the Treasury and from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which is what I needed.

*Q: After a good, solid four-year assignment in Washington, you went to Bogotá, where you served from '59 to '65. Could you explain what were you doing?*

EATON: Well, yes. Actually, how I went to Bogotá is of some interest. I was assigned, in the normal processes, as consul in Pôrto Alegre, Brazil. But the Economic Bureau personnel people objected to the assignment. They had an economic officer that they wanted assigned an economic job. So they entered the picture and succeeded in changing my assignment from consul in Pôrto Alegre to head of the economic section (we were not called consuls at that point) in Bogotá, which was fine with me. So the Economic Bureau did have some clout at that stage.

**JOHN J. EWING**  
**Officer for Binational Center, USIS**  
**Porto Alegre (1950-1953)**

**Director of Binational Center**  
**City Unspecified, Brazil (1955-1960)**

*John J. Ewing was involved with the Binational Centers Program - a public relations, information, and education program - for more almost 20 years. He helped to establish Binational Centers in Mexico and Brazil. This is a self-interview covering his experience in working with this program on July 17, 1988.*

EWING: During the five-year period of 1955 to 1960, five new centers opened in 30 cities in Brazil. Before I speak of the rapid expansion of the Brazilian Binational Center Program during the five-year period of 1955 and 1960, I wish to record my experience as Director of the Porto Alegre Center because it was to become the prototype for new Centers when I became USIS country Binational Center Officer in 1953.

After having spent the summer in Washington attending seminars and lectures in American studies and applied linguistics taught by Professors Smith and Trager, I arrived in Porto Alegre, Brazil, as Director of Courses for the recently founded Binational Center. Porto Alegre was the capital city of Rio Grande del Sul, the home state of President Getulio Vargas, who had been Brazil's dictator since 1937. It was Getulio Vargas that had made the notable "March to the West" speech as early as 1940. Though President Vargas' dream was not to be implemented until 1955 and by another president, the dream was firmly planted. It had only been delayed during the political turmoil and during the war years.

Nevertheless, Porto Alegre was very much alive in the fall of 1950. Progress was very much on the minds of everyone. The big question was what method should be used to get there. The lines were being drawn between socialism, nationalism, and Pan Americanism. Rio Grande del Sul was also the home of a future disaster in the making and a future president, Joao Goulart, a young protégé of President Vargas.

A Brazilian American Binational Center was very much needed to help establish a cultural exchange program that could diplomatically and yet effectively educate an interested public concerning the culture of the United States of America. They wanted to learn the English language and to learn firsthand about the country that had made it possible to defeat Hitler's plan for the world.

The Center had been opened on the main street of the city. The quarters were small and limited in space for meeting the needs of a full cultural program. There was not enough space for all those who wished to learn English. Our enrollment was around 600 students. We began to look around, and a few weeks after my arrival, an opportunity presented itself for us to lease space on the eleventh and twelfth floors of a new 12-story building in downtown Porto Alegre.

The Director of the Center, Dr. Solmonson, had to return to the United States. I became Executive Director, and Gloria Wasaluski became Director of Courses. Howard Hill was the USIS branch public affairs officer. This was to be the American team that worked together to build one of the finest Binational Center institutions anywhere.

Our first task was to find a progressive experienced administrator to be president of the Board of Directors. For political reasons, we determined that the president of the Board of Directors should always be a Brazilian. Dr. Acho was recruited. He was a former president of the Porto Alegre University of Rio Grande del Sul. Dr. Acho enthusiastically joined our team and not only contributed to the building of a strong and respected Binational Center, but his ideas of organization and ways of reaching the Brazilian public carried over into the period when I was country BNC officer from 1955 to 1960 in Rio de Janeiro. Dr. Acho's idea was that an

institution, especially a Binational Center, would be stronger if no one individual was permitted to dominate his position for longer than three years at a time. This would be a built-in insurance policy for an embryo democracy in a country that had had very little experience in democratic government.

To get it all started, our team chose an executive committee of three members to serve on the Board of Directors. Dr. Acho was to be the president of the Board, with a vice president and a treasurer. Each of these men was to serve three years. Three others were appointed, each to serve two years as chairpersons of the program, library, and academic committees. The remaining three on the Board of Directors of nine were to serve one year as chairpersons on the social, scholarship, and art committees. At the end of the first year, three members of the Board would be replaced each year to serve three years. The retiring Board members each year would become members of the Binational Center Council. This arrangement kept the Center from taking on the personality of the strong man on the Board of Directors. This already had become a problem in some of the older Binational Centers in Latin America.

The Board of Directors met once a month, and each working committee met at least once a month. The American grantee executive director was a member of each of the working committees. The American grantee director, of course, was a member of the academic and scholarship committees, and an ex-officio member of the Board. This was an important arrangement because in the absence of the grantee executive director, the grantee director of courses was to serve as the executive director. The USIS public affairs officer also was a member of the Board of Directors. Though the two American grantees and the USIS branch PAO were members of the Board, they were ex-officio members. They were there to give and receive information. Nevertheless, their leadership was vital to the success of the plan. They, along with the president of the Board, were the catalysts. The president of the Board often attended a working committee to give and receive program information.

The involvement of each member of the team in the program and the dedication of the area USIS officer to the BNC program was the secret of success. In later years, when BNC grantees became USIS officers and BNC objectives and projects were written into the USIS country plan, all this became more institutionalized and it became much easier to accomplish an ongoing rapport with BNC leadership.

Whenever possible, the Board of Directors was made up of five Brazilians and four Americans. Anyone reviewing the early history of Binational Centers may feel that a democratic rotating Board of Directors was not such an important historical event to record, but certainly in 1950 it was. It is even today in many parts of Latin America.

Once the basic organization of the Center was taken care of, we were ready to push ahead with moving into our new quarters. This move was helped by a State Department grant. This grant made it possible to furnish beautiful quarters for an auditorium, library, offices, and classrooms. The beautiful terraces at each end of the building provided additional space for social activities. They looked out over the city of Porto Alegre and its harbor. Being the tallest building in town, everybody knew it. The Center was a showplace in the city, and it became popular immediately.

The academic department under the dedicated leadership of Gloria Wasaluski prospered. The enrollment increased by over 1,000 students within a period of months. Students participated in the library activities, and many attended cultural and social programs. Our goal was that they should remain members of the Center after their study of the language had formally ended. The age group in these classes ranged from 16 to 60. Children were provided with cultural and social activities, which brought popularity to the Center from among its membership. Within months after moving into the new quarters, people were coming to join the Center. Some of them spoke English, but they wished to enjoy the cultural activities and to have library privileges.

The library of American authors and reference materials provided by USIA supplied a hungry audience made up of from among government workers, universities, and schools, as well as from our own membership. The library opened onto the terrace, and it was a very pleasant place to read an American magazine or to do reference work. The library staff carried on a full schedule of library-related activities for its members. The American grantees took part in scheduled discussion groups and forums. Our auditorium and our social hall provided a meeting place for the State Department Exchange of Persons grantees and American visitors. A monthly newsletter and calendar of activities were mailed to members and advertised in the newspapers.

In 1952, we put together an album of pictures and graphs of the Porto Alegre Binational Center Program and mailed it to ICS in Washington to be used in the BNC grantee training program. This had been prompted by a suggestion by someone at the Lima Conference of Cultural Officers and BNC Grantees for South America that was held in November of 1951. I had presented the democratic principles of organization under which the Porto Alegre Center had been operating. Our success had seemed of interest to others. In every way we were accepted by the end of 1952 in what had been a very nationalistic city. The American story was being heard and it was becoming much more difficult in the community to be anti-American because of the effectiveness of the American cultural and social programs at the Binational Center.

A few weeks before I arrived in Porto Alegre in 1950, the entrance hall of the American consulate had been painted with tar by vandals. During all this period of growth and popularity, there was never any vandalism against the Binational Center.

After helping with the seminar for national teachers of English in Santiago, Chile, in 1953, I was transferred to Guatemala City as Director of the Binational Center, to help hold it together during the Arbenz revolution. This fascinating experience I will leave to another recording, because it is a story all in itself.

After 11 months as Director of the Binational Center in the Dominican Republic, I was appointed as a USIS staff officer, and transferred back to Rio de Janeiro to serve as the area BNC officer for Brazil. My wife and I arrived there in September 1955. This, then, begins the second part of my recording which concerns the rapid expansion of the Brazilian Binational Center Program.

Upon my arrival in Brazil, again, in September 1955, I was pleased to learn that the Binational Center family had increased to 17. When I had gone to Porto Alegre in 1950, there had only been seven Centers in the whole of Brazil. In January of 1953, the United States Advisory Commission on Information had stated in their report to the Agency that, "Our work in the field

should become less and less that of Americans conducting propaganda on foreign soil, and more and more a partnership arrangement between Americans and others for the mutual welfare of both." This statement and the general curiosity about Americans after the war had served the cause of Binational Centers well in Brazil.

After I was able to set up my office in USIS Rio de Janeiro, located in the Embassy, I felt that it was necessary to visit each of the Centers and meet with their Boards of Directors. This gave me a good understanding of what was being accomplished among them as a USIS Binational tool. Many of the Centers at that time were little more than English-language institutes, much like the Mexican City Center had been before it became a Binational Center, but with much less professional guidance. Some of the larger Centers, such as the Centers in Sao Paulo, Santos, Porto Alegre, Curitiba, and Rio de Janeiro, were true extensions of USIS. The obvious problem would be how to bring all of them into a pattern that would serve the needs of the State Department's Embassy, which had only five or six consulates in a country half the area of South America and nearly the size of the United States.

*Facts to a Candid World* was published in 1955. It was written by Oren Stephens, the USIA Deputy Assistant Director for Policy and Programs. What he had to say in that book rang a bell with many of us: "Of all propaganda, the most effective is that which has the least appearance of propaganda. The greater the seeming objectivity of the material, the more it will be accepted as disinterested and reliable information on which the audience can have a judgment." Mr. Stephens' counsel was excellent for American Binational Center grantees who found themselves playing the role of cultural ambassadors in a country that had been governed so long by a dictator, and where the democratic style was so little known.

President Getulio Vargas had committed suicide only the year before, in 1954, bringing his 17-year rule to an abrupt end. The new president that took office in 1955 was a charming and politically wily doctor named Juscelino Kubitschek. He had campaigned hard on a platform that stressed democracy and rapid economic progress. He had promised 50 years of development during his five-year term from 1955 to early 1961. By the time I arrived in September of 1955, his efforts were already under way to make Brazil's dream come true. He soon founded the National Auto Industry. In time he built hydroelectric power plants and steel mills throughout the country. One could feel the wave of euphoria that even a sudden burst of inflation did little to dampen.

His most flamboyant gesture, outside of restoring democracy, was to resurrect a postscript to Brazil's first Constitution of 1824 that called for a capital to be known as Brasilia, to be constructed somewhere near the center of the country. Locking hard on this idea, Kubitschek was to start the "March to the West" that Vargas had dreamed about in his speech in 1940. He hired two prominent architects, Lucio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer, and mounted a crash program to build the new capital high on Brazil's central plateau. It would be a full 16-hour drive northwest of Rio de Janeiro. It was this great expansion to the West and into the interior of Brazil that gave the American Binational Centers their opportunity to follow the frontier.

In the near future, Brasilia was to become the launching pad for conquest of the Mato Grosso and Amazonia. In the meantime, the new roads being cut to it from Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo

would bring to many villages thousands of new inhabitants that would make of them cities in the interior. They were hungry for schools and education to meet the challenge of the frontier. This frontier gave them land and opportunities for business undreamed of for generations. The Rotary Club and the Lions Club began their work, along with the American Binational Centers that came into these new and booming cities. It was a time of high spirits and courage, all sparked by a wily president who dared to do all this in the name of democracy.

After my return from visiting all of the existing Binational Centers, I was certain that the only way USIS would be successful in meeting the challenge being presented to it would be to tie closely what we were able to do with these Centers into the country plan. USIS would have specific goals and projects to support each fiscal year. These goals and project must, in order to be successful, meet with the approval of the country team. From the very beginning, the program had the full support of Ambassador Briggs, the country public affairs officer, John McKnight, his deputy, Lew Schmidt, the cultural affairs officer, Larry Morris and, later, his replacement, Dulaney Terret. These men, including the USIS executive officer Jim Opsata, gave program support to the American Binational Centers, to me, and to the BNC grantees whom I helped supervise. Without this coordinated effort by the country team, the program would soon have died on the vine.

It was determined by USIS that we needed a system that would formalize our recognition of a Binational Center that wished to receive the official help and guidance of the Embassy. Impressive certificates of recognition were printed. When the Center, either new or long established, met the requirements for Embassy recognition, a certificate signed by the USIS cultural officer and the president of the Board of Directors was presented to a joint session of the Board of Directors and the Center's council. This method presented an opportunity to update the Center's government on BNC standards and their significance.

During 1955 and 1956, we had laid the groundwork for the USIS BNC program in Brazil. I had visited all the existing Centers and explained the countrywide standards that had been set by the country team. We were then ready to start responding seriously to the many requests for organizational visits from would-be Binational Centers.

The workload of the country BNC officer had increased to the point that he could no longer travel as much as was required and keep up with the office work at the Embassy. USIA Washington agreed to give the country BNC officer a deputy and one more local employee. Jack Fawcett, the Director of the Curitiba Center, was appointed an FSS officer and deputy BNC country officer for USIS Rio De Janeiro. This permitted one USIS BNC officer to be at the Embassy and another in the field at all times. Regularly, after a month of travel, I came back to the office and my deputy left to catch up on requests for help that had occurred during the month. During my first 18 months in Brazil, I slept in 30 different cities in all parts of Brazil.

Our travel was by plane whenever possible, but very often there was no way to get to some of the cities in the interior but by car or jeep. On the Amazon, we had to travel by boat. In 1957, the USIS office in Sao Paulo had received a request for training seminars for Binational Centers in Piracicaba and Barretos. After my wife and I had spent a week in each city, we decided to answer requests for a visit by a new city on the border of the Mato Grosso and in the

northwestern part of the state of Sao Paulo. This was Votuporanga. President Kubitschek had suggested to one of its Rotary members that what Votuporanga needed was an American Binational Center. So we decided to visit the city fathers and their Rotary Club, to see what possibilities existed for such a Center.

After having been presented with the keys of the city by the mayor of Barretos for the English teaching and BNC leadership seminar, we had left Barretos early in the morning in our specially built Hillman-Minx, which had oversized shock absorbers and springs, as well as a heavy-duty cooling system and an extra low gear. None of the roads were paved as we headed west and further into the interior.

Across the northern part of the state of Sao Paulo, we didn't meet another car all morning. Finally, in the early afternoon when we joined the main newly cut highway to Brasilia, we began to meet trucks and jeeps. We had to leave the main highway to Brasilia near Mirassol, where we had organized a Center the previous year.

Our trip had been complicated by a heavy rain the night before. The ruts in the red clay road were becoming so deep that our car was in danger of getting hung up on them. Sure enough, the inevitable happened about 3:30 in the afternoon. We were stuck fast. I had been told when I left Mirassol that in case we needed help, a caravan of trucks on their way to Gernandopolis would be along in the late afternoon. We saw no other traffic. Finally, sure enough, about 4:00 o'clock, we could see the trucks coming over the horizon of red mud. In those days, Brazil's truck drivers were, as now, a very special breed of men. Along with Kubitschek's march to the West, they provided the wheels and the good natured helpfulness to travelers, no matter who they were. Twenty of these frontiersmen surrounded our car and lifted it out of the deep rut so I could drive straddling it. The caravan of eight or nine trucks followed. About 5:00 o'clock, we reached the outskirts of Votuporanga. Across the highway was strung a meter-wide banner in red and blue on white, that read, "Welcome John J. Ewing!"

Our little hillman and ourselves, covered with mud, drove under the banner, along with the caravan of trucks with all horns blowing into the city to be received by the welcoming committee. Some of these special men were to spend evenings on layovers at Binational Centers en route from and to Sao Paulo. Old USIS magazines from BNCs circulated among them.

Votuporanga was to have its Binational Center. The next year we visited them again for an additional training seminar, but by that time, USIS had a four-wheel-drive jeep that we could use for such trips.

My wife, Bertha Irene Ewing, who had been a Binational Center grantee in Chile before I married her, was an invaluable help on these trips. Bertha is a graduate of Hunter College and holds a master's degree from Middlebury College. She was also a temporary instructor at Radcliffe and Harvard, where she was doing graduate work before she joined the BNC program. When she was not traveling with me or conducting a seminar on her own, she tutored the daughters of President Kubitschek at Laranjeiras Palace in Rio de Janeiro. All of this was volunteer work for Bertha, because in those days USIS wives could not be employed by the U.S. Government.

By 1958, I had been able to recruit a person to fill the new slot provided for in the USIS budget for locally hired English teaching specialists that could begin to offer continuity in our English teaching efforts throughout the country. I had persuaded Hal Madison to leave our competition in Sao Paulo, and join our USIS BNC staff at the Embassy in Rio de Janeiro. He became the author of an excellent series of textbooks that were used in Binational Centers, secondary schools, and colleges throughout Brazil. He had the help of USIS BNC officers in making the series of books one of the best courses of study available. With the help of Mr. Madison, we were able to carry our program into the schools and universities of Brazil.

Each of the 23 BNC grantees participated each year in English language seminars to help train English teachers in these schools. The seminars were held in ten or 12 of the larger Centers, at least one in each state, to which private and public school teachers could come for training during the summer months.

Once a year, these same large Centers, under the supervision of American grantees, administrated the University of Michigan Proficiency Examination and the University of Pennsylvania Examination in American Studies. These examinations were sponsored by USIA in cooperation with these two universities. The certificates were issued by the universities for those who qualified and they were presented in an annual ceremony by USIS and the Binational Centers.

The annual seminars for National Teachers of English were one of the best public relations activities ever undertaken by USIS Brazil. They met with high approval and encouragement from the Brazilian Government. While in Curitiba, Jack Fawcett wrote an anthology and textbook of American literature for teaching American literature in Brazilian schools. This invaluable text became popular in Brazil. Upon joining the USIS BNC staff in Rio, Jack also wrote a USIS English teaching course of study for radio. Attractive booklets were published and placed in radio programs throughout the country for mailing to listeners. Each USIS officer had his role to play.

The book presentations program provided American works in both English and Portuguese for BNC libraries. USIA/ICS provided basic libraries as each Center qualified. These were added to on an annual basis. ICS also provided audio-visual aids and equipment as needed. Educational exchange officers conducted many educational exchange efforts within a Binational Center context, thus helping to promote the program and scholarship committees within the Binational Centers. This provided educational exchange experience for both countries. The Binational Center Scholarship Committee often served as scouts for finding well-qualified candidates in their area for the Embassy or Consulate's educational exchange program.

The film section of USIS Rio obtained and dispersed film programs that circulated among the Centers and often through them to schools and colleges. There was also a USIA/BNC speaker exchange program that was coordinated in the USIS office in the Embassy.

The press section of USIS paid attention to returning State Department grantees and to BNC cultural programs and released information on these activities to the Brazilian press. In 1957, our

USIS executive officer, Jim Opsata, hit upon the idea of using the PL 480 funds to make capital improvements among the Brazilian Binational Centers. The first dispersal of these funds was to come in 1958 to seven Binational Centers. The PL 480 funds in the end would come to a considerable sum of over \$4 million. We tried to find a way to set up a Binational Center Foundation that would be the holding agent for making loans to over 50 Binational Centers then in existence, and let the money flow back again for reuse as needed by all the Brazilian family of Binational Centers. The country team was in full agreement, but we could not get the agreement for the plan approved in Washington.

Grants were finally made to those Centers that qualified. Most of them were building grants that permitted them to move into their own buildings. Some of the grants were used by smaller Centers to make capital improvements or to take out long-term leases on more adequate quarters. These grants were made each on the condition that each Center raise an equal amount to match the funds to be received from the PL 480 grant. This grant system gave stability to each Center, as well as an opportunity to seek out local commitment and local support for the Binational Center program. Attractive, well-equipped quarters became a boon to the program. Most of the well-established Centers were able to raise matching funds within a year after they became available.

Some of the USIS officers in Rio de Janeiro were, in time, transferred to branch offices as branch PAOs. This was a great asset for the area they went to. Jack Fawcett was to be assigned to Porto Alegre, and Fred Dickens to Salvador (Bahia). Howard Hill, my old colleague in Porto Alegre, had already been transferred to Recife. These men kept alive the Binational Center philosophy that had developed over the years we had spent together.

I will relate here only the experience of Fred, who had been so helpful when he was country educational exchange officer in the Embassy USIS office. In my opinion, one of Fred's most creative efforts on behalf of Binational Centers took place in Salvador (Bahia). Following the experience I had in Guadalajara, Mexico, Fred proposed to the rector of the University of Bahia that the university provide quarters, teachers, and staff for a university Binational Center to be called the Institute of North American Studies. When the rector accepted the idea in principle, Fred obtained clearance and support from USIS Rio. Binational Center grantee Isabel de Herwig was named director. All university faculty privileges and facilities were made available to her. A small building with classrooms and a library of new books in English and in Portuguese was provided.

My wife and I went to Salvador (Bahia) and gave a two-week training seminar for the teachers of the Center. In the first year, 1,300 university students enrolled in the English language study and others in American studies. Hundreds more were to view films and slide shows. This was the first university Binational Center in Brazil, and expenditure of USIS funds was minimal.

Fred Dickens' and Isabel de Herwig's great success in this adventure was building upon the outstanding success of the Bahia mother center that had been so well served during the tenure of Jeff Sandel, the BNC grantee director who had preceded Isabel. By the spring of 1960, there were 23 American Binational Center grantees hard at work in 17 of the largest cities in Brazil. All had area duties and they helped supervise and train local personnel for 40 other Centers.

Every major city on the Atlantic coast of Brazil had a Binational Center. Centers had also been established in the larger of the interior cities, as well.

The new center in Belem, at the mouth of the Amazon, was now prospering. Belem had become a beachhead for another push into the interior by President Kubitschek, this time from the north to Brasilia in the central plateau. A 2,100-kilometer highway, over half of which would be through very dense tropical forest, two million people would soon settle along this road. Trucks and buses between the two points became crowded with goods and people. Amazonia was now integrated with the rest of the nation.

We had already established a Binational Center in Manaus in early 1958. On that trip I was the only passenger on the plane from Manaus to Brasilia. I sat in the co-pilot's seat while he took a long nap. In 1959, my wife and I took a ship at Belem after the training seminar there, and traveled six days and six nights to Manaus on annual leave. Others from USIS met us there, where we held a seminar for national teachers of English for all of Amazonia. The seminar was sponsored jointly by USIS and the Binational Center.

I was transferred to Washington in May of 1960. Jack Fawcett, my deputy country BNC officer, was transferred to Porto Alegre as branch PAO. I suggested that Sidney Vertz of the Rio de Janeiro Center be made country BNC officer. The political climate had almost been perfect while the country was under the administration of President Juscelino Kubitschek, but after Juscelino, Brazil once again fell into political disarray. His elected successor was Janio Quadros, a brilliant but unstable politician. He had campaigned with a broom as his symbol and announced as his laudable, if quixotic, goal, the elimination of widespread corruption in government. The Congress was apprehensive and failed to corroborate his election for over six months. As a result, he resigned. In 1961, the presidency passed into the hands of his vice president, Joao Goulart.

Goulart was from Rio Grande del Sul, as had been Vargas. The primary shortcoming of President Goulart, who, for long was widely accused of being far too soft on the left, if not a Communist himself, was not his radicalism, but rather his incompetence to govern. Under his administration, disorder became commonplace. Shortages, strikes, and a runaway inflation all took their toll.

Finally, on March 31, 1964, a military coup took place, and Goulart, along with many leftist politicians and academics, clandestinely left Brazil.

These years were hard on the morale of Binational Centers. The real and imagined dangers to these micro-democracies put them in jeopardy of losing their hard-won popularity. I will leave this new era and its story to my colleagues who followed me. Many of these very special binational institutions still are healthy and strong. The Rio de Janeiro Center recently celebrated its golden anniversary.

As long as there are men around like Dr. Belchior, who has been the real Binational Center guardian angel ever since the 1950s, and men like Dr. Acho of Porto Alegre, the miracle of the human spirit will live on. These Brazilian Binational Center leaders have projected their dream

and our dream far beyond their own harbors. Yes, there will also be a Brazilian president again who promotes progress through democracy, as did Juscelino Kubitschek.

**RUTH MCLENDON**  
**Clerk, Consular Affairs**  
**Sao Paulo (1951-1952)**

*Ruth McLendon was born in Texas in 1929. She received her bachelor's degree from Texas Christian University in 1949 and her master's degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1950. Her postings abroad following her entry into the Foreign Service in 1951 include Sao Paulo, Manila, Adelaide, Rangoon, Bangkok and Paris. Ms. McLendon was interviewed in 1995 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

*Q: So, those things had to be letter perfect.*

McLENDON: Of course, no erasure. When I got down to Sao Paulo, we had an agreement, my boss and I, if it had to be letter perfect, we would send it to one of the other secretaries who were all good pals of mine and say pretty please, would you do this.

*Q: I also like to nail it down, you were in Sao Paulo from when to when?*

McLENDON: I was in Sao Paulo from July of 1951 to June of 1952.

*Q: 1952, so a year approximately.*

McLENDON: Approximately a year. No, maybe early August.

*Q: Anyway, we're talking about essentially a year. What did we have in Sao Paulo and sort of can you describe the consulate there?*

McLENDON: We had a consulate general. It was not nearly the size it is now, but a small consulate general, rather heavily on the area of economic commercial side and I assume it still should be except to the extent the consular work doesn't devour the whole thing. The consular section such as it was consisted of one officer who handled only citizenship and protective service citizens which was not a full time job, but he didn't like visas and he was the senior, the chief of the consular section. The visa officer was somewhat overworked, but only because our procedures in those days were so backwards.

*Q: Yes. Can you describe a little of the life in Brazil and in Sao Paulo at that time as you observed it?*

McLENDON: Sao Paulo at that time was the fastest growing city in the Western Hemisphere. One thing I remember is of Sao Paulo is the sound. You could not escape the sound of

construction, of buildings being constructed, of new bridge crossings and underground crossings and every form of transportation being constructed. It was I guess about two million in the city. It was still a livable size.

*Q: What about the social life there?*

McLENDON: The social life I fitted in with the other clerks and secretaries. We were a small enough post to be sort of an informal family and we would get together with officers and their families. Not long after I arrived, I teamed up with two other women who were looking for quarters because we didn't have furniture and furnished apartments were not to be had, so we started a system of house sitting. We would house sit houses of families who had gone on home leave for two, three or five months. That way we had a very comfortable furnished house and we could be flexible. We had very little to pack up and if we needed extra furniture we knew that we could borrow some from the consulate general and haul it in the consular jeep. We were gypsies.

*Q: Who was the consular general when you were there?*

McLENDON: Julian Greenup.

*Q: Who?*

McLENDON: Julian Greenup.

*Q: Greenup.*

McLENDON: He was replaced by Clarence I cannot remember his last name.

*Q: That's all right.*

McLENDON: He was very kind to me, but I cannot remember the last name.

*Q: How did you find your Foreign Service experience was at this place?*

McLENDON: Well, I was fascinated with Brazil and still I didn't like it much. I was, that was before I had learned to look a country with more understanding. I reacted to Brazilians rudely and Brazilians as with some of the continental cultures and I found it in Mexico. I had gone to live with a Mexican friend when I was 16 to learn Spanish. If you were of the people one knows, they were polite and otherwise no one else was entitled to politeness. The French were a little like that and the Brazilians were and I reacted against that. I had dated a student from Brazil my first year at Fletcher, had almost become engaged to him, and that should have given me a kind of feeling for them, but it didn't.

*Q: Would you say the Foreign Service family, how would you describe it?*

McLENDON: My social life consisted of the Foreign Service family and some friends, a young single international group I had met through fellow boarders at homes in Sao Paulo. I met a

young American physicist there and he had introduced me to friends of his. I had a cluster of friends who included Germans, one Czech, one Dutch, one or two Brazilians and so forth. We read plays.

*Q: Oh yes, wonderful exercise. It's a little hard, I'm not sure how it is today, but in those days the staff so many of the secretaries would be coming essentially out of the same educated class, the same gene pool as the officers that the interest.*

McLENDON: Even those who didn't had the gumption and the interest to want to go overseas. They were a good group.

*Q: It was a good group, but I think in many ways, in large embassies things would sort of fall out because that's the problem of large embassies, but in the smaller places it is very cohesive because it wasn't them and us as far as the staff versus the officer corps then.*

McLENDON: No, in those days it wasn't. We were a family. We liked and enjoyed each other. They would all go on trips together, several of the women and with one or two of my friends from the circus, my little play reading group. It was a fun time.

*Q: Later you got involved from time to time on the consular side. What was the consular work like in Sao Paulo at that time?*

McLENDON: Oh, my God. Consular work was just totally buried under layer after layer of regulations that simply could not be all carried out and procedures that were just totally out of date. We had to fingerprint every applicant for every visa, non-immigrant visas as well. A businessman going for a brief trip to the United States, a full set of fingerprints. Oh, just total absurdity. The files we kept, just total absurdity. It was a system I fought from the day I first encountered it until the day I retired.

*Q: Did it sort of appall you at the time?*

McLENDON: Yes. It appalled me at the time. It was so totally. Not to the degree it did later because I was still green enough to think well, maybe for security reasons we have to do these stupid things, but no, the system was appalling.

*Q: Excuse me a minute.*

McLENDON: The system did not make allowances for human nature.

*Q: Or the sensitivities of foreigners, too.*

McLENDON: Or the sensitivities of foreigners. I remember that only the flexibility in the mind of the officer applying the law allowed us to survive. I remember there was at that time and may still be a section in the immigration law that prohibits the issuance of a visa to anyone who is entering the United States primarily for the purpose of engaging in immoral behavior.

*Q: Yes, in immoral sexual practices. I think that was it.*

McLENDON: I remember we were handling the application of one of the better known of the Brazilian industrialists who was going to the States with his mistress. I sort of raised my eyebrows and said, "How do you get around that?" He looked at me, and of course he's going for business, and he said, "She is going for shopping." It says primarily.

*Q: When that came in a little bit later, I said, well, you've got to figure out what are they going to be doing most of the time, unless they real sort of sexual athletes, they're going to be doing a lot of other things, too.*

McLENDON: No one is doing it primarily.

*Q: I mean who would go to the United States to. But it was embarrassing to have to administer this law. These things were thrown in by congress on almost a whim or something. Were you feeling the hand of McCarthyism or something like that while you were there?*

McLENDON: Oh, very much so.

*Q: Here you are a new girl on the block and all of a sudden this manifestation of.*

McLENDON: We were all painfully aware of McCarthy and when I really felt the hand of McCarthy on the Foreign Service was when I came back and passed my orals and was brought in by the Foreign Service class of 1953. I said the Foreign Service class of 1953 because we were the last Foreign Service class for 18 months, the only one that year.

*Q: The next one was renumbered and called class one.*

McLENDON: Was it?

*Q: That was mine. I started in July of 1955.*

McLENDON: We were a small class. There were 20 of us. The Eisenhower administration had taken over and John Foster Dulles had pledged to rid the State Department of all those commies and at that same time they were determined to cut it back substantially. We took a RIF of I think one-third that year, one-fourth to one-third. They were trying to select out and they did select out 25% of the Foreign Service Officers. My class was caught up in that before we had our commissions because no one was commissioned for 18 months and no one was promoted for 18 months because the promotion lists, the commission lists, were all held up in the senate until everyone got a new full field FBI security clearance. The debate went on in the personnel division. We were in training three months and throughout that three months they were debating within the personnel division, there was a debate whether we would be considered career and they would hang on to us or whether we were to be dropped at the end of our training. So, every week we would call, we had two contacts in personnel and we'd get one side from one and one side from the other. It was all right for me, I was single and young, but there were married classmates. Some of them with children.

**CLARENCE A. BOONSTRA**  
**Agriculture Attaché**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1953-1955)**

**Deputy Chief of Mission**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1970-1971)**

*Ambassador Clarence A. Boonstra was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan on January 5, 1914. He attended Michigan State University, the University of Wisconsin, and Louisiana State University. He entered the Foreign Service in 1946. Ambassador Boonstra's career included positions in Cuba, the Philippines, Peru, Argentina, and Brazil, and an ambassadorship to Costa Rica. Ambassador Boonstra was interviewed by Mr. Donald Barnes in 1989.*

*Q: I've seen the name in the listing, but I don't know anything about him.*

BOONSTRA: Well, he was the author of all the books on foreign management 10 years ago when foreign management was a big thing in agricultural economics. When I first started, of course, that's where most of agricultural economics started, was in the foreign management courses that are taught in colleges of agriculture, which then expanded into agricultural economics, generally.

So John Hopkins had been in Brazil several years, and I guess he wanted to go to Argentina, so in 1953 I was transferred from – he was the agricultural attaché in Brazil, so we traded jobs. He came to Argentina and I went to Brazil in 1953. I arrived there at a rather upset time. The Eisenhower administration had just placed in a new ambassador called Jim Kemper, who was an extremely wealthy former treasurer of the Republican National Party and a good friend of all the big Republicans. So he had this job, but the first time he'd ever been much abroad, and he had his own objectives there.

Also, there was a coffee drought, so I traveled around Brazil a lot, particularly on coffee. I had to learn a lot about coffee, which I did. I did things which are not permitted today. For example, the embassy had no travel funds, of course, at that time still for agricultural attaché to do much travel, and the only way I could really get a decent estimate on coffee was to really visit all the coffee areas and do a lot of ground work myself. So Anderson Clayton, which was at that time the big coffee buyer – they don't even exist anymore, at one time also the coffee buyers. They loaned me an airplane for three weeks.

*Q: That's how you got around?*

BOONSTRA: It's the only way I could get around is a small little Cessna that they had. A funny thing, we couldn't accept that anymore, could we?

*Q: No.*

BOONSTRA: By all means. Anyway, I cleared it with the Department of Agriculture, and they said, if it's the only way you can get an estimate, you've got to do it. But it was a big country, and I had two assistants there, Glenn Ruggles – have you ever heard of him?

*Q: Yes.*

BOONSTRA: And a very, very fine man, who later became a good agricultural attaché, Paul Ferree.

*Q: Paul married a Brazilian lady.*

BOONSTRA: Yes, he had a miserable end to all these years. I'll tell you, Paul Ferree was very, very good. He married a Brazilian there while I was there, too. In fact, I was his best man. Anyway, that was a very nice tour, but the problem was that since coffee was at that time the lifeblood of Brazil – certainly isn't anymore, thank goodness – it was the lifeblood of Brazil, Kemper became interested in coffee, too. And, also, they were nationalizing petroleum and that sort of thing. He had an economic counselor who was not too well and was out much of the time, so in effect Kemper made me more or less the acting economic counselor, which is a very large economic section.

Of course, I was a Foreign Service officer, working for the Department of Agriculture as agricultural attaché, which is the title I had, but I spent most of those years – then we had some big problems in Brazil after the long-time dictator, President Vargas, committed suicide.

In fact, I was one of only two officers when a mob marched, began firing bullets in the embassy, along with a Marine guard. But after Vargas died, killed himself, and the government was in turmoil, the government was about to fall in a monetary sense and the economic counselor was not in too good shape. I became the chief adviser in the embassy on monetary affairs for Kemper.

In fact, I went back and forth to Washington with a team of the new president's special advisers, one of whom I still correspond with a great deal. I became, dealing with the Export-Import Bank and all the monetary people, I sort of vanished, but I had good people, particularly Paul Ferree, who were handling most of the agriculture. But, anyway, I was working directly for the ambassador on all of these monetary affairs. And about that time, in 1954, the Department of Agriculture decides to separate, which was not a bad idea. I had no opposition to the idea at all, because I had kept on being drawn off.

In Brazil, at least, I was being drawn off into all these other matters, so it was a very easy choice for me. Obviously, my career was much better directed staying as economic counselor in Brazil and not advancing in the Foreign Service, which was a fairly easy choice. I didn't leave as an agricultural attaché because I didn't want to be an agricultural attaché anymore, but mainly because my whole career had been bent constantly in other directions, so I chose at that time to remain in the State Department.

BOONSTRA (to Thorburn): Were you in in '54, at that time?

THORBURN: I came into FAS in '54.

BOONSTRA: So you had to make a choice?

THORBURN: No, no, I came out of the Army. I had graduated from the university and I was in the Army. In '54, after the act of 1953, they hired 10 junior professionals, and I was one of the junior professionals.

BOONSTRA: Oh, I see.

THORBURN: And I ended up in Brazil in '61, and I was in Sao Paulo from '61 to '66.

BOONSTRA: You were in Sao Paulo '51 and '52?

THORBURN: No, '61 to 66.

BOONSTRA: Oh, '61. Yes, I didn't think I'd ever met you there.

THORBURN: No, no, but I saw in the files in Sao Paulo, I saw some of the work that you did, because we had some copies of the reports that were signed by you.

BOONSTRA: And, actually, Sao Paulo, one of the problems always was that Sao Paulo was more the center of the coffee trade than Rio, and then Santos.

*Q: The subsequent assignments I think are pretty much covered in the oral history that we already have.*

BOONSTRA: But not from an agricultural point of view. I'll make a few remarks.

*Q: Okay.*

BOONSTRA: From there, I went back to Cuba as economic counselor, which made my wife very happy, and which made me happy. And, while I was in Cuba, actually, we decided that as soon as I reached 50 and could retire under the State Department rules, we decided that we were going to live in Cuba. So we bought a home with my wife's father-in-law, and we shared a farm down there, and I was going to wait. I was in my early 40s and I was going to work until 50, and then we were going to go back to our home in Cuba, but things turned out differently.

The agricultural attaché there at that time was a fellow named Chester Davis. Chester had come there during the war the first time I was in Cuba, as whatever agency, the office of something or other, that bought – he was a purchasing agent for lots of things, including cigars. But Chester was then the agricultural attaché there, and he stayed on for a long time. You probably have recorded him.

My plans got all upset when Castro arrived. My wife's sister had married the president of the Nicaro Nickel Company, which was our big nickel operation in Cuba. And some congressman, or actually Drew Pearson ran a thing in the column about me saying – at that time some problems had arisen. I was actually chargé d'affaires at one time there. He wrote that the American chargé d'affaires, which was a fellow like Castro there, had a Cuban wife and had too many interests in Cuba and at that time said her sister had something favorable about Cuba. And so Drew Pearson set off a torrent in the Congress that – that said something favorable about Cuba, that they had a chargé d'affaires in Cuba who was favorable to Castro, and the State Department got clobbered for it. So I got ordered to leave immediately.

Well, my ambassador at that time, who was a nice guy, Arthur Gardner – didn't know anything about Cuba – so he actually sent me up to his friends in the White House who said, "Look what the State Department is doing to me. I'm here in Cuba and have got all these problems on my hand and you're sending the only man who speaks Spanish and his wife..."

So they gave me another four months to get out of there. They didn't know what to do with me, I guess, because they had bad publicity about me, so they sent me to the National War College for a year, which was very pleasant. I enjoyed that. But then I went back to the State Department as director of South American affairs, and I stayed there a couple of years. But then my wife died, and meanwhile Castro had seized my father-in-law's farm. I got him out of Cuba, finally, and also seized my house, but I beat him to it, because I defaulted on the mortgage and so it was the Royal Bank in Canada that took the hit. That's my picture of my house in Cuba. It was painted by my wife, who died. That's why I keep that there.

So, anyway, that's a painful memory. I stayed there for several years, but then my wife died in Washington and the State Department was very good to me. I wanted to get out of the State Department. I didn't know what to do, but I had lost my house, I had no money, I had a couple of children. They arranged very nicely for me to go as political adviser to the armed forces in Panama. At that time, we called it Caribbean Command, now the Southern Command. We changed the name while I was there.

I got along very well with them, and it gave me a chance to travel all over and to try to reform the School of the Americas, which I lectured at that school every week when I was in Panama. But I spent a couple of very profitable years there, and I met Margaret there, who was in the embassy, my wife, whom you've met. We didn't marry then. We married later.

But, anyway, spent a couple of years there, and then had a chance to go to Mexico as deputy chief of mission there, which was just before Kennedy's assassination. So, then, that post was open for a while so I was chargé d'affaires in Mexico for quite a while, which is the best experience I had. That was a better job than Costa Rica to tell the truth, but you can only stay so long, and I really liked my skill.

So from there I was named ambassador to Costa Rica. That was very interesting. In Costa Rica, people are very pleasant, but there really aren't any – I'd been used to working hard. Costa Rica was just sort of like an endless vacation. It was not a problem, at that time, with many problems,

but I did manage to get myself in trouble, though. Because then, when Nixon was elected, I had always worked mostly with the Democratic Party, I guess, except for Eisenhower, and when Nixon was elected, he sent a team down to Latin America, which in accord with State Department instructions and all that, I had more or less assisted the United Fruit Company to settle a lot of its problems with the unions there. One of the major irritations in Costa Rica was in the banana industry. I learned a lot about the banana industry, too, then.

I was assisting at the American Institute for Free Labor Development. You've heard of that one, which was very much sponsored by George Meany and by the Kennedy administration, and by the Johnson administration – the Johnson administration particularly. And so I got a lot of enemies, because the union then began its activities with Standard Fruit Company, which was growing fruit on the east side, the Caribbean side, in a really much more competitive area than the United Fruit's holdings on the Pacific side.

So, anyway, I got accused by the Nixon administration of being a Communist, because I was assisting the AIFLD with these union organizations and the Rockefeller mission came down and they sent a fellow named Cannon. In fact, while I was out with Rockefeller doing goodwill things, Nelson Rockefeller, this guy Cannon was getting all this stuff about the Communist American ambassador, so I got jerked out of there in a hurry.

And then, once again having nothing to do, I became a diplomat in residence at the University of Colorado. It's a very pleasant year, again. I have to give the State Department credit. They do some very nice things for people who get in a lot of trouble. Then we had Burke Elbrick, the ambassador in Brazil, before I finished my year at the University of Colorado, Burke was one of the first attempted assassinations of an ambassador. The chauffeur was killed, but he was kidnapped. In fact, there's a movie about it, if you ever saw that, three days and something or other.

He was kidnapped, but he was not seriously injured in the process, and, finally, he was released, but he was not a well man, and when he got to State Department, they couldn't give him a clearance to go back to Brazil, and the Brazilian government on the other hand said that he had incited these revolutionists and they had captured a tape recording that Burke had made when he talked with them in which he said he sort of agreed with him. A lot of things were very bad in Brazil, and they were, under the military government. So the Brazil government said they wouldn't take him back in any case, and the deputy chief of mission had just resigned and there was no one heading the embassy except of low rank. So they jerked me out of the University of Colorado because I could speak Portuguese, and also it so happened that the foreign minister was an old friend of mine from the first time I was in Brazil. He was now foreign minister.

So they sent me back to Brazil, and the student group vowed to assassinate me or kidnap me, immediately, so I didn't go back to Rio de Janeiro, where the embassy was still officially established. I took a plane from Washington with my family and arrived in Brasilia, which pleased the Brazilian government to no end, because they had tried to get the missions to move to Brasilia and they wouldn't move to this raw village up there.

We had a little small building out there, so I arrived in Brasilia and I announced that the

American embassy was the first embassy to move to Brasilia, which made the Brazilians very happy, so I was in their good graces immediately. But then all our embassy was in Rio, so then I had to go to Rio anyway, where I was met with a rather large force of Brazilian military to escort me to the residence.

*Q: I wanted to ask you a few questions, rather mundane questions, about reporting and the work you did from the standpoint of how different things are today, where today we use electronic forms for reporting, we communicate as you and I have communicated, by long-distance telephone, by electronic mail, whereas when you were in Cuba, when you were in Peru, how did you report to Washington and what were the mechanics of getting information back to Washington.*

[James E. Ross joins.]

BOONSTRA: Jim, he was asking about how we used to communicate. Jim is still familiar with that, and I think Garth is probably too, to some extent. But it's so long ago you're going to have to ask a question about how we communicated.

**WILLIAM C. TRIMBLE**  
**Minister-Counselor/Deputy Chief of Mission**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1954-1956)**

*Ambassador William C. Trimble was born in Baltimore, Maryland. He received a bachelor's degree in political science from Princeton University. He entered the Foreign Service in 1931, where his career included positions in Estonia, France, Argentina, England, Brazil, and Germany, and an ambassadorship to Cambodia. Ambassador Trimble was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.*

*Q: Then you went back to the Western Hemisphere. You went to Rio de Janeiro -- our Embassy was in Rio. You were there from 1954 to 1956. How did that assignment come about?*

TRIMBLE: This is a little tricky. An older Foreign Service friend of mine had gone to the same school although didn't know him at school. He was the child of American parents living in Brazil and spoke perfect Brazilian. He had been sent to Brazil as Minister-Counselor having served there before. He had a Spanish wife. He got along extremely well with the Brazilians because he had this background. Then President Eisenhower sent down as ambassador a man named Mr. Kemper.

*Q: James S. Kemper.*

TRIMBLE: James S. Kemper.

*Q: What was his background?*

TRIMBLE: Mr. Kemper was a big insurance executive, Kemper Insurance of Chicago -- a little man, very pompous, very domineering. He had been Treasurer of the Republican National Committee, so they sent him down to Brazil as ambassador. He resented the fact that his Minister-Counselor knew the Brazilians! He didn't have any foreign language, and he didn't get along himself with them because he was tough, rude and arrogant. So at a staff meeting he said to the Minister-Counselor: "You are fired!", and relieved him of all duties. Then the Department took months to transfer the DCM.

I was then in Holland and Doc Matthews had just arrived as ambassador on Christmas Day --

*Q: This would be?*

TRIMBLE: 1953. Christmas Day afternoon. We were having drinks together and he said, "I just got a message from the Department saying they want to transfer you to Rio, but I need you here so I have drafted a reply that you don't want to go."

I said, "No, you can't say that. I will go anywhere they want me to go." Which we have to do in the Foreign Service.

So he changed it. I can see his point of view. I knew the Dutch, and he didn't. So, anyhow, he insisted that I remain for a couple of months, which I did. Then I had home leave which I hadn't had for three or four years. Mr. Kemper was angry that I hadn't arrived sooner. I finally got there just around early July of 1954.

We went by boat. You couldn't really fly then. You could but it was pretty difficult so we came by boat. I studied phonetic Brazilian, which didn't help much, at the Foreign Service Language Institute. My wife and I had to go every day. We used part of the home leave to study in Washington.

Anyhow, the Ambassador arranged that when the boat pulled in -- I was coming as Minister-Counselor and the Embassy's number two -- no one would meet me except the assistant administrative officer. The assistant naval attaché hadn't gotten the instructions, so he was there, too -- or Army attaché -- and a few other people met us. They had reserved hotel rooms at a Copacabana hotel for my children and wife and myself, and told I was to attend a staff meeting at 2:30 that afternoon. A car would be sent to take me down to the Embassy -- a great, big building, beautiful building, lots of staff offices and a meeting room with a long, long table.

I sat at the Ambassador's right. "All sit down! Trimble is coming here as DCM." Then -- after taking off his wristwatch he said: "You have got five minutes. Anything to say?" It was really pretty humiliating. He didn't introduce me to any Brazilians at all. And my office was wired for sound.

*Q: You mean tapped?*

TRIMBLE: Tapped. He had brought two secretaries from his office down with him, who were very nice girls. One was my secretary, and one was his. My secretary told me about it. Also, I

would have to knock -- adjoining rooms, his off of mine -- knock on the door to get in, or I would have to go through his secretary to get into see him.

Kemper used to have an apartment -- it was a big office building with a special apartment upstairs for the Ambassador in addition to a big residence -- to which he would go and get drunk -- not really drunk. He couldn't drink much, but smoked beautiful Havana cigars which cost -- he used to tell us -- \$1.25 a piece. A most disagreeable person.

The Brazilians didn't like him. He didn't want me to do anything and the office was pretty much in shambles. Some of the staff were good, but he dominated everyone. He would take his Air Force plane with friends of his, a girlfriend and others, to fly them around the country.

Then he made an unfortunate mistake. Coffee was the big crop of Brazil and on a trip to New York he said in a speech: "The prices are coming down, hold off. Don't buy any coffee now." From then on, the Brazilians despised him.

That was around nine months after my arrival; by then I had lost 15 pounds, which I couldn't afford to do. It was just a pretty difficult situation, with a very nasty man -- at least I thought so, and some of the staff did, too. He wouldn't introduce me to anybody. You are generally taken to the Foreign Office and meet people there, but I had to do it myself. He never had us to a meal and only once to a reception.

Finally when Herbert Hoover, Jr., the Under Secretary of State, came down on a trip I pulled him aside -- Mr. Kemper was then on leave in the United States -- and said, "Mr. Secretary, the Ambassador is hurting our relations with Brazil so badly that he should be replaced."

I remember once when the Papal Nuncio was leaving, the Ambassador told the Finnish Minister: "Hey, I am too busy to see him off. You go down to the boat and represent me, would ya?" It was just awful. So Mr. Hoover got rid of him.

*Q: Well, this, of course, is a very serious problem. Sometimes these appointments are made for political purposes, and often the people are sort of taking over, and they have their strengths, and they have their staff, and they all work together, and it works out. But when you get somebody who is really harming your interests, then what do you do?*

TRIMBLE: I had to. That is all I could do.

*Q: What happened to Kemper? You had told Herbert Hoover, Jr. that he was harming our interests which --*

TRIMBLE: Is against the national interest. He reported back, and they brought Kemper back to Washington. They gave him an assignment as advisor to the State Department for several months. Then he was out. He really was dangerous. Jimmy Dunn replaced him as Ambassador.

We used to have a political appointee ambassador in Chile whose wife was Chilean and who spoke Spanish well, but as someone said, he was a bull in a china shop, who always brought his

china shop along with him.

Kemper, I would say, was the same type of person. They were hurting us much. Brazil had been our oldest ally and friend, because they were Portuguese and the other countries Spanish, they felt nearer to us. We had very close relations with Brazil.

Q: *Well, we had them even during the wars of independence.*

TRIMBLE: Yes.

Q: *I mean, it was one of the few places where we have never had any great difficulties.*

TRIMBLE: Yes. Dom Pedro Primeiro was our friend, and Dom Pedro Segundo came up here for the exhibition of 1876.

Q: *The Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, 1876.*

TRIMBLE: This is not part of the Kemper story, but I had a great-great-grandfather, who was Scottish -- born in Gibraltar. I think he got in some trouble in Gibraltar. I never knew what. But he went to Brazil, and into the coffee business. His name was Maxwell, and that is the Maxwell House Coffee today. Of course, it was sold many years later. He married a Brazilian girl, at the time of Dom Pedro Primeiro, who was the first emperor, not the second. My ancestor was a friend of his and then of Dom Pedro Segundo. So, when I went to Brazil, it was just after Vargas' suicide. I could say I too have Brazilian blood and ties going back to the period of Dom Pedro Primeiro, not just Segundo. That helped me a great deal.

**STANLEY I. GRAND**  
**Transportation Officer, USIS**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1955-1956)**

*Stanley I. Grand was born in New York, New York on August 7, 1920. He attended the University of Wisconsin and entered the Foreign Service in 1945 after a two-year tour with the U.S. Army. Mr. Grand served in Peru, Brazil, and Argentina. The interview was conducted in 1992 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

GRAND: I was 34 years old when I was integrated into the career Foreign Service as a Class-3 officer and sent abroad in 1955 to Brazil. I went there initially as a political officer in the Embassy but when I got there I was moved into the economic section as transportation officer and had the misfortune to run up against some strange human beings in the Embassy. The DCM and I didn't get along. Nor did I get along with the Counselor for Economic Affairs.

Q: *Could you explain what you mean by didn't get along, just to give a feel for the situation?*

GRAND: Basically I felt that I had a "none" job. I had gone down there as political officer, but

the DCM decided he wanted somebody else in the Embassy to be the political officer. I was put into a job which had really no significance. It didn't keep me very busy. I had a Brazilian secretary who handled most of the routine and when I left there I recommended that the job be eliminated. It was eliminated temporarily, but later restored. The man who was put into the job was willing to go along with this nonsense. He ultimately ended up as Ambassador to Brazil.

Q: *Who was that?*

GRAND: Jack Crimmins. Jack came to see me when he was going down to take the job and I said, "Jack, I told everybody then that my secretary could handle it. There is not enough work there." He had not been out in the field and had been integrated into the Foreign Service from a desk job in the intelligence area. He was anxious to get field experience and willing to take the job.

One of the things I did learn from that assignment, which may be useful for other people, is the importance of humor and how you can sometimes get things done in the Department by indirection. At that time the Ex-Im Bank was determined to make a loan to a railroad in Brazil. It was a loan which the Embassy had opposed because it was a silly loan. We had gone strongly on record as opposing the loan, but Ex-Im was determined to go ahead with it.

I decided the only way to do something about this was to ridicule the thing. So I wrote a long airgram to the State Department based on the startling fact that the railroad had gone for one full week without an accident. I made a very comical report on this that I knew everybody would laugh about. For the first time people weren't falling off the trains and getting killed.

It was, unlike much of the boring stuff that comes into the State Department, amusing and when something like that comes in it gets circulated. This went all over the place. As a consequence when the head of the Ex-Im Bank tried to bring it up to his Board to make a loan to this railroad, everybody laughed at him. The loan was defeated. That was the purpose of my airgram. Reason had failed but humor won.

Q: *How did this sit with the powers to be within the Embassy? Did they feel you were undercutting them?*

GRAND: No, no, quite to the contrary, the Embassy wanted that done. The Embassy had opposed that loan, so it was happy with the dispatch. Ex-Im was going off on their own.

However one of the problems I had with the Embassy resulted from a serious fight between the Brazilian government and the United States government over interpretation of a bilateral air agreement. They -- the Brazilians -- were interpreting the air agreement unilaterally and making Pan American do a dog-leg, which is kind of an off the route flight over a certain point saying that is what the agreement called for. Pan American had asked us to try to get the Brazilians to change it. We had gone through the normal procedure of sending in notes and meeting with people and the Brazilians weren't going to do anything about it.

One day I decided the hell with it. I had gotten to be friends with Ruben Beata, who was the

president of the Brazilian owned Varig airlines at that time. I was having lunch with him one day and I said, "Do you know, if this dog-leg business continues, since there is a provision in the agreement allowing you to make a non-revenue stop in Puerto Rico, we may just have to require that you do that on every flight you make to the United States." Beata said, "Is that serious?" And I said, "Yes, it is very serious and I think I may just have to recommend this to the Department." He was very upset and worried about this.

Very shortly, a couple of things happened. One, the Brazilians agreed to eliminate the dog-leg and two, my boss, the Counselor of Economic Affairs, asked me what had happened. So I told him. He said, "How did you dare do this on your own?" I said, "Well, it just seemed to be a way of getting something done." I then met with the DCM who also castigated me for doing this on my own and said that he was probably going to recommend a reprimand for me. Things got a little bit hairy. I then quietly met with the vice president for Pan American in Rio and told him what was happening. Shortly after that a communication came in from the State Department. The Secretary had received a letter from Juan Trippe, the president of Pan American Airlines, congratulating me and thanking the State Department for its action in eliminating the dog-leg. It didn't make me very popular in certain areas of the Embassy. But I didn't get a reprimand.

*Q: Who was the ambassador at that time?*

GRAND: Jimmy Dunn was the Ambassador. He had been Ambassador in Spain. Clare Boothe Luce, who had been Ambassador in Italy was supposed to go to Brazil, but during her hearings she accused Senator Wayne Morse of having been kicked in the head by a horse, which accounted for his erratic behavior. As a consequence her nomination was withdrawn and Dunn, who was on the point of retiring as Ambassador, was persuaded to come to Rio because the Department had to drop the Clare Boothe Luce nomination on a crash basis. He agreed to come over for a year.

**RICHARD P. BUTRICK**  
**Consul General**  
**Sao Paulo (1955-1959)**

*Richard P. Butrick was born in Lockport, New York in 1894. He joined the Consular Service in 1921. His career in the Foreign Service included positions in Chile, Ecuador, Canada, China, Brazil, and Washington, DC. Mr. Butrick was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1993.*

*Q: How long were you in Sao Paulo?*

BUTRICK: I was there until I retired. I also had a very nice assignment there. I moved our offices from a congested place downtown to a different area, as I had done in Montreal too. I don't have anything outstanding to say about Sao Paulo except that there were a lot of American business interests there. I was very close to the Chamber of Commerce. I attended all the

meetings, etc. They still send me their bulletins and their year book.

*Q: The Brazilians at that time felt very close to the United States and had sent a contingent into Italy during the war.*

BUTRICK: As a matter of fact, wherever I have been I never had any difficulty with the local people at all. I took them for what they were and tried to adapt myself as much as possible to them. I think it is wrong to try to force our particular type of civilization onto other people. If they like us and want to model themselves after us, that is fine, but to try to force our civilization onto them I think is wrong.

**G. LEWIS SCHMIDT**  
**Acting Public Affairs Officer, USIS**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1956-1957)**

*G. Lewis Schmidt began his career in the State Department in 1949 as a budget analyst for the U.S. Information and Education Program. His career included positions in Japan, Brazil, Washington, DC, Turkey, and Thailand. Mr. Schmidt was interviewed by Allen Hansen in 1988.*

*Q: In 1956, you were transferred from Tokyo to Rio, which was then the Capital of Brazil. What was it like then? You were the Deputy Director and Acting Director of USIS there.*

SCHMIDT: I was sent there as Deputy Director. My PAO was a man with a newspaper and radio background. I don't know if he first came into the Agency as an information man, or through VOA. At one time he was Program Director of the Voice of America but had gotten himself integrated under the Wriston program into the Department of State. His name was Jack Vebber. Then although he had become an FSO, State had assigned him back to USIA and became a PAO.

My experience in Brazil was relatively limited. I think you mentioned earlier I managed to contract polio after I had been down there only about seven or eight months and had to come out. My rehabilitation was so long that I never got back to Brazil in an official capacity.

However, it was an interesting time because the Soviet Communist Party Congress of 1956 -- I have forgotten which session it was of the USSR Communist party congress -- had only recently concluded. It was the occasion at which Khrushchev had given his speech denouncing Stalin; when he was making his effort to get the administration of the Communist Party out of some of its more restrictive doldrums and get the country moving -- an attempt by the way which ultimately ended in his overthrow.

But anyway, he had given this long speech. It had been taken down by the American Foreign Broadcast Service, and translated into English. We had an English copy. We were fortunate in Brazil in having on our staff of locals two or three top flight journalists who had come over from newspapers in Brazil to work for USIS.

The senior gentleman was named Roberto -- I have forgotten his last name now. The younger man who only recently retired from USIS in Brazil was Rodriguez. They both were quite fluent in English and exceedingly capable people. In fact, the whole Brazilian staff was almost as capable as the Japanese staff. I found that they were very high quality individuals, unusually well educated, very smart and very energetic, very innovative.

We went into a session shortly with Roberto whose English was perhaps a little more fluent than Rodriguez. He translated the entire Khrushchev speech into Portuguese. We published it in paperback format which we managed to get into a large number of the schools, universities, newspapers and magazines in Brazil.

At that time, Brazil had a very large communist party and a fairly influential one. I think to this day there is much left wing influence in Brazil despite the long term administration of the Army which only terminated a few years ago after running a dictatorial government for nine or ten years. But the communist influence really was effective in Brazil in my time there.

This move on our part among other things triggered a rather wide scale counter offensive on the part of communist sympathizers. Since a fair amount of the press had leftist leanings, they were getting a lot of material into the Brazilian papers. Furthermore, publications were not censored, and they had their own magazines and publications.

*Q: This is the Communist Party?*

SCHMIDT: The Communist Party, yes. I believe that when the Army took over about 10 or 12 years ago they suppressed the Communist Party. I do not know whether it is once more operating as a legal party. The CIA decided that something had to be done to counter this, and they orchestrated in conjunction with us the rather extensive program of anti-communist posters, newspaper placements, etc., exploiting the weaknesses of the Soviet government as exposed by the Khrushchev speech.

*Q: You are referring strictly to information activities I gather.*

SCHMIDT: I am referring strictly to information activities just now. In fact, during the relatively short period I was there, most of my efforts personally were directed toward the information -- media -- side of the program.

We did have a very large cultural center in Rio. It was one of the Binational centers of which there are a great many, not only in Brazil, but all over Latin America. These centers were begun originally under the Institute of Inter-American affairs (IIA) that began operating as early as 1937-38 in that area under the direction of Nelson Rockefeller. They were known as Binational Centers, because they were designed to engage the joint participation of the U.S. and host country leaders. They are directed by binational boards, composed usually of equal numbers of prominent local leaders and resident Americans.

Most of this effort took place after I was forced to leave Brazil. However, the Center in Rio was

already a prominent force in the community long before my arrival. Many of the USIS cultural activities were staged in or through the centers. This was especially true of the exchange programs -- not only important visitors, and exchange scholars, but also visiting performing arts groups. Although USIS contributed personnel and money to their operations, they were not directly part of USIA/USIS. USIS generally placed Agency-contracted personnel in the centers as Center Directors, and in the larger ones, one or two other similarly employed Americans as well. They were paid by the Agency, which also contributed some operational funds, but the ultimate policy control had to rest with the center's board. Furthermore, the centers were only partially dependent on USIS financial aid. They developed much of their own operating costs through an enormous English Language teaching program. John Ewing either personally, or with the aid of assistants, produced most of the teaching manuals used for the program throughout Latin America.

But getting back to my activities jointly with the CIA, I must explain that in those days there was occasional collaboration between USIS and CIA in the so-called gray areas -- never in the "black." CIA had ways of getting materials into certain media outlets, and had distribution channels not available to us. In this particular instance we mounted a large scale effort which was supposed to be choreographed pretty much by the Political Section of the embassy. But since they didn't have experience in the case of informational operations, USIS people were the ones who were putting the informational products together.

The part that the Political Section was playing was to advise us, and keep the Brazilian government advised as to what we were doing, making sure that we were not going beyond the bounds of what the Brazilian government would approve. An amusing situation took place during that period. Many of the old line Foreign Service personnel of the State Department of that time still held the pre-war and early post-war attitude toward USIA; i.e. that we were second class citizens, really didn't know how to operate very well abroad and needed the guidance of more sagacious Foreign Service people.

The Political Counselor at that time was a man by the name of Eric Wendelyn, who was a typical holder of that old view. The Ambassador was Ellis Briggs. Briggs was a very fine gentleman and he was always warmly hospitable to me personally. Yet, I could always detect a feeling that he somehow didn't quite trust anyone with Foreign Service duties who hadn't come up through the old guard Foreign Service chain.

Just before we entered fully into this cooperative venture with CIA, our PAO, Jack Vebber, was suddenly called to be Deputy Chief of Mission in Guatemala. Once again, on short notice, I became Acting PAO, this time in Brazil. The time was somewhere near the middle of October, 1956.

Anyway, we were in the middle stages of planning for the joint USIA/CIA effort, and so, I was asked to attend a meeting designed to discuss details. Eric Wendelyn was there, along with the DCM, and the Station Chief (as the head of CIA was known). He and I had become close friends. He was a well educated man who looked the part of the patrician that he was, but had no airs. He was easy to know and work with. Eric started to outline the course of action to be followed, then turned to me, who was orchestrating the information side of the effort, and said

condescendingly, "You know, of course, what we are trying to do here, don't you?" I thought, well -- you know I could have made a very sarcastic remark, but for once figured discretion was the better part of valor, so I just said, "Yes, I am quite aware of it," and let it go at that. But that little exchange illustrates the attitude many old line diplomats held toward USIS and USIA.

However, personally, we got along very well. In fact, I got along well with almost everyone in the Embassy. USIS helped publicize projects such as the construction of a large dam that was to be the driving power for a major electrical generating plant. This was a project of the predecessor of AID (I have forgotten by what designation it operated then), and I became a very close friend of the program Director, Howard Cottam. Howard was the first Foreign Service Officer to hold the double job as Counselor of Embassy for Economic Affairs and Director of the AID operation in Brazil. This dual assignment was tried several times in different countries later, with varying degrees of success. I don't know of any such arrangement in recent times. Howard was a highly capable and cooperative man, very friendly toward USIS, who often helped USIA in various ways. He was a few years later America's first Ambassador to Kuwait when it became an independent country. Unhappily, he died of cancer two or three years ago.

*Q: Were you fluent in the language?*

SCHMIDT: I didn't know any Portuguese when I went to Brazil. I was transferred directly from Japan. I did know a fair amount of Japanese and got around pretty well in Japan at that time. But Portuguese was something else again. I was studying Portuguese and trying to become reasonably fluent. I had just reached the point where, although I was not yet able to carry on extensive conversations on important matters, I at least could carry on in ordinary social conversations and get myself around satisfactorily.

Then, I was stricken with polio in January of 1957. At first they thought I would recover quickly. It didn't happen that way. I was there for a month after that, first in the hospital and then at my residence. Even when I was taken back stateside I thought that I was going to be able to go back to Brazil. I didn't know how long it was going to take to get rehabilitated. So I got back to Washington; from there I was sent out to Seattle. My parents were still living at that time and had returned from Alaska to Seattle. I entered the Northwest Respirator Center which was in Seattle's Harbor-view Hospital.

In any event, my rehabilitation, before I could come back to work, took about seven or eight months; so I never returned to Brazil. USIA had to send down both a director and a deputy director finally. Johnny McKnight ultimately became the PAO down there, but Steve Baldanza was sent down first as deputy PAO until McKnight arrived. He and Johnny didn't get along, and Steve was subsequently transferred out of Brazil.

**JOHN HUGH CRIMMINS**  
**Transportation/Communications Attaché**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1956-1960)**

*Ambassador John Hugh Crimmings was born on November 26, 1919 in Massachusetts. He received his BA from Harvard University in 1941. He served in the U.S. Army as a 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant of artillery from 1941 to 1946. Upon joining the Foreign Service in 1955, he served in many countries throughout his career including Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Brazil. Ambassador Crimmings was interviewed by Ashley Hewitt, Jr. on May 10, 1989.*

*Q: How old were you at this time?*

CRIMMINGS: I was born in 1919, so that would be 36. I went to the War College and then was sent from there to Rio as the transportation/communications attaché. I spent four years in Rio as the first secretary in the economic section in that capacity. Came back as Deputy Director of Caribbean and Mexican Affairs in ARA, when Ed Valen died very suddenly in September. I came back in late July of '61. When Ed died in September of '61, I became the acting director, and after I was promoted in the end of '61, I became the director. I couldn't get promoted because I wasn't senior enough. I couldn't get the full title because I wasn't senior enough. So that takes me to '62.

I was Director of Caribbean and Mexican Affairs until January 1963, when I was sent to Miami to set up the Miami Office of the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, a position that had just been established. I was there until May of '63, when I came back and became the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, replacing Sterling Catrell, who had the job for the first two months or so.

I was Coordinator of Cuban Affairs until January of '66, when I was sent to Santa Domingo to take over from Tapley Bennett. This was eight months after the revolution. I went down first as DCM and then became chargé when Tap left in April, becoming ambassador in June of 1966.

*Q: Do you think, John, that he went ahead with the Bay of Pigs thing kind of against his will or against his better judgment, or had he been convinced that that might work and this was the thing to do to solve the problem?*

CRIMMINGS: I was in Brazil at the time of the Bay of Pigs. I thought it was disastrous when I heard about it the first time in Brazil. But this is before it failed. I just thought it was a very bad mistake.

But anyway, my own belief--and this is colored by the regard I had for the President--I think he did it against his better judgment. I just wonder sometimes whether he was reluctant to take on all the vested interest that had been developed around this effort, whether he wasn't a little timid about challenging something that was well entrenched.

*Q: Meaning the agency, the Defense Department?*

CRIMMINGS: The Defense Department and the soft-on-Cuba, no-guts kind of atmosphere that becomes established, which certainly, I think, in recent years has been resurrected, you know, that you're not tough enough.

So I think that it was against his better judgment. My reading of the history supports this, but it's a debatable question, I can see, I can recognize.

*Q: When did the intense involvement of yourself and the US really begin? With the assassination or before the assassination of Trujillo did it become tense?*

CRIMMINS: As I said, I didn't come back from Brazil until July of '61, so that was two months after the assassination. I wasn't involved in the antecedents to the assassination, but I read the accounts. Henry Dearborn probably could tell you enough, more about the degree of involvement than I could.

I think the US involvement goes back to the 1959-60 period, when Trujillo was becoming more and more--what shall I say?--irrational, the attacks on Betancourt and the consequent sanctions that were levied by the OAS against him. We were very actively involved in that. In other words, there was a shift in the late '50s, so far as I could determine, from policy by passivity, to toleration of Trujillo. But the 1959-60 period marked a change.

*Q: That says something about the mentality of the Brazilians.*

CRIMMINS: This is true. He considered Ellsworth to be [Spanish phrase, phonetically *inesencial uchio*.] And Braga took his place. I want to say Olympio, but it wasn't Olympio. Anyway, he was the hard-liner, the simplistic type who looked upon all constitutionalists as reds. I mean, just by definition, communists. He was still there.

Of course, I made all my calls. I went down as DCM because the desire was that Tap would leave at a quiet moment, because there was concern that if he left in the middle of a crisis, this would reflect on him, but more importantly on the judgment of the White House, etc., etc., etc. It got a little sticky because I had my own DCM coming, Frank Divine, who arrived two weeks after I did. We made him a special assistant to the ambassador. He went to live with his wife and kids in the DCM house. I was staying in the guest wing of the residence, and there were all sorts of rumors about this. Given LBJ's temperament, it was impossible to acknowledge anything. (Laughter) So there were all sorts of white lies told about all of this arrangement.

I took over in April. From a substantive point of view, at that time [Hector] Garcia-Godoy was the provisional president, the head of the provisional government, and I had enormous respect for Hector Garcia-Godoy.

*Q: Sort of a transcendental track two.*

CRIMMINS: That's right. In my experience, I have never run into a situation in the field, even the Dominican Republic or Brazil, as chief of mission, ambassador, that I did not feel that I was capable of ascertaining the answer to any question that I put, and, moreover, was the beneficiary of candor on the part of potentially maverick elements of the embassy. There was one attaché in Brazil that went off the deep end, but that was a special case.

To go back to the Dominican Republic, the relations with the US military and the agency, I told you about. With respect to the Dominican Republic, I touched on our relationship with the Dominican military, a relationship that was greatly assisted by the very fine work of Van Joslyn, the Marine colonel who was the head of the MAAG, who had a particularly effective relationship with the Secretary of Defense, Peres C. Peres, and who was an absolutely faithful executor of tasks that were put to him by me and by Frank Divine as the DCM and the chargé when I was in there.

So you had the elections. The development effort was central during the rest of the period. I had very good people, had a huge staff. We started to cut it down right away after the elections. By the time I left in '69, it was probably half of the size that it started. Just to illustrate the problem, when I took over, there were 26 legal attachés in the embassy, FBI types. (Laughter) They were very happy. They were down to two in a couple of months, and down to one very shortly thereafter. They were happy. They were sent when LBJ was desperate for information about what was going on in the Dominican Republic.

To continue with the development thing, not only were we providing funds into the AID program, but we were giving the Dominican Republic special treatment on the sugar quotas. This was a hard fight with Washington on the sugar quotas, particularly. It was easy to get AID money, which was slow disbursing, but the sugar money was right there. We had a tremendous fight in Washington--Linc Gordon, particularly--on devaluation of the Dominican peso.

*Q: No, let's change countries. This is a time when two other issues, which occupied the attention of a lot of commentators and writers since, were sort of getting under way, and that's the dirty wars in Argentina and in Brazil. Do you have any thoughts on that subject that you would like to share?*

CRIMMINS: Of course, in Argentina, the dirty war in earnest didn't start until 1973-74 with Perón. In Brazil, however, we had the severe repression that was going on.

*Q: 1970.*

CRIMMINS: That's right. Was that before or after Chile? Well, anyway, with respect to Brazil--let's start with Brazil. The Institutional Act of December '69--wasn't that right? Was it December '69 or December '68?

*Q: I think it was December '68.*

CRIMMINS: Yes, '68. When I arrived in ARA, it was an issue. I, for one, was very concerned about the repression, and particularly our heavy involvement in our AID program. You will recall that we were providing, in effect, a balance-of-payments assistance to Brazil at the clip of about \$100 million-plus a year, which in those days was an awful lot of money. I was uncomfortable with this in light of the effects of Institutional Act number five and the full-fledged dictatorship that it represented and the increasing reports of torture and other abuses of human rights that were occurring.

We were getting all sorts of intelligence reports of torture being used against prisoners. It was interesting that the military was very reluctant to accept this.

*Q: Our military.*

CRIMMINS: Our military. Because they did not believe that the Brazilian Army was capable of doing this. It took quite a bit of convincing for them to accept the validity of the reports. The agency was very forthright about this. They were reporting straight all the time, and it was in almost all the reports establishing the widespread use of severe torture. This wasn't just electrical shocks; this was the real medieval stuff. It was the agency that established this. As I said, the military were sort of reluctant to do this.

Bill Rountree was the ambassador. He came up, I guess, in 1970 at some point, to testify on Brazil. There was a Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee hearing or set of hearings on Brazil, and Rountree came up. We had some discussion with him about not gilding the lily with respect to Brazil. But I think, in effect, he did. For some reason, I was not asked to testify. Charlie didn't testify that I know of. Bob Dean, who was a country director at the time, did testify briefly, I think, and had, of course, a lot to do with the preparation of the briefing papers for Rountree's appearance. But there was a reluctance, certainly on the part of Rountree, to make much of an issue of the increasing repression in Brazil.

We in ARA--I, with Charlie's approval--were moving toward stopping our AID program in Brazil. Eventually, in early 1973, we did stop it. We had another justification. It was at this time that Delfim Neto, the finance minister of Brazil, was boasting all over the world about how well the Brazilian economy was doing, and it certainly was, and how strong Brazilian reserves were. Well, it was, on its face, pretty absurd to be continuing balance-of-payments assistance to a country whose finance minister was boasting about the amount of foreign exchange reserves they had. So these two things coincided nicely, and we made a decision through the IG in early 1973 to make no further loans to Brazil. The pipeline at that time was almost a quarter of a billion dollars, as I recall--\$200 million, it was. So there was a lot to draw down and there were lots of problems, loans that were problems, that were not being disbursed. So I, in effect, arrived in Brazil having participated importantly in the decision to stop the program.

*Q: This was when you became ambassador.*

CRIMMINS: Yes. This was about six months before I became ambassador when the decision was taken. But that decision was powerfully influenced by the repression in Brazil.

Now, one thing that has to be borne in mind with respect to the whole human rights situation in this period and also in the period when I was in Brazil, is that the Congress was well in the lead of the executive branch on human rights matters. With AID, who, of course, wanted to continue the AID program--certainly the AID mission in Brazil did--one could point to the great difficulty of getting congressional approval for any continuation of AID programs as a reason for not going ahead. So this is the old business of using the Congress as the lever to get things done. Of course, with foreign countries, this was a common technique to say, "Unless you shape up, the Congress simply is not going to permit us to do such and such." In other words, the executive branch's

hands were being kept clean and the Congress was taking the blame, but the result was a useful one.

Now, on Uruguay. I'm very vague about this. I remember the overthrow of Bordaberry and the Mitrione business, which I was very heavily involved in. I recall very few details of it.

*Q: Let's leave it aside and move on to some other things. I do want to ask you a question which may be unfair, because it's really philosophical speculation. Something that has puzzled me and has puzzled a lot of people who are observers of Latin America is that the kind of human rights problems, torture and violence and repression that sometimes happens, somehow doesn't come as a surprise in some countries in Central America or Paraguay or Bolivia, or maybe even Argentina. But a lot of people were kind of deeply surprised and shocked that this should occur in Brazil. Is this surprise due to, in fact, a misunderstanding of Brazilian character? Or was it, indeed, a surprise to the Brazilians themselves? Was it an aberration of some sort?*

CRIMMINS: This is still hotly debated in Brazil. For my four years that I spent in Brazil before, I was surprised, but I think the military in Latin America, given their power, have to be looked upon as something different from the society as a whole. So there was a loophole, let's say, in that sense. But the security forces under [Getúlio] Vargas, for example, in the Vargas dictatorship, particularly in the '30s and '40s, were very rough and people were tortured and died under torture in that period. So Brazil is not without a tradition, let's say, a bloody tradition of this kind. There are a lot of people who say that there are dark recesses in the Brazilian psyche that produce this kind of thing. Certainly they are more recessed, they are far deeper down and not mobilizeable, let's say, anywhere nearly so easily as they are in Central America and other parts of the continent. But they are there.

I think that one of the reasons why our military were reluctant to accept the evidence of Army involvement in this was in part influenced by this. There was, of course, the institutional interest in not having the relationship disturbed by people who would not approve of close ties with a repressive institution, but in addition to that, I think just said, "They're not constituted that way. Their approaches are different."

*Q: "They're honorable soldiers and they fought with us in World War II."*

CRIMMINS: That's right. Of course, one has to bear in mind that among, let's say, the big four of torturism and repressors--that is, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile--Brazil by far had fewer instances of torturees per thousand or disappeared. I remember very well a conversation with President Geisel, with \_\_\_\_\_ present, in which Geisel volunteered the comment that the Argentines were just crazy. Bodies were washing up in the Plata estuary, all over, and it was just incredible to him that this was happening. This doesn't excuse the widespread repression that occurred particularly in the '68 to '73 period, but it was on a considerably smaller scale, both absolutely and relatively, in terms of population, to go back to your torturees per thousand, than it was in Uruguay, Argentina, or Chile.

On Chile, of course--and I believe this to be true--received sort of technical assistance from Brazilian security forces right after the coup of 1973. So the Chileans may have learned some

lessons, even though they went much farther than the Brazilians did. The Brazilians certainly were content to provide assistance to them.

*Q: You are entirely correct there, John, because I used to come to them quite often, not regularly to every one, but I came. Mary Brownell used to come now and then.*

CRIMMINS: That's right. I take it back. Mary Brownell used to come to the ones that I would be chairing. That's right. I take it back. She did. I take it back. Treasury would always attend, I must say, but they always had a negative brief.

Just a brief note about the CASP in the field. When I was in Brazil, I found the annual CASP exercise to be a very useful one, and I ascribed a great deal of importance to it and insisted that everybody participate fully. For me, it was, again, an opportunity--and this, in a way, was even more useful than it had been to me in the policy position in the Department--it was an opportunity to have everybody think very clearly and very hard about what we were trying to do in Brazil, again to use the CASP terminology, what were truly our interests and what truly were the goals and the objectives that flowed from those interests. It was of great use to me in clarifying to myself what we should be about and, I think, to the others.

I used to have the CASP read periodically by the people, and for new arrivals, as I recall, I used to insist that they read the CASP when they came so that they would be clued in, would have some framework, some intellectual structure with which to become acquainted with the efforts of the embassy in Brazil. On that point, I always used to try to get the section chiefs to involve their junior officers in the process and, so far as I'm concerned, they did that. A lot of people complained eventually that it was elaborate, it was too time consuming, and it's been replaced by much simplified pieces of paper, none of which, it seems to me, has demonstrated the usefulness that the CASP had.

On the resource question, I think we are agreed that it wasn't effective as a means of assessing relative allocations of resources, but in terms of establishing what we should be doing in a country, I think it was first class.

*Q: Let's move on to your ambassadorship in Brazil, which was your final assignment.*

CRIMMINS: That's right.

*Q: What were the main issues that you struggled with during your period in Brazil? What were the main challenges?*

CRIMMINS: To be somewhat oversimplified, there were three big issues during the nearly five years that I was in Brazil. The first one, the first and continuous one, were economic differences between us and Brazil. The second was the nuclear proliferation question. The third was the human rights question. All of these were highly controverted, some more emotional than others.

To begin with the economic ones, given the intricacy of the economic web that joins us in Brazil, disputes between the two countries are inevitable. I was never really terribly depressed about the

continuing and constant economic conflicts between us and Brazil, because they all revolved around trade questions. To me, such questions, by their very nature, are resolvable through compromise of one kind or another, and they lend themselves to, let's say, classical treatment.

We had some severe economic issues revolving around dumping and duties of shoes, but these were, to me, manageable. They were difficult, but they were manageable through the exercise of the classic instruments involved in relationships--negotiation, diplomacy, mutual understanding, give and take. Those persisted. They persisted in various forms throughout the four and three-quarters years.

The nuclear proliferation question was of a different sort and much more intense and, in effect, unresolvable. As I used to say, there were high interests involved, high interest of ours and high interests of the Brazilians involved, and these were not susceptible to compromise. One side or the other had to give, or time had to change the terms of the problem.

The nuclear question arose in dramatic form, of course, when the Brazilians and the West Germans signed the nuclear treaty of 1975, June of 1975. The negotiations between Brazil and the Germans go back, to my knowledge, to 1969, when scientific and technological exchange agreements were initiated. There is evidence in the intelligence record that nuclear questions were advanced at that time. Some of the Brazilian personalities who later were very important in the nuclear question were stationed in Germany.

One of the critical events occurred in June of '74, when the US Government, in effect, said it could not guarantee the supply of enriched uranium to many of the purchases lined up for this. This was used by, let's say, the pro-German group as a justification for turning to the Germans for enriched uranium for the power reactors that Brazil wanted.

We had some insights into the negotiations that were going on. I think a fundamental mistake was made when in the early part of 1975 a decision was made in Washington not to invoke political arguments with the Germans against the relationship with Brazil, but, instead, to handle this at a technical level. My own understanding always was that Henry Kissinger was simply not concerned about nuclear proliferation. On the Indian explosion, no action was taken, I think, as I always understood, because Kissinger did not think it was that significant. I think his position changed, especially when the Pakistanis got involved with this sort of thing. But I think this carried over into the Brazilian thing, that he was not prepared to spend political capital with the West Germans on this issue.

This is the kind of question that an ambassador in Brazil is in no position to dispute. I mean, but in hindsight, I think we might have been able to prevent some of the worst proliferatory aspects of the treaty if political investment had been made. As it was, at the technical level, the agreement was tightened up. The Germans did agree to tighten it up. But in any case, we made known our concerns about this to the Germans. We did not take it up with the Brazilians. All of our efforts were directed at the Germans to try to get them to lay off. As I say, no political inputs were made in that effort. An agreement was signed in June of '75 and was hailed as a triumph for Brazil, a historic triumph. *Monchechi* had a headline up, "[Portuguese phrase]." There was a

whole lot of expectation that this was going to lead to a nuclear explosive capability on the part of Brazil. There were safeguards in the treaty.

*Q: Do you think that was ever a Brazilian intention?*

CRIMMINS: Oh, yes. Yes, I'm satisfied that in some sectors, military sectors--and this was, in effect, admitted to me indirectly by the military.

*Q: Because they saw some strategic purpose in it, or merely as an example of manifest destiny?*

CRIMMINS: Prestige. They used to argue, there was a military argument, and this was made by a fairly senior general to one of my attachés, that if Argentina--they were very concerned about Argentina's evolution. Of course, Argentina was well ahead of Brazil at this time in this direction. If Argentina, over the \_\_\_\_\_ problem, threatened to bomb \_\_\_\_\_, I mean, this was the thinking, Brazil had to have some deterrent to prevent this. Even wilder than this was belief that Brazil could not--this is a *force de frappe* thing--Brazil could not depend on the United States to protect it, Brazil, from a nuclear threat from the Soviet Union, so Brazil had to have its own. This was seriously--well, I don't know how seriously, but this was again advanced to another attaché. But anyway, I'm satisfied that there were sectors in the military who looked upon this as a means of developing the technological capability to make a bomb. The pacing of this would depend on when Argentina did.

One of the things that was most worrisome was the popular belief that this did mean that Brazil was going to get the bomb and get it soon. And there was no discouragement of this, no authoritative discouragement of this popular belief by the government, which, you know, was significantly strengthened by the public euphoria that accompanied this thing.

Well, the US was obviously very unhappy about this, and this was a major breach in the non-proliferation regime. The continuation of this sort of unrestrained provision by West Germany of this kind of technology that involved enrichment and reprocessing down the line was looked upon in Washington as compromising the whole non-proliferation regime. The Brazilian-German agreement, which I don't think is repeatable, I don't think that it could be done again under the strengthened suppliers group ground rules, but at that time there were whole series of efforts on the multilateral-international plane taken to try to tighten up because of the Brazilian-West German agreement.

In the campaign of 1976 and continuing in the Congress, there was attention being paid to this question. The Brazilian-German agreement was strongly criticized by [President Jimmy] Carter as it had been in the Congress sort of bipartisan before. The Brazilians were very conscious of this criticism. At the same time--I'll get ahead of the story a little bit--the Carter campaign was criticizing the human rights record in Brazil.

The combination of the Carter references and pressure from the Congress, particularly, led, in October of '76, to a major policy statement by the Ford Administration, a statement that came out of the White House, on non-proliferation and the plutonium regime and all that kind of thing. It was a very strong, strong statement. We made that statement available to all relevant authorities

in Brazil, and they just shrugged it off. For one thing, they were confident that Ford was going to win the election, and they were confident that Henry Kissinger, because of his "close friendship" with Silveira, the foreign minister, and his special ties to Brazil which they thought existed, would protect them from any problems of this kind.

The election came out, of course, the way it did, but my point about the Ford statement is that the Carter policy was essentially the same as the Ford policy, as set out in that October '76 statement.

The Brazilians were shocked that Carter won. There had been all sorts of negative inferences to Carter from official circles in Brazil before the election. The Brazilians were quite unashamed about their partisanship in the election. So when the election finally was held, there was a sense of shock and sort of a digging in of heels on the nuclear question.

The situation was really compounded, or aggravated severely, by an unwise statement that came out of the vice president's plane returning from Germany just before the inauguration. This was the vice president-elect. The statement was attributed to a senior person, who was obviously [Walter] Mondale, that we were going to do something about this and we had raised this question with Brazil and we had gotten no satisfaction, or something like that, but we were going to pursue it. Well, the simple fact was, as I pointed out right away to Washington, we had never raised this with Brazil, in keeping with the strategy of working with the West Germans rather than Brazil, that strategy being based in the belief that we couldn't do anything with Brazil.

The Brazilians reacted very negatively to that statement, and then as one of the first efforts under the new administration, Warren Christopher came down to Brazil in late February, early March of '77, to discuss this with them. His visit was preceded by all sorts of stories planted by the Brazilian administration, particularly the Foreign Ministry, about pressures that Brazil was expecting and the determination of Brazil to resist these pressure, etc., etc., etc.

The meetings were held. There were five or six or seven hours of meetings held at the foreign minister level. There was a general exploration. There were no threats or anything else, contrary to the subsequent treatment in the Brazilian press. Christopher was very, very, very good. He conducted this extremely well--extremely well, it seemed to me. We explained why we were concerned about this and why we hoped that the Brazilians would adopt comprehensive safeguards for all their nuclear activities. We explained the legislative prohibitions that existed in our foreign assistance acts. The Brazilian authorities put out the line that this was a great triumph for Brazil, that they had resisted all sorts of pressures from the United States. There was even a story that was picked up by the *Washington Post* and put on the front page, which infuriated me, that Christopher was not seen off by anybody at the airport, as an act of disrespect or something like that. The simple fact was that Christopher was leaving on a 4:00 a.m. plane. The secretary general, who was his opposite number of the Foreign Ministry, said, "I'll be out at the airport to see him off."

I said, "Romero, I'm sure he wouldn't want you to be out there at 4:00. Please don't come."

He said, "Would you check with Christopher?"

I said, "Sure. I know what he'll say. He's a very, very low key, laid back kind of guy and doesn't like this protocol stuff." And I did check with Christopher, and he said, "No, no. I don't want anybody there."

So I went back to Romero and he said, "Are you sure?"

I said, "Absolutely. He said please don't come." So he didn't come. The chief of protocol came at 4:00, which was fine with us. Then the press picked this up, and the *Post's* correspondent--I've forgotten his name, Murray somebody or other--wrote that this was a terrible affront to Christopher. The denials never caught up with the story. It was amazing. For two years after that, I'd come to Washington and people would tell me, "Oh, but they were really awful to Christopher. They really insulted Christopher, didn't they?" You know, it just didn't . . .

But this was a big, big problem, and there was really no give on either side on this question. I mean, the non-proliferation regime was too important to our global interest, really, for us to do more than nibble at the edges of the situation, and the Brazilians had their backs up, their principal argument--and it's a legitimate one--was that they were going to develop the technology. They needed this technology if they were going to be a major power. Of course, they insisted then, and insist now, that their purpose is purely peaceful. At that time, we were very concerned that there was down the line a desire to establish the capability of building an explosive. I'm satisfied that that was the case and remains the case. That does not mean that they're going to build a bomb. Everything, in good part, depends upon what Argentina does. But you know, it's unlike the situation in South Asia, the India-Pakistan thing. There is no security reason for Brazil or Argentina to develop a weapon.

*Q: Or the Iraqi-Israeli thing.*

CRIMMINS: The Iraqi-Israeli thing. There are real security problems in those areas, but they do not exist--and it's a question of national prestige. I mean, to Brazil--and this goes back to basic national security doctrine in Brazil, as elaborated in the first instance by the I \_\_\_\_\_ Superio \_\_\_\_\_, this is a hallmark. This capability is a hallmark of a major power. And in those days, Brazil had, with every reason, to believe--with good reasons--the goal of becoming a second tier power sometime in the early 21st century. But this, as I say, was one of the hallmarks, along with a certain level of population and \_\_\_\_\_ ese thinking.

Now, the Brazilian nerves were very raw about the nuclear thing. They were worked up about it. A lot of phony stuff issued, planted by the government about this. Then the human rights question intervened.

*Q: We'll deal with that.*

CRIMMINS: Let me say this. The human rights and I in Brazil go back to October of '74 when the G-2 in the section of the 4th Army in Recife imprisoned and tortured an American citizen named Morris--I've forgotten his first name--who had been a Methodist missionary at one point, then stringer for *Time* at another point, sort of a small businessman at that time, well connected with some of the opposition sectors in the MDB [Movimento Democrático Brasileiro] in Brazil,

and was known to D\_\_\_\_\_ Del Camra. We had known that the security apparatus had its eye on him because our consul in Recife at that time, Richard Brown, had been told this. Brown said he wanted to be kept informed about any investigations they were conducting, something like that.

Anyway, they picked him up, tortured him. We knew that he was missing. Rich Brown made all sorts of inquiries all over, including to the G-2 section of the 4th Army. He got absolute negatives from everybody: "We don't have him." "We don't have him." "We don't have him." I was away in the Amazon when this was going on. I came back. Diego Asencio was my political counselor at the time. He met me at the airport when I came back and said, "I think we have a dead one." He was really concerned that Morris had been killed.

They had been talking to the Foreign Ministry about getting access to him, and we finally did get access to him. It turned out that he had been tortured and had been held by the G-2, contrary to-- well, I was very upset about this, very concerned about it. I thought that this was almost a deliberate effort to take us on on this kind of question, and interestingly enough, many Brazilians--I don't know how many, but well-informed Brazilians thought that this, in fact, was an effort on the part of the 4th Army to challenge Golbeidi and Geisel on the D\_\_\_\_\_ Arbetora effort that they were undertaking. This was a signal from the notoriously hard-lined 4th Army that things were not going to be that easy.

In any case, I sent a very strong note to the Foreign Ministry demanding access to him and demanding medical treatment, etc., etc., etc. To make a long story short, the Army was furious. Of course, the 4th Army commander, who was caught out in this, was enraged that anybody would have the temerity to do this, and the minister of the Army, Frota, seconded this.

We had been under heavy pressure from the press about what was going on with this guy. He was well known, and the whole incident came to the attention of the press, and all American correspondents were calling us. I authorized statements to be made to the press that this is what happened. Of course, this all became public. The Army, it turned out, Frota wanted me to be PNGed, but the Foreign Ministry and Geisel, obviously, thought this was be a little much.

Now, that's '74. To bring this up to '76, in January of '77, for the first time, all the country human rights reports had to be made to the Congress.

*Q: Under the Carter Administration?*

CRIMMINS: It was done under the Ford Administration. The amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act was done in June of '76. This was in the Ford Administration. In fact, the reports were done during the Ford Administration. The Carter Administration, so far as I know, had nothing to do with the preparation of the reports. You know how it works.

*Q: Right.*

CRIMMINS: Well, the Brazilians, whose nerves, as I said earlier, were raw because of the nuclear thing, reacted very violently to this, the government did. I was summoned. We delivered a copy of the report on a Friday afternoon, about 4:00, the first time Dave Simcox could get an

appointment over there. We decided that we had to deliver the report. We were given leeway by the Department on this thing to deliver it or not. It was going to be made public. "It's going to be delivered to the Congress on Friday and could well be made public by the Congress on Saturday."

I decided we had to tell the Brazilians because the last thing that I wanted was to have the \_\_\_\_\_ *Sao Paulo* bureau in Washington sending this thing down, having it appear in full text in the \_\_\_\_\_ *Sao Paulo* on Sunday and take them by surprise. They knew this was coming. We had told them often that this was going to be done.

So we decided to do it, and we got our copy on Friday in the pouch and delivered it to the Foreign Ministry Friday afternoon. Saturday morning at 9:00, I was summoned to the Foreign Ministry, which was extraordinary, and told that they were, in effect, renouncing all military assistance from us.

To open the parenthesis here, the Brazilians' sort of conspiratorial theories thought at first that we had deliberately planned to ruin their weekend--no kidding!--by delivering this at 4:00. (Laughter) We privately set them straight on that, and I think they finally came around to believing that we were not that malicious. But anyway, they were terribly exercised about this--terribly exercised! And they went so far as to cut their own throats in their total renunciation. They suddenly discovered they weren't going to be able to get any spares for their F-5s and that sort of thing, and the Air Force was beside themselves. They didn't understand. This was all done by Frota, and they were not very happy about it to begin with.

Anyway, the human rights thing led to the renunciation of the military assistance, and eventually to the abrogation of the agreements that had produced the joint Brazil-US Military Commission, neither of which was a great loss. In fact, all the time that I was there, we used to debate constantly whether we should politely and gradually phase out of the joint Brazil relationship. Interestingly enough, the Brazilians were doing the same thing. The joint staff did a study after Geisel came in, at Geisel's behest, and they came to the conclusion that the agreement really had no benefit from Brazil and it might as well be terminated. Geisel, we knew, said, "Well, I agree. That's right. But I don't want to take the initiative in this. Maybe it will work out and we can just let it go under the right circumstances in a friendly way."

Our position was essentially the same, too. Of course, the Pentagon was interested in this because it had a major general's billet, for one thing. It was a relic of the war and of the "50s and was all tied up with the mystique of the Brazilian expeditionary force that had produced the first co-chairman of the commission.

My point here is that the military relationship was obsolete, really, was antiquated, and the Brazilians felt it was paternalistic. I certainly agreed. We were getting into all sorts of complicated questions of insisting, under the regulations and the law, that the Brazilians had to account for every jeep that had been given them under the grant programs back 15 years before. It was just a mess, and it was becoming very irritating to both sides. So it was no loss, but the Brazilians used this as a means of demonstrating their annoyance and their independence. To raise this to a high policy plane, this was very consistent with the foreign policy of the Geisel-

Silveira period. There was a desire, to me consistent with Brazilian history since the mid-"50s, except for the aberration of the Castelo Branco period, the two or three years of Castelo Branco, a desire for greater leeway, greater elbow room with respect to us, a thrust toward an independent foreign policy.

*Q: In Latin America, as well.*

CRIMMINS: In Latin America, but particularly pronounced in Brazil. This strong trend began in Brazil in the middle "50s, was given structure and firm direction in the Geisel-Silveira period. Silveira got the job, I think, because of a basic paper that he wrote, which I never saw but I can imagine what it said, because in speeches his position became clear, no automatic alignment. There were a whole series of, in effect, slogans. "No automatic alignment, ecumenicism in foreign policy. Brazil is of the West, but not an ally of the United States." We were not allies, which I believed very firmly. The Brazilian posture was, I think, a very correct one and, from their point of view, one that was befitting for a country that had made so much progress and was emerging on the world scene.

So the breakup of the military relationship would have been inevitable. It was messy this way and modestly traumatic. So those were the three big issues. They were running questions. But to repeat, the economic issues, the trade issues were persistent and had nothing to do with, let's say, the basic Brazilian foreign policy posture. They were defending their economic interests and we were defending ours. This led to the frictions and conflicts. But those conflicts were resolvable, in my view, by sensible use of the normal instruments of diplomacy.

The nuclear thing was a very special situation, one which did not lend itself to a resolution and still has not lent itself to a resolution.

The human rights question was, in effect, anachronistic when it began, as the human rights report that created the immediate issue demonstrated. In the report there were very positive references to the influence of Geisel in reining in the security apparatus. The flap over the human rights situation was, to me, a consequence of the great Brazilian insensitivity on the nuclear question.

So those were the three big issues.

**EDWARD M. ROWELL**  
**Vice Consul**  
**Recife (1957-1959)**

**Principal Officer**  
**Curitiba, Brazil (1959-1961)**

*Ambassador Edward M. Rowell was born in Oakland, California in 1931. He obtained a B.A. from Yale University. In addition to Luxembourg, Ambassador Rowell served in Recife, Curitiba, Buenos Aires, Tegucigalpa, Lisbon, La Paz,*

*and Washington, DC. He retired in August, 1994 and was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on September 10, 1995.*

*Q: Where was Curitiba?*

ROWELL: In southern Brazil in the State of Paraná. I went there as Principal Officer (the officer in charge of a Foreign Service post).

*Q: You were there from 1959 to 1962?*

ROWELL: Until November, 1961. It was a totally different climate, in the temperate zone. It's in the coffee zone, close to Sao Paulo. Curitiba presented a whole new set of experiences. I finally finished polishing up my Portuguese by osmosis. I was at the point where I felt comfortable giving a 20-minute, impromptu speech any day of the week. I could talk with anybody.

Southern Brazil was going through a kind of "gold rush." The gold was coffee. Ordinary people would go out to the jungle at the west end of the State of Parana and get a contract to clear the jungle. Typically, the land would be owned by a doctor or dentist in Sao Paulo or Curitiba, who had bought it from the government. He would hire an illiterate person who would go out, clear the land, and support himself and his family by engaging in subsistence farming. He grew the subsistence crops between the rows of coffee bushes which he planted. It takes four years before the first crop of coffee beans can be harvested. That's a half crop. Then, in the fifth year, the bushes produce a full crop. The man working the land had to work until the first, full crop was harvested. He received all of the cash from the first, two crops--the half crop and the full crop. He supported himself with subsistence farming. With the cash from the first two crops he had enough money to buy his own coffee lands. He buys the land and goes through the same process again, except that this time everything was his. For people born with nothing, people who had no education, it was an incredible opportunity to become, as they saw it, "rich land owners." These people were riding on top of trucks heading out to the western part of the state. They were going out there by the thousands, with their wives and sometimes infants.

These were the class of people who, in northeastern Brazil, were serfs on sugar plantations. The same communist leader who had won a substantial number of seats for his party in Recife came to the State of Paraná. I tracked him as he went around the state. I remember going out to a red dirt town in the western part of the state. There was a big sign. There were 40 people who went out to listen to him. Ten minutes later, there was one dog there, scratching his fleas, and the American Consul from Curitiba. That was it. These people didn't have time for that kind of nonsense. They were all going to get rich.

There was high risk. They could get caught by bad weather, a freeze that would destroy the coffee bushes. On average, Paraná has at least one such freeze every ten years. Bad odds since it took ten years to get through two land-clearing, coffee-planting cycles -- the first for the original doctor or dentist landowner; the second for the worker. However, enough workers -- just enough of them -- could make it. It was like the gold rush in California. Not many people got rich, but a lot of people managed to survive. Just enough of them got rich that you couldn't stop the gold

fever. It was exactly the same phenomenon. There is nothing in this world like living through a gold rush. It's exciting.

*Q: What caused this at that particular time?*

ROWELL: A big boom in coffee prices. Brazil was expanding its output. In those days, if you grew coffee, you could sell the coffee at a profitable price. It was guaranteed by the Brazilian Coffee Institute. Coffee was as certain a cash crop then as "coca" for cocaine is today in the Andes.

*Q: What was your job?*

ROWELL: I was the Principal Officer, the officer in charge, at the Consulate in Curitiba.

*Q: What does that mean? How big was the post?*

ROWELL: When I went there, the staff consisted of myself and one American Foreign Service Staff person, whom I was able to have commissioned as a Vice Consul, plus three Foreign Service Nationals [Brazilian employees]. The focus was on consular work. The Mormon Church set up one of its two Brazilian headquarters there, and we had about 130 Mormon missionaries operating out of Curitiba. We spent a huge amount of time, registering them and making sure that they didn't get into trouble. If they got into trouble, we helped them out with the authorities.

I also reported on political and economic events -- the economic growth of the territory. I cut my teeth on my first important political report which I called, "A Political Primer on Paraná." I described the whole political structure and dynamics of the state. We were in the run-up to a major national election. President Kubitschek was finishing his term, and the constitution didn't allow him to succeed himself. Jânio Quadros won the election.

As President, Quadros traveled around the country. He was trying to bring the presidency to people all over the country so they would feel less alienated from the central government. It was a tactic he had used previously when he was governor of São Paulo state. When he came to my consular district, I went out to see how he was doing. During his first three or four months in office he remained very popular. I could see that when I went to Florianópolis, State of Santa Catarina, during one of his visits in early 1961. But four months later when he came to Vila Velha, a town near Curitiba, he was doing miserably. He was greeted by a couple of mayors, a military band, elements of the consular corps and the state government, and maybe forty farm workers who had been rounded up and brought to the dirt airport in army trucks. The band played and there were a couple of speeches. But the onlookers never applauded -- the only time in all my years in Brazil that ordinary citizens refused to applaud the President. Quadros didn't seem to notice. He was almost glassy-eyed, out of touch. He was perceived to have lost control of the government. While economic problems were mounting, he was traveling around like medieval royalty instead steering the country toward solutions for its problems. He had lost all of his support in the rural areas and even among the small- town conservatives who had been the original backbone of his candidacy.

Quadros didn't see this. Neither did the press and broadcast media in Rio de Janeiro, which the US Embassy was monitoring, report it. They were putting a rosy gloss on his travels. But I saw the political disaster and reported it to the Embassy in Rio de Janeiro and to Washington.

The most dramatic event during my two and a half years in Curitiba started one Wednesday evening in September (I believe it was September) 1961. I came home from the Consulate. My wife said to me, "You know, something is up. I was at tea today with the general's wife. After the tea Mrs. So-and-so took me aside and said, 'Le, I'm not supposed to say anything, and you're not supposed to know, but you are a young mother and you have a baby to take care of. Lay in some extra supplies. This weekend you may not be able to leave your house. Just make sure that you can take care of your family for about a week.'" For weeks there had been rumors that Brazilian conservatives and the military were plotting to oust Quadros. When my wife told me of the advice she had received from a general's wife, I knew immediately that the military had decided to act. I immediately got a report off to the Embassy and to the Department of State in Washington. On the Friday night of that week there was a coup d'état. The part of Brazil where I was located -- the southernmost three states -- opposed the coup makers in the rest of the country. The coup took place at that time because the Vice President, who was a Leftist and was believed to have too many friends who were communists, was out of the country, on a trip to mainland China. The Army thought that they could arrange things so that he wouldn't return to take office.

*Q: His name was...*

ROWELL: João Goulart.

*Q: He played quite a prominent role...*

ROWELL: He did. So there was a standoff, because the southern three states, in fact, the southernmost state, Rio Grande do Sul, was Goulart's primary, political base. The southern three states were all part of the same military zone. The other two states in the zone were Santa Catarina and Paraná. The people in those states opposed the coup. I in Curitiba and our Consul in Porto Alegre [Rio Grande do Sul] were the only two American consuls in the part of Brazil that opposed the coup.

As it happened, my wife was almost seven months pregnant. I was already a year overdue for transfer. It was getting close to the point where she would have to fly to the US or have our second baby in Brazil, as the airlines wouldn't let her fly once she entered her eighth month of pregnancy. Because we were scheduled to transfer from Brazil very shortly, we decided to try to get her home to the US. I had to drive her from Curitiba to Sao Paulo, which was on the other side of the lines the south from the coup makers in the rest of Brazil. I had to get a laissez passer from the Army Command in the south and a similar laissez passer from the military authorities in the north. I drove over the road to Sao Paulo which, they warned, might be mined. There was a dirt road between the two areas. It was all right going north. I took my wife and our eldest child through the lines, was interrogated when I got to the other side, and went to the Consulate General in Sao Paulo and reported in. She then flew out to Rio, where they put her on the plane to the US. They had to get a court order in Rio to allow her to take our eldest son because, under

Brazilian law at the time, if you didn't have a written permit from the father, no male child could be taken out of the country.

She received precious little help from the Embassy. A Foreign Service National employee of the Embassy helped to move her from the hotel to the airport. She was seven months pregnant, she had a two and one-half year old child running around, she had the suitcases, and she had this document [the court order] which she was told not to lose. She was told that it would be better to lose her passport than the court order, because if she lost this, she couldn't take our son with her. There was nobody to help her move her bags around the airport. Nothing. She had to take care of herself. That was an experience that made us think for a long time and about a lot of things. Not about quitting the Foreign Service, but how you manage your life in the Foreign Service.

Anyhow, I drove back then to Curitiba and we waited things out. Eventually, João Goulart came back to the country and was inaugurated President. My replacement arrived, and I went back to Washington.

*Q: Did you have any particular feel about the Embassy as the Principal Officer at the Consulate in Curitiba, or did you still have the feeling of being far away?*

ROWELL: The Embassy seemed a little less remote from Curitiba than it had from Recife. I had a lot more contact with the DCM [Deputy Chief of Mission]. At the time the Consul General in the Embassy was the Supervisory Consul General. He oversaw all of the Consulates around the country. We had seven or eight Consulates in Brazil at that time. We had an annual Principal Officers' Conference. So we were quite a group when we got together. The Embassy was sure that it was supervising all of us, except maybe the Consulate General in Sao Paulo, where the Consul General typically had as high a rank in terms of pay grade as the DCM in Rio de Janeiro.

We -- all the principal officers -- took seriously the authority that gave us the right to communicate directly with the State Department in Washington. If you used good sense, that never caused any heartburn at the Embassy. If you didn't use good sense, they found a way to chastise you. However, for the most part, this arrangement worked well, and the Embassy was helpful. We were a small Consulate. We didn't have the time to go through all the folderol of endless, administrative reports. The Embassy took care of that. They let us do our work and picked up a lot of the administrative burden.

*Q: At the local level was there much interest in where the United States stood on coups, Brazilian policy, or things like that? Was the United States just an abstraction which really didn't affect them? I'm talking about the people in authority coming to you and so forth.*

ROWELL: There was a lot of interest in Cuba, US-Cuban relations, and the problems that we were having with Cuba.

*Q: This was just at the beginning of the Castro regime?*

ROWELL: This was at the time of the Bay of Pigs disaster in January, 1961. People paid a lot of attention to that, but we were still basking in the glow of the World War II experience. During

World War II the Germans, the Nazis, had been very influential in Argentina, which had its Peronist populist government, a government that felt a certain kinship with the Fascists in Italy. Brazil and Argentina had traditionally been rivals. The US went a long way to make sure that Brazil stayed on our side during World War II. Brazil had a division of troops in Italy. A lot of personal alliances were formed between the United States armed forces and Brazilian armed forces at that time. All of us benefited from that and, since the military were always terribly important in Brazil, that kind of aura of good feeling spread widely in Brazil. Basically, the US was regarded as a major ally. Brazil was regarded by the Brazilians as a big country which had done its share in World War II and merited respect as an ally. As long as we played that right, we couldn't do anything wrong.

*Q: When this coup d'état developed, you were in a state where the military was opposed to the military in other states. Did anybody come to you and ask how the United States felt about this, or were you just finding out what was going on?*

ROWELL: It was more a matter of my finding out what was going on. It was their problem and, from my point of view, I made it plain that it was their problem. They agreed. They knew they had to resolve it for themselves somehow. The Embassy wasn't trying to tell me to get the people in southern Brazil to give up, hand over their swords, or whatever it was. I was just expected to report on what was going on. Reporting was difficult, because all communications with the other part of Brazil were cut off. I communicated with the Embassy via ITT Telegram to the US and Washington, using my One-Time Pad. Washington would then relay my reporting to the Embassy in Rio, because I couldn't communicate directly with Rio, either by telephone or by telegram. That meant a lot of work with the One-Time Pads. I never wanted to use one again.

*Q: You were there during the early period of the Kennedy administration. Did you feel any of the excitement, the impact of the Alliance for Progress and so forth?*

ROWELL: There was enormous enthusiasm for Kennedy. You're taking me into my next assignment.

*Q: But, while you were in Brazil, were you noticing any of that?*

ROWELL: The Alliance for Progress was announced at Punta del Este, Uruguay in August, 1961. I left Curitiba in October, 1961, after a coup d'état which took place at the beginning of September, 1961. So people in Curitiba hadn't had time to focus on the Alliance for Progress.

*Q: Did you notice any reflection about President Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy, and so forth?*

ROWELL: People loved the Kennedy's. They thought that they were wonderful. They really did. Some of the talk was about whether there was "another Roosevelt" in the United States, because they liked Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Good Neighbor Policy. However, you cannot overstate the importance of their positive feelings toward the US following World War II. And that carried over.

*Q: Was Vernon Walters at the Embassy at the time that you were there?*

ROWELL: Not at that time. I first met Vernon Walters when he was a Major in the Army. He accompanied an American group which came back with the victorious Brazilian division from Italy in 1945 right after the end of World War II. He came out to the American School in Rio and talked to us. I was in the ninth grade and I met him. He didn't remember me from then. He didn't go back to Brazil as Military Attaché until some time after I had left Brazil.

*Q: Is there anything else that we should touch on before we move on to your going back to the State Department?*

ROWELL: I don't think so.

*Q: What did your wife think about your assignment to Brazil? This was your first post and obviously a difficult one.*

ROWELL: And it was non-stop. You see, we did not have home leave between our assignments to Recife and Curitiba. We arrived in Brazil in January, 1958. My wife left in September, 1961. I left in October, 1961. There had been no home leave, and that had been a surprise. My wife was terribly homesick by that time. We had tentatively been assigned to Sweden. I was to be in the Political Section in Stockholm. However, at the beginning of 1961 the United States broke relations with Cuba. The Personnel system had to place a number of people coming out of Havana. So the Stockholm assignment went to someone from Havana. They couldn't figure out what to do with me because they were placing people from Havana. Eventually, I was succeeded in Curitiba by a consular officer who had been in Havana.

**JOHN T. FISHBURN**  
**Labor Attaché**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1958-1963)**

*John Tipton Fishburn was born in Idaho on October 11, 1913. He graduated with a BA from the University of Oklahoma in 1935, then continued his education earning a masters degree at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1936, and was a Brookings Institute Fellow in 1938. Fishburn entered the Department of State on December 16, 1938. He has served as Secretary Chief, Officer of Coordination of International American Affairs from 1941-1942, appointed as economic analyst, as well as the first secretary labor attaché. His career included positions in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Rio de Janeiro, and Geneva. John Fishburn was interviewed by James Shea in 1991.*

*Q: Do you recall when the American Institute for Free Labor Development or AIFLD was set up and were you consulted about this organization or the foundation of such an organization at that time?*

FISHBURN: Yes, that was set up while I was serving a Labor Attaché in Rio de Janeiro and it was established somewhere around 1960 or 1961. I heard about it through a group with which Serafino had been working in Sao Paulo and Jim Shea, my assistant, helped me follow it. Serafino came down and collaborated both with Jim and me with the labor group which later became the Brazilian segment or section of the AIFLD. Later the AIFLD was headed up by Bill Doherty rather than Serafino and with that change there was a rather drastic alteration in the technique of operation in Latin America by the AFL.

*Q: John, could you tell us about your experience in Brazil and then back in the Department and then when you went on to Geneva?*

FISHBURN: Jim, we spent six years in Rio. They were some of the most pleasant and productive years that I felt we served in the Foreign Service simply because it left us there long enough to really get to know the country and its people. As we left Brazil I felt that my last year there was by far my most productive one, but rarely does a Foreign Service Officer get to serve six years in one country and even in a big one. It is a distinct disadvantage if you have to change frequently, every two to three years or so-but at any rate it was pleasant for us and I hope useful. The ability to collaborate with various individual components of the Brazilian labor movement was aided enormously by our ability to have sent to the United States a certain number of Brazilian labor leaders for training up here, by me and our Assistant Labor Attaché in Sao Paulo, with both of us able to handle the language fluently in the labor field. When I returned to Washington after my assignment in Rio for six years, it was in different capacities for a while including the selection of young American labor officers for the Foreign Service as a whole and then finally working two years under Phil Delaney as an Advisor to the Secretary of State in the international labor field. By that time the AIFLD was in full swing of operations in the Latin American labor field and collaborating with the US Government and various segments of it as anywhere else. Later I was offered the opportunity of going to Geneva as Labor Attaché as our liaison with the I.L.O. or International Labor Organization. In that capacity, I served for three years, my final stint in the labor field for Uncle Sam; I must say it was a fascinating one at a period when we found that the I.L.O. which originally been established by President Woodrow Wilson, Lloyd George in Britain and Clemenceau in France to serve as its principal purpose the development of non-Communist labor groups throughout the world to support democracy and our Western governments. We found that at that final period of mine the most influential single group, I'm sorry to say, in the I.L.O. was the Russian group and its friends throughout the world. They had managed to subvert labor groups in various countries and it was a discouraging historical change and one which I'll have to say I don't think our government faced very clearly. The facing of international problems of this sort within the specialized agencies of the United Nations is something for which the organization within the State Department in Washington, at least as of the time of my retirement in 1970, was not prepared to do.

**NILES W. BOND**  
**Deputy Chief of Mission**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1959-1963)**

**Minister Consul General  
São Paulo, Brazil (1964-1969)**

*Niles W. Bond was born in Massachusetts in 1916. He received a BA from the University of North Carolina and graduated from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1938. His postings abroad include Havana, Yokohama, Madrid, Bern, Tokyo, Seoul, Rome, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. In 1998 Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed Mr. Bond.*

*Q: Where were you posted?*

BOND: To Rio de Janeiro.

*Q: Rio*

BOND: Yes, he was going as ambassador to Brazil and I was going as DCM with the personal rank of Minister.

*Q. And this was when?*

BOND: This was in the summer of '59.

*Q: You were in Rio, then, from 1959 until 1963.*

BOND: That's right.

*Q: What was the situation in Brazil in '59 when you arrived there?*

BOND: In '59 Brazil was in good shape. They had a very good president who had done a lot for Brazil, including moving the capital out of Rio and up to Brasilia, which made sense, but was not viewed with any pleasure by either diplomats or bureaucrats. And the country was fairly well off economically.

*Q: Vargas was in, wasn't he?*

BOND: No, he was the wartime president. No, this was... Oh, Christ! *(Pause)* It was Juscelino Kubitschek. He was a good president but, more important, he had a wonderful idea man. This man was responsible for some of the best things Juscelino did, such as building a new capital in Brasilia. And his name I do remember: Augusto Frederico Schmidt. Schmidt was the very wealthy owner of what I would guess was the largest supermarket chain in Brazil. He was an ugly man. No personality at all. But he was also, for my money, the best poet in Brazil. That cut a lot of ice with me.

They had reached the point where they were having to look ahead to the next election -- Brazil's presidents serve only one five-year-term -- which must have been in 1961 -- and the favorite candidate was the former governor of São Paulo, previously mayor of the city of São Paulo. His

name was Janio Quadros. The election was won by this former governor of São Paulo. The system in Brazil at that time, as I recall, was that the man who won the election became president and the one who came in second, who was usually of a different party, became vice president. I took Adlai Stevenson once to visit President Janio Quadros. They discussed economics and economic development, and Adlai came away with the impression that Quadros was a brilliant man.

But this new president was also considered strange and possibly half insane. A lot of Brazilians thought he should have been in an institution. So there was a great deal of worrying as to what sort of president he would turn out to be. He came in on a good platform of “sweep out the crooks” (his symbol was a broom) but gradually, once he took office, he began grasping more and more powers.

Finally, Quadros went to the Brazilian Congress to demand even more power, which would have given him almost autocratic control over the country. And he let it be known that, if Congress did not agree to his demands, he would resign. He then left Brasilia to go back to São Paulo, and waited to announce his resignation until after Congress adjourned. But he mis-timed it! The members of Congress were still on their way to the airport to return to their homes when they heard about it. They turned around, went back to the Congress, and voted to accept his resignation. (At that time and for some years to come, while Brasilia was still "raw," members of Congress worked in Brasilia during the week, but returned to their Rio residences at government expense on week-ends and whenever Congress was not in session.)

So he resigned inadvertently. Now, under the Brazilian Constitution, in the case of the demise of a president, his resignation, or anything of that sort, the vice president assumes the presidency. And the vice president, Jango Goulart, was a very leftist candidate who was hated by the center and the right as well as by the army and the conservatives. This man stood in line to inherit the presidency; but he was such a bad character and so bad for Brazil at that time that many in the army said they would not permit him to become president.

The dilemma was that the military were responsible for supporting and defending the Constitution. This was something they took very seriously. They had always moved in if they thought the government was violating the Constitution. They would throw the offending government out, move in, set things straight, and then withdraw. But, in this case, defending the Constitution meant handing over the presidency to a man who presented such a danger to Brazil politically, that about half the army felt they should not let the Constitution work the way it was supposed to. At this point, Brazil came very close to civil war. The military divided in any political crisis in Brazil means danger. If the military are all on the same side, there's no problem, but if they are divided it can mean war.

So they arranged a Brazilian compromise: they would allow the former vice president to assume the presidency but they would reduce his powers to such an extent that he could do no damage. He took office on that basis, but from then on he continually widened his powers.

It was getting to the point that the military as well as all the conservatives and middle-of-the-roaders were in great fear that he was going to take Brazil Communist. He was very strong with

the labor unions. This was all about the end of '63, I guess. By the time I arrived back in Brazil, in São Paulo this time, in early '64, things were in that sort of state.

There were public demonstrations, particularly by the women of São Paulo, against the president. There were rumors of a revolution. And finally the revolution took place. One of the major armies of the Brazilian Army rose against the president. It spread from there and finally the whole Army was against him and he fled the country.

*Q: What was our embassy doing at that time? This was when?*

BOND: This was in 1964.

Q: Obviously, this was of great concern to us.

BOND: It was, indeed.

*Q: Here is the major country of Latin America and it could become a Cuba.*

BOND: That's right.

*Q: What were we doing?*

BOND: There is one area that I have skipped. I've got to go back to it.

*Q: You were saying about this resignation...?*

BOND: Going back to the question of the sudden and unexpected resignation of the president of Brazil in 1961... The president had been in office for less than seven months when he suddenly resigned for reasons that were not at first evident to the public. He had been elected largely on the basis of his fine record as mayor and then governor of São Paulo; his candidacy had received the support of conservative business interests, including at least the moral support of the American business community in Brazil.

Once in office, however, he had soon begun to pursue an independent and predominantly neutralist foreign policy oriented toward the Third World and away from Brazil's traditional friendship with the United States. His resignation was intended as a political maneuver designed to extract from the Brazilian Congress a grant of authoritarian powers which would enable him to carry out his vaguely defined program of reforms. But the Congress had called his bluff by accepting his resignation. The fact that the president had not really meant to resign did not alter the fact that Brazil was suddenly left without a president, and with a vice president who, in addition to being far to the left of the resigned president was, at the time, absent from Brazil on a trip to Communist China.

During the afternoon rumors began to circulate in Rio suggesting that the president had been forced to resign by pressure from the United States. By late afternoon a menacing crowd, consisting mostly of young toughs, had begun to gather around the embassy chancery in

downtown Rio, with little evident discouragement from the few police in the area. Calls from the embassy to both the Foreign Office and Police Headquarters, brought no appreciable police reinforcements.

The embassy building, while a fine example of contemporary urban architecture and an efficient and comfortable work place, was obviously not designed to be defended against external attack. The front doors were of glass with no protective grills or grating and, thanks to full length glass windows along the entire front of the embassy, the interior lobby was totally visible from the street.

Marine Guards, and the Embassy security staff inside the building were issued carbines and tear gas grenades with the customary admonitions concerning their use. At about six o'clock in the afternoon the crowd outside, which had grown to several thousand, started throwing rocks and other missiles at the windows of the embassy. They began to surge toward the front doors where the few police were concentrated.

Marine Guards stationed on the upper floors dropped tear gas grenades between the crowd and the embassy entrance. The demonstrators pulled back across the street and resumed their barrage of rocks. After several more abortive efforts to reach the embassy doors, and having apparently run out of rocks or windows or both, the crowd began to disperse just as a truckload of armed riot police arrived on the scene.

A bit later, as chargé d'affaires, I sat in my office dictating a telegram to the Department reporting on the afternoon's events. At that point, the secretary general of the Foreign Office called to express the regrets of his government over the attack on the embassy and state its willingness to pay compensation for the damages inflicted. After thanking the secretary general, I could not forbear expressing my disappointment over the failure of the Brazilian authorities, including the Foreign Office, to provide any sort of adequate protection for the embassy despite the latter's repeated requests.

The secretary general, departing from his usual formality, expressed his personal agreement in most undiplomatic terms, then asked if I could give him an estimate of the damage. I replied that the rough estimate we were sending to Washington was \$40,000 to which he responded, "My God! It would have been a lot cheaper to have protected the embassy!"

I had a meeting with my political officers later that afternoon at which we discussed the situation resulting from President Quadros' resignation and subsequent events. Certain basic facts were apparent: First, while the Congress had already named the speaker of the lower house as acting president, the person who would succeed to the presidency under Brazilian Constitutional law was the vice president. He was understood to be returning directly from Communist China.

Second, it was the strong and persistent instinct of the Brazilian people, as well as the traditional and honored function of the Brazilian armed forces, to defend the Constitution and the constitutional process.

Third, the prospect of the succession to the presidency of a vice president who had been a

political protégé of Getulio Vargas, and long noted for his demagogic leftist tendencies, was certain to be highly distasteful, to say the least, to Brazilian conservatives in general and the armed forces in particular.

Fourth, the conflict, therefore, which would be at the heart of this political crisis was the traditional devotion to the Constitution on the one hand and, on the other, distrust and abhorrence of the individual who was, inevitably, the beneficiary of that process. And the place where that conflict would be most acute and dangerous was in the military itself.

It was the consensus of the meeting that the posture of the United States should be one of scrupulous non-interference in what was clearly a Brazilian problem. Prognosis proved more difficult than diagnosis however. No agreement was reached on how the crisis was likely to be resolved. After agreeing on a telegram to the Department setting forth the preliminary analysis and recommendation, the meeting broke up for the night.

During the following week the lines of the conflict hardened. The three ministers of the Armed Forces came out publicly in adamant opposition to the succession of the incumbent vice president, and sought to mobilize the military leadership behind them. At the same time, other military and civilian leaders took strong positions in favor of the succession on constitutional grounds.

It was becoming increasingly evident to me and to my staff that Brazil was approaching the brink of civil war. My own numerous contacts with Brazilians during that period were convincing me that the Brazilian people in general, for all their misgivings about the incumbent vice president, were predominantly in favor of the constitutional solution.

On the other hand, I was finding myself under increasing pressure from anti-succession military leaders and their supporters - some of the most vehement of whom seemed to be in the American business community - to support their cause. But the Embassy continued to recommend, and the State Department to support a policy of strict neutrality.

Finally, after two weeks of crisis and tension and the country teetering on the edge of disaster, the Brazilian genius for compromise asserted itself. The incumbent vice president was to succeed to the presidency, but a weakened presidency stripped of many of its powers, under a newly compacted parliamentary form of government. In mid-October, 1962, a new ambassador arrived in Rio and I was able at last to pass the Chief of Mission responsibilities on to him.

*Q: It was Lincoln Gordon, wasn't it?*

BOND: Yes. Jack Cabot had left, having been declared *persona non grata* by the president. He had made a speech in which he went beyond the bounds of caution regarding Quadros, and the President took away his visa.

*Q: Did you find yourself having a problem keeping the Embassy in line during this critical time?*

BOND: No. I enlarged the meetings so everybody would be represented and could speak their

mind. We had no problems with that at all.

*Q: What about the military attachés?*

BOND: The military attachés agreed with our point of view. They didn't want to get mixed up with it at all. They were under pressure from their Brazilian counterparts to do something, but the business community were really the strongest advocates of not carrying out the succession.

*Q: Were you getting support or was Washington strangely silent, as it often is in times of this nature?*

BOND: Washington was waiting to get the whole story which, finally, as a result of the meeting I just described, we sent to them. They came right back supporting the position we'd taken, that of non-involvement. I also received an Official Informal letter from the Brazilian desk backing that up. They thought we were doing just the right thing.

*Q: When Lincoln Gordon came, how did he view the situation?*

BOND: Well, you never know with Lincoln. You ask him what he thinks of something and he'll give you a 50 minute lecture, the way he does with his students. But he didn't take any exception to the embassy's handling of the crisis (so far as I am aware).

The Brazilians welcomed him and welcomed the fact that, when he arrived, he gave a little speech in Portuguese, which he'd learned in the past few weeks. Jack Cabot had never spoken any Portuguese at all. But Lincoln Gordon had quite a few Brazilian friends, one of them a Brazilian economist. He knew most of the good ones. But even his best friends there later told me they were fed up with his preaching to them as if they were his pupils. That was his way.

*Q: He's still teaching, by the way, over at Brookings. I think he's still there.*

BOND: Oh, is he?

*Q: When did Vernon Walters arrive?*

BOND: I don't remember the date. I was the one who suggested Vernon Walters for that job. He was perfect for it. It was after the succession crisis, because I remember that Linc Gordon had been there only a few months when he was called back for consultation. We had just lost our defense attaché, who was an agreeable person but would have made a far better civilian than a military man. Linc asked me, "Is there anything that I should ask the White House for, or anyone else, when I go back?" So I said, "We badly need a good defense attaché. Please do everything possible to get Vernon Walters assigned to that job."

*Q: Walters, who was in Rome and was dragged out most unwillingly! (Laughter)*

BOND: I know! And I said to Linc that Dick Walters had just gone to Rome recently, and he was almost as well equipped for the job in Rome as he was for the job in Brazil because he had gone

through the Italian Campaign as liaison with the Brazilian Division. The person with whom he had shared tents during that campaign, Marechal Castello Branco, was by this time about to be elected president of Brazil. So anyway, I begged Linc to try to work on that. He told me when he got back that he finally had to go to the White House to try to get that done.

Goulart was still president. He had his own clique of military officers who were always with him. Our own military attachés had no luck in penetrating that group at all. They couldn't get anything out of them. They were looked upon as enemies or, at least, adversaries. So we didn't know what the hell was going on with Goulart's military advisors.

As soon as Dick Walters arrived, Linc took him over to call on President Goulart. His office was in one part of the palace, and his military clique were a few rooms away. When the ambassador and Walters left Goulart's office (I think Walters and Goulart had met before) Linc asked me if I would take Dick down to meet the military clique, none of whom I knew personally.

I told Dick "You know, we've been having a problem getting to these people. I hope you'll know some of them." As we walked through the door I could see 12 or 15 people sitting around, all colonels and generals. They jumped up. "Walters! Walters!" They ran up to him and hugged him. It was amazing! (*Laughter*) From then on he had access to the whole military. It was really amazing.

I didn't know it was going to be that good but that was why I wanted Walters. It was striking, and his Portuguese is excellent. He's a wonderful linguist. I had first seen Dick Walters in action during the Eisenhower visit for the inauguration of the new capital, Brasilia. I flew up to Puerto Rico to meet Air Force One with the President on board, and flew back to Brazil with him. Milton was along also.

*Q: Milton Eisenhower. The president's brother, an economist.*

BOND: Yes, he was along. He was supposedly a Latin American expert. Actually, he was more of a Hispanic American than a Latin American expert. He didn't know much about Brazil. So I had to brief both of them on the way to Brasilia. Dick Walters was the President's official interpreter, but he must have been on the other plane because I didn't meet him until later.

On that occasion, when the President of Brazil (this was the good president, Juscelino Kubitschek) gave a dinner at the Foreign Office for President Eisenhower, Dick Walters had interpreted. He did such a beautiful job of interpreting, and he knew so many people... That was why, in 1962, I put him down as someone who should be in Brazil - it was such an "iffy" time. And the Brazilians just loved him.

Goulart was thrown out by the Army in 1964, and Dick Walters' tent-mate from the Italian campaign was appointed president. The Armed Forces ( who had appointed him) wanted to celebrate his inauguration with a big dinner party in his honor. The new president politely declined, saying "No, I want to have a quiet dinner." And then he called Dick Walters, and he and Dick dined alone together the night of his inauguration. The only person he wanted to talk to was Walters. So, from then on, the embassy knew pretty well what the president was thinking.

That general made a very good president. A fine president.

*Q: Cuanthro?*

BOND: No. Castello Branco.

*Q: Well, you left Rio sometime after Walters arrived, didn't you? Was it '63?*

BOND: I left in '63, yes. The spring of '63. And then, as I was starting to say before, I ran into Dean Rusk who I think was secretary of state at that time.

*Q: Yes, he would have been.*

BOND: I ran into him in the hall on the seventh floor of the Department. He came up to me and he said, "I'm glad to see you. You're about ready to leave Brazil and, as you know, I want you in Washington to teach that Counter-Insurgency course." This was something we had discussed when I was in Washington on consultation in 1962; a pet project of Robert Kennedy's and something I was not keen to take on. Rusk went on to tell me "We will have two Latin American posts opening up when that course is over: Bolivia and Guatemala. At the end of your year here, I want you to go to one of them as ambassador." I was not particularly interested in either country, but I was interested in becoming an ambassador.

A couple of days later, I was walking along a Washington street and ran into the daughter of the then consul general in São Paulo. She told me that her father had just been assigned to Havana as sort of chargé of the American embassy there, although we had no diplomatic relations with Cuba. I asked her when, exactly, he was leaving São Paulo. She said she didn't know; he had just told her about the transfer on the telephone the night before.

I had loved Brazil so much that I immediately thought to myself that I would far rather be consul general in São Paulo than ambassador in Bolivia or Guatemala. Also, my wife wasn't well and I didn't want to expose her to the rigors of being first lady in an embassy. So I went back and thanked Dean Rusk and said, "I understand São Paulo is about to be open and, since I just returned from Brazil, and know everybody worth knowing in Brazil, as well as the language, I would really prefer to go to São Paulo as consul general." So he said, " 'S a' right!" And that is what happened.

*Q: Well, before we talk about that, you did spend some time with that anti-terrorism seminar?*

BOND: Yes. The Counter-Insurgency seminar. I spent about nine months as coordinator. It was for ten months but I think I got out in nine. That was in '63.

*Q: What was that about?*

BOND: When I thought I was being assigned back to the Department and then out, I knew about this course, and was afraid that I was going to have to take it if I were assigned to a Third World country. I was trying to think of some way to get out of it when I had a letter from the

Department saying that I had been named coordinator of the thing, and that was even worse! But anyway, I've written various times about how I felt about that. I finally decided I couldn't get out of it, but I was so unenthusiastic, you know. I really tried to get out of it and pulled the few strings I had to pull. But at least they let me go to São Paulo afterwards, as I had requested.

*Q: You did it for about nine months.*

BOND: Yes.

*Q: What was the thrust of what you were trying to do?*

BOND: Well, what I was trying to do...I wasn't in sympathy with the purpose of the thing, or anything about it. I thought it was a bad idea, a waste of time. My whole effort was to shorten the course, to give them everything they were supposed to be getting, but in much less time. As I stated on another occasion, "It was not that I disagreed entirely with the objectives, or that I discounted the need for some effective response to communist exploitation of the underdeveloped areas of the world. My reaction was more a personal one -- born, perhaps, of a sense of culture shock triggered by transition from a society of culture and cultural values and the creation of beauty to an impersonal world of cold war and counter-revolution. From the beginning, my alienation from the latter world was so intense that the mere carrying out of my assigned duties at the Counter-Insurgency Seminar was a constant ordeal, a *crise de conscience*. But I had to serve my time in this detested job before I could hope to move to one more compatible. I channeled my energies into making the curriculum tighter and more concise, weeding out the irrelevant and redundant elements and instilling a sense of Vivaldian symmetry and logic which made it possible to shorten the course by 20 percent without sacrificing its content."

*Q: Could you give a summary? What does this mean? What was the course supposed to do?*

BOND: It was supposed to prepare people for fighting communism in various underdeveloped countries, and provide an alternative to what the communists provided in the way of help and spiritual sympathy and all of that sort of thing. It was very sketchy and there was no real description beyond such generalities as "unconventional war." Bobby Kennedy sometimes talked. He was sort of the spiritual father of the thing and he was fairly reasonable. He didn't make unreasonable suggestions or comments. We had a lot of very good speakers, but it just wasn't what I was interested in.

*Q: You then went back to Brazil, to São Paulo, where you served from '64 to '69.*

BOND: Well...yes...

*Q: Why don't we talk now about the time you were in São Paulo. You were there from '64 until '68 or '69?*

BOND: Yes. From very early in '64. I got there in January.

*Q: São Paulo is often a post, as is right, that is used for somebody of essentially ambassadorial rank. It's of that importance.*

BOND: Yes. My staff was much larger than a lot of embassy staffs. We had 125, I would guess. I liked it because it was in Brazil and full of Brazilians. I arrived in São Paulo from Washington in either January or February. I had stopped over in Rio to discuss my new post with the Ambassador. Then I went on down to São Paulo with the rank of as Minister Consul General. The growing movement against the left wing president (Goulart) was much more evident in São Paulo than in Rio. The Brazilian women, particularly, were marching in protest in the streets of São Paulo.

*Q: Why was this?*

BOND: Well, I don't know why. I think that Rio is mainly of Portuguese-Brazilian makeup and São Paulo is full of nationalities of all sorts. There is a lot of Portuguese blood, of course, but in Rio the Portuguese form the basis of the upper classes. São Paulo has a great many Middle Easterners, particularly Lebanese and Syrians, and a very large Japanese population. There is, in the southern part of the state, a large colony of Germans. And, of course, a huge number of Italians, by and large northern Italians, not southern Italians. They were from Milan and they were, for the most part, wealthy. The Syrians and the Lebanese were very wealthy. So it was much more cosmopolitan than Rio, and more sophisticated politically than Rio was. At any rate, I found a much higher degree of interest and indignation about the new president in São Paulo.

*Q: Well, had the new president begun to take hold? Was it Goulart?*

BOND: Yes. Jango Goulart.

*Q: He had been in the Far East. He came back. He was visiting China. And had he begun to take hold and make efforts to...*

BOND: Yes, that's right. He had taken certainly taken over, was becoming bolder every week in his effort to move the country to the left, particularly through the Labor Movement which he pretty much controlled. Then he made one bad mistake. I'll just read this little note about it:

“During the week which followed, while I was in Rio consulting at the embassy, the deepening crisis was further exacerbated by the President's handling of a Naval mutiny in which a thousand sailors and marines rose against their officers and barricaded themselves in an armory in Rio. When the Navy minister attempted to quell the mutiny, the President dismissed him from office and allowed the trade unions to participate in the choice of a new Navy minister, whose first official act was to grant amnesty to the mutineers. Although the denouement was still some days away, the president had already sealed his fate.”

*Q: You know, you don't mess with the military on that sort of thing. This is political science 101 or something like that. (Laughter)*

BOND: So then I reported a couple of weeks later by telegram to the Department and the

embassy that there were indications, which I thought reliable, that the Brazilian Army was about to make its move against the President.

The next day I called a meeting of the staff to review the consulate's emergency and evacuation plan. While the meeting was still in progress, word was received that the governor of the state of Minas Gerais (which is northwest of São Paulo) together with the army commander in that State, had finally raised the flag of revolt against the government. It was also reported that the Fourth Infantry Division was already on the move toward Rio from its headquarters in Minas Gerais. A short time later, word was received that the president had responded to the manifesto, relieving the army commander in Minas Gerais of his command and predicting prompt suppression of the revolt.

The anticipated next step was for the State of São Paulo and its powerful Second Army to join the revolt in support of Minas Gerais. But that didn't happen as expected because the commander of the Second Army had been very close to the President, to Goulart. In the early days of Goulart's presidency, the commander of the Second Army had been minister of defense, the Army minister. The revolt could not have succeeded without the support of the Second Army. He took overnight to make up his mind, with the tension growing all the time.

I was with the Governor of São Paulo during much of that day. The Governor, Adhemar de Barros, was one of the architects of the revolt against the president. Finally, a day or two later, just after midnight on a Wednesday morning, the commander of the Second Army went on the radio and announced that his army had joined the revolt in support of Minas Gerais against the president. Ninety minutes later the governor of São Paulo, speaking on television and radio, delivered himself of a confident and fighting speech in which he said that elements of the Second Army were already on their way to join the forces of Minas Gerais in their march on Rio. Later in the day it became evident that the units of the First Army sent out from Rio to oppose the forces from Minas Gerais and São Paulo would offer no resistance in opening the road to Rio. The same day the president decided that things were becoming too hot for him in Rio. He flew to Brasilia and from there to Rio Grande do Sul, in the south of Brazil, which was his native heath. When he left for the south of Brazil, the Congress declared that he had deserted the presidency and swore in an acting president.

The following day the deposed president announced from Rio Grande do Sul that he was still president and had the support of the loyal Third Army, and that he would return to power. But when it became apparent that he no longer enjoyed any effective military support he disappeared from sight, reappearing at the end of the week in Uruguay. At that point in Brazil a newly created military command took over control of the country.

*Q: While this was going on, you say you were with the governor of the state. Wasn't this a problem? Here decisions are being made and the American consul general is observed consulting with an important figure in a political chess board there.*

BOND: Yes, that's right. As it turned out, that was the interpretation of a number of books that were written about this period, which suggest that I was in on the planning of the revolution. Actually, the appointment that I had with the governor had been made a week or so before to talk

about something totally unrelated to Goulart. I forget what the subject matter was.

Once I got there, he just hung onto me and kept me informed about what he knew. He said that the troops in Minas Gerais had jumped the gun. They were supposed to move 24 hours later. That was the problem. He was on the phone with the commander of the Second Army off and on all day. He asked me to stay because he was all alone. He wanted company. Adhemar had always reminded me of Jim Curley when he was governor of Massachusetts. He stole from the rich to give to the poor, lived openly with his mistress, and that sort of thing.

*Q: I'm told that this was rather Brazilian, wasn't it?*

BOND: Yes, it did not have the same effect it would have had in this country, certainly.

*Q: Incidentally, we're moving away. We'll come back to the revolt. But, of a social note, when you sent out an invitation, did you ask Mr. and Mrs. or Mr. and Mistress?*

BOND: No, we always invited the governor and his wife but, almost without exception, he would turn up with his mistress. His wife was not to be seen. That was frowned upon, of course, so he didn't get very many invitations from the elite of São Paulo society. For example, we had a consular corps in São Paulo and I was president of it at that point, I think. The governor had let it be known that he would be pleased if the consular corps would give a dinner in his honor, and we'd been considering doing it anyway. So we went ahead, and that's what happened. We invited him and his wife and he came with his mistress. There were some "tsk tsk tsks."  
*(Laughter)* You know, he really was a rascal.

*Q: Well, back to the revolt. I would have thought that as this thing was moving that one would...and I'm talking about at the American embassy and probably other embassies and I'm sure the Brazilians were all looking to the south for an example. I mean, this alliance with the labor union resembles that of Juan Peron in Argentina. Juan Peron was out of power by this time, wasn't he?*

BOND: I don't know. I don't think he was.

*Q: But he'd certainly driven the economy of Argentina down, where it's just recovering now in the 1990's. Was this something that people were talking about, looking at Goulart?*

BOND: Oh, I think they were. After the episode with the mutineers I think it was generally assumed that the Army had no choice. They had to move in, and the Second Army was the most powerful Army in Brazil. There were, I think, four Army Zones. The Second Army in São Paulo was the largest and strongest army, stronger than the First Army which was based in Rio.

I had reported to the embassy what I mentioned a few minutes ago, that I had what I considered reliable information indicating that the Brazilian military were about to make a move. São Paulo had that before the embassy had it. The first reliable report that the embassy received was from us.

*Q: Well, tell me, with the consulate general, what about your contacts with the military, with the Second Army there?*

BOND: Our contacts were not very extensive. We saw the commander of the Second Army socially. The Second Army headquarters was right next to the governor's mansion. So we did see him and I knew him and liked him but we didn't have military attachés, of course. So there was nobody specifically designated to keep in touch with the military. The attachés in Rio were in and out of São Paulo fairly frequently: I think they were more or less *au courant*.

*Q: During the time you were there, this was fairly early in your coming as consul general, wasn't it, the takeover?*

BOND: Yes. I arrived to take over in January. The revolt went off in April of '64.

*Q: What was the new military government called?*

BOND: It was called the Supreme Military Command.

*Q: You were able to see developments in the newly established government. Did this, the military command, make much of a change in Brazil at the time?*

BOND: It didn't immediately. The ranking general at that time in Brazil was Humberto Castello Branco, a very good man who had fought with the Brazilian Expeditionary Force in Italy. He was the man who had shared a tent with Dick Walters in that campaign. He was the spokesman for the military and he became president not very long after and was a very fine president.

*Q: It was not a major concern that one has about military governments: that they begin to work under essentially martial law and that type of thing?*

BOND: Yes. Well, the Brazilian Army had a very good record. It had stepped in to defend the Constitution time and again. It had always turned the political power back to the civilians as quickly as possible, sometimes more quickly than they should have. I think that most Brazilians... I'm sure everyone had in the back of his mind the possibility that they would not turn the government back to the civilians this time.

As it turned out, as long as Castello Branco, Dick Walters' friend, was president there was no problem. He was succeeded by General Costa e Silva, a guerrilla type who looked the part. He always wore dark glasses. He had a lot of people arrested as subversives, including some of my friends. There was, in effect, a military dictatorship for the next ten years.

*Q: While you were there, there were two civilian presidents?*

BOND: Juscelino Kubitschek was President when I arrived and was President virtually all the time I was in the Embassy in Rio. He was succeeded by Janio Quadros, the man who inadvertently resigned, leaving the presidency to Goulart.

Kubitschek was a good president, but it was his idea man, Schmidt - the poet, whom I have already mentioned - who really came up with Kubitschek's greatest accomplishment, which was to build a new capital in Brasilia. Moving the capital away from Rio was not a new idea. I think it had been in the Brazilian Constitution since the 19th century that the capital should be moved away from the coast in order to make it more accessible to other parts of the country. So, although Kubitschek claimed that as his greatest accomplishment, it was actually Schmidt who was behind it.

Now that's an example of what poetry can do for you. When I was leaving for Rio in 1959, I went in to see Secretary Dulles about something, or to say goodbye to him, I guess. He and I shared a birthday and I'd been invited to a birthday party at his home one year, so we knew each other. As I was leaving he wished me well in Rio and said, "I want to warn you. There's one person in Brazil you should avoid like the plague. Keep away from him. He's no good. He's dangerous. He's rude. He's ugly. So don't have anything to do with him." And the man he was talking about was August Frederico Schmidt. I was told later by Dulles' secretary that the reason he hated Schmidt was because Schmidt had called on him in Washington some months before, and Dulles thought Schmidt had been rude to him. But Schmidt was rude to everyone. That was his way. His parentage was a mix of black and white and Jewish. He was an ugly, ugly man. He had great warts on his face. But he was a wonderful poet...

He returned to Brazil after his visit with Dulles feeling no more charitable toward Dulles than vice-versa. He would have nothing to do with America. Going down to Rio with that warning from Dulles in mind. I decided the thing I wanted to do first, after making my compulsory calls, was to look up Augusto Frederico Schmidt and see if he was as bad as Dulles had said.

I was told that he wouldn't see any Americans, especially anyone from the American embassy. But I was told of a young Brazilian lady who might be helpful. She was married to an American Foreign Service Officer stationed in London, and she had come back from London to visit her family, who lived across the street from Schmidt. Apparently, while she was growing up, she was Schmidt's favorite little girl. Someone I knew told me about her.

Meanwhile, we were giving a dinner for a senator and his wife. Senator Morse, I believe. This was the first big dinner we were giving in the house that we had moved into in Rio. One of the key ladies turned up ill and couldn't come, and we needed another lady. So I called this young woman. She was at home, staying with her mother. Her husband was still in London. I told her why we wanted her to come, and apologized for calling when I had never met her, and inviting her to dinner with people she had never met. Anyway, I told her that it was all about Schmidt. She thought that was a great idea. She came and was a wonderful guest.

Anyway, she talked to Schmidt the next day, told him that I was a poet who was a great admirer of his poetry, and wanted very much to call on him. After mumbling about Americans and their lack of manners, he finally agreed to receive me the following evening. Our conversation began tentatively and stiffly, but warmed up as we delved into poetry and found that we agreed on many things. And so began a friendship that went on until I left. He was very difficult, he never was charming. But, after that, he sent me autographed copies of all of his books. And eventually I got to know him well enough so that we could talk about politics. I had access through him to

corners of Brazilian thought and prejudices hidden from most Americans. So, poetry served me well there.

*Q: How long did the first military president preside as president before he turned it over to the man you described as a "guerrilla?"*

BOND: I don't remember how long Castello Branco was president. I would guess about two years. Sometime later, he was killed in a plane crash.

*Q: It happened while you were there?*

BOND: No, after I had left.

*Q: I would think that the two groups that would be both influential and very unhappy with this state of affairs...I'm talking about the military takeover... would be 1) the students and intellectuals and 2) the trade unions. In São Paulo, did we have much contact with either of those groups?*

BOND: We had a very active labor attaché in São Paulo who spent a lot of time with the labor leaders there. They liked him and they felt that he was honest and that he was not against them. So we were pretty well informed about them. They were just keeping quiet for the most part. They didn't want any problems with the military and the military didn't want problems with them, so it was a "live and let live" relationship- (end of tape)

*Q: You were saying the students...*

BOND: The students were, by and large, against the military government because many of them had been arrested, including some young friends of mine. They were arrested for stupid reasons and not held very long. There was a nervousness among the students that was very evident.

There was one person whom I knew very well, an artist. I have one of his paintings at home. He had the very un-Brazilian name of Wesley Duke Lee. His name dated back to after the American Civil War. The then Emperor of Brazil made a great effort to get Southern plantation owners, who had lost everything in the Civil War, to move to Brazil. They were given free land and free transportation and so forth. Wesley Duke Lee was descended from this group, and was a painter of great talent. At any rate, I met him very soon after I arrived in São Paulo. I was invited to dinner at the house of a young woman, a Spanish writer who was living with a young American photographer. They were pretty representative of the young students and young intellectuals. The guest of honor was Wesley Duke Lee, who had just got out of prison that day. They set this all up on very short notice. This was the first time I'd met him, and he appeared straight from prison, cell number and all. Later, he painted a whole series on his prison term, including his cell, and all sorts of things. He had not been held very long.

The reason that he was held was that he had received a telegram about the birth of a nephew. His brother who was living in the States, I think, had just become the father of a son. He sent Wesley a telegram about the baby that was worded in a humorous way. The military were reading

everything, all telegraphic traffic, and they thought it was in code, a code message. So they picked Wesley up and put him in jail. He was there for several months, and had gotten out that day. The celebration was pretty characteristic of the young people's feeling about the military government.

*Q: I assume there is a University of São Paulo.*

BOND: Yes, a very good one.

*Q: The way I've understood it was that a good number of Latin American universities are sort of a power unto itself and the students who go through there are dominated by leftist teachers, and they come out and they enter the business community but they are pretty leftist while they are in the university.*

BOND: Yes, I think there is some truth to that. I knew a number of professors, particularly in the law school, but I never knew any that were noted for their left leanings. I had heard of some, and I know there were professors who were leaning to the left. I think it's pretty true that the students, once they get out of the university, go and work for their fathers' companies and that sort of thing. But São Paulo University is a very good university with a fine medical school and a very good law school. I think it's possibly the best university in Brazil.

*Q: What about the business community in São Paulo? This was the real reason why we were so interested in it, isn't it, because it's the business center?*

BOND: That's right. It certainly was the financial center of the country. Sort of the New York City of Brazil, the Wall Street of Brazil. Most of the big corporations were headquartered in São Paulo. One of the biggest was in Rio but most of the big ones were in São Paulo. While I was in São Paulo, I was visited by Vice President Nixon, who was, I think, out of office at that time.

*Q: Yes.*

BOND: I had a call from the embassy saying that Nixon was coming to Rio first, then he wanted to come to São Paulo over the weekend. He was going to be there Saturday and Sunday. I was asked to arrange a luncheon for Nixon and this was at Nixon's request. Those who would be invited were the leading financial and economic tycoons in São Paulo. He stipulated that it would be very helpful if they all spoke English.

At any rate, I said to the embassy, "In São Paulo, on weekends, nobody stays in town at this time of the year." Virtually all of those men owned great "fazendas" where they spent their weekends. They were really working with the earth. That was one of their strengths, that they were so close to the earth. They raised cattle and horses and that sort of thing. So I said, "There's not going to be anybody in town unless I can lasso them and hold them down!" And they said, "Well, do what you can. He has to be there on the weekend. That's the only time he has."

So I went around and called personally on the dozen people I thought were the best. They all finally agreed to stay in town and to go to this luncheon. I think with some of it was curiosity.

They were just curious to see what Nixon was really like. So the luncheon took place and was very fruitful, I think, on both sides. It was a good luncheon. We held it at what was then the leading hotel in São Paulo. Nixon asked a lot of the right questions and got honest answers. Then I had him on my hands for all day Sunday, too. I had traveled with him in the Far East before that. He was terrible to travel with.

*Q: What was the problem?*

BOND: He was rude. On that occasion, he was going to visit Korea. Since I was serving at that time as DCM in Seoul, I had to fly down to Taipei to meet him, fly back with him, and brief him on the way. Because commercial flights to and from Taipei were few and far between, I had to go about four days early in order to get back when they wanted me back. So I spent the four days in Taipei, and was invited to all the functions being given for Nixon. But I never got a chance to talk to Nixon and I never tried to talk to him about his Korean visit while he was tied up with his visit to Taipei. I went to the party given by Chiang Kai-shek in honor of Nixon. Other guests of honor included the Living Buddha, and the only living descendent of Confucius... Anyway, we finally got on the plane and were flying on to Seoul, the capital of South Korea.

*Q: This was 1953 or '54?*

BOND: Yes. I would say so. It was right after the truce, I believe. Nixon was given a chart of the route. Flying from Taipei, instead of going right up the Chinese coast which would be the direct, shortest route, we were to fly over Okinawa and from Okinawa up. Nixon raised hell about that. He said, "That's too long. I want to go the shortest route. I want to go right up the coast." We said, "You may be shot down if you do that. You may be forced down; all sorts of things could happen if you're that close to the Chinese coast." Finally, the pilot came back and said, "I have my orders and this is the route we're going to take."

*Q: He was vice president at the time, wasn't he?*

BOND: I think so, yes.

*Q: He had to be, yes.*

BOND: Yes, because he was flying in Air Force Two, the vice president's plane. Then, when we got that out of the way, I took out the schedule we had made up for Nixon and showed it to him. He went through it with a blue pencil and crossed off almost everything on it. He handed it back and said to me, "That's the worst goddamn schedule I've ever seen."

He had two aides with him, unlikely people to be with Nixon because they were not like him. One of them was Christian Herter's son, young Chris Herter; and the other was a similar fellow of the same stripe. They told me later, "He's said that about every schedule he's seen this trip. He's said the same thing: 'This is the worst goddamn schedule I've ever seen.'" He ended up by doing everything on the schedule! But he was nasty about it.

Mrs. Nixon, Pat Nixon, was with him. He was very rude to her on the whole trip. He sort of

made an ass of himself. The staff were all lined up to greet him when he arrived at the embassy. He somehow got the idea- One of the Korean employees was a very distinguished looking Korean, quite old. I forget what it was he did at the embassy. Anyway, Nixon for some reason thought he was the president of Korea. *(Laughter)* He'd started down the line, he saw this man, and then he skipped everybody and went up to him said, "Mr. President, how are you?" and that sort of thing. Made an absolute ass of himself. *(Laughter)* That was my life with Nixon.

*Q: Well, back in São Paulo, one thing I have heard from people who dealt with Nixon during this period when he had lost to Kennedy, and I think he'd made an attempt to be governor of California and lost there, he was considered off the circuit. He traveled around a lot and really made quite a practice of absorbing a great deal on these trips. These were not pleasure trips. This was working.*

BOND: That's what the São Paulo trip was, yes.

*Q: Did you find that he was trying to understand Brazil?*

BOND: Oh, yes. He was all business. And you know, he remembered that we had traveled together in the Far East and he mentioned that and said, "Didn't we have fun!?" *(Laughter)* So anyway, all one day I took him around to places of interest. But I think that's true, understanding Brazil was what he was up to at that point.

*Q: When you arrived there was there a new ambassador or was Lincoln Gordon still there?*

BOND: No, Lincoln Gordon, I think, was gone. I think Jack Tuthill was ambassador, but I'm not sure. It may be that the one who was kidnapped...

*Q: Burke Elbrick. I think he came-- No, because Burke Elbrick was my ambassador in Yugoslavia and he left in, I think, close to '68, so I think it would have probably been Jack Tuthill. Did you get involved in his project, Operation Topsy? Does that ring a bell with you?*

BOND: It rings a bell, but only faintly.

*Q: When Tuthill came to Brazil he decided he was going to cut down the American presence there and it was called Operation Topsy. Somebody I'm interviewing right now (I've already covered this period) is Frank Carlucci. I was wondering if you had any reflections on relations with the ambassador?*

BOND: I was in São Paulo when Tuthill was ambassador in Rio. So I saw him. They had a monthly staff meeting to which I was invited and, occasionally, one other principal officer. I got to know Jack very well and I liked him very much. He liked coming to São Paulo.

*Q: Yes. Well, how were business relations with the United States from the São Paulo point of view? Did we have a lot of American investment there?*

BOND: Yes, I think it was very good. We had the automobile companies. We had the Ford

factory and Kaiser-Frazer had a big... I forget the name of it... car they were making. They both had factories. Ford, General Motors, and Kaiser all had factories. There was a lot of American investment and relations seemed to be very good. They got along very well with each other. I used to have occasion to visit these factories which were about a half an hour's drive from São Paulo. I used to go out there fairly frequently. And Bendix was one of the big ones there, too. I always had the impression that the Americans and the Brazilians were getting along very well. Of course, the top officers were Brazilian in all of these companies, though not the top one.

*Q: The Brazilian economy was such that you had to have a Brazilian component in it in order to work in Brazil?*

BOND: That's right.

*Q: The military took over in '64 shortly after you arrived. You were there until '68 or early '69. Were you noticing growing discontent with the military rule? Normally, they're supposed to take care of the matter and then go back to the barracks and they didn't go back to the barracks. From the São Paulo perspective, was this becoming more and more unpopular?*

BOND: No doubt about it. Because the good one, Figueiredo, the man who succeeded Costa e Silva, the "guerrilla" president, stayed on and on for a long time. He would make an occasional gesture but things were not... It became a real military dictatorship at that time. Brazilians are not comfortable with dictatorships. Getulio Vargas was called a dictator, but he was a dictator Brazilian style, which has a lot of looseness to it. So, the people didn't suffer, really, but they just didn't like the way things were.

*Q: Did you find it difficult as the American representative? Was there the feeling more and more that you blame the Americans for this government, we were giving too much support to it? Was this a problem?*

BOND: No, I don't think that was ever a problem. After the military had been in power for say five years, there was growing sentiment in favor of electing a civilian president, and there was more and more pressure on the military to do that.

I was told by a reliable military source that the president and the military leaders of the country had finally decided on a candidate for president who was a civilian, an aviator, a former Army pilot. He had been mayor of São Paulo and also governor. I was told by this source that General Figueiredo or one of his assistants had called this man, who was still living in São Paulo, and offered the him the presidency. He was asked to go to Rio to discuss it with General Figueiredo. He went to Rio and, apparently as a result of his excitement about the whole thing, had a heart attack and died. He would have been a fine president. I knew him well. He'd been rather a scandal as a pilot. He was known for flying his fighter plane under bridges, things like that, but he was a very good governor and mayor of São Paulo. Now I remember: his name was Faria Lima. So, when that fell through... It was never publicized. I don't think anyone ever knew about that - it was never in the papers, but I was told that that is what happened. I don't remember how the thing worked out. I guess I'd left Brazil by the time they came up with a civilian candidate for the presidency.

*Q: Did you ever feel yourself under any threat?*

BOND: No. But things were beginning to get worse around the time we left. For the first time there was a bomb thrown at the Consulate. It was thrown on the sidewalk right in front of the USIS Library. It exploded there and blew out all the windows and that sort of thing. That was the only violence against us. That was the beginning. If I had stayed on I might have felt some fear, but I left just as that was starting, just as terrorist activities were beginning to appear. I remember that, after I left, there was one businessman murdered, a very prominent businessman, as well as an American Army attaché (dragged from his car and shot before his young son). The Brazilians just went after the terrorists and killed them, and that was the end of it. They just rounded them up and killed them. I don't remember the date of Ambassador Elbrick's kidnaping. I was in Brazil at the time it happened, but had already retired. I had returned to Brazil for the São Paulo Bienal.

*Q: You retired in early '69?*

BOND: No, I left São Paulo in early '69. I retired at the end of '69. During my last year in São Paulo, probably late in 1968, my office received a widely circulated airgram from the Department of State setting forth the position of the U.S. Government regarding the war in Vietnam. Included in the message was the text of a speech to be delivered by the principal officer or other ranking member of the staff, to selected groups of nationals of the host country, in the hope of gaining their understanding and sympathy for the U.S. position.

I did not have to read the suggested speech twice to decide that to deliver it myself, or to associate myself with its point of view, was out of the question, so contrary was it to my strong feelings against the Vietnam War.

As I recall, my reply to the Department's instruction, conveyed in an official informal letter to the Brazil Desk Officer, added that I might be able to find someone on my staff who could deliver the Department's speech without doing violence to his conscience.

I left São Paulo in early '69 but I stayed on in the Department of State as advisor to the Brazil Desk until the end of the year.

*Q: What did you do with yourself after that? Just briefly, because we're going beyond the theme.*

BOND: I was secretary of the Corcoran Gallery of Art for approximately thirteen years. I enjoyed the job. I resigned when my wife died, in 1986. After that I served for eight years as director of the Fee Arbitration Board of the DC Bar.

I observed that, among my colleagues whose wives had died - and whom I used to see at weekly DACOR lunches - the ones who seemed to have survived best were the ones who had re-married fairly soon after losing their wives. I had a good friend whom we had known in São Paulo. Her husband worked for me there. They had been divorced two years before my wife died. She had translated one of my books into Portuguese. She was living in Old Lyme, Connecticut, and we

were married in September of '88.

**BARBARA SHELBY MERELLO**  
**Junior Officer Trainee, USIA**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1960-1961)**

**Cultural Affairs Officer, USIA**  
**Sao Paulo (1961-1962)**

*Barbara Shelby Merello joined USIA in 1959. Her overseas postings included Brazil, Peru, Spain, Costa Rica, and Argentina. Ms. Merello was interviewed by Lewis Hoffacker in 2000.*

Q: *That was in USIA?*

MERELLO: We got our assignments in the fall, of course, of 1960. I went in with three other people. It's strange, but I've never seen any of them again. There was one young woman and two men. I've seen the names of the men, but we've never been at the same post, so I've never seen them again since 1960, and the young woman was drowned at her first post on the Ivory Coast. She was drowned in the ocean. But at that time we were all very happy and enjoyed the training and were looking forward to our assignments. And I remember telling the Personnel officer that I liked cities. I've always been a city girl. And they sent me to Rio, and I was very grateful. That was a pretty good first assignment. I was a junior officer trainee, so I went there in December of 1960. At that point some posts had language training at the post, three months of training. When I was in the University of Texas, I had just for fun taken a semester of Portuguese. There was a girl from Bahia, and I had just taken it for fun, never thinking that I would ever use it. And [lo and behold] it came in handy. But it as good training - three months, six hours a day. There were only three or four of us in the class, and we had several different teachers, so we heard different accents. And it was excellent training. The only drawback was that we were not working, so we weren't meeting anyone, and so it was very lonely, being there for those first few months.

But I found a little wonderful place to live. I have to laugh about it because it was actually an illegal little house. It was on the Baisandu, a long street that leads up to the Governor's Palace in Rio, an old, kind of dilapidated street with tall royal palms. Every once in a while a branch would fall and knock someone on the head, but it was an elegant street - a little dilapidated, a little gone to seed. And I found a little apartment on the top of a four-story building. In Rio it was illegal to have any more than four stories without an elevator, and this was actually the fifth story, but it was all right - I always thought that was kind of fun. There was an open iron gate, and it was extremely small, but there was a big terrace, and I spent most of the time on the terrace. I had a hammock there, and I remember I had Wisteria. It never stopped blooming the whole time I was in Rio, which was a year and a half, I guess. It never stopped blooming.

And I remember Carnival. Carnival in those days was marvelous fun. There were neighborhood associations. There still are. Ours was Narangeras, and the Brazilian family on the floor below

I'd made friends with the young woman, who happened to work in USIS. It just happened that she worked in USIS, and we became good friends, and I joined this little neighborhood association, went out, and it would start around New Year's, when you would hear this clink [*taps a rhythm on a glass*], and then the rhythm would pick up and so on, and everyone would start rehearsing. Some of them had been sewing their costumes all year. And then you'd go out in the streets and that day everyone would go out, and they would round up the usual suspects, pickpockets and so on, and they would have their costumes in jail, and they would celebrate their own Carnival. But amazingly, they wouldn't sell liquor. No one really got drunk. The worst that could happen was they'd spray some ether. But there actually was no crime during Carnival. It was just a lot of fun, everyone jumping around. And I got to go to the ball at the Opera House, and you would see the costumes like nothing in this world. I don't think before or since have so many sequins been sewn on so many - real diamond! You can't imagine. Some of the people couldn't even walk, the costumes were so elaborate. But you danced all night, and of course it was hot - it was hot and humid - but the costumes were brief (all the others, not the ones who were being judged), and you danced all night. And then there was a night club where they would serve onion soup; after four in the morning anyone would get onion soup for free. And then there was a place called Drink on Copacabana Beach, where you could finish up, dance a little more, if you had the energy, and then go out and watch the sun come up over that green ocean. And on Ash Wednesday, everyone was exhausted. It was marvelous to do once. I wouldn't want to do it again, but it was great fun.

And the work - of course I was in training, so I got to be in press and radio and television and the cultural side. It was good training. I enjoyed press especially. And that was the time, while I was in Rio, that John Glenn went up and circled the earth. In fact, this was a very exciting time because of that. It was just amazing. Some people felt that it couldn't be true, that it was all made up, as some people still don't believe that we sent anyone to the moon. But in São Paulo, which was my next post - my first real post was in São Paulo - we had a couple of astronauts visit. I think one was Pete Conrad, and I have a signed, an autographed picture of him, and that was a great event. Pete Conrad was here not long ago. There was an anniversary celebration of the '60s at the LBJ Library, where I volunteer as a docent, and it was like a homecoming party. Everyone was there, and they had a panel on NASA, and Pete Conrad was there telling wonderful stories, and I was so shocked when he died very suddenly a few weeks later. In São Paulo we also had a visit from Louis Armstrong, and that was very exciting, too. And for some reason this has stuck in my mind. Of course, the Brazilians are so self-righteous about how they don't have any racial prejudice. As a matter of fact they do. It's just a different kind. I met a number of black people in São Paulo who told me that it was more economic than anything else, but at that time, black people were not admitted either to the navy or to the foreign service, the Itamarati. That has changed, but this was in the '60s.

*Q: How did this affect your reception of Louis Armstrong?*

MERELLO: Oh, not at all. Well, everyone loved Louis Armstrong, but what I was going to say was that when he arrived there was a press interview, and one of the reporters said, "Well, how does it feel to be in a country where there is no prejudice?" And he said, "Well, I don't see very many of my color here at this Jaguar Hotel." It was the Jaguar, one of the fanciest hotels in town, and by golly, there weren't any others his color in that hotel, because they didn't admit

people [of] his color in that hotel. And they said it was because some of their guests were prejudiced, but of course, again, it was because they were prejudiced themselves. But on the other hand, every woman wanted to be a beautiful *mulata*, and who wouldn't? Who wouldn't want to have beautiful *café au lait* skin and lovely black wavy hair? And so they found that many women, when they took a census, a lot of women called themselves *mulatas* who really weren't. So it's a different sort of prejudice, and I think it's probably less now. That was just an interesting sidelight.

And I loved Rio. In those days, Rio was falling apart, actually. It was awfully dilapidated, but it was fun. There wasn't much crime at all, and there was the only *bonji*, the trolley that you could sit on and go all over town. It took about a day to go around town because, I think, it was a hundred years old at that time, or almost. I think it was dated from the 1880s, and these were still the same cars and the same little torn curtains at the windows. If it rained you got wet. But it was so much fun, and it still had that old magic. It's lost now. I've been back since, just very briefly, but the crime is the problem now, many things. It was after I left that the terrible things started happening. The police would go out - I think maybe out of frustration because criminals were always set free immediately - and they would start just killing them instead. And even children, even orphan children on the street. This was after I'd left, but things are not what they were. I know we always say this, but it's true in Rio's case.

In São Paulo, I didn't want to go there, but it was wonderful. It's a very interesting city, and at that time it hadn't become such a monstrosity as it is now. Now it's an anthill, not a city. It's grown much too much. But even then it was called "the engine of Brazil," and very interesting. It was industrial, but it was also full of artists and writers and musicians and a great many immigrants, many from Eastern Europe or the Middle East or Italy. In fact, one of the wealthiest men there was Francisco Macarazzo. He started the São Paulo *Bienal*. At that time it was one of the two big art shows in the world. The other one was the Venice *Biennale*. And Macarazzo had come as a penniless immigrant. He had a pushcart - everyone starts with a pushcart - and he had become a multi-millionaire. And so he built this enormous building, and that was one of my first tasks, to participate in the *Bienal*, and as a matter of fact, we ended up winning the grand prize for the first time, much to the dismay of the Europeans, who had always divided the prizes up among themselves before. But this was a very big deal. You had a certain amount of space, and you could bring in the artists that you want. And the artist who came, the exhibit was of Adolph Gottlieb, one of the New York impressionists, and I wasn't familiar with their work at the time, but when I saw those pictures hung, and getting them hung was not easy, because we had to build special walls and special materials, and we didn't get the paintings until about a day before the big reception was due - and that was a panic. There was a longshoremen's strike in New York, and so it was late leaving. Then when they got to Santos, there was so much rain that they were afraid to bring them up the hill, and so we had more delay. And the curator who had come down was Walter Friedman, who then went to the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis. I'm not sure where he is now. He was fairly young at the time, and he was tearing his hair out. He was in despair. He said it takes a week to put these up. Well it turned out we had a day and a half, and we put them up, and they looked marvelous, these enormous paintings with these suns and - wonderful energy. And I came to love those paintings very, very much. They were marvelous, very romantic in their own way. Maybe the last romantics were the impressionists.

And then some sculptures by young sculptors who later became famous - a number of them did. Stella was one. There were a half a dozen of them. So it was really a stunning show when we finally had it up on the special walls and everything. It really was an amazing show, quite overwhelming. And since Walter Friedman had never been curator at a *Bienal* before, he refused to play the game with the Europeans, and he just wouldn't go along, and so finally and luckily, they gave the Grand Prize to Adolph Gottlieb, to our section, and it deserved it. It was a marvelous show, anyway. The whole show was good, but we really did deserve the prize, and Adolph Gottlieb deserved it, and I was so happy that he had come down and was here when it was announced. He had come down, and he was a wonderful man, just had the best time. He didn't know Portuguese, but he met all the artists in town. They took him to a geisha house, and that's because one of the Japanese artists was one of the most famous in Brazil, Manabumabe. He had started out as a penniless immigrant himself. He planted heels and his father had died when he was young, and he had had to work in a dry cleaner when he was 14 to support his family, and then he started painting neckties, and he ended up becoming the most famous impressionist in Brazil, enormous canvases, very beautiful and very expensive. He also was a wonderful man. They were good friends. They didn't have any language in common but they communicated. So he had a grand time and had not dreamed that he would win the Grand Prize, and when he did - it was about \$1500, I think - he decided that he would spend it all on jewelry for his wife. His wife had been a teacher, and she had supported him for many years in New York, and he had never given her any jewelry. And Brazil was the place to buy jewelry - gold and tourmalines and topazes and aquamarines and anything that you could imagine. I had the most wonderful time, and I went with him to the best jewelry store in São Paulo, and he decided what to get. And he could buy a lot for \$1500. He bought a great many jewels, and I know that she was very pleased when she got them. So this was all great fun. It was tremendously exciting. This was my first real assignment, and I worked very hard on it. It wasn't easy to get those materials and to hang all this and get it all ready. It was intoxicating, really. It was great fun. And the newspapers were plastered with pictures of Adolph Gottlieb, and everyone recognized that it really was a fine show. So that was a wonderful way to start out. Not everything was that successful, but it was fun to be part of something. And of course, the fun of the agency is that you're always an amateur because you're always doing something you've never done. I don't know whether the State Department is that way or not. I don't think it is.

**LEONARD J. SACCIO**  
**Economic Minister/Director, USAID**  
**Brasilia (1960-1962)**

*Ambassador Leonard J. Saccio began his career in the Foreign Service as deputy general counsel for the Foreign Aid Program in the mid-1950s. He went on to serve in Brazil, San Salvador, and India. Ambassador Saccio was interviewed by Mel Spector in 1990.*

Q: *Then you went to Brazil.*

SACCIO: Right. Now, to be frank about my going to Brazil, I turned to Dillon, after

Riddleberger came back, and I said, "I can't stand this. He has no great operation." I thought that he would resign for illness, but he didn't because he still wanted to be in the Foreign Service. I was no great name in Washington. I was a guy from Connecticut as far as the politicians were concerned. That was what they wanted, somebody of that caliber, reputation, and so forth, because if you put somebody in there, people say, "Okay, we trust that man, and we know him." I was a young guy from Connecticut, that is all, who had nothing more than the local political connections, which were perfectly all right and useful.

So I talked to Dillon -- we were alone, clearing up some business. The next thing, he talked to Loy Henderson, and they decided that the best thing to do was to send me overseas and put me in the Foreign Service Reserve. Obviously, they wouldn't make me an ambassador. I didn't have the kind of experience, and they knew if they did, I would be fired the next day -- by anybody else who came into the White House.

*Q: This was getting towards the end of Eisenhower's Administration?*

SACCIO: Yes. So they said, "We will send you to Brazil and make you the economic minister and the AID director combined." And I think Howard Cottam, who was my predecessor there, had the same standing, but he was in the regular Foreign Service. So I went down there, and this was in September of 1960. This, of course, was an entirely different operation, as far as my experience was concerned. Except as an administrator, I presumably had the help of everybody else to run a program.

On our way down, we were on board, I guess it was, the S.S. Brazil or the S.S. Argentina. We took a ship down, and we had to get an exemption for that, because you flew down to your post and you didn't just take a cruise. Everybody knew that, but they said, "You have been working so hard, absolutely." But at any rate, we cruised down, and on the way down, the election took place in Brazil, and Jânio Quadros was elected. There were great cheers from the Brazilians on board.

Now, on the AID program, before Quadros was elected, Dillon had been working very hard to create some understanding with Latin America. He understood the problems, and he had been working with Kubitschek in Brazil, who had proposed what he called "Operation Pan-Americana."

*Q: Kubitschek did?*

SACCIO: Yes. And Dillon was working with him on that basis. As a matter of fact, even before that had been established, because of our special relationship with Brazil -- I will explain why it was a special relationship -- that created a joint U.S.-Brazil Economic Committee to work with Brazil on its economic problems. Now, this wasn't doing very much, I assume, for the simple reason that Kubitschek made this proposal, and he talked, if I remember correctly, of a \$30 billion operation. Behind that was the famous, highly respected Raúl Prebisch.

*Q: Raúl Prebisch from Argentina.*

SACCIO: He had proposed that the only way to help Latin America was to put in resources. They started this thing, and it was in stream when Kennedy came in, and Kennedy converted that into the Alliance for Progress.

Q: *There had been a lot of new emphasis on Latin America in the latter days under the Eisenhower Administration.*

SACCIO: Definitely.

Q: *In fact, the Inter-American Development Bank, I think, was created.*

SACCIO: Yes. I should go back and mention one thing that Stassen did, which was to create what came to be the International Monetary Fund. Aside from the World Bank, he put \$100 million as capital for a bank that would loan on business -- loan money out.

Q: *To business?*

SACCIO: To business, for the less-developed countries.

Q: *Oh, is that OPEC?*

SACCIO: No. I think it was the predecessor of the IMF.

Q: *Predecessor of the International Monetary Fund?*

SACCIO: Right. That was something when this came about, of course -- the idea of the Latin American bank was broached and it was created while I was still in Washington. The treasury man was the United States representative there.

Q: *Tull, was his name.*

SACCIO: Yes, that is right. But at any rate, when I got to Brazil, I found a massive mission there. For instance, the device used was the -- oh, gosh.

Q: *Servicio?*

SACCIO: *Servicio*. What it consisted of was representatives of the United States and representatives of the country working together on technical assistance, and you would have a *servicio* for agriculture, one for education, and one for public safety, although I don't know whether they called it that.

Q: *One for health.*

SACCIO: Health and education and so forth. And these were all working on the basis of trying to put in technology into a developmental mold for the country. The work at the AID Mission was tremendous, as far as paperwork was concerned; it went on and on, preparing for everything to

be sent up to Washington for the presentation. You had a whole staff there. Bob Herder was there. He was the deputy, and he had been in public administration in Iran and he was the mainstay of the operation when he was Cottam's deputy and he became my deputy.

But we couldn't find just how to do this thing. It was a slow process. I had to recognize that right away. The situation there was that Brazil despite being an agricultural country, wasn't able to produce its own food. Its cattle was out on the range for years before it could ever be brought in to be packed. The agriculture *servicio* bothered me more than anything else. I think we had about 15 Americans on that, who had their offices over at the Department of Agriculture in town, and what they were doing was going out and seeing what people needed in the way of equipment, things of this kind.

I talked to the Brazilian head of the *servicio* and found that he had absolutely no authority in the Department of Agriculture -- it was entirely different -- and the Department of Agriculture was not producing anything but bureaucrats who got jobs in the Department of Agriculture. I beefed like all heck to Dr. Fitzgerald over the phone saying, "Look, these guys are not..." But any rate, Cabot, who was the Ambassador...

Q: *Oh, John Cabot.*

SACCIO: John Moore Cabot, yes.

I said, "Look, what are we doing here?" Bob Herder said "calma."

They sent a former congressman down, who lost his job as a congressman, to take care of some social program. I have forgotten his name, but I guess he was half Italian, so he thought we were buddies or something like that. He was one pain in the neck, and I would get so mad at him; I would shout him out of the office. My secretary would come in afterward and say, "Look, you know, they hear you out there."

I said, "Let them hear me." He was just imposed on us, but he became so fascinated about it, he started his own participant program. But before that, he was just looking for the job. We got people time and again coming down -- Stan Grand and all these people -- looking for my job. It was a good job in that famous 3,000 non-career jobs pamphlet that is always issued for new administrations.

Q: *Oh, yes. Stan Grand came down there before the election, or maybe during the election?*

SACCIO: I forget. But he was down with a team regularly, and we became friends, of course. He and I got along fine, but it was obvious what he was doing. Dillon came down for the new administration. He was now Secretary of the Treasury and Kennedy's man. He came down at the most important time. There was an Inter-American Bank conference, and they had a whole outlay there. Jânio Quadros, of course, was President.

We had a very elaborate procedure for committing PL 480 currency. We gave the food, but they had to put up their local currency for it. It would be used, but it had to be used very carefully.

Project-wise, you had to justify it. It was no joke. It wasn't just shoved in the bank. You had to get all kinds of permission to do it, because, otherwise, it would have been wasted.

So right in the midst of this conference, Doug called me up and he said, "Len, we need so much in reserves."

And I said, "We got to go through all this processes."

He said, "Len, we need it. Would you kindly commit it?"

I said, "Yes."

*Q: Now, he was down in Brazil at the time?*

SACCIO: Yes.

*Q: In this conference?*

SACCIO: That's right.

*Q: And he needed that much.*

SACCIO: Yes, it was part of the deal. "Here I come. (U.S.) I am going to work with you."  
(Brazil)

Well, this seemed to be the practice for practically everybody. In the first days of the Kennedy Administration, we had people come in all over the place. But a good example of how it operated was -- well, Tad Szulc had written these devastating articles of starvation and the drought in the Northeast.

*Q: Tad Szulc, he was the New York Times correspondent.*

SACCIO: That is right. Everything was going. Stevenson came down, and we had a whole session with Jânio Quadros. In his team was Lincoln Gordon, the obvious successor to Cabot. He wasn't yet made, but everybody knew that. And Dick Goodwin, who took the trouble of staying behind after the delegation left the President's office up in Brasília, to tell the President that Cabot was going to go out and that Mr. Gordon was going to be the ambassador.

No, no. It was Goodwin who told the president that it was Gordon who was going to be the ambassador, and he downgraded Cabot like that.

*Q: Cabot had no authority after that.*

SACCIO: Yes. The example I was thinking about is Senator Young. I don't remember his first name and what state he came from, but he was in charge of some committee. And with this brouhaha about the northeast, he was going to come down and look at it.

Q: *Northeast Brazil?*

SACCIO: Northeast Brazil. Because of all these people coming in and out, we, in the Embassy -- the Ambassador, of course -- decided that we would oppose any more visits to the northeast. He said, "All we are doing is creating more problems, because what else can you do?"

I happened to be on consultation up to Washington, and so was Lincoln Gordon, and Senator Young came to the State Department and wanted to talk to Lincoln Gordon before they went down.

Q: *Was Gordon then ambassador?*

SACCIO: Oh, yes. He was Ambassador. He said that he was at the White House and could not be with Senator because he was tied up, but that I was around to talk to him. So I got invited into this room with three Air Force generals and God knows what. They were going to fly them down -- a whole Air Force planeload of three or four senators. Senator Young turned to me and said, "We want to go down, and we are flying directly to Recife and want to see the place. We understand that we got a message from your deputy, the Chargé Bond -- Niles Bond -- that there was a problem, that we should consult with the Ambassador up here."

I said, "I was not surprised that Bond had responded that way, because that was the agreed position of the Embassy."

Young turned to me and he said, "Why can't we go down there?"

I said, "Well, the Embassy feels that it is counterproductive. You are creating all kinds of situations there." They have a feeling that, during the war, we were able to do anything. We built a whole town. We built roads and so forth and all that and it was the point where we sent the planes across to Africa, and we would do anything. Well, what the hell are we waiting for up in the northeast?"

Q: *Why couldn't we do the same thing?*

SACCIO: Why can't we do the same thing?

Q: *Develop the Northeast.*

SACCIO: We had already committed \$150 million down there. I said, "You want to get briefed? The place to get briefed is in Rio, where the office of the northwest agency is. Where Mr. Furtado, who is the head of it, will brief you. To fly this big plane down there," I said, "is the wrong thing. You come down to Rio and you get briefed, and then we will fly you up in a small chartered plane so you can go see it for yourself."

So we all got back to Brazil, and they show up; Gordon had a big briefing session in the ballroom of the Embassy. And when it was all over, the Senator got up and they said, "Mr.

Ambassador, have you any objection to our going up to the northeast?" The Ambassador said, "No."

*Q: So they held you responsible for their not going to the north?*

SACCIO: Before you know it, we had a whole team come down from Washington to reinvestigate under the charge that I was running the Embassy. And poor Linc Gordon tried to get out of it. He said, "No, no. Len is a..."

The Senator Young example is only an example of just how we ran the AID program, because they all came down. For instance, the first time the group came down, headed by Adlai Stevenson, and they went down and talked to Jânio. And A.A. Berle, the old assistant secretary, came down, and at a conference in Itamaraty, which is the foreign office palace in Rio, he got up and made a speech in Portuguese. He had been Ambassador to Brazil for a long time and he had learned the language. He ended off by saying, "To give you a good start, we are immediately appropriating \$100 million to the program." There was dead silence. Niles Bond was in that conference and I was there. As we walked out, he said, "What a lead balloon!"

Well, at one point Fitzgerald said, "What do we do now?"

I said, "What you ought to do is invite Furtado, who is the head of the northeast agency, up to Washington to see the President, because, after all, it is the Alliance for Progress."

He said, "Wait a minute, Len. That sounds good." So he called up, and he said, "Okay, set it up and you come up."

He said, "Okay." And we went up there. It was beautiful. We stayed at the same hotel. I had breakfast with Furtado, and we went to the White House. And before we got into talking to Kennedy, Dick Goodwin looked at the briefing paper on Celso Furtado, and there was a line there, "he has communist . . ." So he took a pencil, and he crossed off all this business about something like communist leanings.

Obviously, he was perfectly right in doing it in the sense that Celso Furtado was no more a Marxist than -- he was a Marxist only because he read about it. He was not a capitalist, put it that way. He believed in government planning.

We finally walked in, and the President was his usual gracious self. Furtado said, "There is a province up in the middle north which we can really develop." -- I don't know whether it was Piauí or another one. It was inward, way inward, from Recife.

And he turned around to me and he said, "How big is Piauí?"

Boy, I caught it. I wasn't going to be dishonest. "It is very big," I said. I should have said it was bigger than Texas -- that would have been historic -- but I didn't.

At any rate, we smiled and we had a nice session, and they sat down and planned it all. They

decided to send a separate mission director for that area -- I can't remember the guy's name to save my life, but he was of Italian extraction or Italian, but an American citizen, and he was related to Gardner, who became...

Q: *Bruno Luzzato.*

SACCIO: That is right.

Q: *He was the father-in-law of Richard Gardner.*

SACCIO: That was fine. That was the end of my direct authority up there. We had some very good guys in education who I got to know when we traveled up there in various parts of northern Brazil, and they were really hard workers and they were creating a very good education program. Well, Luzzato came along, and, before long, one man that we knew, a Brazilian top engineer who was in charge of one of the big dams -- the building of a whole series of dams in a major river to create a great source of power -- said to me, "Do you know this fellow, Luzzato?"

I said, "No. The State Department thinks he . . ."

"What a character!"

I said, "What do you mean?"

"He is a big talker." I think he used some Brazilian words that would mean about the same what we would say.

I said, "Oh, my gosh."

He said, "You got to be careful of that guy."

Luzzato established himself up in Recife, and immediately pushed everybody aside and worked closely with Furtado, and they created a big plan of how to develop this entire area in the northern part of Brazil. I said to Furtado, "Now, look. Before you go up there, find out something about it." This was not my idea, because one of our AID men said, "You know, that is a tropical jungle. They better find out something before they start building cities and roads and all that."

This is the attitude, you see. They had a diagram, actually, with a center and housing all over, hospitals, roads, and so forth, and pure, you know, Thomas Moore utopia. It was all laid out. But Furtado said, "Well, I have already committed myself. I made an announcement on it, so we are going to do it."

I said, "Well, you make the announcement, but have somebody go and take a look there. I will lend you a couple of our guys who know Brazil and know something about the place." And surreptitiously, we included a man from United Fruit, but we wouldn't tell anybody he was from United Fruit because that would damn the whole project.

Furtado finally consented that they go up, but he would not withdraw the program. So they went up, and they came back. "The place is just absolutely dismal, because it has got all kinds of refugees up there who went out there on their own. And as far as getting any wood out of it, it is all teak and it sinks in the river. You can't even get it out."

So what could you do? Furtado and Luzzato sat down and signed five agreements, selected money for health, education. I said to him, "What are you doing with these agreements? I mean, they are just agreements; they are paper."

"Well, this is what we got to do."

I said, "This is not the way. You can't just build. You have to start off with training people and getting yourself people who will go in business and so forth. You are just feeding them."

Well, I couldn't do very much. I explained this all to Lincoln Gordon, who, incidentally, became a great friend. When he first came down, he was cross-examining me, to see if I was a fit person for the job, but, you know, he did it politely. He first met me at a conference of mission directors and ambassadors in Lima, Peru, and I went up there representing Brazil. He, of course, was on the way to Brazil to take on the job; he stopped off there first. And that is where I made my remark to the famous Murrow, who was head of USIS.

Q: *Edward R. Murrow.*

SACCIO: Edward R. Murrow. They sat the mission directors with the ambassadors, which was a big mistake, because every time the board up there, with Murrow and assistant secretaries and so forth, said something, a mission director would say, "Hey."

Q: *The mission director would speak up, is that correct?*

SACCIO: Well, it happened when I was bold enough to make the remark, "You know, the Pope had issued an encyclical on the subject of help and development. Why didn't we respond to it?" I forget what it was. It had to do with helping the less-developed countries. And I said, "Our USIS didn't do a darn thing about."

There was shock all over the place. Finally, Mr. Murrow addressed me, and he said, "Our President doesn't want to get into the position of seeming to deal with the Vatican."

Q: *Oh, I see.*

SACCIO: Well, Lincoln Gordon came up to me and said, "Why did you do that?"

I said, "You know, our USIS fellow thinks there are communists under every bench around this place." His name is Alejandro. He was a typical public relations man, and that was the pitch -- there are communists all over the place.

Well, we really didn't get very far in doing anything, except we had a very good system in Sao

Paulo, a business school. We did a great deal in public safety. There is no question about that. The whole thing was, really, transferring wealth into the area in one form or another -- food, etcetera. They had an agriculture which could not even support a poultry industry. We said, "You know, it is easy. You know, a little farm." "But where are we going to get the seed?" They would have to import the seed!

*Q: To feed the poultry?*

SACCIO: Yes. And that was a big business. I mean, they had no Purina, or whatever we call it, where you could go and buy the bags full.

*Q: May I ask you at this point, you were the minister consular for economic affairs, as well as the AID mission director, correct?*

SACCIO: Yes. Really, at that time, they called me minister. They changed that later.

*Q: So you also were responsible for the economic reporting of the embassy?*

SACCIO: Right. That situation was pretty depressing, anyway. There was a man from the treasury there, and he was the real man, Herb May. We had a commercial attaché and we had an economic man from the State Department. Herb May maintained the relationship. Our commercial man was afraid to take American businessmen to the commercial office of the Brazilians, because "we don't do that sort of thing."

*Q: There was the treasury representative?*

SACCIO: Yes, that is right. He would draw up a plan, like everybody else, which would require \$2 billion, and "this is the way you do it." It served its purpose without any question. The special relationship with Brazil goes back to World War II. They fought with us in Italy. It is true we supplied them, we trained them, we gave them everything to do it in, but this was very close and we wanted to continue it.

And it was a democracy. We were afraid communists would take over the office when Alert came in, and they fired him and the military came in. Quadros quit because of his weird nature. He quit on the assumption that they would immediately call him back and say "Come back," the way he did in the state of Sao Paulo when he got mad and quit, and then they put him right back in.

*Q: So he thought he could do that as president?*

SACCIO: Yes. It didn't work. It was a sad case -- he had close relations with the spirits. The cartoon was of a table under which he was with his hand up, getting a whiskey bottle.

There was a definite prejudice against outsiders, foreigners. They had a pamphlet out which said, "Every time you press a button in your house, you are paying five cents to a foreign utility company." You press a button, you are paying for oil. And they used to call their very competent

and highly praised ambassador, Roberto Campus -- Bobby Fields -- English for Roberto Campus.

We were not making any great progress except to placate them in some fashion or another. As an agricultural country, it was primitive. They had coffee, and that was growing wild. They were spreading it all over the southern part of Brazil and they were making fortunes on it, but nothing as far as the development of agriculture, as such.

**EUGENE F. (GENE) KARST**  
**Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIA**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1960-1962)**

*Eugene Francis Karst has served as the Chief of European regional section of the International Press and Public Division in 1948, Manila press officer in 1949, as well as serving in Buenos Aires in the 1950's as USIS Information Officer. Karst's career included the USIA Agency in 1953, and information officer for International Broadcasting Service in 1953, radio information specialist in 1955. Karst also served in San Salvador as Public Affairs Officer in 1955, Rio de Janeiro in the department of public affairs office in 1960, chief Latin American Division in 1962, as well as in Asuncion as public affairs officer in 1965. Karst was interviewed by himself on December 9, 1999.*

KARST: Two years as Deputy PAO for Brazil were generally pleasant but not unique. The PAO was absent when a big Congressional delegation came to town, wanting to check up on the activities of USIA and of the USAID program. I made a general presentation, followed by more detailed reports from the cultural officer, the film and motion picture officer, and other staffers. We answered questions from the likes of Senator Margaret Chase Smith and other senators and representatives. But when Senator McClellan of Arkansas got the chief of the USAID program to testify, he asked a loaded question, one which would be difficult or impossible to answer. The chief of the AID program turned beet red, and struggled to reply. The Senator, I believe, had it in for the AID program and wanted to make headlines and political capital back home.

Which reminds me of an experience I had in Buenos Aires when I was information officer there some years previously. A big congressional delegation came to town. Argentine as well as American embassy officials were all out at the airport to greet them. After 10 minutes or so, a member of the delegation came to me and asked me to request that the photographers leave the airport. Remember, these were Argentine news photographers and I, as a member of the American embassy, really was a guest in the country.

It was a completely ridiculous request that I, a foreigner, in Argentina, should ask the local photographers to leave. The answer to the whole thing was that still on the plane waiting to disembark were seven or eight wives of the delegation, all traveling on an American military plane. What they feared was that some newsman might tell about the wives getting a free tour of South America and the story would get back to their home town newspapers or perhaps in Drew

Pearson's column.

**HENRY E. MATTOX**  
**Visa Officer**  
**Sao Paulo (1960-1962)**

*Dr. Henry E. Mattox began his Foreign Service career in 1966 as an Economic/Commercial officer in Nepal. His career also included positions in the Azores, Brazil, Haiti, the United Kingdom, Egypt, and France. Dr. Mattox was interviewed by Ambassador William N. Dale in 1993.*

*Q: I suppose that would have been good training for your next post at Sao Paulo. And when you were in Sao Paulo, I am interested in knowing how much support we gave to the democratic regime. I think it was a democracy during the time you were there, and it was before, I think, a number of military regimes. I wonder if you could comment a little bit on how, if at all, we supported that, or played a role there.*

MATTOX: I am afraid I can't comment on that because I was the visa officer -- the only visa officer, at a consulate general, Sao Paulo, and I was fairly far removed from the Embassy. We had such a visa workload -- I was both the NIV and the IV officer. I had a fairly large staff but nobody else who could sign the visas. So I was just swamped every day.

When I first went there, Juscelino Kubitschek was President. He soon left office peacefully, and the newly elected President, Janio Quadros, came to office. That was a fascinating episode because Quadros was quite weirdly honest, a rather strange man. He kept threatening to resign -- threatening to the military who were not technically in control. He was going to resign if such and such wasn't done. After about nine months, I can't remember whether he was in Brasilia or Rio, he threatened to resign, and the military said, "OK", and bundled him up, put him in a plane, flew him down to Santos, installed him in his summer cottage, or something of that sort, and guarded him. So the Vice President, with a great deal of controversy, took office. This was the next to last gasp before the military eventually did take over. The military, I don't think, took over until I was back in INR in the Department. I had left Brazil.

What kind of support, what kind of contacts we had? I don't even know whether the people in Rio were in frequent contact with Quadros, or what. I do know that he was viewed as really a rather odd person because of his unaccountable honesty.

**AMBASSADOR A. LINCOLN GORDON**  
**Ambassador**  
**Brazil (1961-1966)**

*Ambassador Lincoln Gordon graduated from Harvard University in 1933, was a*

*Rhodes scholar, taught at Harvard, and then held a variety of positions in the United States Government. Ambassador Gordon was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1987.*

*Q: 1963, right. Then you served in Brazil through that transition. Was there a breaking point in policy as well as the presidential change? Could you notice a change from the vantage point of an ambassadorship in Brazil?*

GORDON: In the short run?

*Q: Yes.*

GORDON: Well, the shift of assistant secretaryship from Ed Martin to Tom Mann, which took place -- I believe -- in December -- it was one of the earliest appointments that President Johnson made -- didn't have any immediate impact on Brazilian policy. I think there was some sense of a change in general approach toward Latin American policy. I think it's fair to say that Ed Martin, although not one of the original foster fathers of the Alliance for Progress, was much more positively interested in it than Tom Mann was. I think Tom Mann always felt that this was, in substance, not a bad program, but greatly oversold in rhetoric and to some extent a diversion from the more earthly policy problems. Tom was a very hard-headed, down-to-earth sort of fellow, perhaps more cynical than either Martin or I am about Latin America because he's had many, many more years of experience in dealing with the continent. (Laughter)

*Q: Did his appointment anger Latin Americans, as some of the American press, at least, implied at the time that it did?*

GORDON: Well, some. As far as Brazil is concerned, I would say not. But you have to remember that Brazil at that particular moment was in the throes of a near chaotic situation. The Brazilian revolution, or coup, which, took place on March 31 and April 1 of 1964, was already in the making. We didn't know it at the time, but in retrospect it's quite clear that it was in the making at the end of 1963. The situation was deteriorating in such a way that at the time of the Kennedy assassination there was enormous preoccupation with what was going on inside Brazil.

*Q: They just weren't too interested in who was assistant secretary in the United States.*

GORDON: No. That's right.

*Q: Maybe the question should be the other way. Is it true, in Brazil at least, that the personal attraction that Kennedy had for the Latin American people and leaders, charisma or whatever, was so great that it would make it difficult for anybody who represented Mr. Johnson after the assassination occurred?*

GORDON: Yes. This I think is quite clear. President [João] Goulart had made an official trip to Washington back in April of 1962, and President Kennedy was supposed to return the visit. We actually had two dates scheduled. One was in July of 1962, and one was in November 1962. They were both cancelled. The July one, because of another phase of internal political turmoil in

Brazil having to do with Goulart getting back full presidential powers, and the November one, again because the situation there wasn't too good. And then there was the added pretext of the Cuban missile base crisis and the preoccupations of Kennedy at home.

But the Kennedy image was enormously popular in Brazil, and what it was in his life was multiplied almost twentyfold by his death. The experience we had that Friday afternoon and evening and the following weekend, I suppose, was repeated all over the world. But in Rio it was a most dramatic thing. We opened a book at the chancery and another one at our residence, and over that weekend we had a line of people stretching for three or four blocks. It was continuous, day and night, of every class of person, every type, poor, rich, middle class, most of them weeping. It was a most extraordinary outpouring of emotion. So as a reaction to that, there would inevitably be some doubts about Kennedy's successor.

On the other hand, there was certainly no hostility to Vice President Johnson. There was essentially a feeling that this was an unknown person who was stepping into the presidency under the most difficult circumstances. There was a great deal of very favorable comment in the press and elsewhere on the manner of his assuming responsibility.

*Q: Right. Right. One of his first acts, too, was to sort of combine the powers in the way that you intimated [a] while ago the task force had suggested it should be done.*

GORDON: That's right. That part was welcomed. And the second thing in Latin American policy was to reconvene a meeting in the same room, the East Room of the White House, where Kennedy had made his March 13 speech -- I think this was really Johnson's first public act in foreign affairs -- and to rededicate himself to the alliance. The speech ended -- it was a very good speech -- by saying, "Let's make the success of the Alliance for Progress a living memorial to the memory of President Kennedy." So the general atmosphere from that point of view was very good. Now in Brazil we were involved in a very complicated situation. I didn't get back to Washington until January.

*Q: You did come home?*

GORDON: January of 1964. All of us ambassadors were instructed (a) not to resign, and (b) not to come to the funeral. This was in November. We had all kinds of official ceremonial duties. I think I presided -- I'm not a Roman Catholic -- at three different masses in honor of President Kennedy. (Laughter) I learned a lot about it.

*Q: Yes, I could say. (Laughter)*

GORDON: [I learned the] Roman Catholic liturgy and so on during the course of that time. But we were engaged in some very serious official negotiations in Brazil, some of which came to involve the President personally. With the Brazilian political situation deteriorating the way it was, I was very preoccupied with the problem of preventing a fairly radical left wing group around Goulart from developing anti-American issues as a way of trying to generate popular support.

*Q: Their traditional means of doing that, right?*

GORDON: That's right. We've been seeing in Peru in the last few months a very good case of that kind of exploitation. There were various possible things in Brazil which might have been exploited that way, although the traditional Brazilian-American relationship was very good. It's one of the most harmonious in the whole Western hemisphere.

One of the issues had to do with their foreign exchange position and a rather heavy accumulated external indebtedness. There was a possibility of some kind of debt renegotiation. Goulart had changed the whole cabinet in Brazil during the summer and fall of 1963, most of the members very much for the worse from our viewpoint. But his then-finance minister was not bad, a former governor of Sao Paulo, a man named Carvalho Pinto. We had had in Sao Paulo, in November, 1963, just a week or two before the assassination in Dallas, the annual meeting of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council. Governor Harriman headed the American delegation. Ed Martin was with him. I, of course, participated very actively. Carvalho Pinto headed the Brazilian delegation. I might give you the spelling of that for your transcribers.

*Q: Yes, right.*

GORDON: It's C-A-R-V-A-L-H-O, and then a separate name, P-I-N-T-O. But some of the members of the Brazilian delegation were real troublemakers, and they tried to find ways of organizing the Latin Americans against us. It had been an extremely difficult week. Some of these people were very anxious to have a unilateral abrogation of debts to the United States.

*Q: That's always a popular issue. (Laughter)*

GORDON: That's right. A "unilateral moratorium," they called it. I had persuaded Carvalho Pinto that this would be a very bad idea and that there was an alternative, which was a peaceful debt renegotiation, not just with the United States but also with Brazil's European creditors and the Japanese. There were precedents for this in the case of Colombia and in the case of Turkey. I got the documents detailing the way those settlements had been made. I was in more or less constant communication with Carvalho Pinto about this. And then, about the same time that Kennedy was shot, Goulart suddenly fired Carvalho Pinto, or put him in such an embarrassing position that he had to resign, and appointed the former president of the Bank of Brazil -- whose name escapes me at the moment -- who was not too bad a fellow, but a kind of mediocre politician -- as his successor.

Then there suddenly appeared in the presidential palace in Brazil a kind of grey eminence, an extraordinary man, apparently exerting quite a lot of influence on Goulart, who was basically moderate in his view and with whom I developed quite a close relationship. We conceived the notion of an exchange of letters between the two presidents. After all, this tragedy of the assassination had recently taken place in the United States. Goulart always liked to claim -- or pretend -- that he had developed an especially warm, personal relationship with Kennedy during Goulart's trip to the U.S. Kennedy had always been expecting to come down to Brazil. This was now impossible. There was a little bit of truth to it, but it was mostly Goulart's politicking. It was a popular thing from his point of view. So the notion of now establishing some kind of direct

communication with the new president of the United States seemed fairly attractive.

(Interruption)

GORDON: The name of Goulart's adviser was Jorge, J-O-R-G-E, Serpa, S-E-R-P-A. He and I worked up a possible exchange of letters. I had communicated all the background of this to Washington. A little bit to my surprise -- because I still had no personal feel about President Johnson's approach to these matters -- I'd been told that, yes, the President would be happy, if the text of the letter was all right, to open this kind of correspondence with Goulart. [He] thought it would be a good thing under the circumstances, because I'd explained the background, the reasons for it. In fact, the exchange of presidential letters took place sometime in December. I drafted our side of it for President Johnson. Somebody in Washington thought my draft was a bit too long, and a couple of not terribly important paragraphs were cut out, but it was basically an indication that we would be happy to join with European creditors of Brazil in working out some arrangement for lightening the burden and so on. It turned out to be quite important, I think, in deflecting the anti-American group. The fact is that when the coup took place in Brazil in March, 1964, there still had not been any focus on anti-American issues. We were very fortunate from this point of view, and I take a certain amount of pride in the fact.

In January I came back on consultation. Since we're looking at calendars, maybe I can find the dates. This was my first time in Washington after the change of the president. We had taken a Christmas trip that year up to Bahia by road. I was driving myself. It was fascinating. Marvelous trip. I left on January 20 for Washington.

*Q: That was the first time after the assassination then?*

GORDON: The first time that I was in Washington after the assassination, that's right. Yes, I had a series of dates in Washington starting on the twenty-first and running through that week. Then I'd been asked to go off on one of these speaking trips in the United States. I spent the following week in Louisville, Chicago, New York, Boston, and so on.

*Q: Did you see President Johnson during that week?*

GORDON: No, no. That was a source of great disappointment to me. I saw Tom Mann briefly on Wednesday, January 22, and then at length on Saturday, January 25, and again before I left.

I had some personal problems, too. I'd been asked a month before the assassination by President [Robert F.] Goheen of Princeton whether I would be interested in going there as Dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. They'd just gotten thirty-five million dollars. As he said, it was the one important job in academic administration that didn't involve fund raising. I was thinking about it fairly seriously. You see, we'd been in Brazil for two and a quarter years by then, and I had resigned from Harvard. They said they'd be happy if I wanted to come back, and I really had no very clear plans about the future. I was not in a hurry to leave Brazil. In fact, I realized how hard it would be for a successor to get up to full speed in the very complex conditions we were experiencing there. On the other hand, with a new president . . . I'd developed a very close, rather warm, personal relationship with Kennedy. I'd gone back on

the average of four times a year, and I'd seen him on every such trip. He'd always expressed great interest in the country, and so on. So I must say, when I went back to Washington in January, I just took it for granted that I would be meeting the new president. After all, there I was, ambassador in the largest of the Latin American countries, and one which was in a pretty turbulent state, with various explosive potentialities. But Tom Mann, said, "No, things are different now. After all, the President's only been in office for two months, and he's terribly preoccupied with all kinds of things." Tom himself was in the throes of the Panama crisis.

*Q: Panama thing had broken just --*

GORDON: Yes, that's right. That's right.

*Q: -- that two weeks before.*

GORDON: That's right. So he said, "Unless it's absolutely indispensable, the President doesn't want to see ambassadors when they come back." I tried to make the case that it would not be good for my own influence in Brazil for me not, at least, to be photographed with the President to indicate some kind of personal connection. He agreed to this, and I think there was some checking with the White House. Either it wasn't convenient for the President's calendar, or as a matter of principle he didn't want to. In any case, I did not see him on that trip. I confess, I was rather disturbed by that.

*Q: Did that remain typical through the balance of your ambassadorship?*

GORDON: No. No.

*Q: Access difficult?*

GORDON: No. No. I'll explain in a moment how things changed quite a lot after that. But the other business items I wanted to consult about in Washington were perfectly satisfactorily resolved. And I asked Tom -- I'd known Tom Mann well for a long time -- I asked his advice as to whether I ought to consider this Princeton thing and, indeed, what was my standing, anyway, with the change in the presidency. He said in effect, "My belief is, and I know this is the President's also, that it would just be a tragedy if you were to leave Brazil at the present time. There's no telling what the country is going to go through, and whoever we might be able to get as a successor to you would take months to catch up to where you are." He said, "You just ought to put any other job out of your mind until, somehow or other, the situation in Brazil settles down." I guess I was half disappointed about the President's unwillingness to see me, but I decided to go back to face the Brazilian situation as it was emerging. Well, of course, the deterioration went on very rapidly.

The next time I was in Washington was very soon afterwards. In March the President had asked that all of the American ambassadors in Latin America come back for a two or three-day conference on policy toward Latin America, including a meeting with him and participation in an anniversary ceremony of the March 13 -- 1961 -- speech. In any case, the conference took place on March 16, 17, 18. It was those days, starting with a reception at the White House the night of

the sixteenth. I don't seem to have it down on my calendar here, but it did include a meeting in the Cabinet Room, I think on the afternoon of the eighteenth, with about four or five of us ambassadors together with the President. I think Tony Freeman, who was just shifting from Colombia to Mexico, was there. I don't recall what others were there. But this was the first time, I think it's fair to say, that the President really identified me as an individual at all. Otherwise, I was just one of . . . .

*Q: A name in the slot.*

GORDON: Yes, that's right, and one of hundreds of people shaking his hand as they went through some reception line somewhere.

The conference of ambassadors went all right. The OAS meeting was very difficult, because the Panamanian thing was still going on. It was on that occasion that the President said that there had not been a settlement of the Panamanian dispute, although an OAS . . . .

*Q: After an OAS statement to the contrary.*

GORDON: Yes. I still remember the Paraguayan ambassador's face. It was a very difficult situation. Poor Tom Mann, who also thought there had been an agreement, was fit to be tied. It was all about the word "negociar," whether that meant negotiate or --

*Q: Discuss or whatever.*

GORDON: -- discuss. That's right.

Now that was the second time I met with the President. By then it was clear that something drastic was going to happen in Brazil. I did not meet again with the President on that trip, beyond those two occasions. The first was being one of the crowd at the OAS reception and then this small meeting in the White House with four or five of my colleagues. But the President did ask each of us then to say something about the situation in our countries of assignment. He obviously took real interest in what I had to say and apparently was impressed by the way I said it. I did have some consultations with the Secretary of State, the head of the CIA, Tom Mann, and various other people about the deteriorating situation in Brazil on Thursday before I left. I was asked to make a reassessment of the situation as soon as I got back.

I got back on Sunday night, the twenty-second. That was the beginning of Holy Week, that was Palm Sunday. During the next week, the Brazilian situation got worse and worse. There were some very important top secret communications on what was happening. The crisis finally came to a head on the thirty-first of March and the first of April, when Goulart fled Brasilia and an acting president of Brazil was sworn in as his successor.

Then there was the famous question about whether or not we should recognize the change of regime or what should be done about that. And I recommended on Thursday, April 2, that the President send a telegram to the acting president of Brazil, a man called [Ranieri] Mazzilli, M-A-Z-Z-I-L-L-I, who had been speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and was the next in line because

there was no vice president. Goulart had been elected vice president, and had already gone up to the presidency when Quadros resigned in 1961. The recommended telegram was sent. I have been criticized a great deal for that, subsequently, by liberally inclined journalists and professors, but most of them have totally forgotten the circumstances. Most of them think that what I recommended recognizing was Castelo Branco after the issuance of the so-called First Institutional Act. In fact, that was not the situation. The First Institutional Act came on April 9, and Castelo Branco wasn't elected president until two or three days after that, and took office, I think, around April 15. However, that's a separate story [and] doesn't involve President Johnson directly.

But the President, of course, was consulted about the telegram. Indeed, we had a number of teletype conversations between Rio and Washington. They were mainly between George Ball and me, and George was on the other end of the telephone to the President while these were going on. We worked out the wording of the telegram on the teletype. The President never forgot that, because he felt that later on, when the Brazilians were asked to help out in the Dominican affair and assented right away and with some enthusiasm -- which was not the case of most of the Latin American countries, in fact, Brazil was the only large one which joined in -- that there was some connection between that and his telegram in April 1964. So I think it was clear that when my name was later considered for the assistant secretaryship, this rather -- from his point of view -- successful set of events involving Brazil and the Dominican Republic had something to do with his wanting to appoint me. The next time I was back in Washington -- and this time had a rather considerable conversation with the President -- must have been about two months later, because we had a very, very busy time in Brazil after the change of regime.

The next time had to do with money. It was either late May or early June. I know it was in time to get 50 million dollars before the fiscal year ended. It looks from the calendar here as if it must have been June. Yes, I called on President Castelo Branco on the ninth and left the next morning, Wednesday, June 10, for Washington. Actually, I went to Boston first to deal with some personal business and was in Washington the week of the fifteenth. There was a White House meeting on the afternoon of the eighteenth. It says here: McGeorge Bundy, White House. Here we are: President Johnson, twelve o'clock, twelve noon, on Thursday, June 18. That's right. That was quite a long talk. He was tremendously interested. I had said in a speech at the Brazilian War College in May that I thought that sometime when people look back on it, that the events in Brazil that spring would be regarded as one of the critical events in the evolution of international relations generally in the 1960s. President Johnson was much intrigued by this statement and why I thought so. He was all in favor of supporting this new regime as a matter of policy, including financial help for the Brazilian balance of payments. So that was the next personal contact.

*Q: Had he, by that time, developed any personal point of view regarding the Alliance or Latin America generally, that contrasted to President Kennedy's? Anything that stamped it as his?*

GORDON: Well, I don't know that I was aware of it then, but I certainly became so later on. At the time I was appointed assistant secretary in January of 1966, I had a very long talk with him about his attitudes towards the Alliance. It still seemed to me basically the essence of the correct policy for Latin America. He said, "Well, you know, if you go back to 1963, when I came into

office, one of the first things that I became convinced of was that Latin American policy was going very badly. We had some fine rhetoric in the Alliance for Progress" -- these are not his exact words, but it was the substance -- "but I looked into the figures. I found that such-and-such amounts of money had been authorized but the amount actually spent was far below that." He said, "I had it looked into and rapidly became convinced that the program execution was leaving an awful lot to be desired. I thought the time had come to move away from nice words and promises to some real down-to-earth action. This is one reason that I put together, under Tom' Mann, the State Department and the AID jobs." Incidentally, I think this was exactly the right thing to do.

Perhaps I should pause to say that in the spring of 1961, after Kennedy had offered me, and I had accepted, the ambassadorship to Brazil, I went with Adlai Stevenson on his tour of South America in early June. In the middle of that tour I was telephoned by President Kennedy to ask whether I would take the assistant secretaryship, and I begged off on the ground that I really didn't want to and preferred the job in Brazil. In fact, I'd been asked about it before by Bowles in April.

**W. GARTH THORBURN**  
**Agricultural Officer**  
**Sao Paulo (1961-1966)**

**Agricultural Attaché**  
**Brasilia (1971-1973)**

*W. Garth Thorburn was born in New York and was raised there as well as Jamaica. He attended the Hampton Institute, and later joined the Army where he served between the years of 1952 and 1954. In 1954 we worked at the Newport News Shipyard, and then entered the Foreign Agricultural Service in Washington, D.C. in 1954. His career has included positions in France, Brazil, Columbia, Nigeria, India, and Turkey. Thorburn was interviewed by Allan Mustard on January 16, 2006.*

*Q: So then you went to Sao Paulo?*

THORBURN: I went to Sao Paulo as the agricultural officer there, and as you know, Brazil is larger than the continental United States, so we had a lot of ground to cover, and fortunately I had to go up to the northeast of Brazil because I was relegated to certain commodities, and a lot of what I was doing was in Paraná and Sao Paulo. That was coffee. And then in the northeast there was sisal and cocoa and things like that that I had to cover from both areas.

To me, that was a good learning experience. It was just myself and the secretary, so I had to get my Portuguese in shape, travel around, talk with people, get to know people, and it was very, very, very interesting. I had one thing that I think of all the time. I was driving up to the northeast with an assistant from Rio who was supposed to replace me when I left. His name was Abner

Deathridge. And we had a little bit of difficulty on the trip, but these things happen.

But, anyway, I got to near Recife and it was very, very dark, and we were lost, so we stopped and I asked someone where can I find the main road in order to get to Recife? And he said something that stuck in my mind, *Via até ao fim do mundo, e depois pega esguerda*. Go to the end of the earth, and then turn left. So I went to the end of the earth and I turned left. I got on the main road, and I got to Recife.

That particular assignment was very, very good for me, because I learned to run a small office by myself. I learned to do my reporting. I got to know a lot of good contacts that I used later on when I went to Brazil as the agricultural attaché.

After that assignment, I went to Washington and I was branch chief for special studies in the Sugar and Tropical Products Division under Dr. John Kross. I spent two years there. We had a lot of work to do, going to conferences in Rome and Geneva. We were setting up agreements in cocoa and coffee at that particular time. After that assignment was finished two years, I went to Colombia as the agricultural attaché. That was a very interesting time. I almost got kidnapped there.

I was doing the sugar report. I had called people in Medellín and I tried to get some information. I couldn't get it. So I told my wife, I'm going to go to the airport and I'm going to buy a ticket and see if I can go down to Medellín, which I did. I flew down, spoke to the sugar people, came back that night.

When I got back, my wife said, "You need to call somebody." And I called that person, who said, "You need to get out of town. If you had been at Hotel Tekendama today at 11:00, and you usually go there, buy a milkshake and an empanada, you would have been kidnapped." So I called one of my assistants. I got in our official car, and I drove down to the plains, spent two weeks down there, and then came back to Bogotá.

A lot of things transpired. We had guards at the gate and one day my son came out and said to the guard, "What are you doing out here?" And they said to him, "Oh, somebody wants to kidnap your father, so we're here to protect him," so that scared my son to death, but these things happen. At that particular time, I was assigned to Brasilia, so I took a direct transfer and I went to Brasilia as the agricultural attaché.

I had a two-year tour there. It was kind of topsy-turvy, eventful, because I eventually got a divorce from my wife. I went to Washington, and after a hiatus of about three months, clowning around, I was assigned as the director of the Sugar and Tropical Products Division.

*Q: So you were a GS-15 (General Schedule 15) at that point?*

THORBURN: I was a GS-15 at that point.

*Q: When you were the section chief in Brazil, were you a GS-14?*

THORBURN: I was a GS-15.

*Q: Fifteen in Brazil, okay.*

THORBURN: I got my 15 when I was in Bogotá.

Q: Okay.

THORBURN: We at that time really did a lot of traveling to Rome and Geneva and London, because we were working on the same international agreements – coffee, sugar, tea and all of those things. So I went to North Africa, I went to West Africa, because coffee and cocoa were grown in those areas. And I met with the people who we usually meet with when we go to Rome or Geneva to set up the quotas for these various agreements.

*Q: Could you talk about the agreements for a bit, about why we got into the agreements, what they were intended to do and to what degree, in your view, they were successful?*

THORBURN: Okay, the two most important ones in my view were coffee and cocoa. There was an overproduction of coffee at that time, according to world estimates, and we were setting up quotas whereby certain countries could export X coffee and retain Y in their storage facilities. And since the market was X+Y+Z, we had to allocate, and then we got into, "Well, I produce more coffee than that country produces, and I should have a larger quota," and we went back and forth. This is why, before we went to the meetings, I would go to the Ivory Coast, I'd go to Colombia, and we would try and examine exactly how much coffee they did produce, how much they did store, et cetera, et cetera.

*Q: Any other observations that you want to add, or any anecdotes, any stories you want to tell about any of your posts?*

THORBURN: No, that's about it. Everything was hunky-dory if you let things roll off and do the job that you're supposed to do.

One little incident happened in Sao Paulo. I had forgotten about this. There were two. One is Sao Paulo and one in Brasilia. I was in Sao Paulo and an American farmer came in and wanted to speak to the agricultural officer about prospects, market prospects, for his product, Anna Lize Katz Bueno was my secretary, and she brought the guy in my office and he stood up and looked at me and said, "Are you the agricultural officer?"

I said, "Yes." He said, "You're colored." I said, "Yes." He said, "You can't help me." I said, "You're right." So he turned around and left.

When I was in Brasilia, one night, about 3:00 in the morning, I had a knock on my door and an American farmer who had about 5,000 hectares in Mato Grosso, came in and he was having serious problems with the Brazilians in his area, and he wanted me to help. It turned out that he was raising cattle. He had fenced in his area and the Brazilians in that area moved from point A to point B, across his land, anybody's land, and he put up a fence, and they cut the fence down.

And he put up a fence, and they cut the fence down, and he went to the police, and, of course, the police's cousins, uncles, aunts and everything live in that area, so he got no help. So he wanted me to help him.

I said, "This is not an agricultural matter. This is a consular matter." So I asked him to come back the next day, and we went to the consular section and we tried to get in touch with folks in that area. And about a couple of weeks later, I went up with him and we kind of resolved to have a swinging gate or something like that. But these people have been growing across this place for 400 years and this foreigner comes in and puts up fences and stuff like that. It was resolved without bloodshed.

*Q: Cultural differences, going to Brazil and this sort of thing, where else did you see where you were able help Americans bridge some sort of a cultural gap, whether it was related to trade, or just living there, or what they were doing. India and Turkey are very different cultures from American culture, and, obviously, the culture of Latin America is very different.*

THORBURN: Well, I think, and maybe to some extent you see it here in the United States, people, you have to know somebody, you have to have a link, speaking from an American point of view. You don't barge into a situation – "I'm American, I want this, I need that." You have to massage. Sometimes massaging doesn't work well and you have to be forceful, but if you can roll with the punches and adapt to the culture, see how these people operate. Now, we are there to represent the United States. In many instances, the ambassadors that I have served with, get to the point where they think they are Indians or Brazilians or something, and, in my view, are not forceful enough in representing the United States. We're there to represent the United States. We're there to represent the U.S. farmer, the U.S. farm interests. And sometimes we lose sight of this by being, "Yes, you know, let's work with the Indians more on this." And what this shows is a sign of weakness on our part. You can massage the situation, you can adapt to the culture, if you can use it, but never lose sight of why we are there and what we're supposed to do. It is rather difficult.

*Q: Good. Anything else?*

THORBURN: When I was in Sao Paulo, the secretary of agriculture for the state of Sao Paulo was Oscar Thompson Filho, and Oscar Thompson Filho, what a name. It simply means son of Oscar Thompson, and we established a very good rapport.

When I went back to Brasilia as the agricultural attaché, Oscar Thompson Filho was the minister of agriculture, and I went there and the doors were open. So these things really, really work if you can establish good relationships where you are. You never know when you can use them again, and that worked very, very well, because then you had entrée. I'd call up and say, "We're having problems with the foreign office and we want to work on this and somebody's coming from Washington. We need to discuss this. Can you soften them up for us?"

He said, "Garth, I'll see what I can do." So those are the little things that are very, very useful from time to time.

**LEWIS W. BOWDEN**  
**Consular Officer**  
**Brasilia/Rio de Janeiro (1961-1964)**

*Lewis W. Bowden was born in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma and was raised in Kansas. He attended Yale University and then entered the U.S. Navy during World War II. He joined the Foreign Service in 1952 and served in many countries including Yugoslavia, Switzerland, Germany, the former Soviet Union, and Brazil. Mr. Bowden was interviewed by Robert J. Martins in 1991.*

BOWDEN: I went to Brazil and enjoyed my three years there. We spent 18 months in Brasilia.

Q: *That was just opening up as I understand it.*

BOWDEN: Well, that was in 1961-62. It was developing. Congress had already moved out there, for example. That was my beat. I covered Congress, the Brazilian White House...

Q: *But part of the Embassy was still in Rio wasn't it?*

BOWDEN: The full Embassy had not been moved up there at that time. We had tremendous advantages over the people in Rio because all week long the Congress and the President and his staff were there and we had access to them because there were no distractions there at the time.

Q: *There was nothing else to do.*

BOWDEN: Nothing to do except to talk to the diplomats and the diplomats talked to each other. So we were able to do a lot of very good reporting not only on current events but on upcoming things that were just germinating in these people's minds. So it was quite an exciting period.

But then for certain reasons I was sent to the Embassy in Rio de Janeiro where I spent almost two years. So I got a look at both ends. Even in Rio the assignment turned out to be quite interesting because we had a number of people who went on to extraordinary careers, like Frank Carlucci who was in the Political Section. He was sort of my direct boss and then became special assistant to the Ambassador. Sam Lewis, who later went on to become the Ambassador to Israel was in the Political Section. Dick Walters was a military attaché there and he has just finished as our Ambassador in Germany. So we had a star studded cast as it were.

Q: *It might be well to mention who the Ambassador was at the time and which government it was.*

BOWDEN: We arrived just in time for the military takeover. The Ambassador at that time was Lincoln Gordon. Literally before our eyes the government changed -- the military took over and President Goulart fled to Uruguay. Later on Lincoln Gordon was replaced by John Tuthill who came from U.S. Economic Community in Brussels and who had never been in Latin America

before. He was a European specialist.

The military government continued throughout our three and a half years there. Although they changed presidents, one general replaced another. So it was an exciting period in terms of relationships and what was going on.

One of the things I should remark on about the Brazilian experience was to me the important degree to which some of our senior officers identified with local political forces and parties. You can't fault anybody for upholding the forces of democracy versus the forces of a dictatorship and that is not what I mean. What I am talking about is personal identification with opposition leaders and parties, including parties that were on the record dedicated to the overthrow of the government to which we were all accredited. It seemed to me that some of this had gotten quite out of hand.

On one particular occasion I know because it came first hand that the President was about to sign a persona non grata, expulsion order, on the American Ambassador for meddling in the internal affairs of the country far beyond what anybody found acceptable. He was persuaded from doing that at the last moment because they thought the repercussions in relations with the United States would be long lasting, as indeed I think it would have been. But I cite that only to show the extent of the reaction of the Brazilian President and those around him to some of the things that were going on.

*Q: Were there any residual strengths for Goulart after his expulsion?*

BOWDEN: Not that I ever discovered.

*Q: Goulart had a reputation of being pretty far to the left with some sympathy for the Soviets who had a certain sympathy for him. Any insight on that?*

BOWDEN: I think it was the typical picture where any leftist politician in Latin America is going to have some degree of populist appeal and that is the appeal he makes to the people. It goes with a fundamental anti-US feeling. Once you are locked into that kind of pattern, you welcome any outside force to help exploit the pattern and the Soviets were natural and willing partner in this kind of thing all over Latin America. They had never had access to these countries and for their own purposes were constantly striving for access.

The Soviet Embassy in Rio, for example, was fairly large and people were very active in butting their heads against the military government that would have absolutely nothing to do with them.

But you have to look at the whole situation. Not a true democracy in any sense but an opportunity for a politician like Goulart who could appeal to the popular dissatisfactions and frustrations which are innumerable in Brazil, to exploit the situation and maintain public favor. I think most people would consider Goulart quite irresponsible.

But he wasn't alone; there were other politicians in Latin America where declarations are almost more important than real things. The one opposition figure that comes to mind was Carlos

(inaudible), who was known as an orator with power to sway people with the spoken word on occasions. He was a brilliant speaker. He appealed to the deep emotional instincts of people. As far as I know he never managed to get any kind of a following in Brazil in terms of opposing the military government. He was almost a one man political party.

Dealing with him was kind of ticklish for the Embassy who wanted to maintain contacts with the opposition to the government, but at the same time did not want to completely ruin all our lines into the government with which we had to deal every day.

**LINCOLN GORDON**  
**Ambassador**  
**Brazil (1961-1966)**

*Ambassador Lincoln Gordon graduated from Harvard University in 1933, was a Rhodes scholar, taught at Harvard, and then held a variety of positions in the United States Government. Ambassador Gordon was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1987.*

*Q: Mr. Ambassador, there have been several books and articles written concerning your time in Brazil which was a time of great crisis and interest to the United States. Which ones would you recommend and not recommend for those who wish to go into more details in this period.*

GORDON: I would recommend Thomas Skidmore's "Politics in Brazil", covering the period up until 1964. I have some differences of opinion with some of what he says about my role and the role of the United States government but it is basically a good study. He is about to follow it up with work to be published early in 1988 entitled "The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85." There is a short book by Phyllis R. Parker published by the University of Texas Press in 1979 called, "Brazil and the Quiet Intervention 1964," that deals specifically with the circumstances surrounding the overthrowing of the Goulart presidency and the assumption of power by the military in March and April of 1964. She had a long interview with me and she gave me a chance to review her manuscript. Again, while I have differences with certain passages, I think it is basically a good study. Ronald Schneider's book published in 1971 by the Columbia University Press called "The Political System in Brazil 1964-70" is one of the standard works by a very well informed scholar, so I would certainly recommend that. There are a couple of others that I have heard of but have not read myself, so I can not comment. One is Joseph A. Page's called "A Revolution that Never Was - Northeast Brazil 1955 to 1964," published in 1972. That, as I understand, deals particularly with the problems of land reform in the northeast and the role of SUDENE, the special regional development agency and the rather peculiar politics of the governor of the state of Pernambuco with whom I had an interesting run-in about 1963. He is back in Brazil now -- Miguel Arraes -- but quite changed in philosophy. And then there is a book which I have not read and I simply don't know the quality - Joao Quartim's "Dictatorship and Army Struggle in Brazil," published in 1971.

*Q: Turning to the subject at hand: You were basically an economic Europeanist, working on the*

*Marshall Plan in Europe. How did you come to move towards Brazil?*

GORDON:: In 1955 I returned to Harvard from the post of Minister of Economic Affairs in our Embassy in London and Director of what was left of the Marshall Plan Mission, which was terminated on June 30, 1955. All of the country missions set up for the Marshall Plan ended on that day. I returned to the Harvard Business School to take charge of a small group working on International Business and Economic Relations. I had become interested in Brazil almost by accident. While in England in the earlier fifties, I had become interested in economic development generally. This was partly because the British had launched a program, the so-called Colombo plan, for technical and economic assistance to South and Southeast Asia, a region which of course was becoming free of colonial rule. I tried to persuade the U.S. Government to participate on the donor side along with the British, and I did get support from Harold Stassen for that purpose. But George Humphrey was then Secretary of the Treasury and would have nothing to do with it. So that particular idea evaporated. But I went back to Harvard to develop a program primarily for business students. I had a sufficient interest in the development side that in my new course, the first half was devoted to general international economic problems and relations with advanced countries (what today we call developed countries) while the second half was devoted entirely to economic relations, including business and more general governmental relations, with developing countries. I happened to acquire in 1955, at the beginning of this appointment, a research assistant of British nationality, but Peruvian birth. His father had been chief engineer of a Shell Oil refinery in Lima, Peru, so he grew up completely bilingual. He had then gone to the University of Toronto and the Harvard Business School. He was working in Latin America for W. R. Grace but he had written our dean saying he would like to come back into academic life. He was married and needed a salary, so he came back as my research assistant. He was a very intelligent man who knew a great deal about Latin American history, culture, politics and economics, as well, of course, as business problems. He got me interested in Latin America. The more I learned about it the more I became persuaded that although there was very little planning and a great deal of disorder in the developmental process, there was also a great deal of motion. There was, in fact, a lot of development taking place -- political, social, and economic -- so this subject clearly deserved attention. Brazil is by far the largest country in Latin America, and it happened also to be having a developmental boom. At this period, Juscelino Kubitschek was the president. He had been elected in 1955 on a platform of developmentalism. One of his slogans was "fifty years in five"; meaning that in his five-year term he was going to promote fifty years worth of development. In fact he was doing a great deal -- building highways, enlarging the electrical power supply, bringing in an automobile industry -- this was the beginning of the Brazilian automobile industry -- ship building, enlarging iron and steel capacity, and generally promoting a diversified kind of industrialization. So this intrigued me, and I began reading what I could find about Brazil in English. When Edward Mason and I persuaded the Ford Foundation to subsidize a large research program, I decided to carve out for myself a specific project on Brazil. It was focused on relations between government and private enterprise -- the governmental and the private sectors. In 1959 I went to Brazil for almost our entire summer to try to see whether the project was feasible, and if so to recruit some Brazilian collaborators (I use "collaborator" in an entirely good sense, not in the French war time sense of course).

The Ford Foundation happened that summer to be sending down its first exploratory team to see

what it might do in South America, where they had done nothing up to that time. The team was limited to three countries: Chile, Brazil and Argentina. It spent only one week in Chile, then about five or six weeks in Brazil, and a couple of weeks at the end in Argentina. They asked me to join them, since I happened to know the chap in charge. That was very useful because, coming as Ford Foundation advisors, all sorts of doors were opened to us. We visited seven major cities in Brazil, getting a good sense of regional differences, and we met with all kinds of people. A Foreign Service officer was assigned to us -- a very bright young diplomat. We met officials at the state level, as well as the federal. We met people experimenting with new institutions in primary education and development of agricultural extension services. We also met people studying general economic analysis and trying to improve the quality of economic teaching in Brazil which had been very low, and very limited. Others were working on improved training in engineering. I became persuaded that Brazil was an extraordinarily interesting country in which a great deal of development was going on.

How I got the appointment as ambassador I can summarize very quickly. After John Kennedy was elected President and before he took office he appointed task forces to advise him on all aspects of policy, both domestic and foreign. One was a task force on policy toward Latin America. It was chaired by Adolf Berle, who had been Assistant Secretary of State just after World War II (for Latin America). He had also been Ambassador in Brazil in the last year or so of the War. He was a professor of law at Columbia and maintained very active interest in Latin American affairs. A few weeks after the 1960 election I got a telephone call from him in Boston. We had met at several conferences on Latin American matters, but I didn't know him at all well. He first made sure that I was on the other end of the phone and then asked: "Has Sorensen called you?" I replied: "Sorensen, no; who is he?" He said: "I mean Ted Sorensen, the President-elect's right hand man." I said: "What about?" He said: "It will be in the newspapers tomorrow, but the President-elect has designated me the chairman of his task force on Latin America. We need an economist and you are it." I said: "Well, Dr. Berle, that is very surprising and interesting news because I have only been studying Latin America for a few years. I have been working on a project in Brazil and by now I know a lot about Brazil. I also know something about the neighboring larger countries in South America, but nothing about Central America and the Caribbean. (I had never even been to Mexico at the time.) I can name you easily half a dozen American economists who have specialized in Latin America all their careers and are much better qualified than I am." He said: "No, no, you are the man we want. We have been through all that." The group was going to meet a few Friday afternoons in New York at intervals of a couple of weeks, and then end up with a big weekend of intensive work putting together a report. Meanwhile we would each be drafting chapters -- my own being the economic chapter. That is where the substance of the Alliance for Progress was first put into an official U.S. document, based on ideas which had been discussed for some years in Latin American and North American circles. The name "Alliance for Progress" had been developed by Dick Goodwin, one of the President's speech writers and a member of our task force, for use in a Kennedy campaign speech. He in turn had sought advice from journalists in Washington who knew Latin America history. The coiner was the Director of Radio Marti, the special Voice of America radio service directed toward Cuba.

Betancourt at a twenty-fifth anniversary conference in 1986 explained why it was called the Alliance for Progress instead of Alliance for Development. He and his friends knew that

President Kennedy could not pronounce foreign words. The word for development in Spanish is "desarrollo" which was clearly beyond his capacity, while "progreso" he could probably pronounce. So that is how great decisions are made, and "Alliance for Progress" became the name. Goodwin was totally ignorant of Spanish, and not aware that in Spanish you must use the definite article, making it "Alianza para el Progreso" or in Portuguese "Aliança para o Progreso". He wanted to have a direct transliteration of "Alliance for Progress". In Kennedy's speech on March 13, 1961, which launched the program, the definite article was omitted -- much to the amusement of all of the Spanish-speaking people around.

The basic ideas in the Alliance for Progress were Latin American. They had been in circulation and discussion in Inter-American economic meetings for many years. And the outgoing Republican administration, under the leadership of Douglas Dillon as Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, had moved in that direction. They had agreed to set up the Inter-American Development Bank, and Dillon had represented the United States at a quite important Inter-American meeting in Bogota, in 1960, in which a program for social development was adopted. The United States was pledged to support it to the tune of five hundred million dollars. Funds were not appropriated in time for the outgoing administration to use, so one of the first things the incoming administration had to do was and to ask Congress for those funds. Dillon turned up again in the new administration, now as Secretary of the Treasury. He was, in a sense, a personal symbol of bipartisanship in the program of assistance for Latin America.

Drafting the chapter for the task force developed in my mind a sense of personal interest at stake in the Alliance for Progress. Then as appointments were made to the administration, it turned out that I was personally acquainted with almost all of them. Dean Rusk I had worked with during the Marshall Plan days; he had also tried to persuade me to go to the Rockefeller Foundation when he was president there. I didn't want to move to New York so I turned him down, but only after a very cordial discussion. McNamara I had known because he had close connections with the Harvard Business School. George Ball had been involved in all kinds of European matters. He and I had developed a friendly standing difference about the European Common Market -- "little Europe of six countries." I supported looser integration in a wider Europe, while he was a supporter of little Europe and was devoted to Jean Monnet.

I was certain that I would be asked to take some job in the new administration, without knowing what. I made up my mind that there were only two jobs in Washington that I would accept, although I didn't want to go back to Washington full-time in any case. This may sound rather vain, but the first of the two was Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, which George Ball was offered and did accept. He later became the Under Secretary, but he started as Economic Under Secretary. The other job was that of National Security Adviser, which went to McGeorge Bundy. At that time, it was much less prominent than it became later, first under Bundy and later under Kissinger and Rostow and Brzezinski. (Whether it has been so distinguished lately is another question.) I was not offered either of those but I got a telephone call from Dean Rusk in early January, when he was already Secretary of State-designate. He asked me to see him in Washington and he offered the post of Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs. I thought that would be foolish for two reasons. First, I didn't want to come to Washington full-time job in any case. And apart from that, the incumbent was Edwin Martin, a very distinguished professional Foreign Service Officer, who had only been on the job for a year.

He was not a political appointee, and I saw absolutely no reason for making a change merely because a new administration was taking office.

*Q: This was for Economic or. . .*

GORDON: Economic affairs. Not for Latin America -- that came later. So I said: "Well, Dean this is foolish. You know Edwin Martin is a very good manager. He has been in this job for less than a year. There is no point making changes just for the sake of making changes." In fact, they agreed to keep Edwin in the job. But I thought it also useful to have a counter offer in my pocket. I am not sure he even knew that I had been on the task force on Latin America, and had been responsible for the chapter that outlined the content of the Alliance for Progress. Years earlier, in 1947, I had worked with a small group in the State Department heading up the preparatory work on the Marshall Plan in order to make it into a serious operating program. I saw a similar need for the Alliance for Progress. The President-elect had already agreed to adopt the program and mentioned it in his inaugural address. There would be more about it in the State of the Union message, and later a special message devoted entirely to it. So I knew it was going to be part of Kennedy's program. I knew that it would be entirely different from the Marshall Plan, but there was a similar task of converting it from a gleam in the eye into an operating program. I thought I could be useful in that effort. I thought I could work out with Harvard a deal to work in Washington half-time, while keeping on with my teaching in the other half-time. That proposal was accepted by Rusk with alacrity. George Ball telephoned as soon as I got back to Cambridge. "Splendid," he said, "Your first task will be to defend before Congressman Otto Passman's subcommittee the five hundred million dollar appropriation that we need for the Act of Bogota."

*Q: Otto Passman was a congressman or. . .*

GORDON:: He was a congressman from Louisiana who was chairman of the subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee which dealt with foreign aid. He had a dreadful reputation, which was entirely justified. He had a staff aide named Frank Merrill and the two of them had terrorized the presenters of all foreign aid programs, starting with Dick Bissell who presented the Marshall Plan annual appropriation requests year after year, as our foreign aid program changed its character. Officials always had to defend the appropriation request before Otto Passman -- a task regarded as going through a kind of purgatory. Passman had a way of going on and off the record. He would be quite friendly off the record and then suddenly go back on the record and ask what he thought were devastating questions. He was a terrible nitpicker, who thought his constituency wanted him to cut all aid programs. To the best of my knowledge, this five hundred million dollars for the Act of Bogota was the only aid request ever adopted intact by Passman's subcommittee and was done against Passman's will. We persuaded the majority of that subcommittee to vote Passman down. He tried all kinds of tricks. At one time -- I was told by other members of the subcommittee -- during an executive session he picked up the telephone and had his secretary call Dillon, who had made the initial presentation as Secretary of the Treasury. (After that, I spent an entire week testifying, several hours a day.) The record is quite interesting. Passman then said, in the hearing of all of his committee members, "Mr. Secretary, on that matter that we were talking about and so on, I am sure that I can secure the subcommittee's agreement. . ." Without saying what it was, he hung up and said to the subcommittee, "The Secretary is perfectly happy if we cut \$100,000,000 out of this." One of the

other subcommittee members smelled a rat and got hold of Dillon right away. He learned that there had been no such commitment whatever. It was a fraud, and against that background we were able to persuade the majority of the subcommittee members to vote Passman down.

Then came the work on President Kennedy's March 13 speech. The words were produced by Dick Goodwin but the substance was supplied basically by me.

*Q: This was the Alliance for Progress?*

GORDON: Yes, March 13, 1961. Kennedy assembled in the East Room of the White House the whole Latin American diplomatic corps, many members of the House and the Senate, and some other friends of Latin America, from the business community and elsewhere. It was a group of several hundred and he made this launching speech for the . .

*Q: How did the Alliance for Progress differ from the normal aid program?*

GORDON: It was larger. It was supposed to be more systematic, and like the Marshall Plan it was supposed to have some kind of Latin American organization to oversee its functioning. It was a commitment in effect of a billion dollars a year for ten years which in those days seemed like quite a lot of money. In the previous period, except for the last couple of years of the Eisenhower administration, the policy on aid to Latin America had been that private investment and the Export-Import Bank would take care of everything that was needed.

*Q: Would you say, was this really a Democratic versus Republican outlook or just happenstance?*

GORDON: To some extent it was a Democratic versus Republican outlook, although the Republican attitudes had changed. You may remember the background of that change was the near lynching of Vice-President Nixon twice: once in Peru and once in Venezuela, on what was supposed to be a goodwill trip.

*Q: His car was attacked I think . .*

GORDON: That is right -- in Caracas. And after that President Eisenhower dispatched his younger brother Milton, who knew a great deal about Latin America, on an inquiry trip to see what was wrong. Milton reported back that Inter-American relations were very sour indeed and were getting worse. Something had to be done about it. He recommended a much sharper distinction be made between the democratic and autocratic regimes. He invented this phrase: "A cool and correct hand shake for the dictators and an abrazo -- a Latin embrace -- for the democrats." Apart from that he saw a need for a much more affirmative approach to economic relationships. There were problems of the terms of trade: prices of Latin exports of raw materials and agricultural products had been depressed for a number of years so that their balances of payment were under a considerable strain. In addition, there was the whole question of access to the American market for Latin American exports, particularly if the Latins were going to diversify into industrial products as well as raw materials and agricultural products. There was also the question of needed capital for infrastructure, particularly roads, railways, ports, and

electric power, but also for what was termed "social investment." I don't know the exact history of that term, but it really became prominent at the conference in Bogota in 1960. The notion was that Latin American countries needed a considerable amount of social reform. Historians have debated a good deal how far this was a simple reaction to Fidel Castro and what was happening in Cuba. Some of them claim that both the Act of Bogota and the Alliance for Progress were simply reactions to a fear that the Cuban-style revolution would spread. I don't think that is entirely correct. Certainly in winning public and Congressional support for the Alliance for Progress the concern about Cuba played an important part; by that time, Cuba was clearly a Communist leaning if not Communist controlled country. But the inspiration of the Act of Bogota and certainly Milton Eisenhower's trip took place before the maturing of the Cuban revolution. The trip probably took place before Castro came into power on January 1, 1959. I don't remember the exact time, but the trip certainly was not inspired by the Cuban concern. I believe that Dillon's position at Bogota and the agreement by the U.S. to create the Inter-American Development Bank, which the Latins had advocated for years, also antedated active concern about the Cuban revolution.

*Q: It was more a policy that was developing because of growing concern about the state of Latin American countries?*

GORDON: That is right. And the state of inter-American relations -- the attitudes toward the United States in Latin America. During World War II, except for Argentina (which stayed nominally neutral, but was actually leaning toward the Axis side), there had been active cooperation on the part of Latin America. They helped with raw material supplies, with wild rubber of various types, and in the case of Brazil, militarily. Brazil sent troops, ships, and airplanes. A substantial contingent of troops fought under Mark Clark in the campaign running up the Italian peninsula.

*Q: That was a tough campaign, wasn't it?*

GORDON: That is right; a very difficult campaign. So that there was a reservoir of goodwill which had started in 1933 with FDR's so-called "Good Neighbor" policy -- a renewed pledge of non-intervention by the United States. Good relations were further amplified during the war. But then, after the war, there was a terrible let-down because the prices of a lot of Latin American export products suddenly dropped. There simply was much less demand for them. The Latins had hoped that the United States would provide some kind of compensation for this, but we never did. The Organization of American States has an economic arm called the Inter-American Economic and Social Council which at least once a year, and often twice, would have meetings at the ministerial level. They included finance ministers, trade ministers, and sometimes foreign ministers. Repeatedly at those meetings the American representatives had been pressed to develop some new forms of economic collaboration in Latin America and repeatedly the Latins had been turned down, both by the Truman administration and by the Eisenhower administration. Then there was the contrast between John Foster Dulles's pleas for Latin American political support, particularly against Communist expansion anywhere, and his refusal to do anything on the economic front. There was one dramatic meeting of foreign ministers in Caracas where the agenda had some kind of anti-Communist political items. Foster Dulles argued, persuaded, lobbied, and got them passed; he then took his plane back to Washington, leaving a more junior

Under Secretary to handle economic matters and to say, "No." This was resented all over Latin America, as you can imagine, with some passion.

I had been learning a lot about that background in my work with the Ford Foundation and my own studies of Brazil. Then, in early 1961 I worked on the March 13 speech, proposing the Alliance for Progress. After the speech, I began working with a group of Latin American officials and a sizeable group of U.S. officials headed by John Leddy who had been moved from State to Treasury by Dillon. When Dillon was Under Secretary of State in 1959-60, Leddy had been Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs, and when Dillon became Secretary of the Treasury in 1961, he asked Leddy to join him there as Assistant Secretary for International Affairs. Ed Martin was the counterpart on the State Department side. Those two and I, and various others, collaborated very closely in developing the detailed U.S. proposals for the Alliance for Progress.

We were in active consultations with the key Latin American economic officials in multilateral institutions: Felipe Herrera, a Chilean who was President of the Inter-American Development Bank, Jorge Sol, a Salvadoran who was then Economic Under Secretary of the Organization of American States, and, in Chile, the celebrated Raoul Prebisch, an Argentinean who was the head of the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America. Prebisch died only a year or so ago. He had been treated badly by American administrations over the years; they were suspicious of him. He had theories about how the terms of trade were always moving against developing countries and notions about trying to organize developing countries to work together to press for concessions from the richer countries. Indeed, the so-called "dependency theory" owes quite a lot to Prebisch. But he was a much more open-minded man than we had given him credit for. I remember one night at a meeting in Rio, in April, we were sitting together at the swimming pool at the Copacabana Palace Hotel. He almost had tears in his eyes. He said: "You know, these consultations that you got me into on the formation of the Alliance for Progress are the first time that any high-ranking American official like yourself -- and I was of course merely a consultant to the State Department and the White House -- has treated me as an equal." Intellectually, he was an extraordinarily distinguished man; he had been Argentina's Finance Minister and was a highly regarded figure in Latin America. These kinds of rather stupid slights that we had engaged in were quite easy to reverse. Our earlier practices looked like the British in India.

*Q: Looking at our Foreign Service structure, weren't people in our Foreign Service calling these errors to anybody's attention?*

GORDON: That is an interesting question. The Alliance for Progress ideas were welcomed by some of the Latinists in the Department, but others thought that the proponents were excessively enthused. One such case was Tom Mann, who had been Assistant Secretary in the last years of the Eisenhower administration, and was then Ambassador-designate to Mexico. He knew, as I did not know, that the Bay of Pigs was coming, and he wanted to get to Mexico before it happened; otherwise he would have been in a very difficult spot in Mexico City. But Tom was always skeptical about the Alliance. I believe he felt that it was just "the enthusiasm of a bunch of political newcomers that don't really know Latin America the way we do." If you had worked mainly on Central America or Panama, or to a considerable extent Mexico, you had a lot of reason to be rather callous, to be hardened about corruption, the absence of any deep-rooted

democratic cultural roots, and to be skeptical about the possibilities of rapid economic, political and social evolution of Latin American societies along the lines called for by the Alliance for Progress.

The Alliance had a very strong reformist element in it. That was another aspect which was different from previous programs; I should have mentioned it before. The aid was to be conditional, and the conditions were to include various types of reform, with emphasis on social reforms. Examples would include land reform; more attention to the masses whether rural or urban, looking toward a better distribution of income; wider employment opportunities, wider educational opportunities; and generally more social mobility. Those had been the central notions at the 1960 conference which produced the Act of Bogota. The idea was to promote peaceful social revolutions instead of violent class conflict and Cuban-type revolution.

So all of this was background to my appointment as Ambassador to Brazil. It happened that the first big Inter-American high level meeting on economic affairs during the Kennedy administration was to be in Rio de Janeiro, in early April 1961. It was a meeting of the Governors of the new Inter-American Development Bank. The Governors are the Finance Ministers, as they are in the case of the World Bank. They don't meet very often; typically there is one meeting per year. The first annual meeting had been at the Bank's headquarters which are in Washington. The second annual meeting would naturally be in the largest Latin American country, namely Brazil. Because it was the first such meeting, the United States mounted a quite high level delegation. It was led by Secretary of the Treasury Dillon and it included Senator Fulbright and Senator Hickenlooper, the Chairman and ranking minority member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and their wives. Their counterparts from the House Foreign Affairs Committee were also in the group, and Mrs. Dillon was in the party. There were a variety of Assistant Secretaries. Of course John Leddy and Ed Martin, whom I mentioned before, and also the Assistant Secretaries of Labor and Commerce. There was a substantial supporting staff. I had been asked to go along as a consultant on the development of the Alliance for Progress because at this meeting there would be opportunities to meet informally with all of the key economic officials from Latin America: Ministers of Finance, Central Bank governors -- every important economic-type official. In all, there were hundreds of people attending.

In order to avoid a sleepless night, we flew one afternoon to the air base we still had in Puerto Rico, which has since been closed, and spent the night comfortably on the ground. Fairly early the next morning we boarded the plane for Rio. During that day, we were mostly flying over Brazil. Dillon had been told by someone that I was working on a research project on Brazil so he invited me into the forward cabin where the VIPs were -- Senators and Congressmen and their wives, and a couple of Assistant Secretaries. I happened to know more about Brazilian geography and history than anyone else on the plane. Most of the time we were traveling over rain forest so there wasn't very much to see, but every once in a while there would be an interesting feature -- a river or a town. I gave them a kind of Cook's tour lecture on Brazil's geography, politics, economics, current problems, and so on, which they apparently found quite interesting. We arrived in Rio at the end of the afternoon and were installed in our hotel.

The first appointment the next morning was a briefing by the Ambassador Jack Cabot, a very distinguished professional diplomat. I think it is fair to say that he was a diplomat of the old

school which knew a great deal about politics and international law and relatively little about economics. Economics was left to economic attachés, consuls, and commercial attachés. The briefing was very good on Brazilian politics and things of that kind but when it came to economic matters which this delegation was mainly interested in, he stumbled a good deal. He was unable to answer some of the questions and left a rather poor impression. A couple of days later there was a large party at the house of Walter Moreira Salles, a leading Brazilian banker who had been their Ambassador in Washington during the last years of the Eisenhower administration. I had come to know him because, working on my research project, I needed some materials from the Brazilian Embassy, and he kindly had me over for lunch a couple of times with some of his staff members. So we had formed a cordial personal relationship. His party was held in an elegant house -- he is one of the leading bankers in the country and very wealthy -- and all the top people from our delegation were there along with a number of leading Brazilians and so on. I had met many of them during my research trips in 1959 and 1960, and this was noticed. On the way home, Dillon called me aside in the front cabin of the plane, and said: "Look, the Alliance for Progress is going to be the most important thing in our relations with Latin America for the next several years. The Alliance for Progress cannot succeed generally if it fails in Brazil. It might fail in some other smaller country and still be a success, but if it fails in Brazil which is a third of Latin America and half of South America, the most important country in the hemisphere, then it will be an overall failure. I believe that we ought to have an ambassador there who understands what the Alliance for Progress is all about and who is capable of dealing with the economic issues. Jack Cabot is a very distinguished individual; he has been there for a couple of years and it would not be any insult if he were transferred to a post with less active economic work. If I were to recommend to President Kennedy that he appoint you as Ambassador, would you be interested?" Dick Goodwin, who was in the delegation, had murmured something a week or two earlier along these lines. I was intrigued, but didn't take it terribly seriously until Dillon made this very specific proposal. So I said that, subject to my wife's concurrence, I would indeed be interested. I told him I had turned down various jobs in Washington, but this one seemed to me much more interesting and a tremendous challenge -- helping to put the Alliance for Progress into practical operation.

In May, the President invited me to see him in the White House and made the offer. I said I would be honored, and asked him how long he would want me to serve. He said: "How long would you take it for?" I said: "As you know since you have been on the Board of Overseers at Harvard, the longest leave that they will give you in peace time is two years." He said: "OK, that is all right." I said: "That surprises me because I remember in the first few months of your administration a lot of talk about how you only wanted people to accept appointments if they would stay for the duration and the duration was understood to be four full years, your first term." (We always assumed he would live and be re-elected.) He said: "I have long since abandoned that idea." A lot of people simply wouldn't come on that basis and he was perfectly willing to limit it to two years.

*Q: Did you have any trouble with your confirmation hearings going down to . . .*

GORDON: Let me explain what happened because that is an important episode during which I got to know Kennedy quite a lot better, and also Adlai Stevenson. At the interview in May, we then talked about what the timing of my appointment. I said that it should not be made right

away. I was going to be on the American delegation to the negotiating conference in August at Punta del Este, Uruguay, on the Alliance for Progress. It would be better if I were not associated with one particular country, but rather be generally interested in Latin America. Also, I had some chores to complete. My half-time commitment to Harvard had been rather starved and I really wanted to discharge a few more obligations there, including finishing one little study which was published by the Harvard Business School on United States investment in Brazil. (The rest of that project just went by the boards except for a few studies by my Brazilian collaborators which were published in Portuguese.) Kennedy agreed. He said: "That is fine. Let us wait until Punta del Este is over. Then I will send your name to the Senate in the latter part of August and you go down to Brazil in September."

Unfortunately in those days, as now, leakages were common. In my case it probably came from somebody in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In any case, by the very end of May, the same month, there was a story about my appointment in the New York Times. Word about this came to me in an interesting way. I had been invited by General Norstad -- then the NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, to spend a week at SHAPE headquarters in Versailles. This was before de Gaulle kicked NATO out of France. I was to participate in the annual SHAPE conference, in which all the high brass from all the NATO countries are assembled at headquarters. The meetings were mostly about strategy and tactics and policy problems of NATO, but Norstad thought they also had an obligation to learn about wider issues. He became convinced that development of developing countries was an important global topic; so he had one morning devoted to a panel discussion of development by a German, a Frenchman, a Britisher, and an American; I was the American panelist. In return my wife and I were given first-class travel to Paris and hotel room and a car and driver for a week. I thought that was a very good honorarium. We enjoyed it enormously.

On the eve of our departure from Cambridge for that trip, I got a telephone call from Marcilio Marques Moreira, then the Brazilian Ambassador's right hand man, who by coincidence is the present Brazilian Ambassador in Washington. He was then a sort of executive aide to Ambassador Walter Moreira Salles. He said: "Walter and I have heard some very exciting news. I hope it is true." I knew at once what he was talking about. I said: "My God! What have you heard?" "Well, you are to be named Ambassador in Rio." By then I knew Marcilio quite well, and I said "Look, Marcilio, there is no point in my denying it but it would be very embarrassing if it were published because President Kennedy and I have agreed that it should be announced only after Punta del Este." Then I asked how many people knew about it. He said: "I am afraid a number of journalists know it. It is bound to appear in the press soon." I thanked him for alerting me. By then Tom Mann had left for Mexico and they hadn't filled the job of Assistant Secretary. The Acting Assistant Secretary was Wymberley Coerr, who was a professional Foreign Service Officer, who later became Ambassador to Ecuador. And, of course, I had to inform him immediately about these developments. I said: "Something awful has happened. The news of my appointment has leaked out. I don't know whether Jack Cabot has been informed yet, but for God's sake be sure he gets the news before he reads in the newspapers."

Fortunately that was done. He was notified in time and then appointed Ambassador to Poland. The whole thing, fortunately, was handled as decently as possible, in contrast to the experience of Ellis Briggs. Ellis Briggs had been Ambassador in Rio in the late 1950s and read in the

newspapers one day that Clare Boothe Luce had been nominated to his job, without his having been notified at all. As a simple matter of humanity that kind of treatment of professional diplomats seems to me a terrible way to perform. Fortunately, in my case it was avoided, but only by the skin of the teeth since if I had left Cambridge, as I did the next day for Paris, Marcilio Moreira would never have been able to track me down and the story would have appeared before Cabot was notified. It did appear in the newspapers in Paris during the week we were there; the New York Times story was reproduced in the International Herald Tribune.

I had no sooner gotten back to Cambridge, where I was going to spend the months of June and July working on Harvard duties, when a call came from Dick Goodwin who was then a Special Assistant to Kennedy at the White House. He said: "Have you unpacked your bags?" and I said: "My goodness! What mischief are you up to now?" He said: "You will read in the papers tomorrow that the President has asked Adlai Stevenson to take a tour around the ten capitals of South America, to discuss with presidents and ministers there both the Cuban problem and the Alliance for Progress. We are sending Ellis Briggs who has now retired from the Foreign Service, as his diplomatic advisor, but we need an economic advisor. As nobody knows more about the Alliance for Progress than you; you ought to do it." It was to take eighteen days, visiting ten capitals, and of course cutting dreadfully into this time I thought I was going to use for Harvard. But I had never met Stevenson, although I had read a lot about him, and I had been a great admirer of his during the unsuccessful campaigns in the 1950's. I had read many of his speeches. I thought this proposal simply could not be turned down.

We had a whirlwind trip; it was fascinating. On that trip and subsequently, I got to know Stevenson quite well. I came to have doubts as to what kind of president he would have made, but he was a wonderful human being.

At the time of the Stevenson mission in June of 1961, the President of Brazil was Janio Quadros, who had been elected in October 1960 -- just a few weeks before Kennedy's election. He took office January 31, eleven days after Kennedy took office. He was supposed to carry on Kubitschek's developmental thrust but more soberly, with less inflationary pressure and generally in a more moderate and effective manner. Kubitschek had been a very exciting president; and the new capital at Brasilia was one of his great works. Brasilia was regarded by all Americans and most Brazilians as a spectacularly over-expensive and wasteful relocation of the capital from Rio de Janeiro. It should have been delayed at least until more urgent, higher-priority things were completed. But Quadros had been an effective mayor of Sao Paulo city and then Governor of Sao Paulo state -- by far the most important state in Brazil. He seemed like an excellent manager. Stevenson had a three-hour conversation with Quadros at his weekend house in Sao Paulo, in which I participated. By then everybody knew I was going to be Ambassador to Brazil. Quadros treated me personally very cordially in that long interview. It had been scheduled for one hour but he gave us three hours. Then he came out into the garden afterwards, and with hundreds of photographers there, Quadros put his arms around Stevenson, in a cordial Brazilian abraço.

On the plane on our way back to Washington, as we were writing our report, we ranked Quadros rather high among the ten presidents that we had visited. We were quite wrong as it turned out. My name was sent to the Senate on the 24th of August; on the 25th of August, Quadros resigned

from the Presidency, creating a major crisis in Brazil.

Q: *Why did he resign?*

GORDON: There is no clear answer. My own conviction -- which I think most Brazilian journalists, historians and others subscribe to -- is that he expected the Congress to refuse his resignation and offer him a sweeping delegation of powers. But there is some controversy about this. Quadros himself is back in Brazilian politics! He is the mayor of Sao Paulo city once again. On the 25th anniversary of his resignation which was a year ago, he had an interview with a leading newspaper, in which he said he had resigned because the pressures against him were such that he couldn't do what he wanted to, and in fairness to himself, his self-respect, he had to resign. But that really didn't explain anything. I don't think that the pressures against him were all that severe. So the answer isn't entirely clear. He had been acting oddly in the Presidency. This could be a long story, but I think the essence of the answer is that it was a bid for more power. He had sent his vice-president, Goulart, on a mission to Communist China, which was not recognized by Brazil at the time. The Brazilian military were very suspicious of Goulart, because of episodes in the early 1950's and most of Congress did not think highly of him either. Quadros probably thought that when he submitted his letter of resignation, they would say: "Oh no, Mr. President, what do you want? We can't possibly let you resign." So it was essentially a bid for wide discretionary powers. But that didn't happen; instead Congress accepted the resignation. The whole country was surprised and shocked. The military tried to keep Goulart from coming back and taking office. There followed a two-week major constitutional crisis. Then the Congress amended the Constitution, converting to a Parliamentary system temporarily. Goulart was allowed to come back, but supposedly stripped of his powers, like the German or Italian presidents. That didn't work. That is another long story. But on the 26th of August I got a letter from Adlai Stevenson -- a nice letter -- saying: "What is this I read in the newspapers? The President sent your name to the Senate to be Ambassador to Brazil a couple of days ago; then the President of Brazil resigned yesterday. Maybe you should have been named to another country where we dislike the president more!"

Did I have trouble with confirmation? Not in the slightest. The hearing was put down for about ten days later, in early September, when Brazil was still in the midst of this crisis. They kept me for about an hour and a half. The Brazil desk officer at the time was with me and they asked almost nothing about me. They apparently were already satisfied on that score. Their questions were all about the Brazilian crisis and what the outcome might be, and why it happened -- why Quadros resigned; had we had any advance inklings, and so on. I wasn't able to answer any of those questions, but the officer who was following Brazilian Daily did so. We did not have an Ambassador in Rio at the time, since Cabot had already left.

Q: *The Embassy at that time was still in Rio? Is that right?*

GORDON: Oh yes. The capital had only been moved to Brasilia officially in April of 1960, on one of the two Brazilian national holidays, and the city wasn't at all ready for the move. Kubitschek wanted to do it then because his term ended on January 31, 1961. He insisted on the official move several months before he left office because he was quite convinced that, if he left office first, the Congress would reverse the whole project. He was quite right. They disliked the

idea of the move. Rio was a very nice city to live in, once air conditioning became available. Kubitschek pushed for Brasilia -- well, that is another long story. The whole idea of the move to Brasilia was an ancient one in Brazil. It goes back to the 1880's, but nobody took it seriously.

*Q: While you were there, did we have an embassy in Brasilia?*

GORDON: We had a small branch, which in fact had been dedicated and the cornerstone laid by President Eisenhower who visited Brazil in June or July of 1960, in his last year in office. Ours was the most substantial embassy building in Brasilia at the time. It was a hollow square, and on one side there was a fairly elaborate apartment where I would stay on visits, together with a number of guest rooms and bathrooms. There was a cafeteria-style dining room and offices around the other two. We were staffed with a full Marine contingent, a Communications Officer, a fairly high-ranking Political Officer -- in effect a second Political Counselor -- who was in charge in Brasilia, and a significant USIA contingent. This was a good place to try to cultivate Congressmen and we were distributing all sorts of American newspapers, books, films, and music. Congressmen had very little to do. Most of them didn't live in Brasilia. They would come up on Monday afternoons and go home on Friday mornings. So on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, if I were up there and invited a number of Congressmen to dinner, I never had a refusal. They were eager for any kind of diversion!

*Q: But basically you were working out of Rio?*

GORDON: Out of Rio, oh yes. And the whole Brazilian Government was working out of Rio. The Congressmen met in Brasilia and the Supreme Court met up there. The presidents, both Quadros and especially Goulart, and later Castelo Branco after the military take-over in 1964, probably spent half their time in Rio, and half in Brasilia. Brasilia was still a very rural city. There wasn't sufficient housing and there weren't office buildings for their staffs. Brazil has a very big federal bureaucracy and a fair amount of it is still in Rio even now. At that time the cabinet ministers themselves had not moved up. For me, of course, with the Alliance of Progress a major policy interest, a large part of my responsibility involved working with the Finance Ministry. The Foreign Office didn't yet have a building in Brasilia. It was the last department to move up and that was many years afterwards. My immediate successor Jack Tuthill lived in Rio. His successor, Burt Elbrick, lived in Rio and was kidnaped on his way from the house back to the Embassy after lunch one day. It was only his successor, Bill Rountree, who never lived in the residence in Rio. He was in temporary quarters in Brasilia for many months and finally moved into the house which is now occupied by the American ambassador. So that was a good six or eight years after I came home.

*Q: You must have had a check list of things that you really wanted to get done when you went down to Brazil. What were the main things?*

GORDON: Clearly the development of operations under the Alliance for Progress was at the head of my list. There was no question about that. That was why I had been appointed. I believed what Dillon had said in the conversation on the airplane. That program was to be the most important aspect of inter-American relations for the next several years, and it was both my opportunity and my responsibility to get the Alliance to work properly in Brazil. But arriving in

the aftermath of this constitutional crisis in Brazil, my first task was to try to learn the names and numbers of the various players in the Brazilian government. My DCM, Niles Bond, was a professional diplomat. He had spent a year at the Harvard Center for International Affairs; there were two or three Foreign Service Officers there each year, and Niles had been in the first or second group. As a member of the core faculty group, I got to know all the State Department fellows.

In 1961, Niles had been in Brazil for several years and was scheduled to leave. I asked the Department to let me keep him for an extra year because I wanted some continuity there. I knew there was a great deal I didn't know about, and I felt more confident with a DCM whom I knew personally and who had been in Brazil all through the last couple of years of Kubitschek and the brief Quadros period. He was in charge at the time of the resignation of Quadros. Some radical students thought the U.S. had something to do with the resignation and they smashed about eleven of the beautiful green tinted windows in what is now the Consulate General in downtown Rio; it was then the Embassy's chancery building. Fortunately, by the time I arrived, which was at the beginning of October, the windows had been replaced.

I was originally supposed to arrive in late September. I had been confirmed by the Senate in early September without dissent. There was no debate and a unanimously favorable recommendation from the Committee. But a regional meeting of ambassadors covering the whole of South America was scheduled in Lima, Peru, for early October. If I had gone to Rio, say about the 20th of September, I would have spent a few days there, not even enough time to present my credentials, and then gone off to Lima for the regional meeting. That was considered diplomatically rude and unnecessary, since Niles Bond was doing a fine job as Charge. So my wife and younger daughter and I went to Lima from Boston and then directly to Rio. I think it was October 13th that we flew over the Andes to Rio, and I presented my credentials in Brasilia, if I recall correctly, on the 19th. That sort of ceremony takes place only in Brasilia. I presented them to Goulart, who by this time had been allowed back under the amended Constitution, supposedly as the equivalent of a parliamentary system president. The Prime Minister was Tancredo Neves, a very interesting politician from the central state of Minas Gerais. By coincidence, he was elected as the first civilian president in 1985 after twenty-one years of military rule. Unfortunately, he became mortally ill on the eve of his inauguration, and was never able to take office. He died a few days later. He would be president today under the new constitution of Brazil if he had survived.

*Q: Coming back to your arrival in Brazil, did you have, outside of having Niles Bond, did you have any other influence on who was posted there? Did you bring any people with you?*

GORDON: I did not make any changes then. I was very interested in a number of the posts. I knew quite a lot of the people because I had planned to go back on my research project early that summer and had been invited simply as a Harvard professor who was interested in Brazil, to give a lecture in early July to their Higher War College -- equivalent to our National War College. This is a very influential institution whose students are half civilian and half military officers, at about the rank of colonels and navy captains. I was to lecture on Brazilian-American economic relations; the news that I was to be the American Ambassador was all over the Brazilian press as soon as the leak had appeared in the New York Times. I decided to deliver the lecture in

Portuguese. I thought this would make a good first impression. I did not have a speaking knowledge of Portuguese at that time. As a part of my research, I had acquired quite a good reading knowledge so that I could pick up a newspaper and read without having to use a dictionary at all. I also picked up a bit of tourist Portuguese, having a fairly good ear. Jack Cabot was still there, and he was very cordial to me. The Embassy had eight full time language teachers, all very good. The senior teacher, a brilliant fellow, later came for a graduate degree in linguistics at the University of Michigan. Ambassador Cabot arranged for him to give me lessons every day while I was there.

My first problem was to be able to give this lecture. I had written it all out in English and turned it over to the Embassy translating staff. Then I sat down with this language instructor, who said: "Read me the first few sentences," I made some systematic errors, which he corrected right away, and we spent about an hour practicing together. Then he took the manuscript and marked it with accents, putting in extra diacritical marks to guide me on the correct pronunciation. I took it along to the hotel that night, and read it aloud three times. It was about a forty-minute speech. Anybody in the next room must have thought I was absolutely insane. Early the following morning I was called for by an American and a Brazilian military officer to escort me to the War College. In Brazil, you always start speeches with a long salutation to all of the authorities present: "Mr. Commandant of the War College, Mr. this and Mr. that, honored guests, students and so on", and referring to the fifteenth year of the course. I did all of that in Portuguese. The school was equipped with simultaneous interpretation staff and the students all had their earphones on expecting me to speak in English. But I went on in Portuguese to the body of the text and they sort of gasped and took their earphones off. At the end, I had my language instructor include an extra sentence of apology for my freshman Portuguese, which evoked a tremendous round of applause. I could have said anything in the lecture; the content scarcely mattered. It was just a very good ploy for my first semi-public appearance. So working in the Embassy for a week or ten days after that speech, I was meeting all of our key people. I was particularly interested in the AID mission because of the Alliance for Progress. Leonard Saccio, who later became a Foreign Service Officer through lateral entry, was the Chief of the AID mission at the time. It wasn't yet called "AID" -- the legislation on the Agency for International Development was just being enacted at the time. So I had some acquaintance with all of the top people.

In early October, the USIA Mission head, Aldo d'Alessandro, flew over to Lima to be on the airplane with me on my arrival in Rio. We cooked up a little arrival statement together during that flight, which he then put into Portuguese. I read that in Portuguese to the press. Having had that good experience at the War College in June, it seemed clearly a wise thing to do in October. Also, I had been working quite a lot during that summer on the language. You cannot be an effective Ambassador in Brazil without speaking Portuguese, even though the Foreign Service Officers there, their own diplomats, are all good English speakers. It is a necessary qualification.

*Q: It allows you to go beyond the Foreign Ministry. I mean, to get out beyond you have to.*

GORDON: That is right. First, there was the case of the President himself. Goulart came from the southernmost state in Brazil and was bilingual in Spanish, as many people there are, but otherwise had no foreign languages. So I either had to have an interpreter or to deal with him in

Portuguese. He clearly preferred meeting with me alone. That is something we will come to in a moment. Then at the top level on foreign affairs, the first Foreign Minister I had to deal with was a very interesting Brazilian lawyer named San Tiago Dantas, who had only moderate English. We started our relationship, which later became very close, mostly in English because his English was clearly better than my Portuguese. As my Portuguese improved, we found ourselves talking half and half in both languages, but by a year or so later, we were working entirely in Portuguese.

That was my experience with the language. At the start I arranged to have a lesson with the instructor at 9 o'clock every morning. I had my staff meetings at ten, and that worked for five mornings the first week. The second week business began to interfere, so we cut it down to three lessons, that lasted for about three more weeks. Then I had to cut the lessons down to two or one per week, and finally I had to use that first hour of the morning for business and I stopped taking lessons entirely. From then on, I completed my acquaintance with the language by using it. Fortunately, that went quite well. In about December of 1961 I was at a meeting in Salvador, Bahia, and was asked to have a television interview. It was my first television interview, and I took along an interpreter, just in case, but never had to ask him for a word. I was very nervous and felt considerable tension, but after two or three months more I was giving interviews all the time -- press interviews, television interviews, and giving speeches in the countryside. Generally, if they were formal speeches, I would compose them first in English.

I did write all of my own speeches, incidentally, with one exception. I was made an honorary member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, a very stuffy organization, modeled after the Academie Francaise. There is a limited number of members with a very high average age. When a new person is inaugurated, there is a great ceremony, with the members dressed in old-fashioned costumes. Although I knew something about Brazilian literature, I did not feel equipped to write a speech on that subject. One of our USIA mission Brazilian officers, specializing in cultural affairs and very well educated, produced a speech which I delivered. I tried to keep my tongue out of my cheek because of references to distinguished Brazilian writers, some of whom I had never heard of before, and many of whom I had never read a word of. With that exception every public speech I gave in Brazil -- and there was a large number of them -- was my own composition. Occasionally, I had to farm out some sections for research, but I considered speeches a very important part of the job and wanted to convey my own ideas in my own words.

Then the texts were translated by the USIA interpreters and I would deliver them in Portuguese. They would be followed by informal question and answer sessions in Portuguese. After the first six months, I felt quite at home in these sessions. I went back to the War College a year after that first speech, which I had found exhausting. After it, I was so tired that I went back to the hotel and slept for an hour or so. When I came back the second year, the lecture was a full hour and a quarter, followed by an hour of questions and answers -- all in Portuguese. It didn't tire me in the least. By then, clearly I had the language problem under control. That is not to say that I am fluent. I don't consider myself truly bilingual in Portuguese by any means, and I never was, but after about two or three years I was able to tell jokes in Portuguese.

*Q: That's the real test.*

GORDON: Yes.

*Q: Much of the work you did is covered in other interviews and other books.*

GORDON: Let us come back to the staff question.

*Q: I want to talk more about how you felt the staff supported you, your selection of the staff, and how it worked.*

GORDON: At first, of course, I worked with the staff that I inherited. On the whole it was high quality. Within the Latin American region, Brazil is a highly prized post, like London and or Paris in Western Europe. I am sure that in the Middle East, there are counterparts, perhaps Egypt.

*Q: Egypt probably. Beirut at one time.*

GORDON: Yes, but no longer. Those were happier days. The result was that by and large we had our pick of the better officers who were interested in Latin America. A lot of them had to convert their Spanish into Portuguese, but that isn't so hard. The languages are very similar and most of the large words are identical or just have systematic changes so that they could learn Portuguese quite quickly. Occasionally we would get people who had been in Portugal, and already came with the language. It was a huge embassy.

*Q: You said it was the second largest.*

GORDON: Yes, the second largest. I think the largest then was in India where, as in Brazil, there was a very large AID program, or maybe it was in the Philippines. In the Philippines we had a large mission because of the Battle Monuments staff and things of that kind. But in Brazil we had a very big contingent from the USIA, and a very big military advisory group. By Latin standards, there was a substantial military assistance program, part of which was a residue from the Brazilian military collaboration in World War II. All of their equipment was U.S.-built. They were only beginning to have a very rudimentary arms production establishment of their own. Now it is quite large. They are one of the larger arms exporters in the world, but in those days they had very little domestic production. Apart from what would have been the normal kind of supply, we had made a ten-year agreement with them for renting facilities on the island of Fernando de Noronha. It is quite a way out in the South Atlantic -- an ideal location for a tracking station for missiles then shot from Florida. The quid pro quo for that was a stated amount of military assistance, so we had a large contingent of officers from all three of the services. I think it was much larger that it needed to be and Jack Tuthill, my successor, as part of what he called "Operation Topsy", cut down considerably. But the large size was partly because Rio is an awfully nice place to live in and the Pentagon officers who knew anything about Latin America liked the idea of being assigned there. They were of pretty high quality too.

The Navy mission had the longest tradition. Just after World War I the Brazilians decided they had to modernize their military, and they made arrangements with three countries: the French for the Army, the Germans for the embryonic Air Force, which in 1918 was still very small, and the

U.S. for the Navy. So there had been a Navy mission there from about 1920 on. We had a two-star senior rear admiral in charge of it. We also had a regular MAAG, the military assistance advisory group, headed by a major general.

*Q: While you mention this, I speak as somebody who has not served in Latin America but has viewed all of this with great suspicion. These armies don't seem to fight anybody except internally. What are the purposes of our even supporting the armies there. Is it a pay off to make them happy?*

GORDON: That is an interesting question. I was also involved at the time of the decision was made to do it. I was back here from the Marshall Plan working with Averell Harriman in the White House in 1950-51-52, before I went back to London. At that time a Coordinating Committee on foreign aid of all kinds was set up in the State Department chaired by Thomas Cabot, called ISAC (International Security Assistance Committee). I represented the White House on that Committee. One of the difficult issues we dealt with, probably early in 1951, was whether there should be a systematic program of military assistance for Latin America. Basically there were two reasons. One was to keep the supply of military equipment in American hands rather than letting it be taken over by the Europeans. It was quite clear that the military as an institution is important in most Latin American countries except for Costa Rica, and they were going to get some kind of arms modernization somewhere, somehow. We thought it would be better if the supplier were the United States than, let us say France or Britain. We were particularly suspicious about France in those days and French arms salesmen were traveling around Latin America. There had been, after all, very close cultural relations between France and Latin America for many years. In the older generation, pre-World War II, most well-to-do Latin Americans learned French as their first foreign language and they often went to Paris to study. They would know about the latest French novel or French theater production before they knew what was happening in Spanish or Portuguese. So the French had a natural entree into the arms market. The British had been doing a lot of peddling too. The Germans, of course, were out of the game in the fifties entirely, but there were also salesmen from Switzerland and Sweden.

*Q: Of course in those days there was no Russian armament coming in. . .*

GORDON: No, the Soviet Union was not even recognized by most Latin American countries. So, it wasn't that kind of competition; it was essentially West European competition.

The second reason was our recognition, I think correctly, that the military are politically influential in Latin America. There is big training program, for example at the Inter-American Defense College here at the Fort McNair, at the same location as our National War College. There is also a more junior Inter-American training school in Panama. Our theory was that, along with the professional training, we would teach them to respect civilian authority and stop having coups d'etat.

*Q: The results can be documented.*

GORDON: The results are mixed, to put it mildly. I believe, however, that there were some positive ones as well as the negative ones. Those are basically the reasons. The scale of military

assistance in Latin America was quite small. Even in Brazil, where there was a special deal because of Fernando de Noronha; I think the order of magnitude of that deal was only a few tens of millions of dollars per year.

*Q: So, you weren't feeling you were participating in an arms race to get them more equipment than say in Argentina or. . .*

GORDON: That was a problem we had to cope with. We tried very hard during the period later when I was Assistant Secretary of State. This was one of the top priority items, and it was very difficult. We tried to discourage the Latins from acquiring excessively modern military equipment. The Brazilians had bought an aircraft carrier, for example, and there are some very amusing stories about that, and the Argentineans, of course, then felt they had to have their American aircraft carrier. There was a lot of rivalry among the air forces. Their arguments for having armed forces -- not so much in Brazil whose borders are all very secure -- but in some of the other countries go back to real quarrels. Some of them may have been forced by the military around budget time to help one another's budgets.

But Argentina and Chile, for example, had a traditional dispute in the far south which only now has been settled. The Pope has been called in as a mediator; the dispute concerns the little offshore islands near Tierra del Fuego. But those navies were always having little skirmishes, particularly as I say, around budget time in their respective countries. We tried to discourage that kind of thing. Bolivia used to have a large stretch of coastline on the Pacific which is now entirely occupied by Peru and Chile. Bolivia was always making claims for access to the sea, particularly claims against Chile. Peru and Chile had had a rather celebrated war in the mid-nineteenth century, the War of the Pacific which moved the Chilean border considerably further north. The present copper mines and a lot of the famous guano deposit areas there on the West Coast were formerly Peruvian and had been taken over by Chile. Gaining those fertilizer sources had a lot to do with Chile's prosperity, around the turn of the century. Venezuela and Colombia also have had border quarrels which last to this day. So have Peru and Ecuador.

*Q: But in Brazil this was not promoting an arms race. It was a sustaining type of military aid?*

GORDON: Certainly not promoting any arms race whatsoever. It was rather trying to keep the Brazilian armed forces reasonably modern, so they can be self-respecting. We encouraged them to engage in civic action, although they didn't need much encouragement because it was already in the Brazilian tradition. But we helped out with equipment. One of the tasks of the Brazilian Army, particularly, which is by far the most important of three services, is to keep watch on the more remote parts of the interior around the north and the northwest -- the fringes of Amazonia. They have army posts all over the remote regions and for rather thin populations; they provide medical care and assistance in emergencies. They also do road building and other types of civic action projects. Also I would find that military officers were almost the only Brazilians to be familiar with the north of their own country. Other Brazilians who live in the south who are not poor, although not necessarily very rich, would know a lot about Rio and Sao Paulo, quite a lot about Western Europe, particularly France, and a lot about the United States. Almost all of them who have enough money would have been to New York, at least, if not the rest of the United States. But they would know nothing about the north of Brazil. That was terra incognita to them.

I remember a dinner party one night when we were leaving the next day to visit Piauí, the poorest state in the north. It had the lowest per capita income, and a quite small population. We were also going to make official visits to a couple of neighboring states for the first time. My wife told me afterwards that her neighbor on the right -- the guest of honor whoever he was -- had fallen into a conversation about our travels and she said: "Tomorrow we are going to Piauí." He looked at her in astonishment and said: "PIAUI!" This is in Portuguese: "Piauí não existe. There is no such place." It doesn't exist. For him Piauí was the last place in the world. He would far rather go to New Zealand than to Piauí.

For the army officers, in contrast, it was part of their duty to go around these border posts, and they all become acquainted with the north and the northwest of Brazil. They come to know these outlying places and they get involved in trying to assist them. When we visited a new state, it was like visiting a new country. There would be local militia troops out in dress uniform at the airport which we would have to review, and the local band would do its best to play "The Star Spangled Banner," often in very odd ways. Then we would call on the Governor, and on the State Legislative Assembly. I am an honorary citizen of about half the Brazilian states as a result of this. We would then call on the local bishop or archbishop -- whoever the senior Roman Catholic dignitary was; we would call on the head of the Chamber of Commerce and the head of the local trade union federation and then we would call on the local commanding general. That was the regular routine. The visits included, in effect, all the authorities in that region. The army traditionally takes a lot of pride in its role of protecting the physical integrity of the country.

After presenting my credentials in mid-October 1961, I made appointments to meet all the cabinet ministers that I would have any business with at all, and that meant practically the entire cabinet. We had business with almost every department and agency -- economic and military assistance, or some kind of technical help. In the Brazilian tradition, there is no civilian Defense Minister. Each of the three armed services is headed by a general or admiral in uniform. The Air Force General (the title in Brazil is Brigadeiro) had had a rather distinguished past, including being an unsuccessful candidate for the presidency in 1945 and 1950. A rather attractive man, he had been involved in an important episode in Brazil's history back in the early 1920s. We had a very cordial talk about his personal history. Then he said: "There is one request I would like to put to you. Really urgent. It has to do with the Air Force role in civic action." It was the Hercules aircraft, C-130. He said: "I have read about them; I know what they can do." He then went into a full discussion of the problems of the isolated north and northeast and some of the things the Air Force had to carry. He said: "If we could have three of these, it would transform our capacity for civil action."

*Q: They are ideally suited. They were used in Vietnam for just this type of thing. They take off in a short space; they can carry a lot; the fuselage opens up, so you can drive things in. It's a sort of a workhorse. It's the present-day equivalent of the DC 3.*

GORDON: Right, but on a much larger scale. I sent in that request and shortly before I left the post of Ambassador in the last months of 1965, those three planes finally arrived. They were a rather long time in coming!

*Q: A little on this topic. We have skipped around a bit, but at least before the military take over, you saw the military as not just being a group of arrogant officers who were lording it over people, but actually very much involved in civic action. Maybe they weren't ideal types, but at least they were very patriotic.*

GORDON: Absolutely. The military until 1964 had intervened in Brazilian politics several times, but each time rather briefly and bloodlessly. There were never any civil wars in Brazil. The separation from Portugal in 1822 was peaceful. The Regent, the son of the King of Portugal, in effect declared Brazil's independence when the Portuguese Parliament tried to get him to come back to Lisbon. They established the Brazilian Empire, a constitutional monarchy which lasted from 1822 to 1889. For most of that time, the throne was occupied by Peter II, a remarkably advanced, highly cultured monarch. When, for a lot of reasons, the republicans came into power, the military gave Peter his sailing orders, and he was packed off to exile in Europe in 1889. Then the "Old Republic" was declared. That was one bloodless coup. There were a couple of other skirmishes. Vargas took power in the 1930s, but again without bloodshed. The military were then actively involved in World War II on our side. In 1955, some Navy officers tried to keep Kubitschek from taking office after his election. That is why he bought the aircraft carrier, in order to pacify the Navy. And it worked. When he left office, Quadros had been elected and the succession took place absolutely peacefully, like one of ours. But it was the only such case post-World War II in Brazil.

Yet the tradition of the military after each of the interventions was to go back to the barracks. They were supposed to exercise what under the imperial constitution had been called the "moderative power" of the Emperor. The old imperial constitution was a kind of oligarchical democracy, since the franchise was rather narrow, but there was a conservative party and a liberal party. They alternated in power and they also alternated regionally under the Empire. Again in the First Republic, the military regarded themselves as holding the moderative power. The theory, backed by a specific written provision in the constitution, was that if elective politics seemed somehow or other to be threatening the integrity of the country or the general social order, the Emperor could intervene and remove a Prime Minister. Peter II did exercise this power once or twice in the course of the nineteenth century. Brazil in that period faced some major problems, including the abolition of slavery, which was done there peacefully, not the way we did it. It was completed in 1888, by the famous Golden Law, with the stroke of a pen. But they had already gone through some intermediate phases. So, Brazilian politics in the nineteenth century was not entirely free of highly controversial issues. There were also some words in the 1946 Constitution, the democratic constitution which was in force when I arrived, which indicated a somewhat analogous responsibility. Even though the President was Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, there was a paragraph (Article 177) about the responsibility of the Armed Forces for defending the nation and "guaranteeing the constitutional powers, law and order."

*Q: So at that time, everyone in the Embassy who was familiar with Brazilian affairs looked upon the military as being more a stabilizing influence than a threat to democracy in the long term.*

GORDON: At the moment of my arrival, Brazil had just gone through a severe crisis. One or two days after Quadros resigned, the then three military ministers issued an ultimatum.

Meanwhile the Speaker of the House, of the Chamber of Deputies, had been sworn in as acting president. There is always an interim president in Brazil. If the president goes abroad, either the vice-president or, if there is no vice-president, the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, is formally sworn in, and takes the sash -- the symbol of the presidential office. The theory is that there must always be a president in the country, even if the actual president goes away just on a one- or two-day trip, which nowadays happens quite frequently.

So when Quadros resigned, that very evening the rather innocuous Italian-Brazilian Speaker, a man named Ranieri Mazzilli from Sao Paulo, was sworn in as acting president. Under the Constitution, Vice-President Goulart, who was out in Communist China, was supposed to come back and succeed. But then the three military ministers issued an ultimatum saying they would not tolerate his return as President of Brazil. It happened that Goulart's brother-in-law, a man called Brizola who is now again prominent in Brazilian politics, was the Governor of their native state, Rio Grande do Sul. That is the southernmost state of Brazil, and has a reputation for breeding "gaucho" types -- excitable cowboy types. Brizola had acquired a number of radio stations, since television didn't yet exist in Brazil, and he organized what he called "The Chain of Liberty." It was focused entirely on preaching the right of his brother-in-law to come back and assume the Presidency, to which he was constitutionally entitled. There was serious concern about the possibility of civil war. One idea the Brazilian military hated was to take up arms against one another; that was very clear in 1964, when there seemed to be real potential for a civil war. Mistakenly, as it turned out, I thought that was a really live possibility. In the 1961 crisis, an important part was played by the Third Army, based in Rio Grande do Sul. That Army accounts for a rather large part of the total Brazilian Armed Forces since it is stationed on the Argentinean and Uruguayan borders. The commander of that Army declared for letting Goulart return. In other words, he took a stand against his own Minister. So you really had the potential for serious strife. The compromise was devised by this interesting politician, San Tiago Dantas, who later became Goulart's first Foreign Minister. Up in Brasilia they scurried around trying to find some way out of the crisis which would ward off the danger of civil war.

*Q: Did we play any role.?*

GORDON: Not an active role, no. We were just keeping informed. I was reading the telegrams regularly during that period and talking on the telephone with Niles Bond. We played no role in that settlement whatsoever. We were mystified by the whole affair, since we had not expected the Quadros resignation. These events really took us by surprise.

*Q: It also probably took the Brazilians by surprise.*

GORDON: It took all Brazil by surprise. Oh, yes.

*Q: It's still an unsettled question exactly why Quadros resigned.*

GORDON: That is right.

*Q: One of the problems that has been discussed about the United States in its representation abroad is its inability to develop good ties to the left. It is said that we know people we can do*

*business with, and those people have often been educated in the United States, they come from the upper class. They certainly don't come from the left. How did you find our ties with the left when you got to Brazil and were you able to change the situation?*

GORDON: The left in Brazil was a complex set of interests and organizations at that time. Communist Parties were illegal. Brazil had broken diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1948. During the War they were both allied with us. They broke off in 1948, partly under a pretext, partly with reason. The Soviets had treated the Brazilian Ambassador in Moscow very rudely in some episode; Brazil had demanded an apology and Stalin had refused; and the Brazilians withdrew their Ambassador. Then they decided to go further and cut diplomatic relations entirely. But it was also for domestic reasons. They were getting worried about the strength of communism in Brazil and they simultaneously outlawed the Communist Party. That, of course, didn't stop the Communists from participating in politics under other labels. Everybody in the press and all the foreign embassies were aware of the considerable number of well-known communists who didn't try to hide their Party membership. In fact there was a daily communist newspaper in Rio, and also a weekly. There had been a split, so there was a Maoist faction also. One faction was called the PCB, which translates directly as "Brazilian Communist Party"; the other was called PC do B, "Communist Party of Brazil" -- that was the Maoist Group.

The more moderate left included the Labor Party which was one of the three real parties at that time. It was Goulart's own party. The Labor Party had been formed by Vargas in the early 1940s, when he was dictator. Vargas had become President half illegally after a hotly contested election in 1930. But step-by-step in 1932, 1935 and 1937, he had converted Brazil into a fascist state with the so-called Estado Novo, (New State) Constitution. That he promulgated by his own decree in 1937. It was basically a Mussolini-type corporate state, and Brazilian trade unions really owed their existence to this constitution. It was a very elaborate system, in which each industry was supposed to have symmetrical counterparts of labor organizations and industrial management organizations.

Q: *Very much the fascist system?*

GORDON: Exactly on the fascist model. The Labor Party was also tied in with the Social Security Institutes, which were organized in parallel for the same industrial groupings. There was a tremendous amount of patronage moving back and forth between the bureaucracy and the Social Security Institutes, the bureaucracy and the trade unions. As in Fascist Italy, strikes were outlawed. That was the trade-off; labor was officially recognized and organized, but strikes were forbidden. After the War, strikes were then re-legalized under the democratic constitution of 1946, but the organization of labor remained heavily subsidized and controlled by the Government. There was a special tax to finance all these labor organizations, and a lot of influence by the Minister of Labor in appointments to the Social Security Institutes and the trade unions as well. These were not really free trade unions. We made a big effort to try to encourage free trade unions as we had in Western Europe. The AFL-CIO had people all over Latin America including some nominees to our own labor attaché staff. The ICFTU (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) was very active, but never made very much headway in Brazil. They had friends in Brazil, but the officially subsidized organization remained dominant all through the period I was there. When the military took over in 1964, they threw out a lot of

the leaders who they thought were too far to the left, but they didn't change the structure. The structure is still intact to this very day. There is more independence now in some unions like the metallurgical workers in Sao Paulo, but the system is still very much dependent on the Federal Government.

*Q: So to get to the left. . . If you are talking about labor, then labor has almost been co-opted into the Government?*

GORDON: That is right. That didn't mean that there were not some very left-wing labor leaders, including some communists. They were somewhat in disguise, so to speak, since there was no Communist ticket for them to run on. But they were well known despite the disguise.

Left-wing intellectuals, of course, were numerous. As I said in some speech, at one time the marxist tradition among Brazilian social scientists was dominant. That was less the case among economists than others, but political scientists and sociologists are much more numerous. It doesn't mean that they are Communist Party members, but basically they accept the Marxist analysis of society.

In the government when I arrived, there was a coalition that had been put together by Tancredo Neves. He had been appointed Prime Minister by Goulart under the constitutional compromise. Goulart had taken office on September 7, roughly a month before my arrival. My first questions to Niles Bond, my DCM who had been Charge during the crisis, was: "Is this really a Parliamentary System? Does the President have any power, and if so how much?" Niles laughed and replied: "A few days ago a newspaper reported that at a party downtown the other night, Goulart was overheard saying in a very loud tone of voice, obviously intended to reach the ears of the journalists: "If anybody supposes that I am going to be a Queen of England, he had better think again." That was a very interesting statement. When I went to Brasilia to present my credentials I had my first conversation with him, and I was alert to this issue. Unfortunately at that moment I couldn't speak Portuguese very well, even though I could understand what he was saying to me. As my teacher said, I had an enormous passive vocabulary but only a feeble active vocabulary. I read, for the benefit of the press, a short formal statement in Portuguese which I had prepared, and then listened to what he had to say. We were together for about half an hour, just the two of us. That was quite surprising to me. I had assumed that when I met with the President, the Foreign Minister would be there, or at least the President's executive secretary. Goulart clearly didn't want that. He wanted private conversations and it became increasingly clear as our relationship developed that he wanted to talk to me about all kinds of things that were not really appropriate for a foreign ambassador. Even in this first interview, when I was presenting my credentials, the sentence of his that sticks in my mind was more or less: "I hope that you will feel free to advise me not only on Brazilian-American relations but also on my role as leader of Brazil's popular party."

That was in the course of our very first meeting! He had been Vice President under Kubitschek, but during my research in 1959 and 1960 there was no reason to meet him. He was not well thought of. He was elected Vice President for the second time, in 1960, along with Quadros, but the two elections were separate. Quadros had a plurality of several million in a three-way race while Goulart had a plurality of only about a hundred and fifty thousand. He only barely

squeaked in. When I was down for that War College speech in July 1961, I asked the American colonel who was escorting me: "What do people think about Goulart?" I knew that back in the fifties he had some sticky passages with the Brazilian military. They pressured Vargas into firing him from the job of Minister of Labor in 1954. The colonel replied: "If anything happens to Janio Quadros, which God forbid, they would never let Jango (Joao Goulart's nickname) take office." That was two months before Quadros' resignation -- a contingency that didn't enter anyone's mind.

*Q: Mr. Ambassador, could we go back to covering the ability of your staff to have ties to the left. Did we have good ties, at least working ties, with radical elements of the left?*

GORDON: In part, certainly among members of Congress, we were acquainted with the whole spectrum. There was a radical left group within the Labor Party, known as the "Compact Group". It took the lead, for example, in the enactment in 1962 of a measure sharply limiting the remittance of profits by foreign investors. Members of our Political Section, and I myself also, were well acquainted with this group. At one point, while I was visiting the Embassy in July 1961, though not yet Ambassador, Ted Kennedy, then the "baby brother" of the President, came down to Rio. He had heard something about this group. I happened to go up to Brasilia with him on the same plane. He especially wanted a meeting with these people and took me along. He had to leave early to take a plane back to Rio, so I stayed on and talked with the "Compact Group" for an hour after he left. I maintained some acquaintanceship with several of them later when I was ambassador. Our cultural staff was fairly well acquainted with professors and writers. They probably did not reach the most extreme, aggressively anti-American left, and maybe not Communist Party members, but certainly they knew people well to the left of center.

Our labor attaché staff knew many of the trade union leaders. There were two in that job during my four-and-a-half years there. John Fishburn particularly stands out in my memory. Although he was very strongly anti-Communist, as was the AFL-CIO here at home, he was pretty widely acquainted among Brazilian labor leaders, but their whole labor organization had the drawbacks I was describing before -- being tied to an essentially corporative fascist style system. Nonetheless, there were some pretty radical labor leaders in that group and John knew most of them personally. He would have informal debates and arguments with all of them.

On the other hand, certainly as a proportion of our total contacts, it was much easier for us to get along with the center and the center-right, though not the extreme right. There was an extreme right in Brazil too. Before the War, there had been a genuine fascist movement -- they called themselves "Integralistas" and wore a green shirt uniform like Hitler's brown shirts. They wanted Brazil to copy Italy and Germany. Vargas himself was a very moderate fascist, if you can call him a fascist at all. He was an authoritarian ruler and imposed some pretty repressive measures, including total censorship of the press. He almost had a constitutional revolution on his hands in the city of Sao Paulo, which lasted for a few months, back in 1932. Yet, he was obviously not an extreme fascist, or he would never have joined World War II on our side. He had in his cabinet some very moderate people, including especially his famous Foreign Minister, Oswaldo Aranha (a name that means spider), who later became the first Chairman of the U.N. General Assembly. It was really Aranha who persuaded Vargas to join the Allied side in World War II. But there were residues of these Green Shirt types. I never met any of them, but one would hear about

them. One of them, Francisco Campos, wrote the Institutional Act in April of 1964 which was to provide the legalistic rationalization of the military government.

On the other hand, the moderately right of center people predominated in the business community and in the armed forces. The armed forces, I would say, were not in the mold of the Spanish-American caudillo types. There were a number of quite left-wing officers, whom Goulart, particularly in the last years of his presidency, tended to promote out of turn. He tried to build up a kind of core within the armed forces that would be loyal to him because he could see that there were dangers on his horizon. So even the armed services were not in any sense uniformly right of center, in contrast to Argentina, where I think it would be very hard to find a left-wing military officer.

In the Church, a very influential institution in Brazil, I discovered, much to my surprise, that there was by no means a monolithic political attitude. I had supposed that there would be a formal hierarchical structure, which of course does exist, and that doctrine, including attitudes on current political matters, would be passed from the Vatican down to the Papal Nuncio, and then to the archbishops and bishops of Brazil. One must keep in mind that Brazil has more Roman Catholics than any other single country in the world. So it is a country of great importance from the Church's point of view. The National Conference of Brazilian Bishops is a very influential body. But I discovered that, in fact, at the level of the bishops, there was an enormous diversity of political opinion. It runs all the way from very conservative to very radical. There were sharp debates in the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops. That also happens to this day -- debates on such issues as whether they should support land reform, or debates about how to teach adult literacy.

There was a famous literacy program in the 1960s led by a chap named Paulo Freire. It was a new system of teaching literacy by syllables instead of single letters, which apparently makes learning much faster. But the text books that were used were very class-conscious. Instead of pictures of John and Jane, so to speak, they would have pictures of landlords and peasants and the text they were learning would say very unpleasant things about the landlords.

*Q: Was that the famous "Forty Hours in the Revolution", or something like that?*

GORDON: I believe so.

*Q: How did we approach that? I mean, literacy is obviously a keystone to the Alliance of Progress. Here was a program that at least was making a claim that within forty hours they could produce somebody who would be literate enough to vote, which would be really revolutionary. But at the same time the process was in itself suspect. How did you deal with that?*

GORDON: On that, it would be better to inquire of somebody who was actually working in our AID Branch Mission in the northeast in Recife. We were all in favor of adult literacy and also expanding elementary education and secondary education, as well as higher education. We had many programs, usually at the state level to support the building of schools and at the university level, training, especially of applied kinds. My recollection of the specific problem of Freire's program is that it was highly controversial both within Sudene and in our regional mission. Our

people thought that Freire's claims for originality of method were exaggerated, but in any case we didn't like the books. On the other hand, we didn't have any control over the books that were used. I don't think any of our money went in support of producing those particular books. But some of our money certainly was used for adult literacy programs. The details of how much argument we made about it I'm not sure I even knew at the time. I certainly don't recall it now.

*Q: Let's go back to the Church. How did we deal with the Church? Did we have ties? Being an important element obviously we wanted to keep up with what the Church was thinking. . .*

GORDON: In the first place we had, in addition to the branch embassy in Brasilia, two Consulates-General in Sao Paulo and Recife and six more Consulates around the country. So all the largest cities of Brazil had an official American representative. Among the persons that these regional Consulates would become acquainted with were the local bishops and others in the local Church hierarchy. In Sao Paulo, I remember meeting the Cardinal Archbishop on my first official visit. He was a very elderly man, and the Auxiliary Bishop was a more effective person at that time. The Archbishop had a couple of very left-wing advisers and I had been alerted that I might run into some odd political views. He asked me to visit him in his residence, which is a very lovely place up on a hillside in Sao Paulo. Outside was his warm-up tree -- a walnut tree grown from a cutting from a tree planted by George Washington, which grows to this day in Mount Vernon. He was very proud of this.

Then we got into a general discussion. At some point, he said: "The masses in Brazil are suffering from inflation." At that time the rate was about 25% a year, which to us sounds high. Now they have reached 600 to 800 percent a year, which is a different kind of experience. But even in 1961 it was bad. It was higher than they were used to and they were not indexing wages and other payments to compensate for inflation as they later learned to do. He went on: "You are supposed to know something about economics. Isn't it the case that inflation is simply the result of the greed of the employing classes, the merchants? A man, at least in a city like Sao Paulo, needs shoes, At a shoe store the merchant can charge anything he pleases." This notion struck me as rather rudimentary. It wouldn't even have earned a D minus in an economics course. I tried to think quickly how to explain. I said: "Your Excellency," which is how one addresses bishops, "let me put to you the case of Italy." Italy at that time had enjoyed a remarkable economic boom for several years, with very low inflation. I said: "Do you suppose that Italian merchants are any less greedy than Brazilian merchants?" "No," he said, "certainly not; maybe even greedier for all I know." I said: "Well, it is a fact that Italy has had very substantial economic growth for the last ten years and the rate of inflation is only about 2 percent a year," -- or whatever it was at that time. "How can that be?" he asked me. "That is very interesting; how can that be?" I tried to explain to him the meaning of competition. "It isn't really the case that the merchant can charge anything he wants for shoes as long as there are other merchants who are also trying to sell shoes." That came to him as a new idea. "Very interesting." he said. "Is there some book, an easy book that I could read on matters of this kind?" There wasn't any truly elementary sort of economic textbook available in Brazil.

I later suggested to an economist friend of mine, who later became Minister of Finance, that he produce a number of very simple articles for the press which would provide this kind of education. Meanwhile the Archbishop reverted back to talking about exploitation by foreign

investors and so on.

I suppose the most famous left-wing Brazilian bishop is Dom Helder Camara ("Dom" is a courtesy title for all bishops). Dom Helder got an honorary degree from Harvard about four or five years ago. He is now the Bishop of Olinda and Recife, which is a very important diocese in the northeast. He and I had very cordial conversations. We didn't agree. In the United States, I am considered somewhat left of center, though I consider myself at the very center. But in Brazilian terms I clearly was to the right of their center which was well to the left of ours. That is because of the Marxist tradition, which is spread all over Latin America, at least during the last forty or fifty years. The bulk of professional intellectuals -- professors, teachers of social sciences -- tend in overwhelming proportions to have basically Marxist world view. To them the notions of class structure and class conflict are the most important social phenomena, and imperialism is the most important international phenomenon. Profits are always seen as exploitative, illicit, and immoral. Even if they don't believe in trying to seize power through an organized Communist Party, their analysis of social realities is essentially in Marxist terms.

Our Embassy staff often found itself debating these views. I had many meetings with professors and students. One was held on an abysmally hot night up in Manaus, 1200 miles up the Amazon, just before they installed a new power plant for the city. Their old power plant was built during the rubber boom, around 1910, floating on a barge in the river. In this large hall -- there were several hundred people in my audience -- there was just one small electric bulb for the entire place. The temperature must have been close to a hundred with the humidity seeming over a hundred percent. Manaus at that time didn't have a university, but there were a number of so-called "independent faculties"; so there were university level students. I probably had the whole student population of Manaus in the hall that night. A number of them had been coached for this meeting by left-wing teachers, so they thought they would embarrass me with tough questions. Our consul in Belem, who also covered Amazonia, had scouted around to pick up some rumors about the kind of questions I would be asked. I prepared myself with about eight theses that I would lay down and argue. That was intended to forestall some of their questions and put them on the defensive instead of the offensive. I began with a statement of each thesis and five minutes of explanation, backing it up with statistics where appropriate. It worked very well. Their attitude was typical of radical students -- hostile but not violent about it. They were personally very cordial.

In addition to the consuls, we had a large staff of USIA people and we had a fairly sizable CIA contingent including someone in each of these consulates. They were generally fluent in Portuguese -- high quality people who were given pretty long tours of duty, so they got to know many people in the communities where they lived. They would also take on left-wing student groups in debates about American policy. I would say we had reasonable access to the moderate left, and also some parts of the more radical left.

*Q: During the Kennedy administration there was a great push to identify and cultivate youthful leaders. How did you work with that?*

GORDON: It didn't come at the very start. There was the Peace Corps, and Brazil had one of the largest contingents. My first high level official visitor from Washington was Sargent Shriver, the

Director of the Peace Corps. He came down to complete negotiations on a bilateral Peace Corps agreement with the government. In the next week or so, the two of us together worked out with the Foreign Minister the first formal Peace Corps agreement in the world. Our first Peace Corps group was a bunch of young 4-H Club leaders -- young farm types who would work with Brazilians in the northeast on what they call 4-S Clubs -- essentially the same idea. It was a very successful project. The second project was an effort in the far west of the country to promote "community development." Nobody had defined the concept clearly and I predicted to our local Peace Corps director that it would be a fracasso -- a failure. The idea of a special embassy officer assigned to try to cultivate youth and the youth groups came only around 1965. My first youth officer has become rather well known since. It was Frank Carlucci, who had just been declared persona non grata in Zanzibar. That was before Zanzibar and Tanganyika had joined to form Tanzania. He was back in the Department and nobody knew what to do with him. Then came this program which I think was inspired by Bobby Kennedy to have youth officers in each of the larger embassies; so Frank was assigned to our Political Section. He did a terrific job, organizing all kinds of activities. We only overlapped for about six months, but when I left in early 1966 he had all sorts of projects going.

Another youth program was supported by us financially although it was developed by a private organization called the Inter-University Foundation. It was a student leader exchange, led by the wife of an American business man in Sao Paulo, Henry Sage. His wife, Mildred Sage, was a very intelligent woman who had developed a program for locating potential youth leaders in Brazil, mostly at the university level, and bringing a group of them to the United States each summer for about three weeks. The first week was at Harvard with a program on U.S. history, politics, and culture organized by Henry Kissinger. The second week was here in Washington sightseeing and governmental visits under guidance from the State Department. The third week involved some kind of experience elsewhere in the country, either in an industrial city or on a big farm, in order to get some feel of the United States outside of Boston and Washington. I must say that Mildred Sage did a superb job. They had competitive contests to become selected for the program and she made it a point to lean in favor of left-wingers, not to take half-Americanized types and give them this extra boost. They had representatives all over the country whose task it was to identify student leaders. The student organizations in those days, before the military take-over, were not uniformly radical, but they tended to be on the left or far left. The UNE, the National Union of Students, with its headquarters in Rio, was a very radical body.

I suspect that the UNE was responsible for the stoning of the American Embassy windows after Quadros's resignation in 1961. On the very day of the 1964 Revolution, they were calling for rallies in our neighborhood. One group assembled two blocks west of our office building and another group two blocks east. We anticipated a possible effort to storm the Embassy office. We had a general evacuation, except for our Marine guards and half a dozen senior officers. We turned off the air conditioners, because the building wasn't well designed for resisting a siege, although we enjoyed the big glass green-tinted windows. If a fire started anywhere, the air conditioning system would send the smoke right through the whole building with great speed. It was a rather warm and humid day, April 1, 1964. Vernon Walters, the present Ambassador to the U.N., likes to tell the story. He was our military attaché. The others huddled in my office included the DCM, Gordon Mein, who unfortunately was murdered in 1968 in Guatemala where he had gone as Ambassador. He was the first American ambassador to be murdered in recent

years. It happened in broad daylight in downtown Guatemala City, and they were probably trying to kidnap him. Then the group in my office included the Economic Minister, Jack Kubisch, who was also the head the AID mission. He later joined the Foreign Service and became Ambassador to Greece and perhaps somewhere else.

*Q: I'm not sure, I think so.*

GORDON: He was also Assistant Secretary for Latin America at one point. Then there was our Political Counselor, John Keppel, and the CIA station chief. I think that was the entire group that stayed behind in the Embassy.

*Q: This was really your operating team?*

GORDON: That is right.

*Q: Did you feel that you were well supported by the CIA and the attachés?*

GORDON: I was just getting acquainted with these arrangements. I believe in the country team idea, which originated with the Marshall Plan. In London in 1952-55, as the head of the economic side of the Embassy and the Marshall Plan mission, I was part of it. I believe in giving ample time for communication among the senior members of the staff. I had a staff meeting every day at 10 o'clock. It varied in size. There was a core group of about eight, but two days a week it was enlarged to get in some of the outlying officers. For example, the science attaché would come in once a week. We had two different enlargements, one on Tuesdays and one on Fridays. These meetings were all in my own office. There were physical limits to the numbers we could have there. In any case, we wanted a conversation, not a mass meeting.

As to total numbers, I said earlier that we had the second largest U.S. diplomatic mission in the world. There were at the time I left, if I remember correctly, about 2500 in all, equally divided between American and Brazilian nationals, on the official U.S. staff in the country as a whole. They were not all in Rio. These figures include the consulates, the branch embassy, and all the military missions. The largest single component would have been the military because of their advisory groups.

*Q: What were the military advisory groups? Were they really necessary?*

GORDON: In theory the MAAG (Military Assistance Advisory Group) was advising on the use of the weapons we were supplying -- overseeing their arrival, and then training the Brazilians in their use. They would have to work through the manuals, all of that kind of thing. In the case of the Navy Mission, which is the oldest, they were supposed also to advise us on the kinds of ships that would make sense for the Brazilians and their maintenance. Then we had a big naval exercise covering all of South America every year in September. It was called UNITAS and it still takes place. It is a joint anti-submarine exercise, led by the United States, but involving the ships and officers in groups from different South American countries. It starts in the Caribbean. Then it has Colombia and Venezuela in one group. The next group consists of Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina. Rio was the headquarters for that part of the exercise. It was a big annual event

for the Brazilian Navy. I would always be invited. We would have a party at the Embassy for the officers and I would be invited for a meal at the Brazilian Navy headquarters. I happen to like the sea, so I went out with them on a couple of occasions. One year, because the fleet was going on down to Argentina they sent me back on a destroyer escort.

*Q: I was asking whether you felt that the support you were getting was adequate.*

GORDON: Outside the State Department group itself, the important other supporting agencies were the USIA, the military, and the CIA. We also had first-class financial attachés named by the Treasury Department. The USIA then was theoretically subordinate to the State Department, but it was really independent. Ed Murrow was in charge of it -- the great Ed Murrow from Columbia Broadcasting. The two largest groups were the military and the USIA. The USIA not only had branches with each of the consulates and a very large group in Rio, but also what we called binational centers. They were set up in every city of Brazil of significant size. Brazil today has a population of 140,000,000. At that time it was 60,000,000. It is very decentralized, so there are good-sized towns all over the country. In the larger towns and the big cities they were run by full-time USIA personnel. But in the medium size cities they were run by private Americans, usually teachers of Portuguese or students of Brazilian history. They were paid modest salaries and their travel expenses. They wanted a chance to live in Brazil and learn more about it through a part-time job. The main activity of the centers was teaching English; that was the main thing that brought people in. But we also had American newspapers and books and magazines, and some films which could be rented out. They had showings of films, the usual sort of things that are done in United States libraries all over the world. But it wasn't limited to the very big cities where we had Consulates. It was spread all over the country. So the USIA staff was large and busy. There were loads of Brazilians applying for scholarships and fellowships. English had displaced French as the main second language, and we found it hard to get enough English teachers to meet the demand. The demand came from all ages and really all classes of Brazilian society.

In general, the staff support seemed to me very good. They clearly liked an ambassador who seemed to be actively interested in what they were doing. I am not suggesting that Jack Cabot was not, but there had been a fairly long interval there while Niles Bond was in charge, and he was very busy reporting on the crisis in the fall of 1961. I was very well received by the staff.

Soon after arriving, I drafted my first speech, which was to the American Chamber of Commerce. It was a tradition in Rio that they would be hosts for the first speech there by a new American Ambassador. The subject was the Alliance for Progress. When I finished the draft, I circulated it around to the top staff of the Embassy and sent a copy to the Consul General in Sao Paulo, hoping to get comments and suggestions. They may have been intimidated by the notion of suggesting corrections on their new boss's words but didn't think the speech was all that good. I was really disappointed not to receive more constructive criticism.

*Q: They were probably waiting to get your measure before . . .*

GORDON: I think that is probably right.

*Q: That often happens.*

GORDON: In any case, I was disappointed. I was not used to the Foreign Service hierarchy, although I had been in the London Embassy for three years. I don't like being called "Mr. Ambassador". I had to get used to it, but never became happy about it. The automatic deference one is supposed to give the rank didn't sit very well with me. That is just a matter of taste.

Certainly the general impression I had was of a hard-working, competent collection of people. It turned out an enormous mass of paper. Our daily telegram output was huge. There was a lot going on in Brazil. On the Alliance for Progress side, we were in the early stages of working out what was supposed to become a several hundred million dollar per year program. The rule of thumb, at least in my mind, was that Brazil was a third of Latin America and the Alliance for Progress was roughly a billion dollars a year; so Brazil ought to be getting 300 or 350 million dollars each year. We had to face the questions: What is the best use of that kind of funding? How do we distribute it among the different types of projects? We began with the help of a lot of background information. The World Bank had been in Brazil already on quite a large scale. Brazil later became easily the Bank's single largest borrower. It was automatically the single largest borrower from the Inter-American Development Bank because of its being the biggest country in Latin America. It was a very large borrower from the Export-Import Bank. In fact, the then president of the Export-Import Bank was an old personal friend, and every time I was in Washington I would argue that he should extend more loans to Brazil. He would say, "Oh, but there is too much exposure concentrated in one country." I would reply that Brazil happens to be four times bigger than any other country in their bailiwick -- they were mainly Latin American in their interests.

*Q: You were mentioning the great mass of reports that went out. Now, let's exclude the Alliance for Progress reports. As to the ones that were reporting on the situation in Brazil -- looking back on it, do you think all this was necessary? I am wondering about the enormous paper flow, because you can get a lot of information about what amounts to a huge country but finally it boils down to probably a few yes and no recommendations by people at the top. Can all of this reporting be absorbed?*

GORDON: It couldn't all be absorbed by any one person. The question is: was all of it being read by anybody or was it just dropped in people's wastebaskets or left totally unread. I didn't read all of it myself. I could have spent the whole day doing nothing but reading our outgoing material. After Niles Bond left, my Deputy was Gordon Mein, an extremely diligent officer. He read a great deal that he screened for me. We had rules about who could authorize outgoing telegrams. He and I could do so, and on certain subjects we delegated authority down to the counselor level, but within limits. If it were really important or controversial either Gordon Mein or I was to see it before it went out. And with the CIA there was a complete understanding: I didn't try to clear all their communications in advance, but I saw them all afterwards, and if there was some line of reporting on which I had a difference of opinion the Station Chief and I would talk about it and, if necessary, he would send a correction.

People have asked me -- including Jan K. Black in a recent letter -- whether by any chance there might have been a so-called Track Two as in Chile under Nixon with poor Ambassador Korry.

He was almost driven mad by what he later learned about what was happening around him in Chile without his knowledge. By definition, one can't be a hundred percent sure that things done without one's knowledge didn't happen, but I am morally certain there was no such action in Brazil. The instructions from Kennedy were absolutely clear-cut. Kennedy had revised the Eisenhower rule to withdraw the CIA's exception. Under Eisenhower, ambassadors did not have to be told about everything the CIA was doing in their country, but Kennedy had changed that rule. My personal relations with each of my CIA station chiefs were good. The last one who was there at the time of the military take-over, seemed to me exceptionally good. He was a very cautious fellow and worked very hard on improving intelligence collection in the literal sense.

*Q: Did you find that the CIA was a good source of intelligence about what was going on that would be of particular interest to you as the ambassador to anticipate events?*

GORDON: Yes, but not exclusively. We got intelligence as to what was going on from the whole staff. That included the consulates spread around the country, our branch embassy in Brasilia, the political section, and on the economics side, economic and commercial officers, the AID mission, and from the CIA. I certainly feel they were a very valuable source of intelligence but only one among several. There were the military attachés on the military side. I am not sure that I have ever written about this, but have you run across anywhere a description of how it happened that Vernon Walters was assigned as military attaché?

*Q: I think it was covered in Miss Phyllis . . .*

GORDON: Phyllis Parker's book.

*Q: . . . that he had been working with the Brazilians during the War in our Fifth Army.*

GORDON: . . . in Italy. He was liaison officer.

*Q: . . . and he was in Italy at the time... you asked for him I believe because you wanted somebody who spoke Portuguese.*

GORDON: That is right. It was a personal decision by President Kennedy. That was the interesting aspect of it. I wouldn't have done this on my own. I had known Walters because he was military advisor and interpreter for Averell Harriman in the Paris office of the Marshall Plan back in 1948 and 1949 when I was working there. That is where I learned that he had been with the Brazilian Expeditionary Force in Italy during the war. In 1962, he was military attaché in Rome, which is considered a very important post for the military intelligence service. In April 1962, President Goulart came to Washington on a state visit for a couple of days, followed by a couple of days in New York and a visit to Chicago. Then, at my suggestion, he went out to the SAC base.

*Q: S.A.C.?*

GORDON: Strategic Air Command, in Omaha, Nebraska. I had heard rumors that Goulart believed, because of Sputnik, that the United States was finished as a superpower. I thought it

would be a good idea to cure this illusion. Also I had never seen the SAC headquarters myself, and this was a good excuse. It worked out very well actually; it had the desired effect. On his way back to Rio, Goulart stopped in Mexico, where he had a slight heart attack of some kind. When he got home -- this was around May Day -- he made some speeches which shifted far to the left. His speeches here before Congress and other audiences had been very moderate indeed, but he seemed to be taking a much more radical lurch to the far left for reasons unclear.

That was somewhat disturbing. Then there was another crisis in Brazilian politics (this is a very complicated story which I won't try to include in this interview; it is well described by Skidmore and others). The first cabinet that had been appointed under the parliamentary system all resigned in June or July because they all aimed to run for reelection to Congress in October. The Brazilian constitution had an obsolete provision that you could not run for Congress if you held any executive office within either 90 days or 120 days of the election. Under a parliamentary system that is ridiculous, because all of the cabinet members are members of parliament by definition. They hadn't amended that particular clause. They should of course have disregarded it; they chose not to for reasons I learned from his legal advisor. I was on good terms with him; it was one of my operating methods to befriend people in the palace to get light on the President's frame of mind. Goulart thought that enforcing this provision would be a good way to give him freedom to choose a new cabinet, and also to negotiate an early plebiscite to get back his presidential powers.

That is what he wanted most of all. That comment of his about not being the Queen of England really came from his heart. He was a kind of cowboy character himself, a gaucho from the far south. He had been slightly crippled in a riding accident; so he walked with a limp and that bothered him a great deal. He had a typically gaucho macho kind of conception of himself. There were rumors that his own air attaché had cuckolded him with his rather pretty but simple-minded young wife. Rumors of that sort, which were published all over the place, didn't sit very well with his self-esteem -- Goulart was trying to prove his manliness in one way or another. The notion of being the only president in Brazilian history with sharply curtailed powers was absolutely unacceptable to him. So he was clearly politicking to get full powers back by every conceivable means. Kennedy had been supposed to go to Brazil on a return visit in July, but with this new political crisis and great turmoil, it was agreed on my recommendation that he not come.

*Q: This was Robert Kennedy?*

GORDON: John Kennedy. This was supposed to be a presidential return visit. Goulart had been here in Washington in April and Kennedy was supposed to come to Brazil in July. Kennedy agreed to postpone it, but he said, in order to save face for Goulart, "Let us postpone it to a date certain." So we negotiated a date around Thanksgiving time. Then Kennedy said he would like me to come back on consultation. He was following events in Brazil in fantastic detail. I was astonished by it. There were then 22 states in Brazil, and several of the governors came up to the United States on visits, including visits to Washington; Kennedy always wanted to receive them personally. Of course they would come back with PT boat tie pins, overjoyed with having met President Kennedy in the White House. Each time, of course, we had to send briefings on what these people were like before they were received. But Kennedy had an astonishing memory. He

would see me every time I was back, and at some length. (It was entirely different with Johnson.) When we met Kennedy would quiz me: "How is Governor so-and-so coming along -- whom I saw three months ago?" Now in July 1962, he wanted to know about the general conditions and prospects for Brazil in this rather murky situation. We had a long conversation late one morning at the White House. He asked me all kinds of questions about political developments, the economic situation and whether there was any serious danger of instability in the regime. I thought there was. There had been some rather serious riots, the economic situation was worsening, and the outcome of the short-range "mini-crisis" was not at all clear. We were speculating together about various possibilities, Kennedy then said, "In a situation like this, the military attachés might get to be very important. How good are they?" I said that the air attaché was quite good, the navy man had just been changed, so I didn't really have much acquaintance with him yet, but the weak sister was clearly the army attaché. The army was by far the most important of the three forces in Brazil anyway. I would welcome a first-class army attaché. He asked if I knew anyone. I told him that in general I didn't know who was in the army intelligence service, but that I did happen to know one, because I had worked with him on the Marshall Plan. I said: "He would be marvelous. You may know him. He was Eisenhower's professional interpreter, during all kinds of summit meetings. His name is Vernon Walters, and he is presently army attaché in Rome." Kennedy said, "Yes, I don't know him well, but I recall his fabulous reputation for handling any number of languages with absolute fluency." I said, "Yes, that is the man." He said, "Look, McNamara is out of the country, but Ros Kilpatrick is Acting Secretary of Defense, and he is on his way over here for a late lunch. You wait in the outer office and intercept him when he comes in. Tell him you have it from me that you should be sent the best army attaché the Pentagon can find, and unless they can find the equivalent, that would be Vernon Walters." I conveyed that message to Kilpatrick.

I was going back to Rio via Miami the next day, leaving in the afternoon. I was awakened early in the morning at the Cosmos Club, where I stayed on these consulting visits, by a call from the Brazil desk man who said, "General Fitch, the head of army intelligence, desperately wants to talk to you. Can you meet him here at the State Department at 8:30?" I said, "Sure." So I got down there at 8:30. There was General Fitch, whom I had never met before, in a state of high dudgeon -- absolutely fit to be tied. He impressed me -- I may be unfair to him -- as a typical Pentagon bureaucrat. He said, "My God, you can't take Walters from Rome. You will destroy the whole system. We have got a man in training for you as a replacement for. . ." whoever my colonel was. I said, "In training? What is he being trained in?" "Training in Portuguese language." he responded. I said, "You mean he has never served in Brazil before? That doesn't sound very good to me. Look, I don't want to destroy your system or do serious damage to it. But I have very serious problems. Brazil is a huge, important country, and the President himself, your Commander-in-Chief, wants to be sure that we have got the best attaché there that can be found. I don't insist that it be Walters, if you've got somebody else as well qualified." He said pleadingly, "Give me a week to identify someone. Will you give me a week?" I said, "Sure, I will give you a week." And I went back to Rio. About three days later I got a telegram from him with five nominees, all of whom had served in Brazil before. But the fact that they had served there meant that they were known around Brazil; so I was able to make some inquiries. None of them could hold a candle to Walters. I sent a polite telegram back saying I was terribly sorry, but these nominees were not of the desired quality. "If you can't do any better than this it had better be Walters." He fired back within a day another telegram with another nominee who, in fact, was

very much better -- not better than Walters but better than his first tries.

I was pondering about that, wondering what I should do, when by good fortune on that very day I was having a visit from General Andrew O'Meara, who was the CINCSOUTH, Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Command in Panama. He regularly made the circuit around South America, coming to Rio about three times a year. By this time, I had been in office for almost a year, and had received him a couple of times. I liked him very much; we were on good terms. I called him Andy, he called me Linc. He came in late morning with his top staff people who were traveling with him and we had a business conversation. When that ended, I said: "Before we go out to the residence for lunch, Andy, could you spare me a few minutes on a private matter. I would like your advice on it." Then the others all left. I gave O'Meara the whole background and showed him this last telegram. Then I said, "I am really undecided about this. I would like to accommodate General Fitch if I can without doing disservice to my own requirements here, but this is a very uncertain situation. I already know Dick Walters." "Look," he said, "you shouldn't have any qualms about this. You are probably the only American ambassador in the whole history of the diplomatic service that has ever had the personal backing of the Commander-in-Chief, the President of the United States, on the selection of a specific, highly qualified army attaché. You should take Walters. Fitch will find some way of patching up the system. Don't worry about that. The system is like a self-sealing gas tank. It will patch itself." With that advice from a four-star general, I had no further hesitation. Walters told me later that when he got the news that he was to be transferred to Rio, he thought he was being demoted. In Rome there were two assistant army attachés, in Rio there was only one. He was a mere colonel then; he thought he would never get a star.

*Q: It is interesting. You know the thread of Vernon Walters has run through successive administrations, even at a lower, I mean less than a colonel's, rank. From World War II and through 1987. Now he is Ambassador to the United Nations and constantly being called on for special missions. Someday somebody will find out about all that he has done, will deem this The Age of Walters or something like that.*

GORDON: Walters was a very able army attaché, of course. He arrived about two weeks before the Cuban missile crisis, and he describes this in his own book of memoirs.

*Q: "Secret Missions."*

GORDON: "Silent Mission." It is not a hundred percent accurate, but it is basically on the mark. He is reputed to have total recall, which isn't quite true, but his memory is pretty good. In essence what he says there about my instructions to him and what he did for me are correct. When we would go to a state for our first official visit, I used to take him along because he always knew army people there. He had fought with them in the Italian campaign. He knew them all by first names. They had anecdotes about "that day looking at Monte Cassini" or whatever. He also was a very deep reader. This is something many people don't know about him. In addition to his linguistic capacities, which are astonishing, he had read a lot of Brazilian history including regional history as well as national history. He would turn up in some place and say, "In 1890, this, that or the other important episode in Brazilian history took place right here." He was a bachelor, and I assume he had more time for reading than he would have had if he had

with a family. (I say that as the father of four children.) His political posture is a lot more conservative than mine. I guess that was already true at that time; it certainly has become true in subsequent years. But the notion, which some people, including Jan Black have tried to suggest, that he might have been running an independent policy of his own and might have been actively involved in the military conspiracy without my knowing about it, I find impossible to believe. In any case, that is how he got assigned to the job.

*Q: Do you feel that when you came down to Brazil and in connection with everything that you did with Brazil, that the sort of fiasco of the Bay of Pigs in Cuba and the fact the Kennedy Administration didn't want to be tagged with the idea of losing Brazil. Did you feel that this was a sort of albatross around your neck?*

GORDON: No, I didn't have that feeling. At the time I came down, that kind of question didn't arise. The Bay of Pigs didn't count nearly as much in Brazil as it did further north. After all there had never been an American intervention in Brazil. In the late 19th and early 20th century, unlike most of Spanish America, Brazil and the United States had been on very good terms. Economically, these were complimentary. Now they are competitive in all kinds of manufactured goods; in those days Brazil sold coffee and cocoa and sugar, the tropical export products, unlike Argentina, which was directly competitive with beef and wheat.

Brazil had a professional diplomatic service very early. It was organized originally by Peter, the Second. The Pan-American Union, which later became the Organization of American States, reflected a very long tradition of special relationship between Brazil and the U.S., rather like the Anglo-American relationship in European affairs. There was really very little popular anti-Americanism. There was no fear at all when I went there in '61 that there might be a left-wing capture of power. That developed only in 1963. Our whole approach was positive rather than negative. Here was the Alliance for Progress, that was going to push Brazilian development, which had been going strong under Kubitschek, on to a new level of modernization. The book that I am planning to write now if I get Twentieth Century Fund financing is called "Brazil's Second Chance." The concept behind the book is a second chance to make itself a genuine first-world country. The attitude with which I went -- and this was the general attitude toward Brazil here in Washington on Kennedy's part and the administration generally -- was that Brazil was a potential modern big power, and it would be strongly in the interest of the United States for them to realize that potential as soon as possible. The purpose of the Alliance for Progress in Brazil was to speed that up. It was purely a positive approach.

*Q: Here is probably the biggest question of all: The main task that you went down there with was the Alliance for Progress. What was accomplished, what wasn't accomplished, what happened with the Alliance for Progress?*

GORDON: It is a very large question. This forthcoming project of mine will try to deal with it much more systematically than a conversation like this can do. I still have to do some research on it. But I think there is a substantial positive legacy on balance, particularly in the development of skills, cadres of skilled people needed in a modernizing society, which were very limited in Brazil before the period of the Alliance for Progress. I can give you a couple of examples. When I went there first in 1959 a big geological survey project was going on. At Brazilian request, the

U.S. Geological survey had a team doing a survey of what they call the iron quadrilateral -- one of the biggest deposits of high-grade iron in the world. Jack Dorr was the geologist in charge. I struck up a fairly close friendship with him as the years went by. He didn't like Rio, which seemed to him an enervating coastal city. He lived in Belo Horizonte, which is the capital of the state of Minas Gerais and very close to this iron quadrilateral. He had a big Brazilian team working on the project. He also had a training element in the program. It was about a seven year program, and he told me that when it had started a couple of years earlier, there were only six qualified geologists in the country. Here is a country larger than the forty-eight lower U.S. states, with a lot of minerals and a mining tradition that goes back for three centuries. There was a big gold boom in Brazil in the early eighteenth century, plus semi-precious stones and mining of iron, manganese, and so on. Yet here was this large country, with a sixty million population but only six qualified geologists. That was appalling! By that time, through this new training arrangement, Dorr was turning out more than six every year and now they have a reasonable number.

In economics, which I have a special interest in, as an advisor to the Ford Foundation I had started some technical and financial assistance to the most promising of their economic training institutions, including the Getulio Vargas Foundation in Rio. I was back in Brazil in 1976 and had lunch with the director of the Economics Institute there. I asked him how things were going. He said: "I know the history of this place and I know how much we owe to you personally, both as an advisor to the Ford Foundation and then through the Alliance for Progress." We had had a substantial program of assistance. Their brightest students were sent up here, to get M.A.'s and Ph.D.'s. He went on: "You will be interested to know that before the end of this year, we will be giving the first three Ph.D.'s in economics entirely made in Brazil." Then he described the three dissertation subjects. They were all on applied, practical, useful subjects for Brazilian development. He said: "Without the Alliance for Progress we never could have accomplished that." The same kind of thing was reproduced in various fields, such as agricultural modernization, through special training institutions, the equivalent of our land grant colleges, the development of extension services, and things of that kind. These have left a permanent impact on institutional development. Then there was the creation of new financial institutions in 1964 and 1965, after the revolution, when Roberto Campos became the Planning Minister. He was very keen on institutions to provide access to credit for small business. He believed strongly in a highly decentralized working economy with a lot of initiative, a lot of entrepreneurship. Through the Alliance for Progress we helped a number of such credit institutions and they have had rather dramatic effects.

They played an important part in the so-called "Brazilian economic miracle" from 1968 to 1974, which was a period of high economic growth but also very severe political repression. That was the period when torture and disappearances, not on a major scale as in Argentina, but on a significant scale did take place and in my view was clearly too much. They were successful in suppressing the incipient stages of urban guerrilla movements, which they considered very dangerous, I'm sure, however, that they caught a lot of innocents along with the guilty. And the procedures were barbarous. In those same years, without any causal connection in my mind but by coincidence, Brazil experienced very dramatic economic growth. They were running over 10 percent a year for about 5 years on end, 1968 through 1973, a record matched by very few other countries. South Korea has had something like that, and maybe Singapore, but very few

developing countries have ever had that kind of record. That couldn't have happened without the foundations laid by the Alliance for Progress.

I would like to believe, but I don't think that this is proved, that we left in many minds the notion that development with equity, with more equity, is possible and ought to be aimed for. That was a core idea of the Alliance.

If you look at the Brazilian experience over the last twenty years, what has happened is a vast amount of development, a considerable reduction of poverty, but a worsening income distribution and certainly lots of inequitable aspects. Nonetheless, the ideas of more equitable development didn't disappear. Increased social mobility through the expansion of education, particularly secondary education, is still the main theme. We pushed hard for that. We thought the Brazilian education establishment was very lopsided. They had free higher education and a theoretical constitutional requirement for four years (now it's six) of free primary education, but in fact, in the poorer parts of the country, a lot of kids either never saw a school at all or would attend for only one year or take the first year twice. But there was still a large amount of illiteracy. Then there are things that you can't measure. There would of course have been Brazilian efforts taking place without the Alliance, but the Alliance greatly helped. In the area of public health, for example, life expectancy increased by about ten years over the course of a decade. Infant mortality fell dramatically. Introducing clean drinking water up in the northeast, for example, helped tremendously. Here was a region which had had infant mortality of roughly 50 percent. Half of the kids born would die within the first year. Clean water would reduce that in one jump to maybe twenty percent. Twenty percent is still a terrible infant mortality figure, but compared with fifty percent, it's tremendous progress.

I dedicated a number of these projects myself when they were inaugurated and it's a very moving experience. You go to a place which previously had only well water. The women in the little communities would spend half of their days walking to the well, filling those huge pitchers, and carrying them on their heads. When a town water supply is inaugurated, even if they don't have taps in their own houses, there is one close by. They weep with joy at the running water. I was present at the switching on of the first electric lights in places that had not been electrified before. The experience was similar. Electricity makes all kinds of things possible.

*Q: Do you feel that many of the seeds that you planted really took root? This was not a program that you mentioned in your letter -- you certainly disagreed with the idea that the Alliance of Progress died on November 22, 1963. But was it really continuing through the Johnson administration?*

GORDON: Oh yes...Johnson has been treated very unfairly by what I call the Camelot Mythmakers, for example, Arthur Schlesinger. He is a long-standing personal friend, but on this score the worship of the Kennedy clan has really destroyed his objectivity.

*Q: Because of his reverence for Kennedy?*

GORDON: Of course. But bad mouthing Johnson seems to me an unnecessary part of Kennedy worship. It really is quite unfair. When Johnson asked me to come back from Brazil to serve as

Assistant Secretary, he asked about the Alliance for Progress. He told me he had been very unhappy at learning how long the pipeline was when he took office. He gave me full support in carrying on the Alliance. He helped with the congressional appropriations on a couple of occasions when they were trembling on the balance and we needed a presidential push. Johnson had a personal interest in Latin America which went way back to his early days in Texas as a young man. That experience gave him this very warm attitude, which was not purely vote catching directed toward the Chicanos.

*Q: Many of the things that you are talking about, such as lack of electric lights, clean water, and education, were things that actually he would probably have experienced. Certainly John Kennedy never did.*

GORDON: That is right. Johnson had a feel, a kind of personal sympathy about these matters because he was much closer to the soil, so to speak, and to poverty than Kennedy.

*Q: Did you have a feeling, coming from outside of the foreign service establishment, as a political appointee, but not from the politics side, rather from the expert side, being an economist, that knowing Rusk, having served in what I suppose you would call the Eastern Establishment, that you had much greater clout that could be used effectively as an ambassador than, say, a normal foreign service officer?*

GORDON: You mean in Brazil?

*Q: To perform your mission in Brazil.*

GORDON: It is easier to answer that question about Washington than it is about Brazil. I have no doubt, and I think this was demonstrated, that in Washington I had a greater delegation of authority than my counterpart Assistant Secretaries. And in Brazil as well, Washington looked to me more fully for advice on policy toward Brazil than would have been likely with a career diplomat. Obviously, an outstanding foreign service officer, if you had had the equivalent of a Chip Bohlen or a Tommy Thompson or a Dean Rusk for that matter, could have been equally effective, but with the general run of officers we had in the Latin American service, they would have been unlikely to have as strong an influence on Washington thinking about Brazil as I did. In Brazil itself, moreover, there were some things that I couldn't have done as a foreign service officer. I often took on the role of a university professor and economist. I would make speeches, for example, about Brazilian economic policy which would have been, in the mouth of a professional foreign service officer, considered very inappropriate, because they weren't particularly diplomatic. I was always polite about them, but they were dealing with matters that weren't strictly the business of the United States. And I would often be asked to give speeches at universities, sometimes at the beginning of the academic term and sometimes at the end. They were often to faculties and students of economics, and I would say, "Here I am speaking not as an American ambassador but as a former professor at Harvard, greatly interested in Brazilian development. Before I had any notion of becoming an ambassador here I was working on a research project on Brazilian development, and here are some of my ideas. Take them or leave them." It gave me a kind of freedom to address in public topics which were useful from the U.S. government's point of view, but would have been embarrassing or impossible if I had not had a

professional academic background.

*Q: I know this was true. Richard Gardner, when I was in Italy, could do the same thing. He could put on his Columbia law hat, an economic law hat, and talk in those terms at universities, that just a normal foreign service officer couldn't have done.*

GORDON: I think the Brazilians assumed when I came that I was closer to Kennedy in person than I really was. I came to be fairly close to him in person because he had this intense interest in Brazil. Every time I was back on consultations, he wanted to hear from me in person. At the time of the Goulart visit of state in April 1962 we were in more or less continuous communication for several days. He had asked me up a week in advance to help prepare him for the visit. And as the mini-crisis developed in Brazil in the summer of '62, the Kennedy return visit was called off. Instead we worked up the idea of a visit by Bobby Kennedy, which took place in December of '62. I don't know whether that had a useful effect or not.

*Q: Sometimes expectations get too high, don't they? When somebody comes, when we are in a position to give something and they are not after advice . . .*

GORDON: They are usually after something substantive. The Bobby Kennedy visit was unexpected on their part. It was at our initiative. We pretended that Bobby was going to be somewhere in Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands anyway, and that because of congestion of congressional business at home, the President could not come. Wouldn't it be nice if Bobby could come instead, and talk to Goulart on his brother's behalf? Goulart, I think, realized that it was a pretense when I told him this. He at once said, "Of course. I would love to receive him here." In that case they weren't asking anything from him; they were curious as to what message he had to convey. He came back later, after the military takeover, in the fall of 1965 on his own personal campaign business. That was different. I am not sure what he was campaigning for at that moment.

*Q: The Senate seat from in New York, I guess.*

GORDON: No, he had just been reelected Senator in '64. In the interview he had with President Castelo Branco, Castelo asked him what the object of the voyage was. Afterwards Bobby Kennedy seemed amazed at the question. He kept saying to me as we drove away in the car, "Why did the President ask me that question? What was in his mind about that?" Bobby Kennedy handled himself very badly on that trip. Now you want to talk a little bit about the military period?

*Q: I think we ought to talk a little about the military.*

GORDON: I have just given you a twenty-page, double-spaced memorandum I wrote in 1971 or '72 about my personal relationships with Castelo Branco, the first military president. He was the only one who was president while I was Ambassador. That memorandum should cover a great deal of the territory. I believe you are going to keep that on file with this interview.

*Q: Yes, I am going to keep that on file with this interview. During the previous period of the gradual and then quickening move of Goulart towards the left, were you acting under any*

*particular instructions from Washington? What sort of orders were you giving and what sort of orders were you receiving at this time?*

GORDON: I got very little in the way of particular instructions on anything from Washington in that whole four and a half years, other than on certain very specific negotiations. When the Cuban missile base crisis arose, I got a specific instruction to try to see the President between two and four hours before Kennedy's speech was delivered on that Monday night, to read him (in Portuguese) an advance text of the speech, and ask for his votes in the U.N. and the ISTH. next day -- that was a very specific instruction. There were occasionally very clear negotiating instructions on a variety of formal agreements including a protocol to our extradition treaty. But with respect to our general posture toward Brazil, we were reporting constantly. I was recommending policy positions, and generally speaking they were endorsed. I am sure that if you had the whole file now of telegram exchanges, you would find many examples of Washington saying, "That is fine; go ahead."

Let me give you a couple of examples where I acted first and then got confirmation later. This is probably contrary to the way a professional diplomat would have done, and maybe unwise, though I don't regret either of these. One was in November 1965. An election had been scheduled for October, under the old constitution, involving half the state governors. In spite of the military takeover of power, the government went through with that election on schedule. In two very important states, candidates sympathetic to Kubitschek were elected. One was in Guanabara, the old federal district which was the city of Rio and its suburbs. The other was in Minas Gerais, an important centrally located state. The election results created quite a furor. The harder right wing within the military -- the so-called "linha dura" or hard line -- was very unhappy about it. They didn't want to let those governors-elect be inaugurated, and they put Castelo Branco under tremendous pressure. He finally agreed to sign a Second Institutional Act, which extended his arbitrary powers to deprive people of their political rights for ten years. Those powers had been created under the Institutional Act of April that had expired. That phase was supposed to be over. The Second Institutional Act revived those powers; it also dissolved the old political parties, enlarged the Supreme Court, and made other drastic political changes. It was obvious that Castelo had been very unhappy about signing this piece of paper. When he announced his acceptance of it, he also made clear that he was going to use any additional powers that he had to make sure that these two governors would, in fact, get inaugurated. And they were, on the scheduled date. Kubitschek rather foolishly came back from Paris in a wave of euphoria after this election. He was greeted by hundreds of thousands of his friends at the airport in Rio. There was a big parade for him, and this got the hard liners worried. They were afraid that there might be new kinds of protest demonstrations against their regime. The people at the top of the government, including Castelo Branco himself, and his then foreign minister, Juracy Magalhaes, were aware that I had been extremely unhappy about the First Institutional Act back in April. I had seriously considered resigning from the job because it was so contrary to all of my notions about what constitutional government ought to be about. During the middle of the March 31 - April 1 crisis that actually resulted in Goulart leaving and the military taking over, I tried to use my influence to strengthen the spine of the Congress through Kubitschek, the ex-president who was the most popular man in the country. He was a Senator then. All without instructions -- I was acting on my own -- I went to him on the night of March 31st and tried all get him to strengthen the role of Congress on what was to happen if Goulart departed, including the way a

new president would be elected. The acting president would be the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies. Nobody thought of him as a long term president, and the Constitution itself, the 46th Constitution, provided that he would be interim-president only for thirty days. During this time, if it were the first half of the term, there would be a new popular election. If it were the second half of the term, the president for the remainder of that term would be elected by the Congress in joint session. Nominally, they in fact went through that process, electing Castelo Branco without much dissent. I think there were a few negative votes but not many. That was later, on April 11, but it followed the Institutional Act decreed on April 9 by the military. That was a very arbitrary, really fascist document, which said in effect that the revolution makes its own law -- if we maintain any parts of the 1946 constitution that is because we want to maintain it, not because we are bound by it. The Act was signed by the three military ministers. In fact, a sort of junta had declared itself entitled to exercise a revolutionary constituent power.

I thought that was a pretty lousy doctrine, since the Brazilian Constitution had said, more or less in the spirit of ours, that it is "all power emanates from the people." My intellectual formation was very strongly in line with the eighteenth century Lockean political philosophy which underlies our own constitution. So the Institutional Act came as a very shocking document to me.

In 1976, on a return visit to Sao Paulo, I was asked in a press interview what my expectations had been at the time of the revolution about the political future of Brazil and how they corresponded with reality. I gave an honest answer. I said that I had been well aware that during the previous six or eight months prior to the revolution there had been growing chaos: political, economic, and social. When Goulart was thrown out, and the military took over, I thought there would be a period of exceptional rule for a number of months. I expected a good deal of purging of people who were considered subversive in various institutions. But I thought that at the latest by the time of the next scheduled presidential election, which was to be in October 1965, the military would, in keeping with the old Brazilian tradition, get out of political office, go back to the barracks, and turn the government back to civilians. Speaking in 1976, I went on to say that obviously did not happen. The headline in O Estado de Sao Paulo the next day surprised me, because it wasn't true. It read: "Gordon condemns revolution." In fact, I hadn't condemned the revolution; all I did was to contrast what I thought was going to happen to what actually happened.

That example shows, incidentally, some weaknesses in my judgment about the Brazilian scene. However, I did retain confidence that democracy would ultimately be restored. In the 1966 Senate hearings when I was nominated to be Assistant Secretary, I said that the democratic ethos was sufficiently well developed in Brazil that after an interim period they would return to constitutional institutions. In that respect, I was right although it took a lot longer than I expected. But it is very interesting that at no time during these entire 21 years of military rule did any of those military presidents -- they were all Army generals -- argue for permanent military rule. None of them ever acted like Pinochet in Chile. There was never a serious attempt to get renewed in office or to become president for life. And no notion of a permanent military dictatorship. Indeed, when they dissolved the old set of political parties, they didn't do what a truly fascist group (or, for that matter, a communist group) would have done, that is, set up a single party. They said there should be two parties. In effect: "We don't want a Mexican solution, because Mexico is not a true democracy. We can't have a true democracy if we have only a

single party. And therefore, even though we are going on for a while with these exceptional powers, we want to conserve the basis of a democratic system." That is an interesting aspect of Brazilian society.

*Q: You were speaking of actions that you took on your own initiative.*

GORDON: Kubitschek's return in October 1965 was one of the events that led to the Second Institutional Act. I was in Washington at the time. On getting back to Rio, I found an urgent message from Foreign Minister Juracy Magalhaes, asking that I call on him at home that very evening. He knew how much I disliked the Institutional Acts, and he was probably worried, not only about my possibly resigning, which, of course, wouldn't have been a fate worse than death, but also my possibly recommending that economic aid be cut off. Brazil at that moment needed financial help from the United States quite badly. He explained to me in some detail the circumstances. He himself was an ex-Army officer long since out of the service. He knew the generals -- their names and numbers -- very well. He was himself a distinguished figure in Brazilian history. He had played an important part in 1945 in getting Vargas thrown out as dictator, and he had firm constitutional principles. He had been governor of the state of Bahia. I had called on him as a Ford Foundation consultant back in 1959, when we were his guests for dinner in the governor's mansion. We had maintained a very cordial acquaintance after that. Later he was ambassador here, too.

He explained what lay behind the Second Institutional Act and I commented that I was glad to know the background. He described in detail who the hard-liners were and how they practically forced Castelo Branco to sign the document. He described what lay behind it, but he also emphasized that Castelo was going to use these powers to get those two governors inaugurated. Therefore, he went on, he hoped that the U.S. government wouldn't take too dim a view of it.

I made an appointment as soon as I could to call on Castelo Branco, whom by then I had seen a fair number of times. Without instructions, I scratched out some talking notes in the office before going to the palace. It was a polite but extremely vigorous statement of my concerns about the Institutional Acts. I said to Castelo Branco that it had been bad enough to have one. After a revolution, one can understand one such measure, and had been called THE Institution Act. But if you go on to have a second, that implies the possibility of a third, a fourth, a fifth... who knows? That practice puts an end to the rule of law. He was very responsive. He didn't like having signed the document but he felt he had no choice. What I said to him really came from the heart as far as I was concerned, and it was not a very pleasant interview from his point of view. I then went back to the office and wrote a full, detailed reporting telegram. The next day, I got back a message saying: "Bravo! You did exactly right." I don't think that a professional Foreign Service officer would have acted that way.

*Q: I think you are right, except perhaps in very exceptional circumstances. Normally we are trained to check before doing something like this, no matter what you believe.*

GORDON: You draft it first and send it to Washington and say, "Is this okay? This is what I would like to say to the President." Looking back on it, it wasn't all that urgent, and probably I would have been wiser to clear it in advance. That is one decision when I acted on my own. The

other unusual one had to do with military assistance. We were getting requests separately from the Army, Navy and Air Force, each of them submitting lists of desired items. We were running into financial restraints because Congress was pressing to limit military aid to Latin America. The Administration by then was so interested in Vietnam that they were prepared to sacrifice these smaller regions to the cause. I was rather unhappy about it, especially when I became Assistant Secretary, because in Peru our predictions came true: namely that the Peruvians, when refused jet aircraft from the United States, bought them from France. Then later they started having military relationships with the Soviet Union. It wouldn't have cost us very much to have warded that off.

In the Brazilian context, while still Ambassador, I thought something had to be done to rationalize all of this; so I worked up a memorandum on planning for military modernization and procurement. It said that we were entering a period of constraints on the funds available for weapons modernization; therefore priorities were very important; and we were baffled by getting separate requests from the three services, which added up to more than we could supply. We didn't want to be responsible for setting Brazilian priorities. I knew there didn't exist at that time an institutional mechanism for setting priorities. I went on to say that we had lots of experience in the Pentagon with this kind of problem, with which I was familiar as a War Production Board alumnus. Some of my thinking was based on the work we had done on priorities during the War itself.

It would be a great help to us as their military providers if they could have a more rational program. I suggested some possible guidelines and said that if they wanted technical assistance in setting up the program, I was confident that I could get appropriate people from our Budget Bureau or Defense Department to provide it. I took the memo to President Castelo Branco. He read it with interest, and he gave it to General Geisel, who later became President also but was then head of the "military household" in the presidency. I brought along the chief of our MAAG for a long talk with Geisel. Then I sent a detailed reporting telegram, along with the text of the memorandum. As you can imagine, McNamara was overjoyed by this. He sent a cordial and enthusiastic endorsement. But again, it was a case where I acted first and got the approval later. In hindsight, I think in both these cases time wasn't all that urgent, and it might have been better to get approval from Washington first. I don't think it would have changed anything. It reflects the degree of confidence I had that I understood generally what was going on in Washington's mind. I felt sure I would be backed and in fact always was. That was partly due to my frequent consultations in Washington.

*Q: You said you went back and forth approximately every three months.*

GORDON: That is right. When I was here I saw all the key players, because I had the advantage of personal acquaintance with all the cabinet-level people. I had worked with Dillon in these early days of the Alliance for Progress. After he left the Treasury, his successor was H. H. Fowler, who for some reason or other has the nickname "Joe". He had been on the legal staff of the War Production Board when I was Deputy Program Vice-Chairman and later Program Vice-Chairman. We became quite good friends and are still close colleagues on the Atlantic Council of the United States. As a result, first as a Ambassador and then later as Assistant Secretary I had no hesitation in going directly to the Secretary of the Treasury. Those were advantages not so

much of being a political appointee as having a particular set of personal acquaintanceships.

*Q: And a normal Foreign Service officer would not have been able to make these acquaintances.*

GORDON: That is probably right.

*Q: Just two more questions. What would you say was your greatest achievement that you felt being ambassador.*

GORDON: That is hard. I can describe my greatest disappointment more easily. I was disappointed at the fact that the Alliance for Progress did not become a main objective for the Brazilian government. What became Goulart's main purpose was trying to get much wider powers. You describe Goulart as moving to the left, but the left to right scale is not exactly correct. I was convinced that Goulart was not a communist, and said this often in telegrams. He struck me essentially as being like a Tammany Hall boss, a seeker after power. He had two heroes, one being Getulio Vargas, who had been his political mentor, and the other Juan Peron in Argentina. I am morally certain that what he wanted to do and in fact was manipulating things to do, was to become a populist dictator in the mold of those two. I mean the mold of Vargas in his pre-war dictatorial period, pre-war, not his presidential period.

Goulart and I saw each other quite often. I saw him more than I ever saw Castelo Branco, contrary to the usual mythology about my role in Brazil. Goulart talked candidly about many matters. Then I cultivated people in his palace guard. Some of them, probably because they were uncertain about his intentions and what was going to happen, thought it useful to drop an anchor to windward, by knowing the American ambassador and having lunch with me. I did a lot of business with these people in one-on-one lunches at the Embassy residence. We had a marvelous chef, and it was a very agreeable surrounding. Brazilians tend to be talkative, and their tongues loosen quite easily, so they revealed a good deal about Goulart's intentions and frame of mind. So I had a number of confidants, in effect, in the palace guard, some of them full-time officials, and others Goulart's cronies in private life -- a sort of kitchen cabinet. There was a fellow who worked for the German seamless steel tubing company, Mannesman, which had a big factory in Brazil, who was a kind of private economic adviser to Goulart. He and I worked together in trying to avoid a moratorium on Brazil's foreign indebtedness.

Brazil had to restore diplomatic relations with France, which had been cut because of a "lobster war". De Gaulle had sent ships into Brazilian lobster areas north of the hump and Goulart had become furious. I happened to be in the palace one night when Goulart was talking to his Foreign Minister denouncing de Gaulle in wild language. Then, the next day, they cut diplomatic relations. But they couldn't renegotiate their debt without the help of the Paris Club of creditor governments, and the Paris Club was chaired by a Frenchman. So they had to restore diplomatic relations with France. This personal adviser to Goulart came over to the Embassy and we worked out together the documents which made it possible for Brazil to resume relations with France, and then appeal to the Paris Club for help in rescheduling the debts.

We also worked out together the text of a letter from Goulart to Lyndon Johnson. Goulart had had some correspondence with Kennedy, and after the period of mourning for Kennedy, he

wanted to start a personal correspondence with Johnson. What should he say? At that time, he was tacking toward the left internally in Brazil. That was not, in my view, because he was a real reformer who wanted to bring about left-wing goals -- whatever they might be. He talked in terms of socialist goals, much greater equality and basic reforms, but I don't think for a moment that he believed in the substance of basic reforms. What he believed in then was the motto of basic reforms, the slogan of basic reforms, as a way of advancing his claim to power.

To come back to the point, I was disappointed because I had hoped, starting with this great interest in the Alliance for Progress, that I would spend two years helping to put the Alliance into operation. At the end of those two years I would go back to Harvard, and great new enterprise would have been launched in Brazil. Instead of that, after two years, the country was in terrible economic condition: inflation was rising, growth was almost totally stagnating; there was political turmoil. There was great uncertainty towards the fall of 1963 as to what the future was going to bring. Then my own President was shot in November, and those months between Kennedy's death and the military takeover in Brazil were a very gloomy period.

I am not a religious man, but our Embassy was located just under the shadow of the Corcovado, which has on top the monumental statue of Christ. It is floodlit at night, and seen at that distance it is a very moving statue. It is called Cristo Redentor -- Christ the Redeemer. There is an old slogan in Brazil that God is a Brazilian and was born in Bahia, and the slogan is used in the same way as Mark Twain's remark that God takes care of drunks, fools, and the United States of America. Somehow or other, whatever crises Brazil may go through, God will provide. Some of those nights in late 1963 and early 1964, after dinner, I would look up at the statue from the terrace of our Embassy residence and ask myself, "I wonder whether God really is a Brazilian. Is the country going to survive this time?"

So from my point of view, things really were getting worse and worse in those months. And the dramatic events at the end of March were really nerve-wracking. There was the possibility of a genuine civil war. This is why I developed the proposal for a contingency naval force, which was called "Operation Brother Sam." The people who think that I helped to plan the military conspiracy always point to this naval force. I find that insulting. If it all had been according to my plan, at least I would have had the naval task force handy by the time the Brazilian troops began to move, but it wasn't anywhere near; it was way up off the northern coast of South America. The whole revolution was over in forty-eight hours. I advised Washington and CINCSOUTH to call the task force off and turn it back, except for three tankers loaded with petroleum in them which I suggested be kept coming at least until we could see if they were needed. The Petrobras trade union leadership was very radical and there was some concern about sabotage at the refineries. As it turned out, there was no problem of that kind. The top officials of Petrobras were changed right away, and I went around to see the new ones. I told them we had three tankers on the way and asked whether they had any use for them. They said "no." They were satisfied that everything was under control. So I had the tankers turned around, too. When the telegrams were declassified and published, the Brazilian journalists thought POL meant something political. They were quite amazed. There was a long story years later in the Jornal do Brasil about this. The telegram said, "Turn the task force around, except for the POL which should be kept going until Ambassador Gordon advises that it is not needed." This was thought to be some deep political conspiracy, and there were many readers eager to believe in

conspiracy.

So I was disappointed that instead of a couple of years of essentially constructive activity like the Marshall Plan, we had economic stagnation and political crisis and then the military takeover. I was happy about the military takeover because the alternatives seemed to me to me so lousy, but I was not at all happy with the principle of a military take over. I believe in constitutional democracy as a superior form of government. But I was deeply concerned about the way things were moving. I did not believe that Goulart was a communist, but I was convinced that he was a very weak president. Unlike Vargas or Peron, he would not be an effective dictator. He might turn out to be the Nasser who would be followed by some solidly left-wing Nasser. I never identified a particular person for that role, but I know there were a number of individuals who saw themselves in it.

*Q: Nobody knew where Nasser was until Nasser appeared on the scene.*

GORDON: Exactly. That works on the right wing too. Nobody ever heard of Pinochet before he turned up in Chile, and after all Sadat was not much of a known character.

*Q: The same was true of Nasser.*

GORDON: Exactly. The ultimate successor to power turned out to be an entirely different character. That was a real concern of mine regarding Goulart. I reported that in a number of telegrams as a serious danger. For those reasons, I probably made a mistake in being as overtly welcoming to the military takeover as I was.

*Q: You didn't give the cool hand to the military. What was the phrase?*

GORDON: Milton Eisenhower's advice. No, I didn't give the cool hand for two reasons. As I already mentioned I thought seriously about resigning over the Institutional Act of April 9. But on April 2, the telegram that I advised Lyndon Johnson to send -- and a lot of people forget this too -- was not addressed to Castelo Branco. It was sent to Ranieri Mazzilli, the Acting President, the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies. I wanted to confirm the role of Congress as the symbol of constitutional legitimacy. I even had a word in my draft that George Ball took out, "Congratulate Mazzilli on his accession as a constitutional president of Brazil." From the legal point of view I wanted to maintain the notion of continuity -- that this was not really a new regime that required a new act of recognition. There was some basis for that position. When Goulart went into hiding on the second day of the revolution, the Congress, led by the President of the Senate, held a joint session and they voted to declare the presidency vacant. There was no constitution provision for that, but still, it was an act by the properly elected Congress which was the closest thing to a constitutional body. The leaders had walked over to the Supreme Court with Mazzilli and had the Chief Justice swear him into the presidency. So there was a kind of semblance of legality and continuity of the constitution that was maintained for the next eight days, until April 9. It was in that period that I welcomed the takeover of power and advised that a congratulatory telegram be sent to Mazzilli.

I had some dealings with Mazzilli as President concerning emergency economic aid. They

needed it desperately, because they were terribly worried about inflation and they needed emergency supplies to keep food prices down. On April 2 or 3, I was awakened early in the morning by the Acting Finance Minister and requested to stay at home until they could pick me up and take me to the presidential palace for a session with Mazzilli. He himself was a puppet, simply reading what these ministers had written for him. But they were serious men, some of them left over from Goulart's cabinet. This is one of the odd things. Goulart, even at the very end, still had a mixture in his cabinet. Certain members of cabinet skipped out of the country right away. They were very scared about what the military might do to them. Some went into voluntary exile; some just went into hiding, some resigned and didn't go into hiding, others stayed in office for a while at least to carry out the necessary transition.

When Castelo Branco did come in after April 11, the quality of his appointments was very high. His first foreign minister was the senior professional diplomat in Brazil, Vasco Leitao da Cunha, who was universally respected. He had been a political adviser in North Africa during the war, in the African campaign. He had been Ambassador to Moscow after they renewed relationships in 1961, and also Ambassador to Cuba. Shortly after I arrived in Brazil in the fall of 1961, Foreign Minister San Tiago Dantas announced in the Chamber of Deputies that Brazil was going to recognize the Soviet Union again. I was asked by the press to comment on that. I said: "The United States recognizes the Soviet Union; I don't see why this should be a subject for me to comment on. It is for Brazil to make up its own mind." Some conservatives in Brazil regarded that move as very dangerous. Some half celebrated our Thanksgiving day, and considered it particularly inappropriate on a day dedicated to thanks to God to be recognizing this atheistic society.

The impression I had was that Castelo Branco wanted to restore democratic government within a quite short period of time. I intend to check this impression against the semi-official biography of his regime by Luiz Viana, and also the book about Castelo by Jack Dulles, who teaches out at the University of Texas. My conviction at the time was that Castelo first became a conspirator only because he was convinced that Goulart was trying to violate the constitution himself. He seemed to be a genuine believer in constitutional integrity, as he said in the famous memorandum of March 1964 sent to the officer corps. Left to his own devices, I thought that he would try to restore civilian rule pretty rapidly, presumably improving on the 1946 constitution which had a lot of defects. If not in 1965, I thought by 1966 and certainly by 1970. His successor, Costa e Silva, was much more of the hard line type and less of an intellectual. He was a kind of "barracks general", as they called him. He was much cruder and less sensitive to the possible consequences of a prolonged period of military rule. He favored action, without worrying too much about legal niceties. But Castelo Branco was a very cultivated man. I think he had the wish to see civilian government restored, a wish not fulfilled during his lifetime or for a long time afterwards.

Now, coming back to the question of achievements during my tenure, I suppose the greatest single achievement was in the substantial positive results from a lot of these aspects of the Alliance for Progress we have already covered. There was another one in the months before the revolution, the military takeover, that I am quite proud of and was essentially my own contribution. That was to deflect the internal turmoil in Brazil away from anti-Americanism. There was, for example, a big push from the left for repudiating the debt. I managed to deflect that into opening up the channels for renegotiation instead. That took a lot of doing in

Washington, in Paris, working in Rio with the man in the palace to re-open relations with France. I came up here to the annual meeting of the Governors of the World Bank and IMF to attend a special meeting of Brazil's creditors from different countries. I gave them a strong argument for being receptive to the idea of renegotiating with Brazil. That was all before the revolution.

There were other smaller accomplishments. There was a widely accepted theory in Brazil that the terms of trade were being deliberately turned by the United States against an already impoverished Brazil. I had been asked to give a speech to their National Economic Council, which is not a very powerful body, but fairly dignified. So I chose that theme and wrote a long article on the subject, which was later published in English in the Department of State Bulletin. It took a lot of research. It was entirely based on Brazilian data. It showed that the arguments being tossed around always took as a base year, I think, when there had been a severe frost in the coffee area of Brazil. The price of coffee had shot way up, to over a dollar a pound, which in those days was considered astronomical. The normal price was around 20 cents a pound. That year had been taken as the base year for measuring changes in the Brazilian terms of trade. I went back to around 1900, as far back as the Brazilian figures would permit. The article had a chart showing the sharp peak, which I said was like Mount Fujiyama, in the year of the frost. Over a longer period, the terms of trade improved from time to time as much as they worsened. I put in some pretty strong language about careless politicians trying to make this into an international political issue and got some good publicity for the speech. It was published in full in the serious newspapers in Brasilia, Rio, and Sao Paulo. The cliches about the terms of trade as anti-American slogans pretty much disappeared from the vocabulary.

There were some other accomplishments. Brizola, Goulart's brother-in-law, was always a trouble maker. He had the Peace Corps thrown out of his state, Rio Grande do Sul. He accused them of being spies or CIA agents, which was totally untrue, and called on Brazilians to treat them like enemies. I took this issue to Goulart, and was very serious about it. I said: "If any of these youngsters gets attacked physically, you know, your brother-in-law will have been responsible." He took steps to calm this down, and to provide some special security protection for the Peace Corps volunteers.

So many of the accomplishments were fending off trouble, particularly during the nine months before the revolution. You have read my testimony in 1966 in which I classified the Goulart era into four phases, two up phases and two down phases. During that last down phase which started roughly in July of 1963 and lasted until Goulart was thrown out, things were getting worse and from month to month. There was very little redeeming social value. And during that period every time some theme would emerge in the public debate that had a strong anti-American twist to it, I took some kind of action to deflect it.

**VIRGINIA EDWARDS**  
**Secretary to the Assistant USAID Mission Director**  
**Recife (1962-1964)**

*Ms. Edwards was born and raised in Virginia and graduated from a Business*

*School in Richmond VA. After passing the Civil Service Examination she worked with the State Department of Health in Richmond before moving to Washington, D.C., where she worked with Naval Intelligence. In 1951 she joined the Department of State and worked in both Washington and abroad as secretary to AID and Marshall Plan Office Directors. Her foreign assignments took her to Ankara (twice), Katmandu, Tel Aviv and Recife. She retired in 1964 and continued working in various organizations. Ms. Edwards was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.*

EDWARDS: Then when I got home they wanted to know if I wanted to go to Recife. One of the girls in the office said, no, don't go there. She was giving me a tip, don't go there. I went there and stayed two years.

*Q: Recife is in Brazil?*

EDWARDS: Yes, but the interesting part of it, you see, Brazil is big, big this way. Rio was here and that was the big capital. Recife was way over here in what they called the Nordeste; the northeast and we were the cowboys compared with these people. We lived there and we were right on the beach and it was the most beautiful beach. I'm sure the most beautiful beach anybody has ever seen. These little white sailboats would go around. That was quite a thing and that was my last post. After that I came home and soon after I got home. I was supposed to work for John Dieffendorfer who was the assistant chief. He was like some of these others, not really much of a mission chief person, but he was a nice, nice person. A woman who died here later who used to be personnel officer was posted to go down there to get it straightened out. She went down there and came to me at my desk one day and said, "Mr. Dieffendorfer says that you can go downstairs and take somebody's place, a girl in C&R, Communications and Records." Maureen was her name, Maureen Nelson. I couldn't believe it. I thought he liked my work and that he was so dependent on me that he wouldn't think of saying "yes, you could take her." But I said, "oh, in that case I'll go right away." So, I got up and walked down there, didn't even say goodbye to him, didn't say anything, just went down there. She came back to me and said, you've got to go back up there and all that business you know. I finally stayed down there for the rest of my tour and they had to get somebody new to work for this fellow. He's a nice, nice fellow, but it was the personnel officer who really got it all mixed up. He had said that I could do it. He would release me because that girl had walked out. Well, it gave me a chance to have a really good job. So, that's where I stayed until the end of the time.

*Q: That was until '60?*

EDWARDS: '64.

*Q: '64.*

EDWARDS: That was the end and then I came home.

**WADE MATTHEWS**  
**Vice Consul**  
**Salvador (1962-1964)**

*Wade Matthews was born and raised in North Carolina. He attended the University of North Carolina and served in the US Army between 1955 and 1956. He then entered the Foreign Service in 1957 and held positions in Munich, Salvador, Lorenzo Marques, Trinidad and Tobago, Lima, Guyana, Ecuador, and Chile. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.*

*Q: From Germany you were transferred to Salvador, Brazil - an entirely different environment. You were there between 1962 and 1964. How did that assignment come about?*

MATTHEWS: Once again, I was lucky; I had listed Salvador, Brazil on the annual "wish" list that we used to fill out in those days - known as the April Fools list because it was due April 1. I specifically said that I would be interested in a position at my level - that is an FSO-6 since I had received two promotions during my Munich tour - one at the time of my arrival and one around departure time.. Contrary to Dick Johnson's advice - he was my boss and probably an FSO-4 under the grade system then prevailing. I put on my list a "coastal consulate in Brazil." El Salvador was close enough. So in the first two assignments I was lucky, having gotten the exact post - Munich - on the first try and close enough on the second.

Johnson had given me good career advice, which I recognized as such at the time. He thought that I should try to get a political job in an embassy in an area of importance. I didn't follow that advice because I think I was still a bit of dilettante - some of which I never lost. I was still attracted at the time by the challenges that had attracted me to the Foreign Service in the first place. I was interested in the new, in different things, different cultures, learning a new language. I thought that entering a new area with a new language would put me at some disadvantage with my colleagues in a political section staffed by experts or near experts. I would be low on the totem pole in any case because of my grade; add to that my lack of area experience and I think that suggested to me to look in a different direction. I felt that a small consulate would give me some more supervisory experience, more an opportunity to work in all of the facets of work in the consulate. My work in Munich had been very circumscribed. I had learned visa work - I thought pretty well in light of the many differing visas problems I had faced. I thought I knew political work, especially that dealing with internal politics. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, it was possible to have such experiences in a constituent post; today you really to be assigned to an Embassy. Today consulates, with rare exceptions, are not involved in political analysis, even at a level which would engage a junior officer. Many of the consulates are of course still very active in the visa issuing process.

So I felt that a small consulate in Brazil would have given me a better knowledge of the totality of U.S. representation; furthermore, I would add knowledge of a another language. I always liked the idea of living in the tropics - I had lived in Florida and that was the closest I got to the tropics. I saw Brazil as the country of the future.

Salvador was at the time was the second largest city in North-East Brazil. It had a population of

about 650,000. In our consulate district which included the states of Bahia and Segip - central North-East Brazil. The whole consular district had a population of about 6,500,000. Salvador was the original colonial capital of Brazil in pre-independence era. It was the center of African culture in Brazil. The district had a variety of climatic conditions - a tropical jungle area, a coastal area, a semi-arid area in the interior.

I was assigned to Salvador before I went to Rio for Portuguese language training - for about three months. I knew a little bit of Spanish and French, but I had to start at the beginning with Portuguese.

We don't have a consulate in Salvador anymore. We have only a consular agent there now, as we have in many parts of the world. The smaller consulates in Brazil were closed as money saving proposition. But in the early 1960s, Salvador was the center of petroleum production. The Brazilians controlled the production very tightly; they did not give concessions to American companies. There were a lot of American companies in Bahia on contract to Petrogas, the Brazilian monopoly of the energy field. They dealt with the broad spectrum of exploration and production. That was of some interest to us.

Brazil was a federal republic. The states had considerable political influence and power. At the time, Brazil was a flourishing democracy - disorderly, unclear to observers where the country was heading. The society was not very stable. No one knew whether Brazil would take the "Cuba road" or some other direction. Cuba at the time was very much on our mind following Castro's take over in 1959. He was articulating the need for revolution throughout Latin America.

The early 1960s were the hay days of the Alliance for Progress which raised Latin America on the U.S. foreign policy agenda. This newly developed U.S. interests was one of the major reasons I volunteered for a coastal consulate in Brazil, instead of a similar post in India or elsewhere in the world outside of Latin America.

We had a relatively small consulate in Salvador. There were two American officer positions, and one American secretary, one American administrative specialist - both FSS positions. The Consulate supported a number of Americans working for other agencies. We had a USIS operation; there were a couple of people from the assistance agency - although we did not have a mission. Those two technicians were assigned to the University and the Geological Service. In fact, after my arrival, I became the Alliance's officer in Salvador, in addition to my other responsibilities. I did not mind because it meant when there was no other Alliance official in town, I was able to take the Alliance's jeep. I took good care of it, housing it in my garage; I did use for official purposes giving much greater flexibility in covering our consular district than I would have had otherwise. I took a number of trips into the interior, making sure that my itinerary covered inspection of some "Food for Aid" work project. I always wrote reports on those projects. At the same time, I would visit with mayors and other officials of the towns I visited. I wanted to find out what the political thinking was.

*Q: The Ambassador at the time was Lincoln Gordon. It was also a period when the military took over the government - which lasted for many, many years. How was your work before the coup*

*and after? How did we view the developments in Rio from Salvador?*

MATTHEWS: We were a relatively small part of the picture of Brazil. When I arrived, the governor was Juracy Magallanes. He was an old-line politician - center-right, having held a number of governmental and political positions. Later, Magallanes became the second Foreign Minister of the military government. Before that, he had been named as Ambassador to the U.S. - appointed by the military government which took power in 1964. When I first met him, he believed in democracy, but before the coup so were most politicians. He was a firm anti-communist.

Magallanes was governor for about one half of my tour. As I suggested earlier, he was a member of a relatively conservative party, which was supported largely by business interests and the upper middle class - not so much by rural agrarian interests. He was succeeded by Antonio Lomanto, Jr., who belonged to the PTB, the party which also included Joao Goulart, the President of Brazil and Leo Brazolla.

We reported on political developments, on what the media was saying, on economic developments. The reports that were sent in State channels were written by either by my boss or myself. My first boss was Dirk Keyser who was followed by Herald Midkiff. I was the vice-consul and therefore the number 2 officer. When ever the Consul was away, that put me in charge; that I enjoyed. Not many junior officers had such opportunity. I was about 30 when I was in charge.

Brazilians are quite open and hospitable, making it easy to make contacts with them. I had good language fluency; I used Portuguese almost exclusively with Brazilians. I had access as a vice-consul to whomever I wished. I went on a trip through the Bahia interior as part of a little delegation mostly from the Brazilian Navy, headed by the Admiral in charge of the Navy in the Bahia region. That was the beginning of a friendly relationship, which involved reciprocal invitations to our homes. We were friendly with journalists; had good relations with the governor and his Cabinet. We had very little contact with any representatives of the federal government - which was in the process of moving from Rio to Brasilia at the time. I don't believe I ever met Joao Goulart while in Salvador.

We reported from our prospective. I believe that our messages went directly to the Department with info copies to the Embassy. I may be wrong on that, but I believe that was the process. We had a large American community in our consular district - mostly involved in the petroleum industry. They required a certain amount of care; we didn't have to intervene very often on their behalf. Those Americans had good relations with the government and Petrogas. We did push American goods. We had an active USIS program.

An active Communist Party operated in Salvador. I met some of the leaders of the Party. One of them identified himself soon after my arrival; he invited me to Makumba and Candelblay sessions. The latter is a type of dance with musical accompaniment which evolved from a type of fighting that the slaves brought with them from Africa. It is now ritualistic and stylistic, emphasizing use of feet and elbows and hands. It could be compared in part to karaoke, but it is more of a dance now than fighting. There were matches which put a premium on movements -

hand and feet. You were not supposed to actually kick the competitor. Makumba, on the other hand, stemmed from voodoo with African music putting some people into a trance.

I would discuss political issues with him. If he was trying to subvert me, it certainly was not evident. I reported this contact, but I must say that I didn't glean any new insights into the working of the Party, but I did learn a lot about the sessions I mentioned earlier.

*Q: Talk a little about the military coup. First of all, is that the proper word for what happened?*

MATTHEWS: One could call that almost as one wishes. In some ways, if you believed the pronouncements of the leaders, it could almost been called a revolution. They pledged to transform Brazilian society. It turned out to be far short of a revolution. I think a better characterization would be a "military take-over." I remember that event quite well. We did have some clues which suggested something was going to happen. The day before the take-over, the head of our assistance program, Jack Kubisch, visited us in Salvador when I was the senior American at the post. He was going to sign an assistance agreement with the governor of Bahia, Antonio Lamato, Jr. There were too many rumors floating around and Kubisch cut his visit short to return to Rio. He turned over the final documents to me and authorized me to sign on behalf of the Alliance during a signing ceremony which was to be held the next day with the governor. That evening or the following morning, it became quite clear that the military take-over was in process. It was clear that Brazil was in a state of flux. Nevertheless, I went to the governor's office where the signing was to take place. I was ushered into Lamato's office where we exchanged few preliminary remarks. All of a sudden, someone came into the office and announced that the President was on the phone for the governor. Lamato rolled his eyes and when I volunteered to leave the room, he told me to stay. So I sat there while the governor talked to Goulart. There had been no signs of movement by the military in Bahia; everything was quiet. The population was monitoring events in Rio through their radios. It was very uncertain how this process would end. Would the military take-over be successful or not?

At this point, there was still doubt about the military's chances for success. As I said, Lamato was on the telephone with Goulart. I of course heard only one side of the conversation during which Lamato pledged his support for the President, but refused to issue a statement - "it as not the right time." Lamato wanted to wait a while before issuing the statement, but he reassured Goulart that he was in his corner. He assured the President that all was quiet in Bahia and guessed that it was not likely that the military would support the President.

Then the conversation turned to making a phone call. Apparently Goulart asked Lamato to call someone; the governor demurred saying that it would not be appropriate at that moment. He opined that the best thing for him to do under the circumstances was to sit tight and wait. He did add that as soon as he felt it was prudent, he assured the President that he would go public with his support.

Then Lamato turned to me and said: "Doesn't he realize that if I said anything now, I would be put out office in a second?" He was not going to say or do anything until he saw what would happen. He told me that he was not at all sanguine about Goulart being able to retain power.

Then we proceeded and had our signing ceremony for the assistance package. As a matter of fact, the take-over was extraordinarily non-violent in Bahia. The center of the take-over was Sao Paulo; the pro-Goulart military factions were based in Rio. The two factions met at about the state borders; I heard that the deal would include telephone calls from the Sao Paulo faction to the Rio faction saying that it was moving from town to town. "We hope we don't meet up with you. Since the Rio faction had not yet decided what it would do, it pulled its troops as the Sao Paulo faction moved northwards. So the two factions never met.

In Bahia, the military sided - as Lamato expected - with its Sao Paulo colleagues. When the military took over the state, they posted a few guards here and there. Initially, they did not expel Lamato; he remained as governor for another few months. They did arrest Doria, the governor of Sagipy, which was in our consular district. As a matter of fact, Doria was on a prison ship which anchored in Bahia harbor. He was much too left of Lamato.

The first casualty in our district was in the interior of Bahia, after three or four days of military rule. A soldier had been to a bar and had his fill of liquor. Someone made some comments about the take-over and shots were fired resulting in a death. There may have been few other deaths, but they took place after the take-over had taken place. Leo Brazolla was still unaccounted for, but he was found in Montevideo after slipping across the border from his ranch. That was the last piece of the puzzle enabling the military to take over power in Brazil.

There was not much negative reaction from the U.S. Government. There may well have been some individuals in the Embassy who felt that the take-over was inevitable after the military decided that the economic situation was deteriorating rapidly and sharply. There was considerable lawlessness in Brazil toward the end of Goulart's Presidency. The government was trying to subvert the military process. That caused a rebellion of sergeants, even after Goulart informally appealed to the enlisted men to support him. I think that had we vocal about our objections to the take-over, I doubt if the Brazilian military would have paid much attention. After the beginning of the march from Sao Paulo to Rio had started, Goulart appealed to the sergeants publicly. Whatever resistance was offered was led by Brazolla, Goulart's brother in law. Brazolla saw himself as the Brazilian version of Castro; he wanted a revolution which would cast out the upper middle class. Goulart was much more cautious and accommodating. So it was Brazolla who was viewed by the military and others as the source of Brazil's problems; he became the target.

The situation in Brazil was somewhat akin to what happened in Chile before the Pinochet coup. There was a great deal of disorder; the economy was in serious trouble because investments had dried up in light of situation in Brazil. I remember well one headline from one of Bahia's newspapers - a conservative paper: "Someone should kill President Goulart" (or something similar.) This was before the take over and was one of the most noticeable headlines I have ever read. The paper went on to blame Goulart for all of Brazil's miseries which at the time were numerous. Nothing happened to the newspaper. That was indicative of where the winds were blowing.

*Q: Was there any great change in what you did after the take over? Did you find it more difficult to make contacts?*

MATTHEWS: No. Our contact on the far left - the communist acquaintance I mentioned earlier - was arrested of course. Those who were not arrested, went into hiding - some left the country, the others were mostly arrested later. But all these people were later released. Cesium Doria went out to Fernando de La Roina, the prison island. After 9-12 months, he was released and later became a very successful business man in Rio. That kind of evolution became not uncommon.

The take over in March, 1964 was not violent. But certainly the left pretty well disappeared - in prison, or out of the country or just silent. The take over stimulated a terrific genuine outpouring of hope and sympathy among Brazilians, especially from the middle class and much of the poorer class in Bahia. The largest demonstration which I saw in Brazil - matched only by Carnival - was one that supported the military. The march consisted of a variety of civic groups, neighborhood associations, Candelblay clubs, etc. This took place about a week after the take over; people marched spontaneously through the streets - some actually cried. Some carried signs supporting restoration of order, some demanded that democracy be restored, others wanted reform of the political system. I remember thinking that if the military then installed a typical Latin American military dictatorship without making fundamental changes in the system, it would lose most of its public support. The next time that there might be another revolution, it would probably be violent led by the left; the military would have lost all credibility.

So the population in general viewed the take-over as an opportunity for change; it hoped that the military was going to take advantage of its opportunity. There were of course some people - those in jail or fleeing - who would not have shared these views, but I think the vast majority of Brazilians did. I would guess that in the early days, the military had overwhelming support.

**J. PHILLIP MCLEAN**  
**General Officer**  
**Brasilia (1962-1964)**

*Mr. McLean was born and raised in Seattle, Washington and was educated at Seattle University and the University of Indiana. He entered the Foreign Service in 1962. A Latin American specialist, his service in the State Department in Washington and abroad, primarily concerned Latin American Affairs. His foreign posts were Brasilia, Edinburgh, Panama City, La Paz, Milan and Bogota, where he was Deputy Chief of Mission. In Washington Mr. McLean held positions dealing with Latin American Affairs, including that of Deputy Assistant Secretary for South America. Mr. McLean was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.*

*Q: Before you went, did you have any idea where you wanted to go, and how did it work out about your assignment?*

McLEAN: I had had a little bit of French in college, and I thought, well, that's what I should follow up. I was trying to avoid going to Africa because of my small child, and my wife was

already very set, so I was hoping to go to the Middle East, somewhere like Lebanon or Northern Africa, somewhere of this nature. There was a personnel officer who noticed my wife's name was Espinosa and decided that I should go off to Latin America, so I was first told I was going to go to Guatemala, which made some sense with Spanish, but they had me sent off to Brasilia. Frankly I don't think that probably anything of this had to do with anything else. It was where they needed me at the time, and I had no strong background that argued one place over another.

*Q: Did you take Portuguese?*

McLEAN: I took Portuguese; it was three to four months of Portuguese. I certainly didn't arrive speaking Portuguese.

*Q: Where did you go when you came out? Did you go right to Brasilia?*

McLEAN: I went right to Brasilia.

*Q: You were there from when?*

McLEAN: September of 1962 to September of 1964.

*Q: What were you getting sort of in corridor talk and all about going to Brazil?*

McLEAN: Not an awful lot. Not many people knew about Brazil to any great degree, certainly not about Brasilia, because Brasilia had just been opened. They had a program, and they still do, at the Foreign Service lounge where you could look up people who had recently come back from that place and interview them so you could get a sense of what it was like. In fact, my wife, who, as I said, say, was sort of timid about this whole process, went down and the ladies there helped. Their first reaction was, "Nobody's ever come back from there." She was very upset by that, as if we'd never come back from there. Actually I saw pictures of Brasilia. It was horrible. It was during the rainy season and there was red mud everywhere. At that point, just before I got into the program, they had moved the Portuguese language school to Rio. They didn't have the money in the budget to send us to Rio. I think it was actually that they didn't have money in the budget to have us stay in Rio collecting per diem. So they kept us in Washington, and they tried to invent a short Portuguese language program, and it wasn't terribly successful. In fact, it was the least good language program we had. For three or four months we just sat there trying to talk Portuguese with these teachers who were not prepared.

*Q: Did you go straight to Brasilia, or did you get indoctrinated or briefed in Rio before you went there?*

McLEAN: No, I didn't get to Rio for some time. Here I was. I had two months of the basic course and in a jumbled way got a month's worth of consular law, then got Portuguese, then an area course, a very short area course, a course that was led by Warren Robbins, sort of a general anthropology course. In December we went up to Seattle for a week, then to Brazil. I didn't get to Rio for three or four months.

*Q: What was Brasilia like when you arrived? What were your impressions?*

McLEAN: Well, it was really weird. It was a strange place. I can remember as we flew in at night, we flew over this city with all these lights, but then as you got close and looked down, they had streetlights on but there was nothing on the blocks, under the streetlights. There was nothing filling up the blocks between the streets. The streets were laid out. And Brasilia has a very strange arrangement. The embassy was one of the few modern, elegant buildings that they put in place as the era of construction came. There was a movie called "That Man from Rio" which was done in Brasilia at that time. If you see that movie, it's full of dust. They had built some buildings, but most of the construction had ultimately come to a stop as the economic chaos in the country just wrecked the country fiscally. It was not a great place to begin to know Brazil, and maybe not even a great place to begin a Foreign Service career, because it was such an isolated and unusually different place. But eventually it came around. One thing we had was a very talented group of officers there.

*Q: Could you talk about it: I mean, in the first place what you were doing and then, because this was an interesting time, could you talk about the officers and how it was sort of a divided mission at that point?*

McLEAN: That's correct, it was. The embassy was in Rio, of course, with the ambassador, and the theory was that the Political Section was in Brasilia, but soon after I got there, the man who had headed the Political Section, Phil Rain, departed, and they tried to bring in a Soviet specialist to come and be the head of the Political Section. Well, that was a strange idea, and they tended to do that at that time, bring in Soviet specialists, because they were quite sure Brazil was going communist, and so we had a series of Eastern European specialists. I called John Keppel from Brasilia. He knew Portuguese and didn't know the ambassador.

*Q: The ambassador being...?*

McLEAN: Gordon.

*Q: Lincoln Gordon, yes.*

McLEAN: Very soon it became evident that John Keppel was going to stay in Rio, close to the ambassador, close to the country team, not take himself out to Brasilia, so the place was left without leadership four or five months, which was not good for any officer. Eventually we got Bob Dean, very experienced in Brazil and a great linguist, who came and took over and gave the place some direction and spirit. He was one of the brightest Foreign Service officers I've known. We had a small USAID (United States Agency for International Development) office. A public safety AID program was going on there, which was a little strange. We can talk about that too, but that was a strange operation. But the basic thing, Brazil was falling apart. On the night that I arrived in Brazil--my wife arrived in the middle of the night--the Congress had agreed on the change of the Constitution, but the way they did it was unconstitutional. I remember it was throwing me off a little bit, because in very realistic American terms they had agreed to change the Constitution through a referendum with a simple majority of the Congress. They agreed on doing a referendum that would change the Constitution and would be a way of moving the

country from a parliamentary system to a presidential system which was supposed to resolve some crisis that was going on. But it didn't stop the crisis, because the government was quite weak in terms of its control but was looking for more power. So it became a crisis in institutions. We were in a clearer position to know the country, because we knew journalists who understood what was going on in the country, and what the other institutions were doing. By being in Brasilia we got to know people perhaps more intimately than our embassy did. I can now remember that I as a very junior officer could invite senators and subministers to my apartment, and they would accept, because at that time at various points there were one or two restaurants in the whole city, so just to go out to do something helped break the boredom. So in some ways it was a good place.

*Q: You were what, the consular officer or sort of a mixture?*

McLEAN: At that time you were supposed to rotate through sections. When I first got there, they put me in the political section and I worked with them about three or four months. I was in the political section, but I was also the consular officer. In fact, at one point I was moved into the administrative section and I was the acting general services assistant, and then even for a short time, two or three months, I was the administrative officer. But this is a post of about 24 Americans, so it wasn't a big operation.

*Q: I've heard particularly in those days that work stopped as far as the Brazilians were concerned on Friday or something, and everybody took off for Rio.*

McLEAN: We had about three active days a week when Congress was in session, from Tuesday to Thursday, but Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday were lost days in terms of talking to anybody important, because everyone was out of town. And there was even a month or so in which Congress was out of session, so time was really down, and much of the activity was going on in Sao Paulo and Rio. We did all of our reporting in that period out of newspapers, and that was unfortunate. There was, I think, something wrong with the way we were structured.

*Q: The major ministries and all got moved out there?*

McLEAN: Most of the administration went out there. They had token representation. The foreign ministry, I think, had three or four people, and their main job was to build the building into which the Foreign Minister, would move. They had to get one guy who was attached to the Protocol Office of the Presidency, but otherwise there wasn't much of a function of government. The Congress was the important one.

*Q: What about connections to the embassy? Did Lincoln Gordon come out often?*

McLEAN: Gordon came about once a month. There was an apartment there for him to be in, and he'd have a very intense schedule, and then leave. By the time Dean arrived, he listened to my Portuguese and said, "That's terrible." He said, "I want you to go out. You are now the consular officer for the state of Goya," this huge state that surrounds Brasilia, "and maybe you can talk to them." When I suggested my wife come with me, he said, "No, leave her here." He had the precise desire to get me out into the countryside speaking Portuguese so that it would improve

very rapidly. I would make three- or four-day trips out, and each time I did I came back my Portuguese got better. That, of course, made my effectiveness in the new job and political work increase greatly. And then as we moved towards the revolution on the 31st of March of 1964, it became much more important. And then after the revolution, it became even more important, because the government did have more of a presence in Brasilia and everyone was needed and everyone was used. So for the last six months I was in Brasilia, it was a more effective time there.

*Q: Let's talk about the revolution. Was it one that one was seeing coming? How did you see it from your perspective?*

McLEAN: From our perspective, of course, Brasilia was at the edge of Brazil, Brazilian civilization, and we saw that the chaos was just intense. Things just stopped working. The streets were not being cleaned and nothing worked. You ran out of sugar and coffee in Brazil, the products that Brazil produces. If you didn't have sugar and coffee, you had a sort of molasses for sugar, and coffee just didn't exist, and so it was a very difficult time for the country. You just had the sense that nothing was coming together. So, yes, there was a very strong sense of chaos and something was foreboding. Goulart and his forces were trying to stir things up on the populace side and trying to gather political support.

*Q: Goulart being...*

McLEAN: The President.

*Q: the President and coming from what, more or less...*

McLEAN: He came from the left of the Getulio Vargas' political system that had been set up in the '40s and early '50s. He himself was not a laboring man, but he was a product of these people who had worked through the labor movement, through the Labor Ministry, and created a leftist force on that side. And so Goulart was trying to force a crisis in which he could get extraordinary powers. You can understand how difficult it was to run the country at that particular point. I do remember Harry Winer, a very bright, insightful person, turning to me one day and saying, "Could it be, Phil, that maybe the crisis that is coming is not one of Brazil falling to communism but of Brazil falling to fascism?" Let me say two things that happened early in my time. One is just after I got out there, an advance party for President Kennedy's visit came to town. My job was to take Bobby Kennedy's secretary around. The advance party came. It was very exciting, doing papers and, of course, planning his visit.

*Q: This is for Bobby Kennedy?*

McLEAN: No, this was first for John Kennedy. What happened was in October the Cuban Missile Crisis took place. We happened to be the target of a visit by a very large Congressional delegation at that point headed by Strom Thurmond and Henry Talmadge. There were some funny stories about that, but the basic story is that Kennedy didn't come because of the Cuban Missile Crisis. He was scheduled to come, I think, a week after the Crisis took place, so he canceled the trip. Then Bobby Kennedy came in November or early December, and, of course,

he comes and we gave him a very big party. The idea was to try to duplicate the original schedule of the President Kennedy visit. Bobby Kennedy's visit was to try to save Brazil from falling into communism. That was at least the message that we were hearing. I don't think there's a lot of evidence that the country was going towards communism, because the left was seen to be very weak in terms of the country. But what was clear was the country was going towards chaos, and one could have argued that anybody could take advantage of the chaos.

*Q: How did the Bobby Kennedy visit go?*

McLEAN: Well, I was not on that level really... I wasn't a participant in any of the meetings themselves, It didn't resolve anything. I think typically with minorities he gave commitments, he gave assurances, but in fact nothing really happened. He was living in his own world. I don't think he really felt the pressure of the United States to do anything.

*Q: Did Goulart spend much time in Brasilia?*

McLEAN: Actually he was there a good time. I can remember on Thanksgiving Day that we were suddenly invited over to a benediction, because Brazilians celebrated Thanksgiving as a time for celebration, not in our typical way. I think it's something they picked up from World War II when our forces were there. I can remember being at this benediction, and people were kind to the American embassy people.

*Q: What about the military? Were there many military in Brazil?*

McLEAN: There was not a large delegation, but there was a military presence and we certainly did have contact with them. There was like a presidential brigade, but Brasilia was really, and still is, but at that time particularly, way out in nowhere. It wasn't in the middle of the jungle; it was in the middle of a flat, high plain. It was very isolated.

*Q: The military contacts then would probably be made between us from Rio and Sao Paulo?*

McLEAN: Our military mission was in Sao Paulo, and there was a particularly effective military attaché, Colonel Walters.

*Q: Norman Walters.*

McLEAN: He knew many of the generations of leadership that reached the top.

*Q: Well, I take it then, at least early on when you arrived, you weren't waiting for the military shoe to drop. It was more almost a communist shoe.*

McLEAN: There was much more of a focus on the communist left and what the left would do, and that's what our focus was on and our attention. There weren't any of them in our group. We didn't have a lot of contact with the military, so we didn't feel that. We had contacts that were in the Congress with pretty much the full panoply from right to left, and that was the same thing with the journalists. I can remember Duke Ryan introducing me at USIS (United States

Information Service), introducing me to a leftist journalist whom I got to know. I guess I particularly got to know him after the revolution, and friendly Americans became a much more interesting thing to them after the revolution, but even before that. The Brazilian left wasn't really interested in the State Department.

*Q: I was wondering: What was the Brazilian left like? Was it a strong sort of communist-type left, Marxist left?*

McLEAN: There was such a thing, but you didn't feel it in the Congress. Most of the left was highly nationalistic. Clearly they had a sense that the state would have a major role, but in many ways they weren't Marxist as they were nationalists. I can remember one of the people that we knew, Darceo Vermetto, who was the head of the president's civil household. He was a distinguished professor, an anthropologist, very leftist in reputation, very extreme sometimes in his statements, and yet when you listened to what he was actually saying, he was not saying anything that was particularly shocking. In fact, I always noted one of the lines he gave us explaining to us why the Brazilian educational system worked. The reason why it worked was they gave education, free education, at the elementary level and not at the university level. At the college, obviously the high school level, you had to pay in most cases to go, and that weeded most everyone out. I thought that was an extraordinary elitist point of view. Strange enough, I returned to Brazil only once in the immediate subsequent years and ten years later, and I can remember talking with a military government official, and he gave me exactly the same line, so I can remember thinking, well, that's a Brazilian point of view; it's not a right/left point of view; it's a Brazilian thing that's very elitist.

*Q: Was there a university in Brasilia at that time?*

McLEAN: It was just getting started.

*Q: So the student class was not a factor?*

McLEAN: Not much of a factor, and I must say, we tried to have some contact with them, but it was just really getting started out there. Like most things in Brasilia, the city was half-built buildings, and in the university campus they had just some half-built buildings.

*Q: How did the revolution hurt you? It was a coup essentially.*

McLEAN: It was a coup. We got advance word about 24 hours ahead of time from Herbert Levy, who was a senator of representative, I can't remember which, from Sao Paulo. He through marriage was related to Bob Dean, and he was one of our better contacts. He tipped us off. But we heard the troops were moving, and then, of course, that night in fact the U.S. National War College was supposed to come through. Dean, in his usual imaginative way, planned to hold one big benefit, and then split them up into small groups. Some of them were supposed to come to my house, and the young diplomats from *Intematachea* were supposed to come to my house. What happened, as this thing begins to start, the National War College flies over and doesn't come to Brazil. That night we sat in the embassy listening to different reports. Congress was going into session but was locked. I got into the Congress because the doorman saw me and

recognized me. I had always taken him coffee and practiced my Portuguese with him when he came over, so we had a good, friendly relationship and he let me in. So I was the American inside the Congress that night when the presidency was declared vacant. That was part of the recognition. We very rapidly recognized the government, and in part that was because that night we had been able to report the circumstances under which the leadership of the Congress had taken over the government. An important part of it was to communicate that to Washington and to the Op (Operations) Center.

*Q: Well, Phil, in a way it wasn't the tanks in the streets. I mean it was Congress saying enough is enough.*

McLEAN: Well, it was tanks in the streets in other parts of the country. It had begun by troop movements in different parts of the country. So it was almost like a chess game, moving around. I don't think anybody was shot in that whole process. It was just a moving around of troops. What happened eventually was that Goulart that night decided to fly to his home state, Congress took advantage of that to say that he had left the Presidency without the Congress' permission as the Constitution required. I'd have to say, that isn't what the Constitution says; the Constitution says if he leaves the country, if the President leaves the country. They used that provision to justify declaring the Presidency vacant and turning over the Presidency to the President of the Congress.

*Q: Was there much debate, what you were watching...?*

McLEAN: The night it was taking place, the Congress, Vonsel himself and Monomaraji, the president of the Senate, and the other leaders that I recognized stood on the high mesa, the high tribunal in front of the Congress, and they shouted this out over the shouts of the largest majorities certainly of the people on the floor of the Congress but also the people in the gallery that managed to get in, including the young diplomats who had been my guests that night. They were all furious that this was happening. But they declared that they had this power as the leadership of Congress to make this decision by vote. So there was a number of things. I was able to check that, call the embassy, and get that storm over.

*Q: While Congress was taking this stand, or at least elements within Congress, this being the rightist, I guess...*

McLEAN: Well, I think a right or left... They were not leftist.

*Q: I mean there weren't armed guards standing around saying this is what you do and all?*

McLEAN: This was the unarmed guards. God knows what they overheard. History would have to say directly what they all were hearing, whether they were being threatened or something of this nature. But it wasn't obvious on the streets. The chaos in the country was really extraordinary. Some months before, many months before, we woke up to machine gun firing, and it was the sergeants rebelling, trying to take over because they hadn't been paid. It was that type of atmosphere.

*Q: What were you getting from your colleagues about why there was chaos?*

McLEAN: I'll have to put my mind back into that particular time. I think people had focused in that Brazil was going through a very strong modernization crisis and the system that had been set up by Goulart was breaking down. There were pressures in all directions, but the basic thing was that Goulart and his people were attempting to govern but without a strong plan, without strong public support. Then you had an economic crisis that was going on. That was undermining the country. It was a very difficult situation. For Gordon it had to be difficult, because he didn't have good people, interlocutors, people he could talk to in the country. My recollection is that Gordon had a very hard time in talking with responsible figures in government, perhaps because they weren't responsible, no one taking responsibility or making decisions.

*Q: Well, we were mentioning an attempt. Gordon had come out of the Marshall Plan in Europe and all, and still he was around, the Brookings Institute. But he was particularly there to sort of help with AID, the Alliance for Progress and all that. I mean, that's why he was there. What was our feeling about our AID effort?*

McLEAN: There was enormous frustration, because here's Brazil, which one-third population, probably more than one-third of the land mass of what is Latin America, and it wasn't working. You had a theory that the United States had propounded, but in reaction to demands from progressive people in Latin America, Kubichek being one, Fray and others had made these demands. So the United States began to pay attention to it after Castro came along. It tended to be a policy that would favor center-left governments throughout Latin America. But in the Brazil case, it didn't work. It ran up against people who ran off in a radical direction who nationalized the telephone companies and caused the major investment problems. In terms of other parts of the country, conditions were not there to make a major change. There were no institutions in place to try to deal with a major AID program. Gordon came in and found it immensely frustrating and designed a policy that he called trying to identify islands of sanity in this process, and he began to go through and identify who he could work with generally. We tried at one point to do balance-of-payments but that didn't work. Again, Brazil couldn't live up to any commitments.

*Q: How did things develop after... The coup happened, or the take-over happened, when?*

McLEAN: It took place the night of March 31st, April first my recollection.

*Q: '63?*

McLEAN: '64. So for the next six months that I was there, it became a period when suddenly the dam broke to do anything and everything. For instance, when you had something like USIA, your travel program would be given each year with a certain number of positions, opportunities, for people from Congress to travel. We didn't say anything in the previous years, but suddenly we had lots and lots, very large numbers of Congress people from the United States who were suddenly looking around for projects and finding projects that we could fund. On the AID side, we were working with Congress. Congress had decided that there should be profits remittance

type tax. Working with Congress we lobbied rather shamelessly and openly with Congress to get that turned around.

*Q: Well, I take it then from your perspective this was beginning to be more a functioning government rather than sort of a military take-over where you ended up with a major general sitting at the head of each department, who really was not very responsive.*

McLEAN: Well, I would say that was one of the things. I was still quite young; I needn't worry, but to me it was stunning to have watched. I arrived in Brazil when things were becoming chaotic and more and more chaotic, so that's what I had seen. The Foreign Service Institute had told me to be highly sensitive to the local society and culture and don't be judgmental, but I must say, it was very, very chaotic and getting more so and then suddenly overnight people are picking up brooms and cleaning the streets and buses were running, and all this chaos rather visibly changed overnight. In Brasilia, and I think to some degree the rest of the country, but certainly in Brasilia things began to happen. So, yes, it was not a simply military take-over. They had, for the most part, civilian ministers. They said they were going to support, that they were democratic. In our heart of hearts, I think we all wanted to believe it was democratic. Some of the justification I had given them to use that night was used, and they were saying that the new President, first Mazzilli, who was the head of the Congress, which was the Constitutional succession, and within a month's time the Congress had, as the Constitution provided, elected a military man but a man of some kind and goodly reputation, Castelo Branco. He was well known to Walters and a very good close friend. There's a story that Walters was so close that he was actually plotting with him. I had some new evidence of that particular thing. I don't know that that's true. What I do know is true is that the morning of the inauguration Walters... Later on, I remember, I was in my consular office, which was just off the entrance to the embassy, and my secretary for the consular work was the receptionist. She had little enough to do, but she was a very dramatic lady, and I remember her answering the telephone and she says, "No, Colonel Walters is not up and around yet, but can I take a message?" And I remember her screaming, "Oh, Mr. President!" I thought they're calling to invite Walters over to have breakfast that morning, and I reminded Walters of that recently, about that conversation. As I say, as the people in the Congress, more conservative people in the Congress, took over part of the government.

*Q: Well, did the pace of the--I don't know what you'd call it. Was it called an embassy where you were?*

McLEAN: It was called an embassy office.

*Q: Did it pick up?*

McLEAN: Oh, yes. From that period on, we were very oriented, very busy. I know myself, somewhere in that period I began to travel to Rio every six weeks or so, and carried the pouch down. We would start the weekly reports, and I would carry them down to Rio. Even in Rio we were there to work, and we were much more busy. There was enormous appetite for written reports. As I say, when I traveled, I traveled with a frontier team with the Minister of Agriculture. So it was a very active, exciting period.

*Q: Did Dean stay there throughout the whole time you were there?*

McLEAN: As I say, he arrived six or nine months after I was there, and he stayed for the rest of my time, and he stayed on for a period beyond that. He was really a first-class officer.

*Q: By the time you left in September 1964, what was Brasilia like by that time? Was it changing?*

McLEAN: By that time the city physically hadn't changed, but the sense of tempo, sense of work was much greater. There were stupid things like the water in the swimming pool at the yacht club had not even changed. It was these things that popped up in our daily life that had changed. So it really had turned around in that sense.

*Q: Well, I'd like to stop at a particular point of interest. I think it's a good time to stop here, but we'll pick it up the next time when in September of '64 you left Brasilia. Where did you go?*

**FRANK ORAM**  
**Country Public Affairs Officer, USIS**  
**Brasilia (1962-1964)**

*Frank Oram began his Foreign Service career in 1940 as an auxiliary officer of USIS. He served in Brazil, Spain, and Argentina. Mr. Oram was interviewed in April 1989 by Allen C. Hansen.*

*Q: Your next assignment was as country public affairs officer in Brazil. Rio was the capital of Brazil in those days, is that right?*

ORAM: No. It was Brasilia.

*Q: What year was this?*

ORAM: Let me qualify that. On paper, Brasilia was the capital. I remember at a cocktail party talking with a fellow who had just been elected to Congress. I was congratulating him, and his wife was there. She said, "I won't go. I will not go."

I said, "I beg your pardon?"

She said, "I will not go to Brasilia."

I said to him, "What are you going to do?"

He said, "Well, I have got a problem."

The true carioca (resident of Rio) would be caught dead before he would go to a place like Brasilia which is high plateau country -- dry, no ocean or beach life. What I am saying is that

Brazilian officials were very, very reluctant to go to Brasilia. If they could possibly avoid living there, they would just fly up for a couple of days a week and fly back to Rio.

*Q: This was 1962 when you arrived there. What were some of the problems Brazil had? They were probably the same ones they are still having today such as inflation and a growing pollution.*

ORAM: By this time inflation in Brazil was really out of hand. There was a great deal of labor unrest; the labor party was very strong. Communist influence was evident but to what degree -- you know what that is -- but can always seem to be more than it is in real numbers. The President of Brazil, Janio Quadros had suddenly quit. He had won in an open election, then resigned reportedly in a state of depression. Joao Goulart succeeded him. I don't know how he is going to be rated as time goes on, but he wasn't on top of that chaotic situation. Finally, the military took over.

One of the pressures, again not identified, was the question of population growth. Brazil is a huge country, but the population is concentrated in small areas, such as Sao Paulo which now has about 14 to 16 million people. It has slums the like of which you have to go to India to find. Rio, with almost no flat land, has over 10 million people and slums without end. Brazil today, of all the countries in the world, has the greatest disparity between the rich and the poor. Scarcely 1% of the population owns nearly all the land. If Brazil can solve these inequities without going through a really horrendous social revolution, I will be surprised.

*Q: It is a problem all over Latin America, but it's accentuated in Brazil.*

ORAM: In Brazil it is extreme. The combination of high birth rate and migration to the cities means that cities are becoming unmanageable. The cost of any service is multiplied such that the whole infrastructure of social services, health, education, is overburdened. I am rather pessimistic.

*Q: Your mention of the problem of population in those days and even after you had left Brazil -- USIA was not doing anything in population. We stayed away from it, as I recall, until much, much later.*

ORAM: Yes. You have to remember what Eisenhower said while he was still in the White House -- that birth control is not a proper subject for government. In all fairness to him, he retracted that statement several years after leaving the White House. But you are right. It is the kind of subject that is difficult to discuss. It raises too many personal and religious issues. It is also hard to grasp. Population growth is like a glacier. You don't see a glacier grow, but you know that it is moving because the icebergs keep splitting off. You know something is happening.

Population is like that. Suddenly you become aware that your surroundings are very crowded. Like a glacier, population stays around. You can't get rid of it. You can reduce inflated currency by lopping off a zero and giving it another name, but you can't reduce people already born.

*Q: You must have had a fairly large USIS post there in those days.*

ORAM: Yes. We had American officers and binational center grantees in nine cities.

*Q: Was this during the Alliance For Progress or was this prior to it?*

ORAM: It was during the Alliance For Progress. When President Kennedy proclaimed the Alliance, he provoked negative reactions among Brazilians and others for taking over a Brazilian concept already adopted by the Organization of American States. In August 1960 at Bogota, the Inter-American Conference had approved a new hemisphere initiative known by its Brazilian name, Operacao Pan Americana, conceived and promoted by Brazil to be the largest cooperative hemisphere effort for development and infrastructure -- agriculture, education, health. The US Delegation, chaired by Milton Eisenhower, had pledged \$400 million -- a lot of money at that time. Then, only months later in March 1961, Kennedy with much publicity launched the Alliance for Progress as a new US initiative for the same purposes and used the same \$400 million for the initial US pledge, with a following commitment of \$1 billion a year for ten years.

*Q: It wasn't the term but was the concept that the Brazilians...*

ORAM: The Brazilians had already proposed a large-scale hemisphere program and were promoting it at the Bogota meeting. What came out of the Bogota meeting was what the Brazilians and others had really been promoting. I guess what I am trying to say is that we probably would now be much better off if we had not given that whole effort our own label and made it our own program.

When I got to Brazil in mid-1962, I asked an old friend how the Alliance For Progress was coming along. He said, "What have you done for us lately? What are you going to do tomorrow?"

I said, "What do you mean?"

He said, "It is your program, isn't it?"

I said, "Now wait a minute, this is supposed to be a cooperative effort with all the countries working together."

He said, "That is what we were talking about when we were promoting our hemisphere effort. It now appears that it is all tied to US appropriations and a lot of people coming down for the US to run things".

Now, this was one man's point of view, but shared by others.

*Q: Is there anything else on Brazil that you might want to comment about?*

ORAM: I just wish Brazil all the luck and I wish it were in better shape than I think it is.

**CHARLES W. GROVER**  
**Economic and Commercial Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1962-1965)**

*Charles Grover was raised in Gloversville, New York after several years of moving when his father was permanently assigned. He earned a major in American History from Antioch College in Ohio and then received his master's in history from the University of Oregon some years later. He joined the Foreign Service in 1956 and in 1971 served as principal officer in Medellin, Colombia. In addition to Colombia he was posted to Bolivia, Spain, Brazil, Chile, and Ecuador. Charles Grover was interviewed by Henry Ryan in 1990.*

Q: *You were there two years.*

GROVER: I was there for two years and then went to Brazil.

After the desk officer position, I was assigned to be the second man in the American Consulate General in Mozambique, and I took the Portuguese language which I did not have. The Foreign Service Institute very carefully, those of us going to Portuguese areas, were very carefully segregated from those going to Brazil because there were those there who thought our language would be ruined if we got too much of that Brazilian slang into our Portuguese. And then at the end of four or five months of language training I learned that the Portuguese would not visa our passports, and therefore I was going to Rio instead of Mozambique with all of my Portuguese.

Q: *They wouldn't visa your passports.*

GROVER: ...to go to Mozambique, and it was sort of pre- PNGed, because, I have always assumed I worked in this never- never land that they didn't recognize, working for Governor Williams on Portuguese African problems. That was not a position that the Portuguese could ever agree to. I had made a trip to Angola...

Q: *Just let me put in here that PNGed means declared persona non grata.*

GROVER: I had made a trip in 1962 to Angola-Mozambique and I'm not aware of the fact that I saw any revolutionaries there. I don't believe I did. They weren't around in public in the Portuguese areas that one visited. But whatever view the Portuguese government took, it was that I was not going to go out there, nor was my family.

Q: *It was just you specifically, it was not...*

GROVER: No, it was me specifically. But I have a feeling it was related to the position.

Q: *Was the position filled by somebody else?*

GROVER: No, I don't mean that position. Let's go back on this. I'd been working for the African Bureau in ways that they imagined were prejudicial to their interest. They wanted ideally, although they could hardly demand to have a role in personnel assignments that someone from the European bureau would go to Mozambique and would have a more balanced view of things that were happening. But they didn't think it would be useful for someone who had been listening to the talk of Governor Williams, and been marinating in that bureau for year or so to develop any kind of balance on Mozambique. I think that was really their problem. At the same time I suspect that my trip to Angola and Mozambique was very carefully monitored and they may have misunderstood some of the things I was doing. It was a very routine kind of visit, mostly with the Consulates General and taking some trips out in the country to see what country these two places were. I'd never been there before.

*Q: Did you talk to any bad guys when you took your trip into the country?*

GROVER: There was no way of identifying bad guys. All of the bad guys were identified in Dar es Salaam, or in Leopoldville, or what later became Kinshasa.

*Q: The bad guys from the Portuguese point of view.*

GROVER: ...from the Portuguese point of view. Anybody you talked with...Luanda at that time was really a Portuguese city with a hurricane fence around it. And the rest of Angola was Africa. But inside that hurricane fence, which was Luanda, was a Portuguese city. There was no one really to talk to. You really had to talk with people in neighboring capitals who harbored a sense of, and heard of revolution. They weren't going to do that at home. This was a period during which the Portuguese secret police would do away with people on fairly short notice--at least they disappeared from view. The famous P-Day.

*Q: P-Day is...*

GROVER: I don't know. They are initials for something-- police--I don't know what it is, but I just remember the...

*Q: The Portuguese police.*

GROVER: The acrumin, yes. It was the Portuguese secret police, I suppose. Probably the equivalent, with additional tasks, of our FBI--the internal security kind of police. But anyway, the Portuguese desk officer, who was Frank Starrs at the time, was working on this and he raised this issue several times--the issuance of the visas for our passports--with the Portuguese embassy and finally he got the clear signal that the passports could be there until doomsday but they were never going to be visaed. Well, we ended up leaving our passports there and getting a new set of passports. We weren't going to withdraw them. We left our five passports there to be visaed and as far as I know they are still there waiting to be visaed. In the meanwhile we got a new set of passports, and got a diplomatic visa to go to Brazil.

I came on the scene there in 1953 just as Brazil was going into...

Q: '63.

GROVER: '63, I'm sorry. Brazil was getting into a sort of a very unruly situation under Joao Goulart, which ultimately led there to the Castelo Branco overturn on the 31st of March in 1964. That sort of came in the mid-point of our time in Brazil. I was a commercial officer in Brazil-- economic and commercial.

Q: *You arrived in '63 to be an economic and commercial officer.*

GROVER: That's right. To be industry officer, actually, in Rio. The second year I became the assistant commercial attaché, and this was about the time that the revolution took place. And after the Brazilian assignment, which was a very interesting one but from the economic and commercial side, you could see chaos coming but there wasn't much that you really understood about it. Certainly I didn't understand very much about what had happened in Brazil, especially at the beginning with my freshly minted European Portuguese I didn't understand a word that was being said. It took me a while to get a sense of the music of Brazilian Portuguese, and after a while I think I spoke it adequately but I have trouble bringing it back now with too many overlays of Spanish on it.

But anyway, we had a very pleasant assignment despite the turmoil. We had at that time, as you recall, Duke, a Defense Attaché by the name of Vernon Walters.

Q: *I've heard of him.*

GROVER: ...who Brazilians thereafter I think were persuaded that Vernon Walters was more than he was. There was a lot of belief among the Goulart forces that the CIA and others had been in collusion with the far right and turned Goulart out of office. As far as I could see, from my commercial point of view, that government ceased to exist about four or five months before the revolution. We, in the embassy, going to the Foreign Office to explain positions, and trying to seek agreements on things, found we were talking to people who were shell-shocked by what was happening in Brazil, and could not make decisions. Government decisions were being made by Joao Goulart in public squares without any preparation of his own bureaucracy. There was nobody to make any kind of decisions in the country except these pronouncements in public squares.

Q: *You said industry.*

GROVER: I was industry officer which was mostly doing periodical studies on industrial sectors like...

Q: *It was a reporting job.*

GROVER: It was a reporting job, that's right.

Q: *...promoting American industry...*

GROVER: No. The section was not that large. One aspect was doing sectoral reports, the steel industry, the wood industry, the fishing industry. But those were sort of term papers that you worked on and hopefully you met the CERP date.

*Q: You better tell what CERP is.*

GROVER: Comprehensive Economic Report Program I think is what it was and everybody had a CERP book. In those days when economic sections were fairly large the CERP was a real crown of thorns and you were always running late on your CERP requirements. Eventually they became very much relaxed.

*Q: Is the requirement an on-going requirement or just a once a year report?*

GROVER: On-going. Many of these industry reports were reports to be updated every two years, but they were expected to be very comprehensive.

*Q: So through the year you'd have reports due on various industries under the CERP requirements.*

GROVER: That's right, under the CERP requirements. There was also a monthly economic review. I was the editor of that during my two years there, as well as being industry officer and finally being assistant commercial attaché also. The line was not too clearly drawn between the economic section and the commercial section. The only clear line was in finance. State had a finance officer, and there was a treasury officer, and understanding Brazilian finance was an area that I never mastered.

*Q: I don't think you're alone.*

GROVER: There were too many Brazilians, including ministers of economy, and ministers of finance who understood it too well.

*Q: But from your position then, because obviously you had to do a lot of reporting, what did the economy look like, or at least the industrial sector in the economy.*

GROVER: Of course, since it was a chronically an inflationary economy one of the solutions was to simply print a few more cruzeiros. Characteristically the economy of things was very lively; manufacture of automobiles, trucks, whatever; because since money wasn't worth too much, people who saved, saved in commodities, and the more manufactured the commodity was, the more valuable it was because it increased in value rather than decreased in value which finished industrial goods do in a non- inflationary economy. In an inflationary economy they gain value, at least nominally so. And so a doctor who was doing fairly well instead of putting his money in the bank would invest in a new car which he would put up on blocks and not use and hope to sell at some point. He would buy things--refrigerators. And, of course, in a way that artificially made the economy look better than it really was. It was an escrowed economy that was based upon creating goods that could be purchased for almost a kind of a barter economy. At some point things would be traded off.

*Q: That brings two questions to mind. The first is, was that before monetary correction, which we subsequently in this country started calling indexing, which was designed to sort of alleviate that problem in contracts, for example.*

GROVER: There was a certain amount of indexing but it wasn't as widespread at that point. If we got a contract on a house-- occasionally you could get one. In fact we got a contract that didn't have a monetary correction built into it. It was in cruzeiros and at the end of the year we voluntarily gave him a 50% increase in the cruzeiros. Otherwise he would have really taken a bath on it. But about that time the monetary correction was becoming very standard. The economy is sort of like a samba. At carnival time when it's really roaring, it's fast moving. And then on Tuesday, at midnight of carnival, there's a silence maybe for a week before they start practicing for the next carnival. There are no sounds around and that's the noisiest silence that I've heard, and that's the way the Brazilian economy was through Joao Goulart. He disappeared and then suddenly the post-silence carnival came. The economy tried to reconstitute itself and make a real economy rather than one of these artificial economies in which commodities were used instead of cash.

*Q: The other question I wanted to ask you about was about that. Roughly what percentage could participate in that sort of saving? In other words, saving through acquired commodities.*

GROVER: It must have been relatively a small percentage of people but nonetheless there was a fairly sizeable middle class in Rio. But I think in terms of the total population of Brazil--I think there were about 80 million Brazilians at that time--the middle class was mostly a southern Brazil phenomenon, and I don't know what the numbers would be but it would be relatively small. But they had an awful lot of money.

*Q: You were talking about then the post-revolutionary economy.*

GROVER: Well, post-revolutionary economy, they did get a kind of stability. I do recall that it became very expensive for us, and that happens from time to time in Brazil. Brazil is going through one such period now; it's very expensive for dollar holders. And that's probably due to monetary policy that makes cruzeiros or crusadoes very scarce and therefore there aren't very many chasing dollars. And therefore dollars that need to be converted have to do it on cruzeiro or crusado terms. Anyway, trying to understand Brazilian finances is something that I've never managed to do very successfully. It's something that happens, and that's constantly out of control. The Brazilian minister of finance is simply trying to subject this to a degree of control. The irony of it all is that the Brazilians, without having a currency that works, still have the liveliest economy in all of South America. You see that at the borders between Brazil and Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, on up. The Brazilians are much more active commercially even though they don't have a currency that works. So there's something in there that does work. I don't know what it is. Maybe it's the Brazilian himself. We're getting kind of off the mark but I guess I wasn't really on the main line in Brazil. I was a member of the American Chamber of Commerce as an employee of the commercial section. I listened to the complaints of American enterprises who were not being paid. They were concerned about profit remittance legislation which they thought was changing the rules and prejudicary...

*Q: What do you mean they were not being paid?*

GROVER: The legislation, and I don't think my memory is good enough to try to remember it. Many of these firms had come in at a time when profits were freely remittable to the United States but by 1963 in order to try to keep much of its money at home, and given the turn of mind of the Goulart administration, it had passed legislation that limited the amount of remittances that could go abroad. Some companies like Caterpillar reinvested it all in Brazil and made a very strong company. Brazil was a very good place to manufacture caterpillar parts and tractors for export from Brazil to other locations. But that wasn't universally the case. That was one set of problems.

The other set of problems dealt with pharmaceuticals and the tendency of Brazilian manufacturers, at least according to our pharmaceutical companies, to impinge on patents and copyrights-- patents on medicines--and duplicate American medicines that incorporated the cost of research. This is a problem that we have with several European countries, and several South East Asian countries. We certainly had it with Brazil at that time. I don't know whether we have come to terms. But those were two of the major sets of problems that we had: profit remittances, and problems with pharmaceuticals.

We were beginning to have problems--one might say they were principally our problem--of exports of cotton goods to the United States. I think I began the first negotiation on the restraint agreement on the export of gray goods, which is the basic cotton cloth that Brazil was producing in large volume and beginning to export to the United States. They argued that, "With all of your aid you're trying to promote our manufacture of whatever, and to sell it on the international market." We were arguing, however, that this is artificial, that you shouldn't try to base your future on this because the only reason you have this opportunity is that the Far Eastern countries have already agreed to restraint agreements. And which, I think, the truth lay somewhere in between. I think actually probably Brazil is so swamped by foreign textiles that it probably has trouble competing now with the Far Eastern textiles.

From Brazil--that second year, at least as an observer of Brazilian affairs--was fairly quiet because it was all in the hands of the Brazilian military.

*Q: Did you get into coffee issues at all?*

GROVER: I didn't get into coffee issues. That was in this foreign exchange and the financial world. I don't know if you remember John Kryzak, and Ralph Korp. They were involved in what coffee meant in terms of foreign exchange. That's really what coffee seemed to be all about at that time. This is before soluble coffee became an issue. It was just all of those bags of coffee that the Brazilian government had under its control and was trying to dole out. No, I didn't have anything to do with coffee.

*Q: Then you were saying the second year things were very...*

GROVER: ...were very quiet. I went to Tulane for a year after Brazil, Latin American studies, which having gone to Brazil in the first place was sort of accidental. I really had a very keen interest in Africa, but having invested in a year of Latin American studies at Tulane it was pretty clear I was going to be in Latin America for maybe even the rest of my career because the Latin America bureau tended to be an officer trap. Once you got in it was hard to get out. Latin American affairs tended to operate in policy isolation, also. You worked in Latin America; you weren't necessarily known by the cold warriors east and west. You weren't necessarily known by the people who dealt in the big economic issues, which were east and west issues too, like Japan, United States or European market in the United States. We were north-south issues, and they were, as Henry Kissinger used to say with a certain amount of puzzlement until he mastered the business himself, which didn't take very long of course, "You people deal in theology, I don't understand what you're talking about." The language of the OAS, the mysticism of Raul Prebisch who was in charge of ECLA at that time and was talking about deterioration, the deteriorating terms of trade of Latin America. This was Latin American theology and he didn't understand...this was Henry Kissinger, "You people need to be exposed to other parts of the world." And, when he became Secretary of State, he tried to break up the Latin American bureau and cause other people to get the Latin America experience, and the people assigned to Latin America to get more in the main line. Not a bad idea. It didn't work particularly. This goes ahead many years, it's a digression that goes into the mid-'70s. But, the fact of the matter was, that people who worked in Latin America affairs did, and continued to work, in a degree of policy isolation in terms that they understand but people from the outside tend to be slightly mystified by. It may be that that's broken down somewhat, since the Reagan administration had no great love for the OAS. I don't think paid their bills and probably still haven't. That may be breaking down. It's really a language and a series of problems that pertained to the Inter-American system and the dialogue between the members of the system. And there's no reason why it shouldn't have special characteristics, because there have been special characteristics in the relationship. It's just the way it is.

But anyway I took the year of Latin American studies and remained in Latin America, became even more specialized. I spent the last twelve years overseas all in Andean countries so that's the ultimate in specialization. Four years in Bolivia, four years in Chile, two in Colombia and two in Ecuador. We've done the Bolivian portion which came after the year of Latin American studies.

**DAVID E. ZWEIFEL**  
**Political Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1962-1965)**

*David E. Zweifel was born in Colorado on September 13, 1934. He received a bachelor's degree from Oregon State University and served in the U.S. Navy overseas for five years. He joined the Foreign Service in July 1962 and served in Brazil, Lebanon, Jordan, Mexico, Oman, Yemen, and Washington, DC. Mr. Zweifel retired in 1995 and was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on September 3, 1996.*

ZWEIFEL: Since I had not previously studied any foreign languages, I anticipated a lengthy stay in Washington for language training after completion of the A-100 course. Instead, I was among the first of my class to depart. I was assigned to Brazil where I was to study Portuguese at the FSI Institute at Rio de Janeiro.

*Q: Was it good training there or not?*

ZWEIFEL: It was excellent. At the outset, I did not show as a naturally gifted linguist. But, through my absolute determination to succeed and my love for Brazil, which continues down to the present time, I mastered the language and still have a good command of Portuguese.

*Q: What did you do on your first job after training?*

ZWEIFEL: I had been assigned to a junior officer rotational slot at Brasilia. During the time I was in language training in Rio, my orders were changed to assign me to the embassy which, at that time, was still located in Rio.

I had the good luck to begin my rotation in the Political Section. Then, as a result of the tragic death of one of the middle-grade officers in that section, I ended up spending my entire first tour doing political and labor reporting.

*Q: Lincoln Gordon was the Ambassador at that time?*

ZWEIFEL: Yes indeed. Ambassador Gordon was a very able and distinguished diplomat who had come from academia as a political appointee in the Kennedy Administration. He did an outstanding job in my opinion. Shortly after I began in the Political Section, John Gordon Mein came as DCM. He, too, was an outstanding officer and diplomat. Tragically, he was later assassinated while serving as our Ambassador to Guatemala.

*Q: I'd known Linc Gordon in London, where he was our Economic Minister at the time. He was a true intellectual. The government had not completed its move to Brasilia, I gather, by the time you were in Brazil.*

ZWEIFEL : No, we had an 'Embassy Branch Office' in Brasilia at the time. As I recall, there were three or four Foreign Service Officers assigned to it. Bob Dean, who later served as Ambassador to Peru, was the Officer In Charge in Brasilia. It was a small operation, and all reporting was routed through the embassy in Rio.

The Brazilian Federal Government had nominally moved by that time, but even the members of Congress rushed back to Rio every weekend. A standing joke was that the only weekend recreation in Brasilia was to ride the only escalator installed there at the time. Most governmental functions were still located in Rio.

*Q: Were the Communists influential in Brazil in those days?*

ZWEIFEL: When I got to Rio de Janeiro at the end of October, 1962, the Brazilian President was

Joao Goulart. He was clearly left-leaning in his political orientation. It was during a time of intense maneuvering in the Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and we tended to think in zero-sum terms. If Goulart followed through with his socialist policies, we would 'lose' a round to the Russians. Thus, were very concerned by developments in Brazil.

Indeed, the situation continued to deteriorate, culminating in the military coup in April, 1964.

*Q: What about the Cubans" Did they have a strong influence there?*

ZWEIFEL: The Cubans enjoyed good standing with the Goulart regime. This was an added concern for Washington.

Remember, I had departed Washington for Rio at the end of October, 1962. You will recall what was happening during that time.

*Q: The Missile Crisis.*

ZWEIFEL: Precisely. The Cuban Missile Crisis. As a matter of fact, when I left New York on my way to Rio, everyone was glumly half-expecting the bombs to fall. I stopped for a weekend in Caracas. Without a knowledge of Spanish, I spent those days frustrated at my inability to find out exactly what was going on. It was like being in another world.

By the time I got to Brazil, the crisis had begun to abate, but it was still a tense, interesting time.

*Q: Was there a strong amount of anti-Americanism in Brazil when you were there?*

ZWEIFEL: On the contrary, the Brazilians were very, very friendly. Even though they had a government which, as I noted, was quite antithetical to our own philosophy and opposed to many of our policies, the people were by and large very well disposed towards Americans, very hospitable. They especially admired then President John F. Kennedy.

*Q: What was the reaction there to the Kennedy assassination?*

ZWEIFEL: There was a tremendous outpouring of grief and disbelief. All of us who were then adults can clearly remember that experience, where we were, what we were doing. Everything in Rio came to an absolute halt that afternoon. Long lines formed for days after as people came to the embassy to sign the condolence book. The Brazilians to this day worship the concept of everything that Kennedy stood for. He was a very, very popular figure in Brazil - as he was, obviously, globally.

*Q: Yes, but there particularly, I suppose. He did a lot of things for Latin America: the Alliance for Progress, the Peace Corps.*

*You mentioned the Army revolting against President Goulart. Did that have an effect on the Embassy at all?*

ZWEIFEL: Our Military Attaché during that time was an Army colonel by the name of Vernon “Dick” Walters. An exceptional person in so many ways, he had been the Liaison Officer with the Brazilian Expeditionary Force which fought in Italy during the Second World War. As a result he had become a very close friend and confidant of his Brazilian counterparts.

The so-called “Revolution” which unseated Goulart in early 1964 was led by these officers, many of them by then generals. Walters knew what was in the offing. Indeed by the time the coup took place, it was widely expected, only a matter of time. It was not a surprise to anyone.

The reaction among Brazilians was one of great relief. Sadly, the revolution ushered in twenty years of military dictatorship - headed by those same friends of Dick Walters. But at the time, there was tremendous popular support for the movement.

*Q: Were there any threats against the Embassy or not?*

ZWEIFEL: No, the Embassy itself was never under any sort of threat. In later years many Brazilians increasingly saw an American hand behind the coup. More specifically, some blamed Lincoln Gordon who remains a somewhat controversial figure in Brazil down to the present day.

Of course this was nonsense, although we welcomed the ouster of Goulart and his leftist cronies.

*Q: The change?*

ZWEIFEL: Yes, the change, believing that it would stabilize a situation that was deteriorating very rapidly. The Kennedy Administration was not keen to see another Castro-like, radical regime in the Hemisphere, and this seemed to be in prospect under Goulart.

*Q: After three years at your first post and an exciting three years they were.*

ZWEIFEL: Two years.

*Q: Two years. You were brought back to Washington and assigned to the Office of Personnel.*

**JAMES HOWE**  
**Deputy Chief, USAID**  
**Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1962-1966)**

*James Howe was born and raised on a farm in Gage County, Nebraska. After spending two years in a small teacher's college, he transferred to the University of Nebraska, where he majored in foreign affairs. He received a degree in public administration from Harvard. He has also served in Brazil. He was interviewed by Sam Butterfield on April 24, 1997.*

HOWE: Yes, briefly, and then on to Brazil. I came back to Washington in, I guess, about '61. I spent a year in Washington in the Planning Office of Asia, and then off to Brazil as the Deputy Chief of the AID mission to Brazil. That was 1962.

*Q: Another big mission.*

HOWE: That was a big mission, yes.

*Q: What are some of the highlights or particular impacts on you of your Brazil experience?*

HOWE: First, I got there as the Deputy. Then, for a period of two or three months, I guess, I was acting because Len Saccio, who had at an earlier period, been a Republican, got sacked for the sin of being a Republican in a Democratic administration, which was not to be tolerated, and out he went. He was a good guy. I served as acting for a period of time. Then Jack Kubisch came down, a very strong guy, another good guy, as the Mission Director and I was the Deputy there.

*Q: Could I interrupt for just a minute to put a note in the record? Jack Kubisch was one of the products of Operation Tycoon. I'm sure why they chose somebody like Jim Howe, an absolutely solidly grounded AID officer, as his Deputy was because he was brand new to the agency. He needed a Jim Howe to make sure he didn't get too far off the track or went tearing off in the wrong direction.*

HOWE: He was a very careful operator and a man of good judgment. Maybe it was of some benefit to him to have me there. So, we served there for two years. My big impression there, I remember that there was always pressure from the State Department to use our AID programs in ways that would affect the elections. I remember making a list and consulting with people including, particularly people on the political side in the embassy about it, of what are the more important things that are going to affect the outcome of this coming election? João Goulart was then the president. We made a list of about 20. The AID program didn't make the list of important factors. And yet the State Department was convinced that the way in which we gave aid and to whom would make a big difference in the elections. That was one big impression that I had.

*Q: Was there a serious effort to try to influence the elements of the AID program or the timing of this or anything of that order?*

HOWE: Don't press me for details on that.

*Q: Right. It's not fair. It's a long time ago.*

HOWE: It's a long time ago, but my impression that I took away was, yes, that they did. They did have a view that, if we did certain things in certain areas, it would impact favorably. I'm not sure that they were successful in changing the direction of our program. It's kind of hard to change this great battleship, the direction in which it's going. But in any event, that was their view.

Another view, which didn't come from State, but really from AID headquarters itself was the thought that we could have great influence in the policies of the government using our aid program. It turned out that we could get them to sign things saying that they accepted our policies. This had to do with things like inflation and agrarian reform and things like that . But they weren't serious about it. Our aid carrot wasn't big enough. Even though that was one of AID's largest programs in those days, particularly because of our emphasis on trying to help the northeast of Brazil, even though it was a very big program, it still was a tiny fraction of their GNP, of the disposable income that the government had. It was very important to certain individuals, guys who were trying to get something done, roads or hospitals or whatever it may be, to get the dollop of American aid for this particular project, but to the government, to try to influence central policies, fiscal policies, monetary policies, it was so fatuous. Somehow, AID remained impervious to that insight. This is one of the things that sort of carried over. I had it again in Africa. I certainly saw it over and over again in the 10 years that I was with the Overseas Development Council. There was a notion on the part of AID that they were very much more central in the affairs of the host country they were helping than reality would have permitted.

*Q: Right. After you and I both were doing other things, the Reagan administration resurrected that as a particularly strong effort to try to be influential on policy.*

HOWE: Of course, the Congress was about as guilty as AID. A lot of the things that we tried to do were because of the "statutory requirements." At one time, there were 70 or 80 statutory requirements that had to be satisfied before we could give aid. They became a burden, but that didn't stop the Congress from insisting, for example, "are they spending too much on the military," if that's one of the statutory requirements. You have to go through a process to make sure they're not spending too much on the military. "Are they doing anything bad about the environment?" You have to make sure that they straighten up and do the things there that the United States has never been able to do. But, by God, if we can't do it at home, we're going to make sure those guys do it overseas. So, the Congress was far more arrogant than AID. AID's arrogance, I think, was a kind of a reflection of what their bosses on the Hill wanted them to do.

*Q: When one testifies before the Congress, one said, "Yes, we'll do that."*

HOWE: Central AID, I didn't think, ever made an effort - and maybe it would have been a quixotic effort - to educate the Congress. Our great friends down there on the Hill really never got educated. They were very much in favor of AID and they supported us, but they would load statutory requirements on the poor aid vehicle also.

*Q: Are you ready to leave Brazil? I'd love to go on and on.*

HOWE: People there in Brazil... Yes, we had some great ones in Brazil.

*Q: The language... You had taken Spanish at Nebraska.*

HOWE: Yes.

*Q: And in Brazil, you spoke Portuguese.*

HOWE: I spoke Portuguese in Brazil. So, we took weeks (I've forgotten how many) at the Foreign Service Institute, learning Portuguese. We got to where we could find our way to the men's room in Portuguese, barely. But it was a language that we did use down there, more socially than in business. As is true all over the world, their English is so much better than our language. Besides, if it isn't, they'd still like to practice it. So, they tend to push you into that.

In Vietnam (staying with language, but jumping countries a bit), we had to learn French. They knew that we couldn't find the men's room after two years of studying Vietnamese. It was too difficult. So, we learned French, which they knew quite well. That is to say, the Vietnamese officials all were good French speakers. But again, they preferred to speak English. We had trouble with their accent in French, in any event. Language is awfully important and I did admire the guys who became really fluent in the local language. Some of them did become fluent in Vietnamese, particularly guys that were sent up country and spent time up county.

*Q: CORDS, was it?*

HOWE: Yes. After my time, it became known as CORDS. So, we're in Brazil, and I guess we're about ready to leave Brazil. It was a big experience, a big program, a large staff.

*Q: What was the program aimed at or what things was the program aimed at?*

HOWE: The biggest part of it was the northeast, which was the drought-ridden part of the country. We had a special sub-mission up there. Of course, there was the usual amount of wrangling between Rio, which was the headquarters, and the northeast office. It consisted of agrarian reform and of an import program.

*Q: Aimed at local currency generation again?*

HOWE: No, it wasn't really. It was more stuff for industry. We had a training program for industry in the Sao Paulo area of Brazil, Sao Paulo being a great, big city, kind of like Chicago, dirty and powerful. I remember talking with the merchants, that is to say, the businessmen, the industrialists, in the Sao Paulo area about our training program. We had a technical training program to try to get people from the various parts of the county up on the rudiments of technical work. They said, I remember, that they didn't think much of our program, that they felt more comfortable taking a guy fresh from the northeast and training him themselves because the training that we gave them was sort of generic, broad training. We couldn't know exactly the needs of each factory. It failed in applicability. They thought what it did bestow on the trainee was arrogance. The trainees thought they knew something. These merchants said they would rather take workers in and train them from scratch. Of course, this is not a new thought. We find it here, too, that although we set a great store by education in general, usually, when you get on the job, you start over and learn what the job has for you, rather than drawing, directly, at least, on any of the material that you got in education.

*Q: From our own early experiences.*

HOWE: Yes. So, there's much more rich material in Brazil, but it doesn't present itself to my sieve-like mind, which hasn't thought about these things for 15 years. It's been so full of activities that have nothing to do with foreign assistance.

HOWE: Back to Brazil, Link Gordon is a guy who deserves a word or two. He was the ambassador there. Again, one of those great minds that just sops up things so fast. He spoke the language just by exposing himself to it.

*Q: He didn't come with that?*

HOWE: He didn't come with the language, no. He got it by being there. He learned up things fast. He was terribly courageous. When they asked him if he would come onto a talk show talking Portuguese, sure, he came onto a talk show. Probably butchered the language, but it's all right. He communicated. He played cello. This was a kind of a man bites dog thing for the Brazilians, for an ambassador to play the cello, so he was in a little string quartet and he would play around. I'm told that he played kind of atrociously, but he was an ambassador and it's not every day-

*Q: The remarkable thing is not that he played well, but that he played at all. It's like a dog playing checkers.*

HOWE: Right. But he was a strong guy. One tiny vignette: one day, we were in his office having our weekly staff meeting. We were talking about Joao Goulart, the then-president. Some question came up. I don't remember what it was, but he said, "I've got to talk to him," so he buzzed his secretary and he said, "Get the president on the line." He said, "Maybe you guys better get out and let me talk with him." So, we all got out in the waiting room. He came out maybe 20 minutes later and he had the strangest look on his face. He said, "Guess what I've been doing?" We said, "What?" He said, "I've been talking to Jack Kennedy." The secretary got the wrong president on the line and Link said, "Oh, I'm sorry, Mr. President. I asked her to get the President. I was thinking of Joao Goulart. I'm sorry. I won't bother you." "No, wait a minute, Link," Kennedy said, "I want to talk about Brazil." So, they talked about Brazil for 20 minutes. Do you remember who the Brazil desk was in those days? I can see his face, but I can't say his name. I remember him saying, "We've got the highest paid country desk on earth. It's the President of the United States. There isn't a two week period that he doesn't call me and ask about this or that item on the Brazil program, for heaven's sake."

**ROBERT E. SERVICE**  
**Vice Consul**  
**Salvador Bahia (1963-1965)**

*Robert E. Service was born in 1937 in China to American parents. He received a B.A. from Oberlin College and an M.P.A from Princeton University. His postings*

*abroad have included Managua, Salvador Bahia, Mexico City, Santiago, Madrid, Buenos Aires, Brasilia, and Montevideo. Mr. Service was interviewed in 1998 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

Q: *You were in Brazil from 1963 to?*

SERVICE: 1965.

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

SERVICE: There was a great deal of ferment because those were the last days of João Goulart. I don't know if you remember, but Goulart had won election as the vice president. The president was Janio Quadros. Quadros was rather eccentric. At one point he up and resigned. This pushed Goulart into the presidency. Goulart had come out of the left, populist side of Brazilian politics, which was then quite effervescent. A lot of people, conservative people, the military, were very worried about having Goulart as President. There were almost continual rumors of plots by the time I got to Rio in December, 1993. The military finally did overthrow Goulart in late March of 1964, shortly after I had gone from Rio to Bahia. I first spent three months in Rio studying Portuguese.

Q: *Were you in Bahia when the overthrow came?*

SERVICE: Yes, I was. I had gone up there about March 20<sup>th</sup>. I drove from Rio. I think the coup was actually the 31<sup>st</sup> or so. We had very little idea of what was going on and the radio stations wouldn't say anything. Our communication with the Embassy was not the most effective. I suppose we did call, or could have called. The radio stations played music. We just hunkered down and hoped that it would be all right.

Q: *I was just looking at the map.*

SERVICE: Bahia is not on it, but it is right there below Recife.

Q: *It's a long way away from everybody.*

SERVICE: Yes, it is about 1,000 miles north of Rio, and probably 400 or 500 south of Recife.

Q: *What was Salvador Bahia like? I always hear Salvador Bahia. Was that a different place than Bahia?*

SERVICE: No. Bahia is the state. Salvador da Bahia is the city, the capital. But Bahia is often used for the city, too. I think the full name is Salvador da Bahia de Todos os Santos (Salvador of the Bay of All the Saints). It was the colonial capital. It was the capital until the late 1700s, before the capital moved down to Rio. Bahia at one time had a great deal of money and the Church was very strong. It has a pretty location, up on some hills overlooking the bay. The population is and was quite heavily black, so you had the whole African culture or cultures mixed in with the Portuguese. There are beautiful beaches. It is a very romantic, idyllic, down-at-

the-heel kind of place, with a lot of history. They have good food, their own cuisine essentially. I spent a very enjoyable year and a half there.

*Q: Did the military make much of an impression from your perspective?*

SERVICE: No, it was a very pacific revolution, if you want to call it that. The Brazilians pride themselves on not spilling blood in these things, and they didn't on this occasion. The opposition came later and became quite intense by the 1970s when the military showed no signs of giving up power. In the beginning, people sort of went on with their business. The civilian governor of the state of Bahia, Antonio Lomonto, Jr. was allowed to continue. Some governors were allowed to continue. Some were not. He apparently was okay. He ran the state but with the military looking over his shoulder. Again, there was very little overt sign of military rule.

*Q: What were you doing there?*

SERVICE: I was Vice Consul. It is amazing what we used to have in the old days. Here was a little place, which we have now closed, where we probably had ten or more Americans full-time. We had three USIA [United States Information Agency] officers, including two bi-national center directors. We had an Air Force officer. We had an AID officer. We had six State Department, or nominally State, personnel. We had a variety of things. Anyway, I was the second State Department officer, Vice Consul, as opposed to Consul. I basically did the consular work and whatever economic and political reporting there was to be done, and also kept an eye on the administrative functioning of the consulate.

*Q: What sort of consular work would there be there?*

SERVICE: We issued both IVs (immigrant visas) and NIVs (non-immigrant visas), but not a great many. I had a very good Portuguese lady for my consular assistant, Cecilia Peixoto da Silveira by name. She would tell me what to do and I would generally do it, and ask a few questions from time to time. It was not particularly difficult and not very time consuming. I suppose there were some days where we didn't even do one NIV and there may have been other days when we did three, four or five. The IVs became sort of interesting at one point because an immigration lawyer in New York did some research and discovered that Bahia had almost no backlog in immigrant visa issuance. In those days you could not change your status from non-immigrant to immigrant without first leaving the U.S. So this lawyer started sending his people to Bahia. I think they were mainly Dominicans who came down to Bahia. Then we would process them through. We had one case I remember particularly. The immigrant visa regulations say that a person has to be able to read in order to receive a visa. I got one poor young woman and gave her something to read in Spanish and found out she couldn't read it. I said, "I'm sorry I won't be able to issue you your IV." Eventually the lawyer found a way around that by bringing her boyfriend down, and having them get married. Once they were married, it didn't matter whether she could read.

*Q: Who was the Consul then?*

SERVICE: A guy named Harold Midkiff. Harold Midkiff had a missionary background in Brazil

that was sort of parallel to that of my father in China. He knew the country well and spoke Portuguese fluently. He knew the manners and culture and what not. He was a very nice person.

*Q: Was AID a big deal in Bahia?*

SERVICE: It was a big deal in Brazil, but it was not all that evident in Bahia because the main bases of operation were in Rio and Recife. We would get people in and sometimes they would come to the office. The only AID-related people who were stationed there that I remember were a bunch of college professors, some from Michigan State and some from the University of Southern California who had AID contracts to teach business and public administration at the University of Bahia.

*Q: What was the social life like for you?*

SERVICE: I had a girlfriend who was Brazilian. We used to do a lot of things together. Near where I lived there was something called the British Club where I used to go when I didn't have anything else to do, and play snooker, usually with a Brazilian named Jaime Cerqueira. There were a few Anglo-Brazilians who hung out there. Most of them were quite far removed from anything British. One time, a real Brit came in and nobody said a word to him. Finally, he shouted in anger, "What kind of British club is this? Nobody says hello. Nobody asks who I am." He stormed out. There were a few Americans in Bahia. Some were in the oil business. There was a Lone Star cement plant. Another American raised chickens. In the summer, students would come down from U.S. universities. The ones I remember best were the anthropologists from Columbia.

*Q: Was there any disquiet within our diplomatic and consular establishment about how to deal with the Brazilian military?*

SERVICE: If there was, we were not aware of it. I don't remember any guidance messages, or warnings about what to do and not do -- although there may have been. The USG [United States government] view at the time was that the military-led revolution was a positive development. It would be good for Brazil and good for our relations. Only later did we become more skeptical and critical. You'll remember that in the first year or two, at least, of the military government, the official U.S. position as stated by the Ambassador and perhaps somewhat less strongly by Washington, was that this was a great thing. This was a country on the road to development and would return to democracy very soon, too. Lincoln Gordon was very high on the military government. I suppose all of us sort of reflected that. In retrospect, I think what surprised many of us was how long the military were able to stay in power.

*Q: The expectation then, I assume, was that they will put things in order and then go back to the barracks?*

SERVICE: Yes, I think most of us thought that. It was only gradually that it became clear that they intended to stay as long as was necessary. And nobody knew how long might be considered necessary.

*Q: I've heard other people say that if a military government doesn't get out in about two years, they just aren't going to leave.*

SERVICE: There is something to that. If they don't relinquish power voluntarily within a certain period of time, then they are eventually forced to do so. They will sort of be pushed out the door. In the Brazil case, as in many others, they eventually overstayed their welcome. To put it another way, they eventually ran out of solutions to Brazil's many complex problems.

*Q: Was there any reaction to the death of President Kennedy while you were there?*

SERVICE: That was before I was in Brazil. I had left Managua in September 1963. I was in San Francisco. I learned of Kennedy's death while I was in San Francisco sitting in a restaurant having a cup of coffee.

*Q: Did you get to travel around much?*

SERVICE: I saw a good bit of Bahia.

*Q: It is a big state, isn't it?*

SERVICE: It's a big state. Soon after I got there, the Consul and I went off to the interior and visited Peace Corps volunteers. We went west from Bahia to the São Francisco River, and then followed it north and west to the Paulo Afonso falls. There was a big power plant there. One time we had a professor of anthropology from Columbia visit Bahia. He and I drove up through the interior of the state. I visited a friend who was doing a Ph.D. thesis on the coast, in Sergipe, which is the next state up. On weekends, with my friends, I would drive up and down the coast to various places. I took a boat down the coast one time, and worked my way back by various means. In some ways Bahia was the most idyllic of my assignments. I was young and single. I had a fairly steady girlfriend for the last year or so, Maria Franca Machado Pinto. When I left the Consulate for the last time and turned to look at the door, I actually shed a few tears. I have not done that on leaving any other post.

*Q: You left in 1965. You were a four-year veteran of the Foreign Service by this time. Where did you go?*

SERVICE: I went back to Washington, to ARA [Bureau of American and Regional Affairs] Personnel. Bill Lehfeldt was head of it at that time. I worked for Bill for a year, I suppose. Then Roger Brewin took over for him. I did two years in all.

**PATRICK E. NIEBURG**  
**Information Officer/Policy Officer, USIS**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1963-1965)**

*Patrick E. Nieburg joined USIS in 1962 and served for more than 25 years in a*

*variety of positions in Latin America, Europe, and Asia. Among the countries in which Mr. Nieburg served are Brazil, Vietnam, Sweden, Germany, and Turkey. Mr. Nieburg was interviewed in 1988 by Allen Hansen.*

*Q: After Bolivia you went to Brazil. What year was that and what position did you fill?*

NIEBURG: We went to Brazil in 1963 and arrived there actually just two weeks before the impending coup which we, of course, did not know was going to happen at the time of our arrival. I was to take the job of information officer and also double at that point as policy officer at the post. I should add here that in my day and age we were lucky because the Embassy had not moved to Brasilia yet. We were still stationed in Rio. It turned out to be one of those absolutely delightful posts. And, of course, anybody who knows Rio knows what I am talking about.

I remember very vividly though while we were still hunting for a place to live, there were various incidents that showed the tenseness of the situation -- the political situation that we were under. For example, in front of the hotel where we lived the Army decided to make a strong point and occupied it with a platoon of troops.

But in Brazil things don't work quite that way. There was a football game going on, on the beach and the game was tied. So all the players prevailed upon the Army to wait until at least one or the other team would score a goal. The match would be decided. So the Army stood down, waited and then, once the final deciding goal was scored, they leisurely occupied the strong point as they were ordered to do. I mentioned it really not in a jocular fashion. But it showed that there was an approach, a civilized way of looking even at military operations. That was Brazil! I would not have thought this possible, let us say in a Portuguese-speaking Latin American country, let alone in Europe which I know very well. And from then on, after I started to analyze it, my approach to Brazil and to Brazilians was changed to a point that I had a great deal of empathy, sympathy and liking for Brazilians.

*Q: What was your position then?*

NIEBURG: I was information officer and doubled as policy officer. I would later, during my tour there, actually relinquish the information officer's job and concentrate on the policy officer's job which involved also, unfortunately for me, the drafting of speeches for the Ambassador. He was a very prolific man. So there was a lot of work to be done in that particular phase of the job.

*Q: What was the situation with regard to U.S. Brazilian relations at this time? Were they warm?*

NIEBURG: Our relations were actually in flux when we arrived. There was the government of Janio Quadros who was a left-wing socialist with a great deal of reform minded programs on his mind. It did not sit too well with the Americans. A certain amount of American baiting was always present in this very populist and popular president. So the relations were really strained both because of their barbs at the United States, but also in terms of economic relations. The Brazilians thought that they could finesse rapid inflation, you know, by adjusting to it and not taking the hard measures that both the IMF and the U.S. government recommended to them. So one of the problems was, since we also had a very extensive aid program going, that the aid

program not be swallowed up by the continuous inflation. And obviously there was friction there. Our Ambassador, if anything, was a top notch economist and a lovely person.

Q: *Who was that incidentally?*

NIEBURG: That was Ambassador Lincoln Gordon who later became President of Johns Hopkins University. It was very difficult for the U.S. in the substantive arena. But I should mention again as I said before, Brazilians, and especially Cariocas, are such a lovable people that on a personal basis relations with Brazilians were excellent.

Q: *What was the role of USIS in improving the relations between Brazil and the United States at that time?*

NIEBURG: Well, during the Quadros era and that was only a very short period during my tour of service because it lasted only two weeks, the policy to this point had been that we needed primarily to document and explain our economic policies. Some of them seemed harsh. Some of them seemed politically very difficult for Brazilians to follow. And it was up to USIA through examples -- through proper means in terms of exchanges on the professorial level to try to explain our motives -- make Brazilians understand why it was that we advocated what we did. We had to attempt, in our explanation, to put our economic issues advocacy within a framework that could be politically acceptable and doable for Brazilians.

Brazil, even then at the threshold of an emerging nation, presented all of us with a tremendous substantive challenge. It was not enough for a USIS officer to be an impresario of "events and programs." You had to be solidly grounded in substance and issues before hoping to be at least somewhat effective in your information/cultural work. In those days, there was no such thing, nor would the Ambassador have stood still for it, as "when in doubt, bring in an Ampart." The USIS officer and his colleagues in the Mission were it!

**DONOR M. LION**  
**Assistant Director, USAID**  
**Brazil (1963-1967)**

*Donor M. Lion was born in Manhattan and raised in Brooklyn. He attended Erasmus Hall for secondary school. He received his undergraduate degree from Harvard University. He then earned a master's degree in Buffalo before returning to Harvard to obtain his Ph.D.. All of his degrees were in the field of economics. His first overseas assignment was working with the Marshall Plan in Norway. He has also served abroad in Brazil, Jamaica, Guyana, Peru, and Thailand. He was interviewed by W. Haven North on June 25, 1997.*

LION: 'Joined USAID and assigned to Brazil - 1963

Around Christmas time, maybe the day before or the day after, I came to Washington to be interviewed by Lincoln Gordon, who was then ambassador to Brazil and was one of the speakers at our 50th Marshall Plan anniversary here. It was a 2-hour interview and one of the charming things about Lincoln Gordon is that he has about three or four different kinds of encyclopedias, all in his head. He likes to share them with you when he meets with you. The interview took two hours and I spoke all of ten minutes. Link started with the history of Brazil from, I don't know, pre-Cambrian time or whatever, and then an hour and fifty minutes later said, "Would you like the job?" And I said yes. We talked for a few minutes more and that was it. I was sworn in in the first week of January. They could do things more quickly in those days.

I went to Brazil as the assistant director, as the number three man, in charge of capital development and planning. That was a very interesting experience.

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

LION: In January '63, Brazil was in tough shape. Not just a serious kind of dual economy structural situation with Sao Paulo being in great shape but with three-quarters of the country in mass poverty. But they were also having balance payments problems that were enormous. Brazil was the largest recipient in the Alliance for Progress which had been relatively recently launched. It was launched in '61 by President Kennedy.

So, it was the most important country, from the US point of view, in the whole program. It had serious development problems, it had serious economic problems as well as structural problems. I was learning on the job, again.

There was a famous agreement between Administrator David Bell, who was head of AID at the time, and San Tiago Dantas, who was the Brazilian minister of finance. It was called the Bell-Dantas agreement. The US pledged to make 300 million dollars available if the Brazilians did certain things. It was the first example that I experienced, the first experience I had, where assistance was conditional, where conditions were set forth which presumably if they weren't met aid would be cut off.

I think maybe 50 or 100 million of that actually was made available under that agreement. There was some fall-off in performance.

*Q: What kind of conditions were we talking about.*

LION: Freezing up the price of wheat, for example, liberalizing imports. They were trying to encourage wheat production in Brazil, which may not have been the best thing to do but there was a substantial import bill for wheat. And in certain parts of Brazil the climate is not out of the question. But the price was too low, as we found subsequently in almost every developing country in the world. The agriculture sector was almost always sacrificed to the urban sector.

So that was one thing, the price of wheat, as I recall. There was some trade conditions, a move towards freer trade and so on. But there were other problems too that came up a year or two later. In 1963 the vice president was elected president and he was pretty much in the Marxist camp,

Jango Goulart. There were some things like human rights abuses and what not. So aid was reduced. Except for northeast Brazil.

Director for USAID program in Northeast Brazil - 1964 and a second tour in 1968

In 1952, the head of an organization in Brazil called SUDENE, which was *The Superindencia for the Development of the Northeast*. The head of the organization, a fellow named Celso Furtado, contacted Kennedy and asked for help to northeast Brazil. Lo and behold, after somebody was sent down, an ambassador, to do a study and come up with a program, an agreement was signed between the United States government and the government of Brazil to help in the development of a region. It was a diplomatic agreement and it was the only such kind of agreement, before and since, that's ever been signed. Not before or since has the US signed a diplomatic agreement to assist the development of a region in a country. It called for about 143 million dollars over a two-year period. It stipulated that at the end of two years a review would be undertaken to see what next might be done.

Assistance to the Northeast was not stopped. It was not reduced. Northeast Brazil, for the first two years was the priority in Brazil. There was, actually, a sort of sub-mission there. I ultimately went up there in 64 as the director. There was really the first time that I ever experienced major infusions of counterpart that was used for development projects. Our education program was one of the largest in all of the Alliance for Progress. It was mainly funded by US-owned counterpart. This was when they could repay US loans in local currency. That has subsequently changed. They paid us back in their currency and we used cruzeiros for building schools, training teachers, and so on. All expenses in Brazil were covered by cruzeiros. The training in the United States and other countries was paid for in dollars.

A massive program for those days. We trained secretaries of education, ministers of education, in Brazil, in the northeast. So that, five to ten years later, they were the leaders of education reform in all of Brazil. That was a very successful program. Can't say that about a lot of programs. We started something called GERAN which was to reform the sugar sector in northeast Brazil. The owners of the fazendeiros, the growers and the producers of sugar in northeast Brazil, were really exploiting the people in northeast Brazil in terms of wages and health conditions and education and housing. They were virtual slaves.

We came up with an ambitious proposal, together with SUDENE, which we jointly designed. It was a wonderful example of international cooperation, a program that would modernize the sugar sector in northeast Brazil so that it could compete better with Sao Paulo. It would raise living standards, it would provide education, it would do a lot of great things. It started off with all kinds of fanfare. It was on television. The head of SUDENE and I were interviewed. Good thing that I had learned to speak the language, which we had to do up there. Less so in Rio because the government people spoke English but in northeast Brazil not so. But the program was killed by the Paulistas in the federal congress.

*Q: Why?*

LION: Because it would threaten the Sao Paulo sugar industries. Sao Paulo was terribly powerful. Northeast Brazil is probably the largest homogeneous area of poverty in the whole western hemisphere. There were something like 30 million people there and they were in terrible terrible shape.

*Q: What other kinds of programs were you launching? You were a mini-mission director, not so mini either. You were really on your own mission and all that, I suppose.*

LION: It was an interesting situation. We had three “enemies.” The Brazilians, of course, when they didn’t want to do the kinds of things they should do. They were occasionally difficult. SUDENE, also, had been under the influence of a very leftist superintendent in the first few years. Even though Celso Furtado had asked for help from Kennedy, he was still anti-US and was something of a socialist or whatever, more than very liberal even. So SUDENE was one of them.

Another one was USAID Rio, which was the boss. We were a sub-mission.

*Q: Rio was the real USAID mission for Brazil.*

LION: Yes. The third “enemy,” as always, was Washington which always gave you problems. Failure to understand, failure to support fully except when you were in Washington running the bureau, there were others who weren’t always supportive and helpful. So we had a real interesting time and for many many years after that, the spirit that we had in Recife--we’re number two and we try harder and all of that -- held on so that people used to meet at homes, reunions for years after that, who served in the Recife mission.

I must say that I went back there, I left in ‘67, came to Washington and worked as the associate assistant administrator in PPC under Gus Ranis and then Paul Clark, then Hollis Chenery who was quite a character. I went back in ‘68, this time not only the head of the northeast aid program but also the consul-general. That was the first time they had ever combined those jobs. That might have been the best job I ever had. Being, in effect, a little ambassador and also the AID man.

*Q: What did you feel that you had accomplished. Elaborate more about the program and the situation in the northeast because this has been a subject of great interest to a lot of people.*

LION: Northeast Brazil was, as I mentioned, extraordinarily poor so that almost anything you tried could be positive. As I mentioned we were very much into education, and we were also into a big road building program. One of the major problems that the northeast suffered were droughts. Every seven years on the average they had massive droughts. In fact, perhaps as many as one-third of nordestinos had left the area to work in Sao Paulo and elsewhere. For example, the nordestinos were the ones who built Brasilia.

One of the problems we tried to deal with, as I mentioned, was the drought problem. They had what used to be called and maybe still are, acudes, which were holes in the ground. Big, big holes to collect water. We tried to help with that program. We also were trying to raise, as we did

in every poor country, the nutritional standards, and levels. So there was a big nutrition program. That worked out to be our big health program.

We also supported literacy programs. We worked very closely with an organization called "ABC" which was a protestant-episcopalian denomination-supported activity, a wonderful program. We used food in that program. When the children came to the class, the parents too could come, they were given food. That, we found, did help with attendance which was an important finding. We also used food, PL 480 to support cooperatives particularly chicken cooperatives. In fact, it helped to develop the poultry industry in northeast Brazil.

We were very active. We had, in terms of money, the fourth largest program in the Alliance for Progress just for northeast Brazil. The rest of Brazil, we used to call ROB, was the largest. As I recall, Chile and Colombia and sometimes the DR, the Dominican Republic, had larger programs. But for two or three years it was northeast Brazil.

*Q: Did you have a large technical staff?*

LION: We had a much larger one than most missions today. We had a lot of foreign service nationals, we had our own printing equipment and produced an awful lot of our own documents, booklets and so on. In fact, when the mission, we called it the mission, when the Recife office was closed we helped find jobs for people including in the private sector with the equipment that we had in that office. Some of them got quite good jobs. We also placed them in Brasilia where the Rio mission was transferred.

*Q: Were we the only donor?*

LION: We were the largest, absolutely, of any -- bilateral and international. The only other international donors, when it comes to the ones of those years, was the Inter-American Development Bank. But not significant. We were it. The US assistance program and the mission was on the front pages of newspapers almost everyday. The AID director of that program was known throughout the region.

That's the reason behind my appointment as both consul general and AID director. Because until then the consul general and the AID chief did not get along. It's a little understandable. The State people, particularly the minister-consul general, resented like hell that the director of the AID mission was the most important American in northeast Brazil. There were unnecessary conflicts and disagreements and problems.

So they decided to combine the job. They looked around for somebody. A State-AID committee was examining all candidates and turned down every single one. AID turned down all the State candidates and State wasn't happy about any of AID's. Until finally the head of the Brazil desk who was then in State and who had been the AID mission director in Brazil, Jack Kubisch. (He made a lateral transfer into State.) He subsequently was very important in the negotiations.

Kubisch was the mission director in Brazil when I came down to Rio, so he knew my work. And for some strange reason he thought that I might be an acceptable candidate to his State

colleagues. He knew I would be to the AID people. So I went down there with both hats and for the first time the consul general and the AID director got along very well.

It was an interesting experience.

*Q: You were both.*

LION: Yes.

*Q: Obviously you got along.*

LION: Right.

*Q: Did you find the jobs were compatible or did you get pulled in opposite directions?*

LION: It was a smooth and productive operation. I used our AID staff to help in their political reporting. We had AID people working in the nine northeast states and because the US was so prominent they had access to the governors and to the state cabinets. As a result, their reporting from Recife turned out to be exceptional--that was the judgment of people in Washington. When I finished there and I was debriefed, some of the intelligence colleagues in Washington said it was the best political reporting coming out of South America.

When you have that kind of resource you can do many things. I was in a lucky position. We used to have joint parties which we didn't have before. We used the AID executive office to do the things that the State executive office never got done. The political counselor or the equivalent in the consulate, said that he, himself, became a better political reporter. He had been anti AID before that but changed his mind after experiencing the combined experience. We had an inspection, a State Department inspector, come by and see how this worked out, this new experience. What he said was that we ought to do this more often, this has worked very well. I don't think they ever did.

*Q: One or two places.*

LION: On a regional level?

*Q: No, it was at the national level where they combined the AID director and State economic counselor.*

LION: In Korea, for example, Mike Adler, was the economic counselor. Yes, and the AID chief. In Chile the State man was the AID director, Deane Hinton. And also in Guatemala, he occupied the combined positions.

*Q: You were there, how long did that program in northeast go? Over how many years?*

LION: The northeast agreement was signed, I believe, in '62 and when I was last there, I was there twice.

Q: You filled this position twice?

LION: The first time was just as the AID guy. Then I came to PPC for a year under Gus Ranis. We'll come back to that. In '68 I went back for the second time as the two-headed monster.

I left in '71 and about a year or two later, the program was finally shifted to Brasilia. I started the process of closing the shop in '71. It was continued, but from Brasilia for a few more years.

*Q: Why did we close?*

LION: Centralization. Economies of scale, we can do it from Brasilia, it was alleged.

*Q: I see. But that's quite an extended period for one person. What is your sense of the situation in northeast Brazil as a result of several years of US assistance?*

LION: Well, I think we had an important impact in a few areas. In the education and health areas, as I mentioned. And we did something for infrastructure in terms of roads. Like what we do in every other place, which is training of people. Which we all agree is maybe the most important thing that we do. However, in terms of the overall macro situation, we didn't have much of an affect. All-in-all northeast Brazil today is still way behind the rest of the country.

*Q: We weren't involved in the more economic activities, such as agricultural production, industrial development or any of that kind of thing?*

LION: There was a program called RITA which was Rural Industrial Technical Assistance. Where we connected a US university with a university in a state, one of the states in northeast Brazil. The university in the US would send down a professor or two and some graduate students over a period of years. Graduate students for only three months or four months a year and then there would be rotation. They would work with the university people in the Northeast state and the government people to identify economic opportunities, company possibilities, small business prospects. And then help to promote financing of that company featuring community ownership.

Mixed results. As you might expect, if you have leadership in a community and a quality university, you're more likely to be successful. If you have outstanding people from the US who are helping, you're more likely to be successful. Those two things didn't always come together in every one of the programs.

*Q: What's the underlying economic potential? Pretty limited?*

LION: Pretty desperate. It's arid for most of the territory, with terrible droughts. The only part of that whole area that has decent agricultural possibilities is a narrow strip along the coast where it rains. In fact, northeast Brazil is defined, geographically, by a law that referred to the Poligono da Seca, which is the drought polygon. What is the area affected by the drought? And that is northeast Brazil. And that's the area that SUDENE was responsible for, which was the largest

regional development agency in the world. It included nine states and a little piece of Minas Gerais which are affected by the drought as well, a piece of the tenth state.

This is a terrible area. Out-migration is considerable. It's sort of like Guyana. I discovered there are more Guyanese who lived in Brooklyn, New York than there were in Guyana, or something like that. At least in New York City.

*Q: But we were not in agricultural development in a general way, rural development.*

LION: We did some agricultural development work. We did some but it doesn't stand out in my mind as a major activity but we did have agricultural staff. And GERAN was, in large part, a proposed agricultural program. What stands out in my mind is the education, the health and the roads.

*Q: What did you do in education? You're talking about building schools?*

LION: We built schools, we trained teachers, we helped in something that was a dirty word before the Alliance for Progress, planning. Can you imagine developing educational plans for the first time in our history? That's what we did. I think one of our major contributions was to a literacy program, not just in northeast Brazil but it spread and went throughout the country. They had a pretty good literacy program.

*Q: This was a massive scale.*

LION: Yes, it was. I think, all-in-all, we may have put in, mostly local currency, US-owned, maybe as much as 80 to 100 million dollars in the education sector.

*Q: Was there a lot of external technical assistance in this?*

LION: As I said, there was training. That was primarily a transfer of technology approach. We had on our staff, and this is may be the major reason for whatever successes the program had, Brazilians who were quality folks. They were all women except for one man, Francisco. They were energetic, they were gutsy, they were smart. The Governor of one of the states, Ceara, Vergilio Tavora, said that Silvia Bahia and Donor Lion were the only two people who could say no to him. Silvia was our education consultant for Ceara and maybe one or two other states. She was great. I remember her very well. Altogether, there were five or six Brazilians who worked directly with state ministers of education and governors.

*Q: Anything more on northeast Brazil experience? What was the public health program all about? What were you trying doing on that?*

LION: I seem to remember one problem. Don't forget, Haven, this was maybe 30 years ago. We encountered an interesting problem, problems with blindness in northeast Brazil. It was attributed to our milk, our powdered milk. Not that there poisoning or anything but it was helping the body grow faster than development of the eyes. There was a disconnect and that had

a negative impact on sight. So we enriched powdered milk to guard against this, to help with vitamin A.

I remember that problem. Imagine being accused of causing blindness. I mean we were accused of a number of things up there including genocide because of our family planning programs. You know, something that was rattled around in certain circles for years.

*Q: Was family planning accepted though?*

LION: There was a meeting in Fortaleza, which is the capital of Ceara, of family planning people and it included some people from the church, the catholic church. Brazil is 90-95% catholic, it's the largest catholic country in the world. There was this priest, he got up and he said something that I'll never forget. He said, "The Lord said be fruitful and multiply but he left it up to man to determine at what rate."

*Q: Wonderful.*

LION: Wonderful. The church was against this business but there were some church people, soldiers, development soldiers, I called them, who were really working for the poor. We had a few of them helping in the program. We had a few of them helping in the sugar program I was talking about. Trying to work with the sugar unions which were in tough shape. We did not have monumental success with family planning in northeast Brazil but we had some surprising successes considering the religious situation.

*Q: And the health program? Were you in primary health care, maternal child care, and all that kind of thing?*

LION: I haven't thought about this for a long time. Primary health care, yes. Maternal child care. All the good things.

*Q: Did you ever write a sort of summary piece about your experience in northeast Brazil?*

LION: I did a couple end-of-tour reports but I don't have them, I never made copies. I also did a major study. I was sent up there from Rio before I went up as mission director of the program. The people in Rio couldn't stand it when we referred to our office as a mission.

*Q: I've heard that.*

LION: In '64 I was sent up there, I was still in Rio, to do a study called for in the northeast agreement. What should we do from now on? The next two, three, four, five years. That turned out to be an important piece of work. It was the basis for subsequent programming. I really learned a lot when I did that.

*Q: Did you do this on your own or were you part of a team?*

LION: I was the head of team. We had a Brazilian secretary, a Brazilian professional, sort of an assistant, he was not really a trained economist. And we used the US Recife staff a lot. In the process I got to meet Gilberto Freyre, who was an outstanding anthropologist, sociologist. He helped us in terms of understanding the northeast and the history of the northeast and so on. That report, by the way, was what Hollis Chenery read when he decided to ask me to do some work in PPC.

*Q: How were these people to work with in the northeast, your counterpart of sorts. How did you find them?*

LION: As I mentioned, SUDENE was headed up by Celso Furtado at the beginning, who was ultra-left, anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist but a man of integrity. If he said he would do something, he would do it. Maybe I shouldn't say "but." He was just a man of integrity even though he was all these bad things, terrible things, right?

So the relationship between SUDENE, which was very left, and USAID, at the outset was very chancy and not productive before I got there. But when I got there, it was after the military had, in effect, taken over the government of Brazil. Had thrown out Jango Goulart and sent several people away for 10 years, sent them out of the country. Celso was one of them. A new person came in named Joao Goncalvez da Silva. I met him in Rio before I came up and I gave him my northeast study. We became very close personal friends. And he and my deputy, and he and his deputy had lunch once a week, just to talk. We also got to be personal friends which continued many years after, here in Washington.

So starting when I got up there, our relationship at the top level couldn't be better. Joao invited me to speak to his people, who were still Celso Furtado-oriented. So relationships at the personal and senior level were extraordinarily good but the working relationship with SUDENE staff was a struggle. And it depended on how successful the people involved were, how good they were, how open they were, how willing they were to work together. In some cases it worked very well. In other cases there was foot dragging and opposition and stuff like that. So, it was a constant challenge to work with this very large important regional development organization. Even more powerful than any individual governor. And that was a problem for them because AID worked closely with the governors. So many development diplomacy issues arose. It was a good experience. As I said, it may have been the most exciting job I've ever had.

*Q: I hope not. Anyway, I'm sure it was a very exciting time to be in-charge of a program in a defined area like that, a lot of resources, very appealing. But during this time you also went to work for PPC. What was your function in that?*

Assignment to the Program and Policy Coordination Bureau (PPC) - 1967

LION: The first time I went to PPC was in '67. I was assistant director of PPC. I worked on some interesting things. I was presumably in charge of the budget but I was never very good at that. So the fellow, who was a senior staffer, under me, really did the work. A fellow named Sid Brown, he was very good.

But I was very interested in a couple of things and found them challenging and of some consequence. One was called *Title 9* - political development. Remember *Title 9*? That was participation, participation, participation. An idea that you wanted beneficiaries to participate in the design of the project, in the benefits from the project and in the implementation of the project. It became a sort of a conventional wisdom--talked about *Title 9* all the time in the late '60s and the early '70s. I was in-charge of that work.

*Q: It was also involved in some political development, wasn't it? Does this sound familiar to you or not?*

LION: I don't remember that so well. I know that this came a lot later--democratization.

*Q: That's an interesting point because that's now very standard, as though it were recently re-invented--this whole question of participation. Everybody talks about participation.*

LION: How many times have we done that over the last umpteen years. Rediscovering.

*Q: What was the reception to what you were proposing at that time?*

LION: Two congressmen produced this, one subsequently became mayor of Minneapolis, Don Fraser. Brad Morris of Massachusetts who subsequently became head of UNDP was the other. These two guys had their names associated with this paragraph that went into legislation called *Title 9*. I don't think many people took it seriously in the agency. I became a believer. But it was not so much that the legislation suddenly illuminated the problem for me. I had experience, twice in my life, of examples of participation by host-country people in our work.

One was in Norway, where we worked hand-in-glove with their economists and I learned more from them than them from me. And the other was with SUDENE, working with the head of SUDENE, and working with some of the people in SUDENE, and working with them on the sugar program that we developed in northeast Brazil. So, whether I knew it or not, I was learning something about participation. It certainly made me a strong supporter of that legislation and we tried to do the best we could.

*Q: Were there any particular thrusts that you were trying to make when you wrote this policy paper guideline?*

LION: Mostly it was to try to get people to include it in their project design work. How do you make sure that the benefits are shared, that they don't come just to the well-to-do. How do you make sure that the poor are consulted and influence what is done. How do you make sure that they help carry it out. What do you do at the community level to ensure participation. Those were the kinds of issues we raised. But I don't think we made much of a dent in those years. It became one of the traditional priorities and whims that you have for two or three years; and then you have something else and then you have another emphasis. In fact, for a while, it got buried by the basic human needs focus which came in the early '70s. In 1973 there was legislation that emphasized so-called basic human needs. In a sense, that may have been part of this whole

participation movement but Title 9 was no longer what we were pushing, we were pushing BHN, basic human needs stuff.

We've had these cycles, these whims, these new priorities every few years. It was infrastructure for one time. Now, what is it? Hopefully these are not just whims. Democracy, environment, population, growth. Now, growth, that's a real specific. You can do anything you want and call it growth.

*Q: I don't think it's emphasized now, is it? It used to be.*

LION: I think it's emphasized in the rhetoric. It's one of the four priorities.

*Q: So Title 9 just went by the boards. It never had any real application?*

LION: It sort of lost a lot of zip

*Q: It never got infused in the system?*

LION: I think it's come to be conventional wisdom without being called a special emphasis. The whole notion of participation, everybody knows about it now and everybody thinks it should be part of the approach to development.

*Q: Whether they do it or not is another matter.*

LION: That's true too. I think, though, that it's more than just rhetoric. In Thailand, when I was there, I was consulting with UNDP. I was running their cooperation with the Thai government in the development of the Thai government's five-year plan. That kind of cooperation would absolutely not work unless there was a real equal partnership participation kind of thing. So that's really become a part of the donor community's approach these days. I'm sure that it's beyond the United Nations. I'm sure it's in some of the other bilateral programs, particularly the Scandinavian bilateral programs.

I think it's an example even though it didn't necessarily take hold right away. It's an example of one of the things where the US bilateral program led the way. On BHN, Basic Human Needs, I think we led the way. On the importance of population, the US led the way. On the environment stuff, the US has led the way. On participation, we led the way on WID. On participant training, it's always been a very important part of our program, maybe we didn't lead the way but we certainly were a major influence in that area.

*Q: We'll come back to those some more but in that position, you said there were other things that you were responsible for?*

LION: I'll mention one other thing that was a real pain in the neck. There was a senator called Symington. His legislation required that we look at the arms expenditures, the military expenditures by governments, to determine if they were excessive. If so, we had to penalize them in the AID program.

PPC and my part of it were responsible for producing the required analysis. Every bureau had to do it. We had to review it, we had to do the final analysis, we had to make the recommendations and so on. When they would purchase an F12 airplane we had to figure out whether that was excessive. It was a real time-consuming effort.

*Q: Did we ever implement the consequences of violating Symington's amendment?*

LION: For most of the time we did our damndest to show that the country shouldn't be penalized. Some of it was really reaching, the justification we came up with for saying this was all right. That doesn't mean that we were in favor of military expenditures. There's a line, isn't there, where the United States should not impose its own values or policies? I think we've gone over the line on that one. We may have done it with the Symington amendment. That took an awful lot of my time.

*Q: Were there any other dimensions of your work in PPC that stand out in your mind?*

LION: I can recall that the Latin American regional coordinator in PPC reported to me. I was sort of interested in Latin America bureau's work. I had been in Brazil before that so I was sort of part of the Latin Mafia. For a long time there was a Mafia. They only promoted their own people, used their own people. For a long time they were the best bureau. Not any more. In the early years. I think that was because of the Alliance for Progress. All the stuff that surrounded it, the excitement, the Kennedy's, Camelot, the Alliance, so good people were attracted to it. They hired good people. So, for a while, they had some of the best people.

The Symington-Long amendment. Long was the other guy. Had to implement that. The Latin Bureau's work, Title 9. Another thing that I worked on, that was really difficult for me, was to write the instructions at PPC which was sent out to the field for their submissions on country programs. I did a first draft of that and Hollis Chenery, Assistant Administrator for PPC, almost fired me, it was terrible. He got angry with me. Sometimes that helps, and in that case it helped and I produced a decent draft the next time. I remember that, that was one of my highlights.

*Q: What was Hollis Chenery trying to do and he obviously came to AID with a certain ambition, I suppose.*

LION: Hollis was one of the last, well-known, highly regarded, first class economists that were hired from the outside to head up PPC. He was a macro economist of the first order. He was the one who made it quite clear that there was a high correlation between growth and exports. This was one of his major contributions to the agency's policy framework. He was tough to work for, a non-pleasant person often.

*Q: Was there any particular programmatic push he was making?*

LION: Well, I think he was one of the early pushers of the emphasis on growth, which is not something that we started with.

*Q: This was in 1960?*

LION: It was the middle '60s, I guess. A long time ago.

*Q: Because the question was that in the early days of the formation of AID, what was the development strategy, policy, philosophy of that time. Later we got into the basic human needs and the new directions and so on. But in the founding of AID, in effect in 1961, do you recall what its major development strategy was or concept?*

LION: If you think that the Alliance for Progress, described in the Charter of Punta Del Este set up in 1961, if you think that that was a reflection of AID's value system, approach to development, or whatever, then you could say, even then, there was some notion of sharing, of participation. Because this 100 billion dollar program that the Alliance called for in a 10-year period, was to be financed largely by non-AID, non-US public resources: private sector, host country and the United States. That was one of the values in our approach to the economic systems at that time. I would say that we were impressed, to begin with, with assistance to infrastructure in that first few years of the Alliance. And, I suspect, elsewhere where we had money. You see, in those days, there was money. There were significant US resources. You can't do infrastructure unless you have substantial resources. It wasn't until some years after when our budget began to decline that we said, "Let the World Bank do it, they have the big bucks." But infrastructure was a priority in those days. We talked about electricity, dams. The major sector in the Alliance, if not infrastructure, was agriculture. Agriculture development was something that was pushed very hard.

We did not focus on the first years on exports, as I recall. We focused on, as I mentioned, agriculture and infrastructure. I would say that in northeast Brazil we departed a little bit because the basis of that program was found in the report that had been written by this ambassador who came down after Furtado asked President Kennedy for help. The Bohlen report, Ambassador Bohlen, was not a typical economist's report. As I mentioned, we focused on education and on health. Those were not the typical priorities of the bilateral programs and the Alliance. Maybe some but not generally pervasive as I remember it.

We did not have as developed a programming cycle and approach as we subsequently did develop in the agency. It's hard to say what were the overall priorities and program focuses and so on in those days. I suspect that it depended very much on the region, and then in the region on the countries within that region. This was the beginning. Except for the little development work that we did in the Marshall Plan, let's say in Turkey, Greece or Yugoslavia, we hadn't had true development experiences. So we were all learning.

I should say, by the way, that I think that even though we didn't do a lot of development work in the Marshall Plan, one of the consequences was the training of a lot of American people who subsequently stayed in that business after it became development work. I think that may have been one of the best training programs that American economists and other development people ever went through. You remember we said earlier on that there was not a development discipline. You didn't have any graduate schools in development.

*Q: What was the overall objective of the Alliance for Progress? What was the US trying to do with that?*

LION: As I recall, they were trying to increase the average standard of living, like double in ten years or something like that. That was the development side. But the basic rationale for the Alliance, if one might want us to focus on just one element, was that we were afraid of Castro. We were afraid of the spread of communism in the western hemisphere. In northeast Brazil there was an additional element. There were bands of people who were destabilizing the state governments there. We were interested in the northeast especially as part of the anti-Castro, anti-Communist political stability concern. That was what really pushed the Alliance, at least on the US side.

But the Marshall Plan, why was that launched? Why did we ask Europe help itself and help us help it? There was something called the Big Bear around. Post World War II the climate chilled pretty quickly right after that, after the war ended. Isn't it too bad, that something negative stimulates, unifies, pushes, promotes such good things.

*Q: It is. What do you think the Alliance accomplished? It was going on for how many years? Ten years or so, or did it last for ten years?*

LION: I don't know, let's say this. For one thing it became important politically in each of the Latin American countries for the parties and the government to be concerned with development. They had never been really. Governments in Latin America had always been the tool of the elite, of the rich, or of the military. What the Alliance did, among other things, was to make development a priority for many countries. If only in terms of rhetoric, the political rhetoric changed. And in some cases more than the rhetoric. So that was one thing.

Technically, economic planning became institutionalized. They didn't have that in Latin America before the Alliance, before the '60s. Planning was no longer a dirty word. Like today if you're a liberal it's a dirty word, if you were a planner in those days it was a dirty word. It became respectable and even necessary. There was a Brazilian miracle in the '60s: extraordinary rapid growth. It was called a miracle. I never was happy about it because the northeast did not share in it.

*Q: Can you attribute that part to the foreign assistance effort?*

LION: I think there was a push on the policy side that was accepted by some people. For example, Roberto Campos, who was an outstanding Brazilian minister of planning and minister of finance sound policy character.

They had some decent policies in the '60s. Chile, I think, did very well after a while partly because they had some very good economists there, partly because they had some excellent, excellent external advisers, some of them US. Hard to attribute that to the Alliance because it certainly really blossomed after the Alliance.

Another thing that I think the Alliance may have helped contribute, actually two other things come to mind quickly. One is that the US wasn't such a son-of-a-bitch after all. We weren't such

a hated imperialist, squeezer, exploiter as we had once been regarded. In some quarters still, of course. But I think the Alliance of Progress did something to ameliorate the bilateral relationship with the Latinos. I also think that maybe one of the longer term effects was political development. I think there is only one real dictatorship now in Latin America, maybe two. That may have been this effort at development, this effort at economic growth, this effort at participation, this concern for the poor, some of the basic human needs thoughts were in the charter in Punta Del Este in 1961. The BHN, the basic human needs stuff that came out of legislation in '73, drew on those priorities. So, there's a lot of this going on in our business. A lot of connections. Marshall Plan, Alliance for Progress. The Alliance for Progress designed how the process was to be implemented. There were people in Washington who would review country programs, Latinos. In the Marshall Plan, this process was referred to as Reciprocal Scrutiny or something like that. A little of that went on in the Alliance. It wasn't very successful or effective. But there was some effort at it. CIAT, it was called.

As I said, there was an influence on political development and on the fact that today you have countries that can be described as democracies for the most part. Before that you did not. Before the Alliance you had military governments mostly. You had governments that were concerned with staying in power and serving the elite. That changed and I think the Alliance had a lot to do with it.

*Q: We can come back to that, if you want. What was your next assignment. You left PPC and went out to?*

A year off at the State Department and Senior Seminar - 1971

LION: Let's see, where are we. From '68 to '71, I was the consul general/AID chief in northeast Brazil. I came back to the Senior Seminar for a year. I recommend that.

*Q: How do you find the senior seminar?*

LION: Excellent, excellent, wonderful year. We traveled all over the country, visited a lot of activities. This is where I first met the current mayor of Washington, DC. He had a program in Washington that he was running, Pride, I think it was called. I also met Jesse Jackson in Chicago. He also had a program along the same lines. I forget what it was called, Push?

We went to see some military stuff, some of the bases, some of the satellite stuff, NORAD out in the west in a mountain, fantastic. But the thing I found most extraordinary about this seminar was that they said, "You make believe that you are in the State Department, that you're a foreign service person and you can go anywhere in the world for three weeks on any project you want." A lot of folks in the seminar took advantage of that in meaningful ways, in substantive ways. Others regarded it as a wonderful vacation opportunity. Another fellow and I decided to do this together, we liked each other.

*Q: Who?*

LION: Adolph Dubs, Spike Dubs. Spike was our ambassador in Afghanistan, got killed there, remember? Spike and I were very fond of each other. We decided we would make believe we were Australian foreign service officers and we would design Australia's foreign policy for the next ten years.

There was a little bit of a fun reason for that, in a way. We had not been to that part of the world, we hadn't been to Japan. Spike knew some Japanese foreign service officers but he hadn't been there. We hadn't been to southeast Asia. We decided we would visit all these countries: Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia--make that swing. We worked very very hard. We interviewed people all over the place but we also played hard. On the weekends we had tennis and golf. But we worked from eight in the morning till ten at night. And we produced a nice report. That was the highlight for me.

*Q: Foreign policy of Australia?*

LION: The next ten years.

*Q: Did Australia ever see it?*

LION: I don't know, I doubt it. That was '71, '72. That was when you traveled in Australia, they were concerned about the "Yellow Peril." They were concerned about the Japanese coming and taking over. That was the peak expansion period of Japan in southeast Asia. You would look at maps of the world and you would see an arrow coming from Japan pointing right at Australia, a yellow arrow. The Australians were worried about that.

That was fun. The seminar was great, in many respects. You got to know people from the State Department, from the CIA, from the military.

*Q: Anybody stand out in terms of the people who spoke to the group and what their views were?*

LION: I think we had Kissinger speak and of course he was very impressive. I found that some of the people who were attending the seminar were people who I really enjoyed learning from. The caliber of most of them, not all, was high. It was also a place to put somebody that you didn't know what to do with. Just like some of our training programs. But, for the most part, they were quality people and I was really impressed. Spike Dubs became our ambassador to Afghanistan and he was a very impressive guy. There were a few others in that class, my class, the 14<sup>th</sup> year, who subsequently rose to higher positions.

*Q: After the senior seminar what happened to you?*

Assignment in the Latin America Bureau and international conferences - 1977

LION: '72. I went to the Latin America bureau and was made head of an office that consisted of entities that really didn't belong anywhere. But they put them together. It was called the Office of Multilateral Assistance and Regional Social Development Programs, MRSD. *Title 9* work, I was one of the few people still interested in *Title 9* work in 1971, 72, 73, 74.

That office was responsible for the bureau's coordination with multilateral organizations and other bilateral donors. So we worked with the IDB, the World Bank. During that period, I was on every single delegation that the United States sent to regional annual economic meetings: the IDB, the Latin Economic and Social Committee, whatever. The Organization of American States, sponsored annual meetings of various commissions or committees. The US would send a delegation of five, six people. There would be four State people or five State people and one AID person. I was the AID person. I attended more meetings, inter-American meetings, than any US officer in the whole bureaucracy because I was doing AID stuff and State-AID stuff. It was fun.

*Q: Any particular thrust or programming interests that we were trying to promote at that time?*

LION: At that point, there was a lot of anti-US feeling around, still, in a few of the countries. In Chile, by that time Allende was thrown out, so it wasn't Chile. Argentina was very anti-US at that point. So what we ended up doing, in many respects, was defending the United States in these forums. Countering speeches and arguments and stuff like that. It was still important to do.

One of the meetings we were at was in Lima, Peru, a military government, anti-US. The papers were talking about "terrible gringos." One of the few things that I was asked to do, really, was to accept an interview opportunity from one of the newspapers. I loved that opportunity because I said, "Poverty was not something that the United States was responsible for in your country. You are. You are." I went back to the 19th century and all the stupid stuff that they did, I wasn't very politic. "Your problem, don't try to finger us."

That's a lot of what we did in those meetings, defending the US against attacks. But in the committees, insofar as we tried to do any substantive stuff, it was always to try to make the OAS a more effective development institution. That was our push. At least that was the push that I was involved with. The State people, for the most part, felt the same way. But there were a lot of political problems in the OAS.

*Q: What kind of development capacity were you trying to forge in the OAS?*

LION: We were trying to improve the technical level in the region, we were pushing education. I must say, Haven, the OAS was, I can't speak for it now or for the last some years, that it was the most politicized organization that I have ever been exposed to. There were cliques within the OAS: the Argentines, the Chileans, the Central Americans, the Costa Ricans. The OAS was used, in those years, by the governments to place people they couldn't deal with. They all insisted on having a certain measure of participation and staffing. So you did not have, in the early years anyway, a first-class organization, to say the least. It was too bad. Highly politicized, corrupt in many ways.

My expectation, my assumption, my impression, I should say, is that it has improved since then. But I can't really say more than that, except that in those years, I was very disenchanted with Latinos in how they approached important problems. Personalities, political power plays, corruption.

*Q: Was this also the case with IDB?*

LION: Not as much. It was a much more technical organization, I suspect. We had more influence in the IDB than we did in the OAS. In the IDB we had an executive director who was, invariably, a person of some quality and we had a lot of technicians, excellent Latino technicians. The head of SUDENE, for example, when he finished his work (he also was head of the Bank of Northeast, at one point), not Joao Goncalvez da Silva but his successor, Ruben Vaz da Costa, went to the IDB years ago. We have very good people there now, e.g. Fred Scheck.

So I think that the quality of the people, in terms of technical work, in terms of planning and management and what-not, may have been significantly higher than the largely politicized OAS staff, at least some years ago. I'm not qualified to describe the current situation.

But there were some good people in the OAS too, at that time. I remember the people in the finance end of it, Ernesto Betancourt, who had been a Cuban central banker but got out of Cuba - an excellent man, quality man. Some of the technical staff that I got to know were good. But the organization as a whole, I don't think, came up to the IDB.

The IDB had its problems. For example, its representatives in different countries were often people whose government didn't know what to do with them. Not entirely, not so that it spoiled the situation across the board.

*Q: Were there other areas of activity for you in that position? You talked about social development.*

LION: The *Title 9* work, that's where the social development title comes from. We also were responsible for the WID work, Women in Development work, that we ended up doing. Multilateral stuff I've talked about. That took a lot of time. Meetings with the World Bank, the IDB and the bilateral donors, going to these conferences, traveling and what-not.

*Q: What about the WID work or some of those others.*

LION: It was just beginning then in those years. It was a senator from Illinois, Senator Percy, who introduced the first WID legislation. We were just beginning on that. I didn't think people took it seriously then either, something like the early years of Title 9.

*Q: After that you went overseas, didn't you?*

One year as Acting Assistant Administrator in Latin America Bureau - 1976

LION: That was '74, '75. Then I became the acting administrator of the bureau. Herman Kleine resigned in '76. I was acting head for a year. He resigned in July and Lalo Valdez was approved in the Senate in June of the following year. I had the title of acting eleven months. I was only really the acting for the first eight months or so because Lalo sat at the desk for two or three months before he was finally approved.

*Q: Any particular issue that came up during that time?*

LION: Lalo began appointing people to missions and offices in Washington who were largely unqualified. Lalo was very much concerned with Hispanic interests and objectives. This was a bright man and a person, in substantive terms, you could respect. He had been a lawyer with IDB, I believe. But he had this drive, this mandate, this mission and promptly hurt the bureau. That was the beginning of the downfall, the weakening of the bureau from its high position as best bureau in the agency. For example, a baseball coach, an Hispanic, was made deputy director in one of the missions. He put someone in as deputy in Panama, I believe it was, who sent a letter to the Secretary of State saying he wanted to be the Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs. He was a young Latino, 30 years old. I went down there to try to help him understand what his role and his position were.

So that was a major problem I had to deal with in my last few months while I was still in Washington. I honestly tried my best to help Lalo do good things, obviously, in the agency and the bureau. But Lalo, I don't believe, ever trusted anybody who was not a Latino.

*Q: Did he have any program interest?*

LION: You know what a deputy does.

*Q: I mean Lalo.*

LION: I thought you were talking about me. As far as I could see, no. He had a mission and the mission was to redress the imbalance that he saw existed in the personnel profile of the bureau and the agency. That was his consuming objective.

*Q: After a year there, then you went where?*

LION: The US ambassador to Jamaica, designate, came to the bureau and I was asked to brief him on Jamaica. That selection was made because we had decided to help Jamaica some months before that, resume a bilateral program or something. I was made chief of a group that went down there: a fellow from Treasury, a fellow from AID, a fellow from State and I were asked to draw up a program of assistance to Jamaica, a multi-year program. So I learned a lot about Jamaica and what its needs were during that time. I don't know how many weeks we were down there. I was considered the expert on Jamaica in the bureau, which meant that nobody else knew about Jamaica and I knew a little bit.

Fred Irving, who was ambassador to Jamaica, newly selected or designated at that point, I don't remember, came to the bureau and I was asked to brief him. We sat down, chatted for a while then we had lunch in the executive dining room. He said to Lalo, "I want this guy in Jamaica." Lalo said to me, "Donor, you can go anywhere in the bureau that you want to." I said, "I'll go to one of two places, please, I'll go to Jamaica or Haiti." I was a glutton for punishment.

*Q: Was the Food for Work an effective way to operate?*

LION: It's a mixed bag. Sometimes it worked, sometimes it didn't. Invariably there were management problems, invariably there was losses of food at the docks. It didn't matter what country you were in, these things happened no matter how hard you tried to control it and keep it down.

Two food programs that I remember in my lifetime that seemed to work well were in northeast Brazil. One was when we combined it with a literacy program, and the other was when we combined it with stimulating, promoting, developing chicken cooperatives. We would provide the feed. Those two programs stand out in my mind as having worked fairly well.

The other thing we were doing in Peru, it was kind of interesting. We were concerned with environmental issues. Not only were the growers of coca denuding the hillsides of the Upper Huallaga Valley, so that you fly over it and you'd get sick when you see the bald hills. It was terrible. When Dwight Ink flew over he became a strong proponent of environmental initiatives. It was so shocking. Not only were we concerned about what was happening because of the narcotics problem to the forests in the hills, but tropical forests in Peru were being decimated. Part of Peru's territory is part of the whole Amazon region.

The previous Mission's staff had come up with a proposal and a project that represented somewhat a new approach to tropical forest management. Commercial production plus renewal. The technology was to cut a swath, about fifty yards wide and a mile long, for commercial purposes and let nature replant. That happened beautifully. What we learned was that not only will the seeds from nearby trees end up germinating but apparently half the trees that grew in this swath would grow from seeds that animals dropped, deposited. Either they're flying, birds, or they're some kind of four-legged beasties that traverse this area. Within five years we could see that not only were the same species being regrown but there were new ones, that hadn't been there before, from birds which dropped seeds or animals that had eaten something, miles and miles and miles away. So that was a technology that seemed to be working but I wasn't there long enough to see the results.

*Q: How were you and the embassy getting along on this situation?*

LION: I think I mentioned that I was nominated in '86 for Honduras and the ambassador-designate said, "No." So I ended up in Peru with John, who was in Lima, going to Honduras. That couldn't have happened unless the person who was going to Peru as ambassador wanted me there. Alex Watson, with whom I had worked in the '60s, he in the consulate in Bahia, and I was up in the northeast Brazil as the consul general and the AID director. So I got to Peru before he did, actually. That was only because he was able to get the Inter-American Bureau and the State Department to say "yes" even though one of their ambassadors said "no" for another assignment. He had to work on that, apparently, for a week or two. I don't know what he did but he swung it.

We were acquainted, we liked each other from way back. That helps. You can't beat that.

But, for the rest of it. It was one of the best situations in terms of embassy-AID interagency collaboration. You couldn't have asked for a more collaborative group. Alex, himself, stimulated

this kind of thing. He's very open, relaxed, informal, very bright, so people respected him enormously and were fond of him. That's a nice combination.

This proposal for a regional approach that I mentioned? Was thoroughly endorsed by every other agency. The people who reviewed the proposal made some useful suggestions. It was a team effort. It was fine. That's why I think even though there are some natural, almost institutional, reasons for some sort of conflict between State Department and AID, even though that's there, if the people are of a certain sort, that stuff doesn't matter. If people get along, like each other, respect each other, don't have any hang-ups or biases and so on, there are a lot of people in all these agencies that meet that description, just as there are those who don't. If you happen to find that most of them do in the place that you're stationed at, you're in good shape. And we were in Peru.

*Q: Quite a few "ifs."*

LION: That happened a number of times. I was especially pleased at those places where I felt that the embassy and AID and the country team were really supportive of each other. Where AID was regarded as an arm of the US government, of the ambassador and not just another section in the embassy, reporting to the economic counselor. That happened frequently, so that was good.

I loved the combination--consul general and chief of the AID program--in the northeast Brazil job. I saw there how wonderful real integration, cooperation would work. But only if the AID person was the boss! That's not true, I'm just joking.

**JAMES L. MORAD**  
**Student Affairs Officer, USIS**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1962-1964)**

**Public Affairs Officer, USIS**  
**Fortaleza (1964-1965)**

*James L. Morad was born in California in 1934. He received his BA from the University of Southern California and his MS from Columbia University. His foreign assignments include Rio de Janeiro, Madrid, Fortaleza, San Salvador, Madrid, Brussels and Paris. He was interviewed on June 9, 1994 by Allen C. Hansen.*

*Q: After your leave without pay for three months or so, you recovered completely and then went on assignment as Student Affairs Officer to Rio? Was this based on Robert Kennedy's emphasis on Youth?*

MORAD: Yes it was. I was the first Student Affairs Officer in Rio. I was among the initial group of Student Affairs Officers assigned at the beginning of the Kennedy administration.

*Q: Do you think that emphasis was warranted?*

MORAD: Well, I didn't at the time. In fact, I resisted the assignment. I was not interested in student affairs. I was not a student activist as an undergraduate. I considered myself a journalist. Journalism, press and communications were my interests, and my main motivation for joining the Agency. The combination of my interest in foreign affairs plus my journalism and communications abilities were what motivated me to join USIA. Then suddenly I was assigned to what was essentially a job that was part of the cultural section and related to student politics, which never particularly interested me.

*Q: Did you have any guidepost as to what you were supposed to do?*

MORAD: No guideposts whatsoever. One of the interesting things again, is, as a young officer, I resisted the assignment as much as I could and finally I was told by Personnel that I either had to accept the assignment or resign. So, I wasn't given a choice. I think in today's Agency, there is much more flexibility in the assignment process. Officers are given more choice of positions and where they are assigned. In my case, there was no sympathy whatsoever for my background and my interest in the press work. So, in the end I accepted the assignment to Rio de Janeiro, which, as it turned out was paradise and quickly overcame my resistance to the assignment. There was a huge influx of official Americans in Rio at the time, primarily AID employees and AID contract employees, who were being brought into the country to accelerate our economic development projects in Brazil. There was a strong fear that at the time Brazil was on the verge of being dominated by the Communist Party.

*Q: And Rio was the capital at that time?*

MORAD: Rio was the capital of Brazil at the time. This was before the move to Brasilia and when many of the leading institutions in the country, the National Assembly, key labor unions, the Peasant Leagues, student unions, etc., were all under the influence or domination of the Communist Party. Because of the perceived threat and its size, Brazil, was a priority Third World country at the time, and the United States was pouring resources into it. The Foreign Service Institute even transferred the Portuguese language classes from Washington to Rio, and everybody assigned there at the time was taught Portuguese. As a result, my first three months in Rio were in language training. Picture this: I was still a bachelor, and my temporary quarters were an ocean front hotel on Copacabana beach. Portuguese classes would end at three in the afternoon, and by 3:30 I was on the beach, studying Portuguese while basking in the sun in one of the world's great resort cities. It was a wonderful experience.

*Q: How long after that were you sent to Fortaleza?*

MORAD: After language training, I started work as Student Affairs Officer. There was no job description and there was fundamentally no interest in USIS Rio in the job. Nobody really knew what it consisted of, what I should be doing, what its purpose was. So I was given free hand to do whatever I felt needed to be done. The National Student Union was essentially a communist-run organization at the time. So I decided that my job would be to rescue the Student Union from the hands of the communists; rather than pursuing the job in a cultural context, I pursued it in a

wholly political way. In a sense, a Cold War warrior political way. As I gained experience, my contacts developed with students, student leaders including the communist leaders of the Student Union and they became rather close friends of mine; in fact, my daily "modus operandi" was to drift further and further away from USIS and more and more toward the CIA station, which was already active in its own way in that field. Essentially I became a surrogate CIA officer and worked very closely with the station in international student organizations, trying to prop up democratic students against the leftist rabble rousers and, in student elections, helping democratic students issue proclamations and giving them resources to mimeograph statements and that kind of thing.

*Q: You did that for how long?*

MORAD: I did that for 2 years

*Q: And these were what years?*

MORAD: This was 1962 to 1964. Coincidentally, the job turned out to be a lot more interesting and challenging and demanding than I expected. It also turned out to be a lot more relevant because, increasingly, the Student National Union was seen as a major player in the national political scene because of its domination by the communists. In fact, there were four pillars of the Communist Party in Brazil at the time: fellow travelers in the left leaning National Assembly, the Peasant Leagues, the labor unions and the National Student Union. In the process, I gained a lot more attention and notoriety and was given more importance than a junior officer normally would receive in a huge operation like USIS Brazil, which had over 65 Americans and 250 Brazilian employees at the time. So it worked to my career advantage, and led to my becoming a protégé of sorts of the Deputy PAO, Hoyt Ware..I don't know if you remember him...

*Q: Yes, I know him.*

MORAD: He was an old salt of a newsman; he used to be a correspondent for Associated Press. In fact, he headed the Associated Press Bureau in Buenos Aires at one time. He was the Deputy PAO, and, for reasons that were never clear to me, he was very unhappy with the USIS Rio Press Office. Both the Information Officer and the deputy IO, were highly professional, highly experienced newsmen themselves; for some reason, Hoyt was always critical of them. Because he had no confidence in them, he used to feed me a lot of press work in addition to my regular job, including writing articles for Jornal do Brasil, the leading newspaper in Rio. These articles he got placed into Jornal because of his friendship with the publisher of the newspaper. Rather than assign them to the Press Officer, he would give them to me, and I became a kind of ghost writer for him. As a result of that collaboration I developed a close relationship with the Deputy PAO. Then we had an opening for a Branch PAO in Fortaleza when USIS had a branch post there. Hoyt offered me the job, which, for me at the time, was a real advancement since Brazil was only my first assignment following my Junior Officer Trainee tour. I accepted enthusiastically and went to Fortaleza which was in northeast Brazil. At the time it was seen as the real focal point of communist insurrection in Brazil. If the communists were ever going to get a foothold in the country and there was going to be rural and guerrilla warfare, it was expected to start in the northeast.

*Q: Poverty had a lot to do with it.*

MORAD: The Communists organized the Peasant Leagues and dominated them. On occasion they were involved in armed confrontations with the military and police and were seen to be only the beginning of what was going to be a larger insurrection at some future time. So a lot of AID resources were going into the northeast, and even though Fortaleza was close to the end of the world. In that context at that particular time the region was given more importance than it normally deserved. A few years later, the post was closed after the military took over. Actually the military coup in Brazil took place the day after I arrived in Fortaleza. With the arrival of the military, the communist threat literally disappeared overnight. All the communist student leaders, labor unions, labor leaders, Peasant League leaders and fellow travelers in the National Assembly either fled or disappeared. There wasn't much violence. The coup took place very quickly, and it taught me a lesson in terms of where the real power of a country lies. The labor unions and student leaders can make a lot of noise and seem to be disruptive but when the military decides to move, basically there is very little anybody can do, at least in the short run, to resist it. In the long run, of course, opposing forces can undermine the military but in the Brazilian situation, the military remained in power for 20 years.

*Q: How long were you in Fortaleza then?*

MORAD: I was in Fortaleza for a year and a half and then my assignment to Brazil ended. I could have extended if I had wanted, but I chose to move on and was assigned as Information Officer to El Salvador.

**CLARK M. BRINTNALL**  
**Cultural Student for the U.S. Army**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1964-1965)**

*Brigadier General Clark M. Brintnall was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska. He graduated from West Point Academy in 1958. His career included service in Brazil, Panama, and Vietnam. Brigadier General Brintnall was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1996.*

*Q: You were in Brazil this time from when to when?*

BRINTNALL: July of 1964 until December of 1965.

*Q: What was your job when you got there? I mean, what was an attaché...at your level?*

BRINTNALL: I wasn't an attaché. My job was to learn as much about Brazil as I could in one year. It was a marvelous assignment. I had absolutely no responsibilities other than to travel and study. My new wife was happy to be there too. We had no children. One of the things I wanted to do was to attend the Brazilian Army Command and General Staff College, which my

predecessors had done. But the Army, in its wisdom, decided that the program should be kept to one year only. And since I arrived in July, and the course began in January, I would not have been able to complete a full academic year. As a consequence, I spent my time in travel, study at two universities, and teaching English part time at the Command and General Staff College.

Q: *Where were you living?*

BRINTNALL: In Rio de Janeiro...and I had the great good fortune to have a boss, then Colonel Vernon Anthony Walters who was the Defense Attaché.

Q: *We will come back to him obviously. But what were you finding in Brazil, as you traveled around in those days, of Brazilian society, the politics, the dynamics of the country?*

BRINTNALL: I was busy trying to learn about so many Brazils. There was the Brazil of the Amazon. There was the northeast. There was the Brazil of the south. There was the political Brazil of Rio de Janeiro, and of course, there was the dynamic state of Sao Paulo. There was considerable unrest -- this was just after the March 1964 revolution. I was enrolled in the Catholic University and the Federal University in Rio de Janeiro -- two very different universities. I found a great deal of antipathy towards America and Americans at that time. This was July and the revolution had taken place only three months earlier. There was a lot of unrest. A lot of labor unrest. There was resentment from the left against the military government, but most Brazilians were relieved to have the military take over and end the disorder. I didn't feel so much of it at Catholic University which was pretty much business-as-usual. Classes went on uninterrupted. But at Federal University there were strikes. The professors would show up -- they wouldn't show up ; the students would show, they wouldn't show. I felt a great deal of resentment and anger towards me at that time.

Q: *Did you get the feeling that there was an agreement or collusion of the United States with the military coup or not?*

BRINTNALL: Sometimes. Some saw a heavy US involvement. And some didn't. But they didn't like me as an American. They particularly didn't like me as a military officer.

Q: *Of course, this did come up. An American military officer was killed, wasn't he? On just such an assignment as yours?*

BRINTNALL: Yes. In 1968. I believe his name was Chandler, Captain Chuck Chandler, an Olmstead Scholar studying in Sao Paulo. But it was interesting to take part in the university life and observe the students. One day I was present for the assumption of class officers at Catholic University. The President got up and gave an impassioned speech about what he was going to do, and the Vice President did the same. Finally, it was the secretary's turn -- a freshman. But she didn't speak. She went to the front of the room and wrote on the blackboard..."and now let's go to the beach." (laughs) It was Friday. That was true of demonstrations, as well. The student demonstrators were serious about their marches down the broad avenues of Getulio Vargas and Rio Branco, during the week, but the gorgeous beaches of Rio de Janeiro called on the weekends. The demonstrations could be put off until Monday.

*Q: How did you see the role of the United States at that time in Brazil?*

BRINTNALL: The United States had a very strong presence at that time. It exercised a great deal of influence. The military presence was really too strong. During World War II, we had established a joint military commission in Brazil. But even before that we had a Naval Mission that predated World War II -- 1922. In 1964, there were still three U.S. general and flag rank officers in the Military Commission, representing the Army, Navy and Air Force. This was in addition to the military attachés. Later on, Colonel Walters would be promoted to brigadier general. So really the U.S. military presence was overwhelming. We can get into this a little bit later, but we should have begun to down-size the presence as soon as World War II was over. I believe our hosts were beginning to resent our large presence. We occupied the top floor of the Brazilian Army Ministry for example. It was counterproductive to occupy the entire floor, the top floor of the Ministry.

*Q: Did you deal with our Attachés who were there at all?*

BRINTNALL: The Army Attaché was responsible for overseeing our activities. I traveled a great deal to get to know the country. In fact, I traveled to every state and territory. General Walters loved to travel. We took a trip down the San Francisco River with Mrs. Lincoln Gordon -- the Ambassador was in the U.S. and could not go. We traveled from Brasilia to Belem when the road was only a clearing -- just a cut in the Amazon jungle. It was an adventure that few Brazilians could understand our taking. Yes, there was a great deal of contact with our attachés, particularly General Walters. We all learned a great deal from him.

*Q: While you were doing this did you have much contact with the Brazilian military?*

BRINTNALL: Yes, as much as possible. That was one of the principal reasons we were there. To learn about the Brazilian Armed Forces. I made it a point to get to know as many military officers as I could, and I developed friendships that I treasure to this day. One of my activities was to teach English at the Command and General Staff College. I made a number of friends through this. Selection for the Army Command and General Staff College was critical to one's army career. The graduates went on to positions of ever greater responsibility. I associated myself with the class which graduated in 1967. Many went on to four-star rank, and the current Minister of the Armed Forces is a member of that class. One of my best friends today was a Captain I knew at that time. Yes, I did have a lot of military friends -- and still do.

*Q: What did you think about the military government that had taken over and about the situation that had caused the military government to take over?*

BRINTNALL: Most Brazilians were very much in favor of what had been done. They saw no other solution. They saw the chaos, the strikes, inflation which was reaching an annual rate of 64% per year-which seems pretty modest today. The military didn't go in by themselves. They were asked to come in. Generally when there is a military take-over, it is because the people in the country want them to come in. That was the case in Brazil. They were convinced that they had done the right thing.

Q: *Did we see sort of a Communist menace in the country?*

BRINTNALL: Absolutely. There was a Communist menace in the eyes of the Brazilian Armed Forces and it was their duty to nip this in the bud and to do everything possible to see that didn't grow in strength.

Q: *How were we looking at it? I mean there is always a difference between what you might call the Communist menace and to basic social unrest which would come from mal-distribution of wealth or what have you.*

BRINTNALL: We must have gone along with the view of the Communist threat because as I recall we were the first government to recognize the new government.

Q: *Who was the Ambassador during this?*

BRINTNALL: Lincoln Gordon.

Q: *Obviously you weren't sitting at his right hand side, but did you have any contact with him or get any feel on how he ran the Embassy?*

BRINTNALL: I was a very junior officer and had little contact with him other than an occasional exchange. He was very respected within the Embassy -- for his seriousness, for his knowledge of Brazil, for his knowledge of economic affairs. He was well respected, I believe, both within and outside the Embassy.

Q: *How about our AID Program? This would be our Alliance for Progress, I guess.*

BRINTNALL: AID was massive. In Recife, the AID mission occupied an entire building. The AID Mission was very big and controlled a lot of money. It was a very strong presence.

Q: *From the students you were teaching or from the people at the University and all, what was their feeling towards this massive American presence?*

BRINTNALL: There was resentment. I think it was seen as too large, too pervasive.

Q: *One of the things being this junior sort of in a familiarization tour, you were sort of off from having to implement a program and all, were you feeling any disquiet about the size and pervasiveness at that time, of Americans?*

BRINTNALL: No. Those feelings came later. At the time, I just accepted our presence without questioning its size or its mission. That is the way it was.

Q: *In working with, I mean, accompanying as part of your familiarization time, accompanying Vernon Walters at that time, what can you tell me? Can you tell me anything about how he operated or your impression of his work then?*

BRINTNALL: It was like following in the wake of a large ship. He filled the room. He was totally fluent in Portuguese. He knew everything about Brazil. He was also very, very kind, very thoughtful of his subordinates. For example, he called me one night and said, "Have you met President Costello Branco?" I answered "No." He said, "Come over to my apartment. I am having a party and he is here." He would think of his young captains and he would think of his secretaries and he would think of everybody else. He was a marvelous man to work for.

He loved to travel. We borrowed a three-quarter ton truck from the American Geodetic Survey and traveled from Brasilia to Belem. We would change drivers every half hour because no one wanted to be in the middle since the road was awful and the passenger in the middle had nothing to hang onto. The driver had the steering wheel. General Walters took his turn just like the other two of us. He was simply a marvelous man to work for. And very good at explaining Brazil to others. I had the good fortune to be chosen as an escort officer for Senator Hugh Scott when he came down to the OAS Conference. Frank Church, Hugh Scott and some other Congressmen were there. Then Colonel Walters took them into his office and he began to talk about Brazil. At one point, he took a large map of South America from the wall, drew a heavy line around Brazil and then tipped the map on its side, making a vivid impression on the mind's of his guests of the size of the country. He never seemed to forget a fact or figure. He was a spellbinder.

*Q: He of course, had served with the Brazilian Expeditionary Force including Castelo Branco who had been with that force.*

BRINTNALL: He formed friendships in battle that have lasted to this day. He was particularly close to Castelo Branco then, and after the war.

*Q: I was just wondering because he is almost a phenomenon. Did you find as you were traveling this road, did he absorb knowledge and ask questions of the people he would meet?*

BRINTNALL: Absolutely. And he had a tape recorder and every night he would lie on his bunk and record the impressions of the day. He would observe everything -- everything military and everything civilian. He had a great interest in everything that was happening in Brazil. He loved to be with people. I was indeed fortunate to be able to study under him, to watch him and to learn from him. I tried, as he did, not to see Brazil in narrow military terms, but to understand its culture, its economy, its history, its society, its dreams and its aspirations.

*Q: Did you get any feel -- you weren't in the crucial position at this time -- , but did you get a feeling that there was a problem between General Walters and Lincoln Gordon? Because the Ambassador and then the somebody bigger than life like Vernon Walters there, I think there could be a problem.*

BRINTNALL: He was always very careful to observe the proper protocol. Lincoln Gordon and General Walters had worked together in NATO years before. Lincoln Gordon had asked, the then Colonel Walters, to come to Brazil to be the Attaché. He said at their very first meeting, "Mr. Ambassador, I am your attaché, Colonel Walters." He put himself in the subordinate position immediately. I saw him do this at other times too. One time I introduced him to a

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense. He had held positions higher, but referred very respectfully to the DASD as "Mr. Secretary." He was always a gentleman, always courteous.

**NOEL MARSH**  
**Program Officer, USAID**  
**Ri o de Janeiro (1964-1966)**

*Noel Marsh was born in San Francisco in 1931. He received his bachelor's and master's degree at the University of California in 1958. His career in US AID included positions in Nepal, Brazil, Colombia, and Liberia. Mr. Marsh was interviewed by Yin Marsh in 1999.*

*Q: So Brazil was your second post with AID.*

MARSH: That's correct, but when I left Nepal, I had no idea what my next onward assignment would be. I was surprised and, pleasantly I might add, to learn that we were being posted to Rio de Janeiro. As is not unusual in AID, the post wanted us there right away. There was no time for language training, and I was supposed to get Portuguese lessons when I arrived at post. But as is often the case, work takes over and there was no time to study the language. I was in class for about two weeks, but the pressure of work meant that I had to forego the class. This is one of the regrets and one of the few regrets I have about the assignment. I never really became proficient in Portuguese. Other than that, it was a very challenging, exciting, and professionally rewarding experience. As in the case of my first post, I was very lucky. It was an ideal time to be assigned to Brazil. The pro-leftist government had just been overthrown and the military government of Castelo Branco had just got in and seemed quite moderate. They were very eager to strengthen ties with the United States and the U.S. was also eager to extend its program into Latin America. In a sense, Brazil became the center piece of the Alliance for Progress. At this point, the military dictatorship was not unduly harsh, at least it seemed to us to be that way. Later it became more repressive. Rio was a wonderful place to live, and at that time very safe, which is not the case today.

*Q: Going from Nepal, which was a small mountainous kingdom, and then going to Brazil where Rio was a big metropolitan city, must have been quite a cultural shock for you. How did you manage to cope with that?*

MARSH: Yes, it was a cultural shock. It was as different as night is from day, but we settled down rather quickly, and enjoyed life in the "big city" as well as the beaches and wonderfully vibrant people. The work was quite demanding and quite absorbing. In the first few weeks I was quite deeply enmeshed and needed to often work late into the night. I was the Assistant Program Officer at that time, but the Program Officer left after I had been there only a couple of weeks. This only left two Americans in the office, myself and a young and very talented State Department officer who was assigned to AID for a tour so he could become familiar with AID procedures.

*Q: Who was the State Department guy?*

MARSH: Sam Lewis, who later had a very distinguished career in the foreign service and served for many years as our ambassador to Israel. Sam, at that point, knew very little about how AID functioned, but in a sense it was an ideal division of labor. Sam was familiar and comfortable in the policy side of the program, and I concentrated my efforts on the programming and implementation side. We worked very well as a team. The program itself was very large and complex. It consisted of a very large program loan, very large and quite a number of capital development loans, and at this time it was the largest technical assistance program in AID, or one of the largest, and certainly the largest in Latin America, plus there were PL-480 programs and a large number of nongovernmental organizations involved in the program. The Program Office focused on overseeing the technical assistance part of the program. We were understaffed but fortunately had the strong support from the office of management headed by Bill Parks. They took a lot of the administrative load off of what was normally a program function. Apart from the sheer size of the program, it was further complicated by the fact there were numerous sub projects. They called them units of management or project activities. At one point I calculated there were 150 separate and active project activities on the books. Project responsibility was divided between two offices, one in Recife and the headquarters office in Rio. The Recife office had a good deal of autonomy and in many ways functioned more like an independent Mission; they used to call themselves the Recife Mission responsible for the programs in the northeast, and refer to Rio as having ROB (rest of Brazil) responsibilities. This administrative arrangement required a lot of coordination between the two offices. Sometimes it went quite smoothly and other times it caused tensions which were always resolved but not without a lot of extra time and effort on everyone's part.

*Q: Wasn't that a lot of projects for a two person office to keep track of?*

MARSH: Yes it was. It was only possible really because we had a well-trained and dedicated Brazilian staff. They not only were extremely capable but they were willing and able to work extra time, sometimes even around the clock. I cannot heap enough praise on the Brazilian staff. It was quite outstanding and one of the most professional staffs I have ever had the pleasure to work with anywhere. This really made the task possible. A new Program Officer was finally recruited, but that was only a year after I had been there. Later on, two Assistant Program Officers were added. But as I mentioned, the Recife office operation had its own staff, and of course they took some of the administrative load for the projects that were centered in the northeast. I served under three Mission Directors during my time in Rio, Jack Kubisch when I first arrived, then Stuart Van Dyke and later Bill Ellis. All three were experienced officers used to managing large organizations. They knew very well the importance of delegation, and I always appreciated their management style and the trust they put in my ability to take care of the day-to-day running of the programs under my charge. This contributed greatly to our ability to handle such a large portfolio. My authority was always clearly defined and quite extensive, and I felt very comfortable making decisions. I always felt I would be supported as long as I was operating within my authority. For me this was a very important factor in being able to manage such a program, and in fact in my opinion, the only way a program of this complexity could have been managed.

*Q: During this assignment, were there any particular events or tasks that stand out or that you would like to comment on.*

MARSH: Yes, I can think of several. Let me concentrate on one that put my management skills to their greatest test. Unlike my first post where I was working pretty much across the board in a small program, in this case I pretty much concentrated on the technical assistance aspect of the program and as I mentioned earlier, it was a large complex program, and it required a lot of operational and management discipline. The Mission was organized into technical officers; each dealt directly with the appropriate Ministries. The Program Office had very little to do directly with these technical Ministries, but we did work closely with the Ministry of Planning. The task that really stands out in my mind was the preparation of the Annual Program Submission. This actually began a few weeks after I arrived. The Brazil Mission submitted one document to AID/W requesting funding and approval for all the projects including those operating in the northeast but as I mentioned earlier the Recife Mission operated fairly independently and was very protective of its autonomy. The need to submit a combined single program document did create some friction resulting in a traditional headquarters vs. field office stand off situation, with Rio in this case being the headquarters. The procedure was for AID to assign a planning figure for all of Brazil, and then it was up to the Brazilian Mission or Missions to allocate the funds between the two regions. Needless to say, it was a time of intense lobbying, appealing decisions, and arriving at some kind of compromise. The annual program exercise is always a difficult challenge, but having to allocate funds between the needs and priorities of two competing offices within one program compounded the difficulty of the task. It was a nightmare. There were intensive negotiations going on throughout the whole process. Every time we made a change there were a myriad of program documentation changes that would have to be made in order to make the supporting documentation consistent with the program being planned, and this was before we had computers. I would often have the entire local Controllers staff working through the night to get all the various parts of the document to jibe. Somehow it all worked out. We met the deadlines and produced the combined single document and still managed to maintain friendly relationships between the two competing offices; but it was at times quite stressful and difficult.

*Q: So what you are saying is you had more problems dealing within the agency itself than with the host government.*

MARSH: That's right. I think a lot of our energies were spent arguing in house. I suppose the technical divisions did the arguing with the ministries before they got the submitting programs to us, but it was a very intense time. As I said, somehow we managed to get through it. I remember one error that occurred during the whole process of trying to put this tome together. It was a particular livestock program that we were touting, and we somehow got the before and after photographs of the research animals mixed up. This did not serve to illustrate the point we really wanted to make, but it was a great source of amusement and probably added a little levity to what was a pretty serious and sometimes dreary document.

*Q: How long did you stay in Rio?*

MARSH: Actually I only served in Rio for 20 months. I shortened my tour.

*Q: Why was that?*

MARSH: Towards the end of my first tour in Rio I was offered the Program Officer's job in Bogotá, if I were willing to agree to a direct transfer to Colombia. After initially declining the offer I was persuaded that this would be in my best career interests and accepted. In hindsight, I regret this decision, but at the time I felt that it would allow me to continue operating at the same level I had become accustomed to in Brazil. By this time the Rio Program Office was fully staffed. The new Program Officer had arrived, two additional assistant program officers had been added to the staff and I thought that this was a good time for me to transfer to a position of greater responsibility. The Rio Mission graciously agreed to let me go. We left with very mixed feelings four months before my first tour was due to end. From a personal and career point of view, I believe I learned a great deal about program management while serving in Brazil. I appreciated the support and trust I got from the top management and feel that the experience I gained in Rio really served me well in my future assignments with AID. It was a very rewarding to work in Brazil. The quality of the direct hire and contract staff was uniformly high. The program was well planned and well executed. It was a pleasure working with the Brazilians, and I also enjoyed living in Rio very much. So I look back on my second post in much the same way as I do on my first; with fond memories, offering an opportunity to grow and a great feeling of accomplishment.

**CLINT A. LAUDERDALE**  
**Personnel Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1964-1967)**

*Ambassador Clint A. Lauderdale was born in 1932 and raised in Texas. He attended Tarleton State, a branch of Texas A & M University. He joined the U.S. Army at the beginning of the Korean War and was stationed in Germany. Upon returning to the United States, he enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley and received a bachelor's degree in political science. Ambassador Lauderdale's Foreign Service career included positions in Brazil, Mexico, Germany, Belgium, and Spain. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on August 16, 1964.*

*Q: You left there in what, 1964? Where did you go then?*

LAUDERDALE: Rio de Janeiro.

*Q: What was the political situation like there in Brazil when you were there?*

LAUDERDALE: Very unstable. There had been a revolution, a coup, around six months before I came. The elected president had been ousted and some general had taken over the government as president and the...it was bloodless, by the way. But it looked ominous. GIs on the street, on the city streets of Rio with submachine guns on every corner. They'd scare the hell out of you. But actually there was no violence. It was a military dictatorship at the time, and a real challenge for

the United States, because obviously we wanted restoration of democracy, we wanted stability, reliability and so forth. And here you've got a military dictatorship with machine guns in the street.

*Q: You were what, the Personnel Officer there?*

LAUDERDALE: Right.

*Q: When you first arrived, it was Lincoln Gordon as Ambassador, and it was a very large Embassy, wasn't it?*

LAUDERDALE: Yes, it was big. Big AID Mission, big military mission.

*Q: Was this comparable to Mexico?*

LAUDERDALE: Yup.

*Q: Well now, what were you as Personnel Officer, what were you doing?*

LAUDERDALE: Well there were two sort of broad categories. Nationwide, we had something over 500 Brazilian employees, and the Embassy personnel officer administers their entire system. There's no statute and very few regulations, all the way from recruitment, setting salaries, classification system, promotion, keeping the jobs filled, the people paid, and so forth. That's on the foreign service national side. On the American side also, keeping the post staffed, helping people on the way out to deal with their preferences for onward assignments, welcoming the people that come in, orientation, processing, efficiency reports and all of that stuff, for Americans.

*Q: How was living at that time in Brazil? Was Brasilia already established at that time, or what?*

LAUDERDALE: We had in Brasilia a branch office of the Embassy. The capital was still in Rio. Brasilia was under construction, there were some government offices up there, some parliamentary sessions were held there, but none of the ministries had moved yet. We had a branch office up there with three or four people. It was a big Embassy, we had the big question again of planning for the move. Were our FSNs going to move to Brasilia? The Americans you can deal with easily. What about housing for Americans and for FSNs? Also, nobody wanted to move. Not only our employees but nobody in the Brazilian government wanted to move. Yeah, the Embassy was big. It was too big. And Lincoln Gordon's successor fixed that.

*Q: It was Operation Topsy. What was your impression of how Lincoln Gordon operated? Did you get any feel for his work?*

LAUDERDALE: We had a military attaché there, Colonel Vernon Walters. He was the Defense Attaché, and there was a military government so the president was a general. So he was the principal player in the Embassy. He was Political Counselor, Defense Attaché, Intelligence Officer, Deputy Ambassador; he speaks six languages, was fluent in Portuguese and so forth.

*Q: And if I recall he had been the liaison officer to the Division which fought in Italy, which the now dictator had served on.*

LAUDERDALE: Yes, they had a relationship where they could go for martinis together. In style, Lincoln Gordon I would describe as professorial. Competent, as far as I know, administered U.S. government interest with competence. But a lot of the operational, day-to-day stuff was taken care of by Vernon Walters.

*Q: So, were people basically taking orders from the military attaché, as they never would at any other post, I think?*

LAUDERDALE: Maybe taking orders isn't...

*Q: Direction...*

LAUDERDALE: I would say that the tone and thrust of the Embassy's view and the Embassy's recommendations to Washington and the Embassy's analysis were dictated by Vernon Walters. And the others obviously had to conform. Whereas normally that might be by the Political Counselor and the Ambassador together.

*Q: Well, you were still a relatively junior officer there, so you were with the other sort of junior officers there, you know, this was a military dictatorship and all, was this... What was sort of the atmosphere there from your colleagues who were having to deal with the political officers there? Were they, how did they feel about our relations with the Brazilian government?*

LAUDERDALE: There were some strains. We didn't know where it was going. We were unhappy with the military dictatorship. We wanted to get them to turn authority back over to the civilians. There were no commitments to do so, in the short term. So it was one of, one might say, frustration. It's not so dissimilar from the situation in Haiti today. I think our relationship, because of the circumstance of Brazil, its great size, its important economy, it's a much more important relationship and the ties between the two countries are much greater, but some of the frustrations are similar.

*Q: I've never served in Latin America, but I've heard that in Brazil not only the language is different, but the attitude is different, where the United States is not looked upon as the bogeyman of the North, that there is a different attitude toward the United States than there is not only in Mexico, but down in Argentina, where they're always thinking, it's sort of a little paranoia, but that it's not true in Brazil. Did you find that...*

LAUDERDALE: Yes, that is true. It is a different relationship. The Brazilians are completely friendly and open to the United States and to Americans, and to each other! They're not a people or society with a lot of hangups or ulterior motives; one might say simple, pleasant, happy people. We used to laugh about the Brazilian revolution because they're always bloodless, nobody gets killed.

*Q: What about inflation? I don't know if it was at this time or later when one would hear horrific accounts about inflation and all that. Was this a factor when you were there, particularly as a Personnel officer, having to deal with local staff and cost of living for locals and Americans. How did you work it?*

LAUDERDALE: It was a big problem. Inflation was great, something like 40% a year. And they had then as they have now provisions where all contracts are adjusted periodically and so forth. Individual Americans had to gauge when and how much money to exchange, whether they should exchange for a week or a day or sometimes an hour! Because the rate would change, often daily, and with FSN salaries it was always a burden. They're behind, you can't do a wage survey every day. Let's say you go six months. In six months they're 20% behind, then it takes Washington a couple of months, with everything having to be sent to Washington. So you have the problem of the lag. It was a chore. We adjusted salaries twice a year and on some occasions gave as much as 40% pay raises.

*Q: Did you find Washington could work out a system for dealing with this? I've often heard it said that the American government gets an awful lot from its foreign service nationals but it is not very good in dealing with them in circumstances that are not unique to Brazil. Did you find the machinery antiquated, was there a problem?*

LAUDERDALE: Well yeah, it worked a little better at my post, because in the time that I was in the civil service, before I joined the Foreign Service, I had participated in wage surveys. So I knew how to do them and I did the one in Brazil myself. I did the one in Mexico City, when I was there in the Administrative Section. I did a wage survey for foreign Service nationals and did a compensation plan. So I did that in Rio. The problem was the time that it took...first of all you have to wait until the local firms adjust their salaries, and then you have to do the survey, and then you have to send the data to Washington. My view then, as now, which didn't sell by the way, is that when you have inflation of 40% a year and you have to adjust 20% twice a year, let's say, and employees lose money during that time, that 100% accuracy isn't that important. Timeliness is more important. Because if you miss the mark by, say, 5% -- let's say you raise salaries by 25% when it should have been 20%, two weeks later you're up to date. This great delay and great analysis to avoid making a 5% mistake is not worth it. That was my view. So, it's approximately 20%, let's give 'em 20%, let's do it now, and if it's off a little bit it will all come out in the wash. Didn't sell. No, we want the data, we want exactitude, so forth. So we all struggled by somehow.

*Q: When John Tuthill came as ambassador -- he again, like Lincoln Gordon, both were economists I believe, and Tuthill was very much a Europeanist, how did he fit in?*

LAUDERDALE: I can tell you about Operation Topsy, which I think was very interesting. I wasn't there for its execution but I was there for its beginning. He was an economist. He had been ambassador to the Common Market (USEC). He came to Brazil and found this big Mission that you described, and I'll tell you two or three of his techniques. One was that within the first month I got called up as Embassy Personnel Officer. He called up me and the doctor, and the Administrative Counselor and he said: "I'm very worried about the health of this community. An AID officer had a heart attack last week, everybody's charging around trying to conquer the

world and move the earth and the pace of life here is very hectic. Let's slow this down! So, we're going to have some rules. Thursday afternoons is volleyball on the beach. Recreation and exercise. No representational activity on the weekend. I'm not going to host any except for force majeure, diplomatic necessity. But this routine stuff is going to be during the week and I expect weekends to be family time. I'm going to slow this pace down. We're going to stop setting unrealistic deadlines, we're going to stop causing people to have heart attacks. We're going to pay more attention to health and so forth. So, go work out the details."

So that was one meeting. Another meeting was with AID. He said to them: "I see you have three hydro-engineers. What are they for?"

"Well, we're building this great dam."

"Well, don't the Brazilians have hydro-engineers?"

"Yeah, but ours are better."

And he said, "I don't care if ours are better. Let Brazilian engineers do this. We don't need American engineers down here to build Brazilian dams. They can build their own dams."

So he put AID working on a different concept, even though (it reminds me of the Vietnam war) "Americans can do it better," this is their country, let them do it, and so forth.

So he slowed the pace down, he cut down the concept of what Americans needed to do and what the Brazilians could do. Once he did that, he said, "Now we've got too many people. We can cut this place by 25% or 15%," and put it into effect.

*Q: Well how did the bureaucracy respond to that? Because one of the things that I think is endemic in the Foreign Service is this rushing all over the place and doing things that I think in retrospect, now that you and I are both retired, you kind of wonder what was all the rushing about? How did you find the system, at the early stages, responded to this?*

LAUDERDALE: I really respected his technique. Before then and since then I've been involved in retrenching government. The history of the Foreign Service is retrenchment, just about. Cutting back. Establishing new programs with no new resources, you've gotta cut old ones. And I've learned over the years that there are basically two ways to do that and I've seen both tried. One is, you just cut staff, you cut an Embassy, you tell an Embassy you can't have four political officers you can only have three, we're going to cut one. Now you guys work out how you're going to cut the work. I never liked that system. Because what I find is that Foreign Service people in particular are ego-driven, they're end-product driven, and they'll work themselves to death trying to do the same old thing.

The other way to cut, or retrench, is to cut the work first. Cut the work first, then cut the staff. That's what Tuthill did. He cut the work first by challenging it. What is all this rushing around? Who says this has to be done by Friday? I think this could be done by September 15th, it's quite enough. Why do you need an American engineer? Why can't you use Brazilians? So you cut

down the expectations, cut down the demands. Then you can say: "Now we can cut staff by 15%." I consider that really professional.

*Q: How did you find... were there any... in your dealings because anything particularly when you're dealing with an administration you're always up against your opposite number. How did you find the Brazilian government as a deliverer, particularly now as it was under military rule?*

LAUDERDALE: On the administrative side, it worked, with airport arrivals and departures, customs and immigration, with the thousands of interchange things that we have, it all worked. We talked about the mordida in Mexico, in Brazil they have a word called "jeito." You pull a jeito. What is a jeito? A jeito is a deal. It's not a bribe, it's a favor. You get things done with jeitos. So we had some jeitos. What is it? It's smoothing relationships, maintaining... of course we sent over our Christmas gratuities and so forth. But I don't remember any particular head-to-head dealings with the Brazilian government on the administrative side.

*Q: You didn't have any of the problem you had in Mexico of visas and all that, because people would only get visas if they really had a reason to come to the United States and probably come back. So that didn't turn into...*

LAUDERDALE: No, no visa mill there. Our consular section was quite small. Had three or four Americans only. No great non-immigrant visa lines. Most of the people who applied, qualified. It was a completely different environment.

*Q: What was your impression...we had what, three or four consular posts there? It's a big country, what was your impression of how they were used, their utility and all that?*

LAUDERDALE: They had one down in Porto Alegre, one up north in Belem, we had one in Curitiba which later got closed. We had one in Salvador, Bahia. Recife, we had not only a consulate there but an AID Mission. Some of those have been closed since that time. Some of those still survive to this day. I think they were probably all appropriate in those days. The only ones I might question was Curitiba, which we closed. I don't know if we need a post in Porto Alegre. I don't know if we need a post in Belem. Salvador, probably yes. Recife, probably yes. Because the distances are so great. From Rio to Recife you're talking 1,000 miles, so you need a little presence up there.

*Q: Was there any problem with staffing or keeping Brasilia going during the time you were there?*

LAUDERDALE: In the posts yes, we seemed to have problems in the posts. In Belem, when the inspectors came they relieved a couple of people; they relieved the principal officer in Belem. I think he was sleeping with the female USIS officer or something. And maybe not coming to work every day. And staffing Brazilian posts was always a bit of a problem; I guess one thing is the Portuguese language. They used to have a Portuguese language school in Rio in the old days, which they had to close. So keeping people, new officers speaking Portuguese...So one thing I spent some time on was keeping the posts staffed. The problem in Rio was just the numbers. In the posts it was sometimes personalities, people didn't want to go, so forth.

*Q: How about Brasilia itself? Was it hard to get people to go, from what I gather...*

LAUDERDALE: It was a frontier.

*Q: That was the whole idea. Was it Kubitschek, or the president before, that was his great dream, that we'll move...we'll get the Brazilians away from the coast and out into the interior.*

LAUDERDALE: You're right. People didn't want to go. The only asset Brasilia had was a beautiful blue sky. It was a great flat plain, the climate wasn't that bad. But there was absolutely nothing to do, nowhere to go. So people didn't want to go, and those that went used to use the shuttle to Rio pretty regularly.

*Q: I have to ask, having never served there, did Mardi Gras pretty much shut things down in those days?*

LAUDERDALE: Absolutely. Just closed down. As a matter of fact my wife and I bought tickets and we were going to see the Mardi Gras parade, and we had children at home. We had a maid, but we forgot to check with her. So as soon as Mardi Gras came she said "Adios, I'll be back next Tuesday." And we said, "Wait a minute." But we had to let her go. But we found a babysitter somehow to go to one parade. I'm never going back. We went down about midnight and left at about three in the morning. I guess we went down at eleven o'clock, but the parade didn't begin until midnight. It's nice, it's worth seeing, but you wouldn't want to do it twice.

*Q: As a post, let's do a little compare and contrast, how would you compare Mexico and Rio in those days in terms of people? Were there any differences?*

LAUDERDALE: Yeah. For Americans, Brazil is a better place to live. The living conditions in Mexico City were better than in Rio, but the relationships with the Brazilian people were a lot better, it's a lot more open, it's a lot friendlier. You feel less threatened. So I think the relationship between the two countries and between the two people's were probably more friendly with the Brazilians, and that's why I think it's a better place for Americans to live. In terms of amenities, Mexico City in those days was superior to Rio, but that may not be true today.

*Q: Was Vernon Walters still there when John Tuthill came?*

LAUDERDALE: Yeah I believe he was.

*Q: Well how did that work out?*

LAUDERDALE: You know, I don't know. Maybe about that time I left. I left shortly after Tuthill...he'd only been there three or six months. So either the relationship wasn't settled by the time I left... I don't have any particular memory of it. I think Walters may have left also, maybe a little after I did.

*Q: Well with Walters, because he is such a phenomenon, when he was there during the Lincoln Gordon time, did you sense any resentment on the part of the Political Section there, or not?*

LAUDERDALE: No, not particularly. Frank Carlucci was the Political Counselor, another officer that was there was Sam Lewis, Bob Ryan was in Econ. He was a young officer like myself. He and I and Frank Carlucci used to go out to lunch pretty regularly. Max Krebs was Political Counselor before Carlucci. I don't remember anything Max Krebs said. It wasn't anything that Frank Carlucci complained about.

*Q: Was Herb Okun there at that time?*

LAUDERDALE: Herb Okun was up in Brasilia.

*Q: I heard that some people were sort of annoyed about...I came into the Foreign Service with Herb. I heard that he was a little bit difficult to deal with when he was up in Brasilia.*

LAUDERDALE: Yes, he was. But if I can digress, I was later in the Embassy in Spain when Franco was still in power. He died during my tour. But the situation was not that different. Under a military dictatorship like Franco and Madras (of Haiti), and whatever his name was in Brazil, where generals are in power, the contacts are military contacts. And the source of information is Intelligence. So in Spain, guess what I found? The CIA Mission is important. Military attachés are important. What does the Political Section do? Very little. What do you read in the newspaper? Nothing. Parliamentarians to talk to? No. So the Intelligence and the military side of the house was predominant. It changed in Spain while I was there when Franco died. We had to change the staffing. We need econ officers, we need political officers. You can cut the Intelligence out. I think that they accepted that as inevitable under a military dictatorship.

**SAMUEL W. LEWIS**  
**Executive Officer, USAID**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1964-1966)**

**Brazil Desk Officer, Bureau for Latin American Affairs**  
**Washington, DC (1966-1968)**

*Ambassador Samuel W. Lewis was born in Texas on October 1, 1930. He received a bachelor's degree from Yale University and a master's degree in international relations from the Johns Hopkins University. His career included positions in Naples, Florence, Rio de Janeiro, Kabul, and an ambassadorship to Israel. Ambassador Lewis was interviewed by Peter Jessup on August 9, 1988.*

LEWIS: I went off then to Brazil on loan to AID as a program officer in the AID mission. I had arranged that assignment. I knew the then-Deputy Assistant Secretary and Coordinator of the Alliance for Progress, Bill Rogers, and had gotten to know him through my work with "Chet." So when I volunteered for a job in the Alliance, he was anxious to have me, and they worked out

this assignment.

I spent almost three years in Rio. The capital was still in Rio effectively in those days, though technically it was already in Brasilia. The ministries hadn't moved. After about a year and a half in the AID mission, I was moved to the Embassy to work for Jack Tuthill, who had come in to replace Linc Gordon -- Linc Gordon was ambassador when I went down -- and then Tuthill, from a European background, came to replace him.

*Q: Tuthill was career, and Lincoln Gordon wasn't?*

LEWIS: Lincoln Gordon had an academic background. That's right. He's been in the New Deal, also, basically an economic development scholar, a very powerful ambassador, as it turned out. He had been there for two or three years when I arrived. He was there during the coup or revolutionary takeover, when the military overthrew Goulart in 1963, just before we went down in 1964. The military were already in control by the time we arrived.

Jack Tuthill, after about a year and a half, came in, and he had a rather weak DCM, who was extremely good on political affairs, Phil Raine. He had been political counselor years earlier, and had come back as DCM in a way like Outerbridge Horsey had done in Italy. He was still the political counselor in his own mind, and he was only interested, really, in that side of the work.

Tuthill needed somebody to kind of run the embassy, and he asked me to come over as his so-called "Executive Officer". He created a new job in the front office, made me a sort of junior-grade DCM called executive officer. I actually supervised for him the consular section, the military attachés, the science attaché, two or three other parts of the embassy, while the DCM concerned himself with the political and economic sections and one or two other things that he enjoyed. That was a terrifically good experience for me, obviously, still at a pretty young age. I spent the last part of my tour in Rio, therefore, there.

Incidentally, when I arrived in Rio as a program officer, Frank Carlucci, now the Secretary of Defense, was the number two in the political section, and we became close friends. Then when I moved to Tuthill's office, he was still number two in the political section. We worked closely together on a lot of projects.

I had to leave prematurely. I was going to go back for a second tour, but my mother became very ill with cancer, and I was the only son, and we really just needed to get back to the United States to try to look after her, so I asked for a transfer back to Washington. Frank then took over the executive officer job from me, and I went back to the Brazil desk, where I became deputy director for both AID and State. We had an integrated bureau at that time in Latin American Affairs. AID and State, as in the field, were integrated, so you had some AID officers as country directors, and State officers as deputies, and vice versa, in mixed staffs. I was the deputy director with an AID officer, Jack Kubisch, who was the office director at that time. Jack had been, earlier, the AID mission director in Brazil when I first arrived there.

I want to say this about Brazil. My experience in the AID mission was really invaluable. In some ways it was, once again, a kind of new world. They were different kind of people. Evaluating

projects, traveling around, looking at what AID was actually doing, and struggling with the budgets, trying to figure out how to mesh theory with practice, how to deal with the Brazilian bureaucracy in ways that you could see some eventual product out of the money, and relating to a different bureaucracy, all of this was very educational, and I enjoyed it. We didn't have any real representation responsibilities in the AID mission. We didn't have to go to a lot of cocktail parties, which I never have liked. We spent our social lives very much privately, with the Brazilians and with some of our AID friends and some friends in the embassy. As in too many places, there was kind of a first-class and second-class citizenship there, and if you were "of the embassy," then you were regarded as kind of a cut above those AID people or those Peace Corps people. But because I stayed with the AID people, I was neither fish nor fowl. And every now and then we would get invited to the Residence, to help entertain visiting firemen, and the other AID people wouldn't, and they couldn't quite understand why, but they really weren't that jealous anyway, because they didn't like cocktail parties much better than I did.

*Q: Was the military regime not as difficult as some on that continent?*

LEWIS: In those days, particularly the first years, '64, '65, '66, '67, the military governed with a pretty light hand. That is, there was no question who was in charge; the politicians took their orders. The bureaucracy took its orders. There were relatively little, you might say, human rights issues at that time. It was not a brutal regime, nothing like what happened in Argentina or in Chile. They got rougher later on, but they were never anything like as bad. Part of it is the Brazilian temperament, the Brazilian lifestyle, and the tradition of the Brazilian military, but it was not a repressive regime. You really didn't know you were living under a military regime, except that the president was a general and the legislature had been dissolved.

*Q: You could get along with the bureaucracy just as well as with Goulart. It was the same bureaucracy.*

LEWIS: Actually, from the point of view of an aid-giving country or the U.S. Embassy, trying to help encourage a lot of reforms in a social system, you got along much better with the military, because they were a lot more efficient. The Goulart regime and its predecessor, the Kubitschek Government, particularly the Goulart period was just chaotic. What had happened was that the trade unions had been stomped on and almost eliminated, so that economic reform by technocrats was made easier, the civilian technocrats who had the key positions in the government under the military umbrella. They could carry out those reforms a lot more easily, not having a powerful political left to deal with or powerful labor movement to deal with. In the long run, it had many drawbacks, but in terms of operating with the government, we had very cooperative, good relations with the Ministers of Finance, Ministers of Planning, and so forth, all of whom had their political power from the military, but the operators were civilians, and they were technically able.

I thought Brazil was a fascinating place and a depressing place, in the sense that the social problems and the social agenda is just unmanageable.

*Q: It still is, isn't it?*

LEWIS: It still is. It's no better 30 years later. I was back there two years ago, and I was very depressed to see how Rio has slid backwards in certain respects, and as far as the social gap is concerned, crime is up a great deal. But there's also a huge economic dynamo that's part of Brazil, and it's really a continent, not a country. It's a world unto its own. Brazilians are delightful people to work with.

Q: *Did you ever get any chance to do any theater work there?*

LEWIS: No, we didn't do any theater work in Brazil. We did a little later, however.

We came back to Washington in 1967, and my mother didn't live a great deal longer, as it turned out. I went to the Brazilian office for a while and helped to manage the AID program and the economic side of the work, particularly, from the Washington end.

Then one day in mid-1968, lo and behold, I was asked if I would go over to the White House to the NSC staff, and take over that Latin American account for Walt Rostow, then Johnson's National Security Advisor. So I was in the White House during the final months of the Johnson Administration.

Q: *Viron Vaky had been there before?*

LEWIS: No, Vaky came after. He replaced me.

Q: *Bowdler?*

LEWIS: I replaced Bill Bowdler, that's right. Bill Bowdler had been in that job through most of the Johnson Administration, and had done a very good job.

Q: *He'd replaced Jorden.*

LEWIS: He'd replaced Bill Jorden, that's right. Then Bill was going out as ambassador somewhere.

Q: *To Panama.*

LEWIS: To Panama. Yes, at that stage. So they had to replace him. It was a one-man NSC account handling Latin America, with a couple of secretaries. Once again, exactly why they sent me, I never precisely knew, but it was a good opportunity to see how the White House was functioning in those days. I was getting a little bored after four of five years of Brazil.

**STUART VAN DYKE**  
**Mission Director, USAID**  
**Brasilia (1964-1968)**

*Stuart Van Dyke was born in Idaho in 1915. He received a bachelor's degree from Indiana University in 1935. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Turkey, Brazil, and Chile. Mr. Van Dyke was interviewed September 18, 1997 by Scott Behoteguy.*

VAN DYKE: In 1964. Brazil was a completely different environment. It is a big, heterogeneous country, stretching from the rain forests in the north to the pampas in the south, and halfway across South America from east to west. When I flew back from Rio, I was half way home when I had crossed the northern border. It is a real melting pot. Although the natives were mostly wiped out by early settlers, a few tribes remain -- barely out of the stone age. The early immigrants were mostly Portuguese. They came, not to settle, but to extract minerals and precious stones, so they did not bring their women. The Portuguese men married or lived with native women, or slaves who were brought in large numbers from Africa. Later immigration brought Germans and Italians and Japanese and almost every other nationality which wanted to relocate. There was very little racism, and all these newcomers married across racial and color lines. As a result, there are few people today who can claim to be pure white or pure German or pure anything. Most of the immigrants settled along the eastern coast. Brazil's frontier took much longer to develop than ours did, and the frontier mentality often played fast and loose with the law -- if there was any law at all.

*Q: Wasn't the capital moved to Brasilia during this period?*

VAN DYKE: Yes, the Foreign Office moved to Brasilia. I traveled there a good deal, usually with Jack Tuthill, who was the American ambassador at that time. But many of the ministries wanted to stay in Rio, and dragged their feet about moving.

*Q: How did the program work out?*

VAN DYKE: Results were very spotty. I once calculated that, during my four years in Brazil, the AID mission processed about two billion dollars worth of project assistance, commodity program assistance and PL 480 foods, either as loans or grants. Some of it was very effective, such as the contracts under which American universities helped to upgrade Brazilian universities. The commodity assistance and PL 480 food helped raise consumption, but whether they had long range development importance is doubtful.

In one respect the Brazilian program was quite different from the Turkish program. In Turkey we had been pretty much satisfied with the institutions of government, the functioning of the legal system, and the absence of corruption. So we did not hesitate to turn over money and commodities to them without imposing special controls. Brazil had major macro-economic problems, and its institutional infrastructure was less mature. Prices doubled about every year, and the government kept the printing presses busy. The legal system was considered to be mainly for the upper classes; the little guy had little faith in it as a means of getting justice. Conflicts of interest were common in government and business. The way to get things done was to use your connections -- your friends or relatives or anyone who owed you a favor. There was even a special word for it in Portuguese -- jetu, as in "I'll try some jetu and see if it works."

We tried in various ways to influence government behavior and policies. Our primary Brazilian counterpart was Roberto Campos, a brilliant U.S.-trained economist who was Minister of Planning and was later elected to the Senate. He knew as well as any of us what needed to be done but was not always able to muscle it into practice. Our principal tool was borrowed from the IMF. Whenever we were in the process of signing a commodity loan agreement, or a project agreement, we developed a letter of compliance which stipulated that, in return for the U.S. financing, the Brazilian government would take certain action. Program loans were accompanied by a letter which usually dealt with the money supply and the budget deficit. Sometimes other policies were included, such as tariff levels. Project loans had conditions attached which involved strengthening the executing institution and improving its management and accounting procedures. The rather specific stipulations accompanying project loans were usually successful in bringing about changes for the better. But the government almost invariably found itself unable or unwilling to meet the money supply and deficit targets to which it had agreed, so the terms of the agreement would have to be renegotiated to conform to the realities.

It wasn't until some years after the aid program stopped that a government was installed which had the courage to tackle its macro-economic problems. Inflation had been a constant headache for a generation. Years of inflation has some insidious effects. It undermines morality. It distorts the sense of values. It gives rise to a lot of minor corruption. It took many years for Brazil to break the old inflationary habit. I am afraid that much of the money which our aid supplied was used as a crutch to justify postponing the basic reforms which were essential to rapid and orderly economic growth, and which might have been made earlier if we hadn't been subsidizing the inflation.

*Q: Should we have been more strict in offering the money?*

VAN DYKE: I think we went about as far as we could in trying to influence their behavior. They had their own ideas about what was possible. They were just not prepared at that time to do what had to be done. And the last thing they wanted was to give the public any reason to think that they were knuckling under to the big bully from up north.

*Q: Was it the IMF that finally got them to change their policies, to cut back the inflation level?*

VAN DYKE: The IMF wasn't any more successful than we were. We were working hand in hand. I think it finally just became politically unprofitable for the Brazilian government to continue irresponsible fiscal and monetary policies. And when that point arrived, they began to introduce the necessary reforms.

Despite the inflation and the uncertainty of those years, the economy grew. Somehow people adjusted to it, and some of them made a lot of money. The inflationary environment probably exacerbated the gap between the rich and the poor, which remains a problem today. But in recent years the government has gotten the inflation problem under control. The country is probably now on the verge of an economic boom, just as Chile's economy boomed after the government finally achieved an atmosphere of stability which rewarded those who were productive rather than those who could play the financial angles.

*Q: As far as personal job satisfaction was concerned, you felt much better when you left Turkey four years before than you did when you left Brazil?*

VAN DYKE: Yes. I'm afraid we did some things in Brazil we should not have done, and left undone some things we should have done.

*Q: Can you think of any examples? We were working against heavy inflation. Would anything we did really have worked out?*

VAN DYKE: Well, hindsight is always a big help. As I said earlier, I think that our PL 480 food and our program loans, which didn't do much but subsidize consumption, enabled the Brazilians for a while to avoid undertaking reforms which were politically unpopular. It is also likely that sending a lot of U.S. agricultural products to Brazil, which itself is a big agricultural producer, depressed prices and discouraged increases in production which could have been sold locally or exported to advantage.

Toward the end of my assignment, the then U.S. ambassador, Jack Tuthill, concluded that the AID program was simply too big and too intrusive, and told us to cut back. Although the AID mission itself was not large, we were financing a considerable number of technical assistance projects, through contracts and direct hire. I don't remember the exact numbers, but at its peak I guess USAID accounted for about a thousand employees. Half of these were Americans and half were locals. In a country of a hundred million people, this was a drop in the bucket, but we had managed to attract the attention of the local left wing. Street demonstrations had been staged protesting our education projects. U.S. technicians were alleged to be trying to indoctrinate the Brazilians with capitalist ideas by re-structuring the curriculum. Although this was patently nonsense, we did close out the project in order to avoid any further confrontations. Other projects were ended before their scheduled close-out date, and we stopped planning new projects which brought U.S. technicians to Brazil. All of this was unilateral action by the U.S. The Brazilian authorities did not request any downsizing; on the contrary, they were usually pleased to be able to get free assistance from U.S. experts. Reducing their numbers probably produced no serious adverse consequences, since the size was minuscule compared to the number of Americans in Brazil under private sector auspices. Ambassador Tuthill's initiative did raise some eyebrows, however, since his predecessor, Lincoln Gordon, had been an exponent of increased AID spending and more technical assistance. It also generated publicity which may have helped produce a particularly unhappy visit to Rio by a subcommittee of the House Government Operations Committee, chaired by John Moss of California.

We first heard that the subcommittee was going to tour Latin America and look at how AID was performing. Then I began to get phone calls from colleagues reporting they had heard that Brazil was the only country which would get a real scrutiny, and that I was personally in the committee's cross-hairs. I searched my memory to try to recall some crime of which I could be accused. After a whirlwind visit by one of the committee's staff members, we got word that the tour was underway. The group consisted of Congressman Moss and his wife, another congressman who was not a member of the committee but nevertheless joined the tour together with his wife, and several staff members. They stopped for perfunctory visits at a handful of Latin American capitals, and then arrived in Rio. The first day of "hearings" was with the

ambassador and the military attaché and his staff. Everything was sweetness and pleasantries. I attended the sessions to see if I could detect what they were especially interested in about USAID, but encountered no clues.

Then began the first of five full days with the group. One of those days, a Sunday, was taken up with a boat trip on the bay with Roberto Campos and some of his friends. This proved to be a tactical mistake, since the Moss group quickly tired of the boat and wanted to go home. They were pretty unhappy to learn that Campos was determined to spend the whole day afloat, as was his usual Sunday custom. The other four days were taken up with "hearings", or with trips to projects in the city. USAID staff members who spoke at the hearings were required to take an oath before speaking. During my tenure in Washington, I had attended many congressional hearings, and testified at most of them, but I never before encountered an atmosphere where the hostility was so pervasive and so complete. You could have cut it with a knife. We were obviously guilty of something, but it never became clear what it was. Things weren't helped when the congressman asked to visit a certain housing project for which AID had provided some funds. Although I had told the staff to be sure that the driver of the car made a test run to the site before our official visit, to be sure he knew the way, he got lost in the maze of streets. To save time, I suggested visiting an alternative housing project. It was indicative of the atmosphere that I was accused of deliberately causing the problem in order to cover up something we didn't want to be seen.

At the end of the six days I was physically exhausted. I retreated into the hills above Rio and slept for thirteen hours, non-stop. When the report of the committee was issued a few months later, it was critical of the lack of leadership in the Rio mission. I have often wondered why I was the lucky guy who attracted the attention of Congressman Moss. If you spend as many years around the same people as I did, you not only make some wonderful friends; you also make some enemies, or at least some detractors. I was minister for economic affairs in the Embassy as well as being head of the Aid mission, and I knew there were guys who wanted my job, either for themselves or for a friend. But no, it couldn't have been that. Whatever it was, I still have nightmares about that week.

I was ready for a change. But before leaving Rio I should mention some of my colleagues there who turned out to be foreign service superstars. Jack Tuthill was one, and I liked him immensely even though he caused us some problems. Another was Sam Lewis, a junior foreign service officer detailed to AID and assigned to our program office. He subsequently was named ambassador to Israel and, incredibly, lasted in that job for nine years. Then there was Colonel Vernon ("Dick") Walters, head of the military group. He left Rio about the same time I did, and we both were assigned to Paris. Later he was named Deputy Director of the CIA. He was one of the few guys mentioned in the Watergate hearings who emerged from them with his reputation enhanced. His capacity to learn foreign languages was legendary, and he served as an interpreter to presidents and secretaries of state in many high level conferences. He still appears occasionally on the evening news with comments on world affairs. Another was Frank Carlucci, a foreign service officer in the political division who was the ambassador's liaison with USAID. He was named ambassador to Portugal after leaving Brazil, and later was, first, Deputy to the Secretary of Defense and then the Secretary. When the administration changed, he left government for Wall Street, where he continues to make news.

**MARSHALL D. BROWN**  
**Assistant Program Officer, USAID**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1965-1970)**

*Marshall D. Brown was born and raised in California. He received his undergraduate and master's degrees in political science from Stanford University. Mr. Brown's service with USAID took him to Peru, Brazil, and Honduras. He was interviewed December 4, 1996 by W. Haven North.*

*Q: You worked on that for about a year and a half. And then what?*

BROWN: Then I had the good fortune to go to a dinner party and meet Stuart Van Dyke who was in the AID director in Brazil. I guess I said something sensible to him because the next thing I knew he was offering me a job in the mission in Brazil. So I joined AID.

*Q: What year was this?*

BROWN: It was 1965. I went to Brazil, learned Portuguese and spent my first year as a assistant program officer, working for a State Department officer on detail to AID, named Samuel Lewis. That was a marvelous introduction to government; I could not have had a better role model that Sam Lewis. He was politically astute, highly energetic, brilliant, articulate, and highly respect and well liked by everyone. I only worked for him for a year before State prematurely pulled him back to work as special assistant to our Ambassador to Brazil, Lincoln Gordon. I learned an enormous amount in that brief period about how to succeed in the foreign affairs bureaucracy. I would note that Sam capped his highly distinguished career as the longest serving U.S. Ambassador to Israel, during which time the Camp David Peace Accord was signed.

*Q: He was a regular foreign service officer.*

BROWN: Yes. He was a regular foreign service officer who had been selected for a tour with AID. Unfortunately for AID, because Sam was so talented, Ambassador Gordon managed to get him recalled to State before he had completed his assignment with AID.

*Q: Did you get any orientation to AID or you just came in and went out?*

BROWN: Very little. As I recall, there was two weeks of general orientation, but I didn't get the program documentation course. So there I was, a newly hired assistant program officer who didn't know the first thing about program documentation, which was very big in those days. And never being entirely comfortable with my new profession, once Sam left I ended up changing jobs with in the mission. I joined the capital development office.

*Q: So, you just had one year in Brazil in the program office?*

BROWN: Yes. And then moved over to the capital development office where I spent the last four of my five years in Brazil..

*Q: What was the program in Brazil at that time that you were working on?*

BROWN: Well, before Vietnam came along it was AID's largest overseas program. As I recall, something like \$200 million per year, including Food for Peace. There had been an anticommunist coup in 1964 and the new government was very pro-U.S. In turn, the U.S. pulled out the stops in support of the new government. Lincoln Gordon was the ambassador. He was an excellent ambassador. Not perfect, of course. He had the unfortunate tendency to gratuitously second guess Stuart Van Dyke, our director. But it was a very exciting time to be in Brazil. We had lots of money, and we were working in all the then-known development sectors, and we were doing very exciting, cutting edge things. I had the opportunity to conceptualize and develop the agency's first sector program, for a health sector loan in 1967. In 1968, I developed an even bigger education sector loan program.

*Q: Was there any particular development philosophy or strategy that AID was following or the mission was trying to follow at that time?*

BROWN: Well we were working within the framework of the Alliance for Progress, which as I recall was concerned with the increasing economic growth and economic reform and promoting democracy. We also had lots of money. I don't think the mission really had to make hard choices between projects; in a sense, we did all the sensible proposals and sorted out the losers later. I suppose the mission philosophy was to respond to any opportunity where we thought we could be successful. We had major commitments in agriculture, roads, power, water and sewage, health and education and university development, municipal development, public administration, economic planning, tax collection, feasibility studies and housing. We were not in family planning, not until many years later. I even developed a loan to strengthen the Brazilian Census and Statistical Institute, intended to improve their capacity to conduct the 1970 census and to carry out sample surveys. Unfortunately it was a good idea whose time had not yet arrived. The leadership of the Institute was very timid, not really up to the job of managing and directing the program. This project was only marginally successful. The program overall had both a very large technical assistance component and a large loan-funded capital development element. There was also a large program loan for economic stabilization.

*Q: Did you have a general commodity import program ?*

BROWN: Yes, there was a large commodity import program as well. And that's really how the sector loan program came into being. You had all this money for Brazil but they weren't meeting all their disbursement related, macroeconomic conditions, and yet we wanted to keep assisting them. So somebody, I believe it was Jerry Levinson, the director of the capital development office in the LA Bureau, conceived the idea of a sector loan where you'd set your conditions related to performance within a sector, and if they met these conditions, you could release the funds and still have the desired balance of payments impacts but wouldn't get caught up with IMF macro-conditions. And so we moved from the commodity import program and stabilization lending to sector lending. (Years later I learned from the IMF that the coordination of IMF and

U.S. bilateral economic conditionality was pioneered in Brazil, Chile and Argentina during this period (the 1960s.) The sector loan concept also was in response to the new emphasis that came out of the White House (President Johnson's) to allocate much larger amounts of assistance to the "social sectors".

*Q: I see. And you did the first sector loan for health. What was the sector program in health? What did it cover?*

BROWN: Well, it was an interesting experience. The chief of our health office was an old-line technical assistance believer. He was overseeing what he thought was a very good technical assistance program, and he didn't see the need for a sector program, conditioned disbursements or a new sector analysis. So, I ended up developing the sector analysis, drawing heavily on several recent studies done by the AID-assisted economic planning group in the Ministry of Planning, plus a contracted study to identify key health problems. Based on that analysis, I developed a strategy for attacking key problems-and for spending the \$15 or so million we were asking for. Lack of potable water and sewage disposal were major problems. This in turn was the cause of the major health problem-waterborne diseases and high child mortality. Interesting, the solution to the cause of the underlying problem required both political reform and a new infrastructure finance approach.

We developed a program of water and sewerage loans for middle sized cities and created a national sanitation loan fund to carry it out. The national government also made a financial contribution, and the participating cities had to pay a share of the costs and repay the loan. This was a new approach in Brazil; they had always been working on a grant basis from a dozen different agencies. It was a real pork barrel. Influenced by politicians in both the executive and legislative at both the state and federal level, these agencies would give grants to build parts of a system, a few kilometers of pipeline, an intake, etc., and the political sponsors would inaugurate them at the appropriate time. The problem was that the cities couldn't get enough money to build a complete system. We negotiated a change in that approach. We told them to reallocate the money that went to these various agencies and consolidate it in the national sanitation fund. Second, we told them to finance only cities which were willing to conduct a feasibility study of the cost of building an entire system, that is, intake, treatment and distribution, and to charge rates sufficient to repay the loan and maintain the system. This was a radical change in thinking, and a big stumbling block at first, because the Brazilians said in effect, "Hey, this stuff always came free. You don't have to pay for water." Aided by the attractiveness of the \$15 million and supported by Minister of Finance, we finally got them to agree. I would note parenthetically that this would not have been possible had we not been dealing with a reform-minded military government, which had overthrown the far left government of President Goulart three year earlier. Eventually this program became an enormous success.

*Q: How many municipalities were you working in? It is a big country, so...*

BROWN: That I can't recall. We probably started with a half dozen cities. Interestingly, the wealthier cities in the south were much more receptive to the approach than the poorer cities in the north and northeast, who seemed to believe that they had a right to a "free lunch." A key player in the marketing and implementation of the program was a Brazilian NGO called IBAM,

the Brazilian Institute for Municipal Administration. They were working with many municipalities, were widely respected and were highly effective in explaining why this new self-help approach was in the cities' best interest. By the time I left Brazil, three years later, there were several hundred cities involved in this. We developed a second loan for the fund, the government increased its contribution as well..

*Q: What was the size of the sector loan program?*

BROWN: Our initial loan was \$15.4 million dollars, \$400 thousand for technical assistance. I believe our second loan was \$25 million. The program really worked very, very well.

*Q: Why did it work well?*

BROWN: Because it was addressing a crying local need, for safe water and adequate sewage disposal, throughout Brazil. It was both a political priority and a health priority.

*Q: They hadn't had anything like this before?*

BROWN: No. They had always dealt with the problem on a pork barrel, grant basis, but there was never enough money on a grant basis and nobody had a complete system. All you had were pieces of systems. The politician would say, "I got you this many kilometers of pipeline or I got you a little water spigot (which doesn't work most of the time)." And it was all, "Just get me elected and I'll get you a few more kilometers." That was their mentality. We introduced a new approach which said to the mayors in effect, "Analyze your problem, see what it will cost to construct a complete system, how much you will have to repay, how high the rates have to be to maintain the system. Then explain to the people that they are going to have to pay to get the water system they want." Those mayors who were willing got loans. Interestingly, it worked best in the smaller-and wealthier-cities. We worked from the bottom up, starting with the smaller cities where we had agreement to the financial soundness approach. And because politics in the bigger cities were more resistant to political reform, they held out and they were the last ones to come on board. And indeed, cities like Rio and San Paulo had to be financed by the World Bank and IDB. They were far too big for our fund. We could be most effective in the medium sized and smaller cities. Ironically, I doubt if we could have developed this program had we been burdened with the ideological baggage of the "New Directions". If we had been required to focus on the poorer cities of the north, I do not believe they would ever have agreed to the self-help reforms. Or if we had been required to assure that x% of the poor neighborhoods were covered by the initial system, and that they charge higher rates to cover the cross subsidy for the poor households, I have doubts the cities would have been willing to undertake the new approach. I do not believe that the prospects for achieving institutional reform abroad are enhanced by imposing ideological blinders on the negotiators.

*Q: Were there institutional issues? Did you have to give a lot of attention to the institutional concerns of the management of these systems?*

BROWN: That was critical. And that was the key role that IBAM would play. We required a feasibility study, which again was a new concept for the Brazilians. A study, before the project

was approved, of how much would it cost, how many people would you cover, what would the rates have to be to sustain this system based on adequate maintenance as well as repaying the loan. And then you have to train a staff to operate and maintain your utility.

*Q: But you were able to get people to pay for the water and sewage and repay the loan and all that?*

BROWN: Yes, as I said we started in the wealthier south, where there was a higher education level and better municipal administration generally. They were the pioneers, and eventually the new financing approach was extended throughout the country. Once the poorer cities realized that the free lunch was no longer available, they bought into the concept. I believe both the IDB and IBRD eventually channeled their water and sewerage financing through the nation sanitation fund.

*Q: And you also said that you worked on an education sector loan. What were the characteristics of that?*

BROWN: We developed a program of secondary education reform which attacked the qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in the existing system. This was financed with a \$32 million education sector loan. A key feature was the introduction of a practical, work-related curriculum at the secondary education level. The Brazilians had a rote system of memorization and classical studies. And we had three education planning teams that had gone into Brazil after the 1964 revolution to work with Brazilian counterparts at the primary, secondary and higher education levels. The education sector program was an outgrowth of work with the secondary education group. The higher education team effort exploded into a political problem. The team was accused of interfering with Brazilian educational development and they were eventually asked to leave of the country. The leftist students at the universities were still quite powerful.. At the secondary level, however, we were very successful. The team had very good acceptance by their Brazilian counterparts. They believed in the concept of creating practical curriculums with vocational education tracts as well as the academic options.

I designed the project approach or operating mechanism along the lines of the national sanitation fund-a national fund which would provide financing for secondary education reform for states which were willing to undertake the reform commitments and met the eligibility criteria. And so, we were again working on a national fund approach, but one offering grants rather than loans.

*Q: What kind of commitments were you talking about roughly?*

BROWN: They involved the existence of full-time secondary school planning team in the state, satisfactory multi-year plans focused on the expansion of the new work-oriented secondary schools. They also involved implementation of those plans, increasing educational expenditures at the state level, curriculum reform, teacher training, better teacher salaries and proper school maintenance. In essence, quality improvements in education and administration and increased access. We had four states out of seven which had expressed interest which ultimately were willing to undertake the reforms. So, the loan was put together on the basis of that package, taken to Washington and approved. There were also policy and financial reforms required of the

ministry of education. Based on the existing state plans we were able to get the program underway in those four states quickly. We developed a follow-on loan the next year, adding another four or five states to the program. I think Brazil has 20 states or so, so there were maybe ten that got into the program. And they were the ones in the forefront of change in the system. Eventually the whole country shifted over. But we got the program going based on states willing to make the financial and program reforms. Once again, I suspect that if we had proposed this approach during the Basic Human Needs era, it would never have been approved because it wasn't focused on poverty. It was focused on whichever state governor was prepared to accept the conditions and pursue this reform agenda, never mind whether his state was a high income state in the south. If we had been required to restrict it only to poor states in the north I doubt the reform program would ever have got off the ground. But that's just an aside.

*Q: Where were the people, the wealthier states by and large?*

BROWN: The wealthier states were in the south. One of them was in the program. One was in the north and the two others were in the center of the country. So we actually had a good geographical mix of states.

*Q: The money mostly went for school construction?*

BROWN: The bulk of the funds went for school construction, plus equipment, materials and teacher training. We had excellent Brazilian leadership at the secondary education level. The leader of the Brazilian counterpart team was a fellow named Peri Porto; he emerged as the leader and manager of this whole program. He was a very bright and capable guy. He made sure it worked within the Education Ministry. Of course we had negotiated the program with the Ministries of Finance and Planning as well because they wanted the financial resources. More than once they had to get involved to assure compliance on the policy front and remind the states that they had to comply because the government needed those financial resources for the treasury. It was a great help having the leverage of the Planning and Finance Ministries to call on from time to time.

*Q: Were there problems with this federal/state structure relationship?*

BROWN: Yes, but not fatal ones. The country was highly politicized, but it was the politics of the individual more than the national party. The parties were more like associations of regional fiefdoms. Every state had its governor and its politicians, and they tended to be out for their own narrow interests. You needed the federal government to step in when they started to depart from the agreed course of action and bring them back in line. It didn't hurt that the President was a general in the Army.

I just thought of one interesting anecdote that had to do with reform process for the education sector loan. We were in the process of trying to negotiate the conditionality of the loan with the government, and the Mission Director, Bill Ellis, called a meeting of the project committee to discuss his recent meeting with the Minister of Education, Tarso Dutra. We met in the Director's office. The Minister was a former governor of the state of Rio Grande do Sul and a deputy in the congress. He was also a very wily politician who didn't want any reform really. He just wanted

the money to build schools to name after him. So he had been lobbying our director to reduce some of the financial contribution requirement and other reforms. Our project committee was not impressed with what the Director was telling us. Finally, at one point Bill said, "Look, put yourself in Tarso Dutra's shoes." And I made the mistake of immediately jumping in and saying "But our job is not to put ourselves in Dutra's shoes; our job is to advocate education reform", not realizing that with my helpful clarification I had just told our Director that he didn't know what his job was. Bill threw a book down on the coffee table looked daggers at me and said, "You-get out of here!" I left, followed shortly by the other members of the committee. Well, I became a kind of folk hero of the reform group within the mission because I had said what needed to be said-carried away with my enthusiasm for our agreed reform agenda. Eventually Bill came around to our approach, and bought the reform package we were proposing. Whatever it was that Tarso Dutra had wanted, Bill told him we couldn't accept it. Being tossed out of the director's office made a lasting impression on me, and at that moment I was wondering where my career went from there.

*Q: Because this was Bill Ellis, director of the mission!*

BROWN: Yes. Bill Ellis came out of OMB and the program side of AID, favored technical assistance and technicians and didn't have much use for capital development officers. And despite his reputation of being one of AID's "best and brightest, he seemed to prefer developing good personal relations with the Brazilian to pushing policy reform. So I was worried for a while about my future. My clarifying comment, though well-intended, was presumptuous. Bill found it insulting, as I'm sure I would have too, if one of my young, hot shot staff had done that to me-telling me what my job was.

*Q: That sounds familiar. Were there other sectors you worked on?*

BROWN: I developed the loan I mentioned earlier for IBGE, the census and statistical organization. And I worked on the implementation projects loans that were already underway. A housing project in Sao Paulo and loans financing technical assistance in planning, system design and management for the water and sewer companies of the city-state of Guanabara, where Rio is located. And they were successful projects, due to good local leadership. The IBGE project was not so successful.

*Q: What was it about?*

BROWN: It was giving them the capacity to do the 1970 census and to conduct periodic sample survey. But IBGE had a very cautious, timid director. We in effect had to sell him on the project. I recall going over to his office with my boss, Lou Perez. The project paper was all prepared, ready to go to Washington. After an hour of our persuasion he signed the loan application., but he clearly had second thoughts about undertaking the project.

*Q: But it was more our idea than his?*

BROWN: Well, we had an excellent technical assistance team that designed the project The senior IBGE staff supported the proposal, but they lacked executive leadership at the top to make

timely decision and tough decisions. In a sense, the project was also beyond his technological grasp. We provided him a new IBM 360, which was the top of the line computer at the time, technical assistance and training in designing and conducting sample survey and in conducting and processing the census. But he was a guy who was afraid to make decisions, and the project did not achieve its objectives, due basically to the lack of host country capacity really. We sold them a very good bill of goods.

I remember Jack Heller, who was one of our excellent legal advisors, identifying the fatal flaw in the project in our internal mission review meeting on the proposal. Jack was a very clever guy and he always had a clever remark to make. In this case, he said something to the effect that, "This project is designed like a Cadillac when we should be providing a Chevrolet." I took great umbrage at that but he was absolutely right. It was too advanced, had too many state of the art bells and whistles for them. We would have had better results with a much simpler project. IBGE was my first project, and I learned a lesson from it, which was, that the best laid plans will not work if you do not have the necessary host country capacity and commitment

*Q: Well, you mentioned that there were some other areas as well that you worked on, program areas.*

BROWN: Well, there was housing, the two water and sewerage loans for the city of Rio, the Health Sector Loan and the two Education Sector Loans, the second of which was for \$50 million.

*Q: Were you the one responsible for their implementation? Or was that taken on by others?*

BROWN: We had a project committee system, and during implementation primary project responsibility passed to the technical office. The committee typically consisted of the technical officer, an engineer, lawyer, controller, and the capital development officer. We had a full service mission. During the project development phase, the capital development officer would be the chairman of the group. Once the borrower had satisfied the conditions preceding the first disbursement then the technical officer would take over the chairmanship of the group, and he or she would manage the implementation with the help of the other members. My specialty was conceiving, conceptualizing and devising project and program models or mechanisms. I was happy to leave implementation of someone else. I found the project design process to be more intellectually challenging, more fun. However, over the years I learned that the real satisfaction comes from seeing successful implementation.

*Q: Well, how did you find working with the Brazilians?*

BROWN: It was my first experience in an AID context, but I found them to be capable, likable people. They were also good negotiators. Of course, those were the days when we thought government was a good thing; more was better! And so we were trying to build up their government. They had a very good group of career people in finance and planning ministries. I enjoyed working with them. It was obviously a wonderful country to live in.

*Q. What happened to the program in Brazil?*

In fact, my career was downhill thereafter! After starting your career in Rio, where do you do for an encore? We were a very big mission, with a big staff. Following the 1964 “revolution” when U.S. policy was to give top priority to assuring political stability and economic growth in Brazil, the Embassy had no problem with the AID staff build up. Indeed, they encouraged it. However, five years and two ambassadors later, and with Brazil no longer a crisis case, then-Ambassador John Tuthill decided that AID was just too big. At that point, an unfortunate worldwide air gram came out on the subject of “bats, rats and noxious birds.” He used that air gram as proof that AID was too big and getting into too many areas-creating too great of an American “presence.” He made a name for himself within State for having launched “Operation Topsy,” the reduction of AID field missions.

*Q: That was the famous one.*

BROWN: That was the beginning of State going after the size of AID missions abroad. It started in Brazil about 1968 or 69.

*Q: What political context? Was there any sort of State Department pressures in your earlier times to do things or not do things?*

BROWN: Not really, other than keeping up the flow of balance of payment assistance so as to support the Government’s political stability and economic growth. There was a debate on macroeconomic issues, but no micro-management. I would characterize the late ‘60s as the “golden era” of AID: we had ample resources, no congressional earmarks or micro-management, State tended to set the policy framework and let AID carry out its program within that framework, rather than trying to tell you what to do. And we could respond to pressing development priorities within the host country-rather than trying to address a prescribed congressional agenda. In my view, it really was a marvelous time to be working for AID.

*Q: But then, was it during your time there that you began to see the change in terms of cutting back and so on?*

BROWN: Yes. I was on home leave in late 1968. Tuthill's argument had found support in Washington. AID was required to look at each person returning to post and to certify that they were “essential” to the mission before they could return. Fortunately, I was found to be essential.

*Q: And were there major cuts in the mission then?*

BROWN: We took a cut at the margin, but it was not noticeable. What was significant is that was the origin of what has become one of the State Department’s principal peacetime pastimes, namely, reducing the size of overseas missions-and particularly the AID component.

*Q: Were there any particular issues in Brazil that reflected this concern? Were there any problems of having that many Americans and so on?*

BROWN: Not that I can recall. I believe it was more was just Tuthill's seeing an opportunity to advance his own career, combined with his disinterest if not disdain for what AID was trying to do. In addition, he was not well liked by the Brazilians. When Lincoln Gordon was Ambassador AID enjoyed strong support-conceptually and politically. The U.S. was supporting a new government that had thrown out the Communists in 1964. AID was a priority element of that strategy. That was in 1964. By 1968, the government had consolidated itself in power and had gained economic stability. The U.S.-Brazil relationship had cooled quite a bit. There was a change of Presidents from General Castelo Branco, who was very pro-American, to General Costa e Silva, a less talented leader with a group of much more nationalistic advisers. And we had a different ambassador. Relations were less cordial. State was now much less concerned about maintaining a high level of AID assistance to Brazil.

I do not know if the initiative came originally from Washington or the Embassy, but began to focus on AID staffing level-a strategic national security concern that the State Department seems to become obsessed with as soon as its most recent crisis has passed. Urged on by Ambassador Tuthill, they decided it was time to cut the AID mission. There really wasn't a U.S. "presence" problem; the Ambassador simply decreed that was such a problem. Yes, we had quite a number of Americans in country, and we had hundreds of contractors-but Brazil was an enormous country of some 90 million. Rio was a sprawling metropolis with million of inhabitants. You never saw the Americans. The Embassy never seemed to see them between 1964 and about 1967. But once the priority for Brazil had diminished somewhat, the Embassy became obsessed with the U.S. "presence" question. Often this is largely a petty bureaucratic preoccupation. I have seen it in country and after country. It seems to be what State/Embassies instinctively revert to when they don't have any real work to do, or any White House policy directives telling them what they should be doing..

*Q: Were there any major issues or events during your time there?*

BROWN: There was one. It was the enactment of "Institutional Act Number Five". I have forgotten the year; it was probably 1967. That's where the government cracked down on their dissidents and scheming politicians and "cancelled" (there really is no good English translation of Portuguese word) the political rights of a lot of the politicians and were left leaning and corrupt. The Act in effect said, "You can never run for office again; you are a non-entity politically." They barred the "cassados" from any future political activity.

The U.S. reacted and suspended our assistance program. They put it "under review." I remember it was ironic because the day of the suspension I was supposed to deliver the draft health sector loan agreement to my counterpart in the ministry of finance. By chance, I ran into him that morning coming out of my apartment building. He is driving by; he stops and waves, and I tell him "I'll have the draft agreement to you today." "Good," he replies. Then I arrive at the office and discover we have suspended the program, and I can't deliver it to him as I promised. But more than that, State has decided that we can't tell the government we have suspended the program.

That was one of those clever strategies where we send a political signal by not telling them we're sending a political signal! At least initially. And so, in my situation I couldn't explain to my

counterpart why I wasn't delivering the draft agreement. He kept calling, "Where's the agreement? You said you were going to send it." And I said, "Well, you know, it got hung up with the typist, then, it is in the mail, then something else." For about two weeks I had to make up stories why I couldn't deliver the agreement. Finally we came out and told them, "Our AID program is under review because of the adoption of Institutional Act Number Five", restricting political freedom.

There was a big meeting in the Embassy, chaired by the DCM, to discuss our policy because there were some dissenting views within the country team about our strategy. And most of the AID Mission was there arguing against holding up the program. They said that it didn't make any sense, that we were doing things that help the Brazilian people and holding up our aid and assistance is not going to change Institutional Act Number Five. I remember the DCM saying, "I don't understand you AID people, how you can think like that." He was lecturing us that we were all off base. Eventually State decided we could resume our program. The government may have softened Institutional Act Number Five; I'm not sure, but we went back to business-after a several week hiatus in our program.

What eventually led to the phase out of the AID program in Brazil was the human rights issue, as dramatized by the sanctimonious Senator Church. He visited Brazil several times in the 1968-70 period, and he didn't like what he saw. He launched a campaign on the Hill to close down or sharply phase down the AID program. That was the beginning of the end for the AID program. By 1971, I think the decision was made to phase out.

*Q: Were there severe human rights issues?*

BROWN: No there weren't; but Senator Church, who was the political precursor of the later Carter Administration's preoccupation with human rights, didn't like military government, no matter how benevolent. Ironically, in terms of honesty and good administration, the military ran the country much better than the preceding democratically elected governments. The Brazilians are not a brutal people. There was no widespread torture or abuse of prisoners. I'm sure there were cases of police brutality, but that was true in most developing countries. It was not a brutal dictatorship. Brazilians are not that kind of people.

There is a famous story about Brazilian conflict resolution. It involved an uprising in the south. You had two opposing factions, with generals and tanks, deployed and lined up facing each other from a distance. One general called the opposing general on the phone and said, "How many tanks do you have?" The other replied, "I have so many, how many do you have?." The caller replied, "I have so many." Then they compared numbers of soldiers. Then they discussed how the battle would go and who would win, based on their comparison of the two forces. The general with the smaller force said, "Well, OKAY, you win." Brazilians are not a violent people; they look for ways to solve a problem without violence. They have a easy going, relaxed style, and a very creative, musical culture. It was a delightful place to live. But you had a military dictatorship. You had some restrictions on some political freedom. It was a benevolent military government, staffed by civilians. No one lived in fear or was afraid of the government-except for the far left. But the situation was not like the oppression which existed under the military dictatorships in Argentina, Chile or Paraguay. Nevertheless, Brazil situation did not meet Senator

Church's human rights standards, and he began a campaign to stop supporting the government. As I recall, OMB was looking for a reason to reduce the size of the Brazil program, so Church's attack fed into their efforts. That was the beginning of the end. In 1971 the mission was directed to prepare a phase out plan, and proceeded to carry it out over the next three or four years. Eventually, all that was left was an AID Rep and a family planning program.

*Q: Did you travel around the country a lot?*

BROWN: Brazil is an enormous country. I saw quite a bit of it, from Fortaleza on the coast in the Northeast to Rio Grande do Sul on the Argentine boarder in the south. I visited Brasilia and the center, but there is also a lot of it I didn't see.

*Q: Were you involved in the northeast then? In that particularly severe area of poverty?*

BROWN: Actually, we had a separate regional mission in the city of Recife, which was unique.

*Q: Explain the structure and situation.*

BROWN: Because of the extreme poverty in the northeast, AID had set up this regional office with its own staff, strategy, budget and projects. It was a part of the Rio mission, and everything had to be approved by the Rio office. There was considerable tension between the two over the funding level for the NE office. The Brazilian Government also had created a regional development authority for the development of the NE; it was called SUDENE. SUDENE was over-staffed with nationalistic state planners. They were a difficult group to work with. Though the NE Mission and SUDENE were frequently at each other throats, at budget time each organization used the existence of the other to justify their respective indispensability and to argue for more funding.

The problems were severe: a feudal agriculture system based on sugar; a mass of poor farmers on marginal soil; frequent and severe droughts; and as a result, a high level of migration to the larger cities, leading to health, housing and other social problems. During my five years in Brazil, I did not see that we made much of an inroad on the most severe problems in the region.

*Q: But these sector projects you worked on, weren't they in the northeast?*

BROWN: Yes. We had four NE states participating in the education sector program, and a number of cities in the northeast received water system financing. And there were other programs, adult literacy, preventive health care, self-help housing, addressing some of the symptoms of poverty.

*Q: There was no real concept of how to address the development of that area?*

BROWN: Yes, there was. At two different times, Donor Lion was appointed assistant mission director for the NE. The second time he was also the Consul General. Donor understood the nature of the region's problem, and he had developed a strategy to solve it: a transformation of the whole rural sector, the "zona da mata.". Unfortunately, his master plan was much more a

theoretical construct than an operational plan. At that point in his career, Donor was a grand strategist. If I recall correctly his idea involved land reform, integrated rural development and other costly interventions. It was a very expensive proposal, and probably completely infeasible given the low level of human resources in the proposed implementing agencies, the lack of support from the Brazilian Government and the resistance of the large landholders, among other obstacles. Donor's proposal, which would have taken most of the Mission entire budget, did not get a warm reception in Rio. Frustrated with the lack of support, Donor decided to submit his proposal directly to Washington-and go around the Rio mission.

*Q: He was supposed to report to the Mission Director.*

BROWN: Yes he was. He was as assistant director and worked for the Mission Director. The budget for the NE Mission was a part of the whole mission budget to get funding it was going to come from Rio. But he was frustrated at what he considered the lack of support out of Rio, and so I think he decided that as Consul General he could take his case directly to Washington. He found out he was wrong. He was removed from his job shortly thereafter. That was the end of his career in Brazil, and the beginning of the end for the regional mission as well.

*Q: Bill Ellis was the Mission Director at that time?*

BROWN: I'm not sure. I think it was near the end of Stuart Van Dyke's tenure. As I said, once Donor left, they began to phase down the regional office. SUDENE was increasingly difficult to work with. Their approach was "better living through better state planning." They were anticapitalist, leftist planners who had a state enterprise solution to every problem. Donor had implicitly adopted a part of this approach in his transformation proposal. Even if you accepted a statist approach, the competence to carry out such an effort was unlikely to be found in the northeast of Brazil.

With respect to the Brazilian Government's view of the NE, I believe they decided to put their money where the returns were the greatest-which was not the northeast-so as to maximize economic growth and productive capacity. I think they concluded that the problems of poverty would have to wait.

*Q: Any other aspect of your work in Brazil that we haven't touched on?*

BROWN: Well, I returned to Brazil in 1971 or 72 to help the mission develop a very interesting science and technology loan.

*Q: What was that supposed to do?*

BROWN: That was supposed to develop an enhanced capacity for science and technological research and create a capacity for doing applied research for the industrial sector. It was centered in the state of Sao Paulo, with subsequent outreach to a similar capacity in other states. sell applications to industry. To promote practical, as opposed to pure, research, the institutes were required to cover a certain percent of their budgets by conducting applied research activities for

industry. A major marketing effort was also required to convince the industrial leaders that such research really would pay off.

*Q: Where did the motivation or interest in doing something like this come from?*

BROWN: It came from the Brazilian leadership, in the state of Sao Paulo. The Brazilians were very interested in improving their research capacity and in becoming leaders in science and technology. The key individual on the Brazilian side was a U.S.-trained social scientist named Pastor, who worked for the state of Sao Paulo. He got acquainted with the AID mission and got them interested in the science and technology development idea, in particular, Bill Ellis, the director, and Owen Lustig, in the program office. After the mission had been unable to put together anything resembling a fundable activity, I was asked to return to Brazil on TDY to conceptualize a program-that is, to convert the mission's enthusiasm for this area into a fundable, workable program. It was a fascinating experience. I was dealing with a high tech world that I hadn't had any previous experience with. I brought in two consultants, Sadia Shore, a former G.E. senior scientist, and Jim Blackledge, an expert in the operation of research institutes. They advised the Brazilians on how you might structure the proposal. Ultimately, the program was successful in strengthening the research capacity, building these linkages to other states and fostering the fee-based industrial research business. They weren't fully recovering all their costs but they were picking up a good bit of their costs from selling their services.

*Q: This was a loan?*

BROWN: This was a loan to the Brazilian state of Sao Paulo guaranteed by the Federal government.

*Q: Anything else you want to touch on in Brazil at this point? You can add to it later.*

BROWN: Just to observe that AID had a tremendous impact in assisting Brazil develop, even though we phased out the program, prematurely in my view. There were a great number of success stories that were never properly written up and shared with other missions-and the Congress. An effort was made to do an impact study in the mid-'70s. Due to some unfortunate contracting requirement, the mission hired a retired AID officer, David Steinberg, to do the study. I believe he had been director of technical services in the NE Bureau before he retired. He had no experience in Brazil, and no sense of the significance of the study on Capitol Hill. Instead of showing how AID has contributed to strengthening Brazil's human resources, trained its leaders, build many of its key institutions, transferred essential technology and helped improve the standard of living for large segments of the population, Steinberg saw the glass as half empty. He didn't look at the bigger picture; he looked at individual projects, sought out and focused on flaws and imperfections. He was one of those self-appointed, professional truth-seekers whose specialty is fault finding. Such people, who are the curse of AID, apparently are only happy when they are criticizing the imperfections in the agency and denigrating its program. The result, in this case, is that the story of AID's remarkable role in Brazil's development goes untold.

*Q: You left Brazil when?*

BROWN: I left Brazil in the summer of 1970. I came back to Washington and took the FSI six month Economic Studies Program.

*Q: Well, let's turn to some of the countries that you were associated with in that DR work. What were the countries that you found most promising or most responsive and vice versa?*

BROWN: Well, the countries which were graduated from AID assistance tend to be the most successful. Chile is probably at the top of the list, with Brazil close behind.

*Q: What was your criteria for the graduation?*

BROWN: Well, the L.A. bureau didn't graduate-or want to graduate-any country. Typically it was the White House, OMB or PPC. We would have kept helping everybody as long as there was money there. There were always development needs to be addressed. Moreover, a country could also stumble after being graduated. That happened in both Chile and Costa Rica. And we went back into both of them, at State's direction. In the case of Chile, General Pinochet's rise to power accelerated our departure. When he left, we returned.

Colombia was a unique case in that they graduated themselves. That was provoked by our discovering that the internal resource allocations we thought we had been effecting with our sector lending were not being made; they had been scamming us. When we pointed that out to them, and cut off our sector assistance, they decided to declare themselves a developed country no longer in need of AID assistance. What could the USG say but "OKAY, we'll phase out the program." When a new Colombian Government came into power of couple of years later they said, "Hey, we didn't mean that! We need U.S. assistance." We said, "Sorry, you are an AID graduate." And so Colombia graduated a little early while the drug problem was developing. It might have been just as well for our interests that we got out of there when we did because then the drug problem became much more serious. And I'm not sure how effective we could have been.

Brazil, as I mentioned earlier, was graduated prematurely, courtesy of Senator Church, for human rights reasons. We could have done a lot more there if we if we had stayed. I suppose it was a moral victory for the human rights advocates: AID departs and the World Bank and IDB provide massive amounts of assistance to Brazil! Argentina became a graduate early on; in fact, they never were a major AID recipient. It was a strange country, a country full of haughty Italian descendants speaking Spanish. They were almost a developed country in the 1930s. They had all the human resources and all the natural resources but like good Italians they couldn't manage themselves. And so they floundered for many years, mostly under various forms of dictatorship.

And Peru and Bolivia were major recipients throughout the '70s and '80s and have continued to be major AID recipients, and they have made great strides. Bolivia particularly. Going from a socialist disaster in the '50s and '60s to a free market based economy that is attacking poverty. That is a remarkable transformation. In the 1960s, Central America was regarded as a kind of backwater. That's where AID officers were assigned who got in trouble or were found to be somewhat lacking in the talent department. The joke used to be that Central America was the "elephant's graveyard." However, by the time I became deputy assistant administrator in 1981,

Central America was on the front burner; it had become our top priority in the region, courtesy of the new Reagan Administration.

*Q: This was the Kissinger Initiative?*

BROWN: Yes. That was the Kissinger Initiative in the early 1980s. Central America went from a series of ten million dollar country programs in the 1960s to a multibillion program under the Kissinger Initiative.

*Q: Was the ROCAP there at the time?*

BROWN: The ROCAP had been there since the 1960s.

*Q: What was your perspective on what ROCAP was supposed to be doing and why?*

BROWN: Well, during most of its life it was intended to promote regional economic integration and to develop common services-that is, create regional institutions or services which could function most efficiently on a regional basis such like a science technology institute or ag-research operation, or an industrial research operation. Things that had economies of scale that if the countries would get together and do them centrally rather than each little country trying to develop the same function or service. However, that was largely an idea in search of an audience. As long as we paid most of the costs, the Central Americans would go along. The whole ROCAP concept proved to be light years ahead of its time. The Central Americans really weren't that interested in regionalism, they gave it lip service, but they all wanted their own national institutions-no matter how inefficient or poorly funded. They would grudgingly agree to put in their small part of the funding for the regional activities..

*Q: What was the prime motivation for trying to promote this concept?*

BROWN: Well, going back to the 1960s, there was always a group in the LA bureau who had a vision of an integrated Central America. During the 1970s Larry Harrison became ROCAP director and pushed the concept very hard. Finally he got disenchanted with the prospects of getting the Central Americans to really work together, and so he concluded we should close ROCAP. (Of course, whenever Larry left a mission he argued we should close it out.). I argued against Larry and was successful, and we kept ROCAP alive. Only to have it phased out several years later. I should have supported Larry's recommendation, he was right in that instance.

*Q: Why did you keep it alive?*

BROWN: Well, a combination of reasons. One was the optimistic hope that at some point the Central Americans would see the advantage of the integration and common services approach and really buy into the concept. We hoped that they would see the benefit of regional exchange or commodity stabilization funds or grain storage facilities, appreciate the economies that could be achieved in many areas. The other argument, more crass, was budgetary politics. ROCAP was one more program we could argue for to increase the bureau's budget total. Ultimately, everyone, except the ROCAP director and most of the mission's staff, agreed that we have given

the concept every chance, and it was time to make a change. We had pushed the idea for thirty years; the Central America didn't deserve any more regional assistance.

*Q: ROCAP still there?*

BROWN: No. It was abolished as a separate mission during the later part of the Bush Administration and what was left became an arm of the Guatemalan mission, reporting to the Mission Director and limiting itself to certain regional activities.

*Q: In your LA/DR experience, what were some of the projects or programs that you felt particularly good about? That you felt were effective, worked and had an impact?*

BROWN: That covers a lot of ground.

*Q: In ten years you ought to have seen a lot of things come and go?*

BROWN: Yes I did. For example, every year we reviewed about 70 projects. So during my last five years in the office I probably chaired reviews of 60 to 70 projects. At this point, they tend to run together.

*Q: That's right. But were there any particular area or type of activity that stood out in your mind? Not necessarily individual projects, but an area that you felt...?*

BROWN: Well, we pioneered sector assistance in agriculture, education and health. And I think we were successful in negotiating sectoral policy reform. The "New Directions" policy essentially got us out this business. We also pioneered municipal development projects. Our rural health delivery projects were important in reorienting host country health policy, moving them toward more cost effective preventive investments. And in the 1979-81 period we conceived a new public investment-employment generation program in several key countries facing serious macroeconomic problems. These hybrid activities were financed with Development Assistance funds since we didn't yet have ESF available to us. ESF authorizations rose sharply in the early 1980s.

I also believe we were successful in stimulating employment-generating activities in the private sector, such as creating new private financial institutions and small enterprise credit systems.

*Q: What approach did you have there?*

BROWN: Well, for the most part they were mission sponsored projects, many of which we had strongly encouraged them to pursue. The missions would work with interested private sector leaders in organizing a private development bank or new credit system. Many of these became very successful. We had one very interesting regional initiative with a group called LAAD (the Latin American Agri-Business Development Corporation) in Coral Gables, Florida. Over a period of several years we made several loans to them totaling something like \$50 million dollars, which they would partially match with private funds they would mobilize. LAAD in turn

would lend those resources to small and medium agribusiness producers in the Caribbean, Central American region.

*Q: These were American investors?*

BROWN: The LAAD Board members were Americans. The prime mover was Bob Ross, an American raised in Latin America who had a Harvard MBA. LAAD limited their loans and equity investments, however, to local agribusiness ventures. The project was designed to increase agri-business investment and nontraditional agricultural exports, both of which tended to be labor-intensive.

*Q: Was that effective?*

BROWN: It was both effective and successful. Since the project covered an entire subregion, it obviously didn't have a massive impact in any one country, but LAAD had a significant overall impact in terms of transferring new technology in the subregion, creating or expanding agri-business investment, involving small farmers in the production needed by the agribusinesses, and in interesting entrepreneurs in nontraditional export crops, such as melons, pineapples, cut flowers, and other products that had strong demand in the U.S. LAAD was a project largely development and managed out of LA/DR.

Another ultimately successful project was a graduate business school in Central America.

*Q: INCAE.*

BROWN: Yes, INCAE, with the help of Harvard.

*Q: What does INCAE stand for?*

BROWN: Central American Institute for Administration of Business. Originally it was a ROCAP project. We made a mistake in the beginning by funding the project with a loan, Not may business schools get endowed with loans. I don't know why Harvard didn't point that out to us. At some point INCAE named a Nicaraguan with a Harvard MBA as rector; he was a disaster for the school. He proceeded to build a large office complex, buy an expensive Mercedes Benz and do a number of other dysfunctional things as an administrator. So, over a few years he brought the school to the point of bankruptcy. Finally they fired him. I was director of LA/DR at that time and was faced with the question of what do we do with INCAE? Do we let it go under? They were defaulting on the repayment of our loan. I concluded that it was not in anyone interest to let it go under. So we put together a follow on \$6 million grant project to enable them to regain their solvency-and to repay our loan.

*Q: You were giving them a grant to repay their loan?*

BROWN: Well, the Sandinistas had taken over in Nicaragua by this point. They were harassing INCAE; they didn't want any U.S.-sponsored business school in Nicaragua. So, we helped INCAE move to Costa Rica and open a second campus. They had two campuses. They would do

public sector management in Nicaragua and private sector in Costa Rica. We helped them acquire the land and construct the new facilities. It was a former country club location, a golf club. So, we used a large part of the money for that purpose. But part of the money enabled them to free up sufficient cash to resume payments on our loan, because if they were in default to us we couldn't do anything to help them. Although it raised some eyebrows among the BHN believers in the bureau, I believe I made the right decision.

*Q: It has been a very successful institution.*

BROWN: Yes it has. I don't take credit for that first loan; that was before my time. I did manage to save INCAE years later. And it has proven to be very important education center as well as a form of regional "think tank". That is one regional institution that has worked very successfully in Central America. Students from all over the hemisphere come to INCAE for training.

Another successful private sector project that I can recall is the creation of a private development bank for the Eastern Caribbean. During the latter part of the Carter period there was a growing concern over potential instability in the Eastern Caribbean, where the small island states had been on very short notice "graduated" by the British who felt they could no longer afford to underwrite the cost of these Western Hemisphere dependencies. There was the clear risk that a number of these ministates could be taken over by the left, as had happened in Grenada. So the US, was looking for extraordinary ways to help them, and the Acting Assistant Administrator, Ed Coy, looked to DR for ideas. One of the first things we did was to create a special facility through the Caribbean Development Bank to finance labor-intensive public works and infrastructure projects in the islands. It was a form of disguised program assistance focusing on the local currency impact of the assistance. Again this was before we had any ESF authority. It was a short term, economic stimulation effort.

Our longer run response was to create a private development bank to lend to the private enterprise in the region. I went down to Barbados on TDY to lay out a plan for Bill Wheeler, the mission director for the Eastern Caribbean, for how to put the project together, including how to finesse the objections of the problem-creating regional legal advisor stationed in Barbados. Bill and his team put together a sound project, involving the best private sector leaders in the region. Over time, the new bank proved to be an important source of capital for new businesses and business expansion in the Eastern Caribbean. These were very small economies and the existing banks wouldn't think of doing any capital investment financing. That was an important initiative in the period just before the Reagan Administration came in and developed the Caribbean Basin Initiative.

*Q: These are making loans for new businesses?*

BROWN: For starting new businesses or expanding ongoing businesses in the countries that make up the Eastern Caribbean. These were the small, English-speaking islands that for years had been British colonies or protectorates which the British concluded in the late 1970s they could no longer afford. The islands had been highly dependent on the British, financially and psychologically. They were not prepared to take responsibility for their own affairs. I had a fascinating exchange with one of the Prime Ministers at a World Bank conference on the

Caribbean in Washington. We were having a one-on-one meeting, and I told the PM that our regional mission in Barbados looked forward to assisting him in attacking his highest development problems. Then I said, "Tell me Prime Minister, what is your highest priority need?" And he thought for a moment and said, "I need four new tires for the fire truck at the airport."

*Q: A big thinker.*

BROWN: That was his understanding of development, and how he had viewed the role of the British: They pay the bills. You send them the bills and they pay them. And AID was taking on their role. And at that moment the fire truck needed new tires, and he needed someone to pay for them. So, I said, "Well, I'll pass it on to our Mission and I'm sure they will look carefully at that request." The people of the Eastern Caribbean were charming people and they spoke delightful English, but they did not have an understanding of the concept of self-help; they were from the entitlement school. They had always had the British around to pay the bills. And while there was never enough money to really address their needs, that wasn't a problem as long as there was just enough to get by.

*Q: They weren't thinking in development terms.*

BROWN: No. They never had to set priorities, make choices or sacrifices because the British took care of them. But then suddenly the Brits cut them loose and said, "God speed, you are on your own." Our mission had a very difficult time trying to get them to accept the idea of self-help-that you have to do something to get something. They did not understand why we couldn't just write the checks to cover their needs, as the British as always done. It was hard to counter that mentality. It was unique in my experience in Latin America. I guess ultimately they have come to understand what is meant by self-help.

*Q: What happened to the old sector program, loan financing concepts?*

BROWN: Well things tend to go in cycles in AID, and sector program assistance was done in by the New Directions/BHN enthusiasts in the Congress who wanted to refocus AID solely on directly assisting the poor. Plus, we had lost all of our ESF assistance-or whatever it was called in those days-because that was considered "political" money and the liberals on the Hill didn't like that. So Congress told AID: "DA only." Thus we had lost all of our tools for doing sector assistance in the early 1970's and only had projectized DA money to work with. As a result I spent a considerable amount of time in the latter part of the '70s devising assistance modes that minimally met the DA's legal requirements but really had broader sector impact, like the employment sector program we developed with Caribbean Development Bank. We were working right at the margin, addressing broader development needs with DA projects that looked a lot like sector programs. By the end of the Carter Administration, there were some small amounts of ESF that were appropriated for the Eastern Caribbean to deal with their pressing employment problems. Fortunately we were already working there, with a precursor instrument conceived to meet a broader sector problem that we really didn't have right tools to address at that time.

*Q: There was some question that people raised in Colombia where there was a problems of spending the local currencies that were generated by sector programs and budget issues?*

BROWN: That was true particularly true in Colombia. We had been doing sector lending for several years in Colombia with considerable success in terms of policy reform. Overtime, we became more and more demanding in our conditionality-particularly in terms of internal resource allocation. I suppose we exceeded the Colombians' tolerance threshold. We discovered they had been playing a game with us and telling us one thing regarding budgetary allocations while doing something quite different. This had been going on for a couple of years. I believe Ron Venezia who uncovered the scam they had been running on us. Ron was working for me in LAC/DR at that time, backstopping the Colombia program from Washington. He discovered that the Colombians were not being honest with us. They were telling us one thing about how they were using both budgetary funds and sector program local currencies in accordance with agreed reform targets, while they were actually spending them just the way the politically powerful wanted. That led to the end of sector assistance in Colombia. And that in part was what led them subsequently to declare their own graduation from AID assistance. They got annoyed that we pulled them up short and said, "You're lying to us." They didn't like that. And then after, I don't remember how long exactly, they decided they would graduate themselves.

*Q: Were there other things in the DR area that you were concerned with?*

BROWN: Probably the most important influence on me when I came back to Washington, in terms of forming my mind set, my style of operation and my organizational values, was the leadership of Herman Kleine, our Assistant Administrator. He was very professional, very serious, very hard working and wanted to do everything right-and to the highest standard.. Herman didn't cut corners. He didn't fool around. He was a professional and that was the standard he set. I was deeply influence by him and internalized much of what he stood for-though I did cut some corners and certainly did fool around more than I think Herman would have approved of. He was a great role model for me, a stern father-figure.

I can recall one review meeting on the Brazil portfolio which he chaired; it was probably around 1972. I was a still young officer and I knew Herman well from having worked for him when he was deputy director in Brazil. We used to have monthly reviews of implementation in the field. I was back-stopping the Brazil program and Herman asked some question which I didn't know the answer to. I tried to distract him with some humor because I couldn't answer his question. Several people laughed at my humor. Herman however pulled his reading glasses down, looked down the table at me and said, "Buster, I take these reviews seriously even if you don't." I hunkered down in my chair. That was the last time I tried to distract Herman with humor. But he saw what I was doing so he embarrassed me; he zapped me good. He was a very revered figure in the LA Bureau as a career guy who made it to Assistant Administrator. He did an excellent job running the bureau.

*Q: I see. What would you call his style?*

BROWN: He was a very serious, responsible manager who expected and got the best from his people. He was not what you would call a conceptual person, however. That was not his forte.

*Q: He did not have a development philosophy to push or anything of that sort?*

BROWN: If he did it didn't come out. Congress, the White House and the AID Administrator laid out the policy and priorities. I think Herman saw his job as carrying out that policy and set of priorities. It was simply that here were the rules and we want to be the best in carrying them out-to meet deadlines, to address the priorities and respond to new initiatives, to obligate our funds on a timely basis. I think Herman wanted us to be the leaders within the existing framework. He wanted to have everything done properly and responsibly. He was not a conceptual thinker. He didn't espouse a particular development philosophy other than good management. Perhaps his ego was not as large as some of our other development philosophers who wanted to leave their mark, or make a name for themselves through their particular crusade. Interestingly, Herman was nowhere near as effective when he was deputy director in Brazil or when he was deputy assistant administrator in Latin America. His talent for leading people only emerged when he was in charge.

*Q: On the DR side, are there any other events or areas that you want to comment on?*

BROWN: Well, talking about problems with the New Directions mandate, a major one was Congressman Clarence Long, or "Doc" Long as he was known. He was the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee-Foreign Operations Subcommittee who became the patron saint of appropriate technology or light capital technology crusade. In his later years the Chairman was suffering from something that caused him to be rather wacky on many occasions, particularly field visits. He wasn't "all there" all the time. He was also irascible and authoritarian-a delightful combination for those who had to deal with him. He was pushing us into activities that were very cheap per beneficiary, employing what he called light capital technology. One of his favorite innovations was the sharp stick, which you stuck in the ground and made holes for seeds, and that was an agricultural project. He argued against much of our program as being too expensive and too high tech. While there is a grain of truth to that, he carried the opposite approach to the extreme, to the point of becoming irrelevant. My sense was that, by the end of the 1970's, AID had become almost totally irrelevant in foreign policy terms; we had no tools available to us to respond to foreign policy interests. We were also becoming only marginally relevant in terms of development. Clarence said all we were supposed to do was look for the low-cost, appropriate technology innovations that could assist the rural poor-never mind the broader range of development issues and policy problems that countries were facing.

So in my view, one of the great contributions that Peter McPherson made when he was appointed administrator by President Reagan was to make AID relevant again. I call it the "McPherson Restoration". He made us foreign policy players, mobilized support for ESF assistance, got us into policy reform again, in a major way, and made us a full service development agency. Instead of only focusing on the poverty problem, he broadened our focus to include policy reform, institution building, human resource development the technology across the board. And his great contribution, I believe, was to restore AID's relevancy in the foreign policy and foreign assistance arena in the 1980s.

*Q: Why was the Assistant Secretary so determined to spend the money?*

BROWN: I suspect because he had been called by the President of Costa Rica and had promised the President he would solve his problem. I thought Motley was a delightful character, but he was also a hip shooter. He was quick to make decisions. I got to know him on a trip to Brazil in the early 1980s when he was our ambassador to Brazil. I went duck hunting with him and the AID Rep in Brazil, Sam Taylor. Motley was raised in Brazil and spoke idiomatic Portuguese; he went back as a political appointee as ambassador under President Reagan.

*Q: I see.*

BROWN: I don't know quite how to describe him. He was outspoken and irreverent and had a marvelous sardonic humor-often directed at some of his stuffy State staff. In Brazil he was famous for going on TV and debating Brazilian politicians in sometimes earthy Portuguese. I believe those in State who take themselves most seriously would describe Motley as "colorful." He was action-oriented, wanted to get things done quickly and liked to put deal together. He was a "man's man."

In any case, when he came to Washington to become Assistant Secretary, I was the acting Assistant Administrator, and we had a good relationship-on everything except this Costa Rica disbursement problem. His position was, "Damn it, I want this done now." Tony, I'm sure, thought he could intimidate me into disbursing, which was his normal style. But I knew he would have to get Peter McPherson to direct me to make the disbursement, with the conditions unmet, and I was pretty sure McPherson was not likely to do that So I told him somewhat apologetically, "I don't think we can do that., noting that his ambassador opposed disbursement." Motley couldn't believe it. He definitely was not accustomed to and did not like people going against his decisions, so he took it out on Curt Winsor. Curt was in that far right, anticommunist camp closely connected to the White House and Ollie North. That group had had a recent dust up with Secretary Shultz over whether the latter was sufficiently hard line, so I think Winsor was already on thin ice as far as the Secretary was concerned. Motley played golf with Secretary Shultz every week and I'm convinced he used that opportunity to get his licks against Curt. Shortly thereafter Ambassador Winsor was no longer ambassador. Too bad, Curt was a very decent guy who had stood up for what was right. We held to our guns by the way; we didn't disburse until the Costa Ricans met the conditions.

*Q: In a more general sense, what is your view of the effectiveness of foreign assistance over the years-particularly the years you've been working in it? Has it made a difference or has it been marginal?*

BROWN: I think where we have massed resources in a given country or against a given set of objectives, we've been very successful. The success of the Central America Initiative, including economic stabilization and revitalization plus socioeconomic progress-despite its premature termination. Our program in Brazil. The modernization we helped to bring about in Bolivia. Certain parts of the Egypt program. Our small enterprise programs in Latin America and elsewhere. Our work in child survival or family planning around the world. The transfer of technology, creation of new, cost-effective approaches and new institutions in the private sector to attack development problems. We have a lot of very positive results to show.

Foreign aid policy tends to go in cycles, and during those periods when economic policy reform was not in vogue-such as the New Directions era under Carter, we were limited to working on the human side of development. We need to work on both aspects of development: promoting sound policies to promote economic growth, which in itself helps to reduce poverty through increased employment and incomes, and increased revenue for government; and targeting social investments on education, health and small farmer agriculture and enterprise. We were able to do both under the Central America Initiative, and we got results.

On a related topic, too often we have handicapped ourselves by not giving sufficient attention to systematic marketing of our success stories. And here I don't mean publishing scholarly evaluations; I mean publicizing good results, the kind of thing a congressman can related to and understand.

I believe we have lacked a marketing or public relations mentality-except for Jay Morris who, unfortunately, was so superficial and insincere that his public relations efforts seemed to be discounted on the Hill. We have been an agency obsessed with self-criticism. We never did enough, never reached poor enough people. We were never satisfied with the results. We had too many "truth seekers" always devising new and better programming system to link every AID activity to some transcendental goal, always in search of a better evaluation system to demonstrate how our projects failed to meet some arbitrary and unrealistic set of predetermined targets I think AID has attracted too many "truth seekers," liberal ideologues, and frustrated scholars and social scientists who were never satisfied with of performance of the AID "lab rats," better known as field staff. People who had a hard time understanding why our projects fell short of perfection. Too many of these people ended up in PPC, in the DP offices and in charge of evaluation. They helped the poor by devising highly complex and time-consuming programming systems that forced missions into a fantasy world of interconnecting linkages and indicators. The current system is an embarrassment to try to describe to an outsider.

Congress, the source of AID's life blood, is a totally political entity by definition. They know how to appeal to the American people; that's how they got elected. If a congressman were going to explain to his constituents why he is supporting AID, he, or she, needs some short but significant success stories of human interest, of helping poor people, of transferring US technologies-but not exporting jobs of course. They don't need scholarly and scientific evaluations pointing out how AID failed to reach its original indicators-which may well not have been relevant or reasonable in the first place. If a congressman who opposes foreign aid looks at one of those evaluations, all of his suspicions are confirmed-courtesy of AID's corps of "truth seekers." From my experience, I would argue that the typical congressman wants to see how we are helping people, improving lives, creating new opportunities. They like anecdotal human interest stories, sound bites they can use back home. They don't care how elegant our programming system is or how rigorous and scientific our evaluation system is, they are interested in what we did for the people in Honduras or Ethiopia or South Africa. They don't care about intercountry comparisons by sector, they want to hear about how we used the money they have us to get some positive results.

I think we spent too much time trying to perfect our internal methodologies and not enough selling ourselves externally-where we should have been emphasizing the many successes we've

had. These two activities are not mutually incompatible. But AID's prevailing mentality gave primary importance to the former, and in the process, undercut the latter. We should have followed the World Bank's approach. They produced and publicized a great deal of material on how they were helping the world's poor, which quietly devoting the bulk of their resources to infrastructure projects. They also had a reasonable good evaluation system, but they were careful not to broadcast negative results. Obviously at the top of the Bank there are a few politically astute thinkers, as well as good economists and social scientists. It's too bad AID never learned that organizational survival lesson from the Bank.

And then the IG comes along and takes a few examples of missed indicators and exaggerates them into examples of waste and inefficiency; and the media picks up the story and we get trashed. And so our image is one of a bunch of incompetents, wasting the taxpayers' funds. Whereas I believe we have always been the leader among the major development agencies-ahead of the World Bank and the IDB-innovating new approaches, new activities, new ways to attack a sector. We have traditionally been the first one to get into a new area, whether it was sector programs in agriculture, education and health; the environment; small enterprise; democracy; improving the justice system; or family planning. We were always there first. And frequently the two banks would come along and piggyback on what we had done, copy our model and put more money into the program. Unfortunately, AID never got any recognition for that.

*Q: Good point.*

BROWN: The World Bank puts out slick propaganda pieces saying they were the world leaders. They weren't. In almost any sector, they were several years behind us, time after time. The first time I saw it was in Brazil in the mid-60s, they came in behind us in the education and health sectors, and put money into both programs utilizing the structures we had put in place. Developmentally it made perfect sense, but they would never had developed the approach if we hadn't been there. They used our model and ran their money through it. This is largely an untold story.

*Q: We were pioneers?*

BROWN: Absolutely. In every sector we've been the first ones in there with new approaches on how to get results in the environment or in democratic initiatives or in improving the justice system or strengthening municipal government. Increasingly in recent years, I have seen AID in effect squeezed out of a sector as one or both banks come in and basically take over and expand funding for our program. AID has received little if any credit for its pioneering role in development around the world.

*Q: But you talked about whether it had an impact on people. What was your feeling about this ..did it really change lives of poor populations, do you think?*

BROWN: Well, in my experience, when we targeted a project on a given group, it worked. We raised their incomes, improved their health or education, increased their opportunities. We improved lives. What's important, however, in my view is that you create a system, mechanism, institution or technological or financial approach that replicates this benefit for an increasing

number of people over time. Our best projects are those that enhance or expand a country's capacity to improve the lives of an increasing number of its citizens -- not just reaching the poorest of the poor with a one time AID hand out. Sometimes requiring that such a new institution focus exclusively on the very poorest at the beginning can unreasonably hinder its successful operation.

But looking beyond government programs, I believe one of the most important things we have done to help poor people is to stimulate new private investment, to create new and better paying jobs, to open up new opportunities. In Honduras, in addition to supporting policy reforms needed to attract new investment, we also directly helped to develop the export shrimp industry and the garment assembly industry. Our success story in creating new jobs in garment assembly was attacked by US labor prior to the election of President Clinton for exporting US jobs. Any impact we had on the US was minuscule, but in Honduras we were creating thousands of new, better paying jobs. The industry was providing jobs for women-and subsequently for men when they ran out of women-much better paying jobs than they had. A lot of them formerly were maids. Many had been living in rural areas with no jobs, some had been prostitutes-though that was pretty well paying so we didn't attract too many from that profession. By the time I left Honduras the new investment in this garment industry had had a significant impact on employment on the north coast of Honduras and had also created backward and forward linkages to other industries. There were all kinds of positive impacts that resulted from this new sector of industrial activity. When you have the good fortune to have an ESF stabilization program, you can negotiate a set of economic policies and incentives that make it attractive for private investment capital. That means new jobs, better incomes, new skills and technologies and more revenue for government social programs. The whole country benefits. That's what a good policy-based ESF program could do.

**MARK LORE**  
**Rotation Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1965-1966)**

**Rotation Officer**  
**Brasilia (1966)**

*Mark Lore was born New York in 1938, and graduated from Bowling Green State University. He served in the US ARMY from 1961 to 1964 as an overseas captain. His positions include Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, Luanda, Rabat, Brussels and Lisbon. Lore was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 26, 1998.*

Q: *Where did you go in your first post?*

LORE: We went to Rio. I indicated a preference for Portuguese, they honored that. At that time you went down to Rio. We found ourselves, to our great surprise, because most people after you came in the Service, your various courses, consular, A-100, and language and all the rest, you didn't get out to post until sometime in the latter half of the year you entered, after six-eight

months. By early April we were suddenly in Rio. We arrived there without speaking Portuguese and went right into intensive Portuguese training in the embassy building.

Q: *You and your wife?*

LORE: Yes, both of us.

Q: *Just to get while you were in Brazil, '65 to when?*

LORE: We were in Brazil '65 to October of '66.

Q: *Can you tell me about your impressions of Brazil and Rio while you were...at this time?*

LORE: Much about Rio's special atmosphere remains the same today. It is very sultry, with unique topography and beauty. This city itself is rather plain. That is to say, the man-made buildings are generally not distinguished by great architecture. They haven't done much in terms of preserving the old colonial buildings, so the streetscape can be rather bland. However, you lose sight of that because of the fantastic topography and the terrific street life. The combination of the tropical vegetation which cascades down the mountains right to the sea and the city sort of laid out through these mountains.

Rio's topography makes its tremendous disparity of income unusually visible. Many of the poor live in *favelas*, the urban slums, on the mountain sides. Unlike Washington, DC or Sao Paulo in Brazil or many other cities which spread out laterally, the rich look up from their affluent neighborhoods and can see the poor. For their part, the poor are not as isolated, off in geographically distant areas. So that if you go to Washington you can spend years and never really see abject poverty if you stick to the Mall and Northwest and a place where the more affluent live. In Rio that's not possible. The poor and the rich are cheek to jowl because the poor live on the mountains just above the affluent housing areas of Copacabana and Ipanema.

Brazil was just beginning its second year under the military dictatorship. There was still the feeling among Brazilians and I think in the American embassy that this was a temporary state of being. That it was perhaps regrettable that the military had taken over, but that the military who were running the place from General Castelo Branco on down, were right-minded people - people who really wanted to introduce reform. It was viewed as a more benevolent version of the Pinochet regime which later ran Chile. Our expectation was that the Brazilian military would get the economy right and then quickly hand a stable government back to the civilians. It was viewed on the whole, particularly given the Cold War mentality of the time, as a necessary evil that was going to be good for both Brazil and for the United States in the long run. So there was a fair amount of optimism. Brazilians were still optimistic; even if there was protest and some unhappiness at having the military running the government, it was relatively muted.

There wasn't at that time an oppressive feeling of authoritarianism in Rio or in the country, at least that I could see as a foreigner. The press was quite free, people were quite free, people spoke in opposition on television to the military's rule, at least in those years. It was quite an open environment so you didn't feel like you were living in an oppressive dictatorship by any

means. It was a delightful place for people who had never been overseas to suddenly parachute into. Once we got some Portuguese under our belts it was very stimulating. The Brazilians are extremely kind with people who try to speak their language and very supportive, so you are able to practice a lot. They also don't speak a lot of English. So it was a very good environment for a first-tour officer and spouse.

*Q: Did you find that you were plugging into the young executive part of Brazilian society, people of sort of comparable age and moving into business or politics or what have you?*

LORE: Not so much in Rio. You have to remember that we arrived in April of '65. The first three and a half months were consumed with language training and getting settled and we left the following April for Brasilia. So we had relatively little time. My wife had a medical problem in the middle of this, too. She had to go up to Gorgas Hospital in Panama. So we weren't really able to get to know many Brazilians in Rio. Another thing was that the embassy was enormous. It was one of the two or three biggest American embassies in the world. Lincoln Gordon was the ambassador, the framer of the Alliance for Progress. It was to be the touchstone for the Alliance for Progress. We had money, we had a willing government which wanted the money and was willing to do the things with it that we requested. Our AID mission was enormous. So a junior officer like me felt rather lost in that environment. Very frankly, it was hard to do any substantive business because people were fighting for the crumbs - too much staff for too little work. When I heard about the rather desperate state of our embassy office in the new capital of Brasilia volunteered to go up and work there, where I felt I could do more interesting things. So we found ourselves by April of '66 in Brasilia.

*Q: You were in Brasilia from '66 to when?*

LORE: We got there in April of '66 and we left in October of '66. We wound up being there for only about six months.

*Q: What was Brasilia like at that time from your perspective?*

LORE: Brasilia was fascinating. It was a new capital, it had been inaugurated in 1960. It was still quite unfinished. There was red dust everywhere because they had not planted the large areas, particularly the central mall area of Brasilia. It is a very dry, almost desert-like environment for part of the year. This red dirt would blow into the tiny gaps in houses and in clothes. It was everywhere. There was very little in the way of entertainment. There was one movie theater or two, there were very few restaurants, certainly none that were very appetizing. It was in a lot of ways an African assignment. It was too far removed from Rio or Sao Paulo to easily travel to these places if you weren't a Brazilian congressman with your way paid.

*Q: What were you doing?*

LORE: I was a junior officer and at that time you were what they called "central complement" on your first assignment. You moved from one function to another. USIA still does this with their new officers... You moved around the embassy working in different sections. I had done some economic work and some consular work in Rio, so the idea was I would do political and admin

in Brasilia. I started off doing the political work but it was largely sort of catch-all of political and economic. We had a very small staff, very few people. I worked for Herb Okun who was my principal officer and he really had a gaggle of several junior officers. For various reasons there wasn't much in the way of middle grade.

I worked a lot on land sales. This sounds dry, but it was fascinating because at that time there were some unscrupulous operators out of the United States who had brought up lands in central Brazil and were trying to sell them as retirement spots to mostly Middle Western farmers in this country. They had glossy brochures that gave the impression that these lots were overlooking the city of Brasilia - which they were not. They were 50-75 miles away in the middle of Brazil's central savanna, worth very little money even today. We couldn't do much to get these farmers' money back, but we worked with the Brazilians to confirm the land deeds, at least. It was a very interesting issue and you had the feeling, unlike in Rio where there were so many people, you had the feeling you were making a real contribution to improving a situation that had been inflicted on many unsuspecting U.S. citizens.

I did a lot of that, I covered the congress, covered what bills and issues that the congress was working which were of interest to us. At that time the congress was still operating, later it was closed down. It had some power. I had some dealings with the foreign ministry detachment there, but most of the foreign ministry was still back in Rio.

*Q: Were you running across everybody on the Brazilian side, hated being in Brasilia and they were on their way trying to get back, at least for the weekend or something, to Rio?*

LORE: Let's put it this way. The legislators or congress people, as they still do today, would flee Brasilia on the weekend and go back home. Those that had money, even if they were in the bureaucracy, would get out every chance they could. That includes the small cadre of Brazilian diplomats, who were preparing the way for the installation of the foreign ministry. I often tell the story that, during a typical day, I would go over to the congress and I would talk to people, staffers, about what was happening on certain bills we were interested in. I'd come back to the office at three, four o'clock in the afternoon, and I would often get a call from the Brazilian foreign ministry people wanting to know what the news was up there in the congress. So every now and again I was in the curious position of reporting to the country's foreign ministry on what its own congress was doing.

In those days, Brasilia was not regarded by Brazilian diplomats as prime duty for obvious reasons. But in that group and in other ministries, the military, the private sector, there was a group of young, hard-charging Brazilians who saw that they could really make some difference and they could vault ahead of others in their careers if they took Brasilia seriously and grabbed the responsibility that was out there. It was, after all, the capital of the country. So you had some very attractive young people, more or less contemporaries of mine, who were a lot of fun to get to know. It was uniquely easy to get to know Brazilians in the Brasilia of that day; there were Brazilians from all over the country, not just from one area, and many became leaders later on.

*Q: Speaking of young, sort of aggressive people. Herb Okun and I came into the Foreign Service together. Very bright but very difficult person. I've heard that his time in Brasilia was not a*

*happy one for many people. How did you find working for Herb?*

LORE: I found it good. He was a good mentor, he was a good teacher. I was a junior officer, first tour. I didn't have any particular vanity about my work. I was learning and so I had no difficulty in having Herb take out his big scissors and cut up my drafts and give them back to me in pieces and in a suggested rearrangement. Some more senior people who had been in the Service for a few years and felt that they knew the business didn't suffer this editing quite that well. Herb did not have a fine touch. My relationship with him was excellent, but it was partly because I was junior. I was in Brasilia because, very frankly, Herb could not keep middle grade officers up there due to his rather heavy-handed managerial style.

*Q: How did you find the Brazilian congress? I mean this is a very crucial time. Were they getting along with the military government? What was your impression?*

LORE: The congress at the time was still pretty active. But there were definite limits. I'm often reminded of the old Edward G. Robinson movies of the '30s - you know, the scene where he'd walk into a room and people would be disputing and arguing about this and that and he'd take out a great big pistol and he'd slap it on the table in front of him and suddenly nobody had any arguments. He didn't need to use the pistol. Brasilia in the 60's was that sort of environment. Everybody knew that the military would only go so far in entertaining opposition. But at the same time there were not any frontal moves against the congress at that time. There was some criticism, but we were not at the point which Brazil reached later on where there was wholesale attacks on opposition congressmen, banishing them from Brazil, taking away their political rights. We were still only in the first stages of that process. The military rulers at the beginning hoped to get through without resort to open repression.

*Q: What about contacts with the military? In Brasilia itself, what about the military?*

LORE: It was all in Rio. There was virtually nothing in Brasilia. There were very few military officers up there. Those that were there would be rather senior, including, of course, the president himself. They would be contacts for the ambassador when he would come up from Rio or for Herb Okun, perhaps.

*Q: I was wondering, you had been a military officer long enough to have acquired the patina of...you could speak as a military man. Was this helpful?*

LORE: I suppose it was in a certain way. I think it proved more helpful later on in my career. I don't recall Brasilia or Rio as being places where I was able to use that very much. We had such a huge military mission, and of course with General Vernon Walters' particular access and prestige, the State Department officers had a relatively minor role in contacts with the military.

*Q: Well, Brazil had become much of the focus of your career. What was your impression of regionalism, through the congress and elsewhere? You're up in a place where you're removed from sort of that incestuous Rio crowd and all that. Did you get a feel that Brazil was more than just Rio at this particular time?*

LORE: Well, certainly Brasilia was different. There were still debates going on at that time about just abandoning Brasilia. However, the Brazilian military quickly decided that Brasilia served their interests very nicely.

Q: *Why, they get away from the street mobs and that sort of thing?*

LORE: Yes, I think it was much easier for them to run the country out of Brasilia. Even today, Brasilia, the way it's built, discourages demonstrations. Demonstrations are swallowed up in those great empty spaces. If there had been any serious problems with opposition demonstrations, they could have rolled tanks right down the middle of the city's broad avenues. Therefore, it would have been very easy to contain any overt opposition. It was also, I think, just nice to be away from the stew of politics and pressure groups in places like Rio or Sao Paulo. So the military found it rather convenient. If there had been no coup, Brasilia's fate might have been different; I think Kubitschek's immediate civilian successors, Quadros and then Goulart detested Brasilia.

Q: *It was Kubitschek's idea, right?*

LORE: It was Kubitschek's idea. As I said, I think it's quite possible that during the '60s if there hadn't been a military coup that there might have been an at least partial reversion of the capital back to Rio. Certainly the bureaucracy's movement to it would have been slowed. But the military decided they liked it and by the time the military left power years later it was firmly ensconced.

Q: *But Brasilia, the idea of Brasilia was to make it more representative of the whole country and all of that. Were you getting any of that feeling?*

LORE: Well, you did meet people from all over the country. There were no native residents; government servants had to come in from everywhere. But even today you don't get much of a feel for the country in Brasilia and that's a real drawback. You get a much better feel for the country in Rio despite its peculiarities; despite its uniqueness, it's very typically Brazilian in a lot of ways. Brasilia remains a rather drab and monotonous environment -- although not without its own natural beauty. If you go outside the city, the countryside can be quite scenic. The central plateau remains relatively virgin and unpopulated. In those years there were very few people so you could drive for miles and never see anything.

Q: *How about Sao Paulo. Did that have its own dynamics that you were seeing reflected in Brasilia?*

LORE: Sao Paulo was certainly at that time emerging as the major city of Brazil, but it was contesting with Rio. Rio was still viewed by most people as the true capital of Brazil and most companies were headquartered in Rio. There was a large financial and business infrastructure in Rio, some of which still remains.

So Rio was and is an important city in commercial terms but Sao Paulo was becoming become the combination of New York, Los Angeles and Detroit that it is today. It was a very big city, a

very confusing place. I saw very little of Sao Paulo when I was there in those years because it was difficult to get to. The road between Rio and Sao Paulo, a narrow national two or three lane affair then, is now a high-speed limited access highway. There was no train and air service was expensive. So Sao Paulo for people who lived in Rio was a long way away. It's closer now with the air shuttle and modern communications.

*Q: Well, you were there until '66. Did you get any feel for the relationship between Herb Okun and the ambassador was still...?*

LORE: Lincoln Gordon left in my second year. After I got to Brasilia, John Tuthill was ambassador. I didn't have much feel for Herb's relationships in the mission. I would guess that Herb was held in high esteem. He was very able and very smart. Herb's problems, such as they were, were more with subordinate staff rather than with the embassy front office.

*Q: In '66 you left, '67?*

LORE: I left in '66. We had planned on at least a year in Brasilia. The Department at that time assigned junior officers on a "central complement" basis that is over an above normal staff. At a large post, when the powers that be decided that you were okay -- you were not going to be an abject failure -- you became fair game for assignment into a regular funded position someplace else. In the second half of '66 Ed Marks was the junior officer in Luanda, Angola, a consulate at that time in a territory under Portuguese control. He was transferred to an economic officer position in Zambia and I suddenly received a cable saying "Proceed directly from Brasilia to Luanda." So by October of '66 we were in Luanda.

**EARNEST WILSON**  
**Auditor, USAID**  
**Brazil (1965-1967)**

*Ernest Wilson was born in Louisiana in 1925. He graduated from the University of Illinois in 1949 and served in the U.S. Air Force from 1943 to 1946. His assignments abroad included Ethiopia, Brazil, Ghana, Kenya, and Egypt. Mr. Wilson was interviewed in 1998 by W. Haven North.*

*Q: Where did you go then?*

WILSON: From there, I went to Brazil.

*Q: Quite a shift. Did you have any say in where you went?*

WILSON: I asked to go to Brazil.

*Q: Why was that?*

WILSON: I had an interest in Latin America.

*Q: Where did that interest come from?*

WILSON: From college. Spanish history. I had taken some Spanish language courses in college. At that time, Brazil was one of the larger USAID programs overseas. As I found out when I got there, it was much larger than I had anticipated. In the northeast, there was a branch or a sub-mission that had 50-60 U.S. direct hires.

*Q: So, you were still doing audit functions at that time?*

WILSON: Yes.

*Q: Was there a large audit operation?*

WILSON: There was a very large audit operation. But most of the U.S. positions were unfilled. They were recruiting staff. The chief's position was unfilled and there were five or six other audit positions that were vacant. There were two of us in Rio. We were supervised by the deputy controller until eventually we were fully staffed.

*Q: What were some of the major projects that you audited that stand out in your mind?*

WILSON: Actually, I didn't do a lot of field auditing. We had a large staff of Brazilian auditors.

*Q: Employed by the mission?*

WILSON: Yes. In the larger missions, the audits were generally performed by local auditors supervised by USDH. The USDH staff had not been recruited at that time. The local auditors had continued to complete audits. I ended up trying to get the reports that had been filed published, so I was mostly running a publication office rather than an audit office.

*Q: Published and acted on?*

WILSON: Published. Publication was the first step in getting action. Later on, when I left Brazil, we had gotten into the business of tracking the implementation of recommendations. We set up audit tracking systems.

*Q: What were the main issues that you found in your audits there?*

WILSON: The same issues on a larger scale that we had in Ethiopia: what had happened to the money, the accountability factor.

*Q: That seems to be a chronic issue throughout all the programs you worked with.*

WILSON: Yes.

*Q: But what kind of actions were you proposing to get at these issues?*

WILSON: It was a simplistic approach. Most of them were to either account for the commodities or file a request for a refund. We had not gotten into the business of looking at the capability of the host country audit system so that they could do their own audit. That came later.

*Q: Did you find that the government was responsive to making the refunds?*

WILSON: We had trouble making the recommendations stick. There was a reluctance to file for refunds. Once the request is made, it pretty well stays on the books until it is complied with. So, you have a lot of recommendations for refunds made that are outstanding for long periods of time. It's a problem for the mission.

*Q: Were these large refund requirements?*

WILSON: If the grantee fails to account for the receipt and utilization of commodities or services financed by the project, then, a recommendation for refund is almost automatic under the terms of the Project Agreement or contract, or grant agreement.

*Q: What did happen to the commodities that required a refund?*

WILSON: I think, in most cases, it was just a failure to maintain adequate records. I think, in 90% of the cases, the commodities came in. They probably reached their end users, but they didn't have the system in place to support that.

*Q: Was AID concerned about helping them set up systems?*

WILSON: Yes.

*Q: There were some projects to help?*

WILSON: There were some ad hoc attempts at training people in various ministries.

*Q: Was this part of your office function?*

WILSON: No, it was part of the technical office's. They tried to build it into their participant training program, which was, in those days, a large part of the assistance.

*Q: How did you find working in Brazil?*

WILSON: Interesting, challenging. It was a great contrast to Ethiopia. At that time, the mission was in Rio, which is a big city like New York, sophisticated and crowded. So, as opposed to Ethiopia, where you were in a small, foreign atmosphere, Rio was like New York.

*Q: How did you find working with the Brazilians?*

WILSON: Fine. They were great people to work with and were well qualified. A lot of people were well trained.

*Q: Did you learn Portuguese?*

WILSON: Not too much because they put me to work almost immediately. There was a language school at post and I went full time for the first month I was there. Then they called me back to the office. I seldom got a chance to pick up on Portuguese because of the workload. But the staff was very good and very capable, our USAID FSN [Foreign Service national] staff. They were a pleasure to work with, very knowledgeable.

*Q: Were there any major audit issues from your part or from outside?*

WILSON: No. At that time, the pressure was on to get this roomful of reports published. That's what I was assigned to. So were my other colleagues.

*Q: Published them and trying to get people to do something about them, was that part of your responsibility?*

WILSON: That was the Controller's and the deputy controller's responsibility. Once we published, we were finished. We went on to something else.

*Q: So, you didn't do much follow-up.*

WILSON: No, only as a result of a subsequent audit of the same project/function. Because of staffing deficiencies, somebody else took that responsibility.

*Q: Were you aware of any guidance or instruction from Washington about the audit role, function, and responsibility?*

WILSON: Yes. Rio was a popular place. There was always somebody down there selling ideas, operational guidance, and that sort of thing.

*Q: But at that time, there was really no significant change in the audit approach ?*

WILSON: No.

*Q: It was straight finance and accounting.*

WILSON: Yes. It really wasn't very sophisticated.

*Q: Did you develop any particular impression of the program and its impact on Brazil?*

WILSON: No, to be frank, it was so large and so varied. What little auditing I did do there, every time I was assigned an audit, I found another USAID office in another building. It was almost too large a mission spread out over a very large country.

*Q: Anything else about the Brazilian time?*

WILSON: The only other thing I recall about Brazil was that that's where the reduction in staffing initiatives began. The ambassador felt that there were really too many Americans there and the mission was too large. He started recommending that we phase down some of our operations, consolidate them, and that sort of thing.

*Q: How did that affect your operation?*

WILSON: Immediately, it didn't have any effect.

*Q: They scaled down the audit staff?*

WILSON: Not during my time. But eventually, it did. That was in Congress. But it was not only just AID. The IRS [Internal Revenue Service] was there. Coast and Geodetic Service, Army Mapping, Military Assistance... There were Americans all over the place.

*Q: Anything else that you want to add on Brazil at this point?*

WILSON: I don't think so. It was a pleasant place to be. The Brazilians were great people. There were great capabilities in the local staff. In fact, they helped train some of the new American staff. They had been in place for so long. They were very capable. It was a very easy place in which to work. All you had to do was say, "Let's do this. This is the way we should do it." The only problem was trying to put the reports into the sort of English that was acceptable to the front office.

*Q: You were not involved in any visits from Washington, visits from GAO or anything of that kind?*

WILSON: It was a fine place to try out things: new payroll systems, will this work? We were involved in that sort of thing. Of course, you recall that this was in the days before we had instant communications, too. There were airgrams and telegrams and that was about it. Maybe phone calls. But the average person didn't make phone calls back to the U.S. There was a division chief for that sort of thing. So, that takes me up to 1967. I arrived in 1965 and I left in 1967.

**FRANK CARLUCCI**  
**Executive Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1965-1968)**

*Frank. Carlucci was born in Pennsylvania, graduated from Princeton University, after which he served in the US Navy. After a year at Harvard Business School, in 1956 he joined the Department of State. Before his tenure as Ambassador to Portugal from 1975 to 1978, Mr. Carlucci served in a number of posts abroad,*

*including Johannesburg, Leopoldville and Rio de Janeiro. Mr. Carlucci held a number of high positions in the US Government including; Director, Office of Economic Opportunity; Director, Office of Management and Budget (State Dept.); Under Secretary, Department of Health, Education and Welfare; Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Advisor at the White House, and Secretary of Defense.. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1996 and 1997.*

*Q: So you went to Brazil in, would it be in '65 still?*

CARLUCCI: Yes. I finished the Italian course. That took me pretty much through the summer of '65. I think it was about the fall of '65 that I went to Brazil, speaking Italian.

*Q: Well, that was handy. It probably would have been much handier if you'd gone to Argentina in a way?*

CARLUCCI: In fact I remember negotiating my apartment lease in Italian because it was owned by an Italian. Then I learned Portuguese.

*Q: You were there until about 1970?*

CARLUCCI: In Brazil? '65 through '68, I believe. Well, maybe even the beginning of '69. I think I came back to Washington in late 1968 I guess it was.

*Q: You say Lincoln Gordon, who was a presidential appointee, an economist, and very much involved in the Marshall Plan was sent to Brazil. How had he heard about you?*

CARLUCCI: He was already ambassador to Brazil. I had a friend in the ARA [Bureau of Inter-American Affairs], Tan Baber, who was, I think, executive director or deputy executive director. It was quite well-known that I didn't want to go to Italy. He said, "Why don't you have a session with Lincoln Gordon?" Gordon is a brilliant man who later became president of Johns Hopkins. But he is given to talking a lot. I had one of the strangest interviews I've had in my life. I went in; he asked me what university I went to and I gave the right answer there.

*Q: Princeton is it?*

CARLUCCI: I think he'd gone to Princeton. Then I said, "You know, I'd be very interested in the situation in Brazil."

One hour later I'd barely said a word and Lincoln Gordon thought I was brilliant. So he went to Joe Palmer and tried to get me to go to Brazil. He wanted me to go as principal officer in Brasilia replacing Herb Okun, but Joe Palmer said, "No."

Lincoln said, "Well, can I have him in the embassy?"

Palmer said, "As long as you bury him."

*Q: You were not to be trusted with a separate mission.*

CARLUCCI: That's right.

*Q: When you went to Brazil in '65, what was the situation there?*

CARLUCCI: We'd had the Carlos Costello Bronco government, military government, albeit a fairly enlightened military government with a very large American aid program. We had some 900 Americans in Brazil. Our influence was pervasive. We had Roberto Campos as the Finance Minister [Finance Minister during General Castelo Branco's presidency, 1964-1967], known as Bob Fields because he was so pro-American. But you also had a certain simmering social situation in Brazil which continued to go unresolved, and indeed needs more attention today. We had a large military presence as well. We had a big MAAG [Military Assistance Advisory Group] with, if I remember the situation correctly, two generals and an admiral. This gets into another story, but Lincoln Gordon was replaced by Jack Tuthill, who started the TOPSY operation. He pulled me up from my job in the political section, promoted me to position of executive officer of the embassy. In fact, I became the chief administrator of the embassy. The DCM at the time, Phil Raine, was much more interested in the political side. He was de facto political counselor and I as an FS-03 and was, in effect, the closest thing to a DCM in the embassy. I was given the responsibility for implementing the TOPSY program.

*Q: What was the TOPSY program?*

CARLUCCI: This was an effort by Jack Tuthill - interesting story how it got started. Tuthill was a marvelous man. He died about four or five months ago - a wonderful person to work with. I've been fortunate in my career that I worked with some great people. He called me in one day, and he said, "Frank, this embassy is too large. Who is the most useless person in the embassy?"

I thought for a minute and I said, "Well, the assistant science attaché is a good tennis player, but he doesn't do much."

He said, "Get rid of him."

I went to work on that. Tuthill called me back in about a month or two later and said, "How's it going on getting rid of Mr. X?"

I said, "Gee, Mr. Ambassador, I've never had such a difficult job. This guy is useless, but everybody in Washington is defending him."

He said, "Well, I've been thinking. It probably wouldn't be much harder to get rid of half the embassy than it is to get rid of one person."

I said, "I think you're probably right."

He said, "Well, I'll think about that."

He came back from lunch one day and went into his office, came out and walked into my little office and handed me a draft cable and said, "What do you think of this?"

It was a cable back to Washington saying, "I request authority to cut the staff by 50 percent." I went back into his office and I said, "Well, it probably needs to be done, basically for political reasons, but, Mr. Ambassador, you at least have to allow the different sections of the embassy to comment on this before you send it."

He said, "Alright." He called everybody into his office and he said, "You can comment."

And as I left his office, the general in charge of the MAAG said, "Well, you of course don't mean us?"

He said, "Oh, yes, I do." He said to everybody, "Get your comments in to Frank by noon tomorrow."

And all the comments came in. And the comments of the MAAG were a marvel to behold because they said, "If you cut us by 50 percent, we'll lose space in the ministry of war; we'll lose some hanger space; we may have to give up one of our airplanes, and we might even have to close the PX."

Jack Tuthill said, "Frank, you respond to all the other comments. I want to respond to this one." And he had a field day.

We sent the cable and then Tuthill and I went to Washington and walked the halls arguing for a 50 percent cut. We got all the way to Katzenbaum, who was deputy secretary at the time.

*Q: Nicholas Katzenbaum?*

CARLUCCI: Yes, Nicholas Katzenbaum. We got his support, but that support kind of evaporated as we got lower in the building. There were something like 18 agencies represented in Brazil and the State Department didn't control those agencies. They were the hardest to deal with. We brought in a special task force to look at the CIA. Eventually, after a year, of full time effort on my part and probably 80 percent of the Ambassador's time, we ended up with a cut of about 30 percent. I went in with trepidation to tell Tuthill that was the size of the cut we were finally ending up with and he said, "That's about what I expected."

*Q: Now how did the name TOPSY develop?*

CARLUCCI: I think Tuthill coined it. He said this place just grew like TOPSY [Note: a literary character from the 19<sup>th</sup> century novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin]. He pointed to an AID request that had come out asking us to do a study on rats, bats, and noxious birds in Brazil. He had a great deal of fun with that one, too.

*Q: What was your position on this operation TOPSY, as the implementer? I would have thought*

*that this would have been more dangerous, in a way, than the Congo - a walk in the embassy...*

CARLUCCI: It was and when Tuthill left I became very vulnerable. Before he left, he made me political counselor, but I was not a very popular man in the embassy. I took a different point of view than much of the senior staff. For example, when I was political counselor, there was another institutional act decreed by the government, the fifth institutional act, I believe.

*Q: This is the government of Brazil?*

CARLUCCI: The government of Brazil. We suspended our aid program. Most of the top level of the embassy was pushing to restart the aid program. The embassy became badly divided. A lot of the younger officers fought against reinstituting the aid program and I sided with them, but I was the only one on the senior staff. Those were the days before we had a dissent channel. The embassy, the aid people, drafted a cable which the DCM, chargé now, favored saying let's restart the program. I said, "If you send that cable I'm going to enter a formal dissent." The cable was never sent and the program was not restarted for an appropriate period of time.

*Q: Why don't we stop at this point and we'll pick it up again. We're still in Brazil. We've talked about operation TOPSY, but let's talk about the next time about relations with the Brazilian government as you saw them, developments there, personalities, particular military. Was Vernon Walters there?*

CARLUCCI: I ghostwrote the fitness report that got him his first star.

*Q: So we'll talk obviously about Vernon Walters and other elements...*

CARLUCCI: My first assignment when I was buried in the political section of the embassy was to report Vernon Walters' conversations. He and the president of Brazil had a close personal relationship. Walters would come back from Sunday dinner with the president and on Monday he'd give me a stream of consciousness and my job was to take it and put it into State "Departmentese." Walters had a fantastic memory. He could remember the conversation word for word, but that wasn't suitable for reporting.

*Q: We'll pick that up and we'll also pick up starting from what your first job was in the embassy.*

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*Today is the 3rd of October 1997. Frank, something you'd mentioned earlier on - there was the issue of do you renew aid to the Brazilians. I think you said there was a split between the young officers, yourself included, and the older officers at the embassy as to whether we should keep the pressure on or relax it a bit. Do you recall that?*

CARLUCCI: Well this occurred towards the end of my tour after Jack Tuthill had left. I of course was not the most popular fellow in the embassy having been hatchet man from TOPSY and being fairly low ranking to be political counselor. I think I was still an FS-03. Bill Belton was chargé d'affaires and Bill was very much a traditionalist. The Brazilians had implemented

another institutional act (I think it was the fifth.) and the U.S. government had frowned upon that and had suspended aid. After about, I would judge, two or three weeks, the powers that be in AID in the embassy, accompanied by the economic side, the economic counselor and his people, began to urge that aid be reinstated. This provoked a good deal of concern on the part of the younger officers, myself included, although I was a little older than they were. We protested. It came down to a meeting in the chargé's office where the chargé went around the table and all the senior people said they favored the resumption of aid and had drafted a cable to this effect. I didn't say much at the time and then the cable was passed around. I read it and towards the end of the meeting, I simply said if you send this cable, I request that the following sentence be put on the end. The political counselor dissents from this cable and reserves the right to write his own cable. Those were the days before we had dissent channels. Dissent was not very much in vogue and there was somewhat a startled reaction in the room. But Bill Belton said, "Well, if Frank's got these reservations, we need to consider them," and the cable did not go. In essence the embargo on aid programs continued for another month or so.

*Q: I was wondering - this may be almost philosophical - but could you explain, this is a scenario that has played out quite often where the most senior officers at an embassy on something don't want to disrupt relations and to make things good and the more junior members say "The hell with it, we have a policy and we've got to stick it to them." Can you talk a little about, in general, your observations of the dynamics of youth versus age?*

CARLUCCI: I suppose youth is more prone to risk taking and taking strong positions than those of us who have reached, shall we say middle age, or a little bit more. I think that's a very healthy characteristic. Studies have generally indicated too that people tend to be more liberal in their younger years than their older years. You don't get so much in a rut and your views don't become so formalized. You're more open to new ideas and new approaches. I think I told you in the last session that I was lectured by the then Director General on my free wheeling approach and maybe that was part of the function of youth although I'd like to think that I still am able to think a little bit outside the box.

*Q: As you became political counselor, what was your impression of the Brazilian government at that time?*

CARLUCCI: When I first came to the embassy, Carlos Costello Bronco was president, a military man - a very competent military man - who was guiding the country, I felt, toward a more democratic system. He was succeeded by another general, Costa e Silva, who candidly speaking didn't have Carlos Costello Bronco's intellect. In fact, the Brazilians, as you know, like jokes and he became the butt of jokes all around Brazil. His alleged low IQ was always poked fun at. He was a rather stolid figure, quite unimaginative, basically a place holder. We enjoyed cordial relations with him and Ambassador Jack Tuthill would see him fairly frequently. I used to serve as Jack's interpreter in some of these meetings. I accompanied Tuthill to the meeting when Tuthill told Costa e Silva we were going to start the TOPSY program, cut the staff by 50%. Everybody in the embassy had predicted that the Brazilian reaction would be very negative to TOPSY. On the contrary. Costa Silva's reaction to the TOPSY program was quite favorable. He understood the political ramifications so he was quite supportive throughout that exercise.

*Q: With Vernon Walters having these ties going back, it was sort of legendary he was the liaison officer to the Brazilian division during World War II in Italy and all. What was your impression of how this translated into helping us?*

CARLUCCI: Oh, I think Dick Walters was probably the single most influential American. When he spoke, they listened. He had a marvelous relationship with Carlos Costello Bronco.

*Q: I think so, yes.*

CARLUCCI: When Dick served as the liaison officer, Dick would go around on Sunday, practically every Sunday night, for a one on one dinner with Carlos Costello Bronco. There was hardly a military man in Brazil that Dick Walters didn't know and have a relationship with. He was admired and respected and as you know he was extraordinarily fluent in Portuguese - probably the best Portuguese speaker - in the embassy. He played a very key role in U.S.-Brazilian relations. Dick pretty much confined his activities to the military side. He didn't get involved in questions of aid policy, the kind of things we were just discussing.

*Q: Did the ambassador use him because I imagine with a military government, this was a very important aspect?*

CARLUCCI: Yes. Tuthill liked and admired Dick Walters and from time to time when he wanted to get a message across he would ask Dick Walters to convey the message. Tuthill was never very status conscious. He didn't have a sense of insecurity because Dick Walters had more access than he did. That didn't bother him at all. He viewed Dick as an asset and worked rather closely with him.

*Q: As political counselor, did this intrude upon your work or...?*

CARLUCCI: On the contrary. I felt like Tuthill did, that Dick Walters was an enormous asset. I worked extremely closely with Dick. I decided it would be useful if I got to know the military myself and Dick was only too happy to introduce me. I also got myself as political counselor named assistant director of AID and would attend the AID meetings and work with them to shape a program that I thought was more politically acceptable.

*Q: How were your relations, when you were political counselor, with AID because often, particularly in that era, AID tended to be an agency on its own and it has its own dynamics and all that?*

CARLUCCI: There's no question there was that. I had been through the TOPSY exercise. I understood the aid program quite well as a result. So when I moved over to the job as political counselor, and I said to the AID director, Bill Ellis at the time, "It would be useful if I continued the relationship. I'd like to have a title and go to the staff meetings and contribute what I could to the program."

Bill welcomed it and I carried through on that undertaking.

*Q: How was AID integrated into furthering our political objectives at this time would you say?*

CARLUCCI: Both Tuthill and I felt that large numbers of technical people - while each individual may contribute to progress and to good relations - the cumulative impact of such large numbers was bad. It tended to create a sense of dependency, while we really were trying to encourage Brazilians to do more on their own. Our goal was to try and reduce the numbers and obviously to get the resources down to a manageable level and to try to move the Brazilians to take up more of the slack. We also tried to point the programs in the certain areas that we felt were critical-education would be one of them-and to change the focus of the programs from trying to do everything to trying to do the things we thought were going to give the democratic forces in Brazil the greatest leverage.

*Q: Did Brazil, with their young people going away to universities and all...I always think of Chile and other places where you have the University of Chicago boys and all that. Was there anything of this nature developing in Brazil or were they going back to Portugal to universities? What were the dynamics there for foreign higher education?*

CARLUCCI: Well there were some that had very close connections with the United States. Robert Campos was Minister of Finance and he was known as Bob Fields which is a humorous translation of Roberto Campos. That's because he was so pro-American, spoke fluent English, so there were close associations. I don't recall there being a University of Chicago school or anything like that, but I remember Brazilians had substantial exposure to the U.S. educational system.

*Q: What about their economic planners? Did they seem to be going a different course? So many of these countries, particularly in those days, were going for a status as opposed to a more open, free wheeling system. What were the atmospherics?*

CARLUCCI: Well, certainly Roberto Campos and Delfim Neto, who was the finance minister, seemed very receptive to building a private sector. They were a long way from where Brazil is today on issues such as privatization. That wasn't very much in vogue. There were large government-owned companies and there was no effort to privatize those. On the other hand, they were trying to stimulate a market economy. It's just that Brazil had enormous economic problems at the time. It was like trying to turn an aircraft carrier. It moved very slowly.

*Q: What about on the economic side, particularly, we have a Consulate General on the pad for a long time in Sao Paulo which is really almost another capital on its own, isn't it, as far as industry? Was it difficult being the political counselor? Did you find it was almost another dynamic coming out of Sao Paulo as far as our people there?*

CARLUCCI: Sao Paulo didn't do a lot of political reporting. They confined themselves to commercial and counselor work. The larger issue was the move to Brasilia. I had an apartment in Brasilia and basically shuttled back and forth. The Brazilian politicians at the time hated Brasilia. The less amount of time they could spend there the better. But Sao Paulo, I don't recall Sao Paulo playing a very significant political role.

*Q: On the move to Brasilia, what was our impression at the time? Was this a pain in the neck or...?*

CARLUCCI: Yes. We all liked Rio and the Brazilian politicians liked Rio. Brasilia was in the middle of nowhere. It was a long flight. They would spend the least amount of time possible there. Generally two or three days a week. Air travel was free for the politicians. It proved very useful to me because simply by flying I could get to meet all the Brazilian politicians. I got to know quite a number of them that way.

*Q: I would imagine that these flights would end up as political caucuses in a way?*

CARLUCCI: They did indeed. And the liquor flowed freely on the flights. It was a very congenial atmosphere.

*Q: Did you find it quite useful.*

CARLUCCI: Yes, I found it very useful. I actually came to rather like my trips to Brasilia because I thought it was fun. I enjoyed going around the halls of Congress.

*Q: As the political counselor, what was your impression and how did you deal with the political class as opposed to the military?*

CARLUCCI: Well, it was a little hard to distinguish between the political class and the military class. The country was being run by the military, but there was a political class growing up. I made an effort to get to know them. Sometimes those efforts were controversial. The principal opposition politician was a man named Carlos Lacerda who had been governor of Guanabana and had run for president. He was a brilliant man. I had gotten to know his son and tangentially gotten to know him. I did something extraordinarily controversial. I set up a meeting between Tuthill and Carlos Lacerda. The result was that the President, Costa e Silva, called Tuthill in and complained about the meeting. Basically, he complained not about Tuthill, but about me for having set it up. The meeting became headlines in the newspapers and I became quite a controversial figure.

*Q: Was this politician legitimate opposition, so this was not going to the underground or anything like that?*

CARLUCCI: Of course not. But that's a concept that was a little hard for the military people to grasp when they're in control of the country.

*Q: How did Tuthill respond?*

CARLUCCI: Tuthill liked the meeting, he liked Lacerda and he thought it was the right thing to do.

*Q: Were we sitting around at a country team meeting and saying well, Brazil is eventually going to get rid of the military and we have a new political class is going to emerge with whom we*

*have to be on good terms and identify who they are going to be. No matter what the military says, we've got to get ready for that day and working on that?*

CARLUCCI: Essentially that was the message I was trying to get out. Nobody would argue with that, but everybody had their day-to-day business and the institutional forces take hold. If you are AID, you want to continue to do business with the people you are doing business with. You're not necessarily in favor of change. I was probably the one who was arguing most forcefully for change. Tuthill essentially agreed with me-or I agreed with him I guess would be a better way of putting it-because he was the leader in the embassy. It all worked well as long as Tuthill was there. When Tuthill left, I became, as I said, a little more vulnerable.

*Q: During the Tuthill period, what about the mid and junior level political officers in the embassy. I would think it would be difficult for them to get out and see military figures and they'd be more prone to go after the civilian politicians who were not very powerful at that time or how did that work?*

CARLUCCI: Well, we had some able political officers - Lowell Kilday, Lou Bolden, Bob Bentley. Bob Bentley knew practically everybody in town. They got around and met both the military and political types. I thought it was a very effective embassy. Tuthill always encouraged people to come up with new ideas. He loved dissent and he would bawl people out if they didn't dissent from him. He was always thinking in different terms. He created an embassy that looked at issues differently. He once - I may have mentioned this to you in the last session - told me to draft an airgram on what I thought the ideal embassy would look like. I did one which essentially abolished all sections and organized it along functional lines. He was always thinking of new ideas and new concepts and that cascaded all the way down in the embassy.

*Q: What was our prime message? There is the normal reporting on political developments which in a way is passive, but that's the observer role. Being the United States, we were an activist country and we were trying to influence events. What were the main things we were trying to encourage with respect to the political scene?*

CARLUCCI: The main objective was to move them toward a fully functioning democracy and get the military to do what they said they were going to do-hold elections, respect those elections, make sure that there was freedom for the press, freedom of association, all the things that constitute a democratic system. We kept nudging them in that direction and by the nature of our contacts, which were broad and included the opposition, we demonstrated that we wanted a free and open society.

*Q: How well was this message received by the military people, not just at the top but also at various levels?*

CARLUCCI: Some accepted it. Some thought it was interference in internal affairs. We would get criticized, but I think we had the desired effect.

*Q: What was your impression of the military, the people who came into power, not just at the top but at various levels you were dealing with? Were they sort of a narrow, traditional type military*

*or did they have broader interests?*

CARLUCCI: I would say most of them were traditionalists, although there were clearly exceptions like Carlos Costello Branco. The idea was to try and deal with the people who had a broader sense of the issues and not spend a lot of time on the narrowly focused people.

*Q: How well do you feel you were supported back in Washington by the Secretary of State...?*

CARLUCCI: The main interaction we had with Washington was on the TOPSY program. Washington was by and large supportive although they left the tough fighting to Tuthill. In terms of the political message, we had a very good office director, a man named Jack Kubisch, who was extremely able and extremely supportive. I thought we had good backing from Washington.

*Q: Tuthill left when and how much longer were you in Brazil?*

CARLUCCI: Oh, I'd have to check the dates.

*Q: Approximately.*

CARLUCCI: He must have left about '68 or so and I was there, I'd say, six to eight months or maybe even a year after he left.

*Q: You mentioned that you felt more vulnerable when he left. How did that translate itself?*

CARLUCCI: Oh, it was no secret that Tuthill and I had a very close relationship. My office was right outside his. He essentially administered the embassy through me even though I was a fairly junior officer. Phil Raine was the DCM. Phil was an old political counselor and liked to focus on the political side. So Tuthill increasingly turned a lot of the administrative side over to me. That didn't trouble Phil Raine at all. Bill Belton replaced Phil Rain. He was a slightly different kind of personality - he was a bit more interested in the administrative side. By then I had moved over to the political counselor. Tuthill liked to comment that in eliminating jobs, I eliminated my own, which I did. I felt that the executive officer was no longer necessary in the embassy. The people who were implementing this, namely me, and to a lesser extent Jack Tuthill, were obviously not terribly popular with the rank and file. Although Tuthill himself had such an engaging personality and a wonderfully open style that certainly the junior people in the embassy enjoyed working with him.

*Q: When he left, did you find the system began to close in on you?*

CARLUCCI: It tried to. But I like to think I was able to keep a step ahead of it.

*Q: How would that translate itself?*

CARLUCCI: Well, into arguments over policy. The more traditional people mainly those that were in the economic section arguing in favor of the status quo, going slow on nudging the Brazilian government whereas I would argue the case for putting more pressure on the Brazilian

government to move towards a fully functioning democracy.

*Q: Were there any issues during either the Tuthill or the post Tuthill period while you were there - events or policy matters - that particularly engaged you?*

CARLUCCI: Well, other than what I mentioned, there were things that came up from time to time but they were in the normal course of diplomatic activity. No, I'd say when Tuthill was there, by far the vast majority of our time was devoted to the TOPSY exercise which Tuthill viewed, correctly in my judgement, as essentially a political exercise. He didn't view it as a numbers game. He always made the point that TOPSY was the right thing for Brazil but it may not be the right thing for other countries around the world. And of course it was picked up later by the State Department and translated into BALPA [Balance of Payments Program], and applied worldwide. It was never Tuthill's thinking that this was a template to be used around the world.

*Q: While you were there-I'm just thinking this was the time when the Soviets moved into Czechoslovakia and all this-was there concern about a growing Communist influence within Brazil?*

CARLUCCI: Oh, well, yes, certainly. We had to deal with a certain amount of terrorism. One of our military people in Sao Paulo was assassinated.

*Q: He was a language student, wasn't he?*

CARLUCCI: Yes. Assassinated in front of his family and I as political counselor was the one that had to deal with that. There was increasing terrorist activity. There was certainly a lot of left wing activity in the church. This was countered by right wing death squads. I tried to keep in touch as best I could with the left wing elements. I would have some contact with liberal educators, those kinds of people. There was considerable concern about the rebirth of communism.

*Q: When you were talking to what was considered the left wing in Brazilian political society, did you find they had a tendency to blame the United States for what was happening in their country?*

CARLUCCI: Sure. We tried to establish contact with the students. Those were the days - I don't know if they still have them - when you designated a student affairs officer in the embassy. We designated a man named Larry Lazer and he reported to me on student activities. I would meet with student groups. We'd hear their views. Certainly there was a fair degree of anti-Americanism, a feeling that we were responsible for the military government, that we were encouraging the military government, that we were not doing enough to move them to a democratic system.

*Q: In a way, it's difficult to counter by telling them what you're trying to do because that alienates you to the powers that be. Was this...?*

CARLUCCI: You tell them that you favor democracy but then they'd point to all the shortcomings in the process and that was a little hard to defend.

*Q: Was there any effort to get to the more violent left wing elements there or were they out of bounds?*

CARLUCCI: There was no effort to get to them. Their monitoring was left up to the agency.

*Q: Obviously this is an unclassified interview, but how effective did you feel that you were supported and informed by the agency while you were political counselor?*

CARLUCCI: I had very good relations with the agency which may have been one reason why I was accepted when I finally went into the agency as Deputy Director. I always enjoyed good relations with the agency. I worked with them on meeting with some of the dissident groups. They kept me informed on their activities. I never asked to know their sources, I didn't need that. But I got all their reports and included them in my staff meetings. I thought it was a very cordial relationship.

*Q: Sometimes as I do these interviews I find that the agency work and the political work are on parallel tracks that never meet or mutually support each other, particularly the political section doesn't get the information that's going to the agency. It goes into the agency and may come back but there isn't much support.*

CARLUCCI: I never had that sense. I always saw the reports as they went out. I didn't have a problem.

*Q: What about the press? Did you find... Was the press sat on so much that it was not something worth dealing with or...?*

CARLUCCI: Oh, no. The press was very important and we had some exceptional people in USIA. John Mowinckel was head of USIA and he was excellent. We talked to the press and Tuthill met quite frequently with the editors. Roberto Marinho and Tuthill were good friends. The Brazilian press was very influential.

*Q: Were they, could they lock horns with the military from time to time as far as policy goes or did they tread a very careful path?*

CARLUCCI: They would criticize the government but they were circumspect in their criticism. They would take positions which were not necessarily supportive of what the government was doing.

*Q: How did you find our Congress at this time? Was Brazil off Congress's radar or did it intrude as far as what was happening?*

CARLUCCI: I don't think Brazil was the focus of attention. We had some CODELS [congressional delegations]. I remember Rooney came down.

*Q: This is John Rooney of Brooklyn, who is the chairman of our State Department of Appropriations committee?*

CARLUCCI: He came down and spent something like three days in Brazil. I think he got off the ship once to call on the ambassador and that was all. His other activities were rather well known.

*Q: Yes.*

CARLUCCI: We'd get the odd congressman but it wasn't on the beaten path at that time.

*Q: Did you feel at all, was it reflected at all, about Vietnam. This is sort of the height of our engagement in Vietnam and the opposition movement in the United States. Youth was protesting and all that. I was wondering if that translated itself into your context.*

CARLUCCI: No, there wasn't a lot of activity or concern in Brazil about Vietnam. It was not a big issue. A bigger issue was trying to stabilize the Dominican Republic [DR] in the wake of our intervention there. In fact, the head of the MAAG, General Linville, had been the leader of the military forces that went into the DR. Ellsworth Bunker was conducting his negotiations in the DR and Brazil was a very important player in those negotiations.

*Q: Did they send troops in eventually or...?*

CARLUCCI: I think they did.

*Q: I'm not sure either. I think we tried to get a joint force to give it...Main thing was at that time I guess there was...*

CARLUCCI: Get us out.

*Q: Get us out and there had been political disorder in the Dominican Republic and trying to stabilize the situation.*

CARLUCCI: We eventually did it.

*Q: Yes.*

CARLUCCI: People say military interventions don't work. This is an example of one that did work. We established a functioning democracy in the DR.

*Q: Is there anything else you think we should discuss about Brazil?*

CARLUCCI: No, I think we've covered it.

*Q: You left what in early '69 or so?*

CARLUCCI: Yes, I think it probably would have been about January or February of '69. I'd received an assignment to go to MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology].

**JOHN W. TUTHILL**  
**Ambassador**  
**Brazil (1966-1969)**

*Ambassador John W. Tuthill received a bachelor's degree from Harvard university and obtained a graduate and teaching degree from Northeastern University. He entered the Foreign Service in 1940. Ambassador Tuthill was ambassador to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and to Brazil. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1987 and by Henry B. Ryan in 1992.*

*Q: How did it come about that an economist dealing in European affairs ended up as Ambassador to Brazil, which, while there were economic concerns, had a major concern about a rather oppressive military dictatorship?*

TUTHILL: Well, the specific way it came about was I had been in Brussels close to four years -- the longest I had ever been any place in the Foreign Service -- when I got a telegram in the middle of the night from Rusk and Ball saying, "Is there any insurmountable obstacle to the President naming you as Ambassador to Brazil?"

I immediately sent back a message saying, "Well, if total ignorance of Brazil, total ignorance of all of South America, total ignorance of the Portuguese language, no inclination to correct any of these deficiencies, and, as you both know, an oral commitment to join the faculty of Johns Hopkins University, (without, however, a specific date), if these are not insurmountable, I am obviously just what you are looking for."

Well, we went back and forth, and I agreed to go for two years. I stayed, actually, two and a half. Fulbright, when I came before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said, "Why in the world are you being sent to Brazil?"

Well, the only way I could answer that is, "You had better ask the administration. It wasn't my idea." But I suppose the closest thing to a rationale was the fact that we had a \$300 million a year aid program in Brazil, and I had had a fair amount of work on the Marshall Plan. I knew something; I wasn't afraid of dirtying my hands on economic and financial things. And also, I found out subsequently that when Linc Gordon left -- and he was a great ambassador in Brazil -- they asked who was going to replace him, and he said he didn't know, but he said, "I am going to recommend Tuthill."

*Q: You two came from basically the same background, weren't you? I mean, as far as having worked on the Marshall Plan and being economists.*

TUTHILL: That is right. Of course, Linc had much more of an academic record than I did, and also much more of a record in terms of Latin America.

*Q: He had dealt with the Ford Foundation and actually had been to Brazil a number of times prior.*

TUTHILL: Oh, yes. He was an expert on Latin America, I think, to the extent that we have any experts on Latin America. Though I resisted, I am glad I went. I looked at the list of personnel in Brazil (we used to have lists of people in those days). I didn't recognize even the name of a single Foreign Service officer. I knew the head of USIA, Mickey Boerner, because he had been in Germany, and I had heard of General Walters, who was the military attaché. But I didn't even know the others. The others were, for example, Frank Carlucci and Herb Okun who is now Walter's deputy in New York, Sam Lewis, who was Ambassador to Israel. I had quite a group of people. As a matter of fact, when this came out, I talked with Bill Harrop, who was at the American Embassy in Belgium. I asked to Bill, "Who are all these people?"

And Bill said, "Well, I don't know most of them." But he said, "There are two people I do know, and you will find them very useful, and that is Frank Carlucci and Sam Lewis." And he was right.

*Q: We are talking about the time when there was a strict military rule which seemed to be getting worse, if I am correct. I mean, it was not moderating its role in Brazilian politics at the time you went there. There was a great deal of criticism of our role in Brazil, in the United States. What were your instructions when you went out there?*

TUTHILL: I didn't really have any instructions, you know. We didn't have much in the way of instructions. But actually, there was a change while I was there. The man who became President, Castelo Branco, during the so-called revolution in 1964, was an honest, patriotic, hard working, devoted man, who had some obvious weaknesses -- namely he was skeptical of the universities, youth and trade unions. Fortunately, he had gone to "Ecole Militaire" in Paris; so he knew French, and so he and I talked in French. I respected him. He was honest and he was decent but he was also narrow-minded on some issues, but he was an able man. He was replaced after about a year or so -- because he said he was only going to stay for three years; he stuck to it -- by the next military senior man, Costa e Silva, who was almost totally unqualified for the job and was insecure. That led to a sort of nationalistic outbreaks from time to time. And I had a lot of trouble with Costa e Silva, because Frank Carlucci and I saw a fellow named Lacerda who was the editor of a newspaper in Brazil. He and Linc Gordon disliked each other, and it was not much of a newspaper. But he was one of the real intellectuals.

*Q: This is Carlos Lacerda.*

TUTHILL: That is right. He was part of the political opposition but not of the terrorist end. He made a lot of charges.

*Q: An organization called the Front, I believe. A Fronta or something.*

TUTHILL: Something like that. The main vehicle he had was a newspaper, and he made constant attacks. Frank and I agreed that the time had come that we ought to see him; so I had two meetings with him. Of course, I didn't try to hide it, because, you know, Brazilians were listening to telephone conversations. Costa e Silva raised this with me. At that stage, I had been there about two years, and I felt my time was about up anyway. Costa e Silva was furious about it, because he felt it was being "disloyal" to him, and he gave me a lecture on this. After he got through with this lecture, he said, "Mr. Ambassador, I would appreciate, therefore, if you would not any more see Lacerda."

And I said, "Well, Mr. President, I am very sorry to disappoint you. Your Ambassador in Washington is free to see the opposition party in the United States as much as he wants -- not the terrorists. And I am not going to see the terrorists in Brazil. I have to maintain my own freedom to see people in Brazil, whether or not they agree with the government."

Well, then the papers started to have headlines saying, "Will Tuthill Be *persona non grata*?" At one stage, Frank Carlucci said to me, "Jack, I know you don't give a damn whether you are a *persona non grata* or not, but I have been PNGed twice already. Once in Tanzania and then some other place in Africa." And he said, "If I have three PNGs against me, people start to think Carlucci doesn't get along with anybody."

*Q: On the Lacerda episode, were you getting any particular pressure from Washington on this one way or the other?*

TUTHILL: No. Washington was fully supportive.

*Q: Lincoln Gordon was Assistant Secretary for American Affairs.*

TUTHILL: That is right. No, the Department and the press at home, because then it got into the press, you know. I remember one editorial in The New York Times or the Washington Post that said "The Silly Season in Brazil," having to do with the Costa e Silva position. So no; Washington and the press position was fully supportive.

*Q: Did you feel that it behooved you, as the American representative, to try to work to relieve the repression within Brazil?*

TUTHILL: Well, there was only so much you could do. When I came down there, the first staff meeting, one of the guys on the staff said, "You must be clear that the President of Brazil is the most important man in this country, but the American Ambassador is the second most important."

And I said, "I want to correct you right away. We are not running Brazil. Brazil is for Brazilians. We can play a role. We can see that our aid program helps the progressive people in Brazil, but we are not in charge of Brazil." This was the background of the whole Topsy operation.

*Q: Yes, I would like to get to this.*

TUTHILL: Yes. Because at that time, we had aid people all over Brazil. If somebody was after you for not paying your taxes, there was an American always there. The government was unpopular, and the unpopular aspects of the government were attributed to the Americans. This was because a lot of our people had the view that the "natives" really couldn't run their own country. But we can't run it either. So that sure, we did what we could for the universities, we did what we could for youth, we did what we could for youth and the trade unions.

Q: *When you say, "We did what we could," what do you mean?*

TUTHILL: Well, in the first place, we met with them on substantive issues. When I made my visits all around Brazil, I always went to see the cardinal or the bishop and the general and the governor and -- the trade union people. The Brazilian government didn't like it worth a damn. I remember one time in Sao Paulo, a highly developed industrial area with trade unions, I first sat down with the trade unions, they said, "Mr. Ambassador, will you show us the road to Monticello?"

And I said, "I can tell you about our experience, and I can tell you that I think in any country moving towards democracy, that there has to be free trade unions. I will tell the government this. We can't force it, though. We can argue for you, we can help the trade unions," which we did to a certain extent. As a matter of fact, the labor man in Brazil was a fellow named Herb Baker, who is now here in Washington. He was in Germany for a long time as a labor attaché, Baker would find ways, you know, especially at his house, to hold frequent informal meetings, with beer and sandwiches, with trade union people, because the Embassy residence was a little too heavy for them. So indirectly, we showed -- and I am sure Linc Gordon did, too -- interest and appreciation. Of course, all that time we were cutting back on our aid. What was going on was with the aid people and the IMF, they had to have all these lists of things that the Brazilians had to do with commercial policy and fiscal policy and military policy, and the Brazilians would sign all sorts of things and then do whatever they damn well pleased. So we tried to use our aid to encourage labor and other people. We also supported the idea of opening up the center of the country, in roads and transportation and big agricultural areas.

And when I was back here, I was going around as a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow about once or twice a year, and I went to a university in Iowa, in Orange County, Iowa, Northwestern University. That was an area that used to be in corn. Now it is about two-thirds in soybeans. So I told them that one of the things we did in Brazil was to get the Brazilians to produce soybeans. The Brazilians used to be the largest importer of American soybeans. Now they are the second largest producer of soybeans in the world and also a major exporter of soybeans. So during my week at this little college right in the middle of the U.S. soybean area, we talked in classes on international affairs and ethics and philosophy and politics, about this whole thing. I put it up to them, "Do you think that I spent your taxpayer dollars and mine in a sensible way?"

This is a place that was started by the Dutch Reform Church. At the end, one fellow sort of summarized the whole thing. He said, "Look, at the moment, the price of soybeans is going down, and we have competition from Brazil. It does create a problem." But he said, "You know, it is a world in which there is hunger." And he said, "As Christians, we can't oppose the United States Government encouraging other countries to produce this food which has such nutritional

value." And he said, "Therefore we don't criticize it. We would hope however that the United States Government would also try to see that food gets into the mouths of people who need it worldwide."

And I said, "Well, I wish we were doing more in the second part of that, but I think a lot of people are trying to do that."

*Q: You mentioned before Operation Topsy. Could you describe this, please?*

TUTHILL: I have written that up, you know, in Foreign Policy. There is an article which does describe it, and I have just written another article for the Atlantic Community Quarterly on "Foreign Policy, the State Department, and the Foreign Service" and mentioned this. But very briefly, the business of Topsy came about not as a budgetary matter, although there were beneficial budgetary effects. Of over 900 employees, we send about 300 back home. Some of those were contract employees in AID; so we just let some of the contracts expire. But it was basically a political decision, based upon the fact that many of our people thought they were running Brazil, and we were getting all the backfire from unpopular Brazilian government policies. So that I felt we just had to retrench and concentrate on areas where we could be influential without helping to get the Brazilians to collect taxes and change their fiscal policy and do this and that and everything else.

*Q: What sort of opposition did you have within the American Government?*

TUTHILL: Well, I drafted a telegram for Washington which I popped on the country team and gave them 24 hours to look at it, didn't change a word, actually, and saying that I wanted to tell every -- every American agency in Brazil to tell me what they would have to stop doing if they had a 50% cut in personnel. As soon as I did that, showed that to my country team, both especially Defense and CIA came to me and said, "This can't possibly cover us."

And I said, "It sure as hell does cover you." As a matter of fact, Defense, in particular, was overstaffed. As a matter of fact, CIA was doing some things that I thought were kind of silly and detrimental. So I sent this message back to Washington and asked for approval.

The next day I got a report back from Rusk, saying he fully approved. Then subsequently in Washington, Rusk said to me, "Look, I want you to know that you have the support not only of me, the whole State Department, but all the rest of the Cabinet and the President of the United States. So you have a free hand to do what is necessary." Frank Carlucci was my deputy on this whole thing. I asked for a small working team to come from Washington with representatives of various agencies, and departments, to find out just how we could do this. I didn't cut by 50%; I cut about one-third. I never had said I was going to cut by 50%.

*Q: Give them the bottom line to work with.*

TUTHILL: That is right. I think the key thing -- and I have spelled this out in this article which I have just sent in to the publisher -- the key thing, I think, was the support of the President of the United States. My guess is that when this was started both Defense and CIA tried that out in the

White House, saying, "Does Tuthill really have this authority or doesn't it just mean State, Agriculture, and AID?"

*Q: This brings up two things: your relation with a figure who sort of runs through the post-war and part of the war history, Vernon Walters. One, you were cutting down on the military side, and two, what was his role there, particularly vis-a-vis a military government?*

TUTHILL: Well, first, let me explain that a big cut in the military was in the military aid program, which was not under General Walters. There was a major general whose name I have been happy to forget. He was the one that had offices in the Defense Department and all the rest, and that was where the major cut came. With the military attachés, there was very little cut.

Dick Walters was extremely helpful to me, although his political orientation is quite different from mine. He shared the skepticism about trade unions and universities that the President of Brazil had, and he had served with the President of Brazil in Italy with a Brazilian contingent during World War II. To give you an example of how Walters worked -- I would every so often come in the morning, and my secretary would say, "General Walters wants urgently to see you." And I knew that probably meant he had been called in about midnight by the President of Brazil to have a little chat. Dick is one of the great linguists, you know, and Dick would have this chat, frequently going for about an hour with the President, and would go back to his apartment and type out the whole thing -- "he said, I said." The next morning he would have all the raw material, bring it in to me, put it on my desk. And after I had read it, he would say, "How do you want to handle this?"

And I said, "Dick, about 90% or 95% of it is political, so we will report it through State Department channels. We will head it that "military attaché was called in by President Castelo Branco last night," and I will say, "pass Defense" of course, although that is automatic, so that Washington will know and will give credit to you for the whole thing. And the rest of it you can send through military channels." So therefore, the reporting, I am sure, was accurate, highly reliable, and extremely valuable.

On our political conclusions, that is something different. Dick and I disagreed time and time again, but with Dick -- and we had quite explicit and noisy disagreements from time to time -- I had no doubt that once I told him what the position was of the United States Embassy, that in his conversations with the Brazilian military, many of whom were very old friends, that he followed my line. He didn't say, "Well, the Ambassador thinks . . ." you know, in effect, to discount it. I think some of the military will say to their opposites, "Well, the Ambassador says such and such," but will imply that this is not to be taken too seriously.

Now, when Operation Topsy came along, as a matter of fact, Walters was just about to be transferred back to Washington. He was in Vietnam for a while, then in Paris as military attaché there. But the Operation Topsy, I found Walters' operation so responsible and so valuable that if there was any change, it was minuscule.

*Q: Was he useful to try to bring across the concern the American Government had with the repression by the Brazilian Government?*

TUTHILL: No, I think that was my job. I didn't go so far as to insist that he be a proponent of what I felt should be done. In the first place, they all knew him well enough to know what a conservative fellow he was. No, I made representation to the President or the Foreign Minister or parliamentarians, because they were still important on those subjects.

*Q: Did you have any real effect -- I am not talking about you, but the American Government -- on the military government as far as its rule on the people? Or really did we not have that much of a role to play?*

TUTHILL: I think we had very little effect. As I say, I tried to demonstrate with the trade unions and universities and that part of the church which was liberal, that we were sympathetic with their position. We wanted to see them, but to have any direct effect, I think, very little.

*Q: Were you having problems with or pressure from the American press, the media, the Congress and all, to do more than you felt you could do?*

TUTHILL: Not really.

*Q: Brazil was just not at the front of people's attention?*

TUTHILL: That is right. It was during the Vietnam War, and the Brazilians, as I say, were trying to be as helpful as they could in terms of supporting the American position in Vietnam. No, the only thing that really developed in the press was the questions to whether I would be declared *persona non grata* because I was seeing the opposition. And then the U.S. and Brazilian press was completely supportive.

*Q: Not too long thereafter, they threw all the people, including other people in the press and Lacerda into jail for a while. That was shortly before you departed.*

TUTHILL: Oh, no. It was rather interesting. Take for example Kubitschek, the former President of Brazil. He had been deprived of his political rights, and he was out of the country most of the time. When I came in, he did come back to Brazil. It was very interesting, because he knew that the Embassy would be in trouble with the government if we were too close. I would see him occasionally at parties or big receptions. He was a very sensitive man on this, and he said quite explicitly, "I am not going to embarrass your relationship with the government. The fact that we don't see much of each other, I think, under the present circumstances, is the only way to do it." Now, as to Lacerda, I don't remember that they ever put him in jail. As a matter of fact, I used to see more of Lacerda when I was in Bologna and then in Paris, because he used to spend a lot of time in Europe. I don't remember that he was put in jail subsequently.

*Q: I thought he was.*

TUTHILL: He may have been. Hard to put him in jail because of political opinion.

*Q: Brazil had a small contingent in the Gaza Strip before the 1967 war. Did that have any effect*

*on us, our policy toward Israel and the fact that Brazil was there made us more favorable towards the Brazilians or not?*

TUTHILL: I don't really know. Worldwide, on U.N., on the Far East, Middle East, Brazil tried to be supportive. For example, at one stage when all the little islands in the Caribbean were becoming nations -- I forget which one -- we had instruction to go to the foreign office. I went to the Secretary General and I said, "I hope that Brazil will support this nation, this new nation, for U.N. membership."

And he said, "Well, of course we will." He said, "You know, you can take the entire population and put them in our stadium for football, and the stadium wouldn't be filled." He said, "Furthermore, they have better toilet facilities in that stadium than they have in the whole damn country." So they didn't take any of this very seriously, except Vietnam. And as I say, on that one, at least in terms of the United States Government, in terms of the Lyndon Johnson government, they did what they could to support United States policy.

*Q: How did you see the growth of terrorism at the time? I noted an American officer was killed, Charles Chandler, I believe, in Sao Paulo, and also there were increasing student riots. How did you view that?*

TUTHILL: Well, I have forgotten his name. The one in Sao Paulo had come from Vietnam, and he, rather foolishly . . .

*Q: Charles Chandler.*

TUTHILL: Was that it? He, rather foolishly, I think, got into a lot of public debates in Sao Paulo, in which he implied that he was very close to General Westmoreland and the intelligence operations. Of course, he was Army intelligence or they wouldn't have been sending him to Sao Paulo to learn Portuguese and all the rest, which is perfectly all right. But in any event, he was murdered in cold blood in front of his wife and children -- a terrible thing. Incidentally, the CIA was absolutely right on this, because the Brazilians kept saying, "Oh, well, it is just Intelligence Services fighting one another within our country." It wasn't that at all; it was a left-wing extreme terrorist group that gunned him down.

After that, we started to get threats at the Embassy saying that, "We are going to kill the Ambassador next." And the Brazilians were very worried about it. They wanted to put troops around the Embassy -- the chancery -- and we finally agreed to let a few be in down in the cellar where they weren't visible, so if something serious happened, they were right there. And then they said they wanted to give me an armed jeep behind a car, a bodyguard in the car, and I said, "No, we have the Marines here, and I will have a Marine with a driver." I did that for a while, and then I started thinking these Marines were all back from Vietnam -- they were all young kids, nice boys, but in Brazil, driving is crazy, and sooner or later some Brazilian was going to drive in front of my car, and this Marine was going to shoot him dead, and the Brazilian will be totally innocent. So I changed that and said, "Okay, you can let me have a plainclothesman in the car. And secondly, between the residence and the chancery, you can give him instructions and give instructions to my driver the route to follow." There were three or four different routes you

could take. So we did that and nothing ever happened.

Now, Burke Elbrick succeeded me, and Burke was a very experienced, splendid Foreign Service officer. But he thought that was excessive. So he said he didn't want that bodyguard in the car. He said, "Furthermore, I can save several minutes if I take the direct route every day." And after only a few weeks, they picked him up. I know the street very well -- 100 yards or so from the residence. They just blocked both ends of that street, stopped the car, and he was a hostage for a month or so. He got hit on the head with the barrel of a gun, and his career was ended. He came back, but he was never well again, and then he had several operations. That was the start of the terrorism in Brazil of ambassadors.

Then a little later, they got the German Ambassador and then the Swiss Ambassador. They released about a dozen political prisoners in order to free Elbrick. It was a bloodier thing with the German Ambassador, because I think the driver or the bodyguard was killed. The case went on for some time, and they released about 20 or 30 political prisoners in order to free him. Then the Swiss, they raised the ante to, I don't know, 60 or 70, and the Swiss Ambassador was held for a long time. The military were furious about it, about this giving up political prisoners, plus the fact that it was thought in Rio that the Swiss Ambassador was a homosexual, and they said, "We are going to give up 60 political prisoners for this homosexual Swiss Ambassador?" Actually, the Ambassador, apparently, behaved very well, very courageously in captivity. He was finally released, but then the Brazilian Government said, "No more. No matter who is taken hostage from now on, we are not going to release any more political prisoners." And it stopped. But part of the reason was that this gang, in which I say the CIA was right about the killing of the captain in Sao Paulo, it was a left-wing terrorist gang, and they killed the leader of that gang in a shoot-out someplace or other in Brazil.

*Q: This brings up a question. I don't want to move into sensitive information, but how well were you served by the CIA, do you feel, that you could talk about, in Brazil?*

TUTHILL: Well, the CIA contingent was too large and too obvious. The very top floor of the chancery was CIA, full of equipment, equipment on the roof and everything. And everybody knew it was CIA. You know, a cleaning woman would know. Anybody would know. And secondly, it was the easiest thing in the world to identify the people in the Embassy, or most of them who were CIA. Then Fulbright didn't help any, because in my hearings, he asked, "Why are you being sent to Brazil?" and I said, "You have got to ask somebody else; don't ask me." And he said, finally, "Well, Ambassador Tuthill, I know that this committee and the Senate will give its consent to your nomination because of your record, but you don't know anything about Brazil, and you go down there, and you will find a deputy who is a CIA man, and he will just show you around and explain everything to you." Well, I did have a deputy; he wasn't a CIA man at all -- Phil Raine, who was a USIA man, who was, in fact, very familiar with Brazil. But Fulbright did a disservice, because, of course, the Brazilian papers picked that up immediately and said, "Fulbright says CIA will guide Tuthill," which was not true.

The first CIA man there when I came, their station chief, was quite helpful, but the CIA was engaged in what they refer to as "recruiting" agents, and I raised with CIA in Washington what the hell they thought they were achieving with the recruiting, because everybody that was

approached and refused (about nine out of ten refused), would go out and tell their friends, "Hey, guess what's happened to me?" So the word got around, that the CIA was doing this. I felt that the marginal benefits to be obtained from this were so small in a country where practically everything is open anyway, while the risk of having some prominent person identified as being a CIA agent was so grave that I felt that the CIA operation was excessive and potentially very embarrassing. On the other hand, on some of the things such as who was killing people, they were absolutely right. When they stuck to something like that, they were very good. When they were engaged in recruiting agents, I thought that the risk far outweighed any advantages.

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*Q: Can you tell me a little bit about what you were trying to do as Ambassador to Brazil as far as US policy was concerned in Brazil?*

TUTHILL: It starts with why I was sent there. As Fulbright said in the hearings, "Why are you going to Brazil? You have spent a quarter of a century working on Atlantic and European relations." That is a question that should have been put to the administration; not to me. I should have used that old phrase: This transfer is not being done at your request nor for your convenience.

As you probably know, I resisted the assignment when Ball and Rush sent me a telegram saying, "Is there any insurmountable obstacle to your being named to Brazil?" I sent a message back immediately saying, "Total ignorance of Brazil, total ignorance of all South America, total ignorance of the Portuguese language, no intention to correct these deficiencies, and, as you both know, I have an open end agreement to join the faculty at Johns Hopkins University in Bologna. If these are not insurmountable, obviously I am just what you are looking for." But they were getting desperate. I guess the only possible rationale would be the fact we had a \$300 million a year AID program and I had had a lot of experience with Marshall Plan aid in Europe -- in France, Germany, Britain and in Sweden. So, if there was any rationale about my going there it was experience on aid programs.

This came to a head quickly. I arrived on a Saturday, I think, and immediately I was taken to that great beach that Frank Sinatra was always singing about, the Gulf of Ipanema, and damn near drowned. That Sunday morning we had a meeting at the Residence with the IMF guys and the Treasury guys which had to do with the next bunch of \$100 million dollars for the Brazilian government. These characters from Washington had a whole list of things that the Brazilians had to do -- credit policy, monetary policy, fiscal policy, tax policy and everything else. And especially about monetary policy. I forget now what the policy position was in the United States government, but the Brazilians had to agree specifically to actions on monetary policy.

I will never forget this stupid meeting. I can see the guy -- he was then working in State and subsequently went to the IMF. I said, "You know, the fact is that in the United States we don't know what the effect will be of a change in monetary policy. You can do something on interest rates or the flow of funds, but you can't be sure what effect this will have. So how is it that we are so sure what the effect will be in Brazil?" And this character said to me, "That is right, Mr. Ambassador, you are quite right about the United States but we do know in Brazil." I said,

"Well, I doubt this very much." So, if there was any rationale of my going to Brazil, I guess it had to do with the AID program. I don't think that is a very strong rationale, but at least it is something.

*Q: What direction was the AID program moving then. One kind of has the feeling, and maybe I am wrong in this, that it began with a great deal of enthusiasm with Jack Kennedy. Then Johnson came in and got more involved with the Vietnam war and there was less emphasis on certainly the reform aspect of it and maybe even on the aid.*

TUTHILL: You are quite right. The Alliance for Progress had sort of run out of steam, but the United States government takes two or three years for one of these things to run out. We still had the appropriations and we had AID. Washington seemed, especially the Department of Defense, to be oblivious of the fact that by then Brazil had a huge reserve of foreign exchange because when McNamara told me that our military didn't think the Brazilian military should have M16 rifles, I said, "You know, we can no longer make that decision. We can keep them from buying M16 rifles, but then they are going to buy European rifles of the same type. They have reserves of such a magnitude that they are perfectly free to go into the market for military equipment and that is what they will do." By the time I got there Alliance for Progress had sort of run out of steam.

In terms of the reform aspect of the thing, there was not much left in the reform as Kennedy wished when he started the thing.

*Q: You mean that emphasis?*

TUTHILL: Yes. Also, you see, in terms of Brazil we were so fortunate to have Linc Gordon as Ambassador when the military took over in 1964 because Linc had, and still has, a sort of liberal orientation -- not a helluva lot, but a little bit slightly left of center -- and he supported the Castelo Branco government. I think he was dead right in doing it. But with that support of a military government and with a kind of relaxed attitude as to what they were doing -- especially with Dick Walters and others... While I have great respect for Dick in many ways, he went along 100 percent with what the military wanted. So the steam was out by the time I got there of a human rights program of any significance.

And typical enough about the way Washington reacted. When I went around to the various state governments, I made it a point of seeing the governor and the general who was in charge of everything, and the Cardinal, and the trade unions. I always remember the first meeting in Sao Paulo, which was a main industrial area and had the most important trade unions. I sat down with a group of them without any military presence. When I went to the northeast, the military was always there in the front row. But at the first meeting with the trade union people in Sao Paulo one fellow said, "Mr. Ambassador, are you going to show us the road to Monticello?" So the trade unionists were seeking encouragement. We didn't do a helluva lot. I saw them, talked with them....

*Q: Was the fellow being sarcastic?*

TUTHILL: He was being sincere.

Q: *He wanted you to, in other words.*

TUTHILL: Oh yes. He undoubtedly was skeptical about what we could do and we didn't do very much. I remember later, I guess in 1968, when there was a new Minister of Labor under Costa e Silva and there was a trade union office in Sao Paulo which was raided and people beaten up and files taken away -- this was the trade union who had some guys who were connected to the AFL-CIO. I immediately called on the Minister of Labor.

Q: *These guys were connected to the AFL-CIO?*

TUTHILL: Yes, the AFL-CIO had people coming down all the time. Irving Brown, who was an old and close friend of mine, had been very active in Europe and also was active in Latin America. These were people who were sent down by Irving or Irving was related to it. And I think there were even AFL-CIO employees in that office.

So I went to see the Minister of Labor to raise hell about it. He said, "Well, I don't know anything about it." I thought he was lying and became more and more outraged. But then, after talking with other people, I came to the conclusion he didn't know anything about it. That in Brazil there is firstly the federal military, the state military and then the municipal people, and I think looking back that the Minister of Labor wasn't informed in advance and had no power to do anything about it.

Then we had the operation "Topsy" and I was always thankful to Linc Gordon who was then Assistant Secretary of State in charge of Latin American Affairs, that he never raised a finger opposing my sending a lot of his people back home. But finally when we got the whole program lined up, somebody in Washington said, "Why didn't you throw out more of the people working with the state police around Brazil?" I said, "Well, why didn't you speak up a year ago and tell me about this concern?"

Q: *This was the AID public safety program?*

TUTHILL: Yes. Because when I went around to these various states, I did talk with the police and they needed jeeps, equipment for communications, etc. and I thought it was an essential part of the state structure. What happened, however in many cases, was that evil men got in charge of that from time to time. But we did not have...I think it is fair to say that we had very little reform program going on.

You know Howard Baker. Have you talked with him?

Q: *No.*

TUTHILL: Well you ought to talk to him because he is here in town some place. He was the labor attaché. I forget whether he was paid by AID or State; it didn't make any difference to me. But Howard was the main contact on the spot. I met a lot of the labor people through him. He

would know.

The other person, and I always see him in Paris, is our old friend Martin Ackerman. I can give you his address if you would like it. Martin would be good on this.

I assume when you are talking about reform you are talking about human rights and labor rights. You are not talking about financial reform or fiscal reform.

*Q: Yes. I am talking about human rights. I gather on the financial matters we were still being rather tough.*

TUTHILL: Well we talked tough. I read in the paper a year or so ago that the IMF is having a lot of trouble with the various nations around the world getting them to sign agreements. But they weren't having any trouble at all with the Brazilians. The Brazilians would sign anything; they just wouldn't do anything about it. It is so typical.

*Q: You were talking about "Topsy" too, and I would like you to talk about if you will? One thing about it I am interested in is the nationalism among our friends. It comes up in Bolivia as well.*

TUTHILL: The only reason I got away with "Topsy" was because of the political situation in Brazil. John Mowinckel of those twenty guys on the team was the only guy who supported me. Joan McGuire supported me. There is another picture of John up there. This was at that meeting when there was an art exhibition across the street from the Chancery and a couple of congressmen came in and raised hell. They were complaining about it. Mowinckel, to his everlasting credit, said to one Congressman, "You dumb, vulgar son-of-a-bitch." I thought it was just wonderful.

*Q: I remember that. I wasn't there when he said it but it went through the Embassy like a flash.*

TUTHILL: It was just wonderful. Now, where were we?

*Q: The motivation for "Topsy."*

TUTHILL: Oh yes. The argument which I put to Washington was -- that was in late 1967 -- that we had so many people. We were interfering in everything. The Brazilians were unhappy about the fact that people wanted them to pay taxes and right in the tax office there was an American. Everything they did they associated -- not only the SERTA but the public in general -- all the excesses of military government -- military government of the United States was simultaneous as far as they were concerned. And it was true of a lot of our military people in particular. So everything that people didn't like in Brazil was associated with both the military and the United States government. And at that time Costa e Silva was President. I wouldn't have done this under Castelo Branco. Silva being an insecure man was very nationalistic. He was making a lot of rather stupid statements. I had a lot of trouble with him. The combination -- you know I had that trouble about Lacerdo where he told me he read I had seen Lacerdo and he hoped I wouldn't do this any more. I said, "Well, I am terribly sorry to disappoint you, Mr. President, but I really have to remain free to see anybody who is not in a terrorist organization and I want to see, just as your

Ambassador in Washington is free to see anybody in the United States." But the argument was that with a nationalistic, insecure president, with America being blamed for practically everything the Brazilian populace didn't like, the time had come for us to cut way back.

Therefore, I asked for the authority to demand that every agency in the United States government operating in Brazil tell me what they would have to stop doing with a 50 percent cut in personnel. The only agency that I excluded was the Peace Corps Volunteers. I thought those young people were doing such an extraordinarily job and weren't disturbing anybody, except on birth control where you had a conflict with the church, of course. The whole argument was political, that we had to reduce our public posture to a much more restrictive basis. I got an answer back in 24 hours from Rusk saying to go ahead.

We didn't cut it by 50 percent, but by asking them to tell me what they would have to stop doing if cut 50 percent, we did cut by about one third. And as you know Frank Carlucci was my deputy through this whole thing.

CIA was cut and was the toughest nut to crack. The military was not, because we had a very nice and able general in Panama who saw my plan and called me and asked if he could send his comptroller and several other officers down to look the situation over. I was very skeptical about it but told him to send them along.

*Q: Was that the commander-in-chief?*

TUTHILL: Yes. He sent three guys down and they looked the situation over. After a few days they came to me and said, "You are absolutely right; we have a lot of military here and they don't know what the hell they are doing. They could be sent away."

So, the whole operation was based upon a political evaluation that the time had come for a much less public posture of the United States government and that we had to stop telling the Brazilians how to do everything.

Typical of it was a guy came in from Bahia to see me and he said that he was teaching geology. I said, "That is certainly very important to this country; are you teaching Brazilians to teach geology?" "Oh," he said, "No. I am just teaching geology." And I said, "Well, when will this ever end?" He said, "I don't think it ever will end." I said, "That is exactly what I am talking about. You ought to be teaching Brazilians enough geology so that they can teach geology." He said, "Oh no, that is not my assignment at all."

*Q: Was he official?*

TUTHILL: He was...I forget now whether he was USAID or USIA, or what. Yes, he was on the United States government's payroll.

*Q: How did the cut in personnel affect your role as Ambassador? Did it make it easier to control the various agencies, including military and intelligence agencies?*

TUTHILL: Most of the military aid program...there was a Major General, a real Stu, because he wrote back on the 50 percent request that if he had to cut he would have to cut the PX, APO and two of the three airplanes. I thought it was an asinine thing.

*Q: He was in Brazil?*

TUTHILL: Yes, he was a Major General and went to higher, greater things later on. He was in charge of the aid to the Brazilian army. He had a place in the Ministry of the Army. I read this thing and called him on the phone and said, "Look, I am going to send in the comments of the country team people as I send this in, but quite frankly I think your comments are ridiculous and I think people are going to laugh at them in Washington. As for the PX, I don't even know where it is; close it. As to the APO, who gives a damn? As for the planes, why do we need three planes anyway?" Well, he let it go and, of course that is exactly what happened in Washington. They read it and said it was ridiculous. The military aid program was ridiculous. It was just that guys liked to live in Brazil and they kept out of Vietnam and all sorts of things.

*Q: The military aid program was not run through USAID but directly through the Pentagon. Is that right?*

TUTHILL: That is correct.

Now the military intelligence. That is a different picture. That is rather an interesting picture because Dick Walters was, of course, the man there. About once every six weeks or so, Joan would call me when I came in the morning at 9:00 saying that General Walters wanted to see me urgently. I knew what that meant. It meant that Castelo Branco -- they had been together in World War II in Italy -- had called him in around midnight and talked to him about all sorts of things. Dick would go back to his apartment where he had one or two cats, and no women, and type out the conversation. And all that rough material he would bring in to me in the morning. It was 95 percent political. So in each case I would say to Dick, "Well, it is mostly political so we will send it through State Department channels." And the telegram always said, "Military Attaché pulled in by the President of Brazil" so that Dick could get full credit for the thing. That in its pure form would go back to State, Defense, CIA and everybody else, of course.

Now the conclusions were something quite different. On that Dick and I disagreed and sometimes rather violently. After one violent one in Brasilia -- after we had opened the Kennedy Library at the university -- there was a little scuffle there. People started throwing bottles and glasses. It wasn't an organized thing. But one person got hit with a bottle and had to go to hospital -- a Brazilian. We had a session in the office about what we ought to do about it. I said, "I think I must go tomorrow morning to the hospital to visit this person." Dick was violently opposed to it. We had quite an argument. When we got through I said, "I am going to tell you what I am going to do. I am going to go to the hospital tomorrow morning." And I did.

The next morning I saw Dick and he reminded me of this later. I saw him in that little quadrangle; we had with all those nice flowers and things. I said, "Dick, we had a complete disagreement last night on this. I am going to follow a different course than you recommended, but I want to tell you that I want you to continue to give me your unvarnished opinion. It doesn't

mean that I am going to follow it, but I want it straight from you just the way you did it last night." And Dick said later that he never had any boss who gave him directions like that.

So, when Dick left, I wrote a long letter of recommendation concerning his role because I think...obviously he is extremely conservative, military oriented guy and had all the weaknesses of the military -- he was against the university, against journalist and trade unions. But he was straight. The intelligence stuff came through straight and went back to Washington without any alteration. And, as I say, he and I could have some violent arguments about everything, and we have continued through the years, right up until today. On abortion he takes a straight Pope's line. He is extremely conservative, Roman Catholic, military man with very high personal ideals, but he was an excellent intelligence officer; so there was no problems with Dick Walters.

*Q: Could he, as apparently you can in some embassies, send items directly to Washington without you seeing it?*

TUTHILL: He could have at the beginning, but he didn't. CIA was doing it all the time and we caught them. I believe it was Christmas of 1967 when I got a message back from Washington saying, "Through other channels we hear there is a danger of a coup d'etat over the holidays." So I knew it must have been a CIA report. We looked over the situation and came to the conclusion that there was no more risk at that particular time than any other time. There was always the risk. So we cabled back that we didn't think there was any more danger than usual.

After that first country team meeting about proposing operation "Topsy" the Station Chief came to me and said, "Of course you realize CIA can't be covered by this." I said, "I don't realize any such thing. If you think I am going to cut down the size of the Embassy and increase proportionally the role of CIA, you are crazy. So, of course, it will be CIA."

And then we finally had a little working team coming from Washington and I wanted CIA represented but I came back to Washington and said, "I want to know who the CIA man is going to be who is coming on this team." Well, I had had in Germany a very good relationship with a fellow by the name of Seymour Bolton, who was a CIA man. They said, "Well, who would you pick?" And I said, "I would pick Seymour Bolton." So they send Seymour Bolton.

And Bolton, Carlucci and I played it absolutely fair because they were recruiting, which I thought was stupid and useless.

*Q: They were recruiting ...?*

TUTHILL: ...in Brazil. To get agents. This is the game we play. I asked Dick Helms three times what he thought they were achieving by all this. Each time he said, "Well, Jack, I will look into it." Well, as far as I know, he is still looking into it. He hasn't decided yet.

*Q: You mean recruiting contacts outside?*

TUTHILL: Yes; they were paying guys to inform them in trade unions, universities, military, etc. Nine out of ten people they would proposition would say no and would go to the press saying

that the United States is doing this all the time.

So we did get them cutback. I forget whether it was 30 percent or not -- probably something less. The CIA had phony secrecy. They wanted everybody to know that they were CIA but they wanted people to make believe that they didn't know they were CIA. So it was kind of goofy.

Once we had this we got to this question of communications. There was no problem working it out with Dick Walters. We could see everything. With CIA, the Station Chief said to me and to Carlucci, "We will let you know if something comes through or if we are sending something out of interest to you." I said, "No, it won't do. I will decide whether it is of interest to me and I will designate Carlucci to be the guy to go into your code room and see the messages coming in or going out. If Frank says no interest to the Ambassador, don't send it. In other words, Carlucci's decision is valid as far as I am concerned." And that was the arrangement we had. It wasn't easy and it wasn't pleasant to work it out. They resisted like hell, of course. But they were vulnerable because they made a stupid recommendation which we had to correct about the possibility of a coup d'etat in the Christmas of 1967.

*Q: This is the one you were just telling me about?*

TUTHILL: Yes.

*Q: I meant to ask you about that. Obviously that came to you from Washington but it indicates that something went to Washington from the mission that you hadn't see.*

TUTHILL: So they really got caught off base.

*Q: And you felt that if you could have put an input into that it would have been a better message going up or maybe wouldn't have gone up at all?*

TUTHILL: Sure. Our considered opinion, which turned out to be correct, that there was no greater danger than normal. There is always a danger in any Latin American country of a coup d'etat. But it didn't seem proportionally greater then.

*Q: With the military communications, would you generally see them afterwards or did Walter just play it by ear if he thought you should have input before...?*

TUTHILL: Well, with Dick, I didn't question because I had so much experience with him with this raw information that he was getting from Costello, you see. And subsequently he was replaced by Moro...and I wasn't quite that sure about him. Because, also with Dick, despite our frequent clashes on policy, I am sure that he never went back to the Brazilian military and said, "Well, the Ambassador says such and such, but you know...." implying that I wasn't important. I never had the confidence with Moro, but I was leaving by the time he came in and left him to my poor successor.

*Q: Was there competition between the two? Henderson in Bolivia was concerned about it. And it did play out particularly in the Guevara incident. I think rather dramatically. If there hadn't*

*been competition between the two, Guevara might not have been killed. It is an interesting story where the military attaché knew he was captured...he was held for about 24 hours...and learned it almost immediately. He sent a message to Washington to this effect but didn't say anything to the Ambassador. The Ambassador says at least that he would have weighed in to spare Guevara, that we wanted him more alive than dead. But he never had that opportunity. He didn't know until I interviewed him that his military attaché had sent off the message. The attaché had told me. Part of it seemed to be that he wanted to get it off and scoop CIA, and he did. He scooped them by about 24 hours.*

TUTHILL: There probably were elements of competition between the two, but Dick Walters was so superior in terms of intelligence in Brazil that if the CIA had sent down their whole organization they couldn't have competed with Dick in getting information and finding out what was going on. I think while their program of recruiting was stupid, but they weren't stupid enough to challenge Walters on political information. So whether it changed under Moro, I just don't know.

I was not conscious of any serious conflict between the Defense and CIA intelligence activities.

*Q: Walters was just very well connected with the military government.*

TUTHILL: You couldn't possibly have had a closer relationship. He went through the whole war in Italy with those guys. With Costello.

Perhaps that is the reason that CIA did these other foolish things -- foolish in my view, the recruiting -- was to have some justification to have all those people there and all that equipment. But they were dead right in terms of the murder of the Army Captain, I mentioned earlier, in Sao Paulo. I will give them credit for that. They were following the extreme communist left wing group and, while the Brazilians maintained that they weren't sure, the CIA were absolutely right on this.

*Q: There is one story I particularly want to ask you about. It circulated throughout all the Embassy. You apparently went to Washington and had a meeting with President Johnson at one time during your tour in Brazil.*

TUTHILL: Several times.

*Q: The story is that you were there in fact when all of the problems were occurring in Detroit. Riots were going on and the President was terribly concerned. He was fairly dismissive about Brazilian affairs, which I wouldn't think would be high on his agenda on that particular day. Did that happen?*

TUTHILL: I don't recall. I saw much more of Johnson when I was at the European Community in Brussels than I did when I was in Brazil. As a matter of fact, on terms of operation "Topsy" the reason I knew that Johnson was in favor of it was from Dean Rusk. Johnson didn't tell me; Dean Rusk told me. Dean said that I had the support of the entire cabinet and the President. I did see him from time to time when I was in Brazil, but he really wasn't interested in Brazil.

You remember about every six or nine months we would get a message from the White House saying that the President was thinking about making an official visit to Brazil. Then Mowinckel would prepare the response saying what a great idea and he certainly should do it but not yet. I think I was wearing those out by the time I left because I think there were probably three occasions when we said "not yet."

*Q: Was that an idea dreamed up by people at a lower level in the State Department that would have liked to have it happen or did Johnson at that point really want to come?*

TUTHILL: I don't really know. As a matter of fact, Walt Rostow told me that when Johnson came to Argentina for some meeting of heads of government, on the plane back Johnson is supposed to have said to Rostow and the others, "Now who do you think of all these heads of government in Latin America I would choose as the man to be with in a moment of crisis?" There was silence. He said, "You will never guess; it is Costa e Silva." I said, "Oh, Christ." What a misjudgment."

So I do know that Johnson was a little bit fascinated by that huge country. He did have the mistaken idea that Costa e Silva was a man of substance and to be dependent on. But I don't know, he may have gotten restless -- you see the Foreign Office and the military were toying with the idea of getting Brazil mixed up with the Vietnam thing. At one stage a proposal was made that one of these secondhand destroyers that we were turning over to them, we could turn over to them off the waters of Vietnam and they could try to arrange somehow that the North Vietnamese could shoot at it so that they could go to war.

Well, this was never an official policy, but some of them were toying with this. So the official position of the Brazilian government -- and Nixon when he came down encouraged them in it -- was support of US policy in Vietnam. I think this sort of thing may have influenced somebody in the White House to think that a trip would be appropriate.

*Q: On that point, the Brazilians were never interested were they?*

TUTHILL: Well, we never told them that Johnson was even considering a trip.

*Q: No, I mean about Vietnam.*

TUTHILL: No, I think it was a small group within the government. I think the guy who was the Secretary General in the Foreign Office and the military, would rather have liked to have Brazil in the war with us -- to be militarily engaged in Vietnam. But no, there certainly was no public support for this. I think that is one of the reasons they didn't go any further.

*Q: Aside from this group that was for it, was there ever any official toying with the ideal of assisting the US?*

TUTHILL: They were very sympathetic to the US. They made the right noises -- right, if you mean in support of US policy in Vietnam. But it never went beyond that. I think they were

concerned about a public explosion, which I am sure there would have been. It would have been very unpopular.

Of course, when I went to Brazil, it was 1966, and by that time Johnson was unraveling about the whole Vietnam thing. He had become so obsessed with it, and so was Dean Rusk, for that matter, curiously enough. I can understand Johnson going the extreme on it, but I can't understand how Dean Rusk became that involved.

*Q: That was 1966, so that would have been the beginning of... ?*

TUTHILL: Yes, people were starting to get really serious about the whole thing.

*Q: Protests were beginning.*

*Well I think that covers the topics that I was interested in. Is there anything you would like to mention?*

TUTHILL: No, the only thing I would urge you to do is to find Howard Baker here in town and Kubisch and Ackerman. Kubisch in terms of the whole relationship with the White House and the State Department. Kubisch was tremendous in backstopping this in Washington. Those would be the people.

**LOUIS P. GOELZ**  
**Consular Officer**  
**Sao Paulo (1966-1969)**

*Louis P. Goelz was born in Philadelphia on February 25, 1927. After military service he graduated from La Salle College and Georgetown University. He joined the Foreign Service in 1955. He served in Lima, Hong Kong, Sao Paulo Belen Para, Mexico City, Nuevo Laredo, Tehran, and Seoul. He also served at INR, and the Visa Office and was assigned to the NATO Defense College for a year. He retired in 1992 and was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in July 1992 and February, 1993.*

GOELZ: In '66, yes.

*Q: Then where did you go?*

GOELZ: I went to Brazil. I was for six months working at the Consulate General in Sao Paulo, and then I went up to be Principal Officer in Belem, Para on the Amazon for two and a half years. It was a very interesting assignment. There in Belem we did not have the visa problem that you would have in a larger post. We had some applicants, of course, but most of them local people who we knew fairly well, and there were very few problems with visa applications in that place at that time.

*Q: Since I've got you here, what was the political situation there?*

GOELZ: In Brazil at that particular time?

*Q: And particularly at your post.*

GOELZ: Well, in that area there was only one man who counted. We had a governor who was a former military man, but the one man who called the shots all the time I was there was the Commanding General of the Army. There was no doubt about it. The Navy was there as well, the Navy had an Admiral, a very nice fellow; the Air Force had a Brigadier, very nice, very popular, very good people but the General was the one who ruled the roost.

*Q: Did you have dealings with him?*

GOELZ: Oh sure, of course, as Principal Officer you had to.

*Q: Sometimes there's a removed there.*

GOELZ: We were not close friends, I was much closer friend with the Admiral, and the Air Force General. They had both traveled in the United States, both spoke English fairly well. The military General had not done much traveling abroad, and did not speak too much English, and did not mix socially with the same crowd as the others.

*Q: Did you run across unrest, or anything? Or were things pretty much under control?*

GOELZ: They had things pretty well under control in that particular period of time.

*Q: This is the period of military rule, wasn't it?*

GOELZ: Yes.

**ALAN FISHER**  
**Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS**  
**Brazil (1966-1972)**

*Alan Fisher was born in New York, New York in 1913. He started his photography career working for New York World Telegram. Mr. Fisher began his government career in 1942 as a photographer for Inter-American Affairs. He served in the USIS from its beginning and has worked in Paris, Brazil, and Vietnam. Mr. Fisher was interviewed on July 27, 1989 by G. Lewis Schmidt.*

FISHER: Then when television started in Brazil, our films were very popular on television. It was only then that they began to worry about television rights for them. I remember we had a

television station start in Rio, and I discussed with the general manager the use of our films. He said, "We need material. We don't have any material. Can we use your stuff?"

I said, "Well, I don't have rights for you to show on television, but I don't have a television set. So if you borrow them and show them on television, I don't know whether you'd use them or not, because I can't see them. If someone complains, I'll have to bring the films back." That's the arrangement we worked by. But we felt, "Wow, we got in on the ground floor with television." But we learned that as soon as that space that we were using our films for became salable, we were out. And that's the history of television with our films. If that space is salable, either we buy it to show or somebody buys it to sponsor our film, but it doesn't get on for nothing.

One interesting story was that I had ordered an American jeep for use in the interior, and it came without a top. Shortly afterwards, I had the visit of two men from the motion picture service in Washington, Harry Keith--you know Harry very well; he was your motion picture officer in Japan--and Doug Baker.

*Q: I know Doug, too.*

FISHER: Doug is now a dependent husband. (Laughs) Well, they came down to visit me, and they had visions of sitting around on the beach in Copacabana. I said, "No, I'm going to set up a trip for them in that jeep that the motion picture service sent me without a top." So they arrived and I gave them a day of rest, and then I took them off into the interior in that jeep, with no top, and it started to rain. They complained. I said, "Boys, you didn't send me a top." (Laughs) Well, they came down and I had them out there for four or five days. Harry Keith came down with a terrible cold. Doug weathered it well. Finally, when I put them on the plane to go back, they said, "Alan, you can bet nobody's ever going to come down to check your operation again." (Laughs) Motion picture work was very interesting.

*Q: At that point, you were not producing any films yourself, were you?*

FISHER: Not at that point, but shortly thereafter, when Frank McArdle was information officer at the embassy, a wonderful guy, Frank had a long history of McCann Erickson, and I knew Frank from the early days of the coordinator's office, when Dick Hipplehouser was the head of the office. Connie Eagan was there and Jack Wiggin or Johnny Wiggin, and Frank McArdle, Francis J. McArdle were both our radiomen. After he was info officer there, he then went to PAO Sao Paulo, then went as PAO Lisbon, where we visited them later on. We were very good friends.

*Q: Hadn't he been previously with one of the major ad agencies?*

FISHER: McCann Erickson, yes, in Africa. I don't remember where it was.

Mrs. FISHER: South Africa.

FISHER: South Africa, yes. Frank suggested to me--"Mac" we called him--"Why don't you get into some local production here? I think we can get some money for it."

When I was a photographer in Rio, I knew all the local photographers and the newsreel men, and there was one newsreel outfit that was a good one. They put out the best newsreel in Brazil, and their chief photographer was a good friend of mine. So I got together with him and I said, "How about let's doing a few documentaries?"

He said, "Fine." And we did, for example, the SS Trigger. The submarine Trigger came on a goodwill trip to Brazil, and we did a documentary on that. I took Herbert aboard the submarine, and we made a dive, so that Herbert could show that the gauge is registering depth and so forth.

*Q: Was that his surname or was that his first name?*

FISHER: Herbert Richers.

*Q: Oh, yes. He was the one with whom Turner Shelton later was dealing for some major film activities in Brazil.*

FISHER: Through me, yes.

*Q: Through you.*

FISHER: Yes. We had a great program going, but this one particular time when we went down in the submarine, when we came up, we had made arrangements with a Brazilian Navy tug to meet us 30 miles out, because the Trigger was on her way back to the States. The Brazilian Navy tug was going to meet us at a pre-arranged spot 30 miles out, take us off, and bring us back. We surfaced, and there was no tug. We waited for a while. No tug. We saw a Brazilian fishing boat, so we headed towards it, and the guy started to zigzag. He thought we were chasing him. He zigzagged all over the place, and finally we stopped him. We said, "What are you afraid of?" He said, "I thought you were going to attack me." And I learned that the way to avoid it is to zigzag. We finally made a deal with him for \$75 to take us back, so we transferred to that little fishing boat, off went the sub, and we went back. Halfway back, we met the tug coming out for us, but we were already halfway back. We stayed on the boat.

*Q: Had you already made the dive by that time?*

FISHER: Yes, we finished the dive. We finished the film.

Another time we were doing a film, I took Herbert up to the Amazon to do a film on the health program up there. We were out on the Amazon, going upriver to visit some of the little hospitals that our joint health service had built with the Brazilians.

*Q: Was this an AID project?*

FISHER: No, it was SPHS, special public health service. It was funded jointly by US and Brazil, and it was a very good program. It operated in many hospitals in communities along the Amazon River, plus other areas in Brazil.

Mrs. FISHER: They were giving malaria medication.

FISHER: They were doing malaria on occasion, which the Rockefeller Foundation had done a lot of before, but they were attending to the needs of the sick, mostly malaria, and dispensing a lot of Atabrine and so forth. We were up on the Amazon, and Herbert thought he might use the gangplank as a water ski. (Laughs) And dropped the gangplank over and rode it, got his hand tangled up in the rope and dislocated his wrist. We kept quiet about it. We finally managed to get it fixed up at the next hospital we stopped at.

Mrs. FISHER: Boys will be boys.

FISHER: But we tried to hide the fact that it happened, but the captain told, and we were admonished for our frivolousness. At any rate, we did a pretty good film on that.

Then later, a year or so later, we got into another operation which was a classified operation, and I don't know whether we get into that here or not, but it was a good one.

Herbert Richers then became a big-time motion picture producer.

*Q: Alan, you mentioned a confidential project that you wondered whether we should put on tape or not for various reasons. I think I would like to record it at this point. It was apparently done confidentially at the request of the Brazilians and not the US Government, and it may be that even now it shouldn't be released. So I would like you to put the story on tape, and then I will check it out. If it still is considered advisable to delete it, we will delete it from the final draft.*

FISHER: This was a newsreel operation which Herbert Richers, the cameraman, and I started. Again, it was at Frank McArdle's encouragement that I was doing this, and I proposed to Herbert that he start a newsreel of his own, and that we would finance a good part of it, and the rest of the financing he could have through theater rentals, or if he wanted to sell parts of it the way the regular newsreel operated, it would be okay with us.

So Herbert started a newsreel which was basically a good newsreel with a lot less materia paga, which the Brazilians call "paid material" in it, which the newsreels in those days were loaded with. If you wanted a story in a newsreel, you could get anything in a newsreel, provided you paid for it.

Our stories, we were to have at least one story a week in the newsreel which was a pro-American story. It might be a project we were working on in Brazil, it might be something we wanted to bring in on international news. Whatever it was, Herbert ran it. Then he was always to look for other stories for the reel which would reflect well upon the Americans or support some basic American policy. Herbert and I would meet every week for lunch. We'd go over the makeup of the newsreel, determine what was being done, I would approve the script, and it would go out to theaters. He released in every major city in Brazil. Unlike many Brazilians reels which played (I've seen newsreels in Brazil in the interior five years old), his, within something like three weeks, were out of circulation. So that his reel was a fresh reel, and people really liked it. They looked forward to it. This, again, was before television, so the reel was like our newsreels in the States. I brought equipment in for him, I brought in sound effects, and even sent him up to the

States once for some special training. But it was a very successful project and it continued up until the time I left. Shortly thereafter, I believe the ambassador objected to this classified operation and it was stopped. I don't really know.

*Q: Yes, he was.*

FISHER: They needed someone to go to Lima, Peru, as acting PAO because Tom Driver was being transferred to Karachi urgently. So they looked around and said, "Whose operation can do without him for a while?" and they sent me over as acting PAO for three months to Lima. It was a wonderful experience, a wonderful experience. I worked with Ellis Briggs.

*Q: Who later became ambassador to Brazil.*

FISHER: Yes. He was a very nice guy. We had daily staff meetings, and I was able to learn a lot about the whole operation and make some changes in it, which I felt it needed. But I spent three months there, and Florence and Stephanie came over to join us. We went to Machu Picchu. Then they went back, and later on at the end of three months, I went back to Brazil again. Then got transferred to Paris.

The interesting thing about that was that a year before my transfer, Bill Clark, who was area director, had come to Brazil and had said to me, "Turner wants to transfer you to Paris. He's got problems there and he thinks you could settle them."

I was really getting into the operations with Herbert Richers at that time. And I said, "Give me another year, but don't tell Florence that you asked me." (Laughs)

He said, "I won't." And Florence never knew for a year that I could have gone a year earlier. But then I was transferred directly to Paris.

*Q: Did Charlie Mertz replace you in Brazil?*

FISHER: Yes. You know, by the way, an interesting thing about Mertz. He was very well liked in Brazil. He carried an attaché case to and from work, and this I learned later, the locals told me, and they referred to that as the frigorifico, the deep freezer. I said, "Why?" They said, "Because Mr. Mertz would put stuff in there and it would never come out." (Laughs) Put papers in there, you know, communications that would never come out.

**J. PHILLIP MCLEAN**  
**Regional Officer, Latin America (ARA)**  
**Washington, DC (1967-1968)**

*Mr. McLean was born and raised in Seattle, Washington and was educated at Seattle University and the University of Indiana. He entered the Foreign Service in 1962. A Latin American specialist, his service in the State Department in*

*Washington and abroad, primarily concerned Latin American Affairs. His foreign posts were Brasilia, Edinburgh, Panama City, La Paz, Milan and Bogota, where he was Deputy Chief of Mission. In Washington Mr. McLean held positions dealing with Latin American Affairs, including that of Deputy Assistant Secretary for South America. Mr. McLean was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.*

*Q: So you were in ARA from 1967 to when?*

McLEAN: To June or July of 1969.

*Q: What were you doing in Latin American Affairs?*

McLEAN: I had several jobs. The first job I went into, as I say, was an editing job. At that time they didn't have a regional office as such, so they had a small unit of three people who basically did the job of pulling paperwork together for the Bureau. There are larger offices that now do that type of thing, but at that time it was a small unit. We were considered staff assistants to the assistant secretary. I was given the additional job, and I was told it was to be 50 percent of my time, to serve as the liaison with the Sea-Level Canal Commission which was then studying routes for building a new canal somewhere in the Americas' isthmus. It seemed to really belong more to the Panama office, but they wanted to assert the fact that we had not chosen where we were going to build this canal and maybe we would build it in Nicaragua or Colombia or some other place, so they put it as a regional responsibility. In this capacity I worked for Bob Sayre, Robert Sayre, who was the principal deputy assistant secretary, and he was in fact a member of the Commission, so I was his staff person for relations with that group. In that capacity I wrote the draft report for the foreign policy part of the Commission report. The member of the Commission who oversaw my work was Milton Eisenhower, who was extraordinarily kind and helpful. I remember why I learned, despite my Democratic roots, to love the Eisenhowers. There were two critical points in this work where Eisenhower proclaimed that my work was the best that had ever been done on this--this type of exaggeration, which was wonderful.

*Q: Well, then you did other things too when you were in the area?*

McLEAN: Yes, I did other things. We were the ones who did the putting papers together, staffed out papers for the offices to do, and ran them up to the assistant secretary, to the secretary. We did the Congressional testimony for the Secretary. Whenever a position paper on something going on in Latin America, we either did it or had it staffed and edited it. I might mention a couple things that came up. One was Brazil, and the other would be Guatemala. In the Brazil case, because I had had experience in Brazil, I became the person who looked after things there, and I can remember so well that pressures were building up in Brazil in 1968, but I can remember one night working on a paper about student rioting in Rio de Janeiro as we were sensing that Brazil was on the verge of something and at the same time someone calling me across to the other corner of the building saying, "Look, look out," and their look out was Washington burning. I remember this put things in perspective.

*Q: This is after the Martin King...*

McLEAN: This was Martin Luther King, and we could see this. From our point of view the smoke was coming up really over the White House, so it was a rather dramatic night. After that particular set of very alarming cables from Brazil, I kept after the desk to say let's get at this, let's define this question a little bit more carefully, because something's going on in Brazil and our policy there. Where I was was a good place for a junior officer to ask questions, and in fact I think I sent down to the desk a series of pointed questions. I was told then by the desk, "Don't worry about it. We have communicated to Frank Carlucci, who was then political counselor in Rio, to please keep a lid on all this terrible reporting. You're scaring people too much." In my own mind, at least as seen from a small corner of things, that was really unfortunate, because the pressures then began to build up, and I don't think we were getting the reporting for the next six months that would have put this in perspective and dramatized it in the way that it needed to be, because we were pouring enormous resources into Brazil at that time and the political basis of it needed to be questioned.

*Q: What was your feeling about why the desk was trying to not smother but smooth over things?*

McLEAN: I'm not making accusations against individual people, but it seems to me a natural human tendency of those who are involved trying to sustain these programs and to continually try to justify the programs that the embassy and others wanted, that they were terribly afraid that the support for this within the bureaucracy and Congress and the American people would die off, so they were quite naturally trying to put a damper on what might be alarming reporting. But again, perhaps maybe because I had some peripheral experience with the Vietnam experience through the INR, I had seen how these pressures to do programs sometimes cloud the vision of those who are looking at the problem or standing back and saying, "What are we trying to accomplish with these programs?" This was a perception that I had, and the example I gave was exactly how, specifically how, I saw them. I remember at the end of the story, a particular period in that story was in December of 1968 the Brazilian military suddenly declared an *auto adicional*, additional declared act, from the executive, which severely constrained the political process again, constrained it more than '64, and did so in a way that totally caused us no longer to be able to say, as we had been saying up to that point, that this was really a democratic process with some elements of the military in it, to be one that was clear that this was a straightforward military dictatorship. I can recall the heat of the morning after this happened when people were raging against the military for having done this, and yet, I have to tell you, within a week people began to justify and were finding other reasons to justify our program, which up to that time had been justified on trying to build a truer democracy in Brazil. This I do not think would ever happen later, but at that time it was interesting to see how the mind of man can curve to circumstance.

*Q: You're also pointing to something that is sort of not only man but almost bureaucratic behavior really, that what we're doing is something we'll continue to do. Particularly in a bureaucracy it's very difficult for people to say, okay, let's stop.*

McLEAN: That's right, and it's also difficult to continuously say, "How does this fit with everything else that I'm trying to accomplish?" Clearly at that time we were not... The United States was a poor democracy, but democracy was not quite such a center of our thinking as it

would later become. We were trying to justify what we were doing in Brazil by the democratic ideals, but we also had developed ideals, and I think we were somewhat taken by the Latin, particularly the Brazilian, view that what was important was development. After you've got a country developing, then democracy would come along with it. Brazil, of course, was developing its national security doctrine, which would later become important to them, and the National War College was developing these ideas. I don't think we were quick enough to pick up that we were looking at something that was fundamentally anti-democratic, and for America's own interests, which should be... We should have been trying to put the weight of our programs more in the direction of getting a political goal.

*Q: What about the "Communist menace" there? Was this used dealing with Brazil as sort of the justification or excuse for a lot of things?*

McLEAN: It was, but I think it's a little revisionist history to say that everyday we were thinking of communism as the biggest danger. The big issue before people's minds was how do you get this country developing--this was a third of Latin America--and how to get it away from the poverty. That was a major justification, and I don't think that everyday we would say communism was going quickly, because it would have been unrealistic. Communism was not a big factor at that particular time. We could argue in some ways that this military dictatorship was in fact trying to push things more in that direction. I don't think I mentioned earlier that one of the journalists that I had met during my time in Brazil who was on the left went farther to the left and becomes a guerilla and later on is a prisoner as exchange for our ambassador back in 1969. So, I think, the United States identifying itself with this repressiveness did have the opposite effect on some people's ideology. Communism clearly was an issue, but I don't think it certainly was the only issue. We were worried about the kidnapping. At this particular point--I'm talking about 1968, early 1969--terrorism was not the biggest issue.

**JAMES R. MEENAN**  
**Program Auditor, US AID**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1967-1968)**

*Mr. Meenan was born in Rhode Island and raised in California. After graduating from Woodbury College he entered government service. Joining USAID in 1965, Mr. Meenan had a distinguished career with that Agency, serving as Mission and Program Auditor in USAID Missions throughout the world. His foreign postings include Liberia, Vietnam, Brazil, Chile, Panama, Sri Lanka and Philippines. Among his Washington assignments was Committee Staff Member in the Office of Senator Max Baucus. Mr. Meenan was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.*

*Q: How did you view Brazil? You were in Brazil from when to when?*

MEENAN: I arrive in Rio de Janeiro in 1967 and departed for a new job with the U.S. Navy in 1968. The USAID program was quite large, exceeding \$100,000,000 a year in economic

assistance.

*Q: In Brazil, what program issues did you identify?*

MEENAN: Overall, I found the USAID program to be quite dynamic and delivering the resources needed for the country's effective growth. I did perform reviews of two program shortcomings dealing with the adequacy of the USAID's oversight efforts.

The main iron ore mining company had imported, under a USAID Commodity Import Program, extensive amounts of Caterpillar equipment. However, a U.S. seafarer photographed this equipment stranded on the docks of a port just above Rio de Janeiro and reported it to his congressman. Upon arrival at the port, I confirmed the fact that extensive amounts of equipment, in fact, were distressed all because the local customs official would not clear the items. The customs official took the position that all parts making up the Caterpillar piece of equipment had to come from that sole company. So if he saw any other firm's item on the machinery, he blocked the clearance. Once we confirmed the facts, the U.S. raised the issue with the Brazilian government and that customs official was removed and the equipment promptly cleared for use by the importer. This did serve to show the USAID that some end-use inspections were needed of the goods imported under its large commodity import program. This type of assistance was good both for the U.S., since it helped introduce U.S. goods to new markets, and the host country, in that it provided current technological goods at a reasonable price for economic development.

On a major power distribution system project the USAID was funding, we confirmed the findings of a recent evaluation report that identified many construction and technical shortcomings that the USAID was not addressing. With the assistance of one of our local audit staff, we proceeded to inspect the full length of the transmission system, including substations that ran from the hydroelectric dam, the Japanese were building, down to the major city of Sao Paulo, Brazil. We traveled by off road vehicle and small aircraft that the power firm made available and confirmed the shortcomings that included substation blockhouses where the walls and ceiling wouldn't meet and transmission line arrangement difficulties. At one point in our travels, our small aircraft was forced down by bad weather as we approached Sao Paulo. We had to buzz the local office of the power company so they would send a vehicle to a nearby dirt landing strip. Once the transport switch was completed, we continued the rest of the way in the pouring rain by vehicle.

In documenting the findings for USAID, its senior engineer assigned to manage this project took the position he did not need to go out and inspect every inch of the transmission line to do his job, but he could simply walk across the street and talk to the power company executives. Accordingly, we included his position in the final draft report that was circulated to senior USAID management. That position received a lot of attention! We did get our message across and it was agreed that field inspections were a vital part of managing projects, so we removed his earlier position from the final report. We believe a lesson was learned: Don't try to get short with auditors, it can come back to haunt you.

I was pleased to see the good work that was being accomplished with a local currency loan

provided the Getulio Vargas Foundation, which is the think tank for Brazil policy makers on economic matters. Later when I was a private sector trade advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce and the U.S. Trade Representative, I observed that they were having negotiating difficulties with Brazil on the Free Trade Agreement for the Americans. Accordingly, I recommended that they explore the possibility of quietly opening a door for discussing the broad trade objectives with the folks from the Foundation. This could possibly find some common ground where the policy makers could sort out their differences and avoid further direct confrontations that the U.S. has had and continues to have with Brazil. I believe that the U.S. has built up a lot of good will with Brazilians familiar with the level of assistance provided in the 1960s, it would be hoped that U.S. leaders could recognize these earlier efforts and build upon them in the current dialogue.

*Q: What prompted your change in employment?*

MEENAN: USAID was following questionable personnel practices that were not conducive to establishing a career. It was retaining Foreign Service personnel in a “limited” employment category without moving them to career status as well as requiring they fill positions that were classified as two to three grades higher than the grades at which the employee was being paid.

While in Vietnam, I was performing the tasks at two to three grades higher than my compensation and when I departed, my work was taken over by three senior Foreign Service officers. In Brazil this same disparity continued and USAID did not remove my “limited” appointment status. To add insult to the injury, USAID initiated a new “fast track” employment/advancement program for International Development Interns, but declined to allow existing employees to participate.

So again, I visited the Help Wanted section of the Wall Street Journal and located an ad by the U.S. Navy for a budget officer on its new Polaris/Poseidon submarine program. I applied and was hired in Brazil. The position was with the Special Projects Office, later renamed Strategic Systems Office, of the Navy, and located in the old Naval Munitions Building on the mall in Washington, DC.

Before departing for the navy venture, I was most pleased to marry a “Girl from Ipanema” who also happened to be a senior administrative staffer in the loan office of the USAID. The wedding took place in the chapel at the governor’s palace in Rio de Janeiro.

*Q: What work did you do for the Navy?*

MEENAN: Upon reporting for duty, I learned that the admiral heading the operations had been promoted by congress and not through normal channels. This made for a difficult work environment because multiple budgets were prepared, one for the direct submission to the congress, and a second that was not as accurate submitted to the Pentagon. This situation resulted in a high turnover in office staff. After about a year in this awkward position I contacted USAID/Washington and they offered me a nice audit position in Santiago, Chile.

Before departing the Navy position, I did some research into the accounting that was being used

for the termination costs on some major works. I remembered from my time with the USAG at Douglas Aircraft that when the U.S. terminated a project, the termination costs can run as much, if not more, than the original cost to complete the work. I called around the U.S. to the prime contractors and contracting officers and determined that a final settlement for these costs had just been worked out. Unfortunately, the Navy had not set aside any funding for these payments and would have to go back to congress for the funding.

*Q: Why are the termination costs so high?*

MEENAN: In most cases, a termination notice comes late in the production process, once all the upfront engineering, tooling and related costs have been incurred and production staff assembled. At this point, the bulk of the production costs have been set and the added demobilizing costs just runs higher than if the job was completed as originally planned. A termination notice is usually issued when it is determined that the technology or the design to be used is flawed. While many technology changes can be handled by a simple modification, the extreme situations require a full termination.

One such termination that I saw at Douglas Aircraft in the 1960s was for the Skybolt Missile System.

*Q: Skybolt.*

MEENAN: Yes. It was an embarrassment, because the Pentagon kept trying to get this missile to work properly without much luck. The President put out the order to terminate it, but Douglas Aircraft decided to try one more test, which proved somewhat successful. That unscheduled test did not go over well and extra audit efforts were taken to insure that the company's general overhead costs that the Skybolt program was scheduled to absorb were now to be shared by all company projects, commercial as well as defense.

*Q: Skybolt was quite a thing. We were trying to get something going with the British on that.*

**HOWARD L. STEELE**  
**Agricultural Economics**  
**Piracicaba, (1967-1970)**

*Dr. Howard L. Steele was born in Pennsylvania and graduated from both Washington and Lee University and Penn State University. Assignments abroad have included Brazil, Guatemala, Bolivia, Honduras and Sri Lanka. Dr. Steele was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.*

*Q: It was 50% at Ohio State and 50% in Brazil?*

STEELE: No, 100% in Brazil. We moved to Brazil, arrived in Piracicaba, Brazil, October 15, 1964. I had to teach my first lectures in agricultural economics in Portuguese the end of

November with the new term of the school there. So, I had to go into an immersion language training program. I had four years of German courses in high school and college, but had never had any Spanish or romance language. We were fortunate that there was a missionary immersion language-training center at Campinas near Piracicaba. Our Brazilian minister at the Methodist church in Piracicaba, Reverend Jerson Vega, had a number of young people who were doing that teaching and he arranged for them to come and teach the professors from Ohio State in the immersion system.

*Q: How long were you there?*

STEELE: The original assignment with Ohio State was 2 years, 1964 to 1966. It was in the middle of the sugarcane area of that part of Sao Paulo. But most of my projects were working with farmers' cooperatives that were being developed, the business side of corn and livestock. I wasn't in sugarcane at all. That was already developed. Coffee was developed. We were looking at the domestic crops, livestock, fruits and vegetables.

*Q: You got there not too long after there had been this military coup.*

STEELE: We came in right after the military coup of '64. The president was General Costello Branco, "General Whitehouse" in English. I had a number of left-wing students in my classes and that was interesting. I've written all about that in my recently published book *Food Soldier*. The average age of the student body there was about 24. There were a lot of professional students hanging on. We were warned about them in our security briefings. Pretty soon, it was easy to spot them. There were these clandestine mimeographed propaganda sheets which would show up under the classroom doors in the mornings, and they always pictured me as a dog with long ears smoking a pipe, which I did in those days. One of these left-wing communist sympathizers would start to ask a question about some subject we were talking about and then make a speech and just keep going on and on and on. Sometimes the other students would boo him or her down and would stop them, embarrass them. I found that humor worked very well. Quite often, they'd finish and I'd say, "That was a wonderful Portuguese discussion, but what was your question now? I've lost track of it." A little humor helps.

*Q: What were the parts of Brazilian agriculture you were dealing with?*

STEELE: A very interesting question because the coffee industry was outstanding, modern, productive, in world trade, marvelous grading and packaging and so forth. Sugarcane, a big industry, very productive, very well organized. In contrast, the dairy industry, the corn industry, the soybeans and rice, fruits and vegetables, and so on, were a disaster for the domestic markets. I couldn't figure it out at first. If they can do this for their export markets, they certainly can do it for domestic. But there was not a price incentive to do so. That's the kind of thing we began to work on.

*Q: Were you running into that bugaboo of the Brazilians, the horrible inflation? Was that at the root of the problem?*

STEELE: It was a part of the problem. That part of Brazil, Sao Paulo state, was founded by

northern Italians. My counterpart was Dr. Alcides Zagato, a wonderful guy, a very brilliant guy, but all book knowledge. I tried to get him to go out and interview farmers with me and he always supported me and then he'd find some reason why he couldn't go. It finally dawned on me what the problem was: he was embarrassed. He had a full professorship in agricultural economics and he didn't know how to talk to a farmer or a middle man. It was all theory. But we then got some of the younger professors and some of the graduate students in our department to go with me - that worked out quite well.

Yes, inflation was a serious problem. When he was paid in cruzeiros, inflation was only 120-160% when I was there; later in the '70s it got up to 1000-2000%. How they survived, I don't know.

*Q: I never understood this.*

STEELE: He would be waiting to get his money in cruzeiro notes. His wife would be outside the gate with the car running. He would run down to the car. They would go into the center of the city and buy glass, wire, anything, sand, stone, anything that would hold its value.

*Q: Parlay it into real...*

STEELE: Because the currency would lose its value overnight. The government was printing too much paper money, to try and offset their debts. Too much money chasing too few goods leads to monetary inflation.

*Q: How can you operate? You're trying to get people to run an efficient corn operation. Would they do this for barter or what?*

STEELE: What I saw of it was the marketing side. That's where the cooperative activity came in. Cooperatives had a bad name in Latin America because there were a lot of crooks that stole farmers' money. So we called them producer associations. Producers who have a similar need banding together to solve common problems. That's the model that we used in the United States and that's the appropriate model because you get people with similar problems together and they want to solve those problems jointly.

The biggest project I had working with the cooperatives (a producer's association) was 200 miles northwest of Piracicaba in a place called San Jose de Rio Prato. There was a medical doctor there who was so upset at the prices he was getting for his coffee and the fact that he and his neighbors got practically nothing for their corn, he started a cooperative action. He and his neighbors had to bag up their corn and other grains, and send them to Sao Paulo on the train or trucks. Then they had to haul back their ground feed or livestock rations. Well, imagine the double cost of transportation on soybeans or corn into Sao Paulo 280 miles away and then back? Why do that? So, we were trying to get them to keep those products, grade them there in the production area, use the off-grades for animal feed with grinders and feed mixing components, not pay that double freight, and then sell the cash grain in truckload lots. That was a big increase in the efficiency of the operations and could become sources of much additional income for the farmers.

*Q: I would think that, here you are, a gringo from North America coming in and putting forth these things. Obviously you were breaking somebody's rice bowl. This may be inefficient, but for somebody, it was making a lot of money.*

STEELE: Well, that's a good point because you had to be pretty careful. It had to be the Brazilians' idea. A man named Professor Ray Cray interviewed me at Ohio State before I left for Brazil. He had been in the Ohio State program in India. He was on the main campus in Columbus. He said, "Steele, I understand you're going to go to Brazil for us. Let me ask you a question. Are you somebody who wants to get the credit for everything? The ideas you come up with, do you like to get up there and talk about your idea from the stage and so forth?" I looked at him and said, "Well, I don't think that would be good in a situation like I'm going to go into Brazil." He said, "That's right. That's the point I want to make. If you're willing to plant seeds in the minds of these Brazilian counterparts you're working with, whoever they are, you're not going to find a plant sprouting out right away probably, but eventually you're going to discern the germ that you have helped plant with that "seed idea," and some day your counterpart will say to you: 'I had an idea.' It may not be what you thought it was going to be, but it's in the right direction. You've got to jump in behind it and say, 'Boy, what a great idea. Wish I had that. How can I help you?' If you're one who doesn't want to take all the credit for everything, you'll do well. But it's got to be the Brazilians' ideas. They're the ones that have to generate the changes and they're the ones that have to live with them.'" So, we did not go in there like a bunch of bulls in a china closet. That would have been a disaster.

*Q: How did you find Brazilian mentality? You said they had very efficient export industries, but were you dealing with a different type of person, the domestic producers? How did they respond?*

STEELE: The ones that responded most favorably at first to what we were trying to do were the Japanese-Brazilians in a producers' association called Cotia. They were trying to develop their own grading standards. There were no grade standards in the '60s for things like tomatoes, peaches, grapes. But the Cotia organization had some very smart managers. They were developing standards and trying to enforce them to get higher prices. People would look around and see what the Japanese-Brazilian farmers were getting for their produce and they wanted to have a piece of the action. They wanted to join Cotia.

One example. I went into the old market in Sao Paulo in the middle of the night one night when some people who came down from Ohio State. I had met the manager of Cotia. He spoke English, Japanese and Portuguese, was a very bright guy. I took them into Cotia's warehouse and there were truckloads of the farmer producers' tomatoes in Cotia's warehouse. They had a covered warehouse. It was one of the few operations that did. The manager was having the drivers and the laborers take boxes of tomatoes out of the middle of each truckload there and put them down on the floor. Then he went down into each box and he found misshapen tomatoes, diseased fruit, and he rejected not just the boxes with the numbers of the patrons on them, but the whole truckload. The guys from Ohio State said, "How can you do that?" So I asked him, "How can you keep from losing your job?" He said, "They know what the standards are. We've had all kinds of training sessions. They know what kind of prices I've been able to get when they ship to

the standard. These neighbors who have the rest of their tomatoes rejected are going to shake that farmer up who tried to cheat on them and us or they're going to throw them out of the association if he or a neighbor do not ship to our standards: yes, I take some risk" and he smiled.

*Q: Did you find yourself running into local opposition? Were you having problems trying to promote better marketing?*

STEELE: No, because the prices that they were getting for the commodities where they were making these kinds of changes, the income that was being generated by not having to double transport product back and forth to Sao Paulo, showed up in their income stream quickly within a year or so, often within a season. The biggest problem we had was with people in the U.S. Agency for International Development in Rio de Janeiro calling us in and saying, "We can't program and chart any progress that you're making. You see the kilowatts of hydroelectric power that we've helped generate here? Look at the kilometers of highways over here. What are we going to program for Ohio State University's money that we've provided them here in Sao Paulo?" My chief of party, Dr. John Sitterley said, "Well, we will eventually. We're being very careful in the number of students we select to go to the United States in the participant training program. But we can only select the right kinds. We're not going to select political appointees, sons and brothers. So, in time, you'll be able to chart the number of graduate student trainees that we've sent up there and have come back. But one of the things we're trying to do is instill changes in values. We may not ever be able to measure that. These people are going to do that if they get in positions of responsibility and authority in time, but how in the world can we chart that?" I thought it was very interesting. Some of the psychologists and programmers in AID were extremely anxious to be able to chart progress.

*Q: What was Ohio State getting out of this?*

STEELE: Some prestige, of course. They and some other universities were in the forefront of participant training activities and humanitarian assistance in one sense of the word, developmental assistance and its humanitarian side. There was an exchange of professorships. There was a broadening of the horizons of the faculty. They got some money, too. They got some very nice operating funds and overhead returns...

*Q: Were you getting grad. students coming down from Ohio State?*

STEELE: Yes, we did. We had them come down. We used them quite effectively in helping us design our projects. They had had enough training that they could do statistical sampling, conduct interviews when they became proficient in Portuguese, and so on.

*Q: Did you find that you were teaching the educational institution and that the students didn't get too political on this? Did the students find agricultural economics not to be their bag?*

STEELE: Those who were left over from the left-leaning governments of Jamie Quadros and Joao Goulart that the military overthrew eventually left the university. I don't know where they went. They got out of the student body. I was glad for that. By the end of the second year, we had some real good students, hardworking students. We did have trouble with the faculty. They

considered themselves to be the biggest, best, most advanced university of agronomy in South America. They were pretty badly inbred. We had trouble getting our master's program approved by the Catagricos, the chair professors that really controlled that university. We finally had to compromise. They wanted to call it "diversificacao" (diversification) rather than "specialization" and we were trying to get specialization in a discipline. They had 22 departments. For a man to get a ring put on his finger and a crown on his head and be called an "engineer agronomo," he had to have taken courses in every one of those 22 departments, so he had a little bit of knowledge about a lot of things but not much about anything.

Our compromise was that they said, "We're going to make them have a 5<sup>th</sup> year. We're going to call it 'diversification.'" We said, "Well, that's not a good idea." They said, "Well, but it can be used as the first year on a master's program." So we compromised. And it worked.

*Q: You left there in '66. This is a good place to stop for this session. How did you feel? Did you feel you had made an impact?*

STEELE: Yes, I did. I was so excited about it that I tried to get real excited about Ohio apples and grapes, the processing tomato and greenhouse industries, and so on, back in Ohio, but I kept gravitating to the Brazilian and other international students. I went back and did consulting beginning in 1967, then again in 1970 to finish writing a book, *Comercializacao Agricola* (Agricultural Marketing) which was published by Editora Atlas, S.A. in Portuguese in 1971.

*Q: Ohio being an agricultural state for eons, the things you were interested in, they had already gone way beyond that state, is that it?*

STEELE: At Ohio, yes. Ohio was in the forefront along with other great land grant institutions like Michigan State, Iowa State, Penn State, and others, Maryland, of course, of developing institutions of higher learning in developing countries. We were sent to Brazil to the agricultural faculty there at the University of Sao Paulo to help start a graduate program with them at the master's level at first. But I think your point is well taken. What you're driving at is that things that we did in Brazil and even more so in countries in Africa, very backward developing countries, and some in Asia and others in South America and Central America where I served, things we did were very elementary, very basic, especially in my field, agricultural marketing, trying to cut down on the losses of valuable product, trying to maintain the quality of that product, trying to avoid mishandling and bad handling and get a better quality product in the hands of consumers or for export at better prices for consumers, middlemen and farmers.

*Q: You left Brazil the first time when?*

STEELE: The fall of 1966.

*Q: How did you feel things were going as far as where they were vis a vis our program here in the United States?*

STEELE: We had established this master's program that was just getting started. They called it "diversificacao"(diversification.) Really it was a specialization program. Insofar as our charge

was concerned, working with the 12 Ohio State faculty there, we were picking up young professors, young instructors, the first bright graduate students who we thought had great potential, to go to the United States with participant training funds and get some additional training up here so that when we pulled out and they came back they could take the program over. We also were successful in developing a bit of an extension program, a bit of a research program, which didn't exist at that institution before. It was based on the old European system, pure theory, little application.

*Q: This was one of the real problems where the United States has been quite successful, that you've got to get down and dirty in these things.*

STEELE: Exactly.

*Q: Were you having problems getting your students to get down and feel the soil?*

STEELE: Not at all. The students were enthusiastic. The professors were the ones that we had trouble with. I mentioned last time that my counterpart was Alcides Zagato, a wonderful man, a very good theoretical economist, a full professor. I couldn't get him to go out to meet co-op or agribusiness people or to talk to farmers. He always supported me. My colleagues had the same situation in their respective fields. But he could always find a reason why he couldn't go. It finally dawned on me that it was face saving. He never had talked to a dirt farmer or a marketing specialist and he wouldn't know how to do it and he didn't want to lose face. But he recommended that his young assistants go with me. So, we got the mission accomplished but it was through these younger Brazilians...

*Q: You came back in '66 and you were where?*

STEELE: Columbus, Ohio. The main campus.

*Q: How long were you there?*

STEELE: I stayed there until I came to the Department of Agriculture in 1971. I went back to Brazil in the summer of 1967 and did some additional work with a producers' association of local farmers' groups that was trying to form a strong federation with the smaller groups. I did that in the summer of 1967. Then I went back in 1970 and finished the first agricultural marketing textbook from scratch in Portuguese in Brazil. They had some books translated from Spanish or from English, but they called me from USAID headquarters in Rio de Janeiro – Dr. Dick Newberg, Director of Rural Development for USAID/Brazil – just before I left in 1966. He said, "I've seen your apostila (a workbook that I'd put together with students' cases and notes and theory and application and so forth over the 2 years that I was there teaching the various courses). We want to publish this as a book. Brazil needs this." Dick was partially responsible for a \$500 million a year program we were funding in Brazil in 1965 dollars. I said, "Dick, I appreciate this. This is an honor, but it's in no shape to be put together. I'm going to have to bring it up to date with current cases and edit it, and so on." He said, "How long will it take?" I said, "Well, I've got a full teaching load, research and committee assignments, counseling assignments and so on at Ohio State when I return - It will take me a couple of years." He said,

“I’ll hold the money for 2 years and that’s it because it is in a cruzeiro fund which is losing value, But we need your book.” So I went back in the summer of 1970 and finished it.

*Q: When you were working with these cooperatives, were you up against the competition? I think of the Del Monte or Kraft Foods. These are big commercial firms that are doing the same thing in Brazil.*

STEELE: There were some of them, but I think I indicated the last time we were together that the mystery to me was the way the exporting firms – and those were the big ones, coffee, sugar, citrus to Europe – they were well organized and they were as efficient as any organization that you’ll find anywhere in the developed world. But it was the domestic commodities that were just a sort of “catch as catch can operations”, as you find in many developing countries. Massive open-air markets. You wondered with all the trucks and boys carrying boxes how the market could clear itself during the middle of the night with all this congestion and confusion. It did happen, but with large losses.

What we were trying to do was help the farmers find economic activities and engage in them that they never had before. For example, instead of sending all the beautiful produce stuffed, then shoved on top of busses or in trucks, a laborious drive down to Sao Paulo from San Jose de Rio Preto, 280 miles up in the northwest of the state, and the bags of produce thrown from bus to bus and truck to truck on the trip down. I don’t know how many times it was handled. That wasn’t as bad as the perishing of these beautiful products in the heat or rain. But my point here is that once the product got down to Sao Paulo’s central market, after all the handling, and then for the farmers’ association to buy feed grain back to feed poultry, dairy, cows, that corn and soybean meal had to be back-shipped. Somebody had to go down and buy it in Sao Paulo and back-ship it and grind it or they bought the feed ground. Very expensive and inefficient. We were trying to get them to keep those grains close to the point of production, and avoid double transportation costs.

*Q: This was the military rule of Branco. Was the military rule with you or against you or just not much of a presence?*

STEELE: They were very supportive. General Castello Branco was there the first year we were in Brazil. Then there were a number of other generals who took over in the next 20 years. The head of economics at the University of Sao Paulo was Antonio Delfin Neto, a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt with postdoctoral work from Chicago. He was the one who was the major economic advisor to the Brazilian federal government. He was also the Chair Professor of the Department of Economics of the University of Sao Paulo in the city of Sao Paulo. The new military government appointed him to what was known as Ministerio de Fazenda. Just imagine if we took the Department of Commerce and the Department of the Treasury and combined them into one department. That’s how powerful that man was. He was extremely supportive of everything USAID was trying to do for Brazil. I think he ran interference with the military for programs like ours.

*Q: Did Brazil have an extension service?*

STEELE: Yes, but they sat over here and they were completely separate from the research people and from the academic people at the university. They didn't want to talk to each other. That was another thing that we did at Ohio State. So did the other American institutions. We tried to get these people to talk to each other. And it worked. We helped them form an association, the Brazilian Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology Association. That's one of the more powerful ones in the world today. We Americans are proud of the Brazilians and that accomplishment which we "nurtured."

The agronomists, entomologists and food technologists from Ohio State there in Brazil had the same success helping to organize Brazilian associations in their fields.

*Q: What were you finding as you got out there?*

STEELE: I found out with the knowledge that I had - I was not a very bright guy, never had been a brilliant scholar - but one who liked people and tried very hard always, no matter where I was, to respect people for who they were and what their talents were and tried to find ways to support those talents and help them. So, I got a lot of things accomplished working with these people in developing countries. I might plant some seeds or some ideas but the idea would nurture and would blossom and then it was their idea and my response was always: "How can I help you support it, how can we work together and get this mission accomplished?" Some strange things happened. For example, a man who had studied at one of our land grant institutions got a master's degree. This was a Brazilian. He went back to the state of Sao Paulo and suddenly found himself soon to be (because of his political connections) in charge of food supply for the metropolitan area of Sao Paulo. Ten million people at that time. Persio Junqueiro was his name. I liked him very much. I had worked with him in the early days of my time in Brazil. But when I went back in 1970, I found that he had this very difficult, new responsibility. I called him and told him I was in the country. He said, "You're going to come to dinner with my wife and me. We're remodeling our house. We're going to take you to the racetrack. We'll have dinner and we'll watch the horses run." Fine. He took me aside and said, "Howard, I've got to do some basic research and I've got to work with some people in basic research. How do you draw a sample?" You go straight to the computers here in the U.S. He had been trained on using computers but didn't know how to do a basic, simple sample drawing. So, it wasn't brilliance on my part. It was just that I had had some broad experience and was able to convey that to these people.

*Q: The distribution system is so vital. Good roads, good trucks, good trains. And then marketplaces and all. But most of that stuff's not very sexy. If a new administration comes in, a dam looks a lot better than a bunch of silos.*

STEELE: That's a good point until the public makes its needs known, arises. The reason the Soviet Union fell was not enough food. The reason there was finally a revolution in Brazil in '64 to throw the communists out while the military stayed in the barracks. The politicians didn't know what to do. It was the housewives that went out banging their pots and pans in downtown Rio and Sao Paulo and Bella Horizonte and I don't know but what they might have said to their husbands, who were military, politicians, businessmen, bankers, "If you don't straighten things up, you're going to have a terrible time here at home." Things began to happen. I think that's another key. Organizing around the problem, getting in the case of farmers not to necessarily be

militants and go out with machetes and those kinds of things, but to get the brighter members of their group to go and negotiate with the buyers and the politicians to try and convince them that, here we have 5,000 members in this part of our country that are associated together as corn producers and we think there ought to be a better highway into our system.

*Q: What was the Interamerican group you were talking about?*

STEELE: It's the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA for short). That was founded under Franklin Roosevelt's Panamerican Union, which he helped organize to try and get the Latin American countries not to side with the Nazis. The Panamerican Union put a lot of money into Latin America. One of the things the administration did – this must have been under Cordell Hull obviously – they developed an agricultural research and training center in Costa Rica at Turrialba just south of San Jose. It's a beautiful valley. Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace went down there in 1942 and dedicated this place as one of the first research and training centers in agriculture in Central America. It wasn't the first, but it was one of the first. The first was founded by the United Fruit Company at Zamarano in Honduras. It's called the Panamerican Agricultural College. But Turrialba was more advanced. The one in Zamarano was a 2-year school where they put young boys and girls out getting their hands dirty as well as learning the theory. Turrialba and what was then called the Inter-American Institute for Science in Agriculture, but then they separated and formed CATIA, the research and graduate training arm still located in Turrialba with professors coming in from around the world, exchange professorships, students coming in primarily from all over Latin America but some from Africa and elsewhere, too. IICA moved to the new headquarters in a suburb of San Jose and became the technical assistance arm for the other 34 cooperating countries in the western hemisphere. Let's recognize an early shortcoming in our relations with IICA and CATIE. The United States gave the organizations a lot of money but didn't give much technical assistance them. We were just suppliers of funds. In fact, the U.S. supplied 60% of IICA's operational budget through a quota system established by the Organization of American States of which IICAI is a part. Canada provided 15%. The U.S., Canada, Brazil, and Argentina together provided about 90% of IICA's operational budget each year. The other 29 countries provided the rest. Well, as USAID started closing missions, bilateral programs and technical assistance in the early '90s, the President George H. W. Bush and his State Department advisors decided that we're going to have more influence in seeing things being done in member as U.S. bilateral programs were being phased down. We're going to have to do a better job with the multinationals, the multinational organizations, FAO, IICA, UNDP, the development banks we help fund, you name it. And they also said, "What's in it for the U.S.? What benefits can we get here in our agriculture from IICA's activities? Yes, we'll still provide 60%, but we want to be partners now." Canada said the same thing. Canada threatened to pull out unless they saw some benefit to Canadian agriculture. So, we started trying to have more influence on program activities and developments. There was an election in 1993 for director general. The serving director general had been there for 8 years. He was an Argentine. We called his administration "the Southern Cone Mafia" behind the scenes. It was loaded with Argentines, Brazilians, Chileans, and a few Colombians. They controlled the organization for many years. The Caribbean and Central American countries were really crying because they weren't getting help and they needed help badly. So, we jockeyed around and finally decided, okay, there were 3 candidates: a Mexican, a Guatemalan and the former minister of agriculture of the Dominican Republic, Carlos Aquino Gonzales. The

Mexican candidate was not well-known by the Mexican embassy here in Washington, and they didn't know he was a candidate for director general of IICA at first. He was Mexico's ambassador in South Korea, we learned. Guatemalans came and made arrangements to have presentations made by their candidate to USDA and over to the special representation to the OAS, the ambassador. Carlos Aquino, we were told behind the scenes that he didn't speak English, that he was not very bright. He came to town, gave a marvelous presentation in English with a Texas A&M accent (that's where he did his graduate training) and did the same presentation in Spanish. We were impressed. We did some checking around and found out that he was one of the few honest ministers of agriculture that our ambassadors and USAID directors remembered... He had served twice. He was also active in the private sector. So, we finally threw our weight. Behind his candidacy We found out the Mexican had been in trouble with the Portilla regime in Mexico. Instead of throwing him in jail, they made him an ambassador to South Korea. But he had also worked for the Argentine mafia, a former director. We heard through the grapevine that there was a big consulting firm set up in Buenos Aires with all these people and they were going to get all kinds of lucrative contracts. So, Carlos Aquino Gonzales won the election as the next director general of IICA in Mexico City in September 1993. It was interesting. He turned out to be an outstanding director general. So I enjoyed working with him and his cabinet, not that everything was sweetness and light. We had some problems. We had to replace 2 of our American deputy directors. He fired one and one had to resign. We finally got the third one down there and there was a marriage. He lasted 6 years.

**HERMAN KLEINE**  
**Deputy Mission Director, USAID**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1967-1969)**

*Herman Kleine was born on March 6, 1920 in New York, New York. He attended the State University of New York at Albany and then entered the military. Mr. Kleine began his career in Foreign Service in 1949 when he joined the Marshall Plan Mission to the Netherlands. He also served in Yugoslavia, Ethiopia, and Brazil. Mr. Kleine was interviewed by W. Haven North in 1996.*

KLEINE: I was offered and accepted the job as Deputy Director in Brazil. That was a whole new world for me; I had not had any prior experience in Latin America. I had had some contact with the Bureau earlier on when I was working as the Assistant Deputy Director for Operation in ICA and had to work with all of the Bureaus. Back then, the Latin American Bureau was sort of a separate organization within AID, because U.S. involvement with Latin America on the assistance side went back to before World War II, through technical assistance programs and a mode of operation called *Servicios*, which U.S. technical staff set up, in effect, mini-ministries in certain fields, such as public health, education, and agriculture. Theoretically they were jointly managed by the U.S. and local representatives, but practically everything was done by the U.S.

Q: *A shadow government.*

KLEINE: It was like a shadow government in technical sectors. During ICA years, when I used

to work on matters that called for coordination with all of the regional bureaus, the most difficult was the Latin American Bureau. Its personnel had a very "stand offish" attitude vis-a-vis the rest of the Agency. They resisted involvement, or they might call it interference, from outside. Most of the senior people who were working in the Latin America Bureau had long association with the Latin Americans -- they all spoke Spanish and Portuguese very fluently. Put simply, the Bureau had become in-bred. Gradually, the Agency when AID formed began a movement to cross fertilize. Stuart Van Dyke was one of the early pioneers in that process and he was appointed as Mission Director to the largest of the Missions in Latin America.

*Q: To Brazil?*

KLEINE: Yes, he was the Mission Director when the vacancy in the Deputy's position came up. Bill Ellis, the Deputy, was leaving to go to Harvard for graduate work. Stuart asked if I would be interested and I said fine. At that time the Brazilian program was a very large and varied program. The Mission had about 800 personnel. The prospect of a new experience in Latin America was appealing.

*Q: You went there in what year?*

KLEINE: My family and I went down in August 1967. I stayed with the Africa Bureau until early 1967. I received several months of intensive training in Portuguese before I went to Brazil. At that time there weren't enough people being taught Portuguese to have a permanent facility for Portuguese language training at the FSI. They contracted us out to some organization that had some offices downtown in Washington.

*Q: So what was the main thrust of the program in Brazil? What were we trying to do?*

KLEINE: We were trying to do everything. Most of the resources went into what was called program assistance. Program assistance was essentially balance of payments assistance, on a concessional loan basis -- assistance provided in Europe -- tied to a program of policy objectives that were negotiated between the Brazilian authorities and the U.S. authorities. They were aimed at dealing with inflation, the traditional problem in Brazil, as well as trade issues. The objectives were written into the basic agreement that provided for periodic evaluation. Hundreds of millions of dollars were programmed and released on a tranche basis, following the evaluations or reviews. There was full involvement of the U.S. Treasury Department in these matters; the Treasury had a full-time representative in Brazil. The headquarters of the U.S. Embassy establishment at the time was in Rio de Janeiro. Tuthill was the Ambassador at the time. He had come up the economic route, so he was very interested in what we were doing. The Ambassador that preceded him, Gordon, was an economist, also deeply involved in our programs. In addition to the program loans, there were a number of project loans in infrastructure - roads, power, etc. There was also a large and diverse technical assistance program. The northeast was the least developed portion of Brazil. To help administer the program we had almost a full fledged Mission located there, in Recife. Brazil is enormous, the size of the continental United States, and half the size of South America. Half of the population of South America lives in Brazil.

*Q: Is that the main reason why it was such a big program and why we were putting so much*

*emphasis on Brazil, compared to other places?*

KLEINE: Certainly, the size of the country and its large relative population played an important role. Also, from way back Brazil was considered a country with a future as a great power, given its enormous resources. But it was a country whose future never seemed to come. It was always involved in upheavals of one kind or another. One of the main upheavals when I was down there was the military coup. Coups, as you know, were quite endemic in Latin America. The U.S. traditionally has concerns when they occur in terms of human rights and civil disorders. Very quickly an operational problem came up when the military coup I referred to occurred. We were at a point when another tranche of program assistance of 50 million dollars was due to be released and had just gone through the reviews which indicated that they qualified for the release. When the coup came, the political debate started in the U.S. establishment whether we should signal our displeasure by holding back. I took a leading role in that particular event in drafting the position of the country team. I ultimately got the country team to agree that our going back on the agreement that clearly dictated their eligibility would not be beneficial and that, if we wanted to record our displeasure, it should be in connection with delaying new undertakings. Because a lot of things were involved concerning the release of that money, Washington was not easily persuaded. Consultations were arranged to be held in Washington. The DCM, Bill Belton, the U.S. Treasury representative, and I went to Washington for the meetings. We succeeded in obtaining approval for the release.

*Q: The policy situation hadn't changed despite the change in government.*

KLEINE: That is right. In fact the military government was quite benign in the political area and accomplished more economically than the chaotic Brazilian government that preceded. There are two developments that come to mind from the early stages of my stay in Brazil. They both occurred almost simultaneously. Just after I arrived there was a Congressional investigation subcommittee, an oversight committee of the House, that came to Brazil. It staged a hostile series of meetings. The group was headed by Congressman Porter. He was very anti-assistance and his approach was to look for trouble, look for problems. He browbeat the mission personnel who testified. I couldn't participate -- I had just arrived days before, but I sat through it and witnessed what a grueling experience it was that continued for about a week. I recall one incident that wasn't amusing at the time, but is in retrospect. The mission had tried to arrange everything so that the visit would go smoothly, including visits to project sites. One visit had been set up to take some of the Congressional delegation to visit the *favelas*. The *favelas* are world renowned for being the site of the most miserable poverty in Rio. There are shacks that have been built on non-buildable land on the side of hills and are devoid of any convenience. We were trying to do something to help with education and public health projects. The cortege of cars couldn't get to the site. The technician who was in charge of the project got lost and couldn't find the project. It was messy. Nothing adverse came out of the Congressional review, because it was a pretty solid program.

The other development of interest that was going on was called "Operation Topsy," which had been launched by Ambassador Tuthill. Operation Topsy received a lot of notoriety. It was designed to reduce the U.S. presence abroad. A target was set to reduce staff by one-third within a certain period of time. This applied to all U.S. elements - Embassy, AID, USIA, etc. His

proposal was approved in Washington and it started a very difficult exercise.

Q: *That was initiated in Brazil rather than in Washington?*

KLEINE: Yes.

Q: *I see. And his position was that...?*

KLEINE: That it was in the United States' interest to have a reduced presence abroad. Since the largest number of people were in the AID mission, the impact was greatest on AID. While there was some grumbling about the proposition that it was good for the U.S. interest to have fewer people abroad, no one in Washington had the courage to oppose it.

Q: *Contractors and direct hires?*

KLEINE: Contractors and direct hires. Frank Carlucci was the Embassy political officer at the time and he was the main action officer for the Ambassador on the project. You may recall that he became the Secretary of Defense years later.

Q: *Why was it in the United States' interest to have fewer people? What was driving this?*

KLEINE: There was a time when Americans abroad were considered to be the "ugly Americans." It was just a simplistic idea that he proposed at the right time. The political climate was right for it. It was very warmly received. Tuthill received a lot of credit for "Topsy."

Q: *What Administration were we under then? Was this under Nixon?*

KLEINE: Let us see. This would have been 1967... It would have been Johnson, just before Nixon.

Q: *Just before? So it was the Johnson Administration that started this move to reduce the number of Americans abroad?*

KLEINE: Yes, it was an aggressive exercise.

Q: *It meant closing out projects?*

KLEINE: With the slimming down of staff, there was the closing down of some projects, yes.

Q: *What were some of the most successful projects, or some of the most useful projects that we were carrying out?*

KLEINE: As far as I recall, some agricultural research projects were considered successful. There were housing projects through the housing guaranty program, which was solid. We had some programs that didn't exist outside of the Latin American Bureau. The "Partners of the Alliance" was a network of private, voluntary organizations in the States linking up with states in

Brazil. It involved exchanges of visits and some small technical programs, subsidized by AID money. And we had a couple of offices at the time that were assigned to working on that full-time. Public Administration worked... The typical technical assistance program, but that was a small fraction of the dollar value since the bulk, by far, was in balance of payments assistance and large road and hydroelectric power projects.

*Q: Was this still a time for U.S. procurement, or were there conditions or limitations?*

KLEINE: Economically, it didn't matter what the procurement policy was. It was because the U.S. was the main market for Brazil and Latin America and the U.S. enjoyed a large trade balance.

*Q: Did we try to direct the commodity selection at all towards certain sectors or industries?*

KLEINE: No. It was straight forward. The policy objective aimed at curbing inflation and helping Brazil maintain free trade and an open economy. The capital loan projects were intended to strengthen Brazil's infrastructure.

*Q: But on the policy side, were we successful with our policy? Dialogues and efforts to reform the system?*

KLEINE: Well, I would say that while it is difficult to see progress in any one year, the passing of time has shown that Latin America has emerged from the very, very primitive levels in the economic and political arena to a rather flourishing collection of countries that exists today. By and large the so-called Alliance to Progress, which is the umbrella that covered the activities of AID, was a highly successful program - to a lesser degree than the Marshall Plan, but the development problem was much more complicated in Latin America. The U.S. was coordinating the flow of large resources both bilaterally and multilaterally. We worked very hard to set up the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Contributions from the U.S. set that up. The initial appropriation was \$525,000,000.00, of which \$400,000,000.00 was for the Social Progress Trust Fund and the balance for capital assistance. The IDB became a major actor as U.S. bilateral assistance phased down. That was true for Brazil and the rest of Latin America, except Cuba.

*Q: How did you find working with the Brazilians?*

KLEINE: The Brazilians are very charming people. Brazil is different from many of the other Latin American countries. There is a very heavy European influence in Brazil. There is also a very heavy Asian influence. Large numbers of Italians and Japanese, for example, emigrated to Brazil before World War II.

*Q: From Japan, or is that Italy?*

KLEINE: From Italy and from Japan. When you go visit Sao Paulo, the largest of the cities, you quickly observe that it is a very cosmopolitan city, made up of a polyglot of races. It is very entrepreneurial. There is also a very black presence, primarily in the northeast, including Rio. The Brazilians pride themselves in being a non-racist society and it may be so. However, it is not

a classless society; the higher the class, the lighter the skin. I rarely saw any blacks in senior positions in government - federal or state.

Q: *Did you enjoy working with government officials?*

KLEINE: Yes, they are very pleasant, very fun-loving. They love a good time. While they work hard, too. In Rio, they love the beach. It seemed to me they are more punctilious in their commitments than perhaps in other Latin American countries. There is an enormous gulf between the "haves" and "have-nots". There are some extremely wealthy people and they live extremely well. Women were not very numerous in the work place at the time. They were pampered and spent an awful lot of time at beauty parlors and on their clothes. It was a very interesting society. Rio itself has seen some hard times with the poverty in the center of the city. The city is hemmed in by mountains spread along the ocean. The scenery is magnificent. Have you ever gone down there?

Q: *No.*

KLEINE: It is gorgeous...gorgeous terrain. I think it would be of interest to note that in early 1969, the program emphasis in Brazil started to change rather dramatically. Whereas until that time, large amounts of money went for program assistance and infrastructure, such as power and road construction, the new look, so to speak, was on the social sectors -- education, rural agriculture, and concentration increasingly on the less favored regions of Brazil, primarily the northeast. I mentioned earlier that we had a rather sizeable mission presence in the northeast. Shep Hollander, I don't know if you recall him, was in charge at one time. Donor Lion succeeded him. Also, some new initiatives were launched in Brazil based on guidance from Washington. For example, the Title 9 programs.

Q: *Political development.*

KLEINE: Political development intended to achieve broader participation of members of society in development policy matters. We had people come down to spread the word. Princeton Lyman was their leader for central AID and Bob Culbertson was sort of a front-runner in the Latin American bureau. Also, I should mention a related event that had an effect on the program. That was the Rockefeller mission. The Rockefeller was Nelson Rockefeller, who had been asked by President Nixon to travel to Latin America, the whole region, to examine what the U.S. was doing and to recommend what the U.S. should be doing. That visit was a high visibility visit with a lot of activity. He and his team were very sympathetic visitors. When Rockefeller returned to Washington, he prepared a report in which he set forth recommendations which led, not long thereafter, to a policy speech by Nixon, which became Nixon's Latin American Policy. That occurred just about the time that I was preparing to go on home leave. Essentially, it supported the direction of our programs.

**WILLIAM BELTON**  
**Deputy Chief of Mission**

## **Rio de Janeiro (1967-1970)**

*William Belton was born in Portland, Oregon on May 22, 1914. He received his BA from Stanford University and entered the Foreign Service in 1938. His career has included positions in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Canada, Chile, Australia, and Brazil. Mr. Belton was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on November 19, 1992.*

*Q: How did you find the embassy in Ottawa? You had been in Quito, Bogotá, etc.*

BELTON: It was a much different place. It was a going concern as opposed to the other places. Relations between Canada and the United States were on a vastly differently level than they were between the United States and the Dominican Republic. We had a fairly substantial staff, we had high powered people at various levels and it was very much of a going concern. I already saw that I didn't want to spend all my life being an agriculturalist and so I went around to see the deputy chief of mission, whose name was Lewis Clark, and told him that while I was in the agricultural section of the embassy I would very much like to keep up with what was going on in other sections. He understood that and let me peruse through the files and see the outgoing dispatches and telegrams and so forth; it enabled me to keep up with the overall tenor of the activities of the embassy. I am sure I wasn't in on everything, but I could see the larger picture, My boss, the agricultural attaché, Clifford Taylor, was a very fine agricultural officer, but he was totally dedicated to agriculture and his vision was rather channeled. Cliff and I would go to luncheon together. I can remember standing in line at the cafeteria in the Chateau Laurier with Cliff, who instead of taking a break from the office, would start speculating on hog production in Canada for the next year. There wasn't anything to talk about with Cliff Taylor except agriculture and agricultural reporting. That contributed to my increasing restiveness and my realization that I didn't want to spend the rest of my life reporting on the wheat crop, the pig crop, the cattle and beef situation, and so forth. I arranged to come down to Washington and talk to the then deputy chief of personnel and tell him my woes and how I would like to escape if I could in some gracious way. He was Harold Tewell, who had been the number two man in the Consulate General in Havana at the time I was there, and who was a very likeable and sympathetic sort of a guy. Again this is a feature of life as things were in those days--you kind of negotiated your next post on the basis of what your personal needs were, what your interests were, and what the department's interests were. It wasn't a formal business the way it is now. I told Harold Tewell my problems and went back to Ottawa and before long received a letter from him telling me that they were contemplating sending me to Porto Alegre, Brazil where the consulate had had an agricultural reporting officer that they were withdrawing--by now the war was over. They were also reassigning the principal officer and wanted me to go down and take the job as principal officer with the understanding that I would also do the agricultural reporting. That was a very good solution from my point of view, in the sense that I was able still to continue with some of my reporting activities and feel that I wasn't abandoning agriculture flat, while at the same time I got valuable experience as a principal officer.

*Q: Where is Porto Alegre located?*

BELTON: Porto Alegre is the capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul; it is the southernmost principal city of Brazil.

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

BELTON: That was between the regimes of Getúlio Vargas, who had been sort of the dictator of Brazil. The president at the time we were there was Dutra.

*Q: You were there from 1946 to 1948?*

BELTON: Yes.

*Q: What was the consulate doing? How did you deal with the Brazilian authorities and what were your major concerns?*

BELTON: Our major concerns were representation of American interests, in the sense of watching out for any Americans who got into trouble, promotion of American business interests, political reporting on the local situation, primarily to the Embassy, and from my personal point of view, a very active series of reports on the agricultural situation. It kept me busy full time.

*Q: How did you find the Brazilian authorities at your level?*

BELTON: Cordial and easy to deal with. They having just participated with us in winning the war, it was an advantageous situation at that time.

*Q: They were very proud of the Brazilian troops that had been in the Italian campaign.*

BELTON: The Brazilian troops had done a very good job in Italy in particular. Rio Grande do Sul is heavily populated by people of German and Italian origin so there had been a strong Nazi movement and sympathy there for the Axis powers. It took Brazil quite a while to get into the war, but when they did they took active measures against these people, even to the extent of prohibiting the use of the German language, I guess Italian too, but I particularly remember German, in everyday usage. There were lots and lots of people in those days who, because they lived in closed communities, didn't speak any other language than German. They were automatically violating the law by just saying good morning to their wives and children, because they didn't have any other way of communicating. This was dramatized for us a bit when we first got there and before we had acquired any real competence with Portuguese when Judy went to a shop and tried to communicate in Portuguese and was told by the shopkeeper, "It's all right, you can speak German now, it's all right." Her only alternative was English but they didn't speak any English. When she continued with her poor Portuguese, they became irritated because they thought she was still afraid and trying to hide the fact that she knew German.

*Q: Did you have much contact with the German community? With the Italian community? Or did they sort of avoid you?*

BELTON: I didn't have any particular contact with the German community as such. Let me introduce what I say now by telling you that we went back to Rio Grande do Sul in 1970 and lived there for nine years, so my memory of what was the case in 1946 to 1948 is somewhat blurred and confused by the fact that we lived there after my retirement, from 1970 to 1979. It is sometimes hard for me to remember what happened when. But I wanted to say in response to your question that the social communities of Rio Grande do Sul, whether German or Italian, were Brazilian at the same time, and there wasn't, at least as far as I was aware, any distinct line between what was the German community and what was the Brazilian community. I am sure that there were some lines that we might not have known about, but by the time we got there in 1946 those lines, if they existed during the war, had begun to dissolve. I don't remember, at any rate, ever having distinguished any line of that kind. There would be more of a distinction between the German and the Italian communities than there would be between any German and Brazilian community, because the German community was Brazilian and the Brazilian community was German, or Italian, just as Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegon, although very Norwegian, is undisputably American also.

*Q: Did that cause any awkwardness for you in that immediate post-war period?*

BELTON: No. I don't recall anything that you would classify that way at all.

*Q: Well then they threw you back into the briar patch after that, didn't they--back to Ciudad Trujillo, 1948-1952?*

BELTON: 1949-52. My transfer from Porto Alegre provides another illustration of how they solved administrative problems of the department and the service in those days. After we had been in Porto Alegre for a couple of years I got word that my mother was seriously ill with cancer and didn't have long to live. I was very anxious to see her. In those days my economic situation didn't provide me the wherewithal to make a trip to the United States on my own. As I recall I was entitled to home leave by then, but there was no money to pay for it. The department couldn't find any basis to get me home except by transferring me, via Washington for consultation. So they did that with the understanding that when I got to Washington I could take some time to go out to Oregon see my mother. We worked it out so the whole family went out to Portland. To transfer me they just picked the first available job, which was in Panama. So I left Porto Alegre on transfer to the Embassy in Panama.

*Q: Burke Elbrick had been my ambassador in Yugoslavia before. What was the situation in Rio when you were there?*

BELTON: I found it a difficult place to work. It wasn't my favorite post; it wasn't a post where I felt as comfortable as I had in some other posts. The basic difficulty was that the Brazilian government was in the process of moving to Brasilia and large portions of the government were already there. The President was there and all of his staff and much of the cabinet; the Foreign Ministry was one of the few that was still in Rio. The Congress was in Brasília too. It was a lot more difficult to work in Rio than any place I had been before because I was accustomed to have the whole range of government to get acquainted with and work with. Rio didn't have that, all

you had there were the Foreign Office and a few other government departments, though not major ones. That was one of the problems of working there.

With regard to our overall relations, they were on a fairly stable basis, an even keel. We had a very active AID program; one of the features of our activity was an enormous staff. When Jack Tuthill got there he took a look at this and said, "We've got too many people; this grew like Topsy." He started a program called "Operation Topsy", designed to reduce the staff as much as possible. I came in just about that time...I wasn't in on the actual origination of the program but I was in on the execution and had to do some of the executing.

*Q: You must have gotten into some acrimonious discussions with all the different agencies involved.*

BELTON: I guess we did, but you ask me now where we cut and I can't remember. It seemed to me that we still had an enormous number of people when it was all over with. We did cut a lot of people; I think it was primarily AID programs that were reduced.

*Q: They had a military government at that time, didn't they?*

BELTON: It was a military man who had been elected, he was a general. Let's put it this way: the military had taken over in 1964 when they threw the president out. There was a military government, but it wasn't too intrusive; they had a civilian vice-president. Then the president had a stroke and for all intents and purposes was out of it, and eventually died. As soon as it was evident that he couldn't govern any longer and that the vice-president would become president, the military did step in actively and would not let him assume control. A triumvirate consisting of the Minister of Air, the Minister of Army, and the Minister of the Navy took over and governed for a while. That was a real military government and it sort of couped the coup, as it were, because the other guy had been elected.

*Q: Was this causing problems with our relations?*

BELTON: Well yes. We didn't like dictatorships and I can remember having long and serious conversations with highly placed military men trying to talk them out of this-- that, of course, was an almost impossible task --pointing out that in the history of the world there had almost never been a military government that had managed to get out peacefully, that they were just leading to an eventual tragedy in which they would be the tragic figures. Interestingly enough, those predictions didn't come true. Over the years they did work themselves gradually back to a democracy.

*Q: You left when?*

BELTON: I retired at the end of April, 1970. The big event from the point of view of excitement and so forth was the kidnaping of Ambassador Burke Elbrick.

*Q: I was going to ask if you were there at that time.*

BELTON: Yes, it was my job to get him off the hook, get him out.

*Q: Could you explain what happened and how we responded?*

BELTON: This happened, I believe, right after luncheon, on whatever day it occurred in September, 1969, when Elbrick was leaving his residence to return to his office. A few blocks from the embassy residence his car was intercepted, he was taken out at gun point, put into another car, and whisked away into captivity. The minute we got word of it -- I don't remember now how I first learned about it -- I was on the telephone with the State Department; I then went over to see the Foreign Minister, while others in the Embassy fanned out and made contact with everybody we knew in the government who had influence. This was when this triumvirate was in power. That made it a particularly touchy thing because decisions had to be reached by three people. This was an occasion when our military contacts, our military mission, and our attachés were extremely useful to us.

When I went to the foreign minister he said, "Tell us what you want us to do." I said, "I have not had time yet to get any response from Washington as to what they want, but from my personal point of view I would like you to do everything you possibly can to get him out of captivity as soon as possible." The kidnapers were soon -- I don't remember the exact time relationship -- demanding that the kidnapers themselves and a number of political prisoners in jail be sent out of the country. The people in prison were mostly leftists and communists and so forth who were being held by the military authorities. That was their primary demand.

I went back to the Embassy and again got in touch with Washington to report my conversation and eventually got word back that what I had told the Foreign Minister was right. I immediately told the Brazilians that is what we would like them to do and to please go ahead and do it. This presented some rather serious problems for them. First of all because these military types were not the least bit happy about releasing people they already thought were dangerous enough to lock up. Secondly, because the business of sending them out of the country was a form of exile; even though they had asked to be sent out it was still considered to be a form of exile, and the Brazilian Constitution said that you could not exile anybody; it was prohibited by the Constitution. Over a period of about four days they worked that out and did send these people out; freed them and sent them out. And Elbrick was released.

*Q: What were you getting from Washington? I can't remember if at that time we already had the policy that gets bent all the time of "no concessions to..."*

BELTON: That was our good luck. This was the first kidnaping that had been successful. A few months before, during an attempt to kidnap Ambassador Gordon Mein in Guatemala, he had resisted and been killed. No policy had been developed yet. As I say, fortunately from my point of view they hadn't yet developed a policy, so they okayed the idea of conceding to these fellows to get him out.

*Q: The policy came after that.*

BELTON: The policy came after that. They realized this was a lousy policy; they were right, of course, but from my situation of trying to get Elbrick out, and of course from Elbrick's viewpoint, it was great.

*Q: Elbrick did not stay very long after that, did he?*

BELTON: No. He hadn't been there very long; it wasn't a very happy experience for him. In spite of the fact that he had been in Portugal, his Portuguese wasn't all that fluent--it had gotten rusty, I guess, in Yugoslavia. He didn't understand the informality of life in Latin America. His tendencies and his wife's tendencies were more directed toward very formal relationships, always have the ambassadors of four other countries to your dinner parties, always seat them properly and so on. If that meant that the editor of a leading newspaper was down below the salt, that didn't worry them very much. In my view they just didn't quite get it, so I don't think they were very happy there. Shortly after the kidnaping he was ordered back to Washington for medical checks and all that--it was a real shock to his system. At some stage, I have forgotten now when, he went for a medical exam and had a heart attack during the exam in the department. That effectively was the end of his service. He retired not long after and died within a few years. It wasn't a happy period of his life; it wasn't a good ending for a career that I think had been very distinguished.

**ALEXANDER F. WATSON**  
**University of Wisconsin; Brazilian Studies**  
**Madison, Wisconsin (1968-1969)**

**Foreign Service Institute, Portuguese language training**  
**Arlington, VA (1969)**

*Ambassador Alexander Watson was born and raised in Massachusetts and was educated at Harvard and Wisconsin Universities. In 1962 he joined the Foreign Service and was posted to the Dominican Republic, the beginning of an impressive career specializing in Latin American Affairs. His other overseas posts include Spain, Brazil, Bolivia and Colombia, serving as Deputy Chief of Mission in the latter three countries. He had several Washington assignments, the last being Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. From 1986 to 1989 he served as United States Ambassador to Peru. Ambassador Watson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.*

*Q: From the university sort of at the intellectual level, where did Brazil rank? Were you getting I take it by this time most of the time it had a military government.*

WATSON: Sure, the military regime took over in 1964 and lasted until 1985. This was during the second military administration. It basically came in I believe in '67 or '68.

*Q: By this time it was no longer the option of the military going back to the barracks as it had*

*been maybe somewhat earlier, at least the thought was that they might do that. I mean now this looks like an entrenched.*

WATSON: Yes, it was an entrenched military regime, but defense a little bit like Somoza's, a little cleverer than some, they had a rotation of power. They didn't have a, there were some elected officials sometimes but the military retained control and transferred power among its own members. This was a time of great radicalism and confrontation in political thought in which dependency theories and things like that were extremely imposed. I remember reading rather aggressive dependency theory tracts by the current president of Brazil now. The president of today.

*Q: What is dependency theory?*

WATSON: Well, it was an international extrapolation of Marxism which basically said that everything is economically determined and you have centers of economic power and you have areas dependent on them. So, if you look through the analytical language and analyzing all phenomenon that took place basically, the United States was the center of power and the dependent periphery was all of Latin America. So, this is a convenient intellectual device for people in countries that are considered to be dependent because, while you can blame some people in their own countries for doing bad things, you can certainly blame the military, and you can talk about the [inaudible] and in the final analysis, the joke belonged to the United States and a number of other economic power centers which drove these relations and defined and drove these relationships. I read a lot of stuff. There was some really very interesting and provocative words. At the same time, you had Al Hirschman writing about stuff in northeastern Brazil and journeys; to progress in Brazil was very provocative. You had a belief in the United States that we should have massive assistance to developing countries. We were putting over a billion dollars a year into Brazil in those days in education and tax reform and other things. Sort of intellectually, rather stimulating period for a kid like me trying to sort all this out because you're serious about it. Think about it in real terms: you have to live in this country; it was very rewarding.

*Q: Well, in a way Brazil would fit less into this dependency theory, I would think, than many other places, because Brazil really generates its own power and is not as dependent as almost any other country in Latin America.*

WATSON: Remember, this is 30 years ago and the Brazilian economy that existed to some extent today there is, it was not as great then and I think that people would argue that even the automobile industry in Peru that had been started in the '50s was basically an extension of the North American European automobile industry. Then Brazil sold primary products that were dependent upon the market vicissitudes and durable goods, finished goods, industrial goods and therefore were dependent on. They could not control the markets or the prices for their goods because they were global markets with many producers and they were dependent upon the prices set by the industrialized countries. You have a double whammy there that guaranteed these countries would remain in a state of semi-colonialism dependence and not be able to industrialize, etc. All this was derived from countries like Brazil and others to industrialize, high tariff walls and things like that even when it didn't make good sense to do so because they

wanted to demonstrate their independence. All of this is still worthy of analysis. There was great debate and I don't mean to demean the dependency theory, it was an effort to interpret some realities which were significant.

*Q: How about the Catholic Church? Did they really have their own?*

WATSON: The Catholic Church in Brazil in those days was by and large very conservative and certainly antagonistic to major changes.

*Q: Did the kidnapping of Ambassador Elbrick take place while you were at the university?*

WATSON: It took place while I was in Brazil.

*Q: Oh, so we'll come to that when you come there, okay.*

WATSON: Today I might come to Brasilia. The day I arrived in Brazil, the president had a stroke. I was in Rio, where the embassy was, for two or three weeks before going up to Brasilia. The day I went to Brasilia was the day Elbrick was kidnapped. So, people were making jokes, Watson, just don't move anywhere, stay where you are. That somehow I was related to these horrible events.

*Q: Before we leave the university, did the University of Wisconsin faculty have a twist on how one looks at Brazil? I'm thinking of Cornell and Indonesia. Cornell was turning out people who studied Indonesia for quite a while, sort of looking upon the United States as being the villain and all that. Was there anything comparable to this coming out of the faculty of Wisconsin or was it a pretty straightforward?*

WATSON: Well, I think the most powerful influence on Brazilian studies there at the time was Thomas Skidmore, who has written many books on Brazil and his dissertation was one of our major texts and fascinating and really detailed historical account of Brazil from about World War II up until that time, '64 and '65. It was totally, I mean, it was an analytical tome which contained a heavy element of economic analysis, not necessarily Marxist, but still a good dose of the economic dimension to the overall historical social political context.

*Q: How did Brazil, from the sort of Wisconsin perspective, fit into the rest of Latin America? Did it odd job out or something like that?*

WATSON: Yes, sure, in many ways.

*Q: I mean, did you find that, were you taking courses on all the Latin American countries?*

WATSON: Yes, I took courses on economics. I took a literature course. It's hard to remember now, I'm writing a couple of quantitative political books. I did a lot of work on Venezuela.

*Q: Did you find that the polarization of the student body was having an effect on the studies or were you having sort of the campus radicals trying to twist everything or the teachers or could*

*one sort of move beyond all that?*

WATSON: In the graduate school, where I was I mean, there were certainly people – and I might have been included among them – where they sort of left this persuasion and certainly willing to give the dependency theories and others their due, if only political analysis of a reality, to help shed light on things that other scholars wouldn't do. I don't remember any destruction in the classes. I remember it being all very civilized.

*Q: When you get to Brazil we'll discuss it at greater length, but did you find that you were given the sort of tools to look at Brazil when you got there— I mean, the dependency theory? I mean, was this an analytical device?*

WATSON: I took Skidmore's history of Brazil course plus seminars, took courses from Skidmore. I really, at that point, was really pretty well informed as a lay person. I was a scholar about Brazilian history. Yes, I had analytical tools that I could draw on to help me understand phenomena if they were taking place, that they were not isolated phenomena unconnected to any previous reality I tried to understand. I had a view to how all these things related to what had happened in the past and what forces were at work in the society, which really helped me. You know, most people don't know very much about Brazil and so when I went there and could just very comfortably, not trying to show off or anything, be tossing around historical references, as I was having conversations with people I could see them just, you know, who is this? You know, I said, yes, sure, I learned about it in school and all this. They were immediately impressed, overly so. I think it was only because it was so unusual to find anyone who knew anything more than the last two or three years of history.

*Q: Did you find at the graduate school that being, coming out of judgment, that in a way you were a different breed of cat as far as your approach to things? I mean, that's a nice theory, but what does it really mean and that sort of thing?*

WATSON: Well, one thing I found is that I was the same jerk I was when I was an undergraduate. I have not really advanced in my work habits or my skill—even my interest in receiving strictly an academic environment. I felt sorry for Ph.D.s. I thought they really had a hard life and became almost in some cases almost so sharply focused as to be narrow and I said, God I'm glad I'm not doing that. I'm glad I made the decision not to do this. I didn't hate it or anything like that, but I realized that I am not cut out to be a scholar. I do not have the temperament to do that and would not, although certainly I was interested in the ideas and in learning as much as I could. I did not consider spending a lot of time writing complicated dissertations on things. That was sort of depressing to find that I was the same jerk as I was as an undergraduate, but it was also sort of good to find it out when I hadn't committed myself to an academic career. Yes, initially of course I was a very different animal, but once you hang around with people and once you start to have discussions with them and once you show them that you're not coming at things from a biased point of view and once you show that you actually have some knowledge of some experiences which may be relevant to the conversation. I was only twenty-something. I think my wife and I sort of fit in pretty comfortably.

**RICHARD H. MELTON**  
**Political Officer**  
**Recife (1968-1970)**

*Richard H. Melton was born on August 8, 1935 in Rockville, Maryland. He received his BA from Cornell University in 1958. He later attended Wisconsin University where he received his MA in 1971. He entered the Foreign Service in 1961 and served in many countries throughout his career including Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Portugal, England, Uruguay, and Costa Rica. Mr. Melton was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on January 27, 1997.*

Q: *Then in 1967, you were transferred to Recife, Brazil where you served until 1969.*

MELTON: That is correct. Assignments at the time were for two years; later they became three year tours. I was still relatively new to the Foreign Service and relatively new to ARA; I had not established any contacts with the Washington Latin American bureaucracy. I did not in 1967 believe that I had joined the ARA club.

By this time, I was quite comfortable speaking Spanish and by being assigned to Brazil, I learned Portuguese as well. At the time, FSI had a branch in Rio which allowed me to spend some time in that city--one of the benefits of being assigned to a small consulate in Northern Brazil. I spent nine weeks in Rio de Janeiro immersing myself in Portuguese, which came a little easier to me because of my knowledge of Spanish. Nine weeks was shorter than most people spent in language training. There are both a lot of differences and similarities between the two languages. I didn't find it too difficult to move from one to the other, but there were some in our small language class, who did not have Spanish and they had a much harder time.

I must admit that I was initially disappointed with Rio; when we flew in the city looked just like it does on postcards--beautiful amid spectacular geographic surroundings. But on the ground, you run into some deficiencies. Services don't work so well; the sewage and garbage collections leave much to be desired. The city has been allowed to develop in a way that makes living for many quite difficult. Tall buildings have been allowed to be built almost right on the beach. Foot traffic does not flow very well. So I found Rio to be depressing at the time; it was a dirty city.

In 1964, there had been a change in governments in Brazil. The military had moved in to block an alleged takeover of the government by the left. The U.S. had become quite active in Brazil at about the same time with the launching of a large Alliance for Progress program. The northeast of the country became a large recipient of US assistance. At the same time, the Catholic Church was under considerable pressure, primarily from a very liberal group of priests, to assume a more active political role. The Peasant Leagues were founded under Francisco Juliano and others, with the support of a number of priests. There were land take-overs, accompanied by violence, followed by military repression. The American diplomatic presence in Recife was quite modest and dwarfed by the USAID staff of the Alliance. By the time I left in 1969, I was the senior State Department officer in Recife, even though I was quite junior. When I arrived in 1967, the Consul General was a Foreign Service officer--Grant Hilliker; by the time I left, due to the friction

between the USAID and State staff, the CG was Donor Lion--a USAID official. Lion was both the CG and the Director of the USAID mission. The amalgamation of these two positions was an effort to resolve the friction between the two bureaucracies, as well as the duality of policy advice that had at times flowed from Recife. In fact, there were really no contest; all of the resources belonged to USAID with almost 200 Americans connected with the assistance program stationed in Recife and only three Americans who represented the diplomatic side of our presence. The Alliance staff took its direction from its Rio headquarters so that in the end, the CG had to fall into step.

My first job was that of a political officer. I did reporting. There was a Vice-Consul handling consular matters and the Consul General. In 1967, we covered seven states in the northeast. By 1969, Recife covered nine northeast states. Initially, we did not have responsibility for the Amazon region, but by 1969 we were responsible for that as well. We had had a consulate in Manaus, but when it was closed, responsibility for the Amazon basin fell to Recife.

The military government was quite tough and authoritarian. When I arrived, Castelo Branco was in charge. He was succeeded by other military officers. There was a real policy debate going on both in the Embassy and in Washington about our stance toward this military dictatorship. The core issue was economic vs. political development--an artificial dichotomy. One school felt that by providing assistance and supporting economic growth, political development would be forthcoming. That school felt that the U.S. should support virtually any government that had a sound economic policy--even if that meant relegating political growth to a secondary place on the U.S. agenda.

The other school felt that the U.S. policy could not accept development in one area without comparable growth in the other. The U.S. should not support policies in the name of economic growth which at the same time limited political freedoms. So that was the debate within the U.S. establishment. The debate tended to become personalized very quickly, at least within the Embassy. I remember that we in Recife tended to focus on political development and our reporting on repressive measures being taken in the northeast was well received by some segments of the Embassy and not by others. In the Embassy, the Political Counselor was Frank Carlucci who had been the Executive Assistant to Ambassador Tuthill. He had been the energetic leader of "Operation Topsy" which called for serious cutbacks in the U.S. presence in Brazil. The USAID mission and the Economic Section tended to favor economic development as our primary objective and dismissed substandard performance in the political area on the grounds that once Brazil had developed economically, it would be more likely to follow a democratic path.

During Tuthill's era, the "balanced development" school tended to have the upper hand. After his departure, the "economic development first" model appeared to dominate the thinking of the Embassy and therefore the U.S. government. So in a sense our reporting from Recife was somewhat out of step after Tuthill's departure.

In general, there are usually different perspectives between consulates and embassies. For example, in one of my later assignments, I had a chance to see the Brazilian consulates and the Embassy in Brasilia. Sao Paulo was a post right in the middle of the industrial area of Brazil

where economic development and related policies are predominant. In that case, the best reporting on Brazilian economic activity came from a consulate rather than from Brasilia.

It was very difficult to cover this vast expanse of land of northeast Brazil from Consulate General Recife. I did a lot of traveling--almost all of it by air because of the distances. I would try to cover two or three states on each trip. In each capital, I would start with the contacts that I had developed and then try to broaden my list. I would spend several days in each capital. I would try to bring myself up to date on the issues we were interested in and then write my reports when I returned to Recife. I would try to arrange some appointments by phone or through the mails. When I arrived at a location, I would arrange for other contacts, but I usually had some initial calls arranged ahead of time. Those calls were the foundation of a visit program. For example, Fortaleza, the state capital in Ceara, was an important area because it had a banking institution--the Bank of the Northeast. There were some other groups of interest there--progressive Catholic churchmen, some political activists. We focused on areas of concern to the US, in addition to the local politics which might have been of interest in the state, but not necessarily of national importance or of immediate interest to us. We looked for issues with national implications. We would follow local issues and tried to be informed about them, but those were not of great interest to the Embassy or Washington.

We reported on national political and economic issues, such as developments effecting the Church, which had a political role as well as a spiritual one. It was going through a period of internal debate, as part of the global discussion which was then ongoing. The Catholic Church was an important factor in Brazil. There were some 245 bishops in Brazil at the time; I doubt that there were one-third as many in the US. The Church was a power, both in Brazil and globally. The bishops took stances on social issues, which had political implications; therefore their views were of interest to us. So I maintained contacts with all of the leading churchmen in the Northeast and made a point of meeting with the bishop in every state that I visited. All of the major states had at least one bishop. Several of them were very influential nationally. Dom Helder Camera was the bishop in Olinda, right across the river from Recife. Jose Maria Pires, at the time Brazil's only Black bishop, was in nearby Joao Pessoa; he was an influential leftist churchman. There were several conservative bishops in other northeast states; the President of the National Council of Bishops was in Teresina, a small town in the interior of the state of Fortaleza--I don't know if any American diplomat had ever been there. I did. I made a point of going to places where there was someone of interest to the United States.

We also had an economic officer in the Consulate; sometimes we traveled together and talked to the same people, attempting to meld political and economic perspectives. At other times, we went our separate ways. If I traveled alone, I might also cover economic issues and talk to people on those matters.

As I said, when I made these visits I would prearrange a certain number of calls. When I got to the city I would add other people, sometimes at the suggestion of one of my original contacts. They might sometimes help me make those additional appointments. I would always try to call on the local authorities in each state. That is important in a country like Brazil; a diplomatic representative is expected to follow local custom, which includes calls on local authorities. If one doesn't, that could quickly lead to problems. I would call on the military commanders

everywhere as well as the police commanders, if they were different than the military ones. I would call on church officials, on governors, on mayors--it should be noted that by this time, the military had intervened in all of the states. So governors, mayors, and other local officials were all appointed by the military. In some cases the appointees had been very popular and had a base of support of their own. Many people, it should be remembered, supported the military take over in 1964; that was particularly true in the Northeast. So there was not a uniform revulsion about military government; on the contrary, many Brazilians welcomed the take over and supported the new regime both at the state and national levels. So the local political leadership was a mixed bag.

I should also mention the students, who at this time, were becoming active. I maintained contacts with them as well. It was the policy of the Kennedy administration to show interest in youth worldwide. That continued into the Johnson administration. We had someone in the Embassy--a USIA officer--who was designated as the youth officer. He was younger than I, and had a mixed effect. He also maintained contacts with students. The people I knew were much more interesting and tended to be much more attuned to our concerns.

I also kept in touch with labor leaders. In the Northeast, we had, as I mentioned, the Peasant Leagues, which were a rural labor movement. The Church gave it support through its worker-priests who acted as organizers in rural areas. The two best known were Father Paulo Crespo and Antonio Mello, both of whom operated just outside of Recife in Pernambuco state. I got to know both of them quite well. Both were highly activist, one tended to be a little more conservative and orthodox than the other, but both were very effective and therefore much disliked by the military authorities.

I arrived in Brazil with the view that US policy was properly disposed to support democratic governments. I arrived with some skepticism about military rule, which was consistent with U.S. policy. Therefore, we supported opening of the political process and strengthening of political institutions. In Nicaragua, I had not seen notable progress in similar efforts, but it was clear to me that Ambassador Brown's policy was correct--that is we were as supportive of liberalization as circumstances permitted, but the ultimate responsibility resided with the Nicaraguans. As for the Dominican Republic, I arrived after the die had been cast. Following the intervention, I think our policy was quite clear; we were trying to promote democratic elections and efforts toward political liberalization. Both countries had been ruled for a long time by military dictatorships. So I was accustomed to military dictatorships. Brazil had had a democratic election which had been overturned by the military in 1964--largely because of economic failures. It was clear that the country had a strong democratic predilection which were trying to strengthen.

The debate within the mission was on how to give support to these Brazilian democratic tendencies. Was economic development a necessary precursor to political development? It was the classic debate. I think in the Northeast we saw signs of the heavy hand of the government although there were some encouraging indicators, such as the military's interest in economic development. The government was devoting considerable resources to development of the region; it had a lot of novel schemes, such as redistributing resources from other parts of the country into the Northeast. As we gained experience we learned that some things work and others don't. The government's role was actually much more limited than anticipated; concern

that the government would be too deeply involved in economic development was, in the main, not justified. The government's impact was much limited than the government would acknowledge at the time and that was shown by later studies.

Of course, the military defended its role by suggesting that we Americans just didn't understand Brazilian culture and habits. We got that line from many sources--mostly on the right. There was a doctrine in existence at the time that the Southern cone was fighting the world's battle against the "Godless atheists"--i.e. the communists. They were taking up the cause that we Americans didn't have the guts or the heart to do; according to this view, the Latin American military were really fighting our war and that we were naive in our approach to communism. We certainly heard that message many times from the military.

For example, one of the responsibilities of a diplomatic establishment is the protection of its citizens. In Northeast Brazil, there were a number of American priests and nuns, brought to Brazil by the Church which customarily sends foreigners to countries which suffer from shortages in religious vocations. A number of these American clergy were socially engaged; that brought them into conflict with the military, which emphasized order and viewed such social activism as disruptive. As I mentioned earlier, we maintained contact with the Church; it was in 1968-69 when we were told that two American priests had just disappeared in Recife. No one seemed to know where they were; people were frightened by this development. We made inquiries and discovered that the two were actually being held by the Recife police. We let the authorities know that we were looking for these two American citizens and that we understood that they might be in their custody. The police reluctantly acknowledged that indeed the priests were under arrest. Reluctantly also we were finally granted access to them, as indeed was our right under various treaties. The Consul General and I went to see the priests; then we went to see the 4th Army commander--a very senior four star general. With him, we had a variation of the conversation I described earlier; "You Americans don't understand how to combat the evil of communism." Of course our reply was that it was he, the general, who did not understand how to fight communism. That conversation did not go very far in getting the priests released. But our intervention and subsequent daily visits made it clear to the government that the U.S. was interested in the fate of the two priests and therefore provided a degree of protection to them.

Eventually, the Brazilian military hardened its position. They decided to charge them under sedition laws, which would have called for a trial by a military court. The penalty would have been thirty years in prison. They gave the priests the choice of voluntary departure or a military trial--where the decision was preordained. That choice created a crisis of conscience for the priests. Their superiors from St. Louis had arrived by that time, and the dialogue about their future had been raised to higher levels in Brasilia and Washington. Eventually, the priests did leave; in our protection capacity, I went to the airport to see them off. It was an emotional scene with all their "brothers" at the airport. I think this particular episode did help us in establishing some credibility with both the Church and ironically, the military.

The new CG, a USAID officer, was Donor Lion. He was an interesting person. He is now retired. He and I saw the situation in the same way. From his background in development economics, he understood that political and economic growth go hand in hand. Title IX of the Foreign Assistance Act had just been passed; it placed heavy emphasis on the desirability of political

development, so that USAID missions were directed to include that goal as part of their programs. Donor Lion took this directive very seriously; that fitted well with my approach to political reporting which was closely linked to our economic development programs--education, public health, etc--which had a heavy social content. The Consul General saw the two main strains of development--political and economic--as closely linked. We got along well.

Lion's approach was not always appreciated by his superiors in Rio, both in the Embassy and the USAID mission. They were not very comfortable with the linkages. We were stressing. We were viewed as "renegades." But we were not deterred, and my reporting emphasized the same issues as it always had. Our reporting would generally go to Rio first which would usually send it to Washington with the Embassy's comments attached. In some instances Brasilia and Recife agreed to disagree, which was fine.

I might just add a comment or two on our assistance programs in Northeast Brazil at this time. They did achieve some results--e.g. if the project was to build schools, they were built. Progress was less measurable when dealing with more amorphous endeavors such as "improving education" through text book reforms. Measuring impact on educational reform is much harder than dealing with bricks and mortar. The same could be said for the public health field which had projects in family planning for example. I think that we made a clear impact, but how it is measured is much more difficult.

Our assistance mission consisted at the time of almost 200 Americans. It was a substantial program. I think we may have overvalued the potential benefits of an American presence on economic development, but this was a heady period in our history when we believed that we could do almost everything, given good will and adequate resources. I think we perhaps overreached.

I did attend some Embassy meetings, but my trips to Rio, where the Embassy was still located, were infrequent. When I did visit the Embassy, I would of course talk to anyone interested in our work. I was still a relatively junior officer, but a pretty active one. I think the Embassy took my views seriously, although perhaps having a "Northeast" perspective, which was not necessarily representative of the whole country.

Our military attachés had traditionally been very close to the Brazilian military dating from our alliance of WWII during which Brazilian troops had fought alongside American units in Italy. Vernon Walters got his start being a liaison officer to the Brazilian forces. He was an attaché in Brazil subsequently. He was succeeded by Art Mora, who was able to maintain the same levels of access that Walters had developed. Art was the senior attaché when I was in Brazil. He was very sympathetic to the Brazilian military. I think it is fair to say that our military attachés, the aid mission and the Economic Section were more forgiving of the Brazilian military regime on the grounds that economic development was essential in that country and had to precede any political opening. So they provided sympathetic understanding and were more pro-regime than those of us in Recife.

A lot of work has been done on looking at the social origins of the Brazilian military. The Brazilian elites traditionally have considered a military career for their male off-springs--not

their daughters--to be a worthwhile goal. Over the years, a tradition of service grew up with sons of military officers following in their fathers' footsteps. The military set up its own secondary school system which was the path to the military academy. I don't think one can say that a military caste was being developed, but the officer corps was gradually becoming more insulated. It tended to be drawn from the southern part of Brazil--that was very noticeable in the Navy--but I think all services drew heavily on the South for its officer candidates. There were of course noticeable exceptions--some military leaders came from the Northeast--but by and large they were southern.

If you look at the disposition of the Army, it is notable even today that most of the units will be located on the Argentinian and Uruguayan borders. That has been traditional. That reflects the historical concern of the Brazilian military--a perceived threat from Argentina. Recently, the two countries have made some progress in reducing this rivalry, but there is still a troublesome legacy of more than 100 years. The disposition of forces has reflected that concern.

The other foreign concerns tend to be secondary to the Argentinian rivalry. The Brazilians have periodically shown concern for other neighbors, but not with the intensity and persistence of the concern with Argentina. In the North, the terrain is such to provide a natural defensive barrier; the concern in that region revolved around sovereignty and the demarcation of borders. There are cross-border interlopers, but this is not a major threat. The Brazilian military presence in the North is intended to assure that Brazil's claims to territory are made good. The military is deployed throughout sparsely populated areas to defend these claims.

I must say that I have learned much more about Brazilian economic development after my tour than I knew while I was there initially. I think we need to remember that there are several Brazils. The farther south one goes, the more advanced and sophisticated and productive the economy is. Some states in the south are actually nation-size in the European sense. If they were independent nations, they would have the economic and social indices of a European country--or very nearly so--in most respects. Their per capita income is quite respectable; the literacy rate and life expectancy would be almost at a European level.

On the other hand, the Northeast had indices that placed in the Third World. So there are several Brazils. We knew it then--and that is still true today--as a country which had major disparity of incomes--great wealth and great poverty. But Brazil, unlike many other countries, is so large that it achieves critical mass in almost every field. So with the wide disparities, Brazil can still manufacture world class products in virtually all areas; it does educate enough of its people sufficiently to be able to compete in the world markets even when hampered by the great differences in economic development among its various regions. And that is still true today.

These disparities did not engender the unity of the states, Brazil has a federated system, similar to the US, except that the states are much more autonomous than are ours. A Brazilian state has great control of its social and economic affairs. This is a reflection of a separatist tendency; Brazil has suffered through several insurrections as well as a civil war which brought Getulio Vargas to power in 1930; that was a war to prevent the south from seceding. By the time I served in Brazil, the separatist movement was pretty much in abeyance, although glimmers of such sentiments were still evident in the Northeast and in the South. The military was always worried

about keeping the country together. The motto of the Brazilian Army emphasized the need for holding the country together; it was a central mission of the Army throughout its history, particularly after the 1930 civil war. It had put down separatist movements in the Northeast previously, but the potential of such movements was never far from the military's consciousness. That was one of the reasons for its concern about the activities of the Peasant Leagues which they believed might have moved in that direction.

Inflation at the time was being subdued. The military had excused its 1964 take-over by the need to tame runaway inflation; so when inflation abated somewhat, the military could point to some success for their tight control of the economy and the political life of Brazil. But inflation, until recently at least, has been an albatross around the economy's neck; it was never really tamed until recently. It must be understood that inflation can be a plus for some segments of society because it in effect wipes out debt. Inflation, in theory at least, is a great leveler. In practice, it hurts those least able to support pain--the poor. Brazil managed to work out a *modus vivendi* with inflation. It indexed virtually all transactions, so that even with accelerating inflation, there is relative stability in the marketplace. Some economists thought that Brazil had found a way to coexist with inflation, but later events indicated that this was not quite true. Inflation, even with indexation, still inflicts penalties on the economy and predictability exacts a very heavy expense.

Environmental concerns were very much in the background during my tour in Recife. The Amazon and its rich natural resources were not part of our consular district until almost at the end of the tour when Manaus was added to our district, but I don't remember any great concern at the time about environmental damage.

Recife was a large city with almost a million people in its metropolitan area. But it had the atmosphere of a small town. The Northeast tends to be very family oriented; people are very slow in accepting newcomers--in contrast to the openness that is the hallmark of Brazil. So we had some difficulties in making lasting friendships; it was done, but it was difficult in light of the social environment, which had very pronounced social positions and divisions. As diplomats we are usually ranked very high on the social ladder; that gave us good entry into official circles, but that did not easily translate into social access. We did belong to various clubs, but that did not necessarily translate into social access within the local community. But I need to say again that Brazilians in general--including those in the Northeast to some degree--are very open; a minimal effort by a foreigner will usually open doors.

My social activities in any case had to be circumscribed because we had small children at the time. Fortunately, in Recife at the time, parties or other social events tended to be over fairly early in the evening--that is not true today.

*Q: You left Brazil in 1969 and went to the University of Wisconsin. How did that come about?*

MELTON: By 1969, I had been in the Service for ten years, most of the time in Latin America. I strongly believed that it was time to do something else. I looked around; I applied for University training.

**STEPHEN LOW**  
**Political Counselor**  
**Brasilia (1968-1971)**

**Deputy Director, Brazilian Affairs**  
**Washington, DC (1971-1974)**

*Ambassador Stephen Low was born in Ohio in 1927. He received his bachelor's degree from Yale, and his master's and doctorate from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. In addition to Nigeria, Ambassador Low served in Uganda, Senegal, and Zambia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.*

*Q: There were paratroopers in Georgetown. How did you feel about yourself, did you feel that you were an Africanist by this time? What did you feel about where you wanted to go and do?*

LOW: That was very much on my mind. At that point I did not want to go back to Africa. I did not feel that I was an Africanist. I had, after all, done my doctorate on East Asia. I had never been to the Philippines, but I wanted to go. I was interested in Europe. I had lived there. I felt that the time had come for me to broaden from African affairs. As I said, the car pool was instrumental in many decisions. Bob Yost was driving that day and he said he had to go by the Department. I thought I should do something, so I dropped into Personnel. There had been some talk of a job in the political section at the embassy in London. They had offered Oslo, but that's the only time my wife ever expressed reservations about an assignment. There just wasn't enough daylight for her to feel comfortable. She is very light-sensitive and didn't want to live in a country where it was that dark all winter long. So, we were to go to London where I was to be the third officer in the Political Section. That sounded somewhat interesting. Anyway, when I walked in my counselor looked up at me. and asked, "What's the matter with Brazil?" I remember well the rest of the dialogue which went like this. "Nothing is the matter with Brazil. What's the job?" "You can be in charge of Brasilia." "Isn't that the capital?" "Yes." "How come I would be in charge?" "Well, the rest of the embassy is in Rio and it's going to be there for a while." "That sounds interesting." And I thought to myself, a lot more interesting than third officer in the London political section, and it had a lot more light. I was a little concerned about the timing of the embassy's move to Brasilia and my ability to report directly to Washington, but I was reassured on both matters so I said, "Okay" and walked out of the office on my way to Brasilia. Never in my wildest imagination had I thought of going to Latin America.

*Q: Did you have to have Portuguese training?*

LOW: Yes. I learned that the officer who was supposed to go to Brasilia to be counselor and in charge of that part of the split embassy was Bill Harrop. But just as Bill was packing to go, they discovered that he had reached the statutory limit on time abroad. By law, a foreign service officer had to serve three years of his or her first 15 years in the United States and Bill had been abroad for 13 years without any prior service at home. He couldn't go abroad again. Personnel had just received a letter from the ambassador, Jack Tuthill, telling them to get him somebody in Brasilia fast. I happened to walk into the office that day and I had a head, two arms and two legs.

I don't think they would have considered me if I hadn't appeared in the office at that moment, so I was it. And off we went. It was pure coincidence that I walked in that day, and I wouldn't have done it if it hadn't been for the car pool.

*Q: If they need somebody in a hurry and you don't speak Portuguese...*

LOW: The important thing was to get him a flesh and blood name. Almost anyone – including Harrop – would have had to learn Portuguese. There weren't that many around. I guess this was May. We were within a few weeks of finishing the War College year. I only got 12 weeks language training. And my predecessor in Brasilia, Herb Okun was just leaving.

*Q: You went to Brasilia from when to when?*

LOW: From 1968-1971. It was one of the great assignments that the Foreign Service had to offer because there were very few where a young or mid-level officer could be in charge. That's why the Navy to me is perhaps the best career there is in the early period. You get command early in your career; you get a ship. The great thing about these positions is that you can make mistakes and nobody knows the difference. You are able to build up a certain confidence; experience in management and decision-making. Here I was, an FS-03, in charge of the post in the capital of a large and important country. The presidency and much of the government except for the foreign ministry was in Brasilia. The legislature and the court were also in Brasilia. It was one of the most interesting jobs I ever had. And we enjoyed the Brazilians who are a very attractive people.

*Q: During this period, what was the political situation?*

LOW: It was a military dictatorship with a relatively weak general as chief of state, Costa e Silva. While I was there, Costa e Silva had a stroke and had to be replaced. I was traveling in Belo Horizonte, capital of the neighboring state of Minas Gerais, where I got the first hint of what was happening, before the embassy in Rio heard about it. But it was a difficult time with much of the world led by organizations like Amnesty International, very critical of Brazilian counter-terrorist practices. They were facing a serious terrorist threat and insisted that when they caught a terrorist, they had to get the names of his or her confederates within 24 hours if they were going to make any progress in the internal war they were fighting. So they used every tactic they could, including brutal torture, to extract information from terrorists when they caught them. They were merciless. We didn't like that. But they wrapped up the terrorist movement. This was the difficult issue. I came back to Washington as Brazil desk country director after that assignment. The main issue we were dealing with was the criticism of Brazil's human rights tactics. I had to testify before the House subcommittee on that subject. I didn't do very well.

*Q: Sticking to this particular time, what was the staffing and what did you do?*

LOW: We had about 15 Americans in Brasilia. There were five other embassies there: the British, the Yugoslavs, a couple of others (the Germans maybe). We were the only one with a staff of any size. It was a matter of keeping in touch with the legislature, some of the ministries, and sometimes the presidency and judiciary which Rio couldn't do. It was a busy time because we handled many normal embassy functions except dealing with the foreign ministry on

relations between the two countries. As far as I was concerned we had all the fun. We dealt with the interesting things that were going on in Brazil. I knew the Vice President, and was often invited to the President's house for social occasions - often movies. The Vice President, chief justice, and some of the ministers came to dinner at our house even though we had no official U.S. government china or tableware, though I only invited people of this level when the ambassador was visiting from Rio. (Friends in the States helped us furnish our very modest house. On one occasion a couple of shopping bags of tablecloths were delivered to a lawyer-friend, Sid Dickstein, on instructions from his wife, disrupting a high-level, confidential, board meeting on acquisitions he was attending. The tablecloths had to be turned over to our son who was coming out to join us.) In Brasilia we often had readier access to the leadership of the country than our colleagues in Rio. I was lucky, though. The political counselor in Rio, Frank Carlucci, encouraged my contacts and reporting.

Life in Brasilia was pleasant. At 3,500 feet in altitude with marked seasons, the climate was marvelous. As some of the first foreigners in town, we found the Brazilians very friendly and welcoming. They had all been sent there (often against their will) by their government and, having left their friends and relatives, were looking for new friends. It was a positive atmosphere. The very small advance staff of the foreign ministry there was also friendly, pleased with the U.S. lead in taking seriously the Brazilian government's intention to move to Brasilia. Most of the rest of the diplomatic corps (except for the British and Yugoslavs) reluctant to leave Rio, dragged its feet. The doors were usually open to us. The normal frictions between our two countries were acted out between the embassy and foreign ministry in Rio. While in most offices people were pleased to see us. So, it was a good experience.

*Q: What were you getting from your observations about how the Brazilian government was developing? It had a dictatorship. Were we able to sort of weigh in at your level?*

LOW: No. The military was running the country. We had a very able military attaché in Rio, Art Moura. He had an assistant, a young major, in Brasilia who was quite ambitious. He had good contacts, but didn't really know how to use them and certainly didn't want to share them with the rest of the embassy. I think I was closer to his boss than he was. It was not an easy situation. It was one of the few times when I had someone from another agency in whom I did not have a great deal of confidence. My military contacts were more often made through the Rio attaché than they were through the major in Brasilia. The latter left the service shortly thereafter. We did have some contact with the military at a lower level. But the military-political leadership kept aloof from us. We had some difficult issues, like declaration of a 200 mile territorial limit, which Brazil sprang on us without warning. This was at a time when the U.S. was still strongly defending the three mile limit.

*Q: We're talking the national sea boundaries.*

LOW: When the announcement came Washington went through the ceiling. It was almost as though it was the embassy's fault. I got a telegram saying that the Secretary of the Navy, John Warner, would appear in 18 hours, and he wanted to meet with the Brazilian Minister of the Navy. I was to arrange it. I did set it up though the Brazilians were very reluctant. It was one of the frostiest meetings I ever attended! I can remember John Warner standing up with his

extendable pointer lecturing the Brazilians sitting there cold eyed with no intention of moving back one inch. It was one of the most unproductive American efforts to influence another government I ever saw. As a matter of fact, it made it much worse. That was one of a number of difficult issues that we had to deal with. Washington was unhappy with us for not giving them warning of the Brazilian move. The failure of the Brazilians to warn us was a measure of the rather stand off relations that existed at that point.

*Q: You were going to mention some of the elements.*

LOW: There was considerable difference of opinion within the embassy. I believe that one of the causes, strangely enough, had to do with the physical structure of the building. The embassy in Rio (now the consulate general) is a tall building with four rooms on each floor. To talk to a colleague in another section of the embassy one had to walk up or down stairs. People don't communicate easily that way. For some reason, one thinks of it as more of an effort to walk up or down than down a corridor. When everyone is on the same level, as we were in Brasilia, they're always in each other's rooms and a collegiality develops which aids understanding and cooperation.

*Q: Hospitals don't work well up and down.*

LOW: In this case, it was extraordinary. I would go down to Rio about once a month to participate in the ambassador's staff meeting. Before and after the meeting I would go from floor to floor talking to the economic counselor, the political counselor, etc. I had a better idea what was going on by the end of my visit than they because they wouldn't talk to each other. They communicated by memo - nasty ones. I had never seen such harsh language in inter-office memos as I did in that embassy. The political counselor and the AID director were at odds. I confess that I also found the AID director very difficult to work with. The Agency people were off on their own working in other directions. AID at that point had one of the largest missions anywhere in the world and one of the biggest programs. In view of the government's human rights record, the political side of the house, including the counselor, Frank Carlucci, and the ambassador, Jack Tuthill, were not at all happy about the level of assistance we were giving. They were particularly critical of the large size of the embassy staff. Their view was that we should not be that heavily involved with an authoritarian military government. The AID group, supported by the economic section, saw the AID program as separate from political considerations.

Frank was the political counselor during the first year I was there. My title was counselor of the embassy, and principal officer in Brasilia. I had no functional designation. When Frank left to go back, I became the political counselor resident in Brasilia. The political section in Rio was under me though we operated pretty independently.

One of the interesting events was the visit of Nelson Rockefeller, who was sent by President Nixon at Kissinger's instance to survey our relations in Latin America. He was instructed to meet with each head of state on the continent without the local American ambassador being present. I always considered this a counter productive exercise which demonstrated the President's lack of confidence in his own representative to that country, undermining his authority to represent the

U.S. in the future. In this case, it was somewhat easier. Ambassador Elbrick resided in Rio. He didn't come up for Rockefeller's Brasilia visit, so his absence during the Governor's conversation with the President appeared less anomalous. But the visit was difficult for our tiny staff to arrange. Rockefeller came with two plane loads of staff and press. They insisted on every amenity being provided, from "secure ice cubes" on up. (That meant that we had to be certain that every piece of ice that was put in one of the Governor's or his staff's glasses had been made from boiled water.) When you've got eight or nine people to arrange all the meetings, accommodations, security, and press down to this level of detail, it's quite a job. We spent weeks doing nothing but preparing for the visit. I, myself, had no role whatsoever to play during the actual visit. Nor was it an edifying spectacle. The Rockefeller group simply overwhelmed its hosts. The embassy's ability to deal with the Brazilians afterwards was not strengthened. I hardly met Rockefeller, much less had an opportunity to brief him on the local situation. Months afterwards I received a form letter of thanks which looked like it was machine signed and sent to all Latin American posts.

*Q: What was he trying to do?*

LOW: He was sent by President Nixon after he had gone through that very difficult demonstration in Caracas when our relations with Latin America were very tense. It was a mission of inquiry to find out what we could do to improve the situation. It was not a happy chapter in American diplomacy. I don't think that it resulted in any significant changes and it certainly undermined the effectiveness of our diplomacy there.

*Q: Was this Kissinger cum Nixon?*

LOW: I don't really know, though I was told that the idea that the ambassador should not be present during Rockefeller's meeting with the presidents was Kissinger's idea. Whether that's true or not I can't say.

Perhaps the most important event which occurred during my more than three years in Brazil was the kidnaping of Ambassador Burke Elbrick on July 14, 1968. From that moment on, security was a major concern in my life. I had a detail of police in a little Volkswagen following about three feet behind my car wherever I went. I was convinced that they were going to run right up my tail and felt that I was probably in greater danger from them than the terrorists. We also had two or three armed guards at the house around the clock. The Brazilian authorities would call me every once in a while to say, "There is another threat. The Belgian honorary consul (or someone else) got a letter from the terrorists saying they were going to get him. But we don't think he's the one they are after. The one they really want to get is you." That always made me feel good. They gave us a police dog that pushed our cook into the little bathtub of a pool we had and snatched the roast beef from our table. It was a trying two and a half years, but there were some funny moments. I particularly remember the time our little cook was accused by one of the guards of stealing his machine gun; it later turned up in the garbage can where he had left it. But it was also a little disconcerting, particularly on one occasion when they called me and said they would get me by morning. I had an official appearance that evening at some kind of film opening. I decided to go anyway rather than let them scare me off. So the Brazilians provided plenty of police and the occasion went off without a hitch

*Q: Who was doing this and what was the purpose of both the kidnaping of the ambassador and the threats against you?*

LOW: By demonstrating the weakness the military government through its inability to protect diplomats the terrorists were using us to embarrass the Brazilian government and show it up as ineffective. Our ambassador was only the first of a number of ambassadors and diplomats kidnaped. Not long after Elbrick's kidnaping our consul in Porto Alegre was shot in the leg in a botched kidnaping attempt. The American ambassador in Brazil, as in a number of other countries like Greece, is often treated as a tool in local political rivalries. I think Jack Tuthill was used that way by both the government and the opposition - set up and embarrassed in their efforts to get at each other. Once Elbrick was freed, he became a kind of lame duck. The Brazilian government was embarrassed by his continued presence which reminded them of their humiliation. (They had had to turn over to the terrorists quite a number of prisoners to free Elbrick.). Not long after he had returned to duty, he was called up to Brasilia by the foreign minister. He asked me to go with him to the meeting, as he always did when he came to Brasilia. The foreign minister, Gibson Barbosa, criticized Elbrick for a statement he had made at the time of the failed attempt on our consul in Porto Alegre and led him to understand that he was no longer entirely welcome in Brazil. There was no formal declaration that he was *persona non grata*.

*Q: Why?*

LOW: His presence was a constant reminder to them of their failings. Also, it had been alleged that in his discussions with the terrorists, which were taped and the Government got ahold of, he had admitted many failings of the Brazilian government. He epitomized all their problems to them. One of the things that always surprised me was that he had another engagement somewhere else in the country, so after the meeting with the foreign minister, he got on the attaché plane and went off to his engagement, asking me to write up and send in the reporting cable without showing it to him first. Of course, it resulted in his recall. I thought it was utterly extraordinary that he would tell a junior officer to write the telegram that resulted in ending his very distinguished career. He was a proud and fine man and I think he knew that he would have to leave. I suppose, also, that he realized it didn't make much difference how the conversation was reported. The facts spoke for themselves. He saw it better than I did.

Elbrick was replaced by a man who neither spoke Portuguese nor knew a great deal about Brazil, Bill Rountree. But he was an extraordinarily competent diplomat. Still, I don't think Bill was ever comfortable in Brazil. He decided, I think correctly, that he should come first to Brasilia. No ambassador, American or other, had ever done that. All had gone to Rio first to present their credentials and reside. He landed in Brasilia and spent a couple of days there, then he went to Rio. He was playing to the gallery (the presidency, the military and the public) to a certain degree because the foreign ministry, itself, had been dragging its feet about moving to Brasilia even though most of the rest of the government was already there. The foreign ministry didn't like the idea of moving to a raw new town in the middle of nowhere, leaving Rio's beautiful harbor and beaches as well as friends and family. I think they thought the ambassador was grandstanding a little by showing our public commitment to Brasilia and showing up their well

known reluctance to come. Officially of course they expressed their pleasure in his action, but it embarrassed them a little.

Rountree did visit Rio frequently, but he and his wife, Suzanne, lived in Brasilia in a tiny apartment in the chancery for at least a half a year until the house, which I had earlier found and purchased for them, was ready. Everyone thought I was crazy. They said the house was inappropriate and too far outside the city. But it had a great view and was only 10 minutes from the chancery. The Department had said they wanted us to hurry up and get a house for the ambassador and this was the best available from a very limited choice. Despite its shortcomings, it is still the residence of the American ambassador today and many say it's the best house in Brasilia. The Rountrees were lovely people. During all the time they lived in that cramped, inelegant apartment, we never heard one word of complaint. He was a great boss, too. He had been ambassador three times and assistant secretary, but had no pretensions. The Brazilians are very relaxed and informal. I can remember, he was invited by the governor of Goias, the state surrounding the Brasilia federal district, to visit his summer house. This was a very modest bush house on the bank of the Araguaia River. Rountree called me to ask whether he needed to bring a black tie. My answer was "Mr. Ambassador, I don't think you are going to need shoes most of the time." He was a little taken aback, but asked Sue and me to go along to help translate. And I think both he and his wife had a fine time, loved it, in spite of her being dumped in the river when their boat overturned while fishing. I think Rountree was respected by the Brazilians. He behaved according to their idea of how an ambassador should. He didn't get too involved in Brazilian politics which they greatly appreciated. Interestingly, I think he was more successful than somebody else might have been.

*Q: One always hears in the Foreign Service that the Foreign Service of Brazil is often ranked at the top or next to the top as far as professional foreign services. Did this reflect itself from your perspective in Brasilia?*

LOW: Yes, I agree with that. Both from my experience in Brazil and elsewhere in the world with Brazilian representatives, that they are very competent. They are smart and very well trained. They have their own college, and everyone of them is fluent in both English and French before they start to learn any other language. Their knowledge of the history of their own country and its diplomacy is extensive. (Something it has been my personal crusade to improve for our own Foreign Service.) All this makes them independent minded and tough. They think of themselves as the USA of Latin America, the biggest and most important country of the region (half the continent with almost half its population, bordering most of the others) and the one which should be its natural leader. Of course the other countries, which are Spanish speaking, don't agree. The Brazilian diplomatic service, and most other leaders of the country, think their country should be considered among the world leaders and they resent the fact that their position has never been adequately appreciated by the United States. They see themselves as the rival to the United States in Latin America. They were not easy to deal with politically.

On the personal level, I had close relations and got along very well with many of them because of their competence. But I was under no illusions about their determination to defend their interests as they saw them, which were often in conflict with ours. From the 200 mile limit, to relations with Cuba and on many other issues we differed. They took a certain pride in finding

differences with us. But this was mostly on smaller issues. One might even call them family differences. On the big issue they were firmly on our side in the Cold War. They mistrusted the Soviets as much or perhaps even more than we did and could not understand why we didn't sympathize to a greater extent with their government and its efforts to defeat its terrorist threat. As an authoritarian military government they were nationalistic. Some of the military presidents were more broad-gauged, less narrowly nationalistic than lower elements in the military. These were very close to national socialism and quite antagonistic to the U.S. even though the leaders were not. Sometimes we ran into tension at working levels which could be reflected in the foreign ministry. Many in the ministry were pleased with the military's independent-mindedness. For the most part, while being pro-West, the foreign ministry was sympathetic to continued military domination of the country. They saw our opposition to military domination as part of our failure to appreciate the importance of Brazil. So, we had some real problems in dealing with the foreign ministry.

*Q: This was also a period which lasted for a while where people were looking ahead to the 21st century. Brazil was named often as one of Japan, Brazil, maybe China, as the countries that were going to sort of succeed the United States in the next century, at least to some extent. That talk has really died out. Were you feeling that they felt they were on the go?*

LOW: Yes and no. One of the most attractive Brazilian attributes is their slightly self-deprecatory sense of humor. One of their great jokes about themselves is that Brazil is the country of the future and always will be. I think that they did feel that we gave them insufficient credit for their importance. But I don't think in their heart of hearts that they really thought of themselves as a first-rank global power on the level of the United States and Russia. Yes, we should consider them on the scale of a Britain or France, but it would be a while before they become a first rank world power. Presently we don't give adequate weight to the fact that their economy is three times that of Russia. We shouldn't take them for granted. They are very proud and quite self-confident, which, in a way makes them easier to deal with than people with a small, weak country complex. The Brazilians have their own culture and are quite comfortable with it. They feel confident of their size and strength which absorbs them mostly in domestic affairs and they don't feel at the mercy of what goes on outside their borders.

*Q: Did you find in your connection at the capital that we were interested in Brazil's role as the colossus to the south? They've got something like nine countries bordering it. Did that ever impact on your work there?*

LOW: I don't think we in the United States have ever really thought of Latin America in these terms. To most Americans, and I think that includes the Bureau of Latin American Affairs, Brazil is just one among a number of countries in Latin America. This is perhaps what they resent most. They do not feel they are just one among the other Latin Americans. They consider themselves unique because of their size, their potential strength, the fact that they border all the other major countries except Chile and Mexico and because they are Portuguese speaking. America's policy has never accepted this view of Latin America with Brazil as the dominant power, in part because the rest of the Latin Americans don't accept it either. They don't take Brazil as a leader, partly because of the language issue, and partly because they just don't want to. So, it's not an easy thing. They want to be taken for something they're not, in a sense, and we

don't give them that recognition.

*Q: During this time, did Brazil intrude itself into any major world issues?*

LOW: Not that I can recall. Later (not while I was there and not even while I was on the desk), we had a nuclear development issue. That really all came much later. They were very supportive in the East-West conflict. It was things like 200 mile limits and aid. They were mostly bilateral kinds of things rather than world issues. There were no major world issues.

*Q: At least during much of this period, I always think of inflation as being the dominant thing within Brazil.*

LOW: Not at this point. This was a serious and effective government with one of the fastest growing economies in the world, though its increasing wealth was very poorly distributed. It's economic policies had turned it around. There were periods of rapid inflation but they came earlier and later. And the Brazilians have been successful in controlling them before they got out of hand. Our assistance played a major role in stimulating this economic growth. The biggest issue at this point was terrorism. I was much impressed by the professionalism of some of our other agencies. Nobody, particularly in the intelligence field, got themselves so attached to the military that they weren't willing to report honestly. I had to take my hat off to the people who were doing it. They were professionals and they called the spade a spade. In spite of their close contacts, when they saw denial of human rights, they reported it and didn't try to hide it. It was a competent staff, in that sense.

*Q: This was at the height of the Cold War, which seemed to be at its height for decades. Was this terrorism from our perspective seen as a reflection of the Soviet Union and its operatives or was this a home grown one? Did we see any connection?*

LOW: So far as we knew the organization of the terrorist movement was strictly Brazilian though we believed it received training and supply assistance from abroad which was certainly provided by the Soviets or at least Bloc members. Of course, this created a certain bond, a certain sympathy, in some parts of Washington. Washington was torn on this, just as our embassy was torn, whether to be sympathetic as any ally in the Cold War, or to condemn what were quite evidently civil rights violations. It was a difficult issue.

*Q: Also, just at this time, you had the Tupamaro movement in Uruguay, which would seem to fall into a pattern.*

LOW: Yes, very definitely. Sue and I and the kids were planning to visit Uruguay on our way through Chile and Argentina and back to Brazil on vacation, but we had to desist because at that point an American official was an imprisoned hostage. The embassy didn't want us coming through. It was very much part of that same situation..

*Q: One last question and then we'll move to the Brazil desk. When you left Brazil in 1971, what was your gut belief about whither democracy in Brazil at that point?*

LOW: I was bullish. I considered the government to be a restrained military authority. I was confident that it would turn things back to the civilians eventually. The threat that they had to deal with was very real. Though I was under no illusions about the methods they were applying, I was not without sympathy for their legitimate need to protect their own survival. If they were brutal in their treatment of terrorists, this did not extend beyond that to their political critics of other members of society. In general people did not feel watched or constrained. But I felt that this was not a dictatorship that was unfettered. The military imposed considerable constraint on its own head of state. This was not a repressive one man dictatorship. Nor was social or economic activity controlled by the state. The press was relatively free and often critical of government. Elections were taking place at local levels. For much of the time, there was an active parliament though it was dissolved later. National leadership was imposed by force of arms. But there was quite a bit of decentralization. The leadership of the government, the ministers, were largely civilian. Politics was healthy and lively. It was a military authoritarian government which allowed for considerable decentralization of authority in which the rule of law, as opposed to the individual, was operative in most transactions. The government worked. There was a lot of criticism of economic policies, of the gap between the wealthy and the poor, of the government's failure particularly to deal with favellas (urban slums) and so forth. But they were building a healthy economy for a country. Maybe they should have encouraged greater distribution of wealth. In this sense, they were more conservative than we would have liked them to be. But it was a responsible government and it was effective. The economy was growing at some phenomenal rate of six or seven percent for the eight or nine years prior to the time I arrived.

The time in Brazil and in ARA overlaps because I went back to ARA to be Brazilian country director. So, the issues remained the same. You have to be clear about this. The Brazilian leadership believed they were acting in the best interests of the nation. But that was the best interests of the nation as they conceived it. They believed that they were the best able to carry it out and that they could not trust the popular will to do so. They also believed that in order to maintain this leadership, the end justified the means and they could take such steps as were necessary to survive. In this pursuit, there is no question but that people were imprisoned, often mistreated; and it was an authoritarian government that was neither democratic nor responsive to a popular mandate. We felt ourselves caught in this. We couldn't make over the government of Brazil. It was operating reasonably efficiently, but it was engaging in practices which we all felt were not only undesirable, but in the long range not in Brazil's interest, and certainly not in the United States' interest. The economic development had been remarkable during that period. The growth rates for almost 10 years were near 10%. Everybody spoke of the "Brazilian miracle," so the military leadership got a certain amount of credit for its effectiveness. But the other side was not pretty. They were faced with a violent opposition and they took the steps they felt were necessary to defeat it.

That situation extended over into the next two years in Washington (1972-1974). I took Bob Dean's place as country director for Brazil. The same issues continued. I had to testify before the House Subcommittee on Governmental Affairs on U.S. policy and programs in Brazil and the situation in that country. It was not an easy position to be in. I found myself not wanting to defend the Brazilian government, but on the other hand needing to defend U.S. policy of assisting it - a policy which sought to encourage both change and development to benefit the

majority of the population. Development occurred. It did not benefit the majority; it benefitted the wealthier. But this, in turn, produced a growing economy which provided better roads, schools and hospitals to the benefit of all. The non-wage benefits were considerable. Roads were built in the northeast which allowed people to get to hospitals. Their wages may not have gone up, but when they were sick, they could get on a bus and get into town, which they could not have done before. There was nothing the United States could do to change the kind of government the Brazilians were living under. The question was to what degree did we want to cooperate with that government? Our feeling was that a little assistance would help significantly. I think it did. I think that United States aid over that period played a significant role in helping create the 10% growth rate, even though it didn't trickle down a lot. We had to walk that line in our testimony but I am not sure we were successful in defending our position convincingly.

*Q: What was the reason you were up there making this testimony?*

LOW: In part no one senior to me wanted to go! The hearings were called by the Chairman of the Government Affairs Subcommittee, a congressman from Minnesota, at the urging of his staff who were opposed to assistance to Brazil. I don't think he was sympathetic to U.S. policy either, but he was a fair and considerate questioner. His interest, I think, was getting the information out. He was concerned with our policies and whether or not we were doing anything to encourage or support authoritarian government in Brazil. The questioning was tough. I tried to make the point that we were not encouraging the authoritarian government, that we were discouraging it to the degree that we could. Our assistance, which was then rapidly declining, was intended for the people of Brazil, not for the government, and that it should not be confused. The fact that we were providing project assistance around the country was not a measure of approval of the government. We had our choice. We could either help or not help. We could have gone away and said, "No, as long as you have this government, we won't do anything." We might have felt better, but nothing would have changed. The amount of aid at that point was not large. Its withdrawal would not have made any of difference to the Brazilians. They certainly wouldn't have changed their government or modified their practices. The return to civilian government would not have been speeded up. That was dependent on defeat of the terrorist movement and on domestic politics.

*Q: To put it in some perspective, I was in Greece from 1972-1974. You had the colonels there, whom we were supporting because of our military bases. You had Park Chung Hee in Korea, who was also a dictator. Vietnam was still under a rather dictatorial government. Could you describe what the Latin American context was at that time as far as democracy versus non-democracy?*

LOW: It was a period of transition. There were increasing numbers of democratically-elected governments. Brazil was not one of them, but the Brazilian authoritarian government was an institutional authoritarianism, rather than one-man rule. So far as I know, military officers did not profit personally from their rule. Some of the four or five military presidents were capable and broad-gauged leaders; not all, but most. They were undoubtedly aware of some of the brutality and authorized it. One might call it a benign authoritarianism, but it wasn't very benign to the people who were tortured for wanting to change it violently.

*Q: What about countries like Argentina, Peru, or Chile? Chile was a democracy at that time.*

LOW: Yes, although the Allende episode occurred during that period. Peronism in Argentina was an exercise in personal power and more arbitrary than the Brazilian government. There was no question but that the President was chosen by the military establishment. His constituency was the armed forces from whose ranks he was chosen for a specific term of office.

*Q: Not like Stroessner in Paraguay?*

LOW: Not at all. It was a five year term and it was respected by all. There was considerable freedom of expression in the press. There were limits, but they were pretty wide.

*Q: This was the period of Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon, their high period. Kissinger was still National Security Advisor, but he and Nixon were a very strong team. How did this play? Here you have the White House with a rather weak Secretary of State (William Rogers), and an authoritarian government which is putting down the communists in Brazil. How did this play?*

LOW: The old State Department adage that regulated Latin American affairs was firmly in place. "Keep it off of the seventh floor."

*Q: Explain what this means.*

LOW: It means the Secretary and under secretaries, whose offices were on the seventh floor, did not want to have to deal with Latin America if they didn't have to. That was the job of the assistant secretary for Latin American Affairs on the sixth floor. The seventh floor was concerned with the Soviets, world politics in Europe and Asia and did not want to divert time and attention to Latin America. So, it didn't really get a lot of attention. It was only after the Nixon fiasco in Venezuela that they became a little more conscious of the growing unpopularity of American involvement in Latin America. Then they sent Rockefeller around to visit every Latin American country. But beyond that, there was very little interest in making a fundamental change. It was business as usual, which meant neither Nixon or Kissinger wanted much involvement in Latin America, unless they weren't busy elsewhere. It was only later, after we got out of Vietnam, that Kissinger as Secretary of State became involved to any degree in Latin America. By that time I had been assigned to be the Latin American staff officer in the NSC.

*Q: During this time, other than answering as well as you could Congress, what were you doing?*

LOW: The principal issue we were wrestling with was the related one of the aid level for Brazil. The Bureau of American Regional Affairs (ARA which was principally Latin American affairs) at that a time had an integrated AID-State structure. I was the country director. The deputy director was a senior AID officer, Dick Lippincott. So far as I was concerned, the system worked very well. Dick and I worked very closely and saw eye to eye. When I was away he was in charge of Brazilian affairs and reported straight through State channels. He did it very well, and was highly regarded in State. Dick was absolutely convinced, along with a number of other AID people, that Brazil no longer needed foreign assistance. Its economic growth now provided sufficient resources to continue on its own. It should be "graduated." Besides, our aid was

creating more political problems than it was helping and leading us to a level of interference in internal affairs which was undesirable. Dick, with my support, led a successful effort over two or three years to phase down the AID program from one of the highest in the world to almost nothing. It was the sensible thing to do.

*Q: Did you and Lippincott find that it was difficult to phase out a major aid program? A bureaucracy gets entrenched. People like it, they've got ties to business concerns in the United States, Congress, and all that.*

LOW: Yes and it took time. It was extremely difficult, but it wasn't so much that the administrators were entrenched or self-serving. There were contracts, agreements, and projects in full flower. You can't abandon a project in the middle without a lot of waste and disruption. So, it took a while to draw things to a close.

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

LOW: Charlie Meyers was Assistant Secretary. John Crimmins was the senior deputy, which made life a lot of fun. Two wonderful people. Communication was easy. We got the guidance we needed, and they let us take care of our responsibilities. It was a very happy relationship. Then John Crimmins went out to Brazil as ambassador when the Carter administration came in.

*Q: I take it this time in ARA, unlike a decade later, you didn't have the right wing ideologues in the ARA apparatus, which essentially come from Congress and from the academic world, which made things much more difficult.*

LOW: No, not at all. Charlie Meyers was from Sears Roebuck. He was a Republican appointee who was one of these people who understood how government works, understood the bureaucracy, and instead of creating a "we-they" situation, took people for what they were on an individual basis. He relied on John Crimmins to run the Bureau, and focused on the outside world. They got along very well. When he needed to, Charlie operated within the bureaucracy very effectively. He was respected and we thought highly of him. He made his views known, but listened to others and was judicious in choosing the best course.

*Q: How did you find being back in Washington although you had actually had this when you were in Brasilia? What was your impression of the reporting from the posts and from the intelligence agencies? We still had a fairly sizable number of consular posts in this big country.*

LOW: The intelligence agencies did a good job. They were very frank and not influenced by their contacts. I think they as well as the Foreign Service people did a pretty good job. Although I don't think State reporting was brilliant, it was pretty good. I had a fine political officer in Brasilia, Bill Young, who was perceptive and hard working. We have had in the past some rather remarkable political officers who got very close to the Brazilians. You could do that in Brasilia, where no one was really at home, neither we nor the Brazilians. Everybody had left the social contacts they had grown up with. It was a new city. That meant that contact was easy, open, and friendly. I think we had pretty good relationships.

In Washington, when I went to the National Security Council, the focus changed. The primary issue then became Panama and the effort to negotiate a settlement to the Canal problem. In my experience when there are substantial armed forces involved and State and Defense are in agreement, you can get a lot done. That is exactly what happened. The Navy had concluded, just prior to the time I came back, that the Canal was really indefensible, that the U.S. didn't need the Canal as much as it used to, and that it would be better off getting out of an increasingly difficult situation. That changed things immediately. All of a sudden, we could work together with the U.S. military to create a long term relationship acceptable to both the U.S. and Panama. Politically it wasn't a popular idea in the country. Once the Navy decided to negotiate a new agreement with the Panamanians they wanted to move fast. The State Department wanted to negotiate an agreement that would stand up over time and leave us in a better position to bring our strength to bear to defend the canal if necessary. And we realized the negotiations would not be easy. On one occasion we had to keep the Secretary of the Navy from running down to Panama to negotiate unilaterally with the Panamanians. Ellsworth Bunker was head of the U.S. negotiating team. Kissinger then was Secretary of State and, as National Security Council Advisor, Brent Scowcroft was my boss. When I learned of the Navy Secretary's plans, I asked to see Scowcroft urgently before he left for Europe with President Ford. I got in to see him around 8:30 in the morning. He agreed with me that the trip was ill advised, made a call to have it canceled and then fell asleep sitting at his desk. I realized that he hadn't been to bed at all the night before.

I went with Kissinger on two trips, one to Chile for an OAS conference, and another one to Mexico. I can remember coming back from Chile. It was one of those experiences when Kissinger had a speech to make. On draft 10, he told us he wanted a new draft and this time he'd read it! It was three in the morning when he returned draft 15 to us and said he wanted it back by six in the morning when he would wake up and go over the final draft. Not surprisingly, we were pretty exhausted when we got on the plane to come home after his speech later that morning. Kissinger went up to his end of the plane and immediately started going through the pile of papers which had accumulated during the meeting. The intensity of concentration that he could give was extraordinary. As soon as the plane leveled off, he got out of his seat. He came back to tell my Middle East colleague to straighten somebody out in Amman. Then he asked someone else to get him a Senator in Washington on the phone. I can remember his waving a pile of papers in his hand in front of my nose and saying, "These Panama negotiating instructions... Nixon hates it, but he will sign." That characterized the U.S. position from Lyndon Johnson on, including Jimmy Carter. Presidents regularly came to office by saying one thing and doing something else. I remember Senator Hayakawa's comment: "We stole it fair and square." Carter ran for office saying we would never give it away. Once in office they realized there was no choice but to negotiate a reasonable new arrangement turning over control to the Panamanians. Our job was to get agreement between State, Treasury, and Defense on a negotiating position and get the instructions out. Kissinger would get the President to sign off every time. We kept the negotiations going and until they reached a successful conclusion after I left in the Carter period.

*Q: I want to go back to the Brazil time for a moment and then follow that through. 1972-1974: Allende came in, but he was only there a short time.*

LOW: That was earlier during my predecessor, Pete Vaky's, time on the NSC. Kissinger was still in the White House and I was in Brazil. Fortunately, I didn't have to deal with that issue.

*Q: Had the Pinochet government taken over before you came to the Brazil desk?*

LOW: I think so, yes.

**ROBERT CORRIGAN**  
**Consul General**  
**Sao Paulo (1968-1972)**

*Ambassador Robert Corrigan was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1934. He spent part of his youth in Latin America. He received a bachelor's degree from Stanford University and entered the Foreign Service in 1941 as part of the Auxiliary Foreign Service. His career included positions in Guatemala, Panama, Brazil, and an ambassadorship to Rwanda. Ambassador Corrigan was interviewed in January 1988 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

*Q: In 1968 you left that post to go as Consul General Sao Paulo. How did you feel about that assignment?*

CORRIGAN: I will get to that in just one second. I want to come back to the caliber of these military people we were talking about. There were exceptions, and most of the exceptions seemed to be concentrated in Brazil. And I suppose one reason for this is because Brazil is a very large country. So a lot of the people who went to Brazil to head the Army, Navy or Air Force section of our military group were really up and coming fellows.

For example, Thomas D. White, who was there as head of the Air Force section at one time, became, of course, one of the most eminent military men we have produced -- Chief of Staff of the Air Force, etc..

Well, to go back. Yes, I was then named Consul General in Sao Paulo. Delighted with the assignment. Knew a lot about it, of course, from my days in my first post in Rio. Knew that it was a post viewed by many people of the Foreign Service as equivalent to an embassy. Being in a city of, I guess, only about 10 or 12 million in those days. They say up to around 18 million today. And a fantastic, vibrant, interesting, exciting place.

*Q: Sao Paulo has the reputation of being the other capital of Brazil. Rio being one, Brasilia being almost non-existent as a capital. But one thinks of Sao Paulo having the equivalent weight, almost of an embassy.*

CORRIGAN: Yes. For example, in the Nixon administration you may recall that the President named Nelson Rockefeller to head a mission to Latin America and report back to him. This was a famous mission where in a number of instances ambassadors were pushed aside, because this

mission was supposed to make its own independent judgments, and not be influenced by bothersome ambassadors. It was made up, you may recall, of very eminent people in various fields, like the field of education, the field of finance. One of the fellows, for example, who accompanied Governor Rockefeller was Houghton, the brother of the man who had been ambassador to France. Or, indeed, he might have been the fellow who was ambassador to France later. He had a high military guy who happened, incidentally, to be General Porter, who had since retired. At all of the stops on the mission's itinerary we were required in a very short space of time to arrange high level meetings with the eminent people in that particular place in the various fields. So you had to get the top education people. You had to get the top military people. The top ranking people. The top cultural people. It was, therefore, very much more difficult to arrange than a simple mission where you are only concerned about the head man -- Governor Rockefeller in this instance. And Sao Paulo was the only non-capital city on that itinerary. Therefore, we were the only non-embassy required to come front and center and arrange this extremely complicated visit and fulfill these very demanding requirements of the governor and his people.

*Q: What were your principal responsibilities as Consul General in Sao Paulo, that you saw then?*

CORRIGAN: Well, since we were in such an important part of Brazil and the nerve center of business and finance, our job was to report on what was going on in the business and financial community. This included, of course, rapport with a large group of important American business representatives, because very large companies, you know, Goodyear, General Motors, Ford, Clark Equipment, Eaton Manufacturing, and on and on, had plants. They were manufacturers there. With huge responsibilities and interests, and so a good deal of our interest was in keeping in touch with those fellows, keeping them informed and working with them.

Another thing, of course, since we were in such a big and important place in the scheme of that country, there are constant social and representation functions that take up an inordinate amount of the Consul General's time. And, of course, we were in a sense an adjunct of the embassy in Brasilia.

*Q: What was the situation in Sao Paulo? You had what, several states also, or one state in your district?*

CORRIGAN: Our consular district covered a number of states in a very large area, including Mato Grosso, the sort of Texas of Brazil, way out to the west. And also large cities.

*Q: What was the political situation that you saw in Sao Paulo?*

CORRIGAN: The political situation, of course, in those days did not loom anywhere near as large as it does in Brazil today where you have a very complex democratic situation.

It was still under military rule. In other words it was still consequent to the 1964 revolution where you had a series of military governments. You still had one in those days. But there was still a great deal of ferment. The old political parties and the old political personalities and new

ones coming up, student elements, labor union elements and the like were restive under an authoritarian government, were certainly very active. One of our main jobs was to keep in touch with those people.

*Q: Was there a problem in keeping in touch with what was basically the opposition? Were there protests from the military government?*

CORRIGAN: None whatever. The Brazilians are very sophisticated in that regard. They knew that was going on. They had no objection to it really. They had problems with those groups and dealt with them in their own way, sometimes in a heavy-handed way. But as far as our either getting into any difficulties with the Brazilian government, or pulling any punches, or withdrawing from contacts with and friendship, indeed, with a lot of those elements, there was never any problem.

*Q: Did you have any problem in reporting things in a straight manner? Overplaying the role of - I mean, sometimes when a country is under a great deal, you might say, of media pressure from the United States, that the United States should have a larger role in trying to bring this country to democracy, there is a tendency to be a little bit careful on how you report the actions of the military, the police, on repressing people, because if that gets back to Washington it will lead to the press, and this causes more trouble. Did you feel that pressure in that matter?*

CORRIGAN: No, I wasn't aware of any pressure, and frequently my reports would be critical of certain heavy-handed activities on the part of the Brazilian military in those areas, but we didn't pull any punches reporting it, and I don't recall any incidents of leaking of that and causing us any problems.

*Q: I wonder if you could comment on the terrorism that seemed to break out particularly in the period you were there, including the kidnaping of Ambassador Elbrick while you were in Brazil.*

CORRIGAN: Yes. That was a very difficult time in Brazil, including in Sao Paulo, and subsequent to Ambassador Elbrick's kidnaping, as Consul General I had a great deal of protection. I was picked up every morning by police who had been assigned by the state government to protect me. And they were in a station wagon with sawed off shotguns, three or four of these fellows in a station wagon with shotguns on the floor in front of them, and one fellow riding shotgun in the right front of my car. For the last couple of years I was there this was the situation.

The Japanese Consul General in Sao Paulo was kidnaped during that period. We had intelligence reports that I was a target, that the Portuguese Consul General was a target, and all in all it wasn't a very pleasant way to go about your business outside the office.

*Q: Did this have much of an effect on the effectiveness of the Consulate General, the whole staff getting around?*

CORRIGAN: No, not really. I was the only one who had this kind of protection. The others took their chances. Fortunately nothing ever happened.

Indeed this terrorism thing was extremely serious for Captain Chandler. There was an American Army captain called Chandler, who was a student. They have a program, I think they are called Olmstead scholarships, where promising Army officers are permitted to go abroad and study a year or two in a place of their choice. This is not to be confused with FAST, Foreign Area Specialist Training, but it is something like that. And this particular very fine young captain was there with his family studying at the University of Sao Paulo. Well, he was a gringo, and so he was fingered for elimination, and they did, indeed, eliminate him one Saturday morning. He was leaving his house with his young son and, as I recall the situation, he had backed out of the driveway into the street, and the son, maybe a ten year old boy or something like that, was closing the gate to the house. Fortunately the boy had not yet got back into the car with his father to run an errand. Two or three of these little VW bugs -- there was such a proliferation of those in Brazil that you wouldn't believe it. You never saw so many VW bugs in your life. Anyhow two or three of those converged and guys got out and opened fire hitting Chandler with many shots and he was killed immediately.

*Q: Was this at all in reaction to Vietnam? Did Vietnam have much of a role?*

CORRIGAN: Well, it was all part of that, you know. Yeah, Vietnam certainly was one of the things, and that was the height, of course, of the Vietnam conflict. But, you know, general anti-Americanism and terrorism of these Communists also figured. There was a man called Marighela who was a famous terrorist, who was credited with being a leader of a lot of this, who was finally done in. In any event, that was always there during most of my time in Sao Paulo.

**CURTIS C. CUTTER**  
**Principal Officer**  
**Porto Alegre (1969-1970)**

*Curtis C. Cutter was born in Sacramento, California on October 27, 1928. He attended the University of California at Berkeley and then entered the U.S. Army. Mr. Cutter joined the Foreign Service in 1958 and served in Cambodia, Peru, Brazil, and Spain. He Cutter was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.*

*Q: And then you went to Porto Alegre in Brazil.*

CUTTER: Well, I had asked for that. Actually, when they came to me on the Peruvian desk, I had pretty much lined up my life, I thought. The people in Personnel were very cooperative. I was doing a good job in the Department, I guess. They wanted to keep me happy, and they had agreed on a year's study at Stanford and then to move on to be a Principal Officer in Porto Alegre, Brazil. My principal interest at Stanford was Brazilian economic history. So I really spent a year preparing myself for this post. Rio Grande do Sul is called the cradle of presidents. It is like Virginia is for the United States. It has produced more presidents than any other part of Brazil. So, although it is little known here, it is a city of three or four million people -- a dynamic, industrial city. It has always had a very explosive political situation. A lot of political

movements have started in Porto Alegre. If you couldn't be principal officer -- which I couldn't be at that stage of my career, in Rio -- Porto Alegre was certainly the place to be in Brazil.

I had told Linowitz, when I went to work for him, that it would be only be there for a year. At the end of that year, once again I had this problem of breaking away. He didn't think I should do anything so mundane as going back to school, that I could accomplish much more in Washington doing what I was doing. I said, "no," this was something that I really wanted to do in terms of my long term development. I left, and I still think it was a great choice. First of all, I had a wonderful year at Stanford. It was very stimulating to be back in an academic environment where you could sort of kick ideas around and not worry about the political downside of them. I think it is very important in an officer's career to have that opportunity to get away. You probably did that with the Senior Seminar. It was a crucial time for me in my personal life, sort of to take a step back and look at what I was doing. So I think that university year was extremely valuable, and I recommend it for anybody that really wants to think seriously about foreign affairs and what they are doing. So, from there I went directly to Porto Alegre. I spent a full year at Stanford, including a summer of intensive Portuguese. Instead of coming back to the FSI [Foreign Service Institute], they let me take it at Stanford.

So I arrived in Porto Alegre during a period when, as you know, there was a military junta in power in Brazil. The U.S. was seen in intellectual and "left" circles as the author of that coup, which I think is totally unwarranted. Nevertheless, we are given credit for a lot of things that we shouldn't be given credit for. So the role I saw for myself in Porto Alegre, in addition to the normal, consular functions, was to try and build some kind of an outreach to the intellectual and journalistic community there, and try and rebuild some ties between the Consulate and that group. I arrived there in November 1969 and had made progress by the time March rolled around in developing some pretty good contacts.

I was having a great time, to be quite honest. The whole south of Brazil was part of my consular district. By then I had visited all of the capitals in that area and gotten to know people pretty well.

It all came to a halt in early April 1970. We were coming home from a dinner party. Christiane was sitting in the front seat. I was driving and we had a banker friend from San Francisco, Hovey Clark, in the back seat. We were driving through a rather obscure area in Porto Alegre, when all of a sudden a car cut us off, bumped my front fender. I had an American station wagon at that time -- a big Plymouth Fury. This was a smaller, European car, a Brazilian built car. I thought, "Oh, heck, now we will have a discussion over who is to blame." I was just about to get out of the car when these men started jumping out of the other car. They had stockings pulled over their faces and were carrying machine guns. So, given some of the things that had happened in Brazil up to that point, I knew what was up. Our Ambassador had been kidnaped...

Q: *Burke Elbrick.*

CUTTER: Yes. The Japanese Consul General in Sao Paulo had been kidnaped. You just had the German Ambassador in Guatemala assassinated. So I was pretty much aware of what was happening. To digress for a minute, I had a driver who was an ex-Brazilian paratrooper. We had

discussed what we would do in a situation like this, had it occurred. We were both in agreement that we didn't want to be, just rolled over on our backs. If it looked like it was possible to get away, we were definitely going to make a move in that direction. There had been too much of people just throwing up their hands and saying, "Here I am. Take me." I guess there was some of that mental preparation going on there.

The minute I saw those guys jumping out with their weapons, I just put my foot on the throttle. My wife says that I just said: "Here we go." And both she and Hovey Clark very wisely threw themselves on the floor of the car. They had seen what was happening and threw themselves on the floor. I managed to hit the last one getting out of the car, knock him up onto the hood. He was lying there, with his machine gun for a couple of seconds and then I hit the front of their car, knocking it out of the way, and took off. The leader of this group -- he was the only one carrying a pistol -- stopped another terrorist from machine gunning the car. He took careful aim at the back of the car and fired. One of the shots hit me in the shoulder and knocked me against the steering wheel. My wife asked me what was wrong when she saw me go forward like that. She says that all I said was "Damn it, I have been shot."

Clark in the back seat, who was a former Foreign Service Officer, by the way, said, "Curt, if you can keep going, don't stop! They are right behind us!" So I put my foot on the throttle and made some of the hairiest crossings of major intersections that you have ever seen. Eventually, they stopped their small car and went back to see what had happened to their associates. We continued on to our house, the official residence, where there were always a couple of guards on duty. Of course, as we pulled up, tooting the horn, there was no guard in sight. My wife got out, ran into the house, to try and see what was happening. Hovey Clark stayed with me and tried to help me out of the car. About the time we reached the stairs that went into the house, the guards did appear. They were asleep in the back yard. Fortunately, the terrorists hadn't continued to follow me. If they had, we would have been in deep trouble. We called for an ambulance. None came. Eventually, the neighbors drove me to a hospital. It was kind of funny. We went first to a neighborhood hospital, which was a really more of a clinic. Nuns came to the door and said: "No, no, we don't take those kinds of cases! You had better go to the Municipal Hospital." And it is true, if you are ever shot, don't go to a small hospital. Go to the hospital in the area where they are used to handling gunshot wounds. So they took me in, and the young surgeon on duty had handled countless gunshot wounds, I guess. He put me in intensive care and took care of the problem in a very professional way.

That started a very interesting period. I, of course, had just spent a year at Stanford, doing a Masters program on the economic history of Brazil. I wasn't prepared, just because of this incident, to leave. My attitude was: I wanted to stay. There was no question in my mind that I could stay on in Porto Alegre. I didn't think that this was a reason to leave. After the fact, of course, the Brazilians assigned a veritable platoon of guards to be with us at all times. We had six children living with us at that time in Porto Alegre, some of whom were going to local schools. That meant that they were now accompanied by an armed guard at all times, as was my wife. We were getting, after the incident, constant threats from radical groups, because they weren't very happy with our escape which resulted in the eventual capture of the three terrorists who were involved in my kidnaping. So there were bomb threats and all kinds of threats against me and my family.

However, eventually, I wanted to go back to the States and have somebody take a look at my wound and then go right back to Brazil. So the Department brought us out. Brought out the whole family for medical consultation, and we were supposed to go back. But while we were in the States, the Department decided that my family could not go back. I could go back, I could stay as long as I wanted, but my family was not going to be allowed to go back. There was no way they could assure adequate protection for a wife and six children. So we dispersed the family, and my wife went to Europe to stay with her family. I went back to Porto Alegre. It was obvious that I could only stay a limited period of time. So I began an orderly process of disengagement, visiting the authorities, saying my goodbyes, and preparing to leave.

Then the frustration began. It started, actually, while my wife was still there. One of the big problems that was facing U.S. and Brazilian policy at this time was the whole question of human rights violations by the junta. There was a big debate about whether or not these human rights violations were real, or whether they weren't real. Whether these were just leftist allegations, or whether they were, in fact, true human rights violations. Of course, this was a very muted kind of thing. A lot of our programs in Brazil depended on our not finding them in violation of human rights provisions. So the Embassy was very careful about what they would report to Washington about human rights violations. Even after the Elbrick affair and even after my affair. There was very little hard evidence, except for hearsay evidence, about what was being done by the military to repress the Left.

One of the things that grew out of this experience was that the military and the police in Porto Alegre began to see me as somebody they could talk to very frankly and to see my family in the same light. One of the first episodes that occurred was that the lieutenant in charge of our security bragged to my wife at considerable length about the measures they were going to take to solve this case. He described in some detail the kinds of methods they were going to use if they ever caught these people, to see to it that they got them all. He was very graphic in his description of some of the things he could do, including a fellow that they called "The Mad Dentist," who was a guy who flunked out of dental school, whom they hired. They would strap people into a dental chair, and then would go ahead and perform dental care on them with drills and what have you, whether they needed the dental care or not. My understanding is that this is pretty excruciating. Then they described "The Tank," into which they could dip people, upside down, hold them in there until they were nearly drowned. Well, they went on at some length with pretty graphic descriptions of what they could do.

It seemed to me, regardless of what my personal situation was, that this was very germane to U.S. policy and that this couldn't be ignored. We did some fairly substantial reports from Porto Alegre. The reporting chain was from Porto Alegre to the Embassy and from the Embassy on to Washington. After I went back to Porto Alegre, I was even given a tour of police headquarters and shown the torture facilities. So there wasn't too much doubt that human rights violations were taking place and of a fairly serious nature. Now, of course, you enter the whole domain of the argument of whether these kinds of things are necessary. They argued that they were. Otherwise, you would have further kinds of incidents like mine. But the facts were plain. They were doing horrible things. And they were doing them in a fairly organized and systematic way. This was something that we put on the record, very plainly, to the Embassy. I must say, today,

that I am not sure whatever happened to our reports which we sent to the Embassy, because later, when I was back in Washington, I looked in vain for some sign that these reports were in fact part of the record. They may very well be although I couldn't find them. All I can say is that, on the human rights issue, the facts were plain.

*Q: Well then, you made your calls and then the Department...You decided that this wasn't going to work, with your family...*

CUTTER: Well, I made my farewell calls. The Department and I sort of agreed that I would phase out over a period of months, because I wasn't going to stay there without my family. It was obvious that if they wouldn't let my wife go back, I had to leave. But, I wanted to do it in an orderly fashion. So I went back to Porto Alegre in mid-April 1970 and stayed till mid-June. During that period I made my farewell calls. I very strongly recommended that my vice consul who was black, Bob Lane, be put in charge. Bob was one of the finest officers in the service. He was a fairly junior officer, but I thought that he was quite ready for those responsibilities. Furthermore, he had gone all through this period. He understood it very well, and I thought that it would be good for a lot of other reasons. He had bumped into a lot of prejudice, in Porto Alegre and I thought it was good for us, as a country, to show that we were not going to knuckle under to the kinds of pressures that were put on us to do something about putting a black officer there. The Department went along with my recommendation, finally. It was the beginning of a brilliant career for Bob. You probably knew him along the line.

*Q: I have run across his name. I can't...*

CUTTER: He ended up deputy assistant secretary in consular affairs.

Then began one of the few times that I was down on the Service, because, although they had made it pretty plain that I should leave eventually, the assignment process didn't come up with anything for me. Frankly, the Department behaved very badly during this whole episode. I will be blunt about that and put it on the record.

*Q: Wasn't this a period when the Department didn't know how to deal with these things.*

CUTTER: I guess that they didn't know how to deal with them, but they didn't even know how to deal with the human problems that were involved. Ambassador Burke Elbrick was great. He jumped in his plane, flew down, right after this happened. He brought his personal physician from the Embassy to take a look at me and made sure that I was getting good medical care. He was in constant communication. I never heard word one from the Department of State. Not one communication did I receive from the Department of State. None. Zero. During this entire period. It is sort of mind boggling. I almost felt that what I had done was wrong, that what I should have done was turn myself over and made an effort not to embarrass the Department by being taken hostage. Actually, there were some officers later who said to me that I had done the wrong thing by escaping from this situation and that I had imperiled lives. So there were two schools of thought. When it came time to reassign me, I had become, not as I was to some people, I guess, a sort of hero, but a problem. Now they had to find an assignment for someone they thought they had taken care of for three years. Now I was back in the system again and

needed to be reassigned. Obviously, they had to find something reasonably good for me. So we went through an off and on period, and finally, it became embarrassing. The Consular Corps had given me a farewell, the governors had given dinners in my honor, and I was the lamest of lame ducks. So I just sent a message to the Department, saying that I was going on annual leave. I could be found in Rome, where my wife had moved the family into a small *pensione*. If they wanted to get in touch with me, I would be there and would check in with the Embassy on a regular basis. When they had an assignment, let me know. At this point I had really reached the end. So I did that. I flew to Rome, at my own expense, and just waited there for, what, six weeks -- no, four weeks. I spent four very delightful weeks in which I would check in every morning at the Embassy to see if there was news of an assignment. A series of things went on, and I finally ended up in the Political Section in Madrid. Ambassador Robert C. Hill, had heard about my availability and said, "I don't care what happens. I want this man here in Madrid. I will make room for him at the Embassy here some place, somehow." So I was assigned to the Political Section in Madrid and the system had nothing to do with it. The system did not come up with an assignment for me.

**RICHARD E. JOHNSON**  
**Political Counselor**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1969-1971)**

*Richard E. Johnson was born and raised in Winnetka, Illinois. He attended Harvard University and served in the U.S. Navy. Mr. Johnson joined the State Department in 1947 and entered the Foreign Service in 1951. He served in Hong Kong, Canada, Poland, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Brazil. Mr. Johnson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.*

Q: *What were you doing in Rio?*

JOHNSON: I was the Political Counselor. That was something I arranged while I was in Washington. I remember they told us, and they perhaps told you when you were in the Senior Seminar, you are a hot property and you needn't worry about your assignments from now on...

Q: *I am laughing because...*

JOHNSON: Did they tell you this?

Q: *Oh, yes, and they had no idea what to do with us.*

JOHNSON: No, absolutely not the slightest.

Q: *We were told we would be assured of a fine place because we were a selected few, and they had plenty of time to do this.*

JOHNSON: Yes, yes, and they claimed they had plans for us. And then I remember there was a

poor guy from the Office of Personnel that had to meet with each of us, and he always took us to lunch at Martin's. That was a very painful luncheon, because, after I had been promised that there were all kinds of goodies ready for me, he would have to tell me, "As of now, Johnson, let me see...there seems to be a vacancy for the assistant political adviser to the US military in Düsseldorf."

And I said, "Well, what is at Düsseldorf?"

"Well, it is the headquarters of the 45th Mess Kit Repair Battalion."

And I would say, "Well, maybe you can find something else."

And I despaired eventually, because it was clear to me that they didn't have anything particular in mind. Fortunately, I had a good friend, still a very close friend of mine, Doug Hartley, who was in ARA Personnel, and he said, "You are going on your Senior Seminar tour down in South America; why don't you stop off in Rio; they are looking for a political counselor." And I did, and I got the job.

I arrived at a very interesting time. Elbrick had just then been kidnaped.

*Q: This was Burke Elbrick, who... And this was a brand new thing really for the Foreign Service.*

JOHNSON: Yes, it was, I think, the second kidnaping. The first one was in the D.R., I believe.

*Q: Could you explain how you saw it, and how the Embassy and everybody reacted on this.*

JOHNSON: At that time, of course, our policy toward this sort of thing was just in its infancy. The sole reaction was to order the Brazilians to do everything within their power to get our Ambassador back. The terrorists had demanded the release of sixteen, really tough terrorists -- people with bomb-throwing records who had been caught and were in prison. The Brazilians swallowed this. They said, "This is going to be tough for us, and it is just going to mean more terrorism in this country if we let these so-and-so's go. They are just going to go up to Cuba, where we have to fly them, and then they will be brought back in again in a few months." It turned out they were right -- these guys showed up again. But, sure, they gradually released them all. It took a while. But we really rode them on it. I remember my boss would say, "Well, Teixeira is still in prison up in Recife, and nothing has been done to turn him over for release." So I would call up the Brazilian Foreign Office and say, "What in the hell are you doing? After all, we have got to get these sixteen mothers out of the country, and Teixeira hasn't even been moved." They were terribly patient. But they wanted to get Elbrick back alive, too.

We didn't negotiate with the kidnapers, and anyway they didn't really identify themselves, but they sent us messages through this very fine Rio newspaper, the *Jornal do Brasil*, which was very helpful in getting Elbrick out.

Finally, these sixteen were sent off to Cuba, and the kidnapers turned Elbrick loose.

Soon after that he went back to Washington to be checked over, and he developed a circulation problem, which, as far as I know, had no relationship at all to his incarceration. And shortly thereafter, he lost both legs. Very fine man.

Q: *Very fine man. A great professional.*

JOHNSON: Excellent...

Q: *What were your major concerns other than, obviously, dealing with the kidnaping? In the first place, Rio was still the capital in those days?*

JOHNSON: Yes, it was.

Q: *What was the political situation like in Brazil?*

JOHNSON: The military was still in control -- had been for several years, and any sort of expression of liberal sentiment in politics were suppressed. There was an opposition party, but it really wasn't very liberal. Student organizations were very thoroughly prohibited. Many of the terrorists were themselves kids rather than pros. They were college kids who had liberal aspirations and were not necessarily Marxists or anarchists or anything, but they just resented the pressure that the military regime was keeping on, and partly it was this refusal to allow them to form liberal organizations or any kind of student groups that led them to violence. So the political atmosphere was quite tense.

The U.S. government's position was to distance itself from this military government. There were reports, and I think fairly well substantiated, that the military was even torturing these young people in order to get word of their plans. Sometimes they would say, "Sure, but that is to protect you diplomats, to find out what the terrorists have in mind." But, in any case, our relations with the Brazilian government were not very close then, for human rights reasons.

We had an interesting reporting situation when I arrived. We had in the Embassy an army attaché who had wonderful contacts with the President of Brazil, Médici. They respected one another for their military know-how and experience. The attaché had regular meetings with the very top levels in the Brazilian government, and even civilians, like the Minister for Foreign Affairs, knew him, because he got along well with Brazil's President. He was welcome anytime and they would talk quite candidly with him. Well, you can imagine being a Political Counselor responsible for political reporting in a country ruled by the military, with this guy sending back military attaché reports with hot information from his top level sources. The attaché was happy enough to put "State Department Distribution" down on them. But it made it hard for the Political Section to find a niche. When I arrived, the Political Section just wasn't doing any reporting, because Washington really didn't want anything out of the Embassy that was not vetted by the attaché -- and for fairly good reasons. I mean, if you were trying to say what the Brazilian leadership was thinking, not to clear it with the attaché was looked upon, at least by Washington, as a great oversight.

Q: *He was following really, maybe several times removed, in the footsteps of Vernon Walters,*

*wasn't he?*

JOHNSON: Yes, several steps removed.

*Q: Walters had exactly the same type of relationship.*

JOHNSON: Exactly.

The attaché would not clear anything that my Political Section had written that had accusatory tones. He felt that he understood why the Brazilian government did what it did.

*Q: When you were in Rio, were you getting any push from, say, the Brazilian desk about, "Tell us what is going on?" I mean, were they uncomfortable about this sort of military cast to our reporting?*

JOHNSON: Oh, yes. Yes, indeed, they had been uncomfortable. But I don't think the attaché's reporting was particularly slanted, although he was more understanding of what the military regime was trying to do than the rest of the Embassy. But you are quite right; the State Department was anxious to get Embassy reporting. That was why I devised this business of sending things in with the attaché's separate comments, and we reported on what our contacts thought about the military government, and reported occasionally in very critical vein.

*Q: Was there the problem of being concerned that you have a government with which we can "do business," but if you start reporting on it in a critical way, talking about, say, torturing or that sort of thing, and you know that when it gets back to Washington this could fall into the hands of people who are just opposed to our doing anything, and really not lead anywhere but just basically harm our relations without particularly changing the course of events, say, regarding torturing? In other words, did you find that you had to be careful about your reporting because this could be used not only as a picture of what was happening in a country, but could be used against our relations with that country by other people in Washington?*

JOHNSON: No, I don't think we were that concerned really about the impact on our relations with Brazil. We felt the Department had the right to get the full story.

*Q: Well, how did you find dealing with the Foreign Ministry? Was it easy to deal with? How did they feel about Americans, the professionals in the Foreign Service?*

JOHNSON: Oh, we had many good friends in the Brazilian Foreign Ministry. We liked them. And personally they were quite warm. And they were prepared to see us when we came to their offices, but, I would say, they were not as receptive to U.S. suggestions as to what we hoped the Brazilians would do, for instance, at the U.N. I would go over and speak my piece, and quite often the Under Secretary would say, "Thank you very much for coming by. I appreciate your telling us what your position is."

And I would say, "Yeah, well, what do you think about it? What is your position?"

And he would say, "Our position has not as yet been determined, Dick. We will be in touch with you later."

Kind of a "don't-call-us-we'll-call-you." Very often, having gotten our position, they would draft as a position the exact opposite, because they wanted to be on the side of the developing countries -- the anti-imperialists, the nonaligned. So, at one point, I told Ambassador Crimmins that I thought we were having a negative result trying to get the Brazilians to go along with us.

I really had trouble with the Foreign Minister at the time,. He was, I think, in many ways very bitter about the U.S. I would go to see him, usually with a visitor from Washington. And the Foreign Minister would proceed to tell the visitor from Washington what a great democracy Brazil was in comparison with the U.S., and how there is no racial discrimination in Brazil, how it has always been a great place for the mingling of the races, how for centuries the Portuguese have always married blacks, or at least had black children. (That was true; there is a great deal of inter-racial relations. I wouldn't say marriage but at least intercourse between the Portuguese and all the others that were there.) And he would draw a very, of course, negative picture of racial discrimination in the States and other aspects of U.S. life that I just didn't feel I could allow to sit.

Perhaps I shouldn't have done this, because the interview was really for the Washington visitor, but I felt obliged to tell him that I thought all countries had some problems in this regard. Certainly if you go to the Rio Country Club, you aren't going to see anybody who is even remotely tan. It is an absolutely, totally white club. And that at least in the US we recognized the problem, and clubs that have a no-black admission policy are gradually being beaten down. I don't see in Brazil any admission that there is a problem.

Well, that took up a good part of the discussion. He would launch in on these things because he really didn't want to hear what the American visitor had to say. He didn't want to have to answer any questions. He wanted to monopolize the meeting. And he would start off by assuming that we had nothing particular to say and that he could fill the half hour allotted. After a half hour, while I was right in the middle of my response about racial discrimination -- he would go on so that I would have to start talking right on top of him -- in the middle of this, somebody would take a look at their watch and say, "Your time is up. The Minister has another appointment."

*Q: Not one of your favorite people.*

JOHNSON: No.

My idea was that, at all costs, we had to do some reporting -- what is a political section for? So we would send in things for a time with the attaché's dissent attached, and Ambassador Elbrick would sign them -- while he was there; he wasn't there for an awfully long time. The attaché and I got along quite well -- we agreed to disagree on various things -- but we did turn in a fairly good volume of reporting.

I found I had quite a few junior officers, very good and very bright guys, but they wanted to spread all over town making contacts, particularly with the liberal groups, which was fine; the

Embassy encouraged that. They wanted to spend all their time out and around meeting people, and I couldn't get them to come in, sit down, and put some of this stuff on paper.

I would ask them, "What happened? What did so and so tell you?"

And they would give me a bit of a rundown.

And I would say, "That sounds *terribly* interesting. Would you please make a memorandum of conversation, and we will shoot this right back to the Department; we will send a telegram."

"Well, Dick, I have got an appointment with thus and so this afternoon, and I don't know whether I am going to get around to it."

The only bad efficiency report I have ever written, really bad, on someone on my staff was this guy who absolutely refused to play a role as a reporting officer.

*Q: I think this is somewhat a reflection of this era, of not quite seeing the connection between "doing their thing" and representing the United States in getting that knowledge back into the system.*

JOHNSON: Yes, I think so. In a way, this was perhaps the early evidencing of the Vietnam generation.

**ARTHUR F. BLASER, JR.**  
**Financial Attaché**  
**Brasilia, Rió de Janeiro, Brazil (1969-1973)**

*Arthur F. Blaser, Jr. was born in 1908 and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. He received an undergraduate degree from Yale University in 1929, an M.B.A. from Harvard University in 1932, and a Ph.D. in economics from Columbia University in 1941. In addition to Japan, Mr. Blaser served in England, Germany, and Brazil. He was interviewed by Raymond Ewing on October 16, 1996.*

*Q: I believe your next assignment was to Brazil. You had some German before, you learned German there, you had learned some Japanese in Tokyo. Before you went to Brazil did you have a chance to study Portuguese?*

BLASER: Oh, yes. There we had the best chance of all because we left Germany in February, and went directly to the Foreign Service Institute for 16 weeks of intensive work in Portuguese, and didn't go to Brazil until mid-year. So we went fairly well equipped, and we continued to study daily in Brazil at the Foreign Service Language Program there. We finally became able to do business in Portuguese. This was very helpful.

*Q: You went to Brazil in 1969. Had there been a financial attaché there for some time before?*

BLASER: Yes. I replaced the man there.

*Q: In contrast to London and Tokyo and Bonn, Brazil was a developing country, a vast economy. Was your work pretty much the same, or was it quite different?*

BLASER: A little of both I guess. The physical contrast in the country was remarkable because of course Rio was an old established city, but out in the country it was very undeveloped. Brasilia had just been hacked out of the semi arid scrub. Brasilia is a curious place. It's semi-desert. It rains not at all for about six months, and then rains fairly much. So the growth is mostly scrub trees, and more desert type plants. So that, plus the streets, the workmen, everything, was more of a rural mud on your boots sort of thing...excepting, of course, Rio which was an old established city with a very Spanish type aspect in its architecture.

*Q: The initial period of your assignment in Brazil was in Rio.*

BLASER: Yes, two years in Rio, then two years in Brasilia.

*Q: And the ambassador when you first arrived there was in Rio?*

BLASER: Yes. That was Ambassador Burke Elbrick. As you may remember he was kidnapped, which was a strange and somewhat frightening experience for all of us. I wasn't directly involved in his recovery, of course. All I could do was volunteer to do whatever any staff person was needed to do. But I wasn't called on for anything. Some negotiations took place of which I'm not apprized, and he was later returned.

*Q: Was it a matter of weeks, or days?*

BLASER: Well, certainly days. Perhaps a few weeks. I don't recall exactly, but he didn't come back the next day that's for sure. As I believe, he wasn't harmed physically as such, but I felt that he was pretty badly shaken up psychologically. And, of course, he went back to the United States and didn't return.

*Q: Soon after he was released?*

BLASER: Yes, that's right.

*Q: Did that make quite a difference to you and others in the embassy in terms of security, precautions that you took?*

BLASER: I guess a little. It was more severe later. In Brasilia they tried to have the ambassador come to his office by different routes daily, and not have any established pattern that could be marked. When we were in Brasilia, of course the government offices were there, but the financial community was in Rio and in Sao Paulo, both cities which I visited fairly regularly. I recall one time being in the Minister's car--the Minister, as Steve Low just mentioned, stayed in Rio and

was in charge there--riding in his car and he said, "Watch out for that thing." I looked on the floor and it was a submachine gun.

*Q: In the back seat of the car. I wonder if he knew how to use it.*

BLASER: It wasn't clear, it was just lying there and I wasn't sure who was supposed to operate it should the need arise.

*Q: It wasn't going to be you though.*

BLASER: No. I couldn't. But it was a little shocking to see this Tommy gun there.

*Q: After Ambassador Elbrick left, he was replaced by Ambassador William Rountree, who had been an ambassador in several other countries, and Assistant Secretary.*

BLASER: A Middle East expert really. It seemed Brazil was a somewhat strange assignment, but Ambassador Rountree was a veteran who knew his way around, and didn't have any trouble adjusting.

*Q: When he arrived he located himself in Brasilia.*

BLASER: He never did go to Rio, that's right. We were still in Rio but it was evident that the whole weight of the embassy was shifting then to Brasilia, and that's where we wanted to be. The Finance Ministry was there and all their people.

*Q: The Bank of Brazil and the Central Bank, the banking community was still in Rio.*

BLASER: No, the Central Bank, the Bank of Brazil is another bank.

*Q: Okay, the Central Bank.*

BLASER: I was in contact with them in both places. I think they moved, but I'm not sure. But the whole weight of the financial establishment was still in Rio and in Sao Paulo. Sao Paulo was very important too.

*Q: So after you moved to Brasilia you still regularly visited both other cities. I had an occasion to visit both Rio and Brasilia in 1987, I think, and I had kind of a strange feeling about Brasilia. It didn't seem quite real.*

BLASER: It's artificial, that's right.

*Q: And I realized that one of the things was, there are a lot of hotels, and a lot of Brazilians were spending four or five days during the week in hotels and then going home somewhere else.*

BLASER: The bureaucrats, I'm sure, were dragged kicking and screaming from the nice beaches in Rio up to Brasilia. And as you say, I'm sure many of them maintained their former residences

and just had a place to sleep in Brasilia. Gradually, I suppose, that changed but those Rio people didn't care much to go out there. And that's understandable. Here you have a sophisticated, vibrant city, and to go out to the back woods so to speak, it's quite a difference in lifestyle which they didn't care for.

*Q: Another thing that struck me on the basis of a two day visit was, it seemed to be a city built for cars. Of course, this was 20 years or so after you were there, or 15. To walk was very difficult anywhere.*

BLASER: Oh, it was all spread out. One thing they did have up there was lots of room. And there were buses, of course. The Brazilians were poor. Many had cars but the whole working population did not, so there were the buses. But they had this rather strange system of traffic. They had all these circles. And when we were there there were only one or two traffic lights in town. But I understand that in subsequent years the traffic had gotten a lot heavier and they had to install traffic lights, and the circles aren't too well adapted to that. So I think maybe the planners missed a beat. I'm not sure, but I think so.

*Q: As Financial Attaché did you have an assistant?*

BLASER: Yes, I did.

*Q: ...also in Brasilia. Again you were associated with the economic section?*

BLASER: Yes. We worked together closely. I worked with the economic counselor there.

*Q: Was there an AID mission, or office?*

BLASER: Yes indeed there was. It was more important there than in Germany.

*Q: Were you called on for advice occasionally by them on financial matters?*

BLASER: Yes, that's right. They were still making loans to Brazilian entities, and from time to time when these loan matters would come up, the ambassador would convene a conference and ask us about it. In general we'd go along. Brazil began to develop some momentum of its own so that the loans that were being offered, or considered, were less important. It sort of got to the point where it didn't make too much difference one way or the other. They could make the loan and it would be somewhat helpful, but not necessary. Brazil's resources were sufficient so the matter of repayment was not too important. As you know, the Brazilian's economic or financial history has been to go along for a few years inflating steadily, and then revalue the currency. The effect was to throw out the old currency, since exchange at a thousand to one didn't leave much value. So savings were a very dangerous thing, at least saving accounts in the conventional sense. Business investments, or real property were the only practical means of preserving wealth.

*Q: Which didn't lose its value with the next revaluation.*

BLASER: Would not, that's right. So it was hard to see how many people got along over those years, but this was sort of old hat, and they had learned to live with this kind of a system. During my years there, particularly the two years in Brasilia, they had a very excellent Finance Minister who by one measure or another managed to hold the lid on. He reduced the rate of inflation down to maybe at the best 15 or 20% a year which seems incredulous, but for Brazil that was pretty good. But then I tell my friends, after I left, the lid blew off again. The conservative and skillful Finance Minister for one reason or another was gone, or lost his influence. So things deteriorated more rapidly after that.

*Q: Did you have direct access to the Finance Minister during the time you were there, or did the ambassador feel that was his responsibility?*

BLASER: I saw him once or twice, but no, it wouldn't be fair to say I had regular access to him. He knew me, and I knew him, but the contact was minimal I must say.

*Q: So you would primarily see the senior officials who advised him.*

BLASER: That's right, in the Central Bank. The head of the Central Bank I saw fairly frequently.

*Q: The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were active in Brazil at that time?*

BLASER: Oh, yes, very much so. They sent missions down, and I would always meet with them. I knew some of the Americans on those staffs so they would usually talk to me privately about my feel for the situation and how it was going, what the outlook was.

*Q: And you would try to supplement the contacts you had in Brasilia with regular visits to Sao Paulo, to Rio, to meet with the private banking and financial communities.*

BLASER: Exactly, the American and the Brazilian banks. We had a very good man on the embassy staff, the local staff in Sao Paulo who was especially good. I'd call him and we'd set up a day or two day's appointments and make the rounds.

*Q: He would go around with you.*

BLASER: Yes, because he knew the people.

*Q: Did the Financial Attaché's office in Brasilia and Rio have Foreign Service national staff members?*

BLASER: We had access to the local staff. There was nobody directly assigned to our office, but we could call on them as needed.

*Q: For translations, or...*

BLASER: Well, we didn't need the translations so much in Brazil, but just for research work.

*Q: How about in Bonn and Tokyo?*

BLASER: There was a German staff in Bonn that was very good, and I used them a lot.

*Q: And they were part of the Treasury office with the economic section.*

BLASER: That's right. There were two or three of those people that were my support, and they were very good.

*Q: Is there anything else that we should specifically talk about in terms of Brazil? And then I'd like to ask you a few questions generally about your career.*

BLASER: I think that pretty well covers it. In Brazil the outstanding financial feature was as we've already mentioned, the constant deterioration of the currency, and the periodic revaluations and starting over which has continued to this day as far as I can see.

*Q: And all of that trend, that cyclical process, has great political consequences.*

BLASER: That's true too, and as everywhere political leaders come in, and those who try to hold the lid on usually get blown off and the lid explodes, and expenditures continue. It's a little bit like the United States, I would say.

**JOHN HUGH CRIMMINS**  
**Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau for Latin American Affairs**  
**Washington, DC (1969-1973)**

*Ambassador John H. Crimmings entered the Foreign Service in 1955 after serving in the U.S. Army during World War II. His career included positions as ambassador to the Dominican Republic and to Brazil. Ambassador Crimmings was interviewed by Ashley C. Hewitt, Jr. in 1989.*

*Q: Let us move on, John, to your return to the United States, when you became lead deputy assistant secretary in ARA.*

CRIMMINS: That is right. Let us start with Brazil and the Institutional Act of December 1968 -- wasn't that right? When I arrived in ARA, it was an issue. I, for one, was very concerned about the repression, and particularly the heavy involvement of our AID program. You will recall that we were providing, in effect, a balance-of-payments assistance to at the clip of about \$100 million-plus a year, which in those days was an awful lot of money. I was uncomfortable with this in light of the effects of Institutional Act number five and the full-fledged dictatorship that it represented and the increasing reports of torture and other abuses of human rights that were occurring.

We were getting all sorts of intelligence reports of torture being used against prisoners. It was

interesting that the military was very reluctant to accept this.

Q: *Our military.*

CRIMMINS: Our military. Because they did not believe that the Army was capable of doing this. It took quite a bit of convincing for them to accept the validity of the reports. The Agency was very forthright about this. They were reporting straight all the time, and it was in almost all the reports establishing the widespread use of severe torture. This wasn't just electrical shocks; this was the real medieval stuff. It was the Agency that established this. As I said, the military were sort of reluctant to do this.

Bill Rountree was the Ambassador. He came up, I guess, in 1970 at some point, to testify on Brazil. There was a Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee hearing or set of hearings on Brazil, and Rountree came up. We had some discussion with him about not gilding the lily with respect to Brazil. But I think, in effect, he did. For some reason, I was not asked to testify. Charlie didn't testify that I know of. Bob Dean, who was a country director at the time, did testify briefly, I think, and had, of course, a lot to do with the preparation of the briefing papers for Rountree's appearance. But there was a reluctance, certainly on the part of Rountree, to make much of an issue of the increasing repression in Brazil.

We in ARA -- I, with Charlie's approval -- were moving toward stopping our AID program in Brazil. Eventually, in early 1973, we did stop it. We had another justification. It was at this time that Delfine Necto, the Finance Minister of Brazil, was boasting all over the world about how well the Brazilian economy was doing, and it certainly was, and how strong Brazilian reserves were. Well, it was, on its face, pretty absurd to be continuing balance-of-payments assistance to a country whose Finance Minister was boasting about the amount of foreign exchange reserves they had. So these two things coincided nicely, and we made a decision through the IG in early 1973 to make no further loans to Brazil. The pipeline at that time was almost a quarter of a billion dollars, as I recall -- \$200 million, it was. So there was a lot to draw down and there were lots of problems, loans that were problems, that were not being disbursed. So I, in effect, arrived in Brazil having participated importantly in the decision to stop the program.

Q: *This was when you became Ambassador.*

CRIMMINS: Yes. This was about six months before I became Ambassador when the decision was taken. But that decision was powerfully influenced by the repression in Brazil.

Now, one thing that has to be borne in mind with respect to the whole human rights situation in this period and also in the period when I was in Brazil, is that the Congress was well in the lead of the executive branch on human rights matters. With AID, who, of course, wanted to continue the AID program -- certainly the AID mission in Brazil did -- one could point to the great difficulty of getting congressional approval for any continuation of AID programs as a reason for not going ahead. So this is the old business of using the Congress as the lever to get things done. Of course, with foreign countries, this was a common technique to say, "Unless you shape up, the Congress simply is not going to permit us to do such and such." In other words, the executive branch's hands were being kept clean and the Congress was taking the blame, but the result was a

useful one.

**ALEXANDER F. WATSON**  
**Political Officer**  
**Brasilia, Brazil (1969-1970)**

**Principal Officer**  
**Salvador da Bahia, Brazil (1970-1973)**

*Ambassador Alexander Watson was born and raised in Massachusetts and was educated at Harvard and Wisconsin Universities. In 1962 he joined the Foreign Service and was posted to the Dominican Republic, the beginning of an impressive career specializing in Latin American Affairs. His other overseas posts include Spain, Brazil, Bolivia and Colombia, serving as Deputy Chief of Mission in the latter three countries. He had several Washington assignments, the last being Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. From 1986 to 1989 he served as United States Ambassador to Peru. Ambassador Watson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.*

*Q: Alex, you were in Brazil from '69 to when?*

WATSON: From August of '69 until I think about July of '73.

*Q: Where did you go in Brazil and what was your job?*

WATSON: Well, first my assignment was to be a political officer in the embassy office, it was called, in Brasilia. I was only there for six months and I was then moved to be the principal officer in our consulate in Salvador da Bahia, in the ancient capital in the Portuguese colony in Brazil, up on the north coast, north of Rio. We arrived in Rio in August of '69 and it was a time of great coincidences, unfortunate coincidences and eventualities. The day we arrived in Brazil, in Rio where the embassy still was, that was the day that the president of Brazil, the second military ruler of the military period, President Costa e Silva, had a stroke. We spent a week or two – I can't remember now exactly how long – in orientation, meeting everybody in the embassy in Rio before going up to Brasilia. The day we went from, flew from, Rio to Brasilia was the day that our ambassador, Burke Elbrick, was kidnapped in Brazil. So, people started saying, Watson, you better not move anywhere because every time you do, something bad happens. At that point we went to Brasilia.

*Q: I'd like to just go back to sort of your introduction into at the embassy the first week there. How were they describing the political situation and the situation with our relations in Brazil at that time?*

WATSON: Well, I don't know if I said this the last time we were talking, but I had the good fortune of knowing before I went off to university training that I was going to Brazil on

assignment. That's why I picked the University of Wisconsin, which, along with Stanford at that point, was reputed to have the strongest Brazilian studies program. When I arrived in Brazil I probably had the good fortune to be as well prepared academically as any Foreign Service Officer ever had been. I had a whole year and I had read everything and knew the history and the economics at some greater level of detail than Foreign Service Officers normally do. I had a little bit more of a depth in which to analyze it. When we got to Brazil, if I remember correctly, this would have been, I think it was '69, I think there was very strong and positive relationships between military governments, which was there in the U.S. There was some, there was concern of course with the outbreak of urban terrorism, which resulted in part in the capture of our ambassador. Also, I think there was concern about, at that time we were pouring huge amounts of aid money there, a billion dollars a year. There was a huge sum for education, tax reform and all sorts of things. I think there was some concern in some corridors about growing inequalities of the income in Brazil and, of course, there were concerns on the human rights front and on the democracy front. They had a military regime and there was, in response to terrorism, it was clear and violent repression by the military and police authorities in Brazil against people that they thought to be subversives and communist terrorists and that sort of thing.

*Q: Was the feeling that these were sent over with more of the middle class student types, or where did they feel the terrorists were coming from?*

WATSON: Oh, they were basically, it was a classic kind of disenfranchised middle class university types which most people thought were brewing, if you will. Remember, as I said, the Brazilian regime was not a \_\_\_\_\_, which is the word for dictatorship in Spanish and Portuguese. \_\_\_\_\_ meaning hard. It was \_\_\_\_\_, meaning a bland or soft dictatorship. Because, unlike any of the others in Latin America at the time, the military regimes that were prevalent at the time, the Brazilians found a way to keep the military regime with different leaders; to institutionalize it rather than personalize it. So \_\_\_\_\_ followed \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ was considered to be much more intelligent, more liberal, more far thinking. \_\_\_\_\_ more \_\_\_\_\_ and more hard lined than \_\_\_\_\_. Costa e Silva had his stroke and when it was clear that he could no longer function then they brought in the third military leader, Emilio Medici, who was the guy in charge of the country most of the time when I was there. He was although quite charming he was the most conservative of the five military rulers or presidents of Brazil they were. My recollection is in the embassy at that time, Ambassador Elbrick was relatively new there. He had no experience in Latin America, as I recall. He was in Europe.

*Q: He had been ambassador to Portugal and then to the Yugoslavia. He was my ambassador to Yugoslavia. Actually he had asked me if I wanted to come out and do consular work in Brazil. I think I was in Saigon at the time and so there I was.*

WATSON: He was getting his feet wet in Brazil and we had this huge aid mission, as I mentioned we spent lots of money in. It was the largest aid program in the world and it was sort of a rivalry, I remember, between Bill Ellis, who was the director, who told me this. He was also the minister counselor, a very high ranking person in the embassy and \_\_\_\_\_ in the mission there was a rivalry between Brazil and Indonesia. That's when it first occurred to me that in the aid world there was some importance in value and prestige given to those people associated with the largest program, irrespective of what it was. I also had my eyes open at one point I remember in

a meeting with Bill Ellis and Bob Valentine. Remember, I was still pretty young and had not had, most of my experience had been consular up until then with the intelligence work in the Department and then the analysis work in the Department and the University of Wisconsin period. I remember sitting down and asking them about how they determine exactly what priorities, what the Brazilians really needed and how to tailor our programs to do that. They just looked at me like I was insane. They said, I'll tell you how you do it, you get as much money as you possibly can using whatever arguments you can to get the money and then you determine how to use it. The whole process was backwards in my naiveté. I remember that sitting over in their office that day and I was giving my briefing and really, wow, I just discovered something I didn't know anything about. Of course, there was a large intelligence presence in the embassy for a whole variety of reasons because there was a lot of subversive activity, leftist activity in various stripes, including legitimate terrorist activities, of legitimate concern to everybody. Remember our relationship with Brazilians had a very powerful and strong military element all the time. The military mission that is to say large groups of American military personnel who sat in the military ministries in Rio at that time. I think 1922 was when the naval mission was instituted and a guy named in Brazil and I think in World War II was when the army and subsequently the air force missions, we had lots of military people all over the place. We had very high-ranking military officers, flag ragged officers commanding those as well as high-ranking attachés and we had the history of Vernon Walters.

*Q: Yes, I was going to say.*

WATSON: Who was not there, but his successor Art Morrow was there and while there's no one on earth quite like Vernon Walters who has enormous linguistic skills and his experience going back with the Brazilian expeditionary forces in Italy in World War II. He served as interpreter for Roosevelt, Eisenhower and everybody else. Art Morrow was also a guy who was extremely well regarded by the Brazilian army in particular and very well connected and very articulate, a smart guy and an influential player on the embassy team without any question. It's hard to recall 30 years later in any kind of detail. You've got sort of a picture of the embassy, good relationship with the government, concern about the insurrection incidents and subversive and terrorist threats, huge aid mission and lots of different issues at the same time. Remember we had a very separate aid mission from the one in Rio. A second one in the northeast of Brazil following all this literature that was done by Al Hirschman and others about the northeast of Brazil. So, up there you had a separate aid mission who had separate reporting back to Washington, although in some ways subordinate to Bill Ellis, but it was a separate thing. A lot of concern about northeast Brazil, but it was so far behind the rest, and lots of money was going into that and the Brazilians were doing this as well. Trying to bring that into all kinds of incentives for investments and education and everything, many of which don't work, but they adapt with big aid, big developments, a big military dimension. Obvious intelligence interest reacting to the security thing and then you know, a very active economic analysis because Brazil's economy was obviously going through ups and downs. It was a very rapid growth along a period of heavy inflation and there were very powerful economic people who played major roles as ministers of planning and environment and economy and finance at various points during this time. At that point you had large consulates general in Sao Paulo and Rio and another one in Recife where the aid director as I mentioned a separate aid mission. Then the consulates we had in Porto Alegre in the south, in Bahia in the northeast or the southern part of the northeast, Salvador da Bahia and in

Recife in the northeast and in Manaus in the Amazon. We had consular agents in a variety of places, too. So, we had a very large American presence strength in all the major cities in the country.

*Q: In the first place, was there what you could call because we had this large presence there, was there a sort of Brazilian mafia in the Foreign Service? I mean, I can think of the Italian mafia.*

WATSON: There absolutely was a group of Brazilian specialists in the Foreign Service that were very close to each other. Time has dissipated a lot since then for some reason, but Brazil is a very special kind of country. It captured the affections of almost everybody who served there in whatever agency. The feel of the culture is its distinctiveness from the Hispanic American cultures. The robustness of its music and art and the sort of size of its economy and its perceived significance to the U.S. and it was relatively inexpensive then for Americans to live there if I recall correctly. Rio didn't have the crime problems that it has now and it was a pretty attractive place. There were a lot of people who really liked Brazil. I went to Brazil because one of my colleagues in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research convinced me that I had to go to Brazil. He moved on to the personnel bureau and while there he orchestrated my transfer to Brazil and then my going off to the university and I picked the one that was relevant to my going to Brazil. So, all of that happened out of this so there was a very close group of people from all different agencies and after we came back from Brazil we all hung together, carnival parties in Washington and things like that. A lot of that seems to have disappeared. I'm not quite sure why that all happened because I went to Brazil a second time in my career and almost a third time. I was to go as ambassador, but it never happened, the senate went out and never acted on it. I noticed that there was not that kind of enthusiastic enthusiasm for Brazil and the experience there and the formative nature of these experiences that I noticed earlier on. I'm not going to analyze that.

*Q: All right, some of our posts when you were doing political work and you get rather explicit or implicit instructions about what you're supposed to report on. In other words, some places say lay off this or let's look at this and all or some places just say go out and report. When you went out to Brasilia...*

WATSON: You're actually touching on an interesting issue. I think that there was some tension in the political reporting area within the political section and this also spread to other agencies in the embassy. There was, I think, on the one hand a group of people that, it was a minority, but who felt very strongly and negatively about the human rights problems and the lack of democracy and the military regime and that kind of thing. We were dealing with people on the left and reporting on that kind of stuff and there were other people who took a more conservative point of view and said, basically, this is the government we're dealing with, we have good relations with them. Sure, there may be some bad things going on, but they're not that bad given everything else and U.S. interests are on the side of having the most constructive positive relationships with these guys. I mean, it was a kind of a feeling that if you actually kind of dug into and spent time with and reporting all on what was going on this so called leftist underbelly of all this that that was somehow not completely constructive. There was that. I remember seeing that. I came out from the university and there was a radical time. I came in with an appreciation,

I think, for both of those points of view, but a considerable amount of sympathy for those making sure that we don't overlook all the problems that existed below the rather monolithic looking surface of the military government. I think I also had a broad enough perspective from the historical work that I had done to know that Brazil had alternated between periods of authoritarian government and democracy for a long time in its entire history, and it never really articulated a full blown democratic structure, even during the period after Vargas. Vargas took over as a dictator in 1930 and took over the country not as a civilian, but a dictator, and eventually got himself elected in the '50s and then committed suicide. Then after a while there were these three democratic regimes following Vargas' democratic election. You had Juscelino Kubitschek, the great builder, and he came in '56, and then you had Jânio Quadros, who came in and resigned almost immediately, and Joao Goulart, who was a leftist. Many people thought that \_\_\_\_\_ they had voted for \_\_\_\_\_ who was the reformist mayor of San Pablo who had come in there and sort of swept away some of the corruption that the \_\_\_\_\_ regime had left despite the positive things people perceived the regime or the government had done. \_\_\_\_\_ was a left-wing guy of a labor party who was the vice president of \_\_\_\_\_ to balance the ticket and he didn't really have the legitimacy. He came in there and he did not manage things very well. The situation degenerated rapidly and the military moved to take over in '64 and that was... it was an unsettled democratic structure that you were dealing with. So, I only mention all that to say that I also thought that, while the military regime was bad in many ways, it wasn't completely bad. It was trying to do some good things and there were some good people in it. I tried to do some interesting economics plus some interesting developmental stuff. The alternative to it was not some imaginary utopian democratic system which Brazil had really never had. For me, I guess I approached it in a, sort of a sympathy towards the left, and some of the people out there trying to push the regime to do everything to return to democracy, but at the same time not an unqualified opposition, hostility toward the military regime.

*Q: This was considered a little bit by those of us who were one step above you know, that the kids were trying to run the asylum. Was there a sort of a generational look on how we were at the embassy? I was wondering whether this permeated the political group or not, you know, human rights, gee the left has got to do something about this dictatorship.*

WATSON: To some extent that is correct, but I would say that there were people who were older, too, that felt some of the things that you are attributing now to the younger people and some of the younger people who had different points of view. One thing I think is worth mentioning just for the heck of it. This will be controversial, but it's true. There was a mood in the embassy in Rio, I'm trying to look for the right word and I won't get it.

*Q: You can always edit.*

WATSON: There was a kind of mood of licentiousness. An enormous number of marriages broke up in Rio. There were lots and lots, there was a kind of excitement, a titillation almost childish, this happens to Americans very often from when they get into sort of slightly more relaxed circumstances than they are used to. Kind of guys roaming around with all kinds of girls and things like that. They had their apartments and they were shacking up at lunchtime and all that kind of stuff. I remember being a little disturbed by this, not because I was a prude, but I just thought it was kind of a childish thing. I don't want to start naming names or anything like that,

but it happened, it was going on before I got there and it was in full swing before Burke Elbrick got there, but there was this sort of racy feeling. This is kind of an exciting, as I mentioned, the titillation and it made grown men behave like silly children and sometimes even wear clothes that I thought were kind of funny. Guys that are our age running around with their shirts open to their navel and chains on their necks. I mean, you know, it was kind of bizarre. Remember I was only there a couple of weeks and I went to Brasilia so I was looking from the austere half-built capital covered with red dirt in the high plains there in the Savannah of central Brazil and coming back to this licentiousness, exciting, dynamic, attractive I mean it was attractive. Even some of the women got caught up in this, too. This was a current that ran through that embassy that I think I'm not quite sure how important it was, but I think it had a certain impact on how the embassy and the mission functioned.

*Q: It can. While you were doing this I was in Saigon and of course the circumstances were completely different, except exactly the same as far as this goes. There they were mainly single men.*

WATSON: These were married guys and their wives and their kids right there. It was kind of a badge of honor to raise your eyebrow. Aren't we the fast racy guys? I don't want to get into the personal stuff too much, it's not important because the individuals do this, it's only important insofar this ran through that embassy. I can say without any hesitation there were 20 people engaged in this kind of stuff in relatively senior positions in the embassy and junior officers, too. It had a kind of an impact that I'm not quite sure if there were any telling and lasting results of it on the ability of the embassy to function and the attitude that the reporting. It was just something that I think as a historical note is worth thinking about.

*Q: It's interesting, too and I can imagine that particularly when you're looking at it from Brasilia as you say, you were kind of the Puritans looking at Sodom and Gomorrah looking down and raising doubts. It's a matter of respect, too.*

WATSON: It's that, but it's also, I came off the Wisconsin campus. I knew what kids were doing and that kind of thing, so it wasn't sort of a Puritan from my point of view. What I found was – and I've seen this other times – that certain kinds of Americans and there are a lot of them who live very conventional lives with the conventional values that people try to respect here, that they get into situations where the values are slightly different with this kind of behavior of having girlfriends and stuff in apartments on the side and all this stuff and you're taking lunch breaks in Rio. The culture where that is more common than, not that it's uncommon in Washington, but it's more common in other places. Sometimes Americans, especially men, behave like tiny children, like they've just gotten into a candy jar and they can't manage it as well as say the Brazilians or the French or whoever else who have at least a greater tradition of doing this anyhow as a more standard procedure. The men would actually be flaunting their little escapades in front of their own spouses and such in a way that was so childish and destructive that it struck me in the first instance amusing and in the second instance disturbing. That's really all I have to say about this.

*Q: Well, you get up to Brasilia and you're there for half a year.*

WATSON: There are very few of us in Brasilia.

*Q: Could you describe what you were doing?*

WATSON: Well, we had a director of this office, Steven Low. We had the head of the political section who was Bill Young and you had me. I was the bottom guy in the political section. You had an administrative section. You had a consular section. You had one or two economic officers. We had a lieutenant colonel, I think he was the army attaché, but Art Morrow was down in Rio. We had sort of a lumped group of us there in Brasilia. Everyone knew the embassy was moving to Brasilia over time. The foreign ministry only had two or three people in Brasilia; everyone else was in Rio. The new ambassador from Brazil Rubens Antonio Barbosa was the guy who was the top foreign ministry. It was a guy I dealt with all the time, but he's not the only one in the foreign ministry building they had there. Nobody wanted to leave Rio and go to Brasilia, but this was happening and nobody wanted to do it any faster and this was legitimate because their contacts were in Brasilia. This is going on. When Ambassador Elbrick left and Ambassador Rountree came he made a point of moving to Brasilia and even though he didn't have a residence, he lived in an apartment in the chancery building. That was a symbolic thing which was appreciated by the Brazilians, too, because a lot of the diplomatic corps in Rio even less than the Brazilians themselves, waited to move to Brasilia.

There's an amusing story about that. Barbosa is the foreign minister. He was trying to get the ambassadors to move to Brasilia. Many of them didn't want to do it. The Dominican Republic ambassador was one of the biggest holdouts. So, Barbosa one day summoned the Dominican ambassador to come see him. The ambassador had to run to the airport, get in that plane, fly to Brasilia and go to see Barbosa, met with him for 15 or 20 minutes, left and went back to Rio. Barbosa summoned him the next day and he got the point. The embassy that we built up there, it was a complicated process, but it was kind of fun because there was a handful of us there. The Brazilian congress was shut down by the military at this point, but a lot of congressmen were from around there and these political figures back in their states and there were people of some influence in many cases and very interesting people in other cases even if they weren't influential. I got to know a lot of those people.

*Q: Why would they be there? I would have thought they would have returned to their seats of power? I mean if there's nothing to do.*

WATSON: Some of them, their apartments were there. They didn't have any real place to go. They might go back and forth, but I don't think they had all of their. In Brazil you always had a lot of money if you were a congressman and you could go back and forth. You could go back five times a month to your home state fully financed. I think during this period this might have been cut off. A lot of them are hanging around and there was a certain number of bureaucrats coming up and it was quite easy to have access to these people because we were also scattering the people in this rather large city space. We all knew each other. The people who were coming up very often, they had quite a lot of information because they were the representatives with the finance ministry or the foreign ministry. So, they may not have been at the heart of it, but they were pretty well informed and it was an interesting time. Of course, the government, the generals were there, the military regime was there and the military officers were there after awhile. It was

a fairly interesting period. That was a hard place to live. It wasn't pleasant. None of us had houses except Steve Low. The rest of us had apartments. We had these buildings and we built, it's a different name now from when I was there. They had all names of areas of Rio. We lived in these apartments and it was difficult.

I was supposed to go to Rio and then for reasons of health of another Foreign Service Officer's wife, decided to switch and he would go to Rio and I would replace him in Brasilia. It was a little bit tough for us and it was quite a dramatic change for me from the University of Wisconsin campus, but we were making the best of it and we convinced ourselves that it was a good thing to do. We had a lot of friends there, but then what happened was that the wife of the principal officer in Salvador became ill. I think she had TB or something. Even though she was a Brazilian, an Anglo Brazilian from Sao Paulo the Department's wisdom at that time was to send people home to the U.S. if you were sick. All of a sudden there was a vacancy and they were looking around for someone to become the principal officer there. It was a kind of a funny story. Someone had suggested that maybe I'd be the person to send out there. My wife and I had spent all this time justifying to ourselves how wonderful it was to be in sort of a difficult spot in Brasilia. You know how you do? Trying to make the best of something that wasn't that good. We had all these justifications. The embassy was coming up, the center of affairs. We were going to be there ahead of everyone else. We're part of the in group and who the hell wants to go off to some remote place like Salvador da Bahia that we had never visited. On the other hand, \_\_\_\_\_ and Jean Abbot were friends of ours who were with USIA and had an office in Brasilia and had just come back from Bahia, said, that's the best place on earth. If you have to go you've got to go. We went home on the weekend and we were debating should we go to Bahia or stay in Brazil, what should we do. Finally we said, okay, we'll go off to Salvador da Bahia. I told Steve Low. He called up the DCM in Rio. He said, well, Watson and his wife have sat down and decided that yes they will accept the position in Salvador da Bahia, to which I understand from Steve that the DCM exploded over the phone, "What do you mean they'll accept it? They have no God damn choice; they're going there." We spent all that weekend agonizing over something we had no control over whatsoever. Off we went to Bahia, passing through Rio for the carnival in February of 1970. So, we did that. In some ways it was remote, but the very experience of having spent so much time in Rio. We had pouch runs through Brasilia. You remember that far back and I always took advantage of those— if anyone needed a pouch, I took it to Rio. I knew people in the embassy much better than somebody who had just come in and just gone to Brasilia. Certainly much better than someone who had just gone to a place like Salvador da Bahia. I knew everybody in the embassy. I knew what our issues were; I knew what people were interested in, what the problems were. I had this experience at Wisconsin. When I got to Bahia, it was like I was in this set of circumstances where I could take better advantage in that position than somebody else who hadn't had the good fortune of having all these experiences that I had. I could quickly decide what was going on in Bahia. It was not of importance in Bahia, who cares. It's important to the nation. Who were the political figures in Bahia that were important to Brasilia. Who were the military people who were important in Brasilia? What were the economic issues that were of significance of the country to the U.S., not just the locals? I was lucky enough because if I hadn't had this experience I probably wouldn't have been able to do this. We are sort of focused narrowly on the local issues and I was lucky enough to have that respect. Bahia was considered to be a kind of paradise. Everybody in the embassy wanted to come there. That was okay. We put them up in our house. We put them up in hotels, but that was another way I could

use all the elements of the embassy to get into additional relationships in Bahia that were relevant to the activities of the embassy.

*Q: This was early Nixon period, Kissinger was the national security advisor and Latin America was not high on either of their agenda, at least that was my impression.*

WATSON: That's probably right. Somewhere around here wasn't it that Kissinger said that South America is a dagger pointed at the heart of Antarctica?

*Q: Absolutely, I used to use that on the Foreign Service oral exam when I gave it. What did he mean by that? When you were in by this time you were in Bahia, what did you see were our real interests at that time and how did that translate from the Bahia perspective?*

WATSON: I guess I saw two or three areas that were significant and that I could make a little bit of a contribution to. One was the political evolution of Brazil. What was happening in the military regime, which had lots of civilians in it and probably enjoyed the support of the majority of Brazilians, initially at least. How is that evolving? How did the regime function? How did the states, the big states, and Bahia was a pretty big state, not as big as Sao Paulo or Rio, but a big state. Some very powerful, the governor of Bahia had been the chief of the civil household as so called as the chief civilian aid to the first military president. Then \_\_\_\_\_ who is now president of the senate was a leader of the civilians in support of the military coups and he went off to be, he was mayor of Salvador when I was there. Then he went on to be governor and we were still pretty close, quite close as a matter of fact.

These are guys who are players. By my talking to them even in Bahia I was finding out things that were going on in Brasilia that the people in Brasilia weren't finding out. Also, the military guys that were important that I got to know and also one of the more interesting things that I did, I wrote a paper which I think was quite useful. People told me it was useful, how they selected a military successor to the president. How they did that. They sent out people from the national intelligence service in Brazil, all over that country, quietly talking to civilians, military, all sorts of people coming back to report it. They slowly developed within the high command of the armed forces a consensus on who the most acceptable person would be. It was a very interesting process.

I had access to the national intelligence chief office, the national intelligence service office in Bahia. These guys talked to me. I also talked to the intelligence chiefs of the three services in Bahia. I talked to all the political leaders. So, I knew who Brasilia was talking to and what they were saying and how these from this particular fairly important state, this is a window into the process of the decision making which I don't think anyone else had access to.

*Q: I would have thought that you would have been breaking the crockery of the CIA and of the military attachés by getting into this process.*

WATSON: There was no CIA in Bahia, and the agency personnel, who were friends of mine, who had responsibility for, that were living in other cities and I worked very closely with them. I'd invite them down and they would sometimes go with me to some of these meetings to get

some of this information. It was hard to report, you see. I had reported everything by airgram and by classified pouch, how often did that go? It was ancient history. I could have done a cable, but I had to use a one-time pad. Do you remember those things?

*Q: Oh, yes.*

WATSON: I never sent a cable the whole time I was there. I'd find other ways. I'd go, I'd rather get in a plane and go and tell people. That was one area. Talking to these political figures, not just this one episode I told you about, but I was able to be pretty well informed on the major thing and report that back to Brasilia.

Secondly, I mean there was terrorism going on. Carlos Marighella, who was one of the top terrorists, was in Bahia and was captured and killed there. I knew everything about that. I shocked the station chief. I was led to Brasilia, I remember the story; it was kind of amusing. He said to me in this sort of badgering way, he stuck his head in the office in Brasilia where I was sitting. He said, "Hey, Watson. What's the matter with you guys? Your guys in Bahia let Carlos get away." I said, "No, he's still there and he's going to get his this afternoon." I was dead right. Before I flew to Brasilia in the morning I talked to the chief of intelligence of the air force and I knew exactly where Carlos was. They were on his trail. He was fleeing out in the west of Bahia. They had him surrounded and they were absolutely confident they were going to get him and they did. Meanwhile, the station thought he was already back in Sao Paulo. So, it was sort of a minor triumph. A minor figure in the Foreign Service in that minor post.

*Q: But still these things, everyone notices these things.*

WATSON: I think it was indicative of the fact that – I don't want to sound boastful, but I think that I had an unusual set of very frank relationships and knew a lot more about what was going on in Bahia and to some extent to what was going on elsewhere in the country because of them. There was that angle. We all had to have bodyguards in those days.

*Q: I was going to ask you about that.*

WATSON: I had a bodyguard everywhere I went, one guy with me all the time. He probably wasn't much help, but it was my first introduction to that kind of lifestyle. You had guards at our house and sometimes we would find a tripod mounted machine in our front yard sitting there with all the guards sound asleep and our five-year-old kid running around; a little scary. I think he was more than five; he was probably seven or eight at that point. That was an area that everyone was interested in and I could sometimes have something useful to say. Third was economics. The only oil that was produced in Brazil at that time was produced in the state of Bahia, on land and offshore and a little north of Bahia. You had American oil firms there and lots of other oil firms there and you had an incipient petrol chemical industry that was stimulated by the Brazilian government. There was a lot of investment going on. The Brazilians had very interesting arrangements for the joint ventures. If I remember correctly, they had to have three partners in a joint venture in the petrol chemical area. One partner was the government company, PetroGas, and one of its incarnations. One partner had to be a foreign firm expert in this area and the third partner had to be a local. The way they structured it, they had a majority private sector,

as I said, a foreign investor in the local capital with a majority of Brazilian local capital and the government. And you had a majority technically proficient, the government's fully a monopoly, and a foreign investment. That was sort of the triads; the three triads that came together. It was interesting and I was reporting on all that and talking to all the people and helping them get established. In addition to that, there was the traditional economy. This may not sound unusually important, but it was of moderate importance. Brazil was anywhere from the first to the third producer of cacao, cocoa, in the world at that time. It affected exports to a considerable extent and it affected life of the people in the area. It also was a center of the Brazilian tobacco industry, mainly for domestic production and sales and several other traditional agricultural products. Sugar had gone. It was a tourism area. There were American hotels. There was that sort of group of economic issues.

*Q: Was there, maybe it's later on, but we've had problems with Brazil because they try to produce everything themselves to a certain status. Was that a problem then as far as finding markets for regular American products?*

WATSON: I think it still was.

*Q: Self-sufficiency.*

WATSON: Self-sufficiency thing and they were one of two countries that had a conceivable hope of being able to realize those expectations, and even in the days back in the '50s and others, they built their own automobile industry and they had high import barriers. That's basically how they did their very rapid growth. They even did that during the military regime. All those people like Roberto \_\_\_\_\_ and others, more classically oriented economists who were arguing that it was time to shift away, that they were creating insufficient industries and \_\_\_\_\_. It was still a very, yes, it was, I mean a lot of incentive for investment in Brazil. I mean, Americans could come in and establish factories and make things there, but it was hard to import things in a finished state.

*Q: How about human rights at that point? Were we looking at that?*

WATSON: We were starting to look at it. You could not ignore it in Brazil because, as I said earlier, there was a clear repression going on. It wasn't anywhere near what happened in Uruguay or Argentina or even Chile a few years later. It was going on. They had in Rio, at the air base and at the navy base in Rio there were people getting the tar beaten out of them and were getting killed. Things were happening. They never got to great excess and the Brazilians so when the transition to the civilian government and democratic assistance took place, the trauma to the country to try to deal with the excesses of the past was far less than in the other countries that I mentioned or in the other countries in South America. Yet, it was a manifestation of the phenomenon every time in Latin America. Americans, very often North Americans, don't understand this all the time, we get upset about it. There's no case in Latin America that I know of that has been different from this. Once the military regime goes and you move to a civilian democratic regime, the people of the country overwhelmingly decide rather than spending a whole lot of time investigating the past and determining actually who did

what to whom, when and how and where and punishing those people for that which would be an enormously exhausting enervating process and what would it lead to. It probably would not be totally successful. It would lead to all kinds of incriminations and openings of old wounds. Rather than doing that in every single case they originally come to the point where they say, let's move on and focus on the future. We will have some kind of investigatory mechanism like you have in Chile. We have developed information, but nobody is going to move on it. We will try to find out what happened to your son, daughter, father, mother, aunt, uncle, best friend and whether they were killed or buried, try to find that out, but we're not going to have any mass trials, Nuremberg style or anything like that. The only slight exception to that was the significant one in Argentina where they jailed some of the generals. Even then they released all of them. Given that reality, that's the way the Latins have dealt with this phenomenon whenever it has occurred. Given the fact that in Brazil it was a less extensive repression and abuse of human rights, although serious, less extensive than other countries, it was easier. Given the Brazilian personality, in Brasilia they say that Brazil is a country of the future and always will be. Brazilians easily move from the present to the future.

In this regard my wife said something interesting. When we moved from Brazil the second time to Peru, somebody said the countries must be very much the same. She said, "Oh, no, completely different. Brazil is a country that pays no attention to the past and it views the future as a prologue and the present is prologue for the future. Peru is a country that pays no attention to the future. It focuses on the present as the results of what has happened in the past, where they really focus their attention— completely opposite ways of approaching life in chronology."

*Q: How about when the groups there, how about university intelligencia. I mean, does the intelligencia play much of a role in Brazil?*

WATSON: There were a lot of them and a lot of them were from out of the country. The current president of the country, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, I think was at Stamford or in Chile or in France. I think he was all three of those places, or was it Berkeley? Anyway, in California, Chile or France. A lot of people are in the government now. They have a dependency theory in which Cardoso was a leading exponent in those days and was very much in vogue, the world being described in sort of Marxist economic circles, and was the center and that dominates everything else and was subordinate to it. It's not a completely an invalid or analytical approach by any means, but it gets carried to extremes. Also, the most dangerous thing about it is that it leads to blaming any kinds of difficulties that you had on some other situation beyond your control and thus avoids your facing responsibility for making decisions that will improve the welfare of yourself or your country. That's the most dangerous aspect of it. Those ferment in the university and sometimes there were riots and protests, and the left is active in Brazil. They've had elections. When the congress was reinstated, you had elections and you had municipal elections and people, even when I was there, shifted from the governors of states being appointed by the military regime to being elected, and the mayors being elected. In that kind of a situation, this is when I talked about the evolution of the military regime. Everyone knew that you had to get back to a civilian democratic structure, even the military knew this. \_\_\_\_\_ was the most conservative, \_\_\_\_\_ was the most liberal in many ways, conservative in other ways, but he was just a character. \_\_\_\_\_ was the guy who handled it, was the intelligence chief, one of the guys that then

moved it all the way to the end of the process in which you had elections in 1985.

*Q: Did the United States, I mean, were we a whipping boy or was there allowed to be a whipping boy in society? I mean, the Vietnam War had reached its peak and was beginning to go down. I was just wondering, were we used as a great colossus to the north that's screwing everything up?*

WATSON: Interestingly, during the military regimes of Brazil was when the U.S. military mission that I mentioned a while ago, that started in 1922 in the navy if I'm not wrong, then came '42 with the army. Anyhow, they were all thrown out of the country by the military. Brazilians were extremely nationalistic during this time and when I was there also we had planes that were flying around the Brazilian air force and others were photoremedic analyses of Brazil, snapping. There was a belief that became so strongly – unless my memory fails me – it became so strong we had to stop these things. This is all a plot for us to determine what was in the Amazon and we could see from these planes what was underground which, of course, you can do now, but you couldn't do then, but you can do now.

*Q: Yes, you can.*

WATSON: We were supposedly determining where the mineral deposits were so that American companies could come in. The Brazilians, and still people have this to some extent, it's hard to believe and understand where this came from, the paranoia about the U.S. taking the Amazon away from them for some reason. It was right in the middle of this, Herman Kahn at the Hudson Institute published an article or a book with the idea that we damn the Amazon and create a huge gigantic lake in the whole center of South America, which would facilitate communication among all the countries. This is viewed as absolute evidence that was the U.S. intention and plot— another example of our taking over the Amazon. So, you had this kind of stuff and you had the concern that, during the times of human rights violations, that Americans were in their face. We've always had the foreign ministry as being highly nationalistic. I've always thought that the Brazilian foreign ministry played a role similar to the foreign policy of France and Mexico, France being the most authoritarian at that time of the European countries no matter how much they focused on being a democracy. It's much more control from the center than any of the other countries. They always had sort of a liberal, or even leftist, nationalist foreign policy. The Mexicans did it beautifully. It's an authoritarian state, not so much now, but it was, and run by one party doing whatever it wanted; corruption. They could take the stand in the UN and around the world and it was generally recognized by the \_\_\_\_ to dupe the press and everybody that they were somehow the paragons of socialist virtue and that kind of stuff. The Brazilian foreign ministry simply was very aggressive about American stances around the world, which is extremely useful, I think, in domestic political terms.

*Q: People I've talked to – I've never served in Mexico – have pointed out that in many ways, we have very close relations with Mexico. The foreign ministry is sort of the pressure valve or something where they put almost all the leftists, the sort of anti-American people and they can sort of vent themselves there, whereas we have these corporations and all. Was any of that feeling... I heard that the Brazilian Foreign Service is supposed to be one of the best in the world, but I was wondering.*

WATSON: They are highly trained and they're very competent. They're very competent in managing diplomatic work and in advising, in negotiating multilateral forums and elsewhere positions without necessarily, in many cases, being very creative. I would say there are a lot of exceptions to this, but generally not being very creative in dreaming up new policy. They're good diplomatic technicians, highly frustrating to deal with. You say let's get to the issue. Look, this is how you get to it and protecting my position and not using one thing to you to the end. I don't even know what the end of the negotiation is and not giving you anything until we get there. That kind of thing. They're very good at that, very skillful and they're smooth and they're smart. I think that Cardoso and in recent years I think it's gotten, \_\_\_\_\_ to leave and people like that, much more creative and much more bold. But during the military regime basic foreign policy guidelines were established by generals certainly with advice from the foreign ministry people with whom they had confidence, but always it was highly nationalistic and conservative and in a belligerent way. This didn't mean that we couldn't have useful and constructive relations with them. We had lots of issues with them. We had fishing issues. I remember five or six major, very difficult issues. The nuclear issues were out there already at that time. It was by no means a picnic. The embassy was basically positive and constructive in trying to find ways to work with this important country without spending too much time on its failings of the regime, but some time on that, but within that context. There were a lot of issues that Kissinger created this special I forget what it was called now, it was supposed to be a high level bilateral commission where we would discuss how to find a way to solve issues, but let's put a little bit more pressure on and it made some progress. It did do something.

*Q: How about aid in your part of the woods?*

WATSON: Well, as I told you, it was run out of Recife, the city further to the north of Salvador da Bahia. There were aid programs, actually, that were all trying to focus on the impoverished area that was either smashed by heavy rains or severe droughts in the north east of Brazil. Bahia was by far the richest state in the northeast and by far the biggest state and a much more varied economy than most. It had probably the best political leadership up until recently. We worked on agricultural stuff. We must have had 20 different programs going on that were managed out of Recife. When I got to the consulate we had a couple of AID people, but they left. The consulate was very, very small. It was me, the USIA guy, a woman who ran our cultural section who has just been my houseguest now. She had come in when the first USIA guy left, she succeeded him as public affairs officer for the place and that's about it. The AID guys moved on. We had some people from the University of Maryland doing medical research there that was affiliated with the consulate.

*Q: What about dealing with the church? Was the church involved?*

WATSON: Oh, that was one of the things I spent most of my time on. I was fortunate once again. I had tremendous access for some reason to the local church leader. I think he's still alive. I think he's still down in Rio. The Catholic Primate of Brazil, of the Catholic churches in Bahia, is the formal leader of the Catholic Church. He may not be the most powerful person. It used to be the archbishop or the cardinal of Sao Paulo, but the highest-ranking person was always in Bahia. That's the first capital, that's where everything begins. That's where the capital was in

1763. It was 1500 when Brazil was started by the Portuguese and Salvador was the capital and you have this Castillo institution. \_\_\_\_\_ who was reputedly enormously conservative. This was a time when you had a fellow named Dom Helder in the northeast and he was considered to be sort of a radical firebrand stirring up the peasants and the impoverished people and all that stuff against the regime. The military regime was considered to be at one pole, and Helder at the other. Not quite true. Helder was a very thoughtful guy who had a clear awareness of the difficulties of the situation, clear analysis of the failings of the military regime and the dangers it posed for long-term problems. You had to be very careful with respect to that regime. He told me all kinds of things. We had long, long discussions. A very austere guy. There were no jokes. I would write these long reports and they were without question – and I say this not out of arrogance – the best reports coming out.

*Q: This is tape four, side one with Alex Watson. Yes?*

WATSON: Without any question the best reporting anyone was getting anywhere out of the church. Not that it was complete, it was just one person's view, but it was really eye to eye. For some reason we got along well. We talked for like two hours, just one on one in his absolutely 17th Century office or residence. Then when he left, he went to Rio, which was kind of a promotion even though \_\_\_\_\_ was a bigger. Then they brought in a guy who was more on the left and more liberal and more progressive than Helder. In fact, once again – this is the truth – I thought \_\_\_\_\_ was more analytical, in fact more progressive, in how he wanted to see things evolve, although very conservative in style and approach. But I had a pretty good relationship with him, too. He talked to me a lot as well, but he was never as useful and profound, I thought, and intriguing as the conversations with Helder.

I also spent a lot of time with Benedictine monks. They produced the first Roman Catholic missile ever produced in the Portuguese language. It was produced recently because, up until then, it was always in Latin, you know. It was done there at San Sebastian monastery. There were two really interesting guys. One was the friar of this monastery, who was a family planning advocate. Can you imagine that, in these days in the early 1970's, in the Catholic Church in northeastern Brazil? Unfortunately he's died, but he was an extraordinary person. He understood in all its profundity the perplexities of \_\_\_\_\_, that there had to be better ways to \_\_\_\_\_. Also, the head of the monastery, I can't remember what his title was now. Maybe he was the friar and \_\_\_\_\_ had another title, I can't remember 30 years afterwards exactly all the details. That was another really extraordinary guy. This monastery was a cautious but forceful human rights player in the region. The head of the monastery did not share \_\_\_\_\_'s views on family planning, or if he did, he didn't articulate it that way. So he was perceived as a little more conservative and his personality was a little more discreet and cautious, but he was also – I can't remember his name right now – but he was sort of an extraordinary fellow. They were really important players there and independent of the Bishop and the church hierarchy, since they were a separate order. There were some human rights groups, too, but they were not anywhere as active as nowadays. There was much more activity on this front and further south in the big cities of Rio and Sao Paulo.

*Q: Was there anything equivalent in your area to, was it revolutionary theology or social?*

WATSON: Well, some people would argue that \_\_\_\_\_, the archbishop although not ever

cardinal as far as I know of Recife was the forerunner of all that. He was the man of the poor and downtrodden and the church had an obligation to these people and the rich people could take care of themselves. That was the underlying theme that was developed in Peru where liberation theology was created.

He was viewed with great suspicion by the military. Did I mention this guy \_\_\_\_\_ who moved to someplace else in the northeast in the \_\_\_\_\_ in Salvador da Bahia was viewed to be sort of near \_\_\_\_\_, but I don't think he really was, but it was used. Then you had \_\_\_\_\_ who was from the northeast as well, but became cardinal in Sao Paulo and probably was the most influential cardinal. He was a very strong human rights advocate. Then \_\_\_\_\_ who I think was his cousin who was not quite as outspoken as \_\_\_\_\_. These guys, the church played an important role. I mean it was divided into the more conservative camps and \_\_\_\_\_ would have been considered there, but as I told you I thought he was much less so than \_\_\_\_\_, his outward manner dealing with the authorities was very conservative. Inwardly he was very much, viewed as very similar to those to the more outspoken human rights advocates like \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_, he was a little bit of a demagogue in my view. He was good, maybe bad, may have been an effective leader and basically was an advocate of the rights of the poor not so much focused on the human rights violations by the authorities, but a more profound situation that the poor found themselves particularly in the northeast.

*Q: Speaking of the poor, what was, I mean, normally an American diplomat you'd be talking to people who come out of the middle class or upper class. Did you find much concern within society from the upper and the middle class, concern about the poor and how did the poor translate themselves in Bahian terms?*

WATSON: It's a question with a complicated answer, probably a series of answers, so I'll try to do it in pieces. One is Bahia and Salvador is the home of the novelist, Jorge Amado, who wrote all these books about the common people and the poor people of the northeast. Amado is viewed as a communist member of the Sao Paulo state legislature and was treated as a leftist and could not get a visa to go to the U.S. until I got him one. We were very close friends and are still close friends and for some reason we were intimate members of the \_\_\_\_\_ group of intellectuals and all kinds of folks in Bahia; we were really the only foreigners in that group. I went to his house almost every Sunday where something amazingly interesting was happening every time. In any case, through Amado's writings and stuff the poor of Bahia have a kind of romantic appeal which is also seductive and dangerous because it romanticizes poverty. Yet it also though on a more positive side brings to the consciousness of a lot of people who would not be even slightly aware of the stuff what the people of the streets and the fields and stuff really think about things, how they behave and that kind of thing. I would say that in Salvador da Bahia the popular life of the people was perhaps more evident everyday to the middle and upper classes than might be the case of other places. Because it was an essential part of the charm it attracted \_\_\_\_\_. Other cities always burst out at carnival time, but the rest of the year might end up being \_\_\_\_\_ by somebody, \_\_\_\_\_ less salient all throughout.

Particularly as the regime moved to more and more democratic forms of elections, the leading political figures knew they had to get support from the lower classes and so they would do things to attract their support. Demagogic things, symbolic things, whatever it was, sometimes real

things including things that made a difference in their lives. As the regime liberalized, you had more of this. On the other hand, the basic policies of the military regime were sort of economic growth at all costs and that meant holding wages down and pressing labor unions and things like that. Oftentimes you found also the regime, as happens in so many countries, tried to hold down the price of food one way or another in order to meet the demands of the urban populations, which are considered much more dangerous than the rural populations to the stability of a regime. So, you found farmers that had prices set for farm products that were so low that farmers could not survive. Then you get to the point when you start to reduce the food supply because farmers would go out of business. Then they kind of said wait a second. Either you have to start subsidizing the cost of food from other sources of the government while allowing the farmers to get an adequate payment for their products, or you've got to do something that increases the proficiency of farm production that brings the prices down and still gives a good return to the farmer. When you try to do this at a macroeconomic level by setting prices and agricultural credit rates and all that kind of stuff, it gets very complicated. The Brazilians wrestled their way through this. I would say, again, the bias is toward providing commodities at lower prices to the urban people and thus negatively affecting agricultural development to a considerable extent until Nixon made the fatal mistake of banning U.S. exports of soybeans to Japan, which triggered the Brazilian investment in soybeans and now they are the second largest exporter of soybeans in the world after the United States.

Then you had the large mechanized farms and you already had the large coffee and then the large cocoa and other kinds of production in the country. I've always thought that the rural poor were the people that we see less, the least attention from the government of Brazil. Brazil is now considered to have the worst distribution of income of almost any country in the world and one of the fault lines of that distribution pattern is urban/rural and I know Cardoso is sensitive to this. You've got to do something about education, health in the rural sector. Even in some of the poor urban sectors as well.

*Q: You mentioned that you became very close to this leftist writer whose name was...*

WATSON: Jorge Amado. \_\_\_\_\_ to Florida.

*Q: I've seen the movie.*

WATSON: All those, I mean, 30 or 40 now including some back in his early stuff, rather interesting radical, interesting novels about life in the back lands of the northeast.

*Q: You mentioned the one who wrote about this, that was earlier I think, the profit who had his siege.*

WATSON: You're thinking of \_\_\_\_\_ of Peru, who wrote the book about \_\_\_\_\_, who was in Bahia. The original book was written by an army engineer named Euclides da Cunha who went on the military expedition in the early 1902; I think that was a third attempt, the first two had failed for logistical reasons going to the backlands. The third attempt had been wiped out \_\_\_\_\_ and his followers in this area. The book in English is called Rebellion in the Backlands.

*Q: Fascinating book.*

WATSON: Fabulous book and then \_\_\_\_\_ took \_\_\_\_\_ that into a novel. Interestingly enough, I think it was the grandfather of the governor of Bahia when I was there, \_\_\_\_\_. Either father or grandfather was the governor of Bahia who sent the troops to the \_\_\_\_\_ just at the turn of the century. I went up there. I went with a friend of mine, \_\_\_\_\_ Fitzgerald, and a driver and a bodyguard. We drove. We followed the route described in the book, Euclides wrote in the sort of 19th Century naturalist style of Darwin of every plant, grass blade, creature, bird, insect you could describe. We followed the route and had a lot of adventures. Finally, we got to the place where this massacre took place and the military finally got to a point they could win. All around the hills the \_\_\_\_\_ was and fired down on them.

*Q: In the first place as an ex-consular officer, how did you get the visa for him? I mean, this was not a tolerant time. I mean Kissinger and Nixon and all that.*

WATSON: Well, first of all it was a real profound problem. In those days these small posts, the one in \_\_\_\_\_, the Amazon, Port Alegre, which was on the south between the Uruguayan, and Argentine borders. Bahia is in the middle of the country, the second biggest state of Brazil, Salvador da Bahia were not really consulates. They were called listening posts. They were consulates for me, but they didn't do a lot of consular work. It was the idea of calling them listening posts. I always thought that was a terrible idea for a whole variety of reasons.

*Q: To me it's like putting a gentleman with all his essential jewels on there. I always felt that if you take away the visa thing, you've castrated a post.*

WATSON: Right. The currency in which you trade at these small posts is visas, whether you like it or not. That doesn't mean you have to be corrupt in issuing visas, but that's what brings people to you. If you're not doing visas there, people say then why are you here. You're a listening post? What does that mean, you're a spy? It's a dumb idea, but we had, I had no visa authority at all. I realized very quickly what you've just said, what I traded in my currency I wasn't going to get too \_\_\_\_\_ of that process. I convinced the people in Rio to give me the authority to help them process the visas. The deal would come to me, including even travel agency owners, and they would bring in the visas. I would send them down to Rio and I would distribute them. I couldn't actually issue them. I made myself a point of contact for people who had visa questions. If they wanted to send it in to a travel agency, we'd send it down to Rio where all the visas were being processed. If there were any questions or problems, I got information and everyone knew that this was where you could do that. It was very helpful also for our exchange visitors. There were a lot of visitors to USIA. We got a lot of money for that and in those days we liked people going back and forth. Also, immediately all the citizens services for the area. I couldn't issue the passports, but I could take the applications and all that stuff and the notarizing stuff and kind of be of use to the American community for the same reason that you've suggested. I never got into the immigrant visa business, but with Amado, well, he got an invitation from Penn State University to go up there and spend a year. I think this is how he did it. A long time ago, if you had asked me this yesterday I would have asked my houseguest Fran, who was in the middle of this with me; we made the arguments that I think sure he was a communist, but he was a legacy. He was an active communist for some time back in the '30s in the state of Sao Paulo, but his

whole life since then had been nothing like that. In those days the law said you had to have, if you were such a convert, you took an active anti-communist position, if I remember correctly. We had to sort of scratch some things to get that through. We just kept hammering away at it and finally got the embassy to support us, to get into Washington and got him a single entry visa and get him up there. He went once I think on tourism and then he went up with this Penn State thing, he and his wife. I remember a photo they sent back of him standing outside Paul Revere's house in Boston.

*Q: You were saying you visited almost every Sunday?*

WATSON: Well, it was like, sort of a European salon. Amado's wife was also an author and very charming people. They have a very simple house, an open tropical style house with a garden, internal patio which he had little building with air conditioning in his office where he did his writing. The rest of it was open, not too big, but a good size open house. All the other painters and musicians and the folk musicians were down at the market and any author who happened to be in town. I remember meeting Arthur Hailey, the Canadian who wrote Airport and all those things were there and any sort of intellectuals from wherever country in the world, I mean Senegalese dance troops. You'd go and there would always be something interesting going on. There was a central corps in Amado's house, there was an artist, who unfortunately has died, he was originally an Argentine, but did a lot of painting in his simple style, voodoo called \_\_\_\_\_ religious ceremony, there were all sort of painters who had some significance throughout Brazil and in Bahia. Bahia has a relationship to the rest of Brazil a little like New Orleans has to the U.S. and that is it is the center of African culture. It was the capital and even in the days when it was the center of the slave trade, the Brits stopped slave trading officially in 1850 the British were still bringing them in there until the 1870s. You had people there who could remember; old people told me that they remembered coming over on the slave ships. Whether that really happened or not, I don't know, but they had a much greater infiltration of slaves into Brazil long after it stopped in the U.S.

*Q: Well, slave ships were really going up; until almost the turn of the Century they were slipping in.*

WATSON: 1888 is when slavery was abolished. In this country slavery became a breeding operation. They didn't bring in new slaves. Very early in Brazil you had to bring them in, so it was a much greater \_\_\_\_\_ to have freed slaves to do the artisan work, unlike in the country. It has to do with the nature of the colonization by the Europeans as much as anything else. You had all those evil and horrible, it was not as rigid and the freed slaves in the United States were largely feared and dangerous elements and in Brazil they weren't. You still had slave revolts, you had slave communities. Comparison of slavery in Brazil to the United States is an interesting story, but I don't know how we got on that.

*Q: You were talking about this.*

WATSON: A lot of music, all these musicians; one was just in town— \_\_\_\_\_, who does spectacular shows at the Kennedy Center. There are a lot of the most important musicians. From Brazil are Louis Armstrong and the New Orleans guys. So, you always had something going on.

There were interesting people there and we were part of that group for some reason. Not everybody, obviously. Not everybody was an artist or a singer or a painter or a writer. Some were just sort of amusing characters that told funny stories that hung around.

*Q: You had this group, did it sit around and have Parisian lunch with cigarettes hanging out of their mouths?*

WATSON: No, we told jokes, you know, drank drinks, ate food that \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ would provide, not full meals, \_\_\_\_\_ from Spain and we'd go from whatever it was in the morning until middle to late afternoon on a Sunday. Whenever they were in town because they lived part of the time in Paris and they traveled, whenever they traveled and whenever they were in town, we sort of had these things. It was, no it was not serious profound intellectual discussion, it was screwing around, amusing people, teasing each other and telling stories. For us, of course, an extraordinary window about how people thought about them. You had these guys for a market performance, street performers, from the lowest possible classes who were all part of this.

*Q: Well, this might be, is there anything else we should cover in this period?*

WATSON: Well, one last thing I should say. It was interesting to be in this city because it's hard to recall, hard to believe, but in Brazil there were very few road connections between the various parts of Brazil. We were sort of in the middle of \_\_\_\_\_ administration and in Bahia you had to go, when we went from Salvador da Bahia to Rio you went by plane up until the mid '50s. So, when we were there which is now ten to 15 years later, the place is still being integrated into mainstream southern Brazil. We were there at a time when the economy started changing as I told you and the petrol chemical industry and a whole bunch of other incentives because they were in the northeast with all these incentives. I mentioned to you before the investment in things, many of them misplaced, but anyhow a lot of factories and stuff coming into the basic agricultural sleepy old days were changing, different products were coming in that people hadn't had before. I remember when strawberries arrived in Sao Paulo and different kinds of meats. You're there at a time and what of foreigners, including foreigners from other parts of Brazil, some \_\_\_\_\_ who were ridiculed by \_\_\_\_\_ and are in turn ridiculed by \_\_\_\_\_. There was a cultural change. It was really an interesting time to watch a very traditional society adapt to these kinds of things. That was a lot of things that made it interesting. So, we stayed there. People kept saying, Watson you've got to get out of here, your career will be over. You can't stay here. We said, we love it here and it's very interesting here, and we're going to stay here. We stayed until, as I said, July of '73. It was a year and a half—the most formative periods of our life, no doubt about it.

I'm going to say one thing about this. Even a very small operation is important if you're the head of that operation. You learn so much about yourself, and that's why I regret that these kinds of posts that are eliminated throughout the Foreign Service because the whole post, every cent spent including my salary, was not \$60,000 a year. It cost nothing and yet a whole bunch of us went through this, and USIA people, too. You're in charge of your little operation. You learn what you're relatively good at, relatively less good at. You learn how to take responsibility. You learn how to define priorities. You learn how to relate to larger realities around you and you don't have someone telling you everyday what you have to do. I think it's a really useful experience

for people to have and that for me, I was 30 years old at the time and this was a dramatic period for us in many ways; the cultural stuff. And we learned many things that we could not have been able to learn in a job that had been more narrowly focused.

*Q: Also it helps a professional corps of people who know more about the country.*

WATSON: I had to speak Portuguese all the time. There was nobody to speak English to.

*Q: This is it, as opposed to an embassy. It's kind of a little bit of an island. Alright. We'll stop in July of '73, and where did you go?*

WATSON: Well, when Steve Low left the embassy, moved from Rio to Brasilia definitively, Steve Low, instead of being the head of the embassy office in Brasilia, then became deputy chief of mission. He went back to be head of the office of Brazilian affairs in the State Department which, in those days, AID and State were combined, and only in that region of the world; only in the Latin America area. Then Steve asked me to come back to be what they called the Brazil desk officer, which was basically the political officer on the team. We had Steve, we had two AID people, an economic officer; I had a deputy. There were about eight or ten of us in this Brazilian affairs office and I went back and did that, arriving there on the job I think in August or September of 1973.

**DAVID L. HOBBS**  
**Labor Officer**  
**Sao Paulo (1970-1972)**

*David L. Hobbs was born in Iowa in 1940. After serving in the US Army from 1960-1963 he received his bachelor's degree from University of California at Berkeley. His career included positions in Germany, Brazil, England, Japan, Colombia, and an ambassadorship to Guyana. Ambassador Hobbs was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in March 1997.*

*Q: You went to Sao Paulo in 1970 and were there until when?*

HOBBS: I was there from 1970 to 1972, two years.

*Q: What was the consulate general like at that point?*

HOBBS: Sao Paulo at the time produced about a third of the gross domestic product of Brazil, so it was really the most dynamic part of the country. The consulate had a very important role in covering the economic issues. There wasn't much in the way of politics because it was still under the control of the generals who had taken power in 1964. I was doing economic issues sort of from the working class view. I also had the responsibility of covering anything that had to do with Mato Grosso.

*Q: Mato Grosso being...?*

HOBBS: The big, sparsely populated interior state of Brazil, which is part of the Sao Paulo consular district to the west. I made some trips out there and that was fun.

I used to have contact with the metal workers union which was considered a very leftist union, and bankers didn't like that. I had some good contacts with the people who did labor statistics. After having been there for about a year I did an airgram which discussed how the revolution and the economic policies of the revolution--it really wasn't a revolution, it was a military coup that took over--and how it affected the working class of the southern part of the country. It was a long airgram and took me about a month and a half to research it. I found it interesting because a few years later when the military finally turned over power to the civilians again there were some articles in the *New York Times* about how the working class made it through those years. They had put a rather tight lid on labor and wages in order to generate more economic growth. Many of the things I had said in that airgram was in this article. In fact, some of them were almost word for word and it made you wonder where they got some of this information. It was kind of fun to have been involved in that and to have identified some of those issues earlier on.

*Q: You had this military government and labor unions, unless they are manufactured company unions, are usually anathema to a military government. How did you find the situation?*

HOBBS: That is exactly right. The unions had no power. They couldn't do any actual wage negotiations, could never strike or do anything that unions do. So, they were shunted off into doing things like social programs. They would run vacation resorts where the workers could go and spend some time on the beach with their families. They would run health programs, education programs, etc. There were always social issues that the unions could spend their energy on but could not get involved with salary and conditions of work because that was all decided by the government. They were literally frustrated. Some of the unions that were more radical, like the metal workers and automobile workers, were constantly under the supervision of the military and occasionally arrested.

*Q: Did you find that being the labor officer you were getting any instructions from Washington to do what one could to encourage the labor unions to get more power? Or were we being rather careful?*

HOBBS: There was an AIFLD representative...

*Q: AIFLD being...?*

HOBBS: American Institute for Free Labor Development, an AFL-CIO funded organization which works in many countries in Latin America. There are other counterparts in Africa and other places. There was a representative there who was trying to build unions and make them into more powerful institutions that dealt more with more traditional activities. It was impossible to do this during the time of the military rule, but the idea was to lay the groundwork so that when they could, they would be ready to do those things.

So, since there wasn't much of a labor movement playing much of a role, I had a great job because I could do what I wanted. I did pollution control stuff. I remember I wrote some things on Brazil's major manufacturing center in Sao Paulo pumping a lot of garbage into the air and doing a lot of damage to the rivers. I did some studies of human rights, building of highways and generally kept myself pretty busy, but not much labor.

*Q: Did the embassy give much direction?*

HOBBS: In Brazil there were three labor officers. The attaché who was in Rio De Janeiro, not in Brasilia, because there really wasn't any labor movement in Brasilia. There was a labor officer in Brasilia, who worked for the labor attaché because the labor attaché was assigned to Brasilia but stationed in Rio. I didn't work for the labor attaché in Rio, I worked for the consul general. However, we met, talked, cooperated and had a good relationship. I didn't really get much attention on labor issues.

*Q: Who was the consul general then?*

HOBBS: When I first arrived it was Robert Corrigan and then Fred Chapin. Both of them were interesting to work with.

*Q: How would you describe the view of the Brazilian towards America? Much interest?*

HOBBS: Very positive I think. There was a lot of travel to the States. A lot of Brazilians who went abroad went to the States rather than to Europe. They knew a lot about us and I think we were very popular. It was not a hostile place to work. Americans liked Brazil and I think Brazilians realized we liked being there. I think it was a very good time for Americans then.

*Q: Were there any security problems while you were there?*

HOBBS: Some. The ambassador, who had not left Rio yet, had been kidnaped a few years before I arrived, Burke Elbrick. There was still the aftermath of that. Then there was the consul in Porto Alegre, Cutter was his name, who they apparently tried to kidnap and he ran over one of the kidnapers. I went down to Porto Alegre once to be acting principal officer when the principal officer wanted to go on vacation, because it was down to a one officer post by that time. I found out that the consul there spent all of his time under the heavy blanket of security with armed guards with him all the time. Whenever we traveled outside the city of Sao Paulo we had to notify the police wherever we went so that they would be aware of our comings and goings, sort of keep an eye on us. I traveled around with Fred Chapin making a number of trips into the interior to try to reach out and touch everyone. We had security everywhere we went then.

But, it wasn't as bad as I experienced later in Colombia. Only when you have security on you all the time, like I did in Porto Alegre, do you feel that you are in danger. When you don't have it, you don't feel in danger even though you may be in more danger.

*Q: Were you married by this time?*

HOBBS: Yes. My son was born in Germany and my daughter in Brazil. Neither one has been back to the country they were born in.

*Q: Who was hijacking, and when did it take place?*

HOBBS: It was a Brazilian leftist organization which hijacked an aircraft that was leaving from Guaratuba, one of the cities in the south. Felix Grant had been down in Brazil. He is a leading expert in Brazilian music, which I wasn't aware of before. He was giving lectures to Brazilians on their music and doing a good job.

He was on this airplane coming back from Guaratuba to Rio de Janeiro where he would get a plane to the States. The aircraft got hijacked and was flying around in the air looking for a place to land and finally, having a fuel problem, landed at Sao Paulo airport, the one that is nearest to the city. I knew he was on the aircraft because he had been in San Paulo a few days before that and we knew his travel plans.

We raced out to the airport to try to protect this American. We went up to the tower and there was a general in charge of this problem. I said there was an American citizen on board and was there to look out for his interests. If he didn't mind I would like to hang around to see what was going on and be of assistance, if I could be. He looked at me like some crazy nut who claimed to be an American diplomat, but he let me stay around. I watched some of the activity going on and it looked sort of heavy handed to me. I asked the general what he was planning to do? He said, "Well, we are going to storm the aircraft and the guy is going to have to commit suicide." I said, "Oh, that is very interesting. How do you know he is going to commit suicide?" "Well," he said, "You will see."

They put some soldiers in uniforms of caterers and after the people got hungry enough they asked for food. The soldiers dressed as caterers went out to the aircraft in catering carts filled with weapons. When they got out to the aircraft they jumped the aircraft and went in through the cockpit shooting the pilot, not badly, and took over the aircraft very quickly. The single hijacker, according to the general, committed suicide. The next day the [local] newspaper, which was owned by a man who was very, very opposed to the military running the government and who would leave blanks where articles had been censored so people would know the censor had been at work again, ran an article saying the kidnaper at the airport was attacked by the police and committed suicide by shooting himself thirteen times. That was a sneaky way of getting out some of the news that was really going on.

It was kind of an interesting experience for me to see how this suicide was planned and carried out by the government. Felix got off the airplane and I asked him how it had been and he said, "You know, the worse thing about it was that damn MUZAK music they played the entire time we were on board. I hated every minute of that. Other than that, it wasn't so bad."

**WILLIAM M. ROUNTREE**  
**Ambassador**

## **Brazil (1970-1973)**

*Ambassador William M. Rountree entered the Foreign Service in 1942 as a Foreign Service Auxiliary Officer. He served in Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, the Sudan, South Africa, and Brazil. Ambassador Rountree was interviewed by Arthur L. Lowrie in 1989.*

*Q: Well, we are up now to the move to Brazil. Again, you continued when the Nixon Administration continued. They must have asked you to stay on in South Africa because you stayed there quite a while after the change.*

ROUNTREE: Yes, I returned to Washington at the change of Administration when President Nixon took office. I met with him and we went over our policies in South Africa. I learned from him his views on our relations with that country. I was very pleased that, at that time and subsequently, I found myself in complete agreement with President Nixon and with the general course of American policy in South Africa. I was told in 1970 that he wanted me to go to Brazil as his Ambassador. I was rather surprised at the change from the Near East and South African area to South America -- never having served in Latin America before. I was told that it was his desire to have someone have a fresh look at our policies and relations in South America, and he decided that I was the one to do it in Brazil. I welcomed the assignment and enjoyed it tremendously.

*Q: In your capacity as Ambassador to Brazil, did you also have an opportunity to get to know Henry Kissinger?*

ROUNTREE: Yes, I had known Mr. Kissinger even before he came into the White House as one of the principal advisors to President Nixon. I did not serve under him when he became Secretary of State. I had retired by then. But I had followed his work with great interest.

*Q: When you went to Brazil, one of the big issues, I believe, was personal safety and the threat of terrorism. Was it not?*

ROUNTREE: Yes, terrorists were very active in Brazil in those days. As a matter of fact, my predecessor as American Ambassador in Brazil had been kidnapped and was injured in the course of his capture. The Brazilians had embarked on a program of anti-terrorism that created some criticism in the United States and elsewhere because of the extreme pressures they put on terrorists once they were captured. One of my tasks in Brazil was to articulate American concern for safety and security in Brazil on the one hand, but on the other hand concern that the means of coping with prisoners should be civilized.

*Q: Were there any terrorists incidents involving you during your tour in Brazil?*

ROUNTREE: No, not an incident directly involving me, although there were many reports of plans of assassination or capture. I was provided by the government of Brazil with a strong security guard wherever I went, particularly in Rio or Sao Paulo. There usually were police cars preceding and following mine, with armed guards. A policeman with a machine gun rode in my

own car. The Embassy premises were strongly guarded. There was never an occasion in which my life was put in immediate danger. Other ambassadors, in addition to Ambassador Elbrick, were kidnapped. The German ambassador and the Swiss ambassador, for example. In each of these cases the government of Brazil agreed to free captured terrorists in return for the release of the diplomats. The United States Government never engaged in negotiations with terrorists in the case of Ambassador Elbrick or others. The decision to meet the demands of the captors was one made entirely by the government of Brazil. As I said, Ambassador Elbrick did suffer injury which could have had a highly detrimental effect on his subsequent health.

At the outset of my service as Ambassador to Brazil, I announced that I would move the Embassy from Rio to the new capital of Brasilia. I was the first Ambassador to make the full-time move. This was not an easy task because we had many hundreds of employees in our Rio Embassy, and facilities for our diplomatic establishment in Brasilia had not been completed, and in some cases not even begun. It took a year to make the move from one city to the other, during which I was required to spend most of my time in Rio. Over the months I was able to spend progressively more time, with progressively more staff in Brasilia. Eventually we were there full time. It was a fascinating experience to be a part of this historic move from Rio to the new capital and I enjoyed it.

*Q: President Medici visited Washington in December 1971, the first time that a President of a military government in Latin America visited the White House. What brought that about? Was that your idea?*

ROUNTREE: I think it was an idea of a good many people, including President Medici, who wanted very much to meet President Nixon, and Nixon himself who attached great importance to our relations with Brazil. Nixon had a particular interest in our relations with Latin American neighbors. Brazil, after all, is half the land area of South America, has about half the population of South America, and possesses more than half of the natural resources of that continent. Thus its importance in the context of US interests and relations can be understood.

*Q: Was this, in fact, the first time the President of a military government had visited the White House? Was a big thing made of that?*

ROUNTREE: About Latin American governments, I don't at the moment recall, but certainly there had been other military governments, such as those of Pakistan and Sudan, whose heads have been invited to make state visits to Washington.

*Q: Was that a successful visit?*

ROUNTREE: It was a very successful visit and gave us an opportunity to review many things that we and the Brazilians have in common. Brazil, over the years, has been one of the best friends of the United States. It has never been our enemy. Brazil has been consistently with us in military operations, including World War I, World War II, the Berlin Airlift, and various situations in Latin America. We have maintained in Brazil, since 1922, a military mission that has been very important to us, and military facilities established during World War II have been continued in one form or another. Our military have cooperated in many respects over the years,

and the Brazilian economy has greatly benefitted by American investments in that country. There had never been a time in which anti-Americanism was a factor in relations with Brazil. We extended enormous amounts of financial and economic help to the Brazilians when they needed it to expand their economy, and the progress which they made rendered it possible greatly to reduce aid levels during my terms of office. I think our relations were at an absolute peak in 1972, the time of the visit of President Medici. So it was a good visit in a good situation. The main problem that we were having with Brazil related to their treatment of captured terrorists but even that had by then greatly abated and the situation had begun to return to normal. The process of transition between the military regime and a return to democracy, which we advocated, had only just begun.

*Q: It was also a period of great economic growth for Brazil and by 1972 they had finished the first 1200 kilometers of the Trans-Amazonian Highway. At that time, was there any concern about the destruction of the Brazil Amazon rain forests and the species and all that?*

ROUNTREE: There was a great deal of concern, but the magnitude of this program and its effects on the world ecology was just beginning to be understood. Perhaps the international community should have been far more forceful at the time, although whether this would have made much of a difference is questionable. We were, indeed, concerned with the ecology. We were concerned not only with the effects on the ecology of the Trans-Amazonian Highway, but also the effects of pollution, which was rampant in Brazil at that time. I was instructed on several occasions to take up with Brazilian authorities, including the President, our hope that the Brazilians would join us in anti-pollution efforts we were making through the United Nations. During this period, Brazil was making the greatest economic progress in its history, achieving solid gains across the board, particularly in industrial and agricultural production. And, for the first time, Brazilians were seeing the benefits of turning more to the interior of the country in their development efforts, capitalizing on lands that theretofore had never effectively been utilized. As I indicated, one of the few differences of real importance that we had with Brazil during my term of office concerned the ecology. Whenever these questions were raised with them, they would reply quite frankly that they hoped the time would come when they could undertake anti-pollution measures but, for the immediate future, their main concern would have to be increased production and improving the economic welfare of the Brazilian people. Their response to American approaches at high levels bilaterally and through the United Nations would, therefore, be simply that they had have to "reserve their right to pollute". And that is a term they used, quite literally. I think the pollution problem in Brazil has gotten even more out of hand. Since then the devastation wrought by the development of the Amazon, the Trans-Amazon Highway and all the new projects in that region has increased the alarm of the international community. Hopefully, it has increased the concern of the Brazilian government as well. Clearly, what was a matter of concern to us in 1970-1973 when I was there, is a problem of far greater proportions today.

*Q: Brazil has the reputation of having one of the most inequitable distributions of income in Latin American, or in the world for that matter. Was that true and noticeable in those years?*

ROUNTREE: Yes, it was noticeable then and it continues to be so. There is extreme poverty in all of Brazil, and particularly in the northeast part of the country. It is this situation that initially

prompted the government to undertake the Trans-Amazon program. It was their hope that by opening up new areas, substantial relief could be given to disadvantaged Brazilians in the northeast and other parts of the country, and productivity would be increased. I suppose that this has helped but it is my impression that it has been marginal because of the character of the land. The farming projects undertaken do not lend themselves to the kind of small land holder that originally had been anticipated.

*Q: How did you find Brazilians in comparison to Afrikaner officials, in comparison to Ayub Khan? Are they in your opinion, competent, capable, serious?*

ROUNTREE: As you know, relatively few Brazilians have reached high levels of education, but among those who have are some of the most capable people I know. Brazilians excel in various facets of the economy -- in banking, in industry. Their engineers and architects, for example, are among the best in the world. Brazilians benefitted from the fact that most American investment in Brazil over the years has been in productive, rather than extractive, enterprises. Brazilians learned from American industrial firms how to produce. They were given on-the-job training and were also trained in the United States over the years. Brazilian educational institutions have excelled in many fields. Yes, they are serious and some are highly competent people. Perhaps, the period in which I served in Brazil was the one in which the Brazilians had more sense of cohesion and direction than ever before. Even though a military regime was in control, more constructive progress was being made. They have lost some of that. One cost of a return to democracy has been the loss of the kind of central direction that moved Brazil forward so rapidly. Right now the Brazilian economy is in terrible shape, and it is difficult to see how it can be turned around.

**STEPHEN F. DACHI**  
**Peace Corps**  
**Brasilia (1971-1972)**

*Stephen F. Dachi was born in 1933 in Hungary. He attended the University of Oregon Dental School and then joined the Peace Corps. While in the Peace Corps he served in Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil. During his career in USIA he served positions in Hungary, Panama City, Brazil, and India. Mr. Dachi was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in May 1997.*

*Q: Let's move to the next tour.*

DACHI: I went from there to Brazil. There was a five year limit on being a Peace Corps official with a possible extension for a sixth year, so I still had a couple of years left. Joe Blatchford, who besides Venezuela, had experience in Brazil, liked what I had done sufficiently well in Venezuela that he wanted me to go to his other favorite country, namely Brazil, to try to do the same thing. So, I went there at the beginning of 1971. I was in Brazil from January of 1971 to August 1972. I was part of the first Embassy team to move up from Rio and set up business in the new capital, Brasilia. Steve Low had been in charge of a "pre-embassy" diplomatic outpost

there for the previous two years. The first American ambassador, William Rountree, took up residence in Brasilia in January 1970. I arrived at the same time. So, we were there together in the first days of the embassy.

*Q: What was the political and economic situation in Brazil when you arrived in 1971 as you saw it?*

DACHI: It was toward the middle period of the 20 years of military rule from 1964 to 1984. The first military president of Brazil was a capable technocrat who would put a lot of things in order. But, afterwards, there was an outbreak of violence and the kidnaping of several foreign diplomats including the American ambassador, Burke Elbrick. That happened about a year before I got there. The regime cracked down hard on suspected terrorists, exiled many leftist politicians, among them the current President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, committed many violations of human rights in the process. So, there was a bit of a “dirty war” there, too, not quite as widespread as in Argentina, Chile or Uruguay, but there was that. There was growing political tension between the military regime and what was becoming the leftist liberation theology advocated by a segment of the clergy of the Catholic church. The number of rural militants in the drought and poverty stricken northeastern Brazil was increasing. The Archbishop of Recife, Dom Helder Camara became a leading advocate for the rural poor of the northeast, and as his fame grew, he became more and more of a thorn in the side of the ruling generals.

Much of this had, by the time I got there, been rather brutally brought under control; maybe not put down, but basically brought under control. This was also the period when the generals got the idea that they could get rid of all the politically unreliable poor by building a highway into the Amazon rainforest and resettling them out of harm's way, so to speak. The Brazilian military rule was consolidating itself after having put down a guerrilla militancy leading to a number of kidnappings and opening up the Amazon to get rid of political opponents. National security was the main and subsequently shown to be the fatally flawed rationale for opening up and developing the Amazon region. Also, the rulers believed that if they didn't settle the region first, legions of poor from neighboring countries would move in and do it for them.

Subsequently, Brazil moved into an intensive development phase. That is when they acquired this massive foreign debt that eventually led to a moratorium on payments and to over fifteen years of the worst wave of massive inflation ever experienced by any country over such a sustained period of time. That vicious cycle really took off after I left. So, this was a relatively stable period, imposed by strict military controls, between two major waves of change.

*Q: What about the inflation? Was this a problem then?*

DACHI: Yes, it was becoming a problem. It had its roots in the extravagant deficit spending initiated with the building of Brasilia 10 years earlier. But it was not yet the overwhelming problem that it became by the end of the eighties.

*Q: What was the history of the Peace Corps prior to your arrival?*

DACHI: Brazil is so vast and so varied geographically, culturally, economically, and so on, that

the Peace Corps never found even a modicum of thematic coherence the way it did in smaller countries. You could never describe the Peace Corps in Brazil as having two or three focused objectives. You had these disparate groups of volunteers in various parts of the country who had nothing to do with each other, living in totally different worlds, doing a variety of things. There was no unity there at all. There were quite a few regional directors in different areas, but they and their projects had little in common. It was hard to put your finger on what the Peace Corps was doing in Brazil, even though it had patches of good programs in various areas, put together on an ad hoc basis.

*Q: When you arrived in 1971, how big was the program?*

DACHI: We had 600-700 people. It was one of the biggest programs, just like Colombia had been. The Vietnam political situation was still going on. But in Brazil, the volunteers were scattered over such huge distances that they could never get together to organize the way they did in Venezuela. They were not able to communicate with each other. You couldn't call a countrywide meeting of volunteers and expect them to show up in one place. They had to travel for two or three days just to get back and forth from their village to a state capital. So, that changed the political profile significantly.

*Q: I would have thought there would have been a local problem within Brazil. You have a military government, an increasingly militant set of Peace Corps volunteers, local liberation movements, the Catholic Church, which is moving into opposition, or at least some elements of this. I would have thought that you would have all sorts of problems.*

DACHI: No. The size of the country negated all these factors. They were indeed present, but if you throw a fish into the Pacific Ocean, it's very different from dumping 500 fish into a community swimming pool.

*Q: How did you see your main job?*

DACHI: I must confess that when I got there, I felt a great sense of relief that I was going to be dealing with technical Peace Corps problems and not Vietnam. But how did I view my job? You go to Brazil, (this is true today and it's true of people who go to China, India, and Russia, these huge countries.) you've got to spend a year just getting oriented. The place is so overwhelmingly big that if you have some kind of countrywide responsibility, trying to grasp the diversity and reality of the culture, you spend a year (If you're lucky, you spend only a year.) trying to learn what is going on. I have never seen anybody beat that obstacle. I've seen some of the greatest ambassadors in the U.S. Foreign Service come to Brazil or India with tremendous zeal and energy. Whether they admitted it or not, they took a long time just to get a feeling.

I was simply going along, traveling extensively, going to all these places, trying to get a handle on it. But in the end, you could only deal with Brazil by saying, "I'm going to look at one state and see how we can make things a little bit better in that state." Then I would go to another state and the situation was different. So, I couldn't take a national approach. I became somewhat more of a retailer than a wholesaler. By that time, the Peace Corps also sort of was becoming disillusioned by this hospital administration and urban planning approach I had experienced in

Venezuela and was looking yet again for new directions. All of a sudden, English teaching came back into vogue after it had been virtually discarded, and underwent a brief renaissance. Brazil was not the place to forge coherent new directions out of its incredible diversity. I know what I did in Colombia and I know what I did in Venezuela, but I'm not sure I know what I did in Brazil.

*Q: You were obviously maintaining the program, I suppose.*

DACHI: I kept it running and improved it here and there.

*Q: So, leaving Brazil, were there any particular incidents that come to mind that you had to deal with?*

DACHI: That was a somewhat more uneventful period. It was not eventful in the way we are talking now, but it was a tremendous learning experience for me in traveling all over the country and understanding the cultural diversity and the history of this continent-sized country. I learned a lot for the future. I learned a lot about Brazil that helped me in my subsequent assignment in Brazil. I learned a lot about the Foreign Service. I have served with some really great ambassadors. William Rountree was another classical ambassador, very much in the traditional mold. Again, we developed a very affectionate relationship. I admired him. I learned a lot from watching him work. Also, Brazil was a time when I was going to find out whether this great hope of my transitioning into the "real" Foreign Service was, in fact, going to work or not.

*Q: How did that come about?*

DACHI: As you know, lateral entry into the State Department has always either been impossible or extremely difficult. Lateral entry into USIA was not much easier. There were people in Brazil who were trying to help me transition into the Foreign Service just like there were people in Venezuela who were trying to help me. It was apparent that it would never work to transition into the State Department, but that it might work with USIA. Various people in the Foreign Service were always speaking up on my behalf in Washington, with the USIA front office to see when a lateral entry opportunity might come up. In fact, I think the first one came up when I finished in Venezuela and I was about to take a panel exam for an FSR [Foreign Service Reserve] appointment into USIA. Then they had another budget cut and put it off. That is how I ended up going to Brazil, because it didn't work out at the end of my tour in Venezuela. But eventually, persistence made us aware of another moment when the door opened briefly. Well, I had hung around that door for so long that the time it opened, I sneaked in. I took a panel exam and they took me in as an FSR. I got into USIA. They put me in a job as a regional program coordinator for Central America. They didn't know initially what to do with me, so they put me into a sort of makeshift job.

Then, I got lucky again. I was invited by my friend, the former PAO in Venezuela, Ed Schechter, to dinner at his home. He had Jock Shirley, the area director for Eastern Europe there, who was a friend of his. He carefully seated me next to him. Jock had grown up in Hungary. He was one of the few not native-born Hungarians who actually learned to speak Hungarian perfectly. We were in the era of Frank Shakespeare as director of the U.S. Information Agency. We were placing a

great deal of emphasis on Eastern Europe because we were into anti-communism big time in those days, and the only political contacts we were able to cultivate in those countries were through cultural and press officers. So, there was a great emphasis in USIA on Eastern Europe. Ed Schechter seated me next to Jock Shirley. We started speaking Hungarian. I was a native speaker of Hungarian, so that was like a gift from heaven for me. After that dinner, we became better acquainted and he “took me away” from Central America within months and made me PAO in Hungary.

*Q. Let's move to Sao Paulo. Sao Paulo is a really major post. You went there as Consul General. This by many is considered the equivalent to an ambassadorship. It's of that rank. How did you get this assignment?*

DACHI: Probably the way most such assignments come about. The Assistant Secretary, Tony Motley, knew me from the time we had worked together on various things when he was ambassador to Brazil and I was Latin America director. Then we had worked together to some degree once he came back as Assistant Secretary. He is the one who chose me and got me paneled to go down there.

*Q: There is the usual Foreign Service vs. USIA conflict over jobs. This is a fairly high one. I would have thought this one would have meant that the State Department Foreign Service would have fought on this.*

DACHI: The State Department Foreign Service will fight on things like this, but if the Assistant Secretary really wants something done, the system has a hard time stopping it. If you try to go through the system, if USIA decided to nominate you by having the chief of personnel from USIA say to the Director General "Here is a guy I think you ought to consider," that is a different story, you can forget about it. If the Assistant Secretary wants you, that is something else.

In those days, there always was a small handful of USIA people who through some personal relationship they developed on their own with someone at the State Department managed to get assigned to senior jobs, but there were very few. There was no institutional cooperation on personnel matters whatsoever. Nowadays there is more. For one thing, USIA has been ahead of the State Department as the latter came under increasing pressure to give senior jobs to women and minorities and there were many instances when they just didn't have as many people coming up the ranks as USIA had. So, more USIA officers became ambassadors and deputy chiefs of mission.

Leaving aside for the moment politically correct language, white males have not necessarily had equal opportunities in the foreign service in recent years, but even white males from USIA have held some top jobs. Christopher Ross, a USIA officer, has been ambassador in both Algeria and Syria, as well as Deputy Assistant Secretary and director of the Office of Counterterrorism. Bill Rugh, a white male, also served as ambassador twice. Jock Shirley was ambassador to Tanzania. Michael Pistor was ambassador to Malawi. Robert Gosende was chief of mission in Somalia at one point during the war. One of the recent ambassadors to China was a former USIA officer. It happened. There were quite a few. But the point is that each and every one of them got these jobs through whatever relationship they had with senior people in the State Department. USIA as an

agency never did anything for any of them to get them consideration in the State Department personnel system. There are almost no exceptions to that. As for minorities, Cresencio (Cris) Arcos is Hispanic, a very, very qualified guy. He became ambassador to Honduras; Marilyn McAfee was ambassador in Guatemala. There was also Kenton Keith, who was ambassador to Qatar. I got another job with the State Department as DCM in the U.S. Mission to the OAS after my time in Sao Paulo. That was also done through personal contacts from the Sao Paulo assignment.

**JOHN D. PIELEMEIER**  
**International Development Intern, USAID**  
**Riό de Janeiro (1970-1973)**

*Mr. Pielemeier was born in Indiana in 1944 and graduated from Georgetown University. He joined the Peace Corps in 1966 and served in the Ivory Coast. He served in numerous USAID projects in Brazil, Liberia, and Southern Africa. He was interviewed by W. Haven North in 1997.*

PIELEMEIER: When I came back from this campaign in Indiana, the younger brother of my friend said that there were some messages for me. He eventually found some isolated slips of paper. One of these slips of paper had a phone number but no name of the organization. This is a true story. I called this phone number. A woman answered the phone but did not give the name of her organization. I said: "May I speak to So-and-So," and she answered: "This is she." I said that my name is John Pielemeier and that I had a message from her, asking me to call. She said: "Oh, yes, John Pielemeier," and she rustled through some papers. She came back on the phone and said: "I wanted to know if you wanted to come and work with us and go to Rio de Janeiro." I immediately said: "Yes," without knowing what the organization was. [Laughter] The organization turned out to be AID [Agency for International Development].

*Q: You had obviously written to AID.*

PIELEMEIER: I had written to AID and I had interviewed with a couple of people. Those whom I had talked to at that time said: "If you really want to get into AID, you'll have to go to Vietnam. There are lots of job openings in the USAID mission in Vietnam." However, I did not want to go to Vietnam. When I left the Peace Corps, I was called up for a Selective Service physical exam and was classified 4-F [physically unfit] because of the paralysis I had suffered in the Ivory Coast. In any case, I was not at all interested in going to Vietnam. So I thought that my chances of getting a job with AID were pretty slim. But the lady at the International Development Intern Program called me, as I said, and offered me a job. I readily accepted. It seemed like the kind of work I wanted to do and also Rio de Janeiro was a good place to go.

I had a girlfriend at the time. We were pretty serious about getting married. There was a serious question as to whether we were going to be married before I went to Rio or whether I was going to go down to Rio de Janeiro first as a single male to get married a year or so later. I had heard about all of the pretty girls in Rio and its beaches.

In any case, we did get married, and went to Rio together. My wife Nancy and I packed our few belongings and, after some excellent training from the IDI [International Development Intern] program staff and language training, we headed to Brazil.

*Q: Was this the AID orientation program?*

PIELEMIEIER: Yes. I think that the IDI training program lasted for about six weeks or perhaps longer. I remember that the man who was running that program was really quite good.

*Q: You mean Jerry Woods.*

PIELEMIEIER: That's right. Jerry Woods. There were several trainers in that IDI program who stayed with AID much longer and whom I ran into from time to time. They were wonderful people. There was also a good group of people in this IDI class. I have kept in touch with many of them over the years. Some of them have become AID Mission Directors and others have done, very important work as agricultural officers or in other senior positions.

When we arrived in Brazil early in 1971, the AID Mission had 100 "direct hire" American employees. Bill Ellis, the AID Mission Director, and his senior staff liked the idea of bringing in IDI's [International Development Interns], so the Mission was full of IDIs. I went to Brazil with two other IDI's from my training group. While I was in Rio, there must have been as many as 10 IDI's in the mission at any one time. That gave us a young "cohort" to work with. Many of the other people we found in the Mission seemed to us to be rather old. By contrast, the IDI's recently had come out of Peace Corps and/or university backgrounds and a different generation.

The older people in the Mission were not the kind of role model we were looking for. We found that there were a lot of divorces in the Mission in Brazil and a lot of families breaking up. I found, in going out to dinner with people, that there was a lot of "backbiting" and competition. To my mind the older crew in the Mission, many of whom were close to retirement, was not very impressive. There were some people in the AID Mission who were impressive. Bill Ellis himself, the Mission Director at the time, and Bob Ballantyne the Deputy Director were particularly helpful to Nancy and me. Bob was a very warm individual and very positive. However, most members of the Mission had their jobs to do and were not particularly warm or interested in helping people from a much younger generation to break into the agency and get settled in a new location.

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

PIELEMIEIER: In 1971 Brazil was part of the U.S. government's "Alliance for Progress" program, established by President Kennedy. The Alliance was beginning to fade from prominence. The respective offices in Washington of AID and the State Department were "co-located" offices dealing with the same countries and regions in the two agencies were across the corridor or next to each other, just as they may be soon, again. This arrangement worked well, I think. Phil Schwab was the director of the Office of Brazilian Affairs in Washington. He was very well known in Latin American circles and a wonderful guy with an extraordinary sense of

humor. He had spent many years in Brazil but, because of a heart problem, couldn't go back on another assignment. So he remained as the Brazil desk officer for a long period of time.

After the Brazilian military coup d'etat in 1964, the country received a lot of American assistance. There were several major programs which AID tried to establish. Overall, the AID program in Brazil provided well over \$200 million per year in loan grants, Food for Peace, and local currency programs. This is probably equivalent to about \$10 billion a year in today's dollars. Many leftists in Brazil found the AID program offensive. They considered it essentially a program with "imperialist trappings" supporting an unwanted military dictatorship.

Included in the AID program in Brazil was a major effort to reform secondary education in Brazil. This was denounced by the Brazilian left as an effort to indoctrinate Brazilian youth and substitute American for Brazilian values in the school system. The Brazilian left also opposed efforts which the AID Mission was trying to carry out to improve the quality of the university education system, which was dominated by the Left. One program was intended to improve the training for university rectors and to build an association of Brazilian university rectors, linking them to equivalent rectors in the United States in an effort to upgrade the quality of university administration.

I was somewhat aware of these issues. I tended to be more aware of them than some of my older colleagues in the AID Mission, because of my contacts with younger Brazilians whom I had met. The Family Planning Program was seen by the Brazilian Left as a completely "imperialist plot."

We had some dynamic USAID programs going on, but not without vocal opposition. One of the people that I heard a lot about, although I did not get to meet him, was a very young professor of sociology in Sao Paulo, who was starting up a small, development organization. His name was Fernando Henrique Cardoso and he is now the President of Brazil. During the military region, like many Brazilians, he had Leftist and very socialist interests and outlooks. He has over time moved toward the middle of the political spectrum and he was elected in 1994 as a "moderate."

However, remember where Cardoso and others were coming from. They had seen the Brazilian military overthrow a democratically elected government by force in 1964. There had been a lot of repression of the opposition, with many young people "disappearing" - not as many "disappearances" in Brazil as there had been in Chile, but there were many such cases. It was fairly natural for many people in the university communities to be anti-military and to see the US as supporting the Brazilian military regime.

As I said, the AID program in Brazil was huge. It extended to virtually all sectors of society. It did a lot of capital development work and provided technical assistance. It was responsible for some wonderful programs in Brazil. Major hydroelectric plants were constructed with our funds and major road building programs were undertaken. The whole agricultural research network was established with our assistance and became the basis for Brazil becoming what it is now, an exporter of basic foods, rather than an importer. In terms of agricultural research, we trained hundreds of Brazilian agricultural scientists who are now the backbone of the whole agricultural research program in Brazil.

Other programs established included, as I recall, one called the Brazilian Institute for Municipal Administration, or IBAM, in Rio. When I returned to Brazil some 20 years later, in the early 1990s, it was still in existence. When I went to see the Director of IBAM, he reminded me that his own salary was initially paid for by AID. Almost all of the costs of his fledgling organization were initially paid by AID to help to get it off the ground. AID supported IBAM for almost 20 years until it became fully self-sufficient. Now IBAM provides excellent training for municipal government employees not only in Brazil, but also in other countries of Latin America, often financed by World Bank loans

*Q: Does IBAM have links to American institutions?*

PIELEMIEIER: Initially, there may have been. I think that the AID program in Brazil was quite effective. The quality of the program seemed to be good. We had hundreds of millions of dollars in local currency available each year, as well as money for loans and grants. There was a major food resource available. As I rotated around the AID Mission as an intern, including the "Food for Peace" office, I remember that there were at least five different "Food for Peace" programs dealing with such things as school lunches, maternal and child nutrition, and food for work programs. There were even programs to buy sorghum to feed animals and use that program as a basis for improving nutrition.

At that time the Amazon area was extremely remote. These food programs, such as a school lunch program in Manaus that I visited, may have been the only "donor programs" at that time to reach an area as isolated as the Amazon. Remember, this was the period from 1971 to 1973.

I rotated to different sections of the Mission as an IDI [Internal Development Intern]. I spent time in the Education, "Food for Peace" Program, and Capital Development Offices. I may have been assigned to a fifth office as well, but I can't recall.

*Q: Did you end up some place in particular?*

PIELEMIEIER: I ended up in what was then the Program Office. Meanwhile, Brasilia had been built as the new capital of the country. The Brazilian Government was encouraging all of the Embassies to move their offices to this new city in the middle of Brazil. This was a red clay area with not a single restaurant to be found and a cultural "waste land" compared to Rio de Janeiro. There was no beach within 1,000 miles and hardly anything to do. The U.S. Government decided that the AID Mission would be among the first major elements of the U.S. diplomatic mission to move to Brasilia.

Of course, within the AID Mission, some of the junior staff went first, including the Pielemeiers, after having spent almost a year in Rio, the most beautiful city in the world. So we packed our bags and moved to Brasilia. We moved into what was called a "Super Quadro," (Super-Block) a big apartment building owned by AID, which housed all junior and mid-level AID staff. It was a "compound" situation. This was about as far divorced from our Peace Corps experience and Peace Corps philosophy as possible.

I think that compound living worked out well for administrative and other personnel who didn't

speaking much Portuguese or who liked to live in an American setting. However, for some of the younger people this certainly wasn't where we were interested in living. It was especially hard on spouses.

My office in Brasilia was a combined Capital Development and Program Office. This was becoming a trend in AID. I worked on leading the project design process for an integrated health loan in northeastern Brazil, as well as some grant activities. To my lasting benefit, during my first assignment with AID, I learned the skills of a Program Officer as well as design and capital development skills.

*Q: You had learned to speak Portuguese by this point?*

PIELEMIEIER: I had received three months of Portuguese language training in Washington. My wife received one month of such training. I continued language training in Brazil, wherever possible, but never more than one hour per day. Nancy and I tried to use our Portuguese as much as possible, roaming around Rio de Janeiro. We became fluent enough to operate in both "business" and social situations, without any great problems.

The AID Mission in Brasilia was much smaller than it had been in Rio. It was more intimate, and there was a better work situation. However, some AID offices remained in Rio, and a third office in the northeastern city of Recife. It was headed by Donor Lyon, who had been in Brazil for several years.

Eventually, the resolution of the Vietnam War became more and more of an issue, and AID wasn't sure where it could find the resources needed to support what was expected to be a massive effort to underwrite a Vietnamese peace settlement. As I understand it, one of the outcomes of that situation was a decision to reduce the size of the AID Mission and the assistance program in Brazil. In part this was because Brazil was growing at the rate of 10% a year, with our help. The US was the largest source of aid funds, providing more than the World Bank or the IDB [Inter-American Development Bank] combined at the time. [This reduction in the size of the AID Mission and program involved not small but large amounts of money.] Eventually, over a period of two years the AID Mission in Brazil was reduced from 100 "direct hire" American employees to 30 or 40 people in this category. By 1967 the AID Mission to Brazil was closed.

*Q: Why was it closed?*

PIELEMIEIER: Basically, because Brazil had "graduated."

*Q: What does that mean?*

PIELEMIEIER: In most countries this involves a combination of a country no longer needing resources from AID and AID itself having too limited resources to finance and staff all country programs. In this case there was an attempt to continue linkages between Brazilian and American institutions. For example, Purdue University had a long time relationship with Vicosia agricultural university in the Brazilian State of Minas Gerais. Efforts were made to encourage the

continuation of that association, using a tiny amount of AID money. Agriculture was the primary area where those continuing linkages were fostered.

I wasn't in Brazil at the time the AID Mission was closed. I left in 1973 after two years. When I visited the country some 20 years later, in 1993, as the AID Representative to Brazil, I found that some of these relationships had continued even without continued AID funding. For example, many of the Brazilians who had studied at Purdue University were now professors at Vicosa University in Minas Gerais. There was an almost automatic, continued linkage which the Brazilian professors fostered themselves. The American professors at Purdue also wanted to keep these linkages going. They would try to find small amounts of money here and there to help to finance exchanges of professors and students as well as exchanges of technical information.

*Q: You went back to Brazil many years later as an AID representative?*

PIELEMEIER: That's right.

*Q: Maybe we can cover that later, but let's finish up with this period.*

PIELEMEIER: The AID program in the 1970s was primarily a government to government program. We worked through a central Brazilian secretariat in the Ministry of Planning. The AID Mission had some contact with private, voluntary organizations in Brazil and with other private sector activities, especially those involved in capital development type programs. For example, AID helped to establish the modern Brazilian stock market.

*Q: Were you involved in northeastern Brazil at all?*

PIELEMEIER: I designed a loan for an integrated health organization for three states in the northern part of Brazil, working with the AID office in Recife.

*Q: What was your impression?*

PIELEMEIER: Brazil was and still is a country of many contrasts. In the 1970s, the southern part of the country was already well developed, but the northeast was extremely poor. Most aid resources were channeled to the northeast for health, family planning, and education projects. However, some AID programs were nationwide in scope, and we had the resources to be able to handle them as well.

*Q: Any particular programs which were memorable or which you found particularly successful?*

PIELEMEIER: I was in Brazil for only two years as an International Development Intern. During part of that time I was involved in helping to design the health loan in northeastern Brazil. I remember doing other things, including working on the "Food for Peace" program, working with education, and performing general program work. I was impressed that school lunch programs, using donated American food, were an important factor in encouraging school attendance in the northeast and in the Amazon.

*Q: What was the health program in northeastern Brazil about? What were you trying to do in that?*

PIELEMEIER: At that time the program basically focused on "primary health care," that is, trying to encourage a system of "outreach." Brazil was like many Latin American countries at that time. Most of the government spending for health was on hospitals in the cities. So AID and other donors at the time were beginning to encourage the establishment medical facilities and services in rural areas, where most of the population lived. I think that AID was probably a leader in that effort in Brazil. Dr. Lee Howard, director of the Office of Health in Washington, visited Brazil and helped us with key issues in the new loan project. He was a very impressive and well respected figure in the field of international health. He looked like your friendly "family doctor." The AID program in Brazil before I arrived there helped to develop the whole San Francisco valley, which is now the "California" of Brazil. This area exports fruit all over the world. AID helped to finance the construction of hydroelectric plants and the damming of rivers, in addition to helping strengthen various agricultural activities and structures in the San Francisco valley program and in the northeastern part of Brazil.

*Q: Was there any pattern of issues and problems that you had to deal with?*

PIELEMEIER: My recollection is that the most significant issue was the political setting. The Left essentially saw AID as being "in bed" with the military government. For its part the military government was becoming slightly more democratized and slightly more open by the early 1970s. The period from 1971-1973 was a very heady time in Brazil with a massive amount of economic growth. Brazilians were like what Americans used to be in the 1950s - very optimistic and entrepreneured. Many people had ideas of starting a new business, constructing a new building, or going off to a new place and doing something different. It was a real "go go" time. At that time Brazilians emulated Americans in culture. They wanted to live in "ranch houses" and to emulate much of American culture. Middle class Brazilians in particular wanted to be like Americans.

Lower class Brazilians were left behind. Over time many of our programs tried to address the concerns of the people who had been "left behind." Many of the people in northeastern Brazil were leaving the countryside and moving to the cities of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

Along with a couple of other young people in the AID Mission, I wondered why AID was not involved in urban development. Many "favelas" [slums] were being created or had previously been developed in Rio and other cities. People were pouring into the cities. There were very few services available for them. There was a great demand for community development and services in the "favelas" in those areas.

As newcomers to AID, we wondered why AID did not have an urban development program. Well, AID had never been oriented toward urban development. It focused almost solely on rural development at that time and for many years subsequently. We decided to put together a working group to draft an urban development program. The term we used for this program was "FUD" [Friends of Urban Development]. This shows how young and inexperienced we were, with no sensitivity to public affairs. FUD has a bad connotation in English ("Old fuddy duddies") and

means something much worse in Portuguese. We made some initial contacts. The AID Mission Director gave us a little bit of money to play with. We sent Brazilians off to a few urban development conferences and did a little bit of training. However, the more we planned the clearer it became that nothing much was going to happen. AID/Washington and the Mission just weren't focused on urban problems.

The rural emphasis in AID was so strong that there really was no room for urban development. At the time, there was only a very small office in the Science and Technology Bureau of AID in Washington that dealt with urban issues. I think that Eric Cheywyn and Bill Minor needed that office at the time. They seemed to be the only people in AID interested in working with us.

*Q: How did you find working with Brazilian Government people?*

PIELEMEIER: It was not particularly easy. They were very bureaucratic at the time, not only at the central level of government but at the regional levels and in the states as well. Brazil has a federal system of government. Some of our programs involved working directly with the Brazilian states. However, I think that in general the Brazilian bureaucrats were simply bureaucrats, much like the case of India. They had copied the colonial bureaucracy without appreciating that the bureaucracy was supposed to provide services. Most bureaucrats at that time in Brazil worked for the government for only half a day. If they were doctors or lawyers, they had their own, private practices, where they would work during the afternoons. If they were teachers, they had other forms of activity to supplement government salaries. So Brazilian government service was, in effect, a part time job. Brazilian bureaucrats weren't paid very well, either. Maybe this was inevitable due to the financial and budgetary circumstances of the time.

One change that I should mention was that when Brasilia was established, many of the people who had staffed the federal government offices in Rio de Janeiro refused to move to Brasilia. So the jobs that they had formerly held became available. Who was willing to go to Brasilia? People from northeastern Brazil, for the most part. So there were many instances of people from the northeastern region who were willing to take the "risk" of going off to the middle of the South American continent to take up a job in Brasilia. Many of them may not have started very high up the bureaucratic ladder. However, because they were in Brasilia at the right time and they showed interest and dedication, they were steadily promoted. When I returned to Brazil 20 years later, I found many of these people in very high positions in the federal government - people who were born, raised, and educated in the northeast. By then they were quite important and successful people.

Not many "new cities" in the world have succeeded as well as Brasilia. Nigeria and Tanzania have never succeeded in moving their governments to a new capital.

*Q: Were there any class or cultural clashes or distinctions that were similar to the situation in Africa, including tribal differences? Was that an issue?*

PIELEMEIER: Skin color was an issue in Brazil. There are people who say that there are only a few blacks in Brazil. However, there are others who say that just about everybody has some black blood in his or her background. Brazil is remarkable in that there is a wonderful mixture of

racess. Just about everybody has ancestors from more than one ethnic background. There are Native Americans and immigrants from Africa, Europe, and Asia. Large numbers of ethnic Europeans emigrated to Brazil. Prior to World War II many Germans, Italians, and Jews came to Brazil. Since World War II, Polish, Russian, and Armenian groups have immigrated as well as large numbers of Japanese and Chinese. The country is filled with immigrants from various ethnic backgrounds. Brazil is much like the United States in this respect.

The last thing that I should mention about that era in Brazil is that from the time the Brazilian military took over the government in 1964, they wanted to inhabit the Amazon area. This was essentially done for two reasons. The first was to secure and protect their borders. Brazil includes at least half of the land mass of South America, but the military felt it could not defend its Amazon borders. The military regarded some of Brazil's neighbors as "Leftist" and didn't want those influences to be contaminating Brazil. Secondly, the Brazilian government was looking for space for the poor to go to, especially those people leaving the northeast. They were increasingly moving to the south and continuing to overpopulate the burgeoning cities. The government was trying to siphon them off to the Amazon area.

Some initial work on Amazon development was being done while I was in Brazil [1971-1973]. I believe that AID helped with some initial studies of resources and opportunities for the development of the Amazon. I remember seeing some AID-financed studies in this area. However, I don't think that we had a major role in supporting this effort because at that time AID funding was decreasing.

*Q: Are you referring to resettlement programs?*

PIELEMEIER: Yes, I was referring essentially to so-called "colonization" or resettlement programs. A major road was eventually built into the Amazon, called the "Trans-Amazon Highway." There were also plans to build a railroad into that area. People were being encouraged to live in "poles," or little "centers" or villages along the highway. However, the highway was practically destroyed after the heavy seasonal first rains. Many of these colonists, after they settled in the Amazon area, were essentially abandoned by the Brazilian Government. If they were able to produce anything for sale beyond their immediate needs, they were unable to get it to market. There were some major failures in this program.

However, over time, the Amazon population has expanded. By the time I returned to Brazil 20 years later I spent a good bit of my time in the Amazon, traveling to cities such as Belem and Manaus, each with well over a million people

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**Belo Horizonte (1972-1973)**

**Information Officer, USIS**  
**Sao Paulo (1973-1974)**

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*Q: Then, Brazil, you were in Brazil from when to when?*

VIRDEN: From 1972 to 1974. Our first post was a place called Belo Horizonte, the third largest city in the country, in the state of Minas Gerais. I knew nothing about it before I was assigned there, but that state alone is as big as France. Brazil has dimensions like that.

Linda and I went there as newlyweds in the spring of 1972, spent one year there and then were transferred to Sao Paulo for another year, that was '73-'74.

Belo Horizonte had been a U.S. consulate earlier, but then it had just -- I think a year or two earlier -- been closed and all that was there at that time was a USIS branch post. There was still a considerable need for consular services, so I asked the Consul General in Rio to send up consular officers occasionally, to schedule a time so they could deal with some consular matters.

Otherwise, it was a big city of almost two and a half million in those days, so it had a lot of things going on, political, cultural and educational, economic things, so there was a lot to do.

One occasion I remember was when Linda and I called on the great American poet, Elizabeth Bishop, who lived in a nearby town, the charming old colonial city of Ouro Preto, or "Black Gold." She had a house there; we arranged to bring her some books and we had a very pleasant chat over lunch. Later, in one of her prose pieces, she described being visited by "the young American consul and his even younger American wife."

*Q: Tell me, what was your impression; now you'd had a chance to look at Thailand and South Vietnam and all, what was your impression of Brazil, from the perspective of Belo Horizonte?*

VIRDEN: Well, this was really quite a new world for me, a different kind of work. Because there had been a consulate there, the residents still looked for a lot of the same kinds of services and representation that they used to get from the consulate, and they clearly felt slighted by our having reduced our presence. So I was engaged across the board, with the governor and the mayor and other politicians and some of the business leaders, as well as the academics and the media.

I had an American assistant and a Brazilian staff and we occupied the old quarters of the consulate. There was a whole wide variety of activities and it was very interesting, but, again, a

bit isolated, too, since there were no other U.S. government officials in the city or the state. Of course, communication was better than in rural Thailand; we're talking about a big city here, not a small town like Phitsanulok.

*Q: How stood Brazilian-American relations at the time?*

VIRDEN: They were somewhat tense, because this was military rule in Brazil in those days. The military had taken power in a move that the U.S. had some involvement with, allegedly, at any rate. That was back in the 60s. The military were still in power and would remain in charge for another decade or so.

We had Peace Corps volunteers in the country. The military rulers didn't like that and felt that the volunteers were kind of undermining their control by drawing attention to human rights abuses; that was a source of some tension. The Peace Corps in fact was kicked out of Brazil, a couple of years later, and we're not back there to this day, which is too bad, because it was a good thing for both countries and could be again.

Overall, the Brazilians were personally friendly to us, but with the top leadership there was that certain amount of tension.

*Q: Well, what sort of work were you doing?*

VIRDEN: Well, we had a bi-national center there that we supported, giving them resources, materials and so forth. They were teaching English and offering American cultural programs. We would bring in, on our own, guest speakers, and we had a very active Fulbright exchange program, in both directions, and were identifying candidates for International Visitor grants. We were also working with the media, giving them materials and interviews. So it went across the board.

I remember one time when the ambassador came to visit Belo Horizonte and we had to host a dinner for local dignitaries: the governor, the mayor, the heads of the major media organizations, the whole thing. The ambassador didn't speak any Portuguese at all and Linda, who was 25 years old at the time and had just taken a short course in Portuguese at FSI, put on the dinner while also doubling as interpreter for her table mates, the ambassador and the governor. It was kind of a baptism of fire.

*Q: Yeah! Who was the ambassador?*

VIRDEN: William Rountree. You know him?

*Q: Yes, I do. I think I've interviewed him. He served in a number of places.*

VIRDEN: Yes, and spoke various languages, but Portuguese was not one of them.

*Q: Did you find what we were trying to say about America, in a way, a hard sell? Brazil is a major country. Did they sort of brush you to one side, or what?*

VIRDEN: No, they wanted a lot more from us. They wanted a lot of everything. They were unhappy that the consulate there had closed.

They felt that they were a major city, the third largest in a very large country and capital of a large state with impressive mineral resources, lots of citizens who had gone to work in the United States, so a lot of contact. They were upset that we chose to close the consulate. They felt there was too much going on, that shouldn't have happened. So that was part of what we had to try to deal with.

The Vietnam War was still underway and they were against it; that was another factor in those days. And then of course they were under military rule and we were talking about democracy and human rights. Some blamed us for interfering, others for not doing more.

So there was all that tension at the senior political level. But in our personal relations with a wide variety of civilians there, we did not feel that; we felt great warmth, as natural allies, two large countries with mostly democratic tendencies and lots of personal ties, we did not feel personal hostility.

*Q: Did you find particularly, say, the students, the faculty of the universities, colleges, looked more towards Europe than towards the United States?*

VIRDEN: No, when they sent their children for education abroad, they sent them primarily to the United States. That was a well established tradition. Some went to Portugal, a few other places in Europe, Australia, but the primary place they wanted to go to study, in those days at least, was the United States.

*Q: Was the center of USIA activities in Rio, or was it in Brasilia, or elsewhere?*

VIRDEN: Well, the capital had recently been moved to Brasilia, and some of the embassies were dragging their feet about leaving the wonderful, lively, dynamic city of Rio de Janeiro to go to the new capital, which was out in the sticks.

We'd just gone through most of that migration and not too happily. Brasilia is really out there, way back in the upland plateau. The Brazilians made a bold decision to move there. This was around 1960 or so, when they decided to realize this ambition, which had been in their constitution even way back, to eventually do that.

Well, they decided it was time to go for it. The motivation, I believe, was fundamentally to secure their hold on the Amazon. They needed to develop the hinterland or else somebody would take it away from them, to put it in very blunt terms. So that was why they moved the capital from Rio.

Again, Rio, a great city and Brasilia at the beginning was just emptiness, there was nothing there. They built a capital out of scratch and if you go there to this day -- I was assigned there thirty years later, at the end of my career -- it still feels a bit unreal, an artificial city. It's now become a

fairly large city, but it still feels like an artificial construct, instead of one that developed naturally.

*Q: Yeah, I remember seeing a French movie, That Man From Rio or something like that, with Brasilia as a backdrop for this movie, but in its early days and sort of the red earth and all of a sudden these cement buildings sticking up in the middle of nowhere.*

VIRDEN: Yes, designed by a socialist architect, Oscar Niemeyer. Some critics said then that as a result it was a city without a soul.

But you were asking where USIS was based in those days. We still had sort of a big part of our operation in the former capital, Rio; portions were gradually being moved up to Brasilia, but with large consulates general in Rio and in Sao Paulo, we maintained a good presence in both of those cities.

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*Q: Sao Paulo of course is the engine that drives Brazil, in a way, isn't it?*

VIRDEN: Yes, and my second year in Brazil, during this period, we transferred to Sao Paulo, where I became the information and press officer.

This was a different sort of experience. Sao Paulo, even then, was a huge city. It was about ten million in those days; now it's almost double that, the metropolitan area, close to twenty million, one of the great metropolises of the world.

It's also the economic hub of South America. More than 400 of the Fortune 500 companies, our Fortune 500 companies, are based there, so it's a huge economic center.

Part of my work in those days was dealing with the press, working with Brazilian journalists who were trying to fight the censorship of the military government. For example, the country's leading newspaper was O Estado de Sao Paulo; when Estado's editors weren't allowed to publish an item, they would fill the blank spots with either classical poetry or food recipes, to let the people know that they'd been censored. Friends at the paper would sometime privately slip me the pieces that had been cut.

So that was part of what we were doing, keeping in touch with journalists, including dissidents. But Sao Paulo was a huge media center – big newspapers, publishing houses, news weeklies, nine television stations, even more radio stations – so there was plenty to do.

*Q: Did you, when you were in Belo Horizonte, to start with, you say the state where it's located is big as France. Did you get out and around much?*

VIRDEN: Yes, I did. The road system was pretty good, and it was possible to move around, to get to the old colonial towns, like Ouro Preto and the larger towns out in the western part of the state, like Uberlandia. In the south there was another city called Juiz de Fora, which was quite a

big industrial city.

Minas Gerais is a big state – it had about 12 million residents then -- that's important both politically and economically. There were some universities in the outlying areas, and meeting key people there, bringing them speakers, identifying candidates for our exchange programs, was all part of my job.

So in the year or so that I was there, I did get around the state a fair amount.

*Q: In Sao Paulo, had crime taken over as much as it has recently?*

VIRDEN: No. Of course, there was a good deal of crime even then, but not like today. The city didn't have -- at least that I remember -- it didn't have the reputation for violence that it has nowadays. I've heard a statistic when I was there in the early 2002 or 2003 that there is on average thirty violent deaths per day.

*Q: Good God!*

VIRDEN: Yes, and Rio has almost as many, proportionately, too. You had asked earlier about drugs. This is about poverty and the drug culture, a lot of the violence is tied to drug wars in the slums, or *favelas*, as the Brazilians call them.

*Q: Did we have programs designed to penetrate sort of the slum areas, or the equivalent, or particularly more the black areas and all that.*

VIRDEN: Well, we did. Over the years, we had a very large USAID assistance programs there, particularly in the poorest part of the country, which is the northeastern region, sort of the bump that juts out into the Atlantic over towards Africa.

Up in that area, the land is poor and poverty is pretty widespread. You have millions and millions of people there living below the poverty line, and AID over the years -- it waxed and waned -- but it used to have really large assistance programs. And in this era that we're talking about now, the early 70s, we still had a very large assistance program.

I remember years earlier somebody, the ambassador, presumably, had complained that the U.S. presence, including AID, had grown like Topsy. I think it was Frank Carlucci, then a young Foreign Service Officer, who was put in charge of cutting it down to size. AID at that time -- and again this is just a little before I was there and I don't know this from direct experience -- but they had people in every ministry of the Brazilian government, that's how embedded they were. The World Bank was also there, funding a large number of development projects, and of course, a big proportion of World Bank funding is American money.

So there were large assistance programs, of ours and the World Bank, in particular going on there, even under military rule. But they were more targeted on poverty and health, not so much on the crime issue, although that obviously played into it.

*Q: It seems, you've got this tremendous country, with lots of industry and all and yet in the time you're talking about it was really almost treated as a Third World country, wasn't it?*

VIRDEN: Well, it was a Third World country, or half of it was. The southern part, from Sao Paulo going south, is better developed, better land, more prosperous.

The classic study of Brazil was called *The Mansion and the Shanties*, a reference to the huge discrepancy between the rich and the poor. So as a generalization, the northeastern section was particularly poor and the southern section, Sao Paulo and points south, much more developed.

When we talk about my second tour, we can talk more about how that is changed now and particularly under the president who just left office, after eight years in power, with an 85% popularity rating.

*Q: Was there a problem of being part of sort of the American establishment in Belo Horizonte, or even in Sao Paulo, of being taken over by the well to do and all that?*

VIRDEN: Interesting question. There was a certain amount of that attempted. There was an upper class that tried to draw U.S. government representatives to their parties, into their social circle, for their own reasons.

It often had to do with getting a visa for a cousin or other relative. So it would be useful to have U.S. government people that you could go to if you had a problem. It was fairly transparent, not hard to tell who was trying to use you.

*Q: It had been more in the Sixties, but in the Seventies, we were trying to correct our racial policies and get more integration and all that and the Brazilians have always made a great to do about how they are a well integrated society and people who've served there all tell me "Hell, no, it wasn't that way at all."*

*How did you find that and sort of selling what we were doing?*

VIRDEN: Again, another excellent question. I agree with what I think you're suggesting: that the Brazilians were not nearly as successful at that as they would like to claim.

They didn't free their slaves until 1888, and most black Brazilians will tell you that, from that period to some extent still to this day, that they suffer discrimination. Claims that Brazil is a fully successful, fully integrated society don't really hold up.

They've made a lot of progress now, and they were making some progress in those days, but that discrimination still exists is undeniable.

Our own situation, okay, we're in the early 70s by this time, we have passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and we're just starting to see some African-American politicians making their way forward.

That's a story that Brazilians could see and judge for themselves, this was not something we could sell them on. We tried to simply present facts: we have had a problem throughout our history, we're working on it, we're making some progress, but we're not anywhere near declaring victory in this area. I think that remains true today.

*Q: You'd been basically off on your own pretty much during your career up to your transfer to Sao Paulo. Did you chafe under being in a big office, or have more fun, or how did you find it?*

VIRDEN: Yes, there was a bit of that on the job. Suddenly I found myself in a huge post, with lots of people around, multiple bosses, and that took some getting used to, but did I learn to adjust, yes.

I took away from my earlier assignments an appreciation for the independence of being out there on your own, and I urge other, younger, officers, if you get a chance to be a big fish in a small pond, when you have to make the decisions and carry them out, it can be an exhilarating and growing experience.

Learning to work as part of a large team was also a valuable experience, -- just in a different way.

*Q: You left Sao Paulo when?*

VIRDEN: Let me just add one note about Sao Paulo that's very important, on the personal side. While we were living in Sao Paulo we adopted our son Andrew, as an infant, in Curitiba, a city about a two hour drive south of Sao Paulo in the state of Parana. He became a Foreign Service brat, traveled with us everywhere from then on, and now lives in Minneapolis, where he just finished a graduate degree at the University of Minnesota.

*Q: Our kids loved it. They didn't go into the Foreign Service, but I think they all appreciated it. Not all kids adjust to it, but ours did, I know.*

VIRDEN: Well, that's right. I found that, in Andrew's case, it made him able to adapt to different situations and different cultures, even within our own country. Foreign Service kids tend to be good at that.

*Q: Where did you go after Brazil?*

VIRDEN: Well, I went to Washington for a couple years and then on to Poland. I left Brazil in September of 1974.

**FREDERICK L. CHAPIN**  
**Consul General**  
**Sao Paulo (1972-1977)**

*Ambassador Frederick Chapin entered the Foreign Service in 1952. His career included positions in Chad, Bolivia, Chile, and Brazil, and an ambassadorship to Ethiopia. Ambassador Chapin was interviewed in 1989 by Ambassador Horace G. Torbert.*

*Q: Sao Paulo is one of the three or four great consulate general in the world as far as importance and clout and size, I guess, for that matter.*

CHAPIN: Yes. As early as the 1950s, the Consul General had been given a career minister status which at the time was before career ambassador rank. But Senator Fulbright subsequently objected to the concept of having career ministers in Hong Kong and Sao Paulo and a few other places and, as a result, not my predecessor but the predecessor once removed was the last officer to have career minister status.

Meanwhile, the city and state of Sao Paulo had grown enormously. People don't realize what a metropolis it is -- including the satellite cities that already had a population of 12 million. The consular district had a population over 35 million at the time and the state of Sao Paulo alone represents 60% of the industrial production of Brazil and 25% of the agricultural production. It is the banking center and had overtaken Rio in that respect years before I arrived. It also publishes the two most important papers, O Estado de Sao Paulo, which is like New York Times, and Foya de Sao Paulo, which has the largest circulation and has very good commercial news. There is a paper like the Wall Street Journal, an edition called Gazette Americantile and the two weekly news magazines, Vesia, and -- the other one will come to mind. Anyway, they are like Time and Newsweek and are both published in Sao Paulo. It has many facets.

At the time, 1972, Brazil was in full scale expansion and we were just tapering off our economic aid program and loans were flowing in from the international lending organizations, the IBRD and the IDB -- the Inter-American bank. There were 500 American companies doing business in Sao Paulo city with plants, of course, located not only in the city but outside. They were opening new plants at least the rate of once a month.

The primary function of the Consulate General was commercial. This had not always been the case. In 1940, for example, the Consulate was not as important as the Consulate we had in Santos because all the coffee for the United States was going through the port of Santos and that was where all the steamers docked and you went up by railroad. Very few people traveled by air in 1940. In 1940, Santos had been the principal Consulate with those consular invoices on all the exports. Well, by 1972, the Consulate at Santos had long since disappeared and the commercial focus was on manufacturing in Sao Paulo and American firms were there. Ford and Chrysler had big manufacturing plants and all of the companies that made parts for the automobile industry as well as major chemical companies. There was a big petro-chemical development at Cubatao around the refinery. There was also a government owned steel mill. So the principal task was commercial.

The Department of Commerce had a requirement until several years before I went down there of developing an annual list of American firms, but they abandoned that and the result was that we had, as a Consulate General, lost contact with a considerable number of American firms. One of

the reasons was that the multi-national firms were moving from American managers to Brazilian managers and third-country managers. When I first got there in 1972 it was about divided and senior management about 1/3, 1/3, 1/3. But of course, over the six years that I was there many more Brazilians became top managers and there were quite a number of third-country nationals who headed operations.

These managers sometimes met at the American Chamber of Commerce but not always. Many of them were not members of the Chamber as I will explain. But they did not intersect in social or other circles. They knew their suppliers and they knew their customers and, of course, Sao Paulo was an enormous city. But aside from that, there was very little cross-communication. The American Chamber of Commerce, which had well over 1,000, almost 2,000 members both corporate and private citizens, included anybody who had any kind of commercial interest with the United States and wanted to be a member. Brazilian exporters to the United States and lawyers who had American clients and so on all belonged. The Chamber tended to be dominated by the very big American firms and the smaller firms would sometimes come to the monthly luncheons but did not tend to be active in the working of the Chamber. Many American firms simply decided they couldn't be bothered to join.

We developed this list of American firms by doing research through the telephone books and commercial associations and what not and, after a couple of years, I was able to go into the Executive Committee of the American Chamber on which I sat as honorary President of the Chamber and give them 3 notebooks full of names of companies that were not members.

*Q: Incidentally, was it called the American Chamber of Commerce?*

CHAPIN: The American Chamber of Commerce, Sao Paulo Branch.

*Q: It didn't irritate the Brazilians?*

CHAPIN: No, it was known as the AmCham and all of the economic cabinet ministers would come down from Brasilia and use the AmCham luncheons as sounding boards for many of their major pronouncements. Of course, the Ambassador would come down periodically every six months or so, and address the Chamber and set forth American economic or financial policy and Secretaries of the Treasury, on their visits to Brazil came to Sao Paulo and gave luncheon addresses. Secretary Connolly came the first year I was there and I had to rush the whole family down in June so that we would be there in time for the Secretary's visit.

Earlier that same year Governor Jimmy Carter and his wife had come down in a special aircraft to establish a Georgia trade office in Sao Paulo and that continued for many years. So one of my first tasks was to give a dinner for Governor Carter from which, at the last minute, many of his Georgians bowed out causing considerable disarrangement especially as my wife wasn't there to help cope. But two of the wives of junior officers were very gallant and stepped into the breach. One of them is a Vice President of Garfinkel's today.

I took Governor Carter around to meet the prominent people. He addressed the state legislature and, of course, called on the Governor and various heads of trade associations and people he was

interested in. Aside from that, he was very active personally with the local Baptist Church.

*Q: You had an early in with the new Administration in a sense.*

CHAPIN: Not really. I was able to take the Governor around. I was very impressed by him. The roundtables we had every two weeks in principle and, as I said, we had a cross-section of American companies and usually a lawyer, a member of one of the big eight accounting firms, and a bank representative. So we had three good experts and everybody was encouraged to talk about his or her company. It was mostly male executives discussing how they were doing, how their industry was doing, and what their problems were. As the Brazilian economy began to encounter some troubles, more and more import restrictions were imposed and import substitution was encouraged. On more than one occasion we had American companies who said, for example, "We are having difficulty importing glass syringes for these hypodermic needles that we sell." One of the people sitting around said, "Well, we have a patent to produce those in Brazil but we didn't find a market. Let us talk about it after the session." In another case, a manufacturer said, "Our real problem in manufacturing is the new plants that we have. We need better dust collectors." One of the fellows piped up and said, "Well, we are not manufacturing them here at the moment but we do manufacture them elsewhere and let us get together." So these served to bring people together as I mentioned.

There was little contact between the three different types of managers -- the Brazilians, the third-country nationals and the Americans. And so the lunches that were financed by the corporations and for which they earned brownie points with their headquarters was also an opportunity to bring these people together socially and for them to get to know one another and deal informally and exchange opinions. These roundtables also served as a locus for corporations to bring their senior management, who were often coming down for a plant opening or to see how the company with its extraordinary profits was doing.

One small American firm, privately owned, came down and made an investment of \$1 million. It had exactly one product -- to seal glass to aluminum frames. Of course, there was a huge construction boom in Sao Paulo. In the first year they made \$1 million in profit, exactly what their investment was. So there were extraordinary profits and corporate management was frequently coming down and banks were holding their annual meetings. David Rockefeller came down twice and the Bank of America, Jim Claussen, and Morgan Guarantee.

*Q: Did First Boston have an office there?*

CHAPIN: Not only did First Boston have an office there; they had a bank. Not First Boston, Bank of Boston.

*Q: Yes, Bank of Boston.*

CHAPIN: Bank of Boston had a big bank which did very well and we often had economists from that bank come to our sessions.

In the first years Brazil was such a market that one of the few things that I was able to bring with

me when I went down in February 1972 was the concept that the United States was going to open a regional trade center in Sao Paulo. Not only for Brazil but we hoped to attract people from Uruguay and Argentina and to a lesser extent Paraguay. But in usual U.S. government style the budgets kept being cut and Commerce Department for several years was unable to fund this while sending down senior officers to assure everybody that, yes, indeed we were going to have a trade center which we eventually did open. It lasted there for a number of years and lasted all during the time of the remaining years that I was there. It was a showcase and was a very good source of sales and U.S. participation in Brazilian trade fairs which were concentrated largely in Sao Paulo were also very rewarding to the American exhibitors. Either the Ambassador or I would open these trade fairs depending on his schedule and we had a lot of business supporting those participants.

As I mentioned, there was a big publishing center in Sao Paulo and USIS was busy placing material with these papers. I maintained relations with some of the people, notably the publishers, particularly the two brothers who published Oestaddo. I was able to get them into the residence of the Consul General for the first time in history to meet with our Ambassador. We did have some interchange. But they were mostly interested in international aspects of American policy and, while I did receive a number of policy briefing telegrams, I was not cut into the vast mass of telegrams on non-Brazilian and non-Latin American matters and certainly not on a timely basis. I received all the general, mail stuff which was very appropriate but was not the kind of thing that a major newspaper was interested in. So I was always behind the ball and they had very good informants and correspondents around the world. There was a limited role with the publications aside from the appropriate role that USIS posed.

I also did have to take over the responsibility in improving the management of the consular section because we were not getting any additional personnel and we were receiving enormous increase in non-immigrant visa applicants. Then we had files of some 20,000-25,000 American citizens who, at one time or another, had registered with us and there was a difficult security situation. In the beginning there was urban terrorism in Sao Paulo much like the Tupamaros on a vaster proportioned scale in Montevideo but, nevertheless, a serious threat and nobody had bothered to pull these files. I instituted a mass action of checking these 20,000 odd cards in order to have up-to-date addresses and weed out the people who long since had left Brazil. We had considerable consular activity.

The other thing that I did was to travel around the consular district which, as I said, had 35 million people in it and was as large as the United States east of the Mississippi. It originally took in not only the states of Mato Grosso and Parana but also supervisory responsibility over the consul we had down in Porto Alegre and Rio Grande do Sul and the state of Santa Catarina which, he being alone, really never got to.

The Brazilian government was then a military government but the heart of the opposition to the government parties, the NDB, was in the south in the more urban and developed areas of Brazil. I would travel the interior and visited all the cities over 1,000,000. There were some 22 when I arrived in the state of Sao Paulo alone. There were some 32 when I left and would make it a point of calling on the mayor and the official party. Then I insisted always on having equal time and trying to see the officially recognized opposition party. Naturally, I didn't deal with the

communists but the officially recognized opposition party I did try to see on every occasion. It was not possible in the beginning when I made my first trips around Sao Paulo state to find anybody who acknowledged that they were the organized leaders of the opposition party. But eventually the word got out and in subsequent years I did meet with people and those individuals became mayors of the cities and then some of them became governors of their states and senators. In fact, the governor of Sao Paulo is a man I first met when he was mayor of Campinas and everybody said he wasn't going anywhere and then he became senator and then governor and there he is -- a possible presidential candidate.

*Q: What was the system then? Did you report back to Rio or Brasilia or did you report directly to Washington?*

CHAPIN: It depended on the Ambassador and the pressure from various sides and his establishment at the Embassy. The theory initially was that we could report to Washington directly on any matters concerning my consular district so that the Sao Paulo reaction to this or that went directly to Washington. We didn't always report by telegram but sometimes by airgram but directly to Washington. Obviously any policy suggestions had to go through the Embassy and we were very careful to steer away from . . .

*Q: You sent drop copies, I suppose.*

CHAPIN: Oh, yes. They got immediate copies of the telegrams and then the section heads from the Embassy came down all the time to Sao Paulo -- the Political Counselor, and particularly the treasury attaché to deal with the various banks, and the Economic Counselor. We did have for several years the commercial attaché in Sao Paulo reporting to me and to the Ambassador on the labor matters. While there was a labor attaché in Brasilia, the trade unions and the day-to-day contact was through the labor officer that I had on my staff because that was where the bulk of the trade union was. Then at various times we had to feed everything but the simplest sort of thing out in political matters through Embassy Brasilia. Obviously on commercial matters and some economic matters we reported directly.

Now, there was an agricultural attaché in Brasilia -- the U. S. Department of Agriculture maintained two offices in Sao Paulo -- who did a lot of crop reporting and they did that directly to Washington on their own hook. We also had some debate over coffee reporting because there was a national employee in Rio who continued to do the coffee reporting and the coffee was all grown down in the Sao Paulo consular district and he never bothered to check in with the Consulate General in any form. The export trade, of course, was in Santos and there were, as far as the growers were concerned, some associations in Londrina, the second largest city of the state of Parana. I had my regular contacts and would report directly to Washington and to Brasilia on what my contacts said. I didn't elaborate beyond that but I would go and interview them periodically and what they had to say was often at marked variance with what the national employee was reporting from Rio. This led to some concern. I wrote a scathing indictment of the reporting by the Department of Agriculture which I sent to Brasilia pointing out many inaccuracies in their reporting and this caused a big brouhaha. The Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs in Washington, Tom Enders, had a fellow named Carlisle assigned to look into this coffee matter because accuracy in coffee reporting. We were an important importer and an

important member of the International Coffee Agreement. I thought it did matter that all views and not just the selected views gathered by a Brazilian national employee whose sources in my own consular district I knew nothing about. He would never pay me the courtesy of stopping by to see me to arrange his visits. In fact, often he didn't give any advance notice of his travel which was totally improper. I was anxious that all views be known to the United States government and I did represent the United States at the annual Guadajob International Coffee Conferences and had to know what was going on.

Political reporting, particularly developing contacts with the opposition took an important part of my time. I went each year on various trips -- north and south and then there was the state of Sao Paulo itself which is as big as West Germany, I would say that I was away on the average of about six weeks of the year. But I did tend to concentrate my travel in the years in which there were elections either local elections or national elections and provide the Embassy with a feel as we saw it from the countryside. We were able to maintain better relations with the president of the opposition party who came from Sao Paulo and who would come to lunch regularly while the Embassy would only see him every now and then.

**ALEXANDER F. WATSON**  
**Brazil Desk Officer**  
**Washington, DC (1973-1975)**

*Ambassador Alexander Watson was born and raised in Massachusetts and was educated at Harvard and Wisconsin Universities. In 1962 he joined the Foreign Service and was posted to the Dominican Republic, the beginning of an impressive career specializing in Latin American Affairs. His other overseas posts include Spain, Brazil, Bolivia and Colombia, serving as Deputy Chief of Mission in the latter three countries. He had several Washington assignments, the last being Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. From 1986 to 1989 he served as United States Ambassador to Peru. Ambassador Watson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.*

*Q: Alex, 1973 you went where?*

WATSON: That's when I left my position as principal officer in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil in our consulate there and came back to be the political officer on the Brazil desk in the State Department. In those days, AID and State were combined in the Bureau of InterAmerican Affairs of the Department. We had a fairly large office of Brazilian Affairs. Steve Low was the head of it and we had an AID guy as the number two person and then a couple of Foreign Service Officers and another AID person and a couple of junior officers and some support staff. It was a fairly large office.

*Q: Well, you did this from '73 to when?*

WATSON: It would have been late '73, probably August or September of '73, just before the

coup in Chile. Allende was overthrown by Pinochet. I remember learning of that while sitting at my desk after I joined the Brazil desk. I was there until about, probably about April of '75. So probably about a year and a half.

*Q: What were the issues? You had come out of Salvador and in a way you were now looking at a much bigger stage. What were the issues?*

WATSON: In Salvador, as I had mentioned before, I had the good fortune of having served in Brasilia before, knowing everybody in the embassy which at that point was still in Rio and having a broader perspective than I would have had had I gone directly to Salvador. I was pretty familiar with the broad range of issues that we were dealing with in Brazil. Just at this time, we had a change in ambassadors. Ambassador Rountree left and Ambassador Crimmins, John Crimmins, went down almost precisely at the same time that I was moving from Brazil to Washington, if I remember correctly. So, I'm trying to think... well, there was the issue... there was always the human rights question in Brazil under the military regime. The military came in in '64 and didn't really go out until '84 or '85. There were a lot of trade issues. I can't remember now, it was so long ago, which ones were the most demanding at that point, but we had shrimping issues and we had other issues. We had, I think, nuclear power issues because the Brazilians were developing a nuclear submarine. It never came to anything. They were working on things like that, which was a concern to the U.S. at this time. Nuclear proliferation was a legitimate concern. There was the tension between Argentina and Brazil on nuclear issues that today seems way in the past, but there was a point where it was considered to be as dangerous, if not more dangerous, than any in Pakistan, but with a potential spark point for a nuclear configuration. I'm not sure, without spending a little more time thinking about it, that I can come up with the other issues we were dealing with.

*Q: Well, we can always add to it. In the first place, with the new ambassador on hand, was there a new look at Brazil, do you think? Sometimes one gets used to the way things are and the new man goes out there...*

WATSON: I think Ambassador Crimmins was a very different personality, almost the opposite of Ambassador Rountree. Ambassador Rountree was one of the most conservative people we've had, and Ambassador Crimmins was much more liberal than he was. Mind you, this was all within a kind of Foreign Service moderation, neither one was a real radical in any respect. Yes, I think there was a much more activist approach taken by Ambassador Crimmins and a greater concern of the human rights question. We had an incident – I can't remember all the details right now, but it was very significant at the time – about human rights violations involving some American missionary types up in Recife, northern Brazil, at the time. It was something that the consulate in Recife was deeply involved in; that I was deeply involved in. I still had some contacts with some of those people from those days who were missionaries, who were appreciative of the things that we did to help them out. Ambassador Crimmins, of course, was engaged with them. He gave great importance to them. There was a different attitude on the part of the embassy.

*Q: On the missionary side, was this, do you recall, was this associated with, sort of, what is it, the liberation theology, or being more, or were these just missionaries that got in trouble?*

WATSON: No, it wasn't that. I really, at least this afternoon, am unable to recall that. I've got to really remember that it occurred. I can't remember exactly what it was about now. It's certainly recorded in the records. Rich Brown, who was up there at the consulate at that time, knows all about it, too.

*Q: We're talking about the Nixon/Kissinger period still here when you came on, you say human rights.*

WATSON: That was the last year that Nixon...

*Q: Yes. When you say human rights, was this a word, I mean, a double word in those days, or was it...?*

WATSON: I kind of remember something that was interesting. Human rights were a major foreign policy objective in the United States; defense of human rights and respect for human rights. It was an issue already at that point and if I'm not mistaken it was led in the House of Representatives by Tom Harkin, now a senator. Harkin and some others were really pushing this issue. In the Ford administration, which of course succeeded Nixon, there was an establishment during the Ford administration. If I'm not mistaken, congress imposed upon the administration a requirement to produce a human rights report. This was before Carter; people forget this. In the Ford administration is when you had to start putting together the first human rights reports for congress. This sounds pretty routine now, but that was a brand new requirement. It was highly criticized in a lot of countries that didn't want their human rights record unnecessarily propagated all over the world. Even people who didn't have human rights difficulties were not happy to have the United States sitting in judgment over them and writing reports on this. The executive branch wasn't too pleased with having to, in many respects, come to spend more time on this than other reports for the congress. By the time President Carter came in '77, he seized upon this in the campaign and an assistant secretary position for human rights was created. Patt Derian went into that. I think that that position was actually created during the Carter administration, but I could be wrong. It might have even been created before Carter came in.

*Q: I sort of suspect it was before it was refugees and human rights together.*

WATSON: Maybe that was it.

*Q: What happened was we shucked the refugee side and concentrated on human rights, which gave it more power?*

WATSON: Yes and Carter made it a more explicit part of his foreign policy in general, but I think what people do forget is that the first, the real impetus for this within the U.S. government actually came from the congress. My recollection is that Tom Harkin and plenty of other people as well, but I remember Tom Harkin being a leader on this in those days. That's something of course we had to deal with on the Brazil desk with a military regime. And other kinds of human rights considerations and the arbitrariness of the government and the weakness of the institution that were trying to protect people's rights in Brazil.

*Q: Here you are on the desk. How did you come up, I mean I'm sure it was a negotiating of all these things were sort of negotiating, these human rights reports, but early on this must have been something that you kind of wish would go away because it's only going to cause problems.*

WATSON: You know it's hard for me to recall now what my attitude was then, but it probably was something like that. I don't know. I sort of wish it weren't, but my guess is probably I viewed it as a slight imposition. My sidekick David \_\_\_\_\_ actually had to do the report. My deputy who was in the political part of the office at that part although I'm sure I reviewed it carefully and had many other eyes.

*Q: On the nuclear issue, what was spurring Brazil and Argentina to go this way? I mean you look at, there's not a hell of a lot of border. There hasn't been an Argentine and Brazilian war.*

WATSON: I don't think it was that. I think and in fact I think in each case it had originally much to do with the other one. It has to do with the big power status. If you consider yourself a big power in those days the big powers had nuclear weapons. If you wanted to enhance your negotiating position on a variety of issues and your power in the world, \_\_\_\_\_ to which other countries took you, so went the belief, it would be good to have nuclear weapons. Both of those countries harbored those sorts of aspirations and thought well, we've got to get into this nuclear business. Then of course it ends up with side by side that people are concerned they will, what the heck do these guys want them for, what will they use them for, well they might use them on each other. It was always a kind of an intense, not hyper tense, relationship between the two countries. I think that the idea that there would be a conflagration now between the two was probably fairly remote, but you have to remember that any possibility at all was considered enormously serious and threatened the world peace and the welfare of everybody at that time. The Brazilians, meanwhile, were busy building these nuclear reactors for the generation of electric power down south of Rio using German technology. The U.S. was endeavoring to prevent that from happening and unable to persuade the Brazilians and unable to persuade the Germans and, in the process, annoying both of them. We were fearful that this was out of control and would end up leading to weapons. Again, I don't remember all of it; it was a long time ago.

*Q: As you're looking at Brazil, particularly at this time when you're looking at the whole country of Brazil, under the military regime, my reading, it sounds like a significant number of ill conceived very large projects, dams, nuclear things, roads and all this.*

WATSON: The Amazon highway that started under President \_\_\_\_\_ who was in office most of the time I was in Brazil. He \_\_\_\_\_, more or less when I left Brazil and then the Amazon highway. He built projects in Latin America \_\_\_\_\_ projects like the \_\_\_\_\_.

*Q: I've seen that. I mean, once this... you had AID people. Were we looking back and saying, my God they're wasting their resources on these pyramids?*

WATSON: Well, I'm sure we did think that, but there's not much we could do about it. Some of these things, you know, the press was under some kinds of restriction in Brazil. Congress wasn't functioning at this time and so these things were generally things like the \_\_\_\_\_ Amazon

highway, were generally accepted as good things. The \_\_\_\_\_ expression of major power status, here we are, the Amazon is ours, and we're going to dominate this thing and take advantage of it. The Brazilians had always had an irrational or a certain fear that somehow the United States would snatch the Amazon away from them. That blossomed even a few years ago when we were doing some military exercises in Guyana, of all places. Then a little while later in Argentina and there was a hysteria in the Brazilian press fed by certain military elements that this was the U.S. trying to ring Brazil and seize the Amazon and stuff like that.

*Q: Every time we touch the Amazon it seems to bring out this... It's the equivalent to today's black UN helicopters to people who feel that the United Nations flaunt Americans \_\_\_\_\_.*

WATSON: I think that, I will in a few sentences try to analyze that, but I think there were a lot of factors. One is that the Amazon, everyone has told the Brazilians that the Amazon is unique and wonderful since the beginning of time. Half of all the fresh water in the world runs down the Amazon, things like that, gigantic descriptions of the importance of the Amazon. Two, nobody knew anything about the Amazon, so it becomes even more mysterious and wonderful than if you actually knew about it. So, you have all kinds of ideas about the tremendous potentiality of it and anything else you want to say, but based very largely on nothing. It's not very good for agriculture, the soil is very thin, you strip away the tropics, the plants drop their leaves over time and those leaves are what constitute the humus in the soil. You cut the trees down to convert it into agricultural land, that process does not go on, the soil is thin, you wear out its nutrients very quickly and then you've got to move on and the winds come in and it's gone and that's what happens. They argue that it's a valuable hydrant of water resources and things like that. So, the combination of the fact that it is perceived to be very important and you don't know very much about it, the idea that nation building constitutes like it did in this country, this is not the majority about Brazil. As sort of an insight, you've got to do something about it. Remember in these days in Latin America most of these countries with military regimes spent a lot of time on national security theories. These were national security states where the preeminent objective of the government was to ensure national security. Then you've got all these countries like Surinam and Guyana and Venezuela and Colombia, even maybe Ecuador even though it's a little remote now and Peru and all and Bolivia, all these countries out there around Brazil, butting Brazil in the Amazon region one way or the other. You have no ability to defend yourself or to keep them out not that anybody wants to come in or anything like that. Just thinking in the most theoretical terms you have no imaginable line or any other defense, no radars, no anything; and that your military person is speaking in terms of national doctrine, that is something that also prompts the potential to this area. Finally, I think there was always the fear – and I think I might have mentioned earlier when we were on Brasilia – there was a fear that somehow the more advanced industrialized countries had technologies which would allow them to be able to discover, before the Brazilians did, natural resources – particularly mineral resources in the Amazon – before the Brazilians could. By the time the Brazilians found out about it, these foreign firms would already be in there somehow exploiting it. So, all of this contributed to a sense of great importance given the Amazon and a great nervousness about Brazil's inability to manage it and the danger that that would bring about in terms of exploitation by others one way or another.

*Q: I'm sure at the time our concerns were raised, we would have the American \_\_\_\_\_ of the west thrown in our face?*

WATSON: I don't even remember the U.S.'s expressing much formal concern over the trans-Amazon. I don't remember talking about that. I think we sort of viewed it as kind of an extravagant project, very difficult to maintain the roads in those kinds, in tropical jungle climate. If you don't have very well constructed roads in the first place, then the system of maintenance was ongoing all the time because of the rain and the road was not going to be surfaced. It gets muddy real fast and to surface it would be much more expensive and even then you've got to be looking for undermining by rivers and you've got, and plants would grow right back over this if you don't use it and it was quite a huge enterprise. I think, my recollection is, I could be wrong; it was a long time ago. We didn't make much noise about it. We were mainly concentrating on the bilateral issues. I remember Ambassador Rountree saying we had seven or eight bilateral issues and we had dealt successfully with virtually all of them by the time he had left, but right now I can't recall what they all were.

*Q: Did you have much contact or was it Steve Low who dealt with the Brazilian embassy?*

WATSON: I dealt with the embassy a lot. I knew the ambassador very well. He had been the foreign minister under \_\_\_\_\_, which was the government that promoted the military to stage the coup in 1964. He was a good friend of mine. We got along well. His daughter married a young man from Massachusetts who was an aide to a congressman and then became a congressman himself at that time. His sons are diplomats now, ambassadors as well. We got along very, very well, he and I. I think that with all due respect to my colleagues, I was probably considered the most Brazilianized of the folks in the State Department, having spent a lot of time not in the diplomatic community of Brasilia or something like that, but in the interior, if you will, on the coast, interior, meaning non-capital areas of the country. I knew a lot about the countries I mentioned before because of my time at Wisconsin, and spoke Portuguese well. I knew lots and lots of people because hardly anybody of any importance came through Bahia. They didn't drag out the American Consul as being a personage of some significance even though it was only me, so I had a chance to meet lots of people there, including the guy who eventually became foreign minister.

*Q: How well did the Brazilian Embassy play the Washington scene? I mean, some embassies don't really understand congress, the media, the White House as well as others do.*

WATSON: I would say in those days they were just becoming aware of the need to play it better, but they still weren't playing it better. I mean, recently they've been doing extremely well. Their ambassador, their last ambassador, was an old friend who I met many times when he came to Bahia when he was a mid-level Foreign Service Officer and later when I was the Deputy Chief of Mission, he was the number two man and the Secretary General of the foreign ministry and then he was ambassador. He was extremely active all over town, knew everybody. But they also had now created sections in their embassy for people who deal with human rights, people who deal with the environment, people who deal with NGOs, people who deal with the congress, people who deal with commercial matters and things like that. In those days we were just, they were still in sort of a classic, if you will, European embassy mode, but they were smart enough to realize that in this crazy town they needed to have many more tentacles and feelers out than they did in areas that were non-traditional and therefore resisted by the bureaucracy outside of the

foreign ministry, but I think they realized they were having to do that.

*Q: Were we making noises during this period about the “when are you going to get back to democracy” and all that, or was this pro-forma, or was this serious?*

WATSON: After the Medici regime ended – that was the most conservative – it was the third of the military governments and it was the most conservative I think. Then they went to Geisel who was probably the most liberal of them all, who had been associated with a faction of the military who wanted to return the country to democracy, and he basically did that. He put that in place. Now, he himself was highly nationalistic, did a lot of things the U.S. government didn’t like, was an authoritarian personality in many ways, but understood the need for the country to move back to civilian democratic government and set in place the pieces that moved toward that. His term ended. The last of the military government was João Figueiredo, who was chief of intelligence and under Geisel. They had elections in ‘84 and ‘85. We have produced Tancredo Neves as president, but he was so ill that he could not be sworn in and he died shortly thereafter and his vice president José Sarney was sworn in and then succeeded the presidency. It was kind of funny. There was a vice president sworn in, but no president. The president who would have been sworn in died, and the vice president succeeded him. That was, I’m getting ahead of myself.

*Q: Did you have any feeling about the State Department under Henry Kissinger that resulted, did not rank very far? I mean there was the sort of thing that... “You fellows take care of Brazil and don’t bother me at all”?*

WATSON: I don’t think... I wouldn’t say I saw anything that would confirm that. That may have been the case, but I don’t remember seeing anything like that. I remember under Kissinger, the habit of writing verbatim notes in all meetings came in. He wanted notes on everything. I remember attending a meeting between the Brazilian ambassador, Bill Rogers, who was then assistant secretary of InterAmerican affairs, Henry Kissinger and I. I think that was the group. I don’t think anyone else was in the room. I remember when we walked in the room, Kissinger said, “how are you Mr. Ambassador?” “I can see that, once again, it takes three Americans to handle one Brazilian.” Ha. Ha. I scribbled my notes during the meeting and ran downstairs and typed them up as fast as I could and got them up to Henry’s flock of people who took care of these kinds of things. I remember the process that I took enormously seriously; I was scared enough not to get a single word wrong, because I had no shorthand skills. It was kind of ridiculous. I thought I’d have writer’s cramp for a week after that and then typed them up. Actually, I’m not bad at that. With the previous memory that I did in those days, I was able to do that, but that was kind of interesting. I don’t think Latin America was unusually high on Kissinger’s agenda. He was quoted as saying Latin America and South America was a dagger pointing at the heart of Antarctica and things like that. But on the other hand I don’t remember his saying anything as you just suggested or doing anything, he treated these guys with great respect.

*Q: You mentioned you had just arrived on the desk when the Pinochet takeover in Chile came. Did this send shockwaves around from what you gathered, particularly in Brazil? Was the feeling that the United States was implicated in this at all?*

WATSON: Being on the liberal political spectrum myself, I was disturbed, to say the least, about the Pinochet coup. I can remember that. It was no secret that the U.S. was enormously displeased with what was happening in Chile. It was a mess. Allende was not in control of his own government, all the economics were out of control, he was not a communist, he was a socialist, and the communists were in key positions and the whole thing was a mess. He was losing public support and everything. There were lots of reports of the U.S. involvement or incitement or what have you. The truth is now still filtering out as to the extent to which the U.S. might have influenced in one way or another, but I remember being disturbed by it. I just remember it as a very dramatic and important event that took place just after I got back to Washington.

*Q: You were there until '75. Did the advent of the Ford administration make any difference?*

WATSON: Unless I'm mistaken, Kissinger stayed on as Secretary.

*Q: He did.*

WATSON: It didn't make much difference to the State Department. I think, I don't recall it making much of a difference in the foreign policy concerns from my perspective. Needless to say, the circus of Watergate went away when the president resigned, so Washington had a distinctly different mood.

*Q: Were you trying to explain Watergate to the Brazilians here at all? Were they as confused as everybody else was, including Americans?*

WATSON: No, I don't remember spending any time talking about that. It wasn't my job. They could analyze it as well as I could. Remember at that point what was going on was a series of revelations— John Dean, Mitchell and all those people. I had my own perspective of it. I knew instinctively, absolutely instinctively, from the outset that Nixon was deeply involved and Mitchell ran the thing. I had no evidence for that, but I just knew it in my gut. My visceral dislike of Nixon, just the lack of respect for his character, led me to this conclusion and it happened to be right. It was based on prejudice and evidence and watching this horrible drama unfold was really quite fascinating. I remember when it was announced on my birthday that he was leaving, and I think it was the day after. It's hard to imagine now, even in the wake of the Clinton saga with Ms. Lewinsky how gripped this town was by the Watergate, much more so than the Lewinsky thing, because it was much more serious. Much more serious.

*Q: The other one was sort of stupid.*

WATSON: Stupid and childish dalliance with perhaps, according to some people, some sort of a perjury or other failure to tell the whole truth while sworn before a court of law, but here we have the president of the United States running a criminal operation of breaking into peoples' offices and houses and stealing things from them and then lying about it and getting the FBI and the CIA to cover for them. It was no comparison between the significance of the two things.

*Q: By '75 you had finished your term there.*

**ANTHONY G. FREEMAN**  
**Chief of the Political Section**  
**Sao Paulo, Brazil (1973-1976)**

*Anthony G. Freeman was born in Newark, New Jersey, and went to high school in New Jersey. He has attended Rutgers University, Princeton University, and Woodrow Wilson School. He served in the U.S. Army in 1956 overseas and later became a Foreign Service Officer in 1961. Freeman held positions in the following countries: Argentina, Spain, U.S., Bolivia, Brazil, and Italy. He was interviewed by Don Kienzle on February 7, 1995.*

FREEMAN: So that took me to mid-1973, and then in September I went out as Chief of the Political Section in the American Consulate General in Sao Paulo, Brazil. There was a labor officer assigned to me there named Jesse Clear, who was designated as assistant labor attache for the country and who coordinated with the labor attache for Brazil, then based in Rio de Janeiro (Jim Shea). Maybe at a cocktail party I would get to meet one or two of Jesse's contacts, but I didn't know many of the labor people there in Sao Paulo. I was there for three years, from 1973 to 1976, and then I decided to take a labor assignment which was opening up in Buenos Aires, which had been my first post.

So I went back to Buenos Aires in August 1976 and stayed there until mid-1980. I went there as a labor attaché but became acting political counselor for a while when the political counselor was sent on detail back to Washington. I think I was acting political counselor for the good part of a year. That was a very interesting assignment, because, as I told you earlier, I had been in on the ground floor in developing contacts with the Peronist labor leaders, and many of the guys I had met then were still around. It was like old home week. I gained easy access to lots of people on the trade union side. It was known among the politicians that the U.S. Embassy had an active Labor Attaché, who knew Argentina better than most Americans. People often called me out of the blue asking for an appointment. I had some fascinating experiences there, including some risky ones.

The situation in Argentina in 1976 was that the military had overthrown the government of Isabel Peron by coup in March. Juan Peron himself had died the previous year. It is hard for me to reconstruct this all now from memory, but there were two armed leftist insurgencies against Mrs. Peron's government. There was a Trotskyite, leftist-guerrilla, pro-Castro kind of movement, known as the ERP, and there was a more nationalist band of leftist urban guerrillas of Peronist origin known as the Montoneros, who had turned against Mrs. Peron's government. Mrs. Peron's government had dealt with this challenge in a shadowy, Machiavellian way. A close aide of hers named Jorge Lopez Rega, from his post in the government, created a clandestine right-wing group of off-duty policemen known as the "Triple A" to assassinate the leaders of the leftist insurgency. In effect, there was a civil war going on between left-wing and right-wing Peronists. The government was inept and corrupt and became successively weakened. In March 1976 the Armed Forces overthrew the government of Mrs. Peron and created a military junta in order to fully take charge of the war against the leftist insurgency and also to restore the economy which

had been undermined by Peronist economic policies.

There was a proliferation of Argentine military intelligence services and they all practiced deception. I don't know how many different intelligence services they had. Maybe thirteen or something like that. Every armed force had its own intelligence service: The Navy, the Army, the Air Force, the Federal Police, the Gendarmeria. Even the Coast Guard. They were all operating there.

The right-wing of the Peronist trade union movement included the guys that I knew best and had cultivated early on. On my first tour we had worked with a different element, the Frondizi-coopted types. But over time we also came in contact with the right-wingers, too. By this time, many of the right-wing labor leaders had been coopted by, or eagerly joined, the intelligence services to fight the left-wing Peronists.

So there was a kind of Peronist civil war going on. And some of these Peronists were actually government agents, who were contract thugs for the government sub-rosa. Many of the killings were between Peronists of the left and Peronists of the right. Of the latter, some were on the payroll of one or another intelligence service. Quite a few top leaders of the Argentine trade union movement were killed this way during this civil war. And some of these killings were contract killings ordered or approved by the government intelligence services. It was not just a civil war. The military government helped to stimulate and paid for this, and many of the bodyguards of the government leaders were from the Peronist right-wing.

Peronists of both the left and right were anxious to maintain contact with the American Embassy and tended to gravitate towards me, because I was the labor attache and easily accessible. At the same time, we had officers in the Political Section assigned to human rights; and the more middle class left-of-center victims of the repression tended to gravitate towards them. By now, the human rights policy of the Carter Administration was in full swing and there were strong denunciations out of Washington concerning the violations of human rights in Argentina. The first signs of a human rights policy actually had surfaced a bit earlier in the Nixon Administration when I was in Sao Paulo, and I had gained some experience as political officer cultivating middle class liberal opponents of the military regime in Brazil, expressing U.S. concern about the heavy-handed military repression there.

But the Carter Administration's strong emphasis on human rights policy was not the only U.S. interest in Argentina. We didn't want to see the leftist guerrillas tortured to death and then "disappeared" in secret operations, let alone innocent civilians labeled as terrorists, arbitrarily detained and then disposed of in the same way, but I believe we recognized it was in the U.S. interest to see the guerrilla threat eliminated. We wanted the guerrillas dealt with by rule of law and some semblance of due process. When I say "we" I mean the US government. It's conceivable there may have been some people in the Administration in Washington who harbored a more benign view of Argentina's rebellious youth, but professionals in the State Department (and certainly the Pentagon) saw the guerrillas as a threat to US interests in Latin America. The political model they appeared to vaguely espouse was some kind of collectivist or totalitarian society, whether of the radical left or right or some hybrid thereof, and they used terrorist methods. They were the enemies not only of the current military dictators of Argentina,

but also of the liberal democratic tradition in Argentine political history, represented by the civilian governments Argentina had known in the past. They were clearly anti-American. If they ever succeeded in attaining power, there was no doubt they would take Argentina on an anti-American, "anti-imperialist" path, whether directly into the Cuban-Soviet orbit outright or into the "non-aligned" camp. And so it was in our interest to see them defeated, but we preferred this done by civilized rules and not the way the Argentine military and police were doing it. As far as I can remember, however, U.S. concern over the latent threat represented by the insurgency was not articulated publicly. This may have been "signaled" or intimated in informal (and possibly even unauthorized) conversations between Embassy staff and Argentine government and military officials, but I don't think publicly. I would need to research this to be sure my reflections on this point are accurate but, officially, I think, the U.S. took a hands-off posture as to this internal rebellion in Argentina and the government's decision to defeat it militarily, except to express concern over the human rights aspects.

The Argentine counterinsurgency was carried out in good Machiavellian fashion. I had the notion of a great deal of deception going on and imagined there were operations where Army units pretended to be from the Navy, or vice versa, just to hide their unit's identity and defend themselves from any future acts of retribution (or justice). The intelligence services would hire thugs, who did a lot of the underground killing that went on. "The Dirty War" as they called it. The French had started this kind of thing in Algeria, I think, and I suspect the Argentines had learned from the French how to do it. This was their operating style, and there were trade union elements right in the middle, either on one side or the other. Some of the labor leaders were suspected of harboring sympathy toward the guerrillas and some were with the government, or at least they were against the guerrillas. And I had opportunity to meet some of the thug types.

As head of the Political Section, I oversaw the human rights work for a time and had some personal experiences trying to protect people's lives. On one occasion during a Congressional visit, Congressman Ben Gilman (R.-NY) asked to see newspaperman Jacobo Timerman, who had been seized at his home a few months back by police and was under detention. The Embassy arranged this and I accompanied Gilman to this meeting. We met with the Minister of Interior, General Harguindeguy, and then he had Timerman brought into the room. When I asked Timerman in the Minister's presence how he was, he answered he was all right "now". Timerman's meaning was clear. He had not been tortured recently. I have recently seen a copy of the cable I did reporting this meeting, which has since been released under FOIA. Frankly, I had forgotten some of the details including the fact that it was Gilman who had generated this meeting. My recollection was that the meeting was connected with a visit that Assistant Secretary Derian was planning to make to Argentina. She too wanted to interview Timerman and hoped to effect his release. Harguindeguy was concerned that Timerman's detention could lead to sanctions by the U.S. against Argentina and he apparently agreed to produce Timerman for Gilman, to demonstrate that Timerman was an officially registered prisoner, in good health (more or less), and he would be dealt with in an accountable way. Harguindeguy's concerns were heightened by a rumor that Timerman and Pat Derian were actually family-related. For me, that was just a base, anti-Semitic, barracks-type joke, but my recollection is that Harguindeguy wanted to appear to be forthcoming to the Americans on the eve of Derian's visit.

*Q: He was this newspaper man?*

FREEMAN: Yes, he was a newspaper man. Jacobo Timerman, a well-known journalist and editor of Jewish origin whose disappearance became a cause celebre in human rights circles in the U.S. and in the American Jewish community. On instruction from the Ambassador, I also accompanied a local Argentine representative of the American Jewish Committee named Jacob Kovadloff to the airport one evening to make sure he got out of the country without incident. He had been receiving threats. The papers and manuscripts he had with him were inspected by the police before he boarded the plane, but they let him go. So human rights was very much a concern of the United States as reflected in our official pronouncements and demarches to the Argentine Government. However, behind the scenes there was a problem festering between Jimmy Carter's Assistant Secretary for Human Rights, Pat Derian, and Ambassador Castro. She felt he wasn't pressing the Argentines hard enough.

*Q: Who was the Ambassador?*

FREEMAN: Raul Castro, who was a very interesting character. He was first appointed ambassador during Lyndon Johnson's administration, as I recall, but his ambassadorial appointments spanned several administrations. Buenos Aires was his third post. He had been my ambassador in Bolivia after Henderson, and when he arrived in Buenos Aires he was happy to have on board a familiar face who had served him in a previous post. I had a good relationship with him. He was a man's man, a guy with a tough *hombre* exterior, and I much liked the guy even though I didn't always agree with his (conservative) politics. Born in Mexico, he had been a boxer at one time, had worked his way up the hard scrabble way, emigrated to the U.S. and had become a citizen. He became a lawyer and a judge and was active in Democratic party politics in Arizona, eventually serving as Governor of the state before his first ambassadorial appointment. On one occasion in Bolivia he had been asked eagerly by a group of Bolivians whether he too was a "mestizo". "Hell, no", he said, he was "pure indio". (This went down very well in Bolivia, but later not so well with the "aristocratic" Argentines). On another occasion after the Gulf Oil Co.'s concessions were dramatically nationalized by the Bolivian military, he was on the phone in my presence answering somebody's questions and he said, "and we've just landed the Marines in Valparaiso and they'll be up here by tomorrow." It wasn't true, of course. Perhaps it was for the benefit and consternation of any Bolivian wiretappers listening in, or maybe he was just venting his macho side. You can't but like a guy like this. After the Foreign Service he returned to Arizona and was elected Governor again, but was implicated in some kind of political coverup of a criminal investigation while in office and I think he went to jail after that for a time. Anyway, he was a very picturesque and likeable character with lots of moxie. He liked me and we got along great, but he wasn't terribly sympathetic to traditional worker concerns. I had some arguments with him over labor issues, but he certainly supported my efforts to cultivate and report on the Bolivian and Argentine trade union movements.

And, as I said, I also oversaw the human rights reporting for a while and there were some differences which emerged between him and Pat Derian, because she didn't think he was doing enough in Argentina to rein in the military government's excesses. The Embassy's reporting and some State Department statements dealing with the human rights problems in Argentina during this period have recently been made public as a result of a FOIA action. It reveals that the volume of Embassy reporting on the detentions and other human rights violations was quite

staggering and that all the key elements of the Embassy were engaged in this effort, including the Ambassador who, as per instructions from Washington, intervened personally on several occasions to make demarches to Argentine military authorities on behalf of individuals who had been arrested or “disappeared”. But Patricia felt the Ambassador wasn’t doing enough. I think there was a question as to whether there was a pro forma or routine quality to the Embassy’s demarches. The regime responded now and then by “throwing us a bone”, that is, producing (and saving) this or that prisoner when it recognized the pressure from the US was particularly intense. Also, there is some evidence in the record that the regime began reducing the number of “disappearances” after a certain point and ballyhooed this to the Embassy as an “improvement” in response to US wishes. But I’m not sure this wasn’t just a reflection of the fact that the regime had largely achieved its objective and the “dirty war” was winding down anyway. If the US didn’t do more, I’m not sure the blame should be put on the Embassy. If the US really wanted to put the screws to Argentina, I think it could have done much more in the way of economic sanctions, but that would have been Washington’s call, not the Embassy’s. Nevertheless, I think there was a certain degree of rankling on the part of the Ambassador as a result of the pressure he was under from Washington and this showed in his body language. There were also internal tensions within the Embassy on these issues. One officer in particular who was assigned the human rights portfolio came under fire in the Embassy because he appeared to be following instructions from the Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights Affairs more than those of his own Ambassador. This officer was fearless in terms of going out, at some personal risk, and bringing back information on human rights abuses, but I think he probably also made some mistakes along the way. He was regarded as “grandstanding” and not being a “team player”. The extreme reaction within the Embassy bordered on the ridiculous and he was virtually treated as a subversive. This led to nasty charges and countercharges, and his career suffered for a while after that. This later became a noteworthy subject of controversy within the Foreign Service grievance or other administrative channels, following which the officer eventually was fully “rehabilitated” and even honored for following his conscience. He has since even been elected President of AFSA. At the time this issue was being played out at post, I had mixed feelings about all this. I was no longer acting head of the political section by this time and wasn’t privy to all the details (and he did not share them with me), but this officer was a colleague and friend and I empathized with his unhappiness that the Embassy’s efforts weren’t turning the Argentines around on their heels. If I had to think of one phrase to sum up the Argentine military’s behavior in this period it would be “the banality of evil.” They acted in an absolutely bestial manner. It would not have been in the U.S. interest if the leftist insurgents had succeeded, but once the military decided to intervene decisively, the insurgents were no match for the state. Of course, I have the benefit of hindsight in saying this now, but I think the military could have easily beat “the terrorists” without having had to adopt methods of state terrorism themselves. And I wonder whether the U.S. exercised enough pressure on them. That we didn’t, I think the responsibility lies as much with Washington as with the Embassy. But whether the Ambassador could have done more or not, I still have warm regards for him personally.

**[February 5, 2004 note:** Having almost by accident stumbled upon a website the other evening and located a cable of mine from this period on the Timerman meeting which has since been declassified under FOIA, it is an object lesson that my recollections of some events during my Foreign Service career may be substantially off in terms of accuracy. With this slew of cables numbering in the thousands now available on the US Embassy’s human rights interventions

during the 1976-1980 period, it's an opportunity for me to go back and review the record, which I hope to be able to do some time. Until I do, however, prudence dictates that I tone down the recollections and judgments I've offered up here and warn that they should be treated as provisional and not definitive. On the general point of recollections and accuracy, see more below in my postscript].

Probably the most important part of my job in Buenos Aires was to maintain contact with the Argentine political class who would be called on to run the Government when the country was eventually restored to normalcy. The Political Counselor before me in Buenos Aires, actually my boss when I arrived there on my second tour in the country, was Wayne Smith. Now Wayne was a fantastic political officer. He knew lots and lots of people, and we worked together very well. When Wayne's assignment was curtailed - I've forgotten why he left early - he turned over all his contacts to me. The Ambassador at that time, a Republican, was Bob Hill. He was from the Grace Lines Company. He didn't like me very much, whether because I was the Labor Attache (and as a businessman he had apparently had some prior unhappy history with the AFL-CIO), or perhaps because I had (both too loudly and as it turned out quite wrongly) predicted that the Republicans were going to lose the next elections in the U.S. [laughter], I don't know. He wanted to appoint somebody else from Washington as acting Political Counselor until a new Political Counselor was assigned by Washington, but Wayne insisted that I knew Argentina better and should serve in the interim.

Wayne turned over his contacts list to me. Among his contacts was a character named Americo Grossman, an Argentine Jewish businessman from Cordoba in the fur export business, who was a Peronist or called himself a Peronist, but who was also a friend (or agent) of Admiral Massera, the chief of the Navy and member of the ruling junta at that time. And Grossman had a Friday night soiree, a sort of political salon every Friday night, at his apartment during which any and every politician in the country would drop in, as well as flag officers from the Navy and Air Force. Few if any from the Army, however.

Americo also invited Wayne to these parties and Wayne had been a perennial Friday evening guest. When Wayne left town, he turned this over to me. So I became the American Embassy representative to this fabulous political salon and it was a unique opportunity to socialize and discuss politics with virtually all the leading political figures in the country, including Massera, the Chief of the Air Force, General Lami Dozo, who had also been a junta member at one time, various intelligence types, and the top leaders of the civilian political parties, at least two of whom were later elected Presidents of Argentina, Raul Alfonsin and Fernando de la Rúa. This was a standing social gathering of leading figures of the incumbent military regime together with representatives of the fragile past and future civilian governments of Argentina, and as a representative of the American Embassy I was invited to mix in and develop a relationship with these people. This was an extraordinary experience which cemented my status in the Embassy as a knowledgeable political officer about Argentina and in the Argentine political and labor communities as a prominent official of the American Embassy.

At the same time I worked on labor and human rights issues in the Embassy and saw our political contact work as helping to encourage eventually the restoration of civilian democracy to Argentina. Certainly Raul Alfonsin, who was elected President after that, looked upon it that

way. I developed a relationship with him. He went on an exchange grant to the United States in November 1980 and we spent the evening of the U.S. elections together in Washington analyzing the returns which saw Ronald Reagan elected President of the U.S. He paid me a call at the American Embassy in Rome when he was on a visit to Rome afterwards. So, the political aspects of my assignment in Buenos Aires were an important experience.

But let me also tell you about some labor contacts I had which provide a fascinating insight into the political underworld in Argentina. The top Peronist labor leader on the right-wing side - they called him... (End of tape)

*Q: What ever became of Miguel?*

FREEMAN: He chatted with us, but nothing spectacular ever came from this that I can recall. He wasn't a great friend of ours, but it was obviously opportune for him to get closer to the Americans and to the AFL-CIO. He was a thug. Not much doubt about it.

In telling you this, some further flashbacks have come to mind about other experiences at previous posts which may be worth retelling also. Sao Paulo was my first experience in which I got involved in human rights and democracy promotion. This was a principal preoccupation of the Consulate General. A gigantic metropolis, Sao Paulo was a major center of resistance to military rule in Brazil. We found broad sympathy in the urban middle class and among the commercial interests for reining in the military's excesses and restoring democracy. This was during the Nixon and Ford Administrations and my recollection is that we had ample support from Washington to encourage respect for human rights and the restoration of democracy. This was before the advent of Jimmy Carter and his human rights policy. I looked up and cultivated a number of lawyers who defended the political opponents of the military regime in the courts. These lawyers were obviously political themselves - broadly supportive of the middle-class, mildly left of center MDB movement. At first, the lawyers were cool to these approaches, suspicious of some kind of entrapment, but they eventually warmed up. Brazil was facing an armed leftist insurgency of its own at this time and in defending itself against the insurgency a substantial number of human rights violations were committed. Perhaps not on the same scale or ferocity as Argentina a little later, but nevertheless quite problematic for the U.S. There was also censorship of the press, which was a bit humorous because the major liberal daily newspaper, *O Estado do Sao Paulo*, had the defiant practice of leaving blank the entire spaces where articles had been censored by the authorities. This produced quite a large amount of cut-out white spaces, which made for an odd-looking newspaper, but judging from the particular page of the censored articles and the nearby articles which had not been censored it was usually easy to figure out which stories had been censored. That was the editors' intention. Part of my job in the Consulate was to report on the abuses, the torture, and the killing that was going on there by the military. Also, the Consul General, Fred Chapin, who was a great boss and mentor and personal friend, made it a point of visiting periodically with Paulo Arns (spelling?), the Cardinal for Sao Paulo, the largest Catholic diocese in the world. I would accompany Fred on these visits. The Cardinal was very strongly opposed to this torture policy and really to the military regime itself. He was very much representative of the Vatican II Council Catholic Church. He did much to support the poor and underdogs of the Sao Paulo slums and I think he also supported the striking auto workers under "Lula" in the "ABC" industrial suburbs of Sao Paulo, which later evolved

into a social movement, and after that into a Brazilian Labor Party, known as the Workers' Party (PT). Fred, through his visits, wanted to show symbolic U.S. support for what the Cardinal stood for. As the political officer in the Consulate, I cultivated the local politicians, particularly the members of the national Chamber of Deputies from Sao Paulo and of course the local state authorities. Also a former President of Brazil named Janio Quadros, who lived in the area. I was especially active in cultivating - and thereby providing the symbolic moral support of the U.S. - to the members of the middle-class MDB party, a sort of social democratic party, which was then on the rise in Brazil. This was our small contribution to the eventual restoration of political democracy in Brazil.

There's also an incident which took place while I was Labor Attaché in La Paz, which I basically kept to myself when I was there, but which gives me some personal satisfaction in recalling now. At some point, Governor Nelson Rockefeller made a whirlwind hemispheric tour of the major Latin American capitals with USG logistical support. Rockefeller had developed a thesis that we had to work with the military governments in Latin America. According to him, it was the best way to defeat the Communists and build the way towards restoration of middle-class democracy in Latin America. The first step was for the USG to develop relations with the military regimes and then work with them to promote middle class democracy in the Hemisphere. He was accompanied on his trip by none other than Andy McClellan, the Inter-American Representative of the AFL-CIO.

**FRED A. COFFEY, JR.**  
**Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIS**  
**Brasilia (1973-1976)**

*Fred A. Coffey, Jr. was born in El Paso, Texas in 1930. He received a degree in business administration from the University of Texas. Mr. Coffey joined USIS in 1956 and served in Brazil, Nicaragua, Indonesia, and Thailand. He was interviewed in 1990 by G. Lewis Schmidt.*

COFFEY: Well, it was a great experience in Thailand. I had three jobs while I was there: press officer, then chief information officer, and then deputy PAO. Five years in country. When the PAO was being reassigned, he had asked the Ambassador to support me for his job. Washington said I had been there too long -- five years was enough. And so, I was then transferred to Brazil as deputy public affairs officer, as deputy to Tom Tuch, or Hans Tuch, as he was known.

Q: *By that time the capital had moved up to Brasilia.*

COFFEY: Well, that is true. Kubitschek had actually built a capital city in the interior, upon the high plains of Goiania, and it was growing.

Q: *Were you about 50 percent in Brasilia and the rest of the time in Rio, or were you most of the time in Brasilia by that time?*

COFFEY: Well, in the division of labors --

Q: *Oh, so you put -- as a deputy, you were in Rio?*

COFFEY: No, the headquarters had been moved to Brasilia, but Rio was considered a branch post, although the largest of the branch posts. There was some seven Americans there, with the information officer located in Rio; supervision came from Brasilia. We had seven posts, including Brasilia -- six branch posts, of which Rio had some seven officers and Sao Paulo had five officers. There were other posts from Porto Alegre on up to Recife.

So my job was really to keep an eye on the branch posts, to supervise them, work with them, as well as develop national programming and oversee the general direction of the program.

Q: *This was what, in '70 --*

COFFEY: I arrived there in late August, early September of 1973, after a two months' refresher course in Portuguese. I was told I was assigned there as the first full-fledged deputy. Before there had been an administrative officer as acting deputy, but not a program man per se.

So I was assigned there to help on the program, to toughen the program. There were accusations that the program was too fluffy, too many piano players, and so forth. And so I spent the next two years -- I was there three years, but spent two years working with Tom Tuch, doing exactly that.

For the first year I was there, however, I was acting PAO, because Tom became acting deputy chief of mission, and so the day-to-day operations of the program were left to me. One of the most exciting and controversial programs I got involved in had to do with the nuclear development of Brazil. Brazil had built one nuclear reactor, but it wasn't quite finished, and started building a second nuclear reactor with plans for a third. The United States government had agreed to supply them fuel for the second nuclear reactor and also, as required, for the first nuclear reactor.

At this time, President Nixon had visited Israel and Egypt, and assured them that we would supply them with fuel for their nuclear reactors. Brazilian officials then had traveled to Washington and made an agreement, a firm contract, with the Atomic Energy Commission for fuel. Congress took exception to President Nixon's commitment to supply fuel to both Egypt and Israel, and placed all such contracts on hold. We could not honor them. Brazil was infuriated. We had spent the preceding two or three months trying to bring down three Atomic Energy officials to talk with the Brazilian nuclear energy people and establish a relationship, which hadn't existed. And then the storm broke.

Several of the nuclear scientists from Brazil had been educated in the United States, but still, on a government-to-government relationship, there really wasn't a linkage. So after developing this program of talks and interchanges, just as the first three men came down, the announcement came that the fuel contract would not be approved, after Brazil had put down its deposit.

This turn infuriated the Brazilians and their sense of nationalism. Our talks went on very well,

and personal relationships were established, but shortly thereafter Brazil made an agreement with Germany to start dealing with Germany on nuclear development. Things in that area then got very gloomy.

*Q: I had left the agency by that time, but was that part of the general worry about nuclear proliferation? Did they suspect that the Brazilians had any designs on producing the capability of producing nuclear weapons?*

COFFEY: Not at that time. Brazil later claimed that they could build anything they wanted and when they wanted it, and they would work with anybody that they wanted to. But at that time the issue was purely fuel for the nuclear reactors that they were building for peaceful energy purposes.

*Q: I must confess that I had somehow missed that particular episode, and I wonder what was motivating Congress at the time.*

COFFEY: They were unhappy with Nixon treating Israel and Egypt in the same way, and seeming to ignore the political realities of the Jewish lobby in the United States. At least, that is how I interpreted it. But there were a number of interesting areas that we worked in. One of the most obvious was the pollution in the lake around Brasilia, plus the fact that a number of us had visited the Amazon and saw some of the horrendous things taking place with the new Trans Amazon Highway going in, leveling thousands of acres with the --

*Q: The rain forest.*

COFFEY: -- the pioneers going in, destroying the rain forest. So we asked the people concerned with environmental control in Brazil if they wouldn't like to develop relationships with our environmental protection agency, and proceeded to bring down people and promote Brazilian visits to the United States. The leadership there today has largely evolved from those visits. Of course all of Brazil and all the world knows about the tremendous problems they have with the loss of the rain forest.

To point out a little episode where the United States lost great favor and the USIS could have had a role in changing this, but didn't, was an incident in Recife where an American missionary, who had very questionable relationships with some of the leftists in the area, was picked up by the Brazilian military and made unavailable to the American consul.

Our officer in Recife, Carl Schultz, had gotten word from the wife of this American missionary that he had been locked up and no one could see him. So Carl immediately contacted the consul, Rich Brown, who then proceeded to bring pressure on the military to be able to see this missionary. But they weren't making him available; so Rich of course called our Ambassador, John Hugh Crimmins. John had been active in our diplomacy for human rights. He decided to make a demarche to the Foreign Ministry about this case.

An AP reporter in Rio got wind of the problem up in Recife, and called the Embassy. Well, I was acting PAO at that time. The Ambassador took the call himself rather than referring it to me or

our press people. He told the man, "Yes, I am going to make a demarche to the Foreign Ministry."

Well, this came out on the wires before he got over to the Foreign Ministry, and infuriated the Brazilian Foreign Ministry and military. They felt that this man had been a friend of theirs, but had let them down. Had he worked through channels properly and made the announcement after the demarche, it would have been much better. In my opinion, this act lessened his effectiveness for the rest of his tour there and hurt -- certainly didn't help any of our programs at all.

*Q: How much longer was he there?*

COFFEY: I think he was there about a year longer.

The military had taken over in 1964, after the civilian administration appeared to be veering left and the military felt that the civilians were leading them into economic and political instability. They took over and appointed a president, a military leader. Military leadership continued during the time I was there, from 1973 to 1976.

There was a good deal of stability then for the country, and the economy was starting to grow. Things were getting better for the middle class, especially. The people who wanted to criticize the military did so, but not with such vehemence, because the military were actually helping build an infrastructure in education, roads, health, and so forth.

This fact was recognized by most people, by the media and by the educators. And so there were a lot of things open for us to do. One of the principal areas that we felt was useful was building and promoting American studies throughout Brazil and encouraging universities to build American studies activities.

This was directed by a very able officer by the name of Nate Rosenfeld. When he arrived there were something like six or seven American studies -- small English-teaching activities in some of the universities. When he left there were some 28 or 30 American studies activities.

Now, having said earlier that in my first tour in Brazil there was some 26 major binational centers, by 1973-74 there were not only the major binational centers but a lot of smaller ones. We called them the B and C level binational centers.

So all over the country, then, by 1974-75, there were literally tens of thousands of people studying English, learning a little bit about the United States. Then we added to that these American studies centers at the universities by helping them with materials, seminars, and getting their teachers together with some of our educators.

I thought that was a very useful program, because at this time the special relationship that Brazil had with United States seemed to be withering. We realized it couldn't continue for long as some of our policies -- nuclear energy, the democratic governments, and so forth -- were diverging, and it was then that we realized that we must rely on the residue of friendship and good will developed over the decades.

*Q: I have got a couple of questions before you leave Brazil. Whatever happened to the missionary?*

COFFEY: Okay, finally we saw the missionary. The Consul in Recife got to see the missionary, who was locked up a few weeks and then expelled from the country. He ended up in Nicaragua, as I heard, with the Sandinistas.

*Q: Good place to go. I had another question. What was your reading, in the earlier days of the military takeover down there, about the peoples' attitude toward the military takeover and the military government? Did you find that because of the chaos that preceded it there was a considerable degree of acceptance, which of course later diminished somewhat, but what did you find out at that time?*

COFFEY: Well, essentially that, Lew. The governance of the country was in chaos and inflation was runaway, the educational system was crying for reforms and a lot of people were -- especially the business community in Sao Paulo and the other industrial areas -- were afraid that they would be losing their markets, and that the labor unions would take over.

They basically welcomed the military takeover at that time. They didn't realize that it would last so long, but it was more or less a benevolent series of regimes by the military presidents, with the military calling the basic shots. But most of them seemed to be in the general interest of Brazil. However, there were many cases of human rights abuse.

The takeover in 1964, according to what I learned later, was designed by a group of officers in Brazil's Escola Superior de Guerra and put into play towards the end of 1964.

*Q: Anything further you want to say?*

COFFEY: Tom Tuch left in the summer of 1975 and was replaced in September by Lyle Kopmann, who had been head of the former IPS -- the press service in Washington. Lyle had some experience in Bolivia and other countries, and was one of the best-liked, most decent officers, men, individuals that I have ever known, so it was a great pleasure for me to serve my last year as deputy to Lyle.

I suppose, egotistically speaking, I also enjoyed the fact that Lyle basically left much of the program operation to me, and he trusted my judgment. I appreciated that. Lyle had been very concerned, too, after hearing in earlier years about the so-called "lightweight" programming. He was reassured when he got to Brazil that our program wasn't light, it was balanced, it was hard-hitting, there was a lot of political and economic content to it, not only through the so-called cultural programs, "writ large," but through the wireless file, our personal contact, our media activity.

**JAMES W. CHAMBERLIN**

**Portuguese Language Training/Consular Officer  
Sao Paulo, Brazil (1974-1976)**

*James W. Chamberlin was born in Miami, Florida in 1945. He received a BA from Principia College and a JD from the University of Alabama in 1972. He served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970 and entered the Foreign Service in 1973. His postings abroad include Sao Paulo, Bangkok, Brasilia, Warsaw, and Rome. Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed Mr. Chamberlin in 1997.*

*Q: Where did you go?*

CHAMBERLIN: Oh, I went to Sao Paulo, Brazil, which was a pretty good assignment because, it wasn't really a visa mill. It was interesting being in a consulate, rather than an embassy the first time.

*Q: You were in Sao Paulo from '73?*

CHAMBERLIN: From '74 to '76 after the A-100 course, I had Portuguese language training, and so arrived in Sao Paulo in January or February.

*Q: What was the, as you saw it then, political and economic situation in Sao Paulo then?*

CHAMBERLIN: Well, Brazil is one of those countries that is always full of promise, and it was then. The economy was on an upswing at the time I was there. I think things deteriorated after I left, but people were optimistic then. Sao Paulo has always been relatively prosperous, and when I was there it certainly was like living in a major, world-class city. Sao Paulo had become the automotive center for Brazil, and most of Latin America as well.

*Q: Were there any political tensions at that time? They had a military government of some sort.*

CHAMBERLIN: Yes, the president was a general, which created some tensions, especially because of human rights issues, but I didn't feel it much as a consular officer in Sao Paulo. I think that's one difference in being in a Consulate. It was out of the mainstream of politics, except for state politics, and economic and commercial matters, which were most important in Sao Paulo. In addition, because I was in the consular section I didn't get involved very much, even in that.

*Q: Well, who was the consul general.*

CHAMBERLIN: Fred Chapin was. He was nice to me in the sense that he took an interest in the junior officers, but I think not a particularly special interest. In Sao Paulo, I didn't have a rotational assignment that would have given me an insight into other sections. It was a straight consular tour, so that I got no experience in the political or economic sections or at the embassy in Brasilia.

*Q: Did you have any Consular cases or problems that particularly come to mind.*

CHAMBERLIN: Well, one on the American Citizens Services side. There was an American in Sao Paulo, who like me was a Vietnam veteran. Apparently he had been giving away LSD at a party when he was arrested. He had a Brazilian girlfriend who stood by him while he was in jail and became his wife. He was the main US citizen that we had to look after in Sao Paulo while I was there. In Rio they had all kinds of people visiting from the US, some of whom always got into trouble. Sao Paulo was more of a business town, and the businessmen didn't get into much trouble. So this young man became my main case. We did an interesting thing for him. The Brazilian court said that if we would write a paper about post-Vietnam stress syndrome, or something like that, the court would use it in sentencing him. So, we in the consular section did; we collected some Time and Newsweek articles on the subject, wrote something based on them, and gave it to the judge. (As a Vietnam veteran, I had mixed feelings about saying that all Vietnam veterans had a propensity to be mentally unbalanced, but I wanted to help him.)

He had to stay in jail until his trial date, which in Brazil was at least 3 or 4 months, but once he was tried and convicted, the judge sentenced him to only a little more than the time already served, so that he was soon out of jail. I went to visit him frequently, because just prior to his arrest, there had been an incident in Recife where an American had been arrested, held over the weekend, tortured, beaten and the consul had been denied access to him. We wanted to make sure that nothing like that happened with our prisoner; so, I went to go visit him frequently. He was held in a mansion that had been converted to a police station in a very nice part of town. He was held in a basement with political prisoners, who he said included the son of a past President of Peru, and some Bolivian big shots. For a prison, he had a pretty soft life there. Then once he had his trial, and the judge sentenced him to about a month in jail, he went to the real slammer. I visited him there, too, and it was a different story. It was a huge, dark fortress of a prison, but fortunately he was only there for only a month before he was released.

On one visit, I brought the prisoner's Brazilian girlfriend, who had become his wife, to give him an extra chance to see her. The prison commandant would not let her in because she had on pants, rather than a skirt. After a while, she worked out a deal whereby she borrowed a skirt from a woman working at the prison. The commandant was happy because she had on a skirt when she met her husband.

*Q: What about visas, were they pretty much, run of the mill visas?*

CHAMBERLIN: Yes, Sao Paulo was a good place to be, because the economy was good, and it was a business town. Plus in those days, the US was far enough away that it was relatively expensive to fly to the States. So, you didn't have a lot of people with no income, who were obvious bad cases, coming in to get visas.

The two biggest categories of applicants we had were probably kids who went to Disney World and elderly Japanese. We used to fill up 747s with children going to Orlando. I pity anybody else who got on that plane. The second category was elderly Japanese, who had immigrated to Brazil, going back to Japan for one last visit. Brazil has, I think, the biggest Japanese population outside of Japan. Most of them are farmers. I think of the Japanese as being high-tech, urban workers,

but in Brazil many are farmers. The Japanese would fill up 707's and 747's going back to Japan. We would issue hundreds of visas, mostly to people at least in their 60's, and often in their 80's, usually going back in the spring to see the cherry blossoms bloom one more time.

*Q: So they would all fly to the United States?*

CHAMBERLIN: Yes, they would all stop in Los Angeles in transit, and they all wanted visas to allow them to visit Los Angeles for a few days.

CHAMBERLIN: Then I went to work on the Brazil desk for 2 years.

*Q: About '78-80?*

CHAMBERLIN: Yes, I think that is about right. Let's see. I wrote this down. '77-'79 I worked on the Brazil desk.

*Q: What was the Brazilian desk like, state some of the types of things you did?*

CHAMBERLIN: Well, there were three of us on the Brazil desk, when I was there. I was the junior officer. In addition, the country director or his deputy handled the big political issues. We had a several high level visits. President Reagan's visit took enormous effort -- planning speeches, scenarios for each site he visited, and so on. One of the most memorable visits was when Warner Christopher went to Brazil to read the Brazilians the riot act about their nuclear deal with the Germans. As Deputy Secretary, he probably got the frostiest reception I ever saw. I understand that no one went to the airport to bid him farewell. At least someone had greeted him on arrival, but when he left, the airport was deserted. Anyway, the senior desk officer handled political issues, another officer handled economic and commercial issues, and I did everything else. Everything else turned out to include a lot of science issues, except for nuclear matters. That was when I got interested in nuclear proliferation. It was around the time that the US sold Brazil a Westinghouse nuclear power plant. Brazil's serious interest in nuclear power began during the oil crisis in the 1970s.

*Q: Well virtually '73 was.....*

CHAMBERLIN: The Brazilians don't have much oil for such a huge country; they have lots of other natural resources, but no oil. So, they were really hurt by the oil crisis. Because they have to import almost all of their oil, they were looking for other energy sources. They decided that nuclear power would help them become less dependent on oil from the Middle East; so, they bought the Westinghouse reactor. But, between the time that they bought it and the time that we finished building it, Senator Glenn had passed a law that prohibited us from exporting the fuel for the reactor unless the Brazilians joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which they refused to do. They said that it was discriminatory, because it discriminates between countries that have nuclear weapons and those that do not. They did not want to become second-class members. So, while I was working on the desk, Brazil had spent about a billion dollars to build this nuclear power plant, and they couldn't get any fuel for it. In this case, by denying the fuel for it, the US was acting like the Arabs had acted a few years earlier. As a result, the

Brazilians found they did not have energy independence after all. So on the desk, the nuclear portfolio became a very big issue, which was mainly handled by Fred Rondon the Deputy Office Director.

Fred and his allies eventually got the Europeans to sell the necessary fuel to the Brazilians, so that they could start up their US-built reactor. But the Brazilians were really outraged by what we did, so that afterwards they made an agreement with the Germans, to buy not only more reactors, but the whole nuclear fuel cycle package as well. It was supposed to give them the ability to take uranium out of the ground, to enrich it, and to fabricate fuel elements to run the reactors, i.e., energy independence. But if you have the capability to produce reactor fuel, you can easily enlarge it a bit and develop the capability to build bombs. That set off all kinds of alarm bells in Washington, and I ended up following the issue for a number of years. I did not deal with it on the desk, because it was too high profile an issue, but later in INR, I worked on it for several years; then after a few years break, I went back to Brazil as the science attaché and ended up working on it again. So it turns out that Brazil, nuclear non-proliferation, and general scientific issues has been the focus of my career.

*Q: Well back to Brazil, was there any feeling about the role of Brazil in ARA? Because, I mean here it is the biggest country, Portuguese speaking, and it stands off by itself. I would think that within ARA, some people hold that Brazil doesn't play a role that is up to its potential or its actuality. Did you find that there?*

CHAMBERLIN: Well, to a certain extent I did, but it seemed to depend on what the problems were. Because Brazil was perceived as a big nuclear problem, it got a lot of attention in the Secretary's office. On the other hand, the Secretary's office was even more preoccupied with Central American problems (especially under Reagan), and the Panama Canal Treaty (under Carter). Because of the focus on Central American issues, except for the nuclear issue, Brazil didn't get much attention. And I think that is probably true at other times, too.

When I was working on the desk, Brazil was one of four countries handled in the same office. It also handled Uruguay and Paraguay, as well as Brazil. After I left the Brazil desk, it became a separate office, but I think I heard recently that it now has some other partners again. With the other countries in the office, there were significant human rights problems. In Paraguay, for example, I think that Stroessner was still in power. In Argentina a lot of disappearances were taking place, making that a big issue. Brazil also had human rights problems, but not as severe as its neighbors. So, except for the nuclear issue, Brazil didn't get that much attention. As you said, it got less attention than the Spanish speaking countries. An additional consideration is proximity to the US, which tends to get Congress' attention. Brazil might be fortunate that the US seems to focus on Latin American countries located closer to us, like Cuba.

*Q: Did you find that you dealt with many at the Brazilian Embassy at your level or not?*

CHAMBERLIN: Not as much as more senior people did, but I dealt with the embassy on a regular basis; I am trying to think on what kinds of issues, perhaps coordinating visits and various types of events. I remember going up to the Brazilian Embassy quite a few times and meeting Brazilian officers at the Department or for lunch.

*Q: The Brazilian foreign service has the reputation of being one of the most professional in the world. Did you get any feeling of that?*

CHAMBERLIN: Yes, I did, mostly when I was the science attaché in Brazil working with Itamaraty in Brasilia. They really were very sharp. It was interesting to see them in Brazil, because of their economic problems during domestic assignments. I was there when the economy was on a down swing, and officers in Itamaraty were financially strapped without the benefits they had when they were assigned overseas.

*Q: Itamaraty that was?*

CHAMBERLIN: That was their Foreign Ministry. It got its name from its location in Rio de Janeiro, before it moved to Brasilia. Itamaraty officials would buy a Mercedes while they were overseas getting paid in dollars, Swiss francs, or another hard currency. They would bring it back to Brazil and sell it for enough money to pay expenses during their assignment in Brasilia. They used to say that when they were eating the back bumper, it was time to go overseas again.

*Q: Who was the head of the Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs?*

CHAMBERLIN: Good question, I think Terrence Todman was. At least for part of my tour.

*Q: Did you get any feel of the role of the ARA within the Department, or were you pretty much in your own little world?*

CHAMBERLIN: Well, I was very much at the bottom looking up. I would say that the perception when I was that ARA, was that it was not one of the leading bureaus in the Department. ARA was something of a backwater, and had a hard time getting the attention of the Secretary or the White House.

*Q: What about the embassy in Brasilia while you were there? What were the reflections that you were getting from reading the cables and people coming back and all?*

CHAMBERLIN: In general my impressions were good. I am trying to think who the ambassador was while I was working on the desk. I think John Crimmins was ambassador when I began work on the desk. Ambassador Sayre was named during my assignment. I was assigned to arrange all of Ambassador Sayre's appointments and interviews before he went off to Brazil. That was a great opportunity for me because he called on almost every government agency, and I went along as note taker. It was my first visit to many of them. I think that the Embassy's reporting was complete and fair, as far as I can remember. I think that people thought that the Embassy was functioning well.

I remember that Ambassador Crimmins got into a quite a fight with the White House and the Secretary's office over President Reagan's visit. He thought that they were going to slight Brazil in the way they were scheduling the visit. Ambassador Crimmins demanded that the visit follow

protocol. He took a lot of flack from a lot of senior people, but eventually he got what he wanted from the visit. He got Brazil treated the way he thought it should be.

*Q: Well you were there most of the time during the Carter administration. Did you feel that at your level, or from the reflection of the people around you? Did you have any problems regarding human rights because this was a focus during the Carter period?*

CHAMBERLIN: Yes, sure. I think we did the first human rights report on Brazil while I was on the desk. The reports were controversial, and every desk was worried about how its country was going to respond. We were worried about what Brazil would say about its report. There was a young activist on the NSC staff working on Latin America, Bob Pastor, who used to give us lots of grief on human rights issues.

In general the perception was that we, the State Department, were too soft on Brazil, and too soft on human rights. It was about the time that they created a Human Rights Bureau, and we argued with them quite a bit. It was always a fight to get anything cleared that had to do with human rights. We often felt that they were saying things that were incorrect, and they felt that we were often incorrect. It was almost impossible to get anything cleared in those days; we would get into big fights that delayed clearance for days.

*Q: So we are in the seventies up to '82, now?*

CHAMBERLIN: Yes, exactly.

*Q: What was the status of INR, I mean on the Brazilian nuclear issue?*

CHAMBERLIN: The situation hadn't changed that much. The main thing that had happened was that Brazil had signed its deal with Germany. Everybody was concerned about what exactly the Germans would convey to the Brazilians, and what the Brazilians would do with it -- what kinds of safeguards and controls the Germans and the IAEA would have? That was the focus of what we were looking at, and how we monitored it.

*Q: Well sir, I would love to get into deep classification, but I would imagine in a process between two democracies there was a hell of a lot of information around. I mean as far as things were going between Brazil and Germany.*

CHAMBERLIN: Well yes and no, because the Brazilians were not helpful. They were mad at us because we had denied them the fuel for their first nuclear power plant. They tried to persuade the Germans not to tell us everything, not to have everything to be open. The Germans, of course, felt they had an obligation to Brazil for the billions Brazil was to pay for the nuclear package. The facilities in Brazil were not open. The Germans would tell us to some extent what they were doing. It was even more difficult to get information from the Brazilians. As a result, there were always suspicions about whether the Germans were telling us everything. There was intelligence, but it was seldom as good as first hand information. The intelligence focused on the bad things the Brazilians were up to. For sure, the Brazilians were keeping the stuff out of view as much as possible. So there was definitely a tension there. I don't remember the details, but I

am sure there were high level démarches, and probably a few insults that were traded between us and the Germans. Whether it was the right thing for the Germans to do, and whether they were putting enough controls on it, was very dubious.

*Q: Well during this '79-'82 period were there, or was there, a movement on this Brazilian nuclear issue?*

CHAMBERLIN: No there really wasn't. In fact I don't know where the nuclear plants stand today. When I went to Brazil years later, none of the German plants was operational. The sale would have been huge; they would have built up to eight nuclear power plants in Brazil, as well as the whole fuel cycle operation. I hope they have a German power plant operating by now, since they have spent so much on the deal. In essence, the results proved that there wasn't too much to worry about, whether it was because the Germans made an effort to limit what was transferred by the deal, or just because the whole thing was too expensive and too complex to begin with.

*Q: Was there a concern about the Brazilians, or only concern about proliferation on principle, and that we didn't want to have Brazil it? Were they worried about what Brazil might do with it?*

CHAMBERLIN: The US was worried about what Brazil might do, because at that time Argentina was more advanced than Brazil was. From the proliferation perspective, people were more worried about Argentina than Brazil. The Argentine rivalry made them worry about Brazil. They worried that Brazil would try to do something destabilizing, because Argentina was so far ahead.

*Q: In terms of nuclear advancement?*

CHAMBERLIN: Right. So, the Brazilians were in fact interested in developing the technology and skills to match the Argentines. It did look like there was a little nuclear arms race on the Latin American continent. At that time, people were seriously worried about it, although now they are less worried. The Brazilians have always claimed to be a peace-loving country, and I think that is probably true. My own impression is that the Brazilians would be unlikely to develop a nuclear weapons capability. They just wanted to have broad nuclear expertise in case they needed it. Of course, Brazil, like any other country, was concerned about self-defense. If they really had felt that the Argentines were going to build a nuclear weapons capability, I am sure that they would have gone all out to match it. In retrospect, I don't think the Brazilians were so motivated at the time of the German deal. We probably over reacted.

*Q: Generally on the intelligence side were there any reflections about feelers either way between South Africa, which was supposedly playing with Israel, which also had its own clandestine nuclear arsenal? Was there any contact between those?*

CHAMBERLIN: Neither of those countries was my responsibility. I would say there was not much cooperation that we were aware of. There were always some nuclear experts, who we always worried were going to go off to talk to each other in hotel rooms in Switzerland. I think in

terms of real assistance, there wasn't that much that I was aware of. Of course there was always a strong inclination for the US to look the other way when Israel was involved. Later when I returned to Brazil as science attaché, I did have some contacts tell me a little bit about clandestine nuclear cooperation between third world countries. Pakistan was mentioned more than any other country. The Brazilians had developed contacts with some of the other third world nuclear countries, but I don't think that much ever came of it, despite the efforts of a Brazilians to do more with them.

*Q: While you were working on the Brazilian side were, were you also working on Argentina?*

CHAMBERLIN: Yes, I was.

*Q: What was the status there?*

CHAMBERLIN: Well, it has been so long ago that I can't tell you in detail what state things were in then, but Argentina did have a Canadian-designed nuclear reactor for which they had developed the complete nuclear fuel cycle. Their mastery of the fuel cycle, which includes many of the sensitive technologies to produce weapons grade nuclear material (plutonium and/or enriched uranium), was the big difference between Argentina and Brazil. Argentina was considerably more difficult to control, because it was not as dependent on outside sources for key technologies and skills. The Argentines had a lot more contact with the other nuclear countries, because for them it was a question of getting raw materials like beryllium, high quality uranium, unusual chemical reagents, and so on, which they didn't have themselves. I guess the other side was that Brazil had a little more of the necessary natural resources than Argentina did. The Argentines worked the international trade network harder than the Brazilians did.

*Q: Was there any sort of brief besides nuclear matters in Latin America or do you have anything else?*

CHAMBERLIN: I ended up handling all kinds of science matters, mainly because no one else in INR wanted to do it. It was very interesting portfolio, because the intelligence community had a lot of committees dealing with scientific issues on which I ended up serving as the State Department representative. Most of the other representatives on the committees were very senior people. The committees discussed all kinds of sexy intelligence stuff: what the Russians were doing in high tech areas, what countries were doing nuclear testing, and so on. I got involved in all of that, and it was really very interesting. During that time, Reagan must have been elected, and when his administration came in, there was a new, very strong interest in export control, in which I got involved. The export control issue haunted me for the rest of my career, but it always seemed to be a very difficult issue that I was never very favorably inclined toward. Nuclear non-proliferation is in many ways an export control issue, but much more specialized and structured than east-west export control was.

*Q: When you talk about exports, what do you mean?*

CHAMBERLIN: Well in those days, the main organization was the old COCOM regime, which restricted exports to Communist countries by western countries that were members of COCOM.

They had very specific limits of what kinds of computers, chemicals, machine tools, and so on could be exported -- very detailed information. As a result, there was furious argument within the intelligence community about such issues as: what type of capabilities the Soviets had in certain technologies; did they already have a certain capability at all; would a transfer give them a new capability. If you changed the specifications of a machine tool slightly, it would be more capable and it might them a quantum leap in the ability to produce better weapons. So, the arguments were endless and bitter. The two main opponents were the military and industry. The Europeans wanted to sell a lot of stuff on the COCOM list, and American industry thought that if the Europeans were going to sell it, the US should be able to sell it, too. So we, the US, were always trying to prevent the Europeans making specific exports and from relaxing the COCOM specifications, and they were always pushing us to relax them.

**JOHN D. CASWELL**  
**Political Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1974-1976)**

*Mr. Caswell was born in 1947 in Massachusetts, raised in Massachusetts and Connecticut. He was educated at Franklin and Marshall College, the Fletcher School of Tufts University and the University of California, Los Angeles. After service in the US Navy he entered the Foreign Service in 1974. His foreign assignments as Political or Economic Officer include Rio de Janeiro, Lima, Brasilia, Lisbon and Sofia. In Washington, Mr. Caswell served in the Department's Operations Center and in European and Latin American Affairs. He also served two years with USAID's Regional Mission for Europe. Mr. Caswell was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2000.*

*Q: with Portuguese, you've got your African Portuguese, you've got your Brazilian Portuguese, and you've got your Portuguese. Was there much of a difference?*

CASWELL: Oh, yes, there's a substantial difference between Portuguese Portuguese, if you want to call it, or continental European Portuguese, and Brazilian Portuguese. I guess I would kind of liken it to the differences between, say, British English and, say, Texas English. There are both accent differences, there are differences in slang and in everyday language. They use some different words for foods and things like that. And there are even some minor grammatical differences, so it's pretty distinct. I had studied Brazilian Portuguese and then my initial posting was to Brazil, and so when I encountered for the first time continental European Portuguese, it was enough to sort of set one's head to spinning, it was almost incomprehensible.

*Q: Well then, you went to Rio and you served there from when to when?*

CASWELL: From 1974 until 1976.

*Q: What job did you have there?*

CASWELL: It was kind of like being a political apprentice for the most part. I was a junior political officer in Rio de Janeiro. Rio had been the site of the embassy until about 1972, as late as that, even though we had opened up operations in Brasilia way back in the early '60s. For a long time it was like a trailer and one or two guys in it. Most of the embassy was still back in Rio because most of the Brazilian government was still in Rio. Gradually there was a kind of a shift, and the shift of the center of gravity of staff really took place in the early '70s. So Rio was still a pretty substantial place when I got there in '74 although it was definitely being downsized, but there was still the idea that they needed to have - in those days an O4 political officer and...

*Q: It's about a major.*

CASWELL: ...sort of a mid-career type fellow, not quite mid-career, and a junior officer. It was almost like a training assignment. I did end up spending some time in the consular section because they set up an informal rotational program within the consulate itself but it was not a rotational assignment in the pure sense of the word.

*Q: In '74-'76 what was the political situation within Brazil proper and then within sort of the Rio area?*

CASWELL: I think the most striking thing was that the military had been in power since 1964 when there was a revolution, they would call it. The military consolidated their power in the latter part of the '60s. At first when the military took over, there was a feeling on the part of many people that they would right things, stop the chaos, expel some people from the political game and then politically acceptable politicians would be in effect allowed to come back in charge again. As it turned out, that wasn't the way it was. When the military got in, developed a taste for power, and they thought they knew better than the civilian politicians how to run things, and they were going to hold on. This in turn generated some urban guerilla violence and even some guerilla movements out in the countryside in the late '60s which then led to further crackdowns and polarized things even more. By the time I got to Brazil in '74, the military president, a man named Ernesto Geisel, was thinking maybe this was the time to try to calm things down a little bit. The Brazilian economy had been growing well in the early '70s - it was called the Brazilian economic miracle - and he decided to pursue a policy of, he called it, *distensão*, which means 'relaxing of tensions', if you will, kind of like a domestic detente. So he began to try to encourage that process and he began to try to get the military security services to back off a little bit. The argument was that the situation merited it, that many of the most dangerous guerillas had either been run out of country, captured or killed, and it would make the political situation more acceptable. So that was what was going on, but not everybody in the military agreed with him. There was a hard-line faction in the military that felt that this was a very dangerous policy, that Geisel was deluded, and that in effect dangerous characters were still out there that needed to be rounded up, needed to be tortured until they talked, and if unfortunately they died during the torture itself, well, that was just too bad but 'you couldn't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs,' that type of mentality. So there was a kind of rollercoaster of tensions, as it were, as Geisel types pursued this *distensão* policy and periodically there would be embarrassing things that would happen when the military security services, despite this *distensão* policy, rounded up people and tortured people, and occasionally these people would end up becoming martyrs to democracy. That was the major domestic

dynamic. It wasn't at that stage the military trying to find a graceful way to leave power - they still felt that they could run the country better than anybody else - but they were trying to make it a situation that could be maintained over the long term.

*Q: In Rio where did your mayor, where did your civic government come from?*

CASWELL: They had in effect kind of controlled or limited democracy, as it were. They had set up a system. Before the revolution there was a wide spectrum of politics. The military theorists thought this was part of the destabilization, this caused Brazilian politics to be unstable. So they said, "We're going to ban certain parties, we're going to terminate the political rights of certain politicians who we think are dangerous and irresponsible. People who are acceptable, we will allow them to continue the political game but under circumscribed rules," and one of the rules was that there would be only two parties. There would be the sort of pro-government party which was willing to play ball with the military and they were essentially conservative people, and there was the legalized opposition, as it were, the sort of tame left. Those two parties were allowed to contest elections at the local level. When I got there, I think maybe the existing mayors of large cities were still appointed, but in the two years that I was in country they did have mayoral elections. They had elections for city council, they didn't had elections for the state assembly, but governors were still appointed, and the next step was going to be to have directly elected governors. So basically it was a kind of limited, ersatz type of democracy. The politicians were allowed to play the game, if you will, but really ultimate power still rested with the military.

*Q: This is a period of real politik as far as the United States was concerned, with Kissinger as Secretary of State and all. There was obvious promotion of democracy, human rights, which is so much part of our repertoire today. Were those much in evidence during your time?*

CASWELL: They were in evidence. Certainly one of the major elements of our brief was to look into allegations [of torture, violations of human rights]. When these came to light, they were no longer allegations, they were actual incidents - of people disappearing or being tortured. Relatives would come into the consulate and want to talk with somebody about their missing son or daughter or whatever and trying to find out what happened. Yes, we certainly followed and tried to learn as much as we could about those cases. When there were celebrated cases that began to affect, if you will, the political health of Brazil if not the ultimate stability of the country, we would report on the political impact of particular cases. It was not pushed as vigorously as when Jimmy Carter came into office. In fact, Jimmy Carter actually sent his wife, Rosalynn, down to lecture the generals about human rights, which they really hated. Human rights together with what became another major concern of ours, which was the 1974 - I think it was signed - German-Brazilian Nuclear Accord, which we were gravely concerned about the proliferation, the potential proliferation, of weapons technology out of that agreement became big issues. Our concern on those two points, human rights and the German Nuclear Agreement, really came to a head under Carter's Administration and really alienated our relationship with Brazil, which lasted for a good 20 years or so. Only we began to see the damage being repaired in the mid-'90s or so. So, yes, we did follow human rights. We did lecture them some on it under the Ford administration, but not as vigorously as when Carter came in. Our great concerns about the German agreement, trying to block it and, once it was signed, trying to get it annulled were

the major issues that we had with Brazil at the time.

*Q: As I recall, there was an Argentinean side of the equation. If Brazil was going to get an atomic bomb or nuclear weapons, then Argentina obviously had to have one. God knows what they were going to do with these things.*

CASWELL: It was then kind of historic contest between Brazil and Argentina for leadership, political leadership, of the South American continent, and this rivalry expressed itself in different ways. When the Brazilian military did their military exercises and planning, it was always premised on an Argentine attack into Rio de Grande do Sul state along the border with Argentina. It's a little hard to conceive of it, but that's what they would worry about, and conversely the Argentine military predicated their arguments for weaponry and so forth based upon the supposed Brazilian threat. The Brazilian military had a very great sense of, concept of, *grandeza* they would call it, grandeur. You know the old joke about Brazil that it's the country of the future, but it always will be; they'll never get themselves organized and straightened out. Well, the Brazilian military kind of felt that, well, they could get the country straightened out and in fact they had been doing a relatively good job of running the country and straightening it out after they booted out the incompetent or dangerous civilian politicians in the mid-'60s. The Brazilian economy started growing great guns in the late '60s into the early '70s. They had a view of themselves and the country reaching kind of a lift-off point. As part of Brazil's gaining the international recognition that it should have, a seat on the UN Security Council and all that, they felt Brazil needed to have the bomb. There was definitely that kind of thinking in the military and that was part of the reason why we were very concerned about a hidden agenda on the Brazilian part in getting this enrichment technology from the Germans, because that was part of what the nuclear agreement was going to be. It wasn't just buying German equipment to set up a nuclear power plant, but it was also buying German enrichment equipment which would supposedly allow them to enrich their own natural uranium resources, which they have in Brazil, without full international safeguards, and we were concerned that they might then divert some of this enriched uranium into a bomb project.

*Q: As a junior officer speaking some Portuguese, I would have thought you might be sort of pointed towards the university students and all that: 'Go for it, fella'. If I were an ambassador, that's what I'd do. We had gone through our own university students. University students are an important bellwether and maybe an important political factor.*

CASWELL: You're absolutely right, and that was one of the projects I did work on in my first two years in Brazil. University students traditionally had been highly politicized in Brazil, as is befitting of the sons and daughters of the social, economic and political elite, because those are the only people who go to university in Brazil. They would get very involved and they would have different slates for university councils and these slates would be affiliated with different political parties. For the most part they were left, lefter and leftist. Universities were always on strike and the students were sort of the shock troops in street demonstrations for the left political parties in the period of the '50s and early '60s. So when a military crackdown in politics came in the mid to late '60s, one of the things that the military did was initially close down the universities and then, when they reopened them, they made sure that they were depoliticized as much as possible, since student involvement in politics was a real "no-no" for a long time. Part

of the whole *distensão* process that I mentioned before was gradually taking the wraps off of these things, and there was a process, if you will, from the students' perspective of testing the waters to see how much more they could do. This was just beginning in 1974/75/76. So my job in effect was to go to these different universities and try to find out, meet with students, meet with university administrators. Actually I was given the job, even though I was sitting in Rio de Janeiro, of doing this as best I could on a nationwide scale. So we talk with colleagues in Sao Paulo, I would read the press and so forth, to try to get a feel for what was happening countrywide. Then also I had a chance to do a little bit of traveling up to the northeastern part of the consular district as well to do this. So I ended up at the end of my tour producing - I guess in those days it would have been an airgram - a research piece that described what was happening, putting it into its historical context. Essentially at that point not much was still happening. It was just very much the early stages of students testing the political waters and it was still much a controlled situation, but they were just beginning to allow student organizations to open up again. It was probably the first paper - as a matter of fact, I think that was what the ambassador said - the first paper that had been produced on this issue for probably 10 years or so.

*Q: Who was your ambassador at the time?*

CASWELL: John Crimmens his name was.

*Q: Usually the faculties of these universities have a good solid core of resident Marxists. They must have been gone.*

CASWELL: They were pretty much hounded out, that's correct. I think some of them had been really fired and driven out of the country; some of them, I guess, had been imprisoned in the period before I got there. There were other people like the man who went on to become president of Brazil in the 1990s, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who had been a leftist sociologist at the University of Sao Paulo. He went into voluntary exile because he could see the handwriting on the wall and he just said, "I don't need this sort of stuff," and he spent some time in France and in Chile. Actually I understand he also spent a little bit of time in the United States.

*Q: Speaking of Chile, I'm not sure but it's very close to the time of Allende and all that. Had that taken place while you were there?*

CASWELL: The Allende Coup took place in '73 just before I got there. It took place while I was still in graduate school.

*Q: Has that had any repercussions in Brazil, saying: 'here's another one of our fellow officers that's gotten rid of those leftist scum' and that sort of thing?*

CASWELL: Well, it wasn't the subject of too much public debate, I don't believe. There was the notorious Operation Condor, which supposedly developed between the Brazilian military, the Argentine military, Uruguayan and, I believe, the Paraguayan - I do not believe it involved the Chilean military (but it may have) - in which they decided they were going to form kind of a working alliance, which was not supposed to be something that was publicized, but a kind of agreement they had to cooperate against a common problem with leftists. Some Argentine leftists

fled into southern Brazil, and some Brazilian leftists fled into Uruguay, or whatever. So it was a kind of intelligence sharing supposedly and, if possible, to round some of these people. To this day it is an issue, particularly in Argentina apparently, of wanting to find out more about this shadowy Operation Condor and what actually was done and what were the records. There's a way for the parents or relatives of the *deparecidos* (disappeared persons) in finding out the fate of the people who disappeared, finding out what really ultimately was the fate of their loved ones and where their remains might be.

*Q: How about our contacts? Were we pretty much sticking to sort of the government supporters or could we get out and talk to people who were coming out who were basically opposed to the government?*

CASWELL: I think, it would be fair to say from my perspective, which was a pretty lowly one at that point, that we were able to certainly talk to people in the legal opposition, if you will, and we regularly did, people in what was called the MDB (Brazilian Democratic Movement party), which was the legally sanctioned opposition party. These people were certainly not self-described Marxist-Leninists and they certainly weren't revolutionary, but they were democrats and they were people who were concerned about their constituency, which in many ways was the poorer classes in Brazil, and they had differences with the policies of the government, the economic policies, human rights, and social policies the government was pursuing, and they felt the government was not moving... They thought *distensão*, that it should proceed much more vigorously, and that they needed to have direct elections of governors, and they needed to have direct election of the president, instead of this sort of rigged system which Brazil had, an electoral college but basically everybody knew that the "rules of the game" were such that the man who was baptized by the military would be chosen president and so forth. We could certainly talk to these people in congress and in the state legislatures and we could talk with journalists. They had still at this point in Brazil censorship of the media, but notwithstanding that, that didn't mean that every political columnist or every political journalist agreed with the government. In fact, many of them took a rather jaundiced view and they would also test the waters and see how far they could go in criticizing the government. Indeed some of the consulate's better contacts - and one of the things the consulate could do to help the embassy out was that we could talk to people in the media, the political columnists and journalists, and get their opinions and using their sources of information, getting other views on what was really happening and why it was happening, to add additional color or balance to the information the embassy could get. Working in Brasilia, Brasilia was very much a government town, if you will. You had pretty good access to the government, but what you got was the government line.

*Q: My understanding was that come Friday afternoon the government took off and headed back to Sao Paulo or Rio.*

CASWELL: Yes, that's true. That was less true by the mid-'70s than it had been in the '60s, but yes, to some degree, although what we found was, while we could sometimes get access to Senator So-and-so or Congress Deputy So-and-so when they were back in Rio for the weekend, for the most part they didn't want to see somebody from the embassy or the consulate over the weekend. They said, "I talked to your colleagues up in Brasilia. Don't bother me." But sometimes they would make themselves available.

*Q: I'd like to comment on this and get a little flavor for things. Somebody I interviewed - I'm not sure if it was this period or not - arrived in Rio and said that something that bothered him was that a number, particularly at the senior level, of the officers had sort of picked up the Brazilian habit - we're talking about the guys - of having ladies on the side and boasting about it, which is very Brazilian, but they'd sort of fallen into this habit. As a junior officer, you notice something like that. Did you feel this, or was this of any concern?*

CASWELL: No, I did not feel that and I did not perceive it. It may have been going on and I was so naive that I didn't particularly understand it. But the reputation Rio certainly had as a post, I guess it's fair to say that all Brazilian posts had that reputation, Rio in particular, that if you were married your marriage was at risk and if you were single there was a good chance you were going to end up getting married during your tour in Brazil, because the Brazilian women were very attractive, they worked very hard at being attractive, and they didn't let the fact that a man might be married stand in the way. They were rather aggressive, and I think many of them might have seen it as a ticket out of Brazil as well. I went there as a bachelor and I, too, was attracted to the Brazilian women, who were really quite exotic and very friendly. That was also one of the arguments among supporters in Brazil of the concept of building Brasilia, was getting the government out of Rio de Janeiro. Rio was considered such a flesh pot, and the local culture, the local *carioca* culture in Rio de Janeiro itself, was so hedonistic and, if you will, anti-work, that it would be a positive thing just to get the government out of Rio de Janeiro. That may have been argument made by people from the rival states of Minas Gerais and Sao Paulo who have a real disdain for people from Rio de Janeiro. But I think there might have been some truth there.

*Q: Did the poverty of parts of Rio impede at all? One thinks of the movie Black Orpheus and other things of this nature. Was this just another world?*

CASWELL: It certainly existed. I would tell people, foreigners who came to visit or my friends back home when they when they asked me, "What is Rio de Janeiro really like?" I would say, "In some ways, it's one of the most beautiful places in the world. The natural setting of the place is just incredible. But it's kind of like looking at a beautiful rock on the ground; it's shiny, crystal, gold and it's really spectacular, but when you turn over the rock, there's a lot of ugly things crawling out from underneath it." I think that's a pretty good metaphor because there's the tremendous disparities of wealth and poverty and really sort of "cheek by jowl." The rich people in Brazilian cities tend to live in the cities themselves; they do not flee to the suburbs like has been the pattern in the United States, and the poor people in effect many times were living out in the suburbs. But you would have the phenomenon of squatters just squatting on any available bit of territory which would emerge, and many times they would live on these famous hillside favelas (slums), which were not proper terrain to build houses on and so they were vacant, but people would put little shacks on them and then over the course of years the shacks would become more and more permanent. That would be one of the local political issues. In effect leftist politicians looking to appeal for potential votes in these favelas would offer public services to the favela dwellers so the favelas would become more and more permanent. They'd offer electricity and try to pipe water and so forth up into them, and many of these favelas had been around for decades and had become rather permanent. Whereas conservative politicians, their constituency, the rich sectors of society would want to tear these favelas down, and this would be

a recurrent political issue within the city of Rio de Janeiro, conservative politicians bragging that they had eradicated favelas and returned the beautiful vistas and nature, and leftist politicians vilifying these “urban beautification” campaigns. It very definitely had an impact on the daily life of people there. It contributed to crime problems that were substantial even in those days, not as bad in the 1970s as it came to be in the ‘80s and the ‘90s, but still very substantial crime problems. I was not personally mugged in my two years there, although my car was stolen in my two years there and I had the misfortune of coming back while it was in the process of being stolen and I was young enough and stupid enough to accost the guys. As I was walking up to the car, they got the car started and they tried to run me over with the car. As they came at me, I bolted up onto the hood of the car as the car peeled out. I escaped with just bad abrasions as I fell off the speeding car and hit the street pavement. Living with crime was something that was a result of this poverty and wealth side by side.

*Q: In your contacts with people in Rio, the people you mixed with, what were their attitudes towards the United States? When you get to Mexico, they're always talking about the colossus of the Americas and all that. How did you find the Brazilians viewed the United States?*

CASWELL: Brazil's different than Mexico, that's for sure. I would describe the Brazilians' psychology in the following terms: They look at the size of Brazil and the resources of Brazil - and, like I say, the old joke about Brazil's the country of the future - and they get a very grand sense of themselves and they say, “We've got all the potential in the world and we're going to be the next super power. There are many things that are similar to us as with the United States. We're a multicultural, a multi-ethnic society; we're a country of continental proportions; we've got all these natural resources; we're a democracy; and so forth and so on. So they've got a little bit more self-confidence and they're not immediately threatened by any of their neighbors. They're not up against and border with the United States and suffering from historic conflicts where they lost half their territory to their neighbors like Mexico did with the United States. So in that sense they don't have the traumas and they have a relatively positive self-image of themselves, but there's this niggling thing about “but we've never become a super power, we've never really achieved our potential,” so there is a sense of inferiority underneath the braggadocio and a kind of annoyance with countries like the United States or the European countries that they don't really take Brazil seriously. It's not that the United States is a threat, but “you don't really consult us, you don't treat us the way you treat the Europeans.” Brazil is not really a player. What really cut them to the quick was the time when de Gaulle apparently - and I'm not sure whether it was just before or just after a visit to Brazil, a state visit, de Gaulle was asked by some journalist what he thought about Brazil and he said, “Brazil, it's not really a serious country.” That really cut them to the quick, also because historically a lot of the Brazilian elite was very European oriented, so when somebody like Charles de Gaulle would say that they weren't a serious country, it really wounded them. In the time period I was there, Nixon actually had tried to appeal some to the Brazilian psyche and sense of grandeur by making a statement something like, “As goes Brazil, so will go South America.” On the one hand, the Brazilians sort of publicly said, “That's not really true,” because they were afraid that this would offend Argentina and some of their neighbors as though Brazil had designs on becoming the hegemony of South America, but secretly down deep I believe that many Brazilians really liked it and said, “Yes, that's right.”

*Q: I realize you were working at this time in a consulate, but one of the things that I've heard repeated ever since I've been in the Foreign Service is that the Brazilians had a top-notch foreign service, but somebody once said, "Yes, it really is very good, but it's a very legalistic group. It's not really very forward looking. They're looking out for Brazil's interests but not sort of projecting Brazil's power." Did you get any feel for this?*

CASWELL: I'd say there's probably some truth to both of those comments. In fact, they do have a professional foreign service, probably the most professional foreign service in Latin America. You have to pass very rigorous examinations to be able to get into it. Then you go through a service academy. So in effect you had to be very well educated. To start out with, you had to speak foreign languages to even pass the exam. Then you went through this academy for at least two years, and that's when you began your career. They had regular examination processes and things that you had to do during the course of your career to get promoted. So, yes, as individuals they were very bright diplomats, and they tend to be charming, cosmopolitan, sophisticated people. That said, I think there's some truth to the fact that they did tend to have a legalistic foreign policy. They had sort of a doctrine, if you will - addressing your point about projection of Brazilian force - rejection of interference in the domestic political affairs of other countries. That was one of the hallmarks of their foreign policy. Dating back to really the beginning of the Brazilian foreign policy in the earlier part of the 20th century and latter part of the 19th century, that's fitting where they were in the world at that time. They were, although a huge country, a weak country, and relatively on the periphery of things, and so they would side with the small countries, not with the world powers, and so they would be concerned about other people interfering in their internal affairs and telling them what they should be doing. So, of course, their foreign policy would sanctify the notion of non-interference. It would be antithetical to them to run a policy of projecting force. I'm starting to get a little bit ahead of myself, but if you get back to the 1990s or so, they began to do precisely that sort of thing in dealing with the problems in Paraguay or taking a leading role in trying to solve the border conflict between Peru and Ecuador. They were becoming by that time much more involved in using Brazilian power and influence to try to promote solutions of problems in countries along their border out of concern about what impact these conflicts might have on Brazilian interests if they were to continue to fester and get worse. But in the 1970s, basically, Brazilian foreign policy was very much Third World oriented. In fact, they were sort of moving from what had been a pro-U.S. orientation in the mid to late '60s. They were so pro-U.S., they were the only Latin American country, for instance, to join U.S. forces in the intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965. They were since then trying to live that down. The foreign ministry thought the DR intervention was a very bad idea. It was the military who thought it was a good idea. By the mid-'70s they had decided that really where Brazil's role in the world would be would be as a sort of self-anointed leader of the Third World in opposition to the first world and using instruments in the U.N. system to try to pursue their rights and interests and so forth through the U.N. system.

*Q: I'm not very sure of my dates, but this is about the time when the Portuguese revolution happened in Portugal itself.*

CASWELL: 1975.

*Q: And, you know, you had Angola and Mozambique and major repercussions there, and, of*

*course, particularly in the black population this is where so many came from. Did that have any effect on events while you were there?*

CASWELL: I would say that it was something that would appear in the press. You could certainly read about it in the newspapers and see it on TV and so forth, but I would say in terms of domestic impact inside Brazil itself, minimal to none. The reason I say that is, one, the Brazilians, as part of their psyche about we're a great country or we're on our way to becoming a great country, even a future super power, but we haven't reach it quite yet, and part of this is the reason why is the flaws that we inherited, the flaws of character which we inherited, which are the fault of the Portuguese. To many Brazilians, the Portuguese are this funny little folkloric country, poor little country on the impoverished southwestern edge of Europe that really had their day in the sun 500 years ago, but today are inconsequential, and are really not very bright. Brazilians see Portugal as having kind of gone to seed over the last 500 years. And the Portuguese speak funny with that accent. The equivalent of a Polish joke in Brazil is the Portuguese joke. And the Portuguese are the brunt of humor in Brazil. In part that reflected the impact of immigrants from Portugal during the '50s, '60s, into the '70s being manual laborers or they'd be taxicab drivers. They were very humble people and not particularly well-educated people who would emigrate from Portugal, which sort of reinforced this notion. Okay, it was the mother country once, but we've long ago outgrown that, and these are silly people. They had this kind of funny comic opera, civil-military thing going on, and of course nobody gets killed and there's lots of posturing, and those silly soldiers they put carnations in their guns, and aren't they kind of funny? Ha, ha, ha. As for what sort of impact the liberation of Angola and Mozambique and so forth would have on public consciousness, not really very much on the politics of Brazil at that time. Black and brown people in Brazil had no political power. They were very marginalized and it's kind of a joke to me to call Brazil a racial democracy. Now by the 1990s an incipient wave of black consciousness had begun to arise in Brazil that they have gotten the short end of the stick for 500 years and they need to mobilize themselves to be proud of themselves and their heritage and to mobilize themselves to try to keep more political power and economic power and so forth. But in the 1970s, no. When the areas where the ancestors of these people, the Afro-Brazilians, came from originally were now beginning to achieve independence as a result of the political dust-up in Portugal, it really doesn't affect general public thinking in Brazil of the 1970s, but it did excite people in the foreign ministry and I think in the military as well that Brazil could become the tutor to newly independent Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa now that the Portuguese have been booted out of there after mishandling these countries for hundreds of years. If you just looked at the map, Brazil is here and just across the south Atlantic is Angola, and Angola is another fairly large country with a lot of natural resources that could be exploited and could become an economic or political partner with Brazil. So, yes, I think there is an interest and some ambitions in the closed circles of the foreign ministry and the military thinking about military relationships [with Portuguese-speaking Africa], but that was it.

*Q: In 1976 what did they do to you?*

CASWELL: In 1976 they sent me back to Washington. I volunteered for it. I had been interested in possibly getting a job in the Operations Center ever since my A100 entry-orientation class, because one of the things they did was take us for a tour over to see the Op Center. So when I was thinking about what would be my onward assignment from Brazil and I was sending back

messages to my handlers in PER, I said I would be interested in getting a job in the Op Center. Indeed that's what came up, so I came back in, I think, October of '76 and began in the Op Center in November of '76.

**CLARK M. BRINTNALL**  
**Assistant Army Attaché**  
**Brasilia (1974-1977)**

*Brigadier General Clark M. Brintnall was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska. He graduated from West Point Academy in 1958. His career included service in Brazil, Panama, and Vietnam. Brigadier General Brintnall was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1996.*

*Q: You were in Brazil from when to when?*

BRINTNALL: July of 1974 until July of 1977.

*Q: So this was the first time you were there as a full fledged...*

BRINTNALL: Full fledged assistant attaché.

*Q: What did you see the role of a military attaché to be in a friendly country as?*

BRINTNALL: First I would like to say that by then the Embassy had moved to Brasilia. I was in Rio de Janeiro sitting at the desk of General Walters overlooking Guanabara Bay on the seventh floor of the old American Embassy. My bosses, the Army Attaché and the Ambassador, were a long way away in Brasilia. It was a marvelous job in one of the most beautiful cities in the world. My job was threefold: to serve as the representative of the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army; to inform the U.S. Army what was happening militarily in the country; and to provide advice and assistance to the Ambassador, specifically in this case, the Consul General and his staff .

*Q: What was the political situation in Brazil in 1974-1976 period?*

BRINTNALL: Initially it was fairly quiet. But bubbling up was the Brazil-Federal Republic of Germany nuclear accord which came to a head with the U.S. Administration in 1977. During this same time, Human Rights became a major issue in Brazil-US bilateral relations. We got a preview of the nuclear issue through President-elect Carter's *Playboy* interview on the subject. Ambassador Crimmins could sense the storm brewing.

*Q: Could you explain what this was about?*

BRINTNALL: Brazil needed new sources of power. It already was embarked on the largest hydro-electric facility in the world at Itaipu on the Paraguayan border, but it need additional energy to grow. To meet this demand it signed an agreement with the FRG valued at up to \$10

billion. You may recall, this was the time of the long gasoline lines. There was a shortage of petroleum and Brazil opted for nuclear power.

Q: *We are talking of gas lines -- of there being a shortage of gas.*

BRINTNALL: Brazil wanted its own independent source of power. It didn't want to be dependent upon anybody else and it didn't produce enough petroleum itself to provide for this independence. It wanted the source of power that the major powers were adopting at that time. But nuclear controls were about to become a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy, and the U.S. was concerned with safeguards.

Q: *Safeguards meaning what?*

BRINTNALL: What would be done with the spent fuel? Would it provide Brazil with the means to manufacture nuclear weapons? How would the U.S. be assured that this fuel would be properly stored? The U.S. came out strongly, and publicly against the accord. First, we appealed to Germany and were rebuffed. Next, we appealed to Brazil and were turned down publicly, and in no uncertain terms. I recall that Warren Christopher came to Brasilia at that time to appeal to the Brazilian Government....am I jumping ahead?

Q: *Go on:*

BRINTNALL: Mr. Christopher came to Brasilia to appeal to the Brazilians to give up this purchase from the Germans. He was very poorly received. As I recall it, he returned that same night after no agreement. The next thing that happened was an announcement by the Government of Brazil that our Military Accords signed in 1952 were no longer operative. They said that the U.S. had unilaterally altered the terms of the accords by requiring a human rights report on all countries receiving security assistance.

Let me say here that a number of factors came into play. First, they were furious over our public attacks on the nuclear accord with the FRG. Next, the Government of Brazil, particularly the military, was unhappy with the Carter Administration's high visibility stance on human rights. Finally, there was the size and composition of the U.S. military presence that had been bothering the military leadership for some time. But the abrogation of our military agreements came as quite a shock. The human rights reporting requirement and the nuclear issue provided the excuse to break the accords. I suspect that they had been looking for some time for a reason to do this.

Q: *This happened in 1977. Were you there when it happened?*

BRINTNALL: I was indeed.

Q: *What did this mean? This must have been sort of like an earthquake in your specialty.*

BRINTNALL: Oh, absolutely. It was a bombshell, a great surprise.

Q: *Did this stop American presence there?*

BRINTNALL: It certainly pared it down to a bare minimum, and in a hurry. But in reality, by that time there was simply no justification for the size and high rank in the Military Mission. Military sales were way down, as was military training.

*Q: How did this impact on your job?*

BRINTNALL: It made it very interesting. I found that with Brazilians, being Brazilian, my personal relationships didn't suffer at all. My relationships continued with my personal friends. But institutionally, I wasn't allowed to travel to places where heretofore I had traveled without restriction. I was even limited in my contacts at the Army Command and General Staff College and the Superior War School. So while the institution doors were nearly closed, my personal relationship continued.

*Q: Sort of going back to the 1974-1977. When you got there, what type of work were you doing? Can you describe a typical month or week?*

BRINTNALL: I would visit as many military units and talk with as many officers as I could every day. I tried to find out...to inform myself what the Brazilians were thinking. What was the mood? How did they view the United States? How could we improve our relations? What initiatives could I suggest to further closer ties? For example, I spent a lot of time promoting exchanges with the Superior War College, and finding speakers for the Command and General Staff College. So, it was really basically two things. What is going on in Brazil and what could be done to make things better?.

*Q: One of the things that always seems to occur, often when there is a coup, sort of a Nasser or a Qadhafi or what have you, sort of catches us somewhat by surprise as well as the government where the coup takes place. Because it happens at the sort of Lt. Colonel or Major levels. Sometimes even lower down. And the normal thing is well, who can get out and talk to the Majors and Lt. Colonels. I mean, was this...not because of Brazil but was this part of the attaché thing...trying to get into the mind of the "coup-prone" officers?*

BRINTNALL: Sure. Just like the political and economic officers try to cover their areas of responsibility throughout a country, the attaché does the same in the military area. I attempted to know as many officers of all ranks that I could.

*Q: But could you have frank discussions with mid-level officers?*

BRINTNALL: Oh, absolutely. And frequently.

*Q: Did you get any difference of feeling between them as to how they looked at the world and how the generals looked at the world?*

BRINTNALL: Clearly there was a generational difference. There was also a difference in the altitudes of those who had been to the United States and those who had not. Less and less were coming to the United States for training and orientation. Just because someone knows you,

doesn't mean they are going to like you. but at least if they know you, they are going to understand you and they are less likely to do something antagonistic just based upon feelings. But there is a good chance that feelings will take over if they don't know you. The exchanges are important for both countries.

*Q: When we were looking at the Brazilian Army during this period, was it pointed towards anywhere or was it more just an internal engine of stability?*

BRINTNALL: It was always pointed to some degree to Argentina. There was always some concern about the Argentines. Less concern with its other neighbors, but there were border concerns. There was also great concern over maintaining a presence in the Amazon and in making sure the Amazon was kept for the Brazilians. There was concern that a vacuum there would be filled by foreign powers. But the bulk of the military force was located in the South.

*Q: What was the concern with Argentina?*

BRINTNALL: It has always been a concern. Political and economic rivalry over the years. No other neighbor was capable of mounting a military threat. This is not to say that the Brazilian and Argentine Armed Forces did not get along. They did.

*Q: Were the Brazilians going for military equipment elsewhere at this point?*

BRINTNALL: Yes. They were. They had French Mirage aircraft, for example. They were building frigates with the Germans. They were building submarines with the Germans. One, they didn't want to be totally dependent upon the United States and two, there was still a feeling by some officers that Brazilian interests lay more with Europe than they did with the United States.

*Q: Who was the Ambassador?*

BRINTNALL: John Crimmins.

*Q: What was your, being down in Rio, did you have much to do with the Embassy?*

BRINTNALL: As little as possible. I think I spent one night in Brasilia during the three-year tour. I was quite happy not to go to Brasilia.

*Q: Who was the Consul General in Rio?*

BRINTNALL: First, William Miller and then John Dexter.

*Q: What was your relationship with the Consul General?*

BRINTNALL: It was very close with both Consuls General. I attended all the Consul General meetings. I talked several times a day with the principal staff. I was very welcome throughout the Consulate; I would use the Consulate General's facilities -- its library, attend their receptions. They would use my guest lists. It was a very close relationship.

*Q: Was there any concern about during this time, either ...it was still a military government, that there might be a coup within a coup? Or any sort of violent change in the form of government or a strong opposition from the civilian community?*

BRINTNALL: No. There was not.

*Q: How did you feel about your personal security? I mean, Ambassador Burke Elbrick had been kidnaped sometime before but it was still...*

BRINTNALL: I was never concerned about my personal security and I felt, rightly or wrongly, that someone, one of my Brazilian friends, would tell me if I or a member of my family was a target. In fact, one of my wife's friends called one day and told her not to send our daughter to school. We kept her home and later found that there had been student riots in the vicinity of her school that day.

*Q: When you say that you were restricted in where you could go, how did this...?*

BRINTNALL: I couldn't just visit a military unit without advance written authority. My requests were not always granted. In 1977 the Army began to abide by the letter of the regulation as it concerns foreign attachés. Before, I had gone just about anywhere I wanted to with few restrictions.

*Q: Were there other military attachés in Rio at that time?*

BRINTNALL: No foreign military attachés. The United States was the only one. We also had an assistant Naval Attaché.

*Q: Were there any other major developments during that period?*

BRINTNALL: I think we covered them. The nuclear accord, the breaking of the military relations and human rights.

*Q: Were you reporting on human rights...the things that you would see or was that beyond your scope?*

BRINTNALL: Reporting in the sense that when I talked to the Consul General and his team, yes. Anything I would learn, we would discuss. We would talk about human rights. We would talk about economic matters and we would talk about military matters.

*Q: What were the human rights concerns?*

BRINTNALL: Principally, torture.

*Q: Was this essentially a military function at that time? Like military police or would this be done by the equivalent of civilian police or who was doing the torture?*

BRINTNALL: I don't know how much torture actually went on. It took place and there were abuses, I would say principally by the intelligence services. Torture of even one person is intolerable, but the incidence of abuse in Brazil during this period was rather small, I believe when compared with many other countries. For example, it paled in comparison to what was happening in Cuba.

*Q: Did you find the intelligence services were sort of a service unto themselves as far as you were concerned? Could you talk to the people there, the ones who were dealing with the internal security?*

BRINTNALL: I could talk to them, though they tended to keep to themselves. They were a little bit different than the other members of the armed forces. They followed these things for years and years and they tended to be more concerned about what they viewed as the Communist threat, the terrorist threat. They saw themselves as the front line troops against the threat.

*Q: This tends to happen.*

BRINTNALL: And they lost some of their people too, since they were on the front lines. They took a stronger line than others because they were in the line of battle.

*Q: Nobody was asking you to go in and say, "Ease up" or anything like that?*

BRINTNALL: I didn't receive any specific instructions to go in and say, "Ease up". But I reflected the U.S. Government views. The Brazilians, military of all stripes, were quite aware of the United States concern over human rights.

*Q: It wasn't incumbent upon you to go and preach to the intelligence people?*

BRINTNALL: No. But I did bring up human rights regularly and I told them that, if nothing else, it is counter-productive. It is a dumb way to behave, because for every one you torture, you make ten enemies, because you antagonize his friends and his family. So, I carried the message of the general human rights concerns but I didn't go in with specifics about specific acts.

*Q: Why don't we stop at this point and we'll pick it up at the next time...I like to put at the end, where did you go next?*

BRINTNALL: I went to the Army War College.

*Q: This is 1977.*

BRINTNALL: Yes. I went to the Army War College and graduated in 1978. Then went to the Office of Secretary Defense from 1978-83 and following that, back to Brazil.

**WILLIAM JEFFRAS DIETERICH**

**Press/Information Officer, USIS  
Sao Paulo (1974-1977)**

*William Jeffras Dieterich was born in Boston in 1936. He received his bachelor's degree from Connecticut Wesleyan University in 1958 and then served in the US Navy. His career included positions in Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil, Israel, Italy, Ecuador, El Salvador, and México. Mr. Dieterich was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.*

*Q: Well, let's go to Sao Paulo, 1974 to when?*

DIETERICH: That was 1974 to 1977.

*Q: What was Sao Paulo like when you arrived there?*

DIETERICH: Sao Paulo is, and was, one of the biggest cities in the world. It is a really big, tough, and smart city. It is part of the southern cone phenomenon, the result of a huge amount of immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese - all sorts of folks plus about a million ethnic Japanese. Most of these people started down on the farm, but many now live in the big city and are lawyers and doctors. Sao Paulo is the industrial center of Brazil, almost to an embarrassing extent. You have the very underdeveloped northeast, tropical, with a heavy population of poor folks of African origins - basically people brought as slaves to Brazil. Brazil abolished slavery even later than the United States did. Rio in the center; Great port, great *entrepot*, great international city.

But Sao Paulo state is traditionally where most of industrialized work gets done. Again, part of that Europeanized southern portion of Brazil. A lot of Japanese, huge number of Germans and Yugoslavs. Curitiba, to the South of Sao Paulo, is the only city I have ever been in Latin America where you can go in the airport and your luggage may be carried by some person that looks like he came out of a Breugel painting. A rather successful part of Latin America. High standards of living, high per capita income, a lot of money to be made, a lot of progress, a lot of big buildings, a lot of big newspapers. And then you have Brasilia, way off in the middle of nowhere, as the capital of the country.

As the Brazilian body politic, trying to center itself in Brasilia, worries about the overwhelming power of Sao Paulo state, I had the feeling that occasionally the American Embassy and USIS in Brasilia worried about the overwhelming power of the Consulate General in Sao Paulo where most of the money and most of the national press was.

*Q: Well, it is a place where we have often assigned a consulate general there and then he became an ambassador elsewhere. I've been reading a book about the Brazilians, and it says that Sao Paulo is a business city, that there are no marks of cultural interest or beauty there.*

DIETERICH: It's written by somebody from Rio, no doubt. We live in an unjust world. Anybody who has spent time in the third world has gotten very used to being patient with "Well, we don't have a lot of material progress here, but we have strong spiritual, esthetic, and

intellectual values. The notion is, there is a bargain somehow. You can have one or the other but you can't have both. The cruel truth, which nobody wants to say, because it's so damned mean, is that, "Yes, you can have both." The truth is they usually go together. The fact is that Sao Paulo has most of the industry in Brazil; it has most of the money in Brazil; it also has the best art museums in Brazil; it also has the best orchestras in Brazil; it also has the best universities in Brazil. Too bad that isn't fair, but it is true. The Sao Paulo art museum is really very good. The symphony, and I've spent a lot of time with symphony orchestras and operas, is not quite as good as Buenos Aires, but they do quite well. Rio is an absolutely delightful city, and I enjoyed every minute I spent there, but it is a city where it is fun to play, but Sao Paulo, in terms of the substance of work, is a much more interesting place.

*Q: Who was the consul general when you were there?*

DIETERICH: Fred Chapin. Do you know Fred?

*Q: No, I know of him.*

DIETERICH: Fred died about two years ago. He had cancer. He was a good consul general and a good friend. The political counselor was Tony Freeman, who I had known in Bolivia. He eventually became the State Department's labor advisor, and now represents the ILO (International Labor Organization) here in Washington. The BPAO (Branch Public Affairs Officer, chief of any non-capitol city USIS post) was Don Mathes. My duties expanded because there were now only about five officers at post. USIS posts were still pretty big in those days. There was a BPAO, an IO (Information Officer), and a CAO (cultural Affairs Officer), and a couple of assistant CAOs to help with educational exchange and things like that. I had the full range of press activities, meaning that whatever had to be done with radio, whatever had to be done with television, plus the printed press, plus minor spokesman's duties at times, was my job. The consulate was supposed to keep its public mouth shut and leave that sort of adult work to the embassy. That in itself presented a problem, because the papers that asked the questions weren't in Brasilia, they were in Sao Paulo, and to some extent in Rio. Again, I was lucky to make some good contacts early, at a couple of the papers that really counted. I continued to work along the lines that had worked well for me in Buenos Aires, and that was to work with the big, weighty, elite press. That was where the audience was that had any impact on decisions involving U.S. foreign policy. Right away I was introduced to a person named Rui Placido Barbosa, who was a young journalist, sort of chief of staff to Rui Mesquita, who was the owner and publisher of the *Estado de Sao Paulo*. *Estado de Sao Paulo* is probably the biggest, toughest, smartest newspaper in Brazil. Often known as *Estadao*, the big *Estado*, it was a newspaper, like La Prensa in Argentina, that had established its own milestones in the battle against censorship.

*Q: How far were we into the military government at this point?*

DIETERICH: About ten years. I think it started about '63 or '64. It was a well-entrenched military government and we were into a period of heavy censorship of the press. The initial deal the military offered *Estado* was "We trust you persons to practice self-censorship." *Estado* replied: "No way, we will not censor ourselves. However, we have to think of the practicalities of publishing a newspaper. We suggest that you appoint censors and we will make room for

them in our newsroom. That way you can do what you have to do even though we don't like it, but we can still publish a timely newspaper." It was a very clever scheme because every time any even slightly important foreigner would visit the paper, the publishers would take them to the newsroom and say, "Here is our so and so editor and here is our censor. Stand up and say hello." They also developed a wonderful way of pointing out when they had been cut. When a censor would cut something out, they would publish in its place a few quatrains of Camoes *Lusiadas*, a classic of Portuguese literature. That is about like producing a few verses of *Paradise Lost* on the front page of your newspaper. It would look nutty. But there it was, and it was *Estados'* way of fighting back and saying, "There was something here you weren't supposed to read so you can read poetry instead." *Estado* kept chipping away at censorship and the censors, and finally, on some anniversary or another of the paper's, the government said that, as a gift to *Estado*, they were going to remove their censors. *Estado* and the Mesquita family basically won their battle against censorship. It was a great victory, and they won it by being smart. They had a sense of humor and a sense of irony. Nobody went to jail.

*Q: What about the rest of the press?*

DIETERICH: There was a very good number two paper called *Folha*. It was a good second paper. In most capitals of Latin America it would have been a good first paper. There was a *Time Magazine* style magazine called *Veja*, which was extremely good. They were equal to most European papers, and I think better than many European papers.

*Estado* for example, took great pride in publishing the State of the Union address of the American President, in Portuguese, at the same time that it was published in the United States. This required strenuous efforts on the part of my office. This was in the days when we were still operating on teletypes. We had to set up a system of actually taking it off section by section, four or five pages at a time, and motorcycling it to the *Estado* offices where their team of translators would go to work on it. They really did publish it the next morning in Portuguese. It was a great accomplishment, and illustrated *Estado's* commitment to covering the United States. *Estado* did maintain a permanent correspondent in the United States, a person that would come back to Brazil every now and then. *Estado* was also interested in some of the copyrighted articles that I had.

The main trick to working with them was speed. Speed was hard in those days. There was no system to get the information to us quickly, we were still operating on a 24 hour turnover cycle, but that wasn't good enough in Sao Paulo. You couldn't have a 24 hour delay and be relevant, except of course in feature articles. We worked hard to get various papers the best stuff we could, and we worked hard to answer questions. Again, the game was to get them to call us up. When someone was working on a story, and had a question about the United States they didn't have the answer to - call us up. I had some fights with Brasilia over this, whether I had to go through them to get to the United States to answer a question. Brasilia would tap dance over the issue, but they finally recognized that I had to move fast and get information quickly if we were to have any influence. I think in terms of influencing the press, which was my job, I think it was a fairly successful time in Brazil. I stayed in Brazil three years.

Big political issues? You're not supposed to have big political issues when you're in a consulate

general. Nuclear proliferation issues were up. There were concerns about nuclear reprocessing plants in Brazil. Drug issues were about to come up.

*Q: I have a feeling the military rulers at that time would go off on tangents of trying to build fairly impressive things.*

DIETERICH: Yes, I guess so, but of course the most impressive project of all was Brasilia, initiated under a civilian government. But, I suppose Brazil's biggest developmental dream of all was the Amazon, and you could already see the rising tensions between the desire to develop the Amazon and the desire to protect the Amazon as well as all the problems of the treatment of native people in the Amazon region. Those were very tough issues, and they are still around. They are not going to go away quickly.

Speaking of the impact of communications technology, I remember seeing a televised ceremony where the leader of a tribal group in the Amazon was meeting with a Brazilian official. They were talking about treaties and other things. What caught my attention that the tribal leader had a tape recorder over his shoulder. He was going to take the talks back with him in a way that would have a different impact than in the past.

*Q: What was the attitude, where you were, towards the United States? Again, this book I'm reading said there was a certain amount of paranoia that there was an American plot to take over large parts of Brazil.*

DIETERICH: I never heard that stuff. I suppose there are people who believe that on the fringes, but they are not the people I dealt with. Maybe they are the people I should have been dealing with. It's black helicopter stuff.

*Q: We're talking about people in the United States who think that somehow the United Nations is going to come in with black helicopters and do Americans dirty. These are the survivalists and gun freaks in 1999 America.*

DIETERICH: That's right, and I'm sure there are Brazilians who believe these things, that the United States has these great nefarious designs, but not anybody I ever talked to.

*Q: Did anybody pay much attention to the United States - was it a subject of conversation?*

DIETERICH: Absolutely, sure, but the Brazilian attitude toward the United States, I think, is much different from the attitude in the Spanish speaking countries of Latin America. Spanish speaking countries were more subject to dependency theories, even Argentina. You know, the litany that goes, "Oh, the United States is going to dominate us no matter what, and if we are poor and underdeveloped it is because they did it to us." All this kind of theory that is really out of fashion now. Brazilians never really thought that way. Brazilians see themselves in a different league. They are in the Indonesia, India league of emerging nations that are going to be something in the future. They do believe that about themselves. They see themselves as a big country and like the United States in some ways. They look somewhat with condescension on the Spanish speaking countries. It's almost an attitude that says, "Well, we Brazilians and you

Americans, we really do have to keep an eye on these banana republics around us, but they are nothing we have to worry about too much, and we should have our own relationship.”

Brazil runs hot and cold on whether it wants to be part of Latin America or not. There are two lines of thinking: One says, “We want to be part of Latin America but we are the center and the most important country and we really ought to run things.” The other says, “No, no, we are in a different league, part of the emerging, big economies of the world, and that is where our future lies.” That creates very different ways of thinking about the United States in Brazil. And Brazilians too, it is basically a very optimistic place, especially in southern Brazil.

*Q: From time-to-time Brazil goes off on this inflation thing that sounds, from a distance anyway, incredible. Where were you on the inflation thing?*

DIETERICH: The economy was running pretty well. The *cruzeiro* at that time was doing okay. Well, it was inflating somewhat. You didn’t have a sense of economic crisis, but you did have a sense of poverty. One of the problems with Sao Paulo being where all the money is, is that it is also a magnet for people from the impoverished Northeast who are desperate for work and education. Part of the Brazilian government’s answer to that over the years has been taxation schemes that try to encourage industries to locate elsewhere, presumably nearer all those people who need work...

*Q: How was the military government viewed at this time? We have been accused of being too friendly with military governments in Latin America. How did this translate?*

DIETERICH: We were friendly with military governments for two reasons: they were the powers that be, and they were anti-Communist. You can’t underestimate the extent to which anti-communism motivated U.S. policy through the ‘70s. There were also a lot of nice middle-class, liberal people with whom we were willing to work, spend a lot of time with, and liked, who were trying to democratize governments in Latin America. On balance we probably preferred democracies to military dictatorships. We certainly, however, preferred military dictatorships to the swing of the pendulum in the other direction. That was the one thing we were not willing to risk and would fight against. Democracy took a back seat.

*Q: Did we see a threat from the left at that time?*

DIETERICH: Well, I didn’t see a particular threat from the left, but there were a lot of people who did and I suppose some of those people were in our embassy in Brasilia. *Estado Sao Paulo* was a very anti-Communist newspaper. There were revelations not long ago that at one time the CIA was paying *Estado de Sao Paulo* to run anti-Communist editorials. Maybe they were, but if so the agency was wasting its money. That’s like paying a bear to defecate in the woods. *Estado* was going to run anti-Communist editorials no matter what.

We did make our alliances, both personal and political, with folks of a conservative caste. And those people made their alliances with us. There were a lot of nice, well-off, well-educated, comfortable people in Latin America who were absolutely proud of their ties to the United States. But part of that bargain was that we were seen as the bulwark against having all their stuff

taken away from them, or their parties crashed, by a bunch of disgruntled workers and campesinos. That was a role with which we had grown way too comfortable.

When during the seventies - especially during the Carter administration - that traditional alliance between U.S. policy and wealthy conservatives began to weaken, they really missed us. And they were really mad at us. They felt betrayed. I ran into this even in Bolivia. Actually, all through Latin American conservative circles there is a sense of betrayal from two places. They feel they were betrayed by the United States, and they were betrayed by the Catholic Church. Both were supposed to help protect their stuff, and both failed them.

*Q: We're talking about '74 to '77. Were you, as a member of the consulate general's team, aware of what the Catholic Church was doing - liberation theology? Were we seeing the Catholic Church as a different instrument than it had been before?*

DIETERICH: Yes, but we weren't quite sure what to make of it because it was a little hard to spot in Brazil. Liberation theology in Brazil - everything gets blurred in Brazil - and if we look to the Catholic Church in its martyred form, it was in Recife I guess. But Helder Camara was such a reasonable voice for a responsible, social political role for the church. People in the embassy who knew anything about him thought he was pretty good. They thought he was a reasonable person.

And remember that in 1977, with the election of Carter, we had a new administration, a different kind of administration. We suddenly had a human rights policy. Some people in the American Foreign Service establishment were pedaling pretty hard to catch up at that point.

*Q: How about terrorism, was that a threat?*

DIETERICH: Not a big issue, as I remember in Brazil. Terrorism, in the sense of bombings, has never been a big issue there. Kidnaping, and the death squad phenomenon that was invented in Brazil. One of the first high-profile kidnapings was our Ambassador Elbrick in Brazil. But those were not big issues in Brazil when I was there. I mentioned the drug issue before.

*Q: Yes, what about that?*

DIETERICH: Well, that goes back a distressingly long way. In Brazil, I began as the USIS information officer, working with the DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency). That was the first time I was at a post that had a DEA presence. Brazil was not a producer country, and not a real big consumer country, but a big transit point. If you think about western Brazil, that's a big outback out there, and there are all sorts of ways to move drugs through that area. We were beginning to put together information programs that basically tried to say "Hey, if you are a producer or transit country, you are going to become users. Don't kid yourself, because you cannot have this stuff in your country and not end up with a drug problem similar to the one we have. All that money sloshing around in your political system is also dangerous." We are still trying to send those same messages, and they are still not working very well, but they are good messages and should make sense.

*Q: There was a killing of an American military officer who was studying Portuguese in Sao Paulo. Was that on your watch?*

DIETERICH: Not on my watch, no.

*Q: Did you have any dealings with the Governor of Sao Paulo?*

DIETERICH: Sure, I can remember meeting him, but I can't remember his name now. Again, I would sit in on meetings and we would talk a lot about politics. Occasionally, Tony Freeman and I would share a lunch with somebody we both wanted to talk to. Basically, my concern was reporting the United States to Brazil. I didn't feel a great obligation to spend a lot of time with politicians either, to tell you the truth. Some USIS officers would disagree with that. They think the function of an information officer is to communicate directly with people. I didn't mind doing that, but it seemed more efficient to be able to communicate through the press, and much more credible. And also through television.

*Q: Television was also on your docket by this time?*

DIETERICH: Yes, it was, but we were not really into the satellite era, so we were in an awkward stage of having film materials arrive - that were usually too late to be of much use - and that was handled through Rio. They had more active television programming because Globo, the big Brazilian conglomerate was up there. My counterpart in Rio, Jeff Biggs, did some good work in television. Again, the relationship I was trying to cultivate was getting them to ask questions and trying to get fast answers. It seemed to me that who you had to know in the newsroom was not necessarily the person they told you had to know. You had to figure out who was the person they asked when they had a question about the United States. That was the person you had to know. You had to get him to say, "Well, I don't know, but maybe the person over at the American Consulate knows.

*Q: We've straddled it a bit between Argentina and Brazil, but one of the most difficult stories in any country, to translate, would have been Watergate and the fall of Nixon. I thought you would have had a multitude of questions.*

DIETERICH: I've glossed over that. I was in Washington when Nixon resigned. I mentioned that when they decided to send me to Sao Paulo, Keiko went back to Argentina to pack us out, but I went to FSI (Foreign Service Institute) to take the transition course from Spanish to Portuguese.

I happened to have gone out to visit a friend in the Voice of America newsroom on the day that it happened. I would like to report there was great solemnity in the Voice of America newsroom when Nixon finally made his speech, but you have to remember that the Voice of America prides itself on its independence as a journalistic identity, and the Voice of America also felt they had particularly been victimized by the Nixon White House. There may have been about fifteen seconds of solemnity followed by cheers, some ruder noises and a sense of "we're glad your gone, you rascal you."

I think a lot of people in Brazil thought Watergate was sort of nutty. In a way they weren't really interested in it. It seemed like an American feud, and I think a lot of Latin Americans were slow to pick up on how important it was. I think they thought it would blow over. I think a lot of Brazilians did have a "so what" attitude. One sector that did pay attention, however, was the press itself. For publishers, like the Mesquitas of *Estado*, the *Washington Post's* role was a fascinating example of the power of a big, privately owned daily. For working-stiff journalists it was an invigorating insight into the power of investigative journalism. Watergate boosted the prestige of American journalism way high, and a generation of younger journalists lived on Woodward and Bernstein fantasies.

A lot of foreign service Americans were very confused by Watergate. When I was still in Argentina, I remember some very strong arguments within the embassy. Once at some kind of an in-house party some place, I remember a colleague saying, "Well, you can't just have the president impeached. Who would run the country?" Unable to think of anything smarter, I said, "The country would be run by a bunch of people" to which he replied, "You can't have the government run by a bunch of people." So much for poor old Abe Lincoln.

As to how we tried to handle Watergate with the Brazilian public, there is an old unspoken USIS rule that says when the substance is really negative, talk about process. It's really a pretty good rule that worked well with Watergate. We went into considerable detail about the legal and procedural issues of the Watergate process. While the conservatives I mentioned before - they really did love Nixon - were further alienated from the U.S., political and academic folks in the center and to the left began to take a new look at the U.S. The power of the U.S. legislative branch and the press suggested ways to rid yourself of a bad government without resorting to revolutionary violence. They began to realize that the U.S. was much more complicated than the automatic anti-communism to which they had grown accustomed.

*Q: What about your wife, did she have any connection with the Japanese community?*

DIETERICH: Yes, she did. We have always had a few Japanese friends everywhere we would go, even in Bolivia and some in Argentina, but it was particularly fun in Sao Paulo. There is a whole neighborhood called *Liberdade* - Liberty - which was a Japanese neighborhood in Sao Paulo full of Japanese restaurants and where you could go see a Japanese movie.

The movies were fun, because this was before VCRs really worked. We had them in USIS because USIA felt - correctly - that they were going to be important. But, they didn't work very well. They were the old reel to reel models, and USIA, always priding itself on being on the cutting edge of technology would ship us these machines, and we would try to make them work, but they would never work. USIA would suggest that we take it over to the offices of editors and play a press conference for them, but I think a lot of us in the field resisted because we lacked confidence in the machines. Imagine lugging the gear to a newspaper and them having it not work. I remember once we had a conference, all of USIS practically, in Rio, we got people from all over the country together to have the audio visual experts of USIS Brasilia, demonstrate what wonderful machines they were. They couldn't make them work either. The thing stopped working right in the middle of the demonstration. Anyway, we weren't into video tapes, so being able to go to a theater and see a Japanese movie was a wonderful break for Keiko.

*Q: Did you see the Japanese community moving up into positions of influence?*

DIETERICH: Oh, yes, absolutely. The minister of mines and energy in Brazil was Shigeaki Ueki, who was probably one of the most powerful Japanese in the world at one point. There was probably tension at times. I remember, when I was leaving, hearing a report that there was great concern at the University of San Paulo Medical School. They had discovered that 80% of their entering class was ethnic Japanese. If admissions are on merit, which they were, and you put Japanese in a studying contest with Brazilians, I can tell you who is going to win. Although one of my colleagues in San Paulo was a Japanese-American, and one of the things I remember him saying about Brazilian Japanese was, "In the United States it takes two generations to ruin a good Japanese. In Brazil they do it in one generation."

More recently, there have been interesting stories out of Japan. After things began to turn downward in the Brazilian economy, and there were labor shortages in Japan, a lot of Brazilian-Japanese returned to Japan. They found it difficult because most of them couldn't speak Japanese and they didn't really like Japanese stuff very well, either. They liked Brazilian stuff. There were some negative comments in the Japanese press about these noisy people and their strange music and stinky food.

**RICHARD E. JOHNSON**  
**Deputy Chief of Mission**  
**Brasilia (1974-1978)**

*Richard E. Johnson was born and raised in Winnetka, Illinois. He attended Harvard University and served in the U.S. Navy. Mr. Johnson joined the State Department in 1947 and entered the Foreign Service in 1951. He served in Hong Kong, Canada, Poland, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Brazil. Mr. Johnson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991.*

*Q: Well, you left Belgrade and went back to Brasilia as DCM.*

JOHNSON: In 1974 to 1978 I was the DCM in Brasilia.

*Q: That was your last assignment?*

JOHNSON: My last overseas assignment, yes.

*Q: Who was the Ambassador at that time?*

JOHNSON: John Crimmins, bless his heart.

*Q: And how did you find him as a...?*

JOHNSON: I really enjoyed that man. He was just a terrific guy. He saw his job in the broadest sense. He loved people; he liked to relate to them. He liked to get his junior officers in and chat with them about anything, from policy to the fortunes of the Patriots football team.

I remember one time when John had a telegram from the Department saying: "By the end of the day we want your views on a certain subject." I noticed that one of the junior officers had been in there for a long time, and they were just chatting. And I thought, "I have got to go in and interrupt them. They may be talking about some important aspect of our policies. but he has to write this telegram, and I am going to help him get to it." And so I went in, with some interruption, and as I came in, Crimmins was saying, "I just can't stand the chunky variety of peanut butter! I think the smooth thing is much, much better. Bill, you are all wrong!" He still found time to write a very perceptive telegram.

On another occasion, as I saw someone heading out of his huge, long office, Crimmins leapt up from his desk and shouted, "Run out for a pass." He was a great New England Patriots fan, and he had this football with autographs all over it that was on his window sill, and he grabbed it and flung it the length of his office. This JO made a leaping catch; otherwise it would have broken a picture.

*Q: What were our issues with Brazil at this time?*

JOHNSON: When I went back, the military government was still there, and there were still reports of tortures. Furthermore, the terrorist threat had subsided tremendously, so that there really was less reason for tight security. The military government was not quite so conservative and doctrinaire, but we still were critical of their human rights record. We were not outspoken about it; we didn't really confront them with it. But when somebody, like Kissinger, would come to Brasilia, he would tell the Brazilians, "We want to talk to you about human rights." He wouldn't say human rights in Brazil, and the Brazilians would then be able to say, "Oh, yes, let us talk about 'em -- human rights all over the world. We oppose apartheid; that is a terrible system." But human rights in Brazil remained a major issue in our relationship.

A very dramatic event occurred midway in my tour. A priest was imprisoned by the military in the Recife area because he was in touch with liberal organizations -- he may have been in touch with terrorist groups, I don't know; he was a defrocked young American priest. Our Consul General in Recife got word that this guy was in the 4th Army's prison and asked for permission to see him. It was denied for a long time. Finally, he was admitted and he went in and saw this guy, and it was clear why they hadn't wanted him to see him. He showed signs of having been really clobbered. Rich Brown, the Consul General, sent word on this down to Crimmins. Crimmins was this very forthright, active person; he didn't mince words, and he went rushing over to the Foreign Ministry and told them about this. And, of course, the Foreign Minister said, "Mr. Ambassador, you are accusing the Brazilian Army of torturing? Do you realize what this means?" We heard later that the Brazilians were on the verge of declaring him *PNG*. But this heightened our determination to report objectively whatever there was, because we were certain that this poor guy had been blasted.

*Q: What happened? Were we able to get him out?*

JOHNSON: Yes, he was released a bit later. But what made the Foreign Ministry so angry at Crimmins was that he told the press about it right after he came away from the Foreign Minister. You could ask why would he do that -- this was a matter between us and the Brazilian authorities. And that was the position that the Brazilian authorities took. But the American press knew this guy had been imprisoned and that Rich Brown had been trying to see him, so the question about his condition was put to the Ambassador; he didn't volunteer it. He said, "Well, I don't know, I don't want to say anything, you know; I don't want to imply torture," and kind of waffled on it, it would have put him and the Department in a bad light later, because this guy went back to the States and was on the *Today* show, telling about everything that had been done to him. He praised the Ambassador for his forthright activity.

That brought our relations with Brazil really to an all-time low point. As did the evidence that led us to believe that they were trying to develop a full nuclear cycle capacity. We were very concerned about the dissemination of nuclear capacity around the world, and we didn't want the Brazilians to get it.

*Q: It is still an issue, isn't it?*

JOHNSON: It still is, to some extent, yes.

Another issue was this: what we suspected was an interest on the part of the Brazilians in developing a full nuclear capacity. Not necessarily a capacity to build a bomb; we didn't have any evidence that they were determined to do that.

*Q: They had no real enemies, did they?*

JOHNSON: Maybe you are right. Maybe there was no reason for them to want to build a bomb. They claimed they wanted the full cycle because they didn't want to have to buy uranium for their power plant use. But we didn't want them to get the reprocessing facilities, because we felt that just expands the potential around the world for bomb-building -- the same way we talk about the Pakistanis and the Israelis and others. And that was, I would say, a number two issue.

*Q: How did Brasilia work? I mean, this was fairly new as a capital, wasn't it?*

JOHNSON: Yes.

*Q: And for the Embassy to operate there, did you find that everybody was running back and forth to Rio? Was it sort of a difficult life to be in Brasilia at that time?*

JOHNSON: Well, the question of relations between the US posts in Rio and Brasilia at the start was a big question. Crimmins was an activist; he liked to feel that he had all the levers of control in his hands. He was a guy that wanted to run the show. He didn't want to have a large staff in Rio, but we left behind a fair-sized staff because there were some Brazilian government agencies left behind there, at least temporarily. So we had a good-sized political and economic staff there, and Crimmins insisted that those staff members be formally made part of the Embassy in

Brasilia. Of course, our ConGen in Rio didn't think very highly of that. He didn't like having people in his building who were not subject to his supervision, and this caused a fair amount of friction. Everything that Rio generated in political or economic reporting had to be sent to Brasilia to be checked out. That was one of the problems, but it didn't last forever.

There wasn't a tremendous amount of running back and forth between Brasilia and Rio, because it is a two-days' drive -- it is a long distance, and by air it was quite expensive. So we had a tendency to be isolated in Brasilia. We were isolated in what was then a rather small town of maybe a quarter of a million, on this high plain with nothing but sagebrush around for hundreds of miles.

There is, of course, beautiful architecture in the town. It has been described as having all of the color and excitement of a great international exposition -- the day after closing. And that is what it reminded me of -- these beautiful buildings, with tremendous open spaces, but no life visible. It was designed by a Marxist town planner. He laid out the town, and the architect was Niemeyer, who himself was a Socialist. The idea was to build a town that had absolutely no gradations of wealth, where everybody lived the same way and there were no rich and no poor. So they had this series of apartment complexes, huge complexes, and each one was allowed to have a certain ration of stores. In each complex there was to be a *merceria*, where you got thread and cloth, and there had to be a hardware store and a grocery store and a church and one club. Life was supposed to center in this complex. The assistant ministers for foreign affairs were supposed to live there right alongside of the elevator operators in the Foreign Ministry. It was laid out to be a town with no center; thus there were these units. So there was no heart. Most Mediterranean Portuguese-type cities have wonderful streets where there's a "*corso*" with opportunities for socializing all the time, and there are coffee shops where life gathers. Well, I haven't been back to Brasilia for a long time, but certainly then there was no center of the town. There was no life in the town. There weren't even sidewalks. The streets were made in a supposedly very modern style, so that people could drive through the town without even slowing down. There were no stop-lights; there were only grade separations, and you could scream from one end of Brasilia to the other at 55 miles an hour; but you couldn't walk from the Embassy to your house, because you would take your life in your hands trying to get across one of those highways. It was, in short, a rather dull town.

But, for Americans, it was wonderful family life. There were lots of swimming pools and tennis courts, and there was even a golf course. You could go out there on a Saturday morning, and look down an empty fairway; there wasn't anybody else playing golf, and you could play to your heart's content. So, from the standpoint of living conditions, it was great.

One of the jobs that I liked the best as DCM was my liaison with the consulates. We then had six of them all over Brazil. I enjoyed exploring Brazil by bus. I took the bus all the time, much to the displeasure of the Brazilian police. They felt they had to know my whereabouts exactly when I was the chargé d'affaires. So they would either ride on the bus with me, or they would tell the police at the other end, in Salvador or Belém or wherever I was going, to meet me when the bus came in. This wasn't harassment at all; this was just security.

*Q: Did you find that the consulates performed a solid function, because of the size of Brazil you*

*needed these?*

JOHNSON: Some of them. Take a guy like Rich Brown, our Recife Consul General then; he is a real all-around Foreign Service officer, and he liked to do reporting. He would send in interpretive reports that were good. He was quite active with business people, trying to develop U.S. business in the area. Others were more traditional consuls. They felt it was their job to make sure the flag was flown up on the flagpole every morning, that the consulate was opened on time, that the consular section was there ready to receive visitors, and that if someone wanted to see the Consul, there he was behind his desk with the flag.

I would ask them, "Do you know the military commander for this area? The military is running this country now."

"Yes, I met him at a reception a couple of years ago."

"Do you ever go to see him, ask him about what is happening in this region?"

"Well, no. He wouldn't want to see me. Why should he want to see me? He is a busy man."

I was continually riding these guys to get out and around, as I put it, instead of feeling that they were doing enough by showing the flag.

*Q: Let's see, the Carter administration came in halfway through this time. Did that have any impact particularly?*

JOHNSON: Yes. One of the highlights of my stay was when President Carter came down on an official visit. I was the chargé. Crimmins had gone, and the new Ambassador hadn't reported. He was in Washington, but he was then...I believe it was in connection with the Panama Canal, he was testifying.

*Q: Who was that?*

JOHNSON: Robert Sayre. He was waiting in Washington, and so I had to make all the arrangements and receive the President and go around with him.

As I recall making the arrangements, I had some conflicts with the White House. They were concerned particularly about President Carter's image in the US. They wanted footage that would look good on the *Today* show. One of the things that all visiting chiefs of state did was to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Well, the advance team for the President visited the Tomb and said, "This is no good, Dick. You can't get a crowd around here for the President. This place is too confined. No."

And I said, "Well, I really do think he has to do this. Please just take this as the Embassy's strong recommendation." He eventually went through the motions.

A little later I got something from the White House that said, "You know, the President is a very

good friend of the President of Warner Communications, which in turn owns the Cosmos soccer team in the States, and Pele is under contract to Cosmos. We think it would be a great idea if Pele would give a reception for Jimmy Carter and invite all the street people that he knows -- all the sports fans, everybody. He should give it at Canecao." This is a wonderful dance hall in Rio, a great, big place, covered a couple of city blocks. "Invite everybody in there. Have beer and wine, and Jimmy can make a speech."

I said, "We recommend against that kind of a thing. Everybody knows that Pele and Carter don't know each other, and this would be seen as a very faked-up sort of a thing. We can get President Carter together with the man on the street on some other occasions."

So we had the feeling that there was a lot of concern, for public image in the US, more concern than we had. Of course, we wanted to be sure he did the correct thing locally, and we were more concerned about that than the White House.

When Carter came, we had been informed in advance that the one person (and this is a sign of the Carter administration also) he wanted to meet was Cardinal Arns. Did you ever hear of Arns?

Q: *No.*

JOHNSON: Well, he was a very liberal, maybe almost Socialist, Cardinal in Sao Paulo State. I think he and President Carter had exchanged communications before, and the President had a lot of respect for the Cardinal -- a very intelligent man, and outspoken, and a real enemy of the military regime. The President wanted to meet with him. We told them in Washington that this wouldn't be well received in Brasilia at all by the Brazilian President, and it could result in Jimmy not meeting the President. The White House came back and said, "Well, work it out some way. It is up to you guys." So the Political Counselor and I worked it out, I thought, quite satisfactorily. Carter was going to Rio, after he left Brasilia, for an informal stay -- just a vacation for a couple of days to rest up. We figured, and correctly, that as long as he saw Arns during that part of his visit, it would be okay. So we arranged a breakfast for him with Arns. We had arch-conservatives in as well -- other people from all walks of political life. But we gave the President a long chance to sit down with Arns and chat with him. We thought that we had resolved the problem that way, and we were quite proud of ourselves.

But, as Jimmy left the place where this breakfast was being given, his limousine was pulled up there, and, with some movie cameras and the TV cameras grinding away, he reached for Cardinal Arns, gave him a big squeeze, shoved him into his limousine, and said, "Let us go out to the airplane together." So there were these pictures, front page, in all the Brazilian newspapers. But it didn't have the tremendous reaction on the part of the Brazilian government that this sort of thing would have had if it had been on his official schedule. They took it in stride.

But it was fun, of course, going around with the President and meeting with everybody.

**ROBERT W. ZIMMERMANN**  
**Bureau for Latin American Affairs**  
**Washington, DC (1974-1979)**

*Robert W. Zimmermann was Born in Chicago, Illinois and was raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He received a degree in economics and political science from the University of Minnesota. He graduated from Harvard Business School in 1942. In 1947, after Serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II, Mr. Zimmermann entered the Foreign Service. He served in Washington, DC, Peru, Thailand, The United Kingdom (England), and Spain. Mr. Zimmermann was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.*

Q: *Then you came back in 1974 to serve in ARA for five years.*

ZIMMERMANN: That is right. I really didn't have an assignment when I came back. I had interviews with the Inspection Corps, with Ken Young and also with Bill Bowdler in ARA. Bill said, "We want you to take over Brazilian affairs. You have Portuguese and we think it will be great." It looked pretty good to me; I didn't see anything else on the horizon at that point. I had not ever been in Brazil before, and I had to do my homework fast. There was an excellent Ambassador at the other end, John Crimmins. It was a great assignment and I really enjoyed it. There were many problems and it was a very busy time.

It became even busier when the office became responsible for all East Coast Affairs including Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. We were having problems over nuclear facilities in Brazil and the military agreements were going a little sour because of friction on nuclear matters. They also wanted a lot more military aid than we were prepared to give them at that point. Also, the "dirty war" was going on in Argentina and Uruguay.

Q: *The "dirty war" being?*

ZIMMERMANN: The "dirty war" was referred to the atrocities committed by both the military government and the opposition. There were hidden massacres and burials at night that nobody knew about. People were abducted and never heard from again. People were dropped out of planes over the river. It was a very dirty war.

At one point Robert Hill was Ambassador. I stayed with him usually when I went to Buenos Aires. I remember riding with him with four lead cars and two behind. It was that bad in terms of threats against Americans who were accused of being too sympathetic with the "opposition".

It was a very dirty problem. Obviously the human rights organizations here were very much up in the air, and, of course, we were too. The Carter administration properly placed great emphasis on human rights. There was great pressure from the White House on these things.

Q: *Basically you had military governments in all three countries.*

ZIMMERMANN: That is true, and Stroessner had been in Paraguay since 1955.

*Q: And Uruguay had a military government?*

ZIMMERMANN: Yes.

*Q: I think it is very interesting to look at the impact of the human rights policy during Carter on the Foreign Service and its almost visceral reaction about how this sort of upsets all sorts of other things. I think we have learned to live with it. But this was the beginning. Did you and your colleagues have trouble adjusting to this major emphasis on something... ?*

ZIMMERMANN: I don't think any of us held any objection to this being a real goal in our foreign policy. I think what gave many of us problems was that it became almost the only goal in some ways. It certainly became a predominant goal and other means of achieving ends were sort of left in limbo.

*Q: Did you find yourself going head-to-head with Pat Derian, head of the Human Rights office, or others in her office?*

ZIMMERMANN: No, you didn't go head-to-head with Pat Derian. Our Assistant Secretary was very careful on this score. We followed his lead. Fred Rondon, who was my Argentine Desk officer and later my deputy, had the most contact with Pat Derian. In fact he accompanied her on a trip down to Argentina. He was a good man for it and was bilingual in Spanish and could help out a great deal with Pat. He also had good rapport with her, I think, given the circumstances. We took our lead from the Assistant Secretary really on how to play this.

*Q: How did this translate with relations? Was it one of these things where we would go up and say you have to be more human rights-ish and then go on our way and nothing would happen but we had made our bid?*

ZIMMERMANN: My opinion is that our representations seldom led anywhere in Uruguay or Argentina -- certainly not in Argentina. In Argentina, one feels half out of the real world. There is a feeling of being isolated from world events. Certainly, they, in their own activities, felt that; they didn't give a damn about opinion elsewhere.

*Q: They can live off their own resources.*

ZIMMERMANN: Exactly. We tried hard. I mean the violations were so egregious that it wasn't hard to be in support of human rights -- believe me. The violations were incredible, including by the Tupamaros in Uruguay. We may have had a slightly restraining role in Uruguay in some cases, but not a great success.

*Q: How about with Brazil and human rights?*

ZIMMERMANN: Human rights was a factor in Brazil -- the death squads and so forth. But violations had tapered off as an issue in some way versus what it had been earlier, and certainly Brazil in this respect was way over-shadowed by Uruguay and Argentina. But there were still

problems. We got wind of violations less than we did in Argentina. Information came from interviews with people who had been released from prison some time later. Also, we had other fish to fry in Brazil, including the nuclear issue, because they were by far the most advanced in nuclear research, etc., and were dickering with the Germans.

*Q: What was the issue on the nuclear side that got us so involved?*

ZIMMERMANN: Well, the issue was basically what their ultimate intentions were. We discouraged the production of enriched uranium, which we tried to keep away from most countries. Were their goals just nuclear power and research or were they intent on developing military uses? We had a similar problem with the Argentines. We were very concerned. They would not let us see their reactors except from a distance. But the issue didn't come up as sharply as it did in Brazil because Brazil was dickering with German firms for plutonium enrichment equipment and processes. In the end, the German processes did not prove very successful as I remember. I think they were systems that had not really been proved in themselves and as far as I know, did not prove to be very useful to the Brazilians either. It cost a lot of money and time and plus bad relations for a while.

*Q: Brazil, unlike most of the other Latin American countries, hasn't really fought any wars with anybody for a long time. Why would it want a bomb?*

ZIMMERMANN: Well, Brazil sent troops to fight with us in World War II and were the only Latin Americans that did.

*Q: Yes, and they fought the Italian campaign. But you don't have a feeling that the Brazilians are after slices of territory. What would they use a bomb for?*

ZIMMERMANN: Argentina. This was the big rival on the continent and they were aware that the Argentines were also pursuing nuclear development.

*Q: Was it the feeling that the Argentines are messing around with nuclear things so we better have one ourselves?*

ZIMMERMANN: That was the feeling on both sides, absolutely.

*Q: You look at the map and you would say that you would have a real hard time making much of...they abut on each other in a relatively small area of little consequence.*

ZIMMERMANN: Uruguay was established as a buffer state. I think, in Brazil's case, it was a little more than that, however. In Brazil it was a question of being a big power. They always wanted to be considered a big power, particularly by the US, and pointed at us and said we didn't treat them as a big power. The nuclear aspect was the mark of a big power and therefore they wanted to develop this. I think that was a very major part of the consideration.

*Q: How did you evaluate our Embassies? Were we well represented in those countries?*

ZIMMERMANN: Well, I think under John Crimmins the Embassy was very strong in Brazil.

**DAVID E. SIMCOX**  
**Political Counselor**  
**Brasilia (1975-1977)**

*David E. Simcox was born on November 25, 1932 in Frankfort, Kentucky. He received his BA from the University of Kentucky in 1956. He joined the Foreign Service in 1956 and has served in many countries throughout his career including Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Ghana, Spain, Brazil, and El Salvador. Mr. Simcox was interviewed by Kristin Hamblin on August 26, 1993.*

*Q: From Madrid you returned to Latin American affairs as Counselor of Embassy for Political Affairs in Brasilia until October, 1977. What was our policy in dealing with Brazil at that time?*

SIMCOX: There's another country that had a military government for a number of years. It was just embarking on the process of questioning how much longer a military government should go on and what should lie beyond it. It was a mixed government. The military generally ran things, but they at least kept the trappings of a Congress, which was allowed to make policy on less important matters in which the military did not feel any strong interest.

Once again, our most troublesome concern was in the area of human rights. That was the area where the greatest tension was. Passionate feelings arose over differences between the Carter administration, on the one hand, and the Brazilians, on the other, regarding human rights standards, because there had been torture in Brazil. There was, indeed, a lot of torture. There always has been torture in Brazil. But when torture began to reach the upper middle class and was administered for political reasons, it sounded alarm bells in the western world, whereas the kind of torture which had been going on for centuries, against the working class and the farmers, never really was much a matter for concern.

There was a lot of tension there. I recall that Brazil broke off its military relationship with the U. S. This happened in 1976, because of what the Brazilian authorities regarded as a "humiliating" human rights report by the Department of State on the situation in Brazil.

*Q: They actually said that the Brazilians were improving, didn't they? We had pretty close relations with Brazil. The Brazilian authorities were antagonized, also, by our opposing a deal which they had reached with Germany in connection with nuclear power plants.*

SIMCOX: Yes. And there were a lot of trade tensions between the United States and Brazil because Brazil was becoming a major exporter of agricultural commodities, invading our traditional markets. So we were using a lot of the machinery of our trade processes, like countervailing duties and anti-dumping laws, to try to block their exports. The Brazilian authorities saw all of this as one big ruse to cut down on Brazilian exports, a form of massive protectionism for which there was no justification.

But the nuclear issue--it's interesting to look back now. The Germans and Brazilians about 1977 announced an agreement to build a facility capable of producing highly enriched uranium that would have made it possible for Brazil to build nuclear bombs. I was there when then Deputy Secretary of State Christopher came to Brazil to reason with the government and to argue with the Brazilians personally, in an effort to persuade them to give up this idea. Throughout the two years that I was there we kept hearing assurances from our Brazilian colleagues in the Foreign Ministry and in the military, "Don't worry, even though this gives us the capability to build an explodable nuclear device. We want it for peaceful uses, so you needn't worry about any of these things." Only after a number of years--I think it was in the last three or four years--has the press revealed that when a civilian government came into power in Brazil under President Collor. The man who was recently thrown out. They found that, in fact, the Brazilian Armed Forces had constructed a nuclear testing site in the Amazon capable of testing some sort of explodable, nuclear device.

*Q: This happened at the same time when, I think, Argentina also wanted to build--I don't know whether they were trying to build a nuclear device. The Argentines were saying, well, we're not doing that. We respect the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, and they were saying that we are a sovereign nation and no one can tell us what to do.*

SIMCOX: Yes.

*Q: Since you were there toward the end of the Ford administration and the very beginning of the Carter administration, how did you see our relationship with Brazil change? I think that when Secretary of State Kissinger visited Brazil, at some point he made a comment that Brazil was a leading Latin American country or some such thing as that. When President Carter came into office, a high U. S. official made a comment in a different South American country that we're not going to look at Brazil in the same light. Did that sort of thing cause diplomatic problems?*

SIMCOX: I vaguely remember that. It was a short-lived sort of thing. It was one of those things that Foreign Service Officers dread, where your whole approach to a government has to change overnight on some key issue. In effect, you have to swallow your words or act as if the things you said in the past, under one administration, were never said, or certain positions were never taken. That's one of the things that really tests the mettle of a Foreign Service Officer. During my career I never felt really comfortable with that sort of thing. Administrations change, it is true, and they have different ideas. Unfortunately, I can't change that quickly.

Kissinger was never warm to the idea of human rights as a major foreign policy issue. He only, and reluctantly, got into it, due to prodding from Congress. When President Carter entered office, human rights were, of course, a major plank in his platform. He had people around him who attached the utmost importance to this issue. They were in key positions, like Andrew Young, who, you may recall, ran for governor of Georgia not too long ago.

We had taken a strong line with the Brazilians on their role in Angola, when the FPLN [People's National Liberation Front] was recognized as the government in Angola. The United States objected, and we put some pressure on Brazil not to recognize the FPLN but rather to wait until a

consensus government emerged among the different, warring groups. But the Brazilians were eager to play a role in Africa. They felt some kinship with the FPLN personalities. The FPLN leaders were mestizos [of mixed white and black ancestry], and, of course, the same language was spoken in Brazil and Angola.

Brazil was very ambitious in its African policy in those days. I don't know how they are now. During the Ford administration we gave them all sorts of reasons why [recognition and support of the FPLN] was a bad idea which would have dire consequences; the Cubans in Angola would be a force for disruption. And then the Carter administration came into office. He had people on his payroll who said just the opposite. Andrew Young made a statement that the Cubans in Angola are a force for stability [laughter]. So we had a situation where the Brazilians in the Foreign Ministry were quoting our own officials back to us. Their positions were based on what was being said back in Washington. Of course, we weren't getting any guidance--there was a lot of confusion in the Carter administration as to who spoke for what--who, what, and why. Cyrus Vance was Secretary of State, but he didn't assert a very strong hand, and some personalities like Carl McCall, Andrew Young, and Pat Derian, Hodding Carter's former wife, were running around, taking human rights to the brink, really. They didn't really represent the consensus on policy in the State Department. We somehow had to deal with them abroad, without instructions.

**JAMES F. MACK**  
**Political/Labor Officer**  
**Sao Paulo (1975-1977)**

*Ambassador Mack was born in Connecticut and raised in New York State. After graduating from Cornell University, he joined the Peace Corps and served in Honduras. In 1966 he joined the State Department and was sent to Vietnam in the CORDS program. Mr. Mack's other overseas service was primarily in Latin America where he served as Political Officer and Deputy Chief of Mission at a number of posts before being named US Ambassador to Guyana. Ambassador Mack was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004.*

*Q: When did you leave Costa Rica?*

MACK: I left in mid '75, took four or five months of Portuguese language training and at the end of the year went to Sao Paulo.

*Q: Now Sao Paulo, of course is a huge city.*

MACK: Indeed and the industrial center of Brazil. This was during the military government period. At that point, Gen. Geisel was President. He proved to be a more open-minded leader than some had expected. The Labor movement was ostensibly under government control. But believe me, underneath their control a lot of things were going on. And in any event, basically my job was to maintain relations with the Sao Paulo labor movement, which I did. I spent a lot of time with the labor union leaders and sent a few off to study at the AIL-CIO's "George Meany

Institute” outside Washington, etc. I also reported on how the government kept union leaders under control. They had systems for doing this. I won’t bore you, but it was very interesting. One of my union contacts was a guy named Ignacio “Lula” da Silva, now president of Brazil.

*Q: Oh Yeah!*

MACK: While I was in Sao Paulo, Lula had become head of the Metallurgical Workers Union that covered the three satellite cities around Sao Paulo where Brazil’s automobile and truck manufacturers were located. Lula’s union was probably the strongest and richest in Brazil. We became really pretty good friends. I liked him a lot. I recognized that his union had some strong leftist influence particularly among the lawyers who at that time were often the powers behind the throne of Brazilian unions. And some were members of the Communist Party of Brazil. But Lula was a bright young guy, honest and forward looking. He also was fairly open minded, though obviously being schooled by some of the advisors that I just spoke to you about. Lula and his wife were guests in our home. I also invited Lula to attend the George Meany Institute for a month’s training. He had never been out of Brazil and was very excited to have this opportunity. He really could not wait to do this. But a couple of weeks before he was to leave for the US, he phoned me and said, “Jim, I am sorry I just can’t make the trip; I have other commitments”. At that point it was clear to me his advisors had told him not to go the United States. Perfectly clear.

*Q: It sounds like these advisors were sort of – they represent the left wing intellectuals hanging around. Not really workers but --*

MACK: Right, they were labor lawyers. But in Brazil, union leaders typically had lawyers to advise them, to write speeches for them etc.

*Q: The lawyers were advisors.*

MACK: Yes. So anyway Lula did not go and the rest is history. He became a very successful Labor Leader and then ran for President, I guess twice before winning his third time. And he is turning out to be a very, very attractive pragmatic leader of the left. The US has developed a good relationship with him despite the ideological differences; he has shown his pragmatic side, which was pretty obvious even way back then.

*Q: There is a certain amount of concern when he became President?*

MACK: Yes there was.

*Q: Which way is this guy going to go? Is he going be another, not necessarily a Castro but somebody who is going to dismantle the whole apparatus?*

MACK: But he turned out not to be that way at all. Though he is socially very progressive. And he is intent on righting some of the social wrongs in Brazil. And definitely wants to improve the lives of the workers. He also recognized that he couldn’t do that by destroying the economy. He needed the support from the industrialists and foreign investors to keep the economy moving. He is acting in a very, very responsible way.

*Q: You were in Sao Paulo from when to when?*

MACK: I was there from '75 to '77.

*Q: Now wasn't this a time when – how were things going in Chile with Allende?*

MACK: The Allende was already out.

*Q: Huh!*

MACK: Allende must have been killed in '72 or '73. So Pinochet was the President, actually.

*Q: I was wondering whether in conversations our role in our role Chile came up?*

MACK: I am sure that it did. Chile was always a topic in Latin America then, but I cannot remember a particular conversation while I was in Brazil.

*Q: Was there the feeling that we were, I am talking about in the Labor ranks, that we were overly supportive of the military government or not?*

MACK: Sure, but I also was there for a year and a half under Jimmy Carter. I am trying to remember what year Carter launched his Human Rights initiative.

*Q: There also were nuclear issues.*

MACK: Yes, Brazil had a nuclear program at the time and Carter was very strong against nuclear proliferation.

*Q: Brazil and Argentina were quite a problem for some years.*

MACK: Yes there was a little bit of tension there. On the one hand we wanted a return to democracy and an end to Brazil's nuclear program. But on the other hand the labor movement believed that the US had been supportive of the coup d'etat in Brazil in the '60's. So yeah, the union leaders on the left, and some democratic labor leaders would bring that up. On the other hand, some of the unions were sympathetic to the military government would not have been concerned about it. Obviously, students would have been concerned about it and intellectuals. While things were calm on the surface, there were a lot of problems under the surface.

*Q: Well, was military taking--*

MACK: It also was a time of great economic growth for Brazil.

*Q: On the economic side was the General Geisel siding with the manufacturers as opposed to the workers?*

MACK: What the General Geisel wanted was labor peace. And the military had designed a system to keep labor peace. Basically if a labor leader got out of line, he was arrested. The government also controlled the unions by controlling their money. The government imposed a "check off" system by which all workers had union dues automatically deducted from their pay checks. But the money first went to the Government which then turned it back to the unions. So the Unions were quite prosperous. They had nice offices and they had a lot of services for their members but they were totally dependent on the Government for their funds. In most cases the Government was successful in using this approach.

But some unions, like Lula's metallurgical workers unions, represented workers with a higher level of education and who drew pretty good salaries and good benefits because they worked for multi-national automobile manufacturers like Volkswagen, Chrysler, Ford and General Motors.

These unions were more assertive but I don't recall any strikes. So, yes, I think the Government basically wanted economic development and social peace and labor peace. And some labor leaders were bought off by the government one way or another. Some were given positions of theoretical influence. Some got out of line and were arrested. Others lost their political rights, they called it *casacao*. I knew one labor leader who was a democrat, in fact, and a true fighter for labor rights. He was banished to a farm in Paraná State.

*Q: How was the Communist Party of Brazil particularly within the Labor Movement. Was this Soviet off shoot or Castro or what?*

MACK: It was an old fashion Communist Party. But this was a clandestine party. The communist party was illegal. Nobody ever said he or she was a communist. These people operated behind the scenes. They whispered and organized but they did not fly the communist flag. They were trying to survive and many I am sure were jailed during that period. They were basically went underground. And some of them were involved with the unions labor lawyers. A couple actually were in Congress. But they were careful.

*Q: I have never served in Latin America but I seem to recall that Consulate Generals in Rio and Sao Paulo as being fairly autonomous from our Embassy in Brasilia.. Did you all talk to each other or were you pretty much working your own territory?*

MACK: Well, there was clearly a division of labor but there was no question as to who the boss was. It was John Hugh Crimmins, the Ambassador. Clearly anything dealing with the Federal Government was in the province of our Embassy in Brasilia. The Consulate General in Sao Paulo, under Fred Chapin, a very, very capable and senior officer, was able to report on commercial economic or labor activity in Sao Paulo State, which is saying a lot since Sao Paulo generated a huge proportion of Brazil's economic activity in Brazil. But Embassy clearance was required in some cases. I remember we did prepare a series of cables on the coffee freeze when much of Brazil's coffee trees died causing a tripling of world prices, and producing a windfall for Brazil because it had such huge stocks of coffee, but also produced a lot of unemployment. I also think those coffee freeze cables had to be cleared through the Embassy since in those days coffee was so dominant in the Brazilian economy.

*Q: I imagine labor was – Sao Paulo must have been pretty much the labor capital wasn't it?*

MACK: Absolutely!

*Q: How did you find living in Sao Paulo at that particular time? Because now I understand that crime and pollution have made Sao Paulo a very uncomfortable place.*

MACK: Criminality existed but not on the scale that I understand exists today. I never really felt threatened there when my wife and I went out at night. I do recall that there started to be some armed holdups in homes of people we knew. But it wasn't something that made people not dare walk down the street. I jogged every day, and I walked a lot. Sometimes I walked to work. I never was threatened and I don't think I was ever robbed. Obviously things got a lot worse.

*Q: How about the AFL-CIO, were they present there or not?*

MACK: There was no AFL-CIO representative in Sao Paulo. And I don't think there was an AFL-CIO representative anywhere in Brazil. It would have been unlikely during the military regime. However, the Embassy Labor Attache, Jim Shea was formerly with the Amalgamated Meat Packers Union and had the complete confidence of the AFL-CIO. Jim was very close to the unions with which the AFL-CIO had historic ties. Of course Jim was not there to organize. However, he would have sent labor leaders to the US for training, as I tried to do with Lula.

*Q: I am interviewing former American Foreign Service people who were involved in Labor work in Latin America, Charlotte Roe and Rick Becker. Before entering he Foreign Service, Charlotte was a labor organizer in Ohio.*

MACK: Right. Charlotte is a dear friend of ours. In fact, she is from my wife's home town of Pleasantville, NY. Charlotte and my wife went to school together from Kindergarten through High School.

*Q: Charlotte wanted to be a jazz singer.*

MACK: Now she plays the harp.

*Q: Was the Brazilian Labor Movement a tough bunch. Did they use muscle for this or that. I thinking about the teamsters or something like that?*

MACK: It could well have been the case with regards to the dockworkers in Santos, Sao Paulo's port city. But up in San Paulo I don't recall that was a problem. Keep in mind the military put a lid on a lot of overt labor organization activities. I mean the unions had quite good physical infrastructure - buildings etc. However, their trying to be militant defenders of Labor Rights was another issue. Everything was very, very controlled and orchestrated by the Government.

*Q: Now Labor Officers during the Carter Administration were often also Human Rights Officers. This is was because Political Officers did not want to mess around with their Human Rights. As a labor officer in Sao Paulo did you get involved with Human Rights at all?*

MACK: Well, I don't recall being directly involved in Human Rights issues. There were instances of people being arrested. Not frequently, but Tony Freeman, the head of the political section, would have followed that issue, as I have since, but not at that time.

*Q: What was your impression of the Sao Paulo Labor Unions you were dealing with? Were they doing well by their people? Sometimes Union Leaders do well by themselves and not as much for the rank and files.*

MACK: I told you the military government had put a lid on the labor movement. The structure was all there. The physical structure was definitely there. The Government saw to it that the unions had money and could provide certain kinds of services for their members. Union leaders who played the game could live comfortably. But I don't remember their living in absolute luxury.

*Q: You left there, when in '70?*

MACK: '77.

**ARTHUR S. BERGER**  
**Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS**  
**Recife (1975-1976)**

**Director, Cultural Center, USIS**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1976-1978)**

*Mr. Berger was born and raised in Rhode Island and educated at Yeshiva and Howard Universities. He joined the Foreign Service (USIA) in 1970. Serving primarily in Cultural and Public Affairs. Mr. Berger served abroad in Kampala, Addis Ababa, Recife, Rio de Janeiro, Tel Aviv and the Hague, where he was Public Affairs Officer. In his Washington assignments Mr. Berger served at USIA Headquarters as Director of Publications and at the Department of State as Spokesman for the Near East South Asia Bureau. Following retirement Mr. Berger worked with the American Jewish Committee before becoming Director of Communications of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC. Mr. Berger was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.*

*Q: Anyway, when you left there, I take it that you were not dying to go to another African post.*

BERGER: No. I did not apply, although the Africa bureau wanted to keep me in Africa. I probably could have adapted and gone on to some other place there. But I wanted a change. I wanted to develop a career that wasn't wedded to one geographic region. I also wanted to see something that was very different. I had a bunch of things on my bid list. I don't remember what all of them were. I do remember that Romania was on there. And I got a call from personnel

saying, “You are going to Brazil. To Recife, Brazil.” First to Portuguese language training and then off to Brazil. And I had no interest whatsoever in going anywhere in Latin America. But I thought “why not?”

*Q: You say you stopped off in Portugal. This was right at the time of great turmoil there, wasn't it?*

BERGER: It was. In fact, the reason we stopped in Portugal, I wanted to hear what Portuguese sounded like. We left Ethiopia and were going back to the States for home leave and the language training, and stopped in Portugal. And I was really taken aback. First of all, it was in the middle of the change from the Salazar regime to a democracy. And they hadn't quite gotten to the democracy stage.

*Q: It was sort of a young Marxist officer coup, wasn't it?*

BERGER: It was. And there were marches. The day we got there was May Day 1975. There were marches. Everything was on strike. We managed to get out of the airport. We had to take our own bags out of the airplane. We were our own baggage handlers. Everyone just climbed in there. There were no customs people. And the people from the airline – I think there were maybe twenty or thirty people there – and the aircraft staff said, “The airline had a bus to take us to a hotel. Anybody who wanted a ride could go.” So we went. We had our two kids with us. Our suitcases. And we went to Avenida de Liberdade. Up on a hill. Beautiful hotel. It was the nicest hotel in town at that point. And they gave us a suite for about twenty bucks a day. There was nobody staying in the hotel. And we had a lot of fun in Portugal. Rented a car and drove around the country for about week and loved it. But I couldn't understand a word of the language. I found out afterwards, when I started studying Portuguese that Brazilian Portuguese is very different from metropolitan European Portuguese.

*Q: Okay, today is September 15, 2004. Art, how did you find Portuguese?*

BERGER: I loved it. The language is such a beautiful sing-song. I got to really like the music. And after I moved to Brazil, the Brazilian people have just such a great fun of life that it really made the tour wonderful.

Knowing the language helped me get into the culture in a way that I could not have otherwise. I think also having a first assignment in Brazil, in Recife, in the northeast, which has quite a different culture and *mélange* than other parts of Brazil. It is still very traditional in many respects. And there is more of a mix of the Portuguese, the Indian and the African. I was the cultural affairs officer for the northeast of Brazil, so I did a lot of traveling around to some fascinating cities and town.

*Q: You mentioned that the Brazilians are a fun loving people. I think De Gaul came and said that not a serious country.*

BERGER: Well a lot of Brazilians joke about themselves as well. I don't like to stereotype any group of people, but I think in the case of Brazil it really is true; the music, the Samba, the sense

of a joy of life is unlike anywhere else that I have experienced.

Q: *You were in Recife from what, '76?*

BERGER: From November of '75 until July of '76. It was the first week of July that we moved down to Rio. So it was only about nine months.

Q: *What was Recife like then?*

BERGER: It was a very quiet port town. It was on the river and on the Atlantic. They had lots of problems with flooding. It was a very poor town.

Q: *What river was this?*

BERGER: Recife is at the confluence of the Beberibe and Capibaribe Rivers, which flowed in from the interior. It was not the Amazon or one of the major rivers. But it had problems with flooding periodically. Recife was also on the Atlantic, so there were some beautiful beaches over there. Recife means "reef" in Portuguese. And there is a great reef along the Atlantic coast that you could see from the beach where the waves broke over it. It protected the beaches. It was a very pretty place. A very quiet and lovely place to live. And the culture, as I said, was a mix of so many different cultures that came into Brazil. It was a very interesting place to live.

Q: *What was the government like?*

BERGER: At that time there was the beginning of the transition from the military dictatorship. I think Ernesto Geisel was the president [1974-1979]. But there was the beginning of a discussion. So there was a little more freedom of press. There was a little more discussion about how they were going to go to elections. And there was a discussion, in fact, on how they were going to work out the municipal elections. The presidential elections came after I left Brazil. But it was the beginning of that transition. People were openly talking about how good it was going to be in Brazil.

Q: *Did the people feel the government was oppressive? Was it getting better?*

BERGER: It was getting better. I think life was getting better. There was a lot more freedom of expression. Certainly compared to the rougher times of the military dictatorship a few years before. There was more openness. The economy was booming. So people did feel that they were beginning to benefit a little bit more. And that also caused more people from the interior, who were extremely poor – some parts of the interiors of the northeast were still very much subsistence economy, although you could see a lot of cottage industry growing over there. But Recife was a magnet for many poor from the interior. And a lot of them also would move down south.

The current president of Brazil, Lula, came from the northeast. Very poor. Moved down to Sao Paulo with his family and they became factory workers. The growth of factories and industries in Brazil is not as much in the northeast, but it was also somewhat in the northeast.

*Q: What did we have there? Who was the consul general?*

BERGER: The consul general was Richard Brown. He recently died. Young guy, very dynamic. It was a small consulate in this beautiful old mansion in the center of the downtown area. And I was the cultural affairs officer for the northeast. And there was a lot of opportunity at that time to really reach out to places like Fortaleza, João Pessoa. There were several bi-national centers that taught English. There was a great demand for English. USIS (United States Information Agency) did not actually run the English teaching programs in Brazil anymore. That had already been turned over, privatized. We didn't speak of it in those terms at that time, but that is essentially what it was. It was turned over to these private organizations called Ebaiyu Instituto Brasil Estados Unidos, the Joint Institute of Brazil and the United States and they had cultural exhibitions there.

And we also brought in a lot of cultural programming. I do remember several of them from the time that we were there. One of them was the Julliard acting school. They put on John Dos Passos' USA, and we staged it in the cultural center in Rio. I'm sorry, I jumped ahead and that was Rio.

One of the cultural programs that sticks in my mind as being incredibly successful – I was only there for about nine months – was the McClain Family Band, a group of bluegrass singers from Berea, Kentucky. They were great. We took them up to Fortaleza. We went to another town in the northeast, I don't remember which one it was. But we also had programs in Recife; jam sessions, concerts. The reaction of the people was tremendous. That was one of the things that my experiences in Ethiopia as well as Brazil in dealing with these cultural exchanges convinced me that this was one of the ways we helped people understand the dynamics of American culture and the diversity of American life.

*Q: Was there any student exchange or anything at that point in time?*

BERGER: There was a student exchange. It was fairly small in the northeast. It was run mainly out of the embassy in Brasilia, although we did have something. We had some graduate students. I think there was a Fulbright professor at one point in Recife from the University of New Hampshire, but I can't remember her name. And there were visiting programs. Lecturers on the cultural side. Gail Godwin came out. I remember her because she made a great impact on me and I read all of her books after that. We hosted some events for her, both lectures and informal programs. It really helped people understand so much more about American culture. There was very little private exchange that was going on. Although we helped to kind of incubate that through the cultural exchange programs. And then we had of course the international visitor program. And that was a very active one.

*Q: In that part of the country, did you find the hand of Brasilia to be heavy or light?*

BERGER: There was a lot of local autonomy. There really was. And the people in Recife were quite laid back.

*Q: How about the Catholic Church? Was this an important element there at that time?*

BERGER: The Catholic Church is extremely powerful throughout Brazil. And it was more so in the traditional areas. Yet, I think it is true – and this may not be accurate, but it's anecdotal about Brazilians adherence to the Catholic religion. Brazil is the largest Catholic country in the world. Yet the personal observance was minimal. I remember some Brazilian friends telling me that they Catholic Church is all powerful because you go to the Catholic Church after you are born for you baptism, you go there for your first communion, you go there to get married and you go there to be buried. And you never go in between. Personal observance was really minimal. People did not go to church. The observance of Lent – compared to Carnival, which came just before – was almost non-existent.

*Q: I take it that this was a lot of fun?*

BERGER: I enjoyed it tremendously. And it really helped me understand a lot about the impact of culture on society, because it is very heavy in Brazil. Cultural life is so important there. And it helped me realize a lot about American culture and the impact of American culture on American life.

*Q: Did you sense any resentment or anti-Americanism at that time? Basically, we had supported the military coup leaders, I think.*

BERGER: I didn't find that. I really didn't. And I got out a lot. And I traveled a lot in the Northeast. I went to every major city and town throughout there in the nine months that I was in the Northeast, both to meet with people from cultural organizations, municipalities, higher education institutions, the bi-national cultural centers, and if anything, I found a real admiration for American society, American culture, the American way of life, the American governing values. Everybody wanted to go to the States.

*Q: I was wondering because at one point, particularly Argentina and Brazil, looked towards Europe as their center, much more so than countries further north.*

BERGER: That may have been truer of Argentina and others of the Spanish speaking Latin American countries. But Brazilians looked to the United States. They saw themselves as the second United States of the Western Hemisphere. They are such a huge country. They are expansive. They speak one language. They have really amalgamated a diversity of cultures into one society, of course very unequal. You had strata of society. A lot of it was racially based. Much of it was economically based. Certainly whereas in the United States it was north versus south; in Brazil it was south versus north. The south, further away from the equator, was far more developed, far wealthier, much more sophisticated and looked at themselves as more in charge, both in government and the economy. The north was less developed and got a smaller piece of the economic pie.

*Q: Were we trying to get across our fight for racial equality and all that?*

BERGER: It was part of the message we had. But I think at that point we really looked at the expression of the diversity of American culture as a way to help people understand that what we

do in America really does create not only a diverse society but also a prosperous society, and one that is based on some incredible values that can cross borders. Ours was a low pressure message, we didn't try to push people on that. Of course, democracy and institution building was one of our objectives in Brazil. But the Brazilians wanted it even more than we did. And that's what helped them move towards a democracy.

*Q: Did events in Vietnam or Chile impact at all?*

BERGER: Not that I can remember. This was the beginning of the post-Vietnam war period. Certainly Brazilians sometimes would bring it up. I'm looking back 30 years almost at this, but I don't remember it becoming an important part of the conversation.

*Q: Well, again, it's such a big place. They had their own problems.*

BERGER: They did. They were trying to come out of military dictatorship that was oppressive. They looked at the United States as the shining example on the hill that they wanted to emulate, both economically and politically. They saw themselves as embracing democratic values. The government looked at it as going very gradually, very slow. People wanted to move more rapidly. And I think the further away you were from the central government the easier it was. And those who were on the cultural side found it much easier because there was a loosening of culture expression. You could do a lot of things in Brazil in the mid-70s that I think you could not do in the early 70s or late 60s.

*Q: Did they have a cabaret type theater to poke fun at events?*

BERGER: That is where music and theater came in magnificently. People like Chico Buarque, a great singer, Maria Bethânia and others. But Chico Buarque especially. The Pete Seeger of Brazil. Beautiful songs, incredible lyrics, expression of Brazilian people's desire to do what they really love. To Brazilians, the music, the arts, the dance, were ways of getting out of that military stranglehold and becoming free.

I remember that after I moved down to Rio I used to go every Monday night to a small theater called Teatro Opinião; "Opinião" mean opinion. The greats of Samba would come and they would sing their old songs. Some of the most expressive leaders in Brazilian song and music would come there and both talk, but mainly sing, what they felt from their heart. And they would get the audience dancing. They would dance in the isles. And they didn't care where you were from.

Also in the universities there was a real sense of this society is moving towards free expression and we can say anything we want. And they did. They didn't have public demonstrations. They didn't have demonstrations against the government. And the two years I was in Rio, '76 to '78, there were many more American Fulbrighters there; political science, literature, linguistics, history. And they were very active in Brazil. And I got to know a lot of Brazilian professors. They were not only fun but they knew where they were going. They knew where they were moving the society and they were doing it.

*Q: You weren't that far away from the kidnapping of our ambassador, [Charles] Burke Elbrick.*

BERGER: That was before I was there.

*Q: I know. But I was just wondering about the universities. In so many countries the universities are hotbeds of Marxism and practically no-go areas for Americans.*

BERGER: I don't think Marxism really played a role, certainly not that I can remember in the three years that I was in Brazil. Neither in the northeast nor in Rio. Certainly before that time it was a hotbed of radicalism. Universities led much more, but you also had the middle class leading at that point. Everybody wanted to move forward. And, as I said, the Brazilian economy was booming. A majority of the society was benefiting from it. You had growth of the middle class that was phenomenal. It became a consumerist society. There was a joke in Brazil, especially in the two years I was in Rio, they said, "You really should go visit Buenos Aires and fill up your suitcase." They said, "No, don't bring a suitcase. Buy a suitcase there and fill it up." Everything was so cheap by comparison. But Brazilians had a lot of money, a lot of spendable cash.

But also inflation was a problem. The government was trying to keep up with it, as they have every since. Attempts to reform the economy and get a hold of inflation. I remember there was an introduction of a new currency, cruzeiro. And since that time they have had several other revaluations or introductions of new currency. There were days when you would go into the supermarket and from the morning to the afternoon the prices would change.

*Q: When you went to Rio, what were you doing there?*

BERGER: In Recife I was the cultural affairs officer for the northeast. And then Lyle Copmann, who was the PAO (Public Affairs Officer) in Brasilia, asked me if I would like to move down to Rio. He was going to abolish the Recife position. There was, I guess, a budget cut and they were trying to make the post in the northeast smaller. They saw, looking at the major influence groups, that Rio was far more important. And he offered me the job of director of the cultural center in Rio. It was a very active cultural center; library, supervising the Fulbright program. I replaced Jeff Biggs, who was down there at that time. And he became the information officer.

And it was great. For two years, I had the time of my life. I had a good budget. A lot of people would come through. Developing cultural programs. A lot of relationship with the university programs. And of course the Fulbright. It was a center. And Brazilians came. Whenever we could develop a program, whether it was a poetry reading, a play – like John Dos Passos USA, music groups from the states, whatever, we would fill up the house. And Brazilians loved it. They saw American culture as something that was akin to the vibrancy of Brazilian culture and music, and in the other arts as well.

*Q: How did the English language training go?*

BERGER: Well there was a big English language teaching program that was run by a private school. It had started years before in the post-Second World War period by the U.S.

Government. USIS ran that for many, many years. There was a Foreign Service officer that was head of the school and ran the program. That had been dissolved many years before I came. It was successful. There had been 20,000 students a year who were taking English courses. We are talking about a big business. It was a big school. It was as big as one of the universities. We did a lot of co-sponsorship of programs as well. They had more money that we did.

*Q: How did you find the universities there? Some universities, particularly in Europe at this time, tended to have a rather embedded faculty. They weren't very dynamic.*

BERGER: That was true in Brazil at some levels. But there was a new group of younger faculty members who were bright. Many of them had been trained in the United States for the graduate degrees, either through the Fulbright program or on their own. And these were the people who were really setting the pace at the universities. They were great to work with. Americans like myself and others from the consulate were welcome on the universities. Whenever we had American specialists who were coming down there was no problem in programming them on campus or at the cultural center.

*Q: Did you find that many of the students were pointed towards graduate degrees in the United States?*

BERGER: A lot of them wanted to, whether they could work it out or not I don't know. We had a limited number of scholarships, such as the Fulbright program. But there was a rapidly increasing middle class and upper middle class. It was becoming quite large and people could actually afford themselves to send their kids to the United States. And that was their preference, rather than going to Europe. An American degree was worth a lot in Brazil.

*Q: From your experience, did you find that Brazilians were leaping beyond Miami? For so much of Latin America, they head towards Miami and that's sort of their Spanish home.*

BERGER: The Spanish speaking I think focused on South Florida and New York. The Brazilians focused on everything. Disney World was the first place. But they spread out everywhere. They had a love of America.

*Q: Did politics intrude either from the Brazilian side or the American side in your work while you were there?*

BERGER: I cannot remember anything of that. I really can't.

*Q: How about the library? How was this used?*

BERGER: It was used extensively. It was a good library. We had professional librarians. They were very good.

*Q: This was the pre-computer age.*

BERGER: Yes.

*Q: How did you find the consul general in Rio?*

BERGER: I don't really remember them. They were supportive of everything that we did. But I was physically separated from the consulate building. And most of USIS was located in the consulate building. I remember Don Gould was PAO for most of the time that I was there. The Consul General, John Dexter, hosted a number of events at his residence which I attended. But I basically was autonomous. I thought I had the greatest job in the world. I was the director of the cultural center. I was two blocks from Copacabana Beach. I had developed contacts in Brazilian society, especially the educational and cultural fields, to a great extent. I had a wonderful budget. What more could I ask for? [Editor's Note: other officers at CG Rio by March 1976 were: Political-Myles Frechette; Econ/Commercial-Tom Dawson; Consular-Don Yellman; and Administration Manuel Silberstein.]

*Q: How did you like the staff, the Foreign Service nationals?*

BERGER: They were great. They were fun to be with. They were extremely competent. And we really worked on some good programs together.

*Q: I've talked to people who have served I think before your time, but when Rio was the capital, and they were saying that one of the things they noticed was that some of our senior officers picked up Brazilian habits of having a wife and maybe a significant other somewhere else. And this got to be a little difficult. Did you find that?*

BERGER: I think that was true with some people. It was certainly true with the marine security guards, these young 18 to 20 year olds who were really taken by the Brazilian women, who are gorgeous. I think that a good number of the young marine security guards ended up engaged to Brazilian women. I don't know how long those marriages lasted, but for many of them that was the case.

*Q: Had the adoption of Brasilia as the new capital affected things?*

BERGER: It had been adopted for some time before and the capital was quite built up by the time I got there. I used to go up to Brasilia for a number of meetings we had within the USIS structure. I remember also, after I was down in Rio, going back up to Recife for a visit of Rosalyn Carter. She was in Recife in 1977. But in the Brazilian mind, it still was very important. There was a large influx of Brazilian officials who maintained homes in Rio. And Friday afternoon was what they called the "champagne flight." It was like a wheels up party for the Brazilian officials. And I remember going up to Brasilia a number of times for meetings during the week. And then coming back on Friday afternoon. It was Varig Airlines, which served champagne on the flight, later afternoon or mid afternoon flight, because there were so many Brazilian officials on the flights going down to celebrate the weekend.

Another thing that was the case was that we had a lot of Congressional delegations that came to Brazil. Brazil was the economic powerhouse of Latin America and there were so many new agreements that were coming into force. And so American members of Congress would come

down. Inevitably they would arrive in Brazil on a Friday afternoon, coming from somewhere else, either from the States directly or somewhere else in Latin America. And they would spend the weekend in Rio consulting and then on Monday morning go up to Brasilia. We would have to be on duty for them as a control office and help them understand something of the cultural diversity of Rio. This meant making sure that they had tickets to Samba schools, were escorted to different music programs, ate at the best restaurants in Rio. It certainly made me understand one aspect of Congress that I really did not like. But in other positions that I've had since that time, I have really respected the need for Congressional delegations coming down. At the time I just saw this as very much of a boondoggle that took place on weekends.

*Q: But it is a chance to corral members of Congress, which many other organizations never have a chance.*

BERGER: Yes. It was a chance also to explain to them or their staff delegations what USIS did in Brazil and the importance of the cultural exchange program, and especially bringing American experts overseas, the Fulbright exchange program, the international visitor program, voluntary visitors and the like. How important these were. So this part of it was important. And since they didn't have meetings on the weekends, this was an opportunity to – whether you were taking them somewhere or even sightseeing up to Sugarloaf Mountain – you had them there and you were able to talk to them. It was extremely valuable and I didn't really realize it as much until later on.

*Q: I think so many of us don't.*

BERGER: Yes. We look at the oppressive nature of it. They are wasting our weekends. And in Rio it happened so frequently because Rio is a fun town. It's a great place to spend a weekend.

*Q: What about the trip by Roselyn Carter? This was shortly after Jimmy Carter became president. What was your impression?*

BERGER: I had already been down in Rio. And because I knew Recife I was asked to go up there and be part of that small delegation to help the trip. I thought she was fantastic. She really was quite substantive. Meetings. It was only a couple of days. It wasn't a big entourage that came with her either. She impressed me as a very down-to-earth person who understood the issues, had been very well briefed, had read up on Brazil, understood a lot about the poverty in the northeast. So I was quite impressed by her. And she let me take her picture at the end, which was great. A picture I still have.

*Q: Did you run across the confederacy of Brazil, the descendents of the American confederate veterans?*

BERGER: I heard about them, but I don't think I ever met them. But there was another visit to Brazil. This was the visit of Jimmy Carter, as president, which was separate from his wife's visit. She came down much earlier. He came down in '78 to Rio and Brasilia as part of a major trip through Latin America, and he went to Africa from there. Carter at that time was really a proponent of human rights. It was a major theme of his visit to Brazil. [Editor's Note: This

Presidential trip went to Venezuela (March 28-29, 1978), Brazil (March 29-31), Nigeria (March 31-April 3) and Liberia (April 3).]

I can still remember my job on this trip. Everybody in the consulate and the embassy is corralled to do something. I was in charge of the press baggage, which is probably one of the least desirable positions that you want to have. You have two or three hundred members of the press who come down on two planes. And you have to get that the press gets on their bus, their baggage – which is pre-marked – gets onto the trucks and gets delivered to all their hotel rooms in time so by the time they check in . . . And there were a couple of snafus on that whole thing.

But I was also working with an advance team from the White House communications and White House press office. And there is only one thing that I can remember from that. And it really left a bit of a bitter taste in my mouth. But it did teach me a lesson about the importance of American media. I was working on the Brazilian media and trying to get them arranged for various press opportunities with the president. And I remember we had a meeting after we went to various site visits. And someone from the White House advance team and I am not sure if it was someone from the White House press office, may be a political appointee or someone from the staff, but we were going over the press that we had arranged for various events. For one important speech that Carter was going to give, I went over the list of Brazilian press that would attend. I also mentioned that American television was going to be reporting this event as well. They were going to film it and I said I had no idea where it was going to be used. This White House press person said to me: “But do you have the New York Times at this event?” I said: “No. We haven’t been able to get a confirmation. I’m not sure they’ll cover that.” And he said: “Don’t you realize that if the New York Times doesn’t cover it, it didn’t happen.” And this taught me a lesson that if the New York Times doesn’t cover it, then nobody else would.

*Q: Did you have any dealings with the Brazilian Government on the cultural side?*

BERGER: We dealt with the state of Rio, the state of Pernambuco when I was in Recife, and the mayor’s office for cultural affairs in Rio. But otherwise, I don’t think there were any.

*Q: What was the impact of American movies or TV shows or anything like that?*

BERGER: American movies and television was the big rage. And unlike in a lot of other countries, Brazil did not dub television and movies. Everything was subtitled. So it helped Brazilians in learning English; they could hear the spoken language. Brazil had a good movie industry as well.

*Q: Yes, the TV stories.*

BERGER: The TV novellas. This was a huge thing. In fact, now they export them to many countries, including the United States. I remember that we could not have cultural programs start on certain nights at certain times because the popular TV novella would be on at that time and everybody would be home watching television. Couldn’t do it.

*Q: I’m surprised they didn’t have to drag you out of Rio. Did they?*

BERGER: In a way, yes. But at that point I had been overseas for seven years in a row, other than the short period of language training before going to Brazil. We were ready to come back to the United States. I wanted to have something a little bit more diverse. I also had never had a U.S. assignment. My kids were in elementary school, but it was a good time for them to go to school in the States.

*Q: How did you wife find Brazil?*

BERGER: She loved Recife. She really did. And no sooner than she had gotten used to it, we were moving down to Rio. And she hated Rio. She hated the superficiality of it. She hated the house that we were assigned, even though it was a very convenient neighborhood. She also hated the drivers. Rio was kind of like New York on the beach, with a lot of disadvantages on New York. I looked at the advantages of it. A lot has to do with our personalities too. I look on the bright side of things and she looks at how difficult life is. She also had to deal much more with our kids schooling and other problems - dealing with a maid that we had who was terrible, a neighborhood that was a little bit isolated. And trying to get used to a new city. I mean, Rio is a huge city, very spread out.

*Q: Well this is often the case. I mean, as an officer, we have an office and all sorts of staff that take care of many of the things. And the women – it has now changed, of course, but in our time the women – are sort of thrown out there. They have to go to the market. They have to drive.*

BERGER: I remember one time my wife had a really rough time in Rio with a bus driver. She passed him on a street in Rio because he was going very slowly. And then she got caught up on traffic and was going to make a right turn. And then he passed her and he cut her off. And so she gave him the finger. Well, the Brazilian version of it which is the okay sign, which in Brazilian culture was the same as giving someone the finger in the United States. And he wasn't going to take that. And so he chased her, with his busload of passengers. He skipped two bus stops. Except that she was coming into a tunnel that went into the neighborhood where we lived, he would have run her down. He didn't care. It was a scary episode.

*Q: In Greece, the evil eye sign in the open palm extended outward. And our ambassador used to tell us not to do it. I mean, the Greek drivers were rude, but if you did this . . .*

BERGER: There was another thing. Shortly after we moved down to Rio she was involved in a traffic accident. She had stopped at a red light and the car behind her came up and hit her, and then took off. He left part of his headlight and some plastic from his grill on the ground. She couldn't move our car because the damage was so extensive. She wasn't really hurt. And then the police came. They said she had to fill out a report. I wasn't with her, so she called me and I came down to the police station. We spent the whole afternoon together filling out the report. I forgot what else happened. We went it to our insurance company. And of course, we have the license plate number of the license plate number that hit her and left. And at the end of these hours spent in there they say: "He didn't have to stay around. You told him you were not injured. If you are not injured, nobody has to stay around. This happens all the time in Rio." It was just so frustration.

Just one more thing. They told us that a lot of drivers don't stop for red lights in Rio because you could be hit by a bandit who wants to steal your car. Definitely part of life in the Foreign Service.

*Q: I know you are terribly busy. Is this a good place to stop?*

BERGER: This would be a good place. Because then we left Rio in the summer of '78. Came back to the States for home leave and then four years in Washington. I went to the African area office and was a desk officer for Francophone and Portuguese speaking West Africa.

**MARGARET J. BARNHART**  
**Consular Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1976-1980)**

*Margaret J. Barnhart was born in 1928 in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. She graduated from Goucher College in 1950 with a major in international relations. She joined UESCO and was employed there between 1951 and 1955. Following that she worked for the State Department in the Speakers Bureau. In 1961 she enlisted in the Foreign Service and held positions in Paris, Tokyo, Jerusalem, Bangkok, and Rio de Janeiro as well as several positions in the Department of State.*

*Q: Oh, then, so you took Portuguese. So when did you arrive?*

BARNHART: In Rio, in about August of '76. I came back in March, and I had four or five months of home leave and Portuguese language for that summer.

*Q: How did Rio strike you when you got there?*

BARNHART: Beautifully and lots of sunshine. I was very lucky. First of all, it was a Consulate General. It had been the embassy, as you know, but it moved to Brasilia. When I took Portuguese, I was in with the new political officer, the new economic officer, the new commercial officer, all three of them and myself as the fourth one, all going to Rio, and David Lyne going up to Recife. He was getting a special class. He had been born in Brazil and had basic Portuguese like the way the nannies spoke and that sort of thing, so he was converting. But anyway, it was great. So the four of us ran each section, and we had gotten along in language, so it was kind of fun when I went there. I knew everyone. There was Gordon Jones of econ; Bill Simmons, political; and Peter Hanson. John Dexter was Consul General, and I was head of the consular section. When I got there, they pointed out several places to live that were vacant, but the one was Melissa Wells' place, because she had been commercial officer for the whole country. Anyway, I got her apartment, which was a two-story penthouse apartment in Jardine Botânico with a swimming pool. It was gorgeous. It was just beautiful. It was inexpensive, because the owner had been part of the You-ark government, I guess, way back and had been

exiled to Mexico and had turned this over to the then Embassy, and all he wanted was his money in dollars. So it didn't cost nearly as much as some of the other places, and that's why they decided. I don't know if they've kept it to this day, but they did keep it for a long, long time. It was wonderful living. The job was quite nice. I had the visa section. I sort of had my choice, I guess. What did I take over? I can't remember. I think I did Welfare Whereabouts or passports. But it was a nice group of people, and the locals were wonderful. They had been doing this for years. They were very experienced. And it was reasonably honest. I didn't see anything. The interesting part was that - that would have been '76 - it was the time when the visa office determined if they were going to cut back immigrant visa issuance to just one post per country. At that time when I got there, we issued about the same number as Sao Paulo did. The inspectors had recommended that it be Rio because they thought that Rio could use additional work. Well, Sao Paulo raised all sorts of trouble. They wanted it. Whoever got it would need one more national employee. When I got there, this was being battled, and I remember all the inspectors came in. Robert Sayer came in. He had been head of the inspectors. He had been Inspector General, I think, before he went there. He brought in George High as his DCM. George High had been an inspector, and Terry Leonhardy had been an inspector. Terry was Consul General in Sao Paulo. George High said, "We recommended Rio," and Terry had gone along with that before, but he said, "Well, now that I'm here, I want to do it here." So I remember going down to Sao Paulo with George, telling - he did, not me - Terry Leonhardy that the decision had been made, it was going to be in Rio and they were going to lose immigrant visas. They were not happy with this. I got along very well with both the Ambassador and the DCM, and the DCM let me be one of the supervising consul in the country. So I got to go over to Bahia, Recife. From time to time I could do that, because we were then the biggest consular section with the visa workload.

*Q: What was the political situation like?*

BARNHART: Well, the political situation was fairly stable then, and that brings me to one other point of making it a slightly easier consular workload. To get permission for Brazilians to leave the country, they had to pay a deposit. It was not cheap. They would have to pay for a deposit to get an exit permit, and they needed an exit permit to leave the country. They had to deposit money in the bank for each traveler, and they would get it back when they returned. It was a healthy amount of money, which meant that we didn't have potential immigrants trying to enter with tourist visas.

*Q: Why was the Brazilian government doing that?*

BARNHART: The Brazilian government did not want the Brazilians spending their money outside of Brazil. They were very nationalistic. Import items as well as American products were banned from entering the country. If they had an exit permit, you knew that they had plenty of money and they had to come back to get it back. The exit permit was taken off the last year before I left. But the presaro (Brazilian currency) was stable while I was there, yet shortly after I left it went down the drain. It's changed so much. Crime wasn't that bad either, although we had people in jail and Americans who died. There were a number of American businesspeople who gave up their citizenship, you couldn't get promoted unless you were a Brazilian citizen. I know one friend of mine was high up with the local English language paper, and he was told he could not be promoted unless he was a Brazilian citizen. He was married to a Brazilian. So, he gave up

his American citizenship and became a Brazilian, but we didn't worry too much because he had family in the United States who could file a petition. He was just one of a number of American businessmen who gave up their citizenship because of this.

*Q: Did you have problems with young people coming down for the carnival and staying too long and that sort of thing?*

BARNHART: Not particularly. It was expensive. Where we had more trouble was when it came to tourists being robbed. In those days the little thieves were not armed with knives and guns like they are today, but every Monday morning you would get someone coming in, and you'd hear it so often. They'd come in and say, "I don't have any passport or any money." I'd say, "I'll bet you were out on the beach, and you had everything in your flight bag and you walked away for two minutes or someone came up and asked you for a cigarette lighter." It was just so common. These little kids that came down from Niffibellas, Copacabana, Ipanema Beach, would either ask for a light or ask for a cigarette, one or the other. Some of these people actually went in the water and left this stuff. They all carried everything, and they all ended up broke. In fact, one of our Foreign Service officers and his wife landed in that situation too once. But it was just to common - robbery. Homes weren't broken into. This didn't apply to the residents per se, but the tourists just constantly. We had some bad cases. We had a girl I remember - very young - who was down with a drug dealer, and in a fight she fell out of the 21st story of the Hilton Hotel. He says - again, it's possibly true - that she was covered with oil or something like that and was out on the balcony and they had a little argument and she slipped out of his grasp, which is probably true. Her family came down. It was a very tragic thing. We had a number of people dying there - tourists - but not an undue amount. As I say, we had a really bad bus accident, and there were some really bad isolated instances of welfare.

*Q: How were the jails for Americans?*

BARNHART: They weren't bad. The morgue was the worst place. After a carnival, we'd have to go there and try and identify a missing American. But the jails were just so-so. They really didn't like to keep Americans in jail too much. There was a ring of cocaine. I visited the women's jail a couple of times. Those were the young girls, usually, in Florida or someplace carrying drugs back and forth - Americans - and we had a couple there that were there for quite some time, and they were well taken care of. They were runners. One of them had a six-year-old son back someplace in the States and was worried about him. Now the problem with the need for an exit permit, that did create problems, because our resident Americans there had to have an exit permit from the Brazilian government to leave, and they had to put up the money too, just like the Brazilians. They would be the equivalent, I guess, of immigrants but not citizens. A number of times there would be an emergency in the States - it always happened on the weekend - and they couldn't get out. We would go after the local authority. But they were very strict. They wouldn't do it. They absolutely said, "Wait till Monday." We may have gotten one done. We did have a number of those. There was a big American community there too. It was really a home away from home laid-back society. It was one of those things that Brazil was in better condition price wise than Argentina. So you don't want to go down there, because it's very expensive now. But six months or two years later, go to Argentina. Things are cheaper than in Brazil.

**GREG THIELMANN**  
**Consular Officer/Staff Assistant**  
**Brasilia (1977-1979)**

*Mr. Thielmann was born and raised in Iowa and was educated at Grinnell College and Princeton University. A specialist in Political-Military Affairs, he held a number of positions dealing with such matters as Strategic Proliferation, Arms Control and Missile Programs. He also served abroad at several posts in the capacity of Political Officer and Consular Officer. His last position was Chief, Office of Analysis for Strategic Proliferation and Military Affairs in State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. Mr. Thielmann was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004*

*Q: Well, then you were assigned to Brazil, Brasília. You were there from nineteen-when to when?*

THIELMANN: This would've been 1977 to '79. Ended up being a little short of two years because of the language requirement.

*Q: What, talk about Brasília at the time, what was it like?*

THIELMANN: I can make some comparisons because I served there again from 1995 to 1998. Brasília at the time even though the city had been in existence at that point I guess nearly twenty years. The city was basically built in three years, a city of a million people. When I arrived there, there was still a lot of the planned city that was unbuilt. I mean, you had an architectural design that was sort of in the shape of a bird or a plane or whatever. One of the wings had clearly not yet been filled out. Even the older wings and the superblocks as they were called still had a lot of red earth with just sort of scrub on it rather than manicured grass, that I found during my later tour. There was a much more powerful sense of isolation there than later also. Brasília being deep inland, 900 miles from the coast, a two-day drive to Rio, a day drive to Belo Horizonte, really quite a long way from any competing center and really surrounded by not quite empty savanna but very sparsely populated savanna that for the most part looked like there was no livestock, no cultivation, nothing. So added to that was the fact that the electronic age hadn't arrived. It was clearly where you get island fever and, in fact the post at the time had an isolation differential in acknowledgement of that situation. Brasília has always and continues to be a unique Brazilian city because so many of the things that one associates with other Brazilian cities don't take place there. You have much less density in terms of the population. The privileged and the wealthy want to live right in the heart of the city, and the suburbs are for poor people. Brasília was almost on the American model. The nice apartments in the city were where Brazilians, I think, instinctively wanted to be. It turned out that they were a lot of developments like American suburbs on the other side of the lake, which increasingly would attract people. There everyone could have their own swimming pool and their own yard and a relatively short drive to work, and it took on an American city kind of flavor, much more than one would associate with Brasília.

*Q: I realize you were at the bottom of the feed line, but where, what, how were relations with Brazil at that time in '77 to '79?*

THIELMANN: Relations were bad. I'm not sure this would be described as the low point in the relationship. But it was at least a close competitor for whatever the low point was. The ambassador was named Crimmins.

*Q: John Hugh Crimmins?*

THIELMANN: I was lowly enough that he was just Ambassador Crimmins to me. But my understanding was that he had nearly been PNGed shortly before I arrived. We did not have a long overlap. It was I think just a few months after my arrival that he left. But he had a very serious dustup with the Brazilian government, actually over the fate of a particular American missionary who had been sort of kidnapped by Brazilian security officials and was probably on his way to being killed. Crimmins was very persistent in asking the Brazilian authorities who first said they had no information. But eventually his persistence resulted in his release, and his persistence and some of the comments he made about the Brazilian government were not appreciated by them. This was during a period when Brazil was still under a military dictatorship.

Added to that was the fact that in 1977 with the Carter administration, there was much more of a focus on human rights and nonproliferation in U.S. policy. That was like a one-two punch to the bilateral relationship with this particular military dictatorship because Brazil had a missile program and a nuclear weapons program at the time. It had an oppressive military government albeit less so than Argentina and Chile. So, as the Brazilians were very quick to notice, Vice President Mondale's first international trip was to Germany. One of the most important items on his agenda was to talk the Germans out of selling nuclear reactor technology to the Brazilians because of our concern about how it could be used. Then with Carter's very visible pro-human rights profile, the Brazilians, I think appropriately, saw themselves as one of the targets of his policies. With those two overwhelming burdens on the bilateral relationship, I thought it was basically a good thing, an appropriate thing for the U.S. I saw Brazilian relations with the U.S. in some respects as in kind of a downward tailspin at the time I arrived and probably during much of my tour. I remember things like the newly appointed head of human rights at the State Department Pat Derian going to Brazil and seeing rolling eyes everywhere about how are we going to seat people at a meeting or at a dinner for this guest. It was like a pariah. No, it was a combination of this sort of Latin American machismo about what's a woman doing in a foreign affairs position. Then charged with the subject the Brazilians didn't want to talk about at all. To me that was kind of one of the most dramatic memories about how difficult U.S.-Brazilian relations were.

Then on the nuclear front in fact on both of these issues, I think the U.S. was on the side of history. During my second tour there it was very dramatic to see for example former President Jimmy Carter coming back to Brasília, sitting around a table with NGOs and having the Brazilians recall how some of them were in prison at the time and how important for them and their cause it was to have the American president taking this position. So we were definitely benefiting in the 1990s from the positions the U.S. had at the time. My second tour in Brazil was

in one of the best possible periods of the U.S.-Brazilian relationship. So it's really going from the nadir to the peaks to look at those two tours.

*Q: I'll come back to some other things. But while we're on this subject, did you find that the "chief" -- I use the word in quotes because you were it of the consular section, you did sit in the country team. Did you sense almost resistance in particularly the human rights policy and all? I mean saying well, it's all very well, but we've got other things to do, and this is screwing up our way of getting this deal or that deal or something like that.*

THIELMANN: I think it was early enough in the introduction or let's say raising the profile of human rights issues that I had the impression as a young officer that it was almost instinctive by career officers saying human rights is kind of unseemly to bring into conversations here. It's unpleasant. It will have immediately negative consequences, and my own feeling is that a lot of the career foreign service officers were still in a state of shock about engaging in a different way of doing business. What I would say sympathetically to them is, of course they had an acute appreciation of how a concern about human rights can very easily turn into an arrogant position of "we are better than you," we know how you should behave. This is particularly the case when policies are controlled by political types who maybe don't have a very sophisticated view of the world. I'm not necessarily putting Carter in that position, but we've certainly seen a number of others in that position. I think it didn't take the Foreign Service long -- I would really date it from Carter -- to see the advantages of having a human rights report and seeing the long term advantages of being perceived by populations, even if not by governments, as being on the side of human rights. So I saw a lot of evidence of resistance when I entered the Foreign Service, but within a relatively short period of time, I think even some of those veteran officers changed their own views about how a properly administered concern about human rights could work.

*Q: Here you are, a brand new officer. Were you married by the way at the time?*

THIELMANN: I was single and I must say that, well Brasilia had a reputation at the time -- that if you came to Brazil single, you would leave married. If you came married, you would leave divorced. In my case it didn't quite apply. I came single and left single. But I did during the course of my two years meet my future wife who was a Peace Corps volunteer. I met her in the Miami airport, and my second year in Brasilia was a period of getting to know her. So in some sense at least the beginning of the marriage occurred in Brasilia. Brasilia, it was a heady thing to be a single American diplomat in Brasilia at that time because in the Brazilian culture, and probably we could say the Latin American culture, one had sort of a double boost to one's personal stature. If you were an American diplomat, you were representative of an extremely powerful country, and so you had that personal power. You were also presumed to be rich partly because, well, because, objectively speaking, you were much richer than the average Brazilian. There was also a little bit of misunderstanding. The Brazilians would assume that the American Foreign Service was like the Brazilian foreign service, and their foreign service really was elite and the upper crust in terms of money in the society. So there was a little bit of misunderstanding. The end result of all that was that, well, let's say it was easier to get the local women interested in the single man than might be the case in the United States if you were a Foreign Service officer. So that was a nice experience for me. I guess I can say it that way.

*Q: Well, tell me about your initial experience when you came. How were you received, introduced into your first post? You alluded to this off mike.*

THIELMANN: Yes. I was met by two junior officers, one whom was the head of the consular section that I was going to be in. I was going to be replacing a young political officer who was working in the area into which I would rotate. So I experienced the shock of this very different kind of environment basically in the hands of two people who seemed to understand Brasília quite well. For junior officers they seemed to have both gotten a feel for the city. Both men spoke good Portuguese. One had a Brazilian girlfriend, and both of them seemed to have good contacts. But I have to report that, before the end of my first year, both of them had been invited to leave the Foreign Service because of alleged improper use of commissary items and drug transactions with the locals. Now without commenting on the guilt or innocence here, I would just say that I thought it was really unfortunate for one of the two officers who was let's say influenced by the other to do certain things that I don't think he should've been held responsible for. The Foreign Service lost a very good political analyst in talking both of them into resignation as an alternative to prosecution.

*Q: Well, was there a corruption atmosphere?*

THIELMANN: Yes.

*Q: The Philippines have this reputation. I was wondering whether—*

THIELMANN: I would really say no. I now can compare it with other posts, and I would say this embassy was from the top down an honest, ethical operation. Brazilian society certainly has plenty of corruption, but the Brazilian employees of the embassy for example were honest as far as I could determine. Even some of those who had worked closely with one of these American officers were themselves not corrupt. I know from personal experience. So there should not have been a negative reflection on the whole post. In fact, the regional security officer was basically doing a good job rooting out the corruption that did exist, which unfortunately involved some of the people that I relied on most closely. Looking back on it again I thought that the regional security officer had even given kind of the ringleader sufficient warnings that he could've reformed himself if he had been inclined to do so.

*Q: Let's talk about your work first as a consular officer. What sort of things did you have to deal with?*

THIELMANN: At that time Brazil had a requirement for anyone who wanted to travel to the United States had to pay for the right to do so. So there was a very large exit fee requirement, which made our job in the consular section much easier because it basically meant that a lot of the huddled masses yearning to breathe free would not be able to come up with the money that would get them in the door for a Brazilian exit visa. There was still, it was still a difficult situation, and I don't think I ever really had a flair for doing what non-immigrant visa officers need to do -- to read people in terms of whether they're being sincere or not, to decipher the forms and ask the appropriate questions. I don't think I was really good at it. We did have very good nationals working there, and that made it a little easier for me. But a big part of the job was

the non-immigrant visa function, and we would at the time, and I suppose it's still the case, get these reports later from the Immigration Naturalization Service.

*Q: Adjustment of status.*

THIELMANN: Adjusting the status of those who had sworn to you, the consular officer, that they only wanted to visit Disney World and then come back. Over time that helps one develop a more cynical attitude toward the veracity of those appearing before a visa officer. But I felt at the time completely snowed under in terms of the requirements of the job. It was an awful lot for one person to do and even more so because I didn't have the experience to draw on. A lot of times I just didn't even know what one was supposed to do or what the law required. I would have to consult with either my immediate supervisor, who happened to be the DCM of a large embassy or a consular officers in Rio, and I did that. They were very good at helping me with some of these issues. But I worked very long hours and had considerable stress and then intermixed with that of course were the occasional American citizen services cases. These included the death of the public affairs officer of a heart attack when I was there. I was the one who had to identify the body and take care of that. An American businessman died on landing in Brasília and in those days there was only one Brazilian in the whole city who could embalm. Brazil had a twenty-four hour burial requirement, which put one under a great deal of stress regarding notifying relatives in the United States to pay money quickly if they wanted to see the body of their loved one again. These occasional pressures included aiding some Americans who had been arrested on drug charges in some pretty remote parts of the consular district. Brasília at the time had this enormous consular district, which I think spanned a territory almost the size of the U.S. between the Mississippi River and the Atlantic Ocean. At that time too for a brief golden period, the U.S. pledged to ensure one month consular visits for any American in captivity to make sure that they had adequate nutrition and that kind of thing. In my case this involved some trips to pretty remote parts of the country. Handling the American citizen services and dealings with the Brazilian government on top of that relentless immigrant visa work was a lot for an inexperienced first tour officer. I guess it was character building.

*Q: How were prison conditions for the Americans under arrest?*

THIELMANN: They were a lot better than for arrested Brazilians. I mean, they really had separate facilities and better treatment just because they were people who could create problems for the jailers. But they weren't good conditions in terms of cleanliness or humane treatment. But at least in the few cases that I had involvement with it was much less depressing than something that would result in a threat to life, limb or health of the prisoner.

*Q: How did you find the Brazilian authorities, the police authorities and all. With the military government they tend to be pretty severe. I mean, did you find that with our poor relations with the country affected any of your work at all?*

THIELMANN: I think it would be fair to say yes. But it was almost like some of the people I had to deal with were either so far down in the hierarchy and so dazzled by dealing with a consular officer that people would call you colonel as sort of an honorary title. So it wasn't that I didn't get respect for my office from people like that. At higher levels where there would be more

national pride resistance to being pushed around by the Americans it would be a slightly different issue. But it wasn't so bad in my area, and for those people you had regular dealings with like the head of the airport police and that kind of thing, relations were fine. I mean, it was mutually beneficial for us to get along.

*Q: Was there much of an American-connected missionary community in your consular district?*

THIELMANN: There was indeed, and that was one of my most severe problems at the time because some of those missionaries were part of the Wickliffe Bible Society. They were bringing literacy to some of the most remote Indians, in many from cases tribes that were just being discovered. Brazilians were very jealous and concerned about these foreigners introducing civilization, if you want to use that term, to natives of their country. The Brazilians did not want the natives to learn their own language, to learn how to read and write in their own language. They wanted them to learn Portuguese and that as the only written language. So the whole Wickliffe thrust was interpreted as being hostile by the Brazilian government. This wasn't always the case, but it became more and more so. The Wickliffe Bible translators were having a terrible time getting visas renewed, and I had a constant flow of problems like that. Aside from making complaints, I didn't feel like I was really helping much other than providing a sympathetic ear and taking the complaints to the Brazilians. It was almost like the issue was much bigger than any individuals could deal with.

Some of these missionaries would provide very valuable air services and medical care and shipments to indigenous people in Brazil, and oftentimes much more effectively than local Brazilian organizations. But even that was not something that Brazilians appreciated necessarily. They more often felt threatened by it. Then there was always fear and suspicion that somehow these missionaries were working for the CIA. Nothing could have been more ludicrous if you know the CIA and know these missionaries. The missionaries were very impressive people, very dedicated, good people, people with whom I may have shared little in terms of theology but very pleasant people.

*Q: But did you find that the missionary groups -- one sometimes think about American missionaries as coming sort of out of the Midwest with no feel for culture or anything else. Did you feel, and all of a sudden being in a place where culture is so important and I mean, the disturbance -- were they aware of the problems of bringing these people out?*

THIELMANN: I think many of them were very sophisticated actually in understanding. They knew what the problem was. They did their best not to undermine Brazilian government authority in any way. They really were an apolitical bunch for the most part. Their mission was in the spiritual realm and to allow the natives to read the Bible in a way that they would be able to appreciate it and not really concerned about lobbying in a political way for an agenda other than what the Brazilian government wanted. So the problem really was not there. In some ways though they were obviously trying to introduce a foreign value system into native culture. On the other hand, they seemed to have a great appreciation for the unique culture of the various tribes. They were also very fluent in Portuguese. So they had respect for the Brazilians' language and government functions and everything. I don't think their attitudes were part of the problem.

*Q: Was the deforestation of the Amazon something that was going on and was this a concern for the embassy?*

THIELMANN: It was clearly going on and, of course, continuing during my later tour there. But it didn't directly impact on my particular job. There were science attachés in the embassy who particularly during my second tour I remember as being the hosts and cultural and linguistic interpreters for a huge number of NGOs and other American organizations concerned about what was happening in the Amazon. This of course extended not just to the science attaché but to the agricultural section and the economic section and many others. I think all of us in one way or another were impacted by the foreign concerns about what was happening ecologically in Brazil, and, of course, those American reactions played back into the Brazilian paranoia about U.S. intentions. I mean, there were a lot of serious people in Brazil who thought the U.S. was just looking for an opportunity to militarily occupy the Amazon.

*Q: I've heard those people who served there. It is just something beyond belief almost.*

THIELMANN: From the Brazilian perspective you can understand the logic train because you would have American spokesmen including some from the government talking about the Amazon as the lungs of the planet and how U.S. and international survival was dependent on what happened in Brazil. You add that to the thrust of America defending its national interests overseas with our own troops, and you kind of put two and two together. It would even come back in funny ways to see connections. On my second tour I was talking to a Brazilian admiral during a U.S. fleet visit in Recife, I think it was, he mentioned to me a U.S. plan to invade Brazil in 1941, and I thought, oh these Brazilians ... these paranoid people are now kind of trying to reinvent history. Then shortly after that there was an article in the proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute that outlined in some detail plans to land a marine division on the northeast coast of Brazil. They were only aborted in a fairly mature phase when the Brazilian government negotiated the rights to use Natal in World War II as a jumping off point for Africa. So, if the U.S. was willing to invade Brazil in World War II, then the Brazilians figure what has changed since then.

*Q: Well, one of the things, we were talking about was your impression of Brazilian society. These Brazilians have always placed great emphasis on the fact that they were a multi-racial society and all. But I would think from what I understand about Brazil, is that you would find Brasilia would have very few people who could trace themselves back to African descent. I would think they would be more concentrated in the more popular cities on the coast or in São Paulo.*

THIELMANN: I would say yes and no to that. The Brazilian elite, the government bureaucrats in Brasília, were, lets say, lighter skinned than maybe the average Brazilian, whatever that means. Afro-Brazilians would be found most heavily in [Bahia?] and some of the coastal areas. But there really is, in so many respects and much more than in some of the other countries of Latin America, a sort of a new Brazilian, I think they almost all have African, Indian and European blood in them. So it's just a case of different degrees. In the case of Brasília specifically so much of the work there in building the city was done by people from the northeast of Brazil who tended to be darker skinned, smaller in stature, and have more Indian blood. So in

Brasília, you would see the full range of Brazilian nationalities. But Brazilian attitudes to race, I mean, are strikingly different from U.S. attitudes. It's tempting to say that Brazilians were not racist and the Americans were racist, and the Brazilians would point to things like the oddities of the single drop theory of race in the U.S. If you have a single drop of African blood, then you're an African American. But somehow it doesn't work in the other direction. If an African American has a single drop of white blood, they're African American. The Brazilians would find that very odd and particularly in relation to the sexes. But in class terms it is very much taboo. That is, a Brazilian sort of European woman or a higher class woman, it would be a complete scandal if she were accompanied by a darker skinned man or if she had an affair with a darker skinned man. Here in the traditional attitudes about fidelity are limited to women and not to men. No eyebrows are raised at all about a light skinned Brazilian man having a dark-skinned companion.

*Q: I've interviewed a USIS Foreign Service officer who had a male friend from Jamaica come visit her and all of a sudden she found doors shut that had been wide open before.*

THIELMANN: Yes. Yes. I have seen Brazil's particular attitude toward race described as colorism, and that certainly jives well with my own personal experience. There is a presumption that the lighter the skin, the higher the class. In Brazil like in a lot of countries, when you cross class lines, you can create problems. But having said all that, there's a wide range of behavior between races in Brazil that you just would not see in the United States. So in general I agree with the generalization that Brazil is much less racist than the United States, and Brazilians value as a national asset the mixing of bloods. That is part of the pride in Brazilian identity. We are a three race nation and proud of it.

*Q: Well, what did you do in the political section in your last year there?*

THIELMANN: I was special assistant to Ambassador Robert Sayre, and then I had other responsibilities that are not uncommon for junior officers, like being protocol officer and bio officer, but it was pretty low level stuff for political section work. That is I didn't really work on an important piece of political section activity. We had kind of an interesting crew of people at the time. It was a very odd position to be in in terms of being the staff assistant to the ambassador because I was in the political section, kind of around the corner from the ambassador. I had to overcome the normal difficulties with the ambassador's secretary since she perceived job overlaps in my responsibilities. The ambassador himself, Robert Sayre, I would say, had a somewhat introverted personality, and so, it took me a while to adjust to his style. At the same time it had not been made clear to me who my immediate supervisor was. I mean, who was actually going to be writing my evaluation. I remember being sort of astounded maybe six months into the tour and finding out that my immediate supervisor was actually the deputy political counselor. I mean that was complete news to me. That was obviously my fault because I was so junior and naïve and didn't know how important it was to know who your boss is when you start a job. I think the blame is probably shared. So it was, I would have to say in terms of what I learned and the quality of the professional experience, it was better as a consular officer being section chief than it was being a low man on the totem pole of the political section when my job was really divided between serving the political section and serving the ambassador.

*Q: Robert Sayre has the reputation of being rather introverted. How did you find dealing with him? How did he operate?*

THIELMANN: It's a little hard for me to characterize. He obviously had previous experience with Brazil and a lot of experience in the Foreign Service. So he was very self-confident in his views. I think he kept things fairly close to the vest, it wasn't very transparent to me what he was thinking. He didn't have the, let's say, the pedagogical instinct that sometimes ambassadors have for staff assistants. Let me tell you how the world works kind of thing. He would express his views, but in some ways I think it was a little bit hard to be a staff assistant because he was a little bit hard to read in terms of what he actually wanted done. My memories of this are just things like he was very upset over the way the section was arranged because someone walking into the ambassador's outer office could see him at the desk if his door was open because that was kind of an unacceptable intrusion into his privacy. I don't remember as clearly some of the really substantive issues.

*Q: You mention a relationship that's often not picked up by people but a very important one. That is being the assistant and then the ambassador's secretary because the secretaries when they've risen to that position are very powerful people and often very strong-willed. Did you find that all your newly honed diplomatic skills had to be used? I assume it was a lady.*

THIELMANN: Yes, it was. And yes, I think it required a great deal of diplomacy, and there were some unpleasant exchanges. I suppose it's a little bit like a second lieutenant and a grizzled sergeant working out a relationship. I think that we did work out a modus operandi in the course of the year. I didn't end up thinking that the ambassador's secretary was power hungry or anything other than this was one of those tough situations. Even the existence of a staff assistant to the ambassador is regarded by the secretary as an insult to her capabilities and her authority. Under those circumstances it's very hard to work constructively, but I think we adjusted in a way that she would see that it was useful to have me in my job and that I helped her and that she helped me.

*Q: Who was the DCM?*

THIELMANN: DCM was Richard—I'm drawing a blank on the name. I'll have to fill that in later.

*Q: Not Johnson*

THIELMANN: Yes, indeed. Richard Johnson whom I liked very much actually. He had been my supervisor in the consular section, and in some respects he filled in those gaps in personal relationship with the ambassador. He was approachable. I could relate to him very easily, and he provided a kind of mentoring in some ways. And he was sympathetic in a way that one got the feeling that he would try to help me in my career subsequently. I didn't get that feeling with Ambassador Sayre even though years later he was very friendly towards me in the State Department when I would run into him. I think in his own way he did have appreciative feelings and kind feelings toward me that just didn't come through that well.

*Q: Yeah, Dick Johnson I knew because we took Serbian together.*

THIELMANN: Oh you did.

*Q: With his wife. I want to say Donna, but I'm not sure if that was his wife's name. But this was back in the '60s.*

THIELMANN: I could probably be convinced by someone of great qualities or bad qualities. I can just remember my very positive feelings at the time. He gave me what I needed as a junior officer, and he seemed in a lot of ways to be a good role model for me.

*Q: Did you get any feeling in both your jobs there that there were tensions or problems between particularly our consulates in Rio and São Paulo?*

THIELMANN: Yes. I think even then, and I had a better perspective on that later, but it was a very odd situation. I don't think there are very many other countries in the world, maybe Pakistan is such a country, where you have these very large, vibrant and important cities that are subservient to a smaller and in many respects less important capital city where all the American senior officials are located. So it's hard to get the officials in the capital city to the consulates in a way they should be. There was in both my first and second tours a continuing effort to grapple with the fact that the building in Rio was not our embassy, with a lot of offices and empty space right in the heart of Rio. In comparison with the embassy which was really built to the anticipated size required in Brasília, and was compared by Henry Kissinger to a Coca Cola bottling factory, which I thought wasn't quite fair to the embassy. And then, of course, you had São Paulo as the real economic powerhouse and the capital of the most advanced Brazilian states. So there was all kinds of tension there. I was probably too lowly during the first tour to be aware of any kind of real struggles between the ambassador and the consuls general. I suspect they existed.

*Q: While you were there was there any movement that you were picking up from your senior colleagues towards changing Brazil from a military government to a civilian one?*

THIELMANN: The process had already started. I mean Brazil was slowly moving to a civilian government. At the time I was first there, there was, for example, a permitted opposition party in the parliament. In many ways the system was rigged to make sure that the pro-government party stayed in control. But there was a nascent true opposition element that one sees today in Brazil with that one party that was allowed. So it was sort of the beginning of a fairly vibrant Brazilian democracy in the mid '70s when I was there.

*Q: Did you find in the embassy that there was any desire on the part of our people to get out to Rio all the time?*

THIELMANN: I don't think that was the way it was in the early years. I mean the early years you had all these terribly reluctant cariocas, Brazilians from Rio, who were then dragged out of their very comfortable bureaucratic situations where they could spend lunch on the beach or whatever to the middle of this wild savanna of Brasília. Many of them would return frequently to

Rio. By the time I was there it wasn't a factor for the Americans because we couldn't afford it. It was expensive to fly to Rio. It wasn't something that one did frequently for fun. There was still, when I was there, an opportunity to make an informal courier run which started in Rio and went up to Salvador and Recife and Belem. That was one of the things that embassy officers looked forward to -- a chance to see some of those cities overnight. But, travel was not casually done in those days.

**TERRELL E. ARNOLD**  
**Consul General**  
**Sao Paulo (1978-1980)**

*Terrell Arnold was born and raised in West Virginia. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1943 and served in the World War II and Korean War. He has attended Columbia University, San Jose State College, and Stanford University. Arnold entered the Foreign Service in 1959 and has held positions in the U.S., Egypt, India Sri Lanka, Philippines, and Brazil. Arnold was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on March 9, 2000.*

*Q: Where did you go in '78?*

ARNOLD: In '78 we went to Sao Paulo.

*Q: I think this might be a good place to stop, because we want to spend some time on Sao Paulo.*

ARNOLD: Yes, we do. It was a fascinating experience, fascinating time.

*Q: It's a very important post. It's really equivalent to an embassy.*

ARNOLD: It drove me sufficiently, I must say, and it was bigger than most embassies I had inspected in Africa.

*Q: We'll pick it up when you go to Sao Paulo from '78 to when?*

ARNOLD: '78 to '80.

*Q: Good, we'll pick it up then.*

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*This is January 10, 2001. Terry, we're in Sao Paulo, 1978. How did you get the job? It's the equivalent to an embassy. I mean it's considered sort of like Hong Kong and a few other places that are sort of really major. How did you get the job?*

ARNOLD: I got the job for two reasons. One, it was timely for me to undertake something like

that. I was just emerging from the Office of the Inspector General as a senior inspector. I had looked at 24 different posts at that point including some of the biggest, and among them Brazil. I had worked for Ambassador Robert Sayre, who was then the Inspector General, and had done all of my inspection work for him, and he was pleased with my work. So when I came up for assignment, he was about to go to Brazil as Ambassador, and he asked me to be his CG in Sao Paulo. That's how it worked.

*Q: I can't remember. Had you served in Brazil before?*

ARNOLD: No, I hadn't served anywhere in Latin America before.

*Q: What was the situation vis-a-vis the United States with Brazil in particular, and then we'll come down to Sao Paulo, in 1978?*

ARNOLD: It was kind of friendly, arm's length situation. We were not having any problems in Brazil, but as an illustration of an arm's length situation, there had been an historic close relationship between the National War College in the United States and the Escola Superior in Brazil, but they weren't talking to each other at that stage. Our military people were tolerated but not embraced, as it were. I had no difficulty as Consul General getting around to see anybody I wanted to see, including the military people. But Brazil was still emerging from a period of autocratic and repressive rule, and changes were coming but they were not quite finished yet.

*Q: Who was the President at the time, Kubichek? Well now, he was an elected President?*

ARNOLD: He was an elected president but still part of an old regime. The role of the military was still very strong. I would say the three most powerful people in Sao Paulo in the overall political environment I was associated with at that time were the Governor of the State of Sao Paulo, who was a conservative ally of the presidency, a Palestinian really a Lebanese by the name of Paulo Malouf. And the second most powerful person there - and maybe the first, I don't know, I never had it put to a test in any way - was the Commander of the 2nd Army. The third was Cardinal Paulo Evarista Arns of the Catholic Church. I have to say those were the three poles, I think, in that region at the time.

*Q: When you went out there, before you went when you were getting briefing and all - you had been an inspection service, you had those files to play with too - what did you figure was going to be your major task?*

ARNOLD: I thought working with the American business community was going to be a major task. Dealing with immigration requests was going to be a fairly large job. But I would say the leading task was going to be understanding their economy and supporting the American business community there, which was quite large. Sao Paulo, of course, is, if not larger, then equal in size to Mexico City, which puts them as the two largest cities in Latin America.

*Q: Before we get to some of the issues, how was the Consul General's staff composed?*

ARNOLD: We were in an interesting situation. My predecessor there, Fred Chapin, was on the

verge of leaving when his consulate general caught fire and was virtually destroyed, so that what he left to me as a legacy was the task of putting our operating system back together again. I had a good staff, but I hardly had quarters for them to live in until we got sorted out down there. So that was my first assignment. I had a good team consisting of a tandem couple, Dale, my Labor Officer and Deputy, and Marilyn Povenmyer, Marilyn was a long-time consular officer and, as I mentioned earlier, went on to be consul general in London later on; an excellent administrator officer, Peggy Blackford, who became an ambassador in a west African country and has just retired from the Foreign Service.

*Q: Where does she live now?*

ARNOLD: In New York City.

*Q: Yes, I like her.*

ARNOLD: I have an address for her, if I can be of some help on that, because we just exchanged messages, as we do, during the holidays. Then we had a segment of CIA, USIA, DEA, and a visiting military establishment. We had a basic embassy shape of organization.

*Q: How was life in Sao Paulo? You think of Mexico City and the pollution there, an industrial city. Did you have the same problem in Sao Paulo?*

ARNOLD: Probably more. Sao Paulo - I don't know whether you know the landscape there - but Sao Paulo is on a plateau at about the 2,000-foot level. It has two small rivers running through it, both of them at that time thoroughly polluted. One of the things that caused the city to grow was the discovery that those two rivers that flowed through there went off in some odd direction toward the interior of the state of Sao Paulo. However, engineers decided that if they lifted the water a couple of hundred feet they could drop it 2,000 feet down the slope to Santos on the coast, and they could generate electric power at three or four different stages on the way, so they electrified the region by that means. That was the beginning of industrial Sao Paulo, really of industrial Brazil.

*Q: That's clean.*

ARNOLD: Clean electric power, and once they got it started - you know, it's a little bit like perpetual motion - it cost them comparatively little to pump the water up that small grade and drop it down the slope. So they had a self-sustaining operating system, a marvelous plant going back before the '20s. In fact, at the bottom of that system, if you want to go, there's a little museum, and if you go through the visitors book, you'll find that one of the early visitors was a gentleman named Rudyard Kipling. But what was the nature of the city? It's a sprawling compendium of maybe 32 or 33 different municipalities all of which just grew together at the margins. It has the disorder that's associated with that kind of a growth pattern. It has industry all over the place. It has some fairly sizable slum areas - the Brazilian term is *favela*. Going from my office in downtown Sao Paulo to the suburban area we lived in was right through one of the larger favelas. That's just an accidental kind of pattern of development that existed then. The Governor of Sao Paulo was a very important political figure for the whole system, and the

*Paulistas* are very proud of their accomplishments. Sao Paulo drives the train, as the *Paulistas* put it, and the *Cariocas* of Rio and such places are passengers.

*Q: As often happens, one picks up a certain amount of "localitis." When I was Consul General in Naples I got mad as hell at our Embassy for always looking down on people in the Mezzogirone, and these attitudes sort of get picked up.*

ARNOLD: It's a different situation for Sao Paulo because, you know, Brasilia has nothing but government, and Sao Paulo is the central hub of the economic system for that country, so that Brasilia, U.S. Embassy Brasilia, had to look to my team to keep it current on all kinds of key developments with respect to the economy, and several with respect to political developments in their country - just because so much of the enterprise and so much of the energy of that system is concentrated in that region.

*Q: Let's talk about the economy. Brazil for so long has tried to be - there's a Portuguese name for it - self-sufficient. In other words, they're going to build their own automobiles, have their own things, their own computer systems and all. This is rather than import it from somewhere else. At least that's my understanding. Were you up against that or trying to get our products into Brazil?*

ARNOLD: Our business community was well into Brazil. We had American banks down there. We had General Motors down there, and so on and so forth. We had a very large American Chamber as a matter of fact, still do, and one of my ceremonial responsibilities was to be the honorary president of the Chamber, and I took that quite seriously because it was good to meet with and work with those people. It was a very large Chamber, a very diverse American presence in the economy, and not merely in and around Sao Paulo but sprawled across the region. A hundred miles or more away there was significant American presence. The Saturn automobile of General Motors was being built in a place called Sao Jose Dos Campos. The airplane that became the standard of many of the commuter airlines in the United States, the Banderante, was built by a company in Sao Jose Dos Campos, a Brazilian company, and that company is now building a twin-engine jet that's becoming the standard for American commuter carriers. All that was going on, a very dynamic place, societally interesting. If you go into a restaurant in Sao Paulo at lunchtime and look around the room, you wouldn't know you are anywhere other than New York. Looking at the faces, you would see that kind of cross-cultural mix, European, African American, South American, American, Japanese. You would see everything that you would see in a restaurant in New York, a large one, and you wouldn't be able to tell just by looking where you were. But when people started to talk, of course, you had a better picture of it.

*Q: Were there any particular issues on the economic side that you got involved in, American business or investment or that kind of thing?*

ARNOLD: Civil aviation was always an issue in most other countries, probably more of an issue then than now because the industry has grown up, remarkably in the past 20-some years. It was going through these teething problems all through my Foreign Service career starting with Egypt where we were there when the jets were first introduced. But Varig and the Latin American air carriers, Brazilian especially, were becoming very aggressive. They were buying new-generation

aircraft. They were growing rapidly. They were competing effectively with PanAm etcetera, so that was one area of issues. Trade matters were important generally, but there was a very brisk trade back and forth. The oil industry was growing in that region; therefore, the Brazilians were beginning to assert themselves as players in the international energy game. It was a widespread variety of issues that we faced there, not the narrower spectrum that we would have in simpler situations.

*Q: Was there any anti-Americanism?*

ARNOLD: You mean of the avid sort?

*Q: Yes.*

ARNOLD: No, not really. My experience with anti-American protests go all the way back to Egypt, of course, where we had a very hard time in my first tour, or in Manila where, yes, there was considerable anti-American sentiment but directly against the U.S. government for being so closely allied with Ferdinand Marcos. We didn't have that kind of situation in Brazil, and we were there in a time when American power was being challenged by the peculiar situation in Iran. I was down there during the Hostage Crisis, and in fact I got interviewed a number of times in Brazilian radio stations about that. We were in some difficulty, and that's a better time for us abroad when the United States is having trouble than other circumstances.

*Q: How did the Hostage Crisis play in Brazil?*

ARNOLD: There was not an awful lot of interest in it, more just something that probably quite properly should have happened to the United States for the way it behaves with foreign countries - you know, getting a little come-uppance. But not a very strong theme in Brazilian society. After all, one of the most popular television series was CHIPS, the California Highway Patrol, CHIPS translated into Portuguese. That plays in an interesting fashion in Portuguese. But the American TV series and soaps and things like that were daily fare.

*Q: In a really advanced society such as Brazil had, was there much in the way of people going to the United States and getting advanced degrees and coming back?*

ARNOLD: Oh, quite a bit of that, but they also went to other places as well. They didn't go much to Portugal, but they did go to the United States a lot. They were very into active relationships between companies in Brazil and up here, and there was a clear process of integration in management. You would have, say, a Brazilian number one and a U.S. number two in a firm down there. You had conceivably the reverse of that up here in an organization like Kellogg, for instance. In General Motors the number one in Brazil became a senior vice president in General Motors in the U.S. There's a highly interactive exchange of key personnel. People came here for the kinds of academic training you can get here. We're still among the best in that regard however we chew on ourselves.

*Q: What was the political situation there? Were we watching this?*

ARNOLD: Moving slowly but surely toward greater openness, and you could see that, among other things, in the decline in the role of the 2nd Army. As the situation opened politically and stabilized, the role of the 2nd Army receded even while I was there. That doesn't mean that the 2nd Army had no federal clout; it had considerable federal clout, because that zone - I don't know whether you can picture the geography, but that zone runs all the way over to Bolivia and to Paraguay and Uruguay - that region politically is very important, administratively very important, and therefore that command was important, but politically receding from the scope, not the enforcer that it once had been.

*Q: Did you get any feel for sort of the military fall. Were the ranking officers sort of concerned about democratic forces or sort of unruly and that sort of thing?*

ARNOLD: Do you mean did they miss the good old days?

*Q: Yes.*

ARNOLD: That wasn't readily apparent. I had later exposure to that in a degree that would reinforce me on that judgment at two different levels. One is when I came back here in '80, of course, I went straight into the National War College as Vice Commandant. During that term, knowing full well that there had been an ongoing standoff between the National War College and the *Escola Superior*, I took a team back to the *Escola Superior* and restored that connection. At the end of my first year of training for the troops with one of the overseas tour groups for Latin America, we set it up with the embassy so that what we were going to do was restore the relationship, and it worked quite well. They were ready for it, in short.

*Q: You were over there in the Carter period. Carter was taking a different course than sort of the normal American one and sort of changed things around so human rights is high on the scale. Was this at all a problem for you?*

ARNOLD: An interest and a concern for me but not a problem, because the trend in Brazilian society was the way it was. I spent time, more time, with the Cardinal than with the Commandant of the 2nd Army, and I spent time with the Cardinal because he was my ear to the ground on what were human rights conditions. I found it was moving in the right direction even though, you know, it takes a while to turn people around. You almost need a new generation of military officers to get rid of one that had been so deeply into repressive behavior. But that was coming, and it seems to have come a long way since then too. But we were in the Carter Administration, and that was of great concern to our business community. They looked to me immediately to interpret what was going on up here. They were concerned about the way U.S. policy would play in a society like Brazil. Thanks to that American business community, I started a tradition there for the American Chamber. They invited me to make a Thanksgiving speech the first year we were there, and that was within a month or so of our arrival, and I made a presentation to them. I had been there long enough and had visited among them enough to know how concerned they were about what was going on here. So I told them something that they were pleased to hear but merely unaware of. I said, "For whatever it's worth to you, there's a very deep conservatizing tendency in American society right now and we are moving in that direction as a society. I don't know how you will see that manifest, but take it as a given that that's a fact of life." And they

were very pleased about that. They still do that annual Thanksgiving address for the Consul General. I should ask Melissa Wells about it and see if she's done that. But the proof of the pudding on that was, of course, a strong Reagan victory.

*Q: What were the concerns of the business community in the Carter Administration?*

ARNOLD: That the Carter Administration policies on such things as human rights would interfere with receptivity to our business activity in that country. And there was some illogic in their concern, but, you know, we had a very well established business community in Brazil. They had been there many years, and the interrelationships between the North American and South American business people, not merely Brazilians but from all over the region, those relationships were well established. That was not as easy, therefore, to disturb as some business people might have expected. But I was always present in the American Chamber monthly meetings, and I never took a lot of punishment for anything. I was often asked for views on various things, but I didn't get knocked around the way I had, for example, in Manila as Economic Commercial Counselor.

*Q: The Carter Administration with human rights, you might say he set a slightly higher moral tone in our policy which included - maybe in started before then - of not making it a prosecutable offense to pay illicit fees, in other words, to submit to corruption and all that.*

ARNOLD: That all really happened before the Carter Administration, although the passage of the legislation on it I can't place exactly in that picture, but that concern in American policy gave me troubles in Manila, a lot of troubles in Manila.

*Q: But it had already worked its way through. Was corruption a problem particularly for American business in Brazil?*

ARNOLD: Not as big a problem as I saw in the Philippines. Very difficult situation there because of - well, part of it was due to the narrowness of the political pyramid at the top in Manila versus the very sprawling operational policy and management environment in Brazil. Things are scattered over an enormous territory, and regional managers had power. They had a great deal of power. Governors had power. It's just a different situation.

*Q: How about the environment? The Amazon was out of your territory, or was it?*

ARNOLD: It was out of my territory. The western region over toward the Bolivia was part of my territory. Rio Grande de Sul was out of my territory. My consular district ran all the way over to Paraguay and Bolivia, so I had an interesting landscape.

*Q: Did you concern yourself with environmental affairs, or was that the Embassy more?*

ARNOLD: We had to take an interest in it and be concerned about it. We were in the pollution capital of Brazil, you know, and there was not an awful lot being done one way or the other. We were interested in what was going to happen on the Parana River when the Itaipu Dam was built, to what degree that was going to have environmental consequences, and we spent some time on

that. We were interested in cleaning up the big atmospheric pollution industries, making slower progress than here, I would say, and, let's face it, some of our companies were more comfortable in Brazil than they were here just because it was environmentally easier for them.

*Q: How about USIS? How much of a reach did it have in its operations?*

ARNOLD: Well, I had a very good team in Sao Paulo, and they had a good program approach for the region. They could get excellent access for our visitors to leadership, leadership cultural and leadership political. We were always able to get excellent audiences for people who came down like John Kenneth Galbraith, for groups who came down like the National Symphony when Rostropovich was the conductor. Thematically they could cover the whole waterfront, easy placement of materials when they needed them. An interesting little episode: On one occasion I was invited to do a July 4th address to the Rotary Club of Sao Paulo, and that was a national kind of old-boy network kind of club, old-boy *Paulista*, not foreigners particularly. There was one North American who was admitted as a member, the Consul General. My Portuguese was good enough at that stage where I was going to address them in Portuguese, and I did that for a very good reason. It was the most unruly group of people I had ever participated with. I mean it was virtually impossible to get their attention, any speaker. There was a constant hubbub of people talking to each other during presentations. So I was introduced, got up, greeted the audience, and then started to speak in Portuguese. That had a most remarkable effect. the only time in my two-year-plus experience with that club that I had that audience, or anybody had had that audience. They all paused and listened. But this is very much like our side of the society. The old-boy nets are strong, they're well established, they are traditional, and you have that mix of European and Latin types. You have a very strong Japanese element in Brazil in society and especially in *Paulista* society. One of the neat experiences I had was touring Senator Dan Inouye of Hawaii around Sao Paulo and taking him to meet his counterpart Inouye in the Agricultural Association of Brazil. The Japanese run this very strong agricultural cooperative movement, and Jervazio Inouye was the president of that. So I got them together, and they shared something very much in common. Neither one of them spoke Japanese, so their common language was English.

*Q: Were there any Presidential or Vice Presidential visits while you were there?*

ARNOLD: No, I don't think so, certainly not that I recall. There was a Papal visit.

*Q: How did you see the role of the Church at that time?*

ARNOLD: Well, the Church was changing, but it was still enormously influential. When I gave you the polarities of the political landscape, that's why I put Cardinal Paulo Evarista Arns in that loop, because he was a very strong advocate for human rights. He, therefore, was very compatible with the basic policies pursued by the Carter Administration. But his concerns were mainly local, and he had an enormous constituency at the very bottom of the human condition. He was an intellectual person. He was compassionate, but he was sharp, and he and I could spend an hour together in conversation and never touch the same subject twice. We could do that in either English or Portuguese, which was great fun for me. When I took the National War College class down to restore relations with the *Escola Superior*, I got a little sample of just how that political environment still was polarized and tripartite. I had a meeting set up to pay a

courtesy call on the Governor of the state and the head of the 2nd Army, and that was all fixed before we got there. But after we arrived, I found that Cardinal Arns was indeed still the clerical leader in that region, and I asked if they could set me up to call on him. Well, it came about immediately, and I went to call on Cardinal Arns, but almost immediately my appointments with the Governor and the 2nd Army commander were canceled. I think there was an absolutely clear connection among those events. Will I ever know? No.

*Q: Was there a political movement in Sao Paulo in its area that was different, say, than was coming out of Rio or elsewhere?*

ARNOLD: Well, there's a whole cultural difference, enormous cultural differences between the coastal region and Sao Paulo. The coastal region is not a unified thing, of course. You've got very different cultures, say, in Bahia, from Rio and that region. You have different culture in Minas Gerais state, which has always been a heavy industrial area centered in the city of Belo Horizonte, places like that. There is a much more cosmopolitan view of the world in Sao Paulo, I think, than you see in any of those other places. Even as much as Rio has been visited by, and therefore changed by tourism, I think Sao Paulo has a much more cosmopolitan climate.

*Q: Were there any elections while you were there?*

ARNOLD: There was a reelection of the governor in my state.

*Q: Was that pretty much a done deal?*

ARNOLD: Well, it was not terribly complicated. His competition didn't by any means have the same stature at that time, but this was an era in which political flavor was conservative.

*Q: How were things along the Argentinean border? I understand that when both Argentina and Brazil sort of looked around, about the only designated possible, possible enemy could be the other, although it's a little hard to see what they'd fight over.*

ARNOLD: Well, you know the river Plate at that point is an enormous barrier. I mean it's not a simple, narrow, little body of water. It's an enormous estuary, so the distance is, quite aside from the fact that Uruguay intervenes there, quite substantial. They all come together, Argentina and Uruguay and Brazil and Paraguay come together at Iguazu, that being the place of the great waterfall system, but that intersection is also very remote from the centers of either country.

There are traditional competitions between the two. The Brazilian economy is much more complex and more powerful than the Argentine one. Argentina in that period was still in the early stages at the very best of recovery from the atrocity and the autocratic rule that it had had for years. It was under military rule at that time.

*Q: They still had, a year or two after they left, they had the whole Malvinas/Spratley Islands mess.*

ARNOLD: Oh, my. I got kind of caught in that with my War College class, too. It was

interesting. See, our timing was nearly perfect. We landed in Buenos Aires for the visit of the War College class. We were received by the military, and we were received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs too, and they made a speech to us in which they assured us that they had no intention to invade the Malvinas. One of the things that I did routinely as the senior visiting officer of the National War College system was to call on the military commander. So asked to call on the Army Commander, Nicholaides, who later became president, but he was then in command of the Army. He did receive me one on one, and we chatted for a while. But he received me in combat dress and ready for war. I made nothing of it specifically at the time, except that I thought it was a little odd that a ceremonial visit would be conducted in that uniform. I also noted that as I was escorted out of his office a priest was waiting to go in, but I made nothing of it. In any case, my troops got on an airplane from Buenos Aires and went off to Santiago, and the next morning we learned that the invasion had occurred.

*Q: Were there any events or crises that particularly stick out in your mind before we leave Sao Paulo?*

ARNOLD: Well, it was not a time of great crisis down there. Things were moving basically in a constructive direction in that region. No, I had some internal crises of one sort or another within my post, but that had nothing to do with what was happening in the country.

*Q: What sort of things did you have in the post?*

ARNOLD: Oh, had problems with especially counselor matters. First of all, we were the largest consulate post in that area and we received a lot of requests for migration to the United States, and we began to receive a number of requests from Paraguayans for visas. That was a recent change that Paraguayans came to us, trying to leave the region from Brazil. A particular scam had become - I guess you would say the term is popular - before I got down there. A couple who couldn't have a child in the United States, or couldn't have a child period, would come down and adopt a baby, basically buy one. The couple would then come to the Consulate and say that the child had been born while they were visiting in Brazil, and they would seek to record the birth of the child as an American citizen, hoping to bring it into the United States that way rather than go through the procedures for adoption. I had an excellent consular officer on this in the person of Marilyn Povenmeyer, and she would always bring them to see me, but I would never take the decision process away from her. If they claimed the child was theirs, then the woman had to agree to undergo a postpartum examination; and if she wouldn't, then we couldn't accept this story. If she did, then the story would be proven false. But it was a constant thing, and it was because there were rings of people down there who were basically in the business of selling children for adoption.

*Q: We had some of this in Korea about the same time. It's very sad, because when people are trying to do...*

ARNOLD: The impulses are basically positive.

*Q: Of course, but still that's not the way the system was run.*

ARNOLD: I could count on one of those every week myself.

*Q: Was there a Brazilian community in the United States of any size, or was that a big country for exodus?*

ARNOLD: It was a country for visits but, no, there's not a sizable expatriate community. Listening carefully around Washington at lunch table conversation from time to time, I would hear Brazilian Portuguese but not often. There may be more of it in Miami and places like that. Disney World was a famous place to visit.

*Q: But that's visiting as opposed to getting out of the country.*

ARNOLD: There has not been in a long, long time, more than a generation, any advantage in that. If you look at Brazil today, it's a very dynamic, growing economy with lots of wealth accumulating. That doesn't mean that the poor are any better off than they were when I was there. The people who migrate for convenience are not the poor.

*Q: Constantly you hear not only about Rio de Janeiro but other parts of Brazil, about the poor in Brazil. Was there any progress being made?*

ARNOLD: You mean in improving the conditions?

*Q: Yes.*

ARNOLD: No, not really, and in fact I think it has gotten worse, maybe even worse now. I don't know for sure, but there were major slum areas around Sao Paulo. There were major slum areas around Rio, especially up the slopes and the least popular and accessible areas around that city. That is still the case, and it's also the case around Caracas, where I saw equally unhealthy, impoverished conditions on the slopes on the road in from the airport to that city. I suspect that those conditions have festered, and not a great deal of effort has been made to fix them because the economy hasn't gotten deep enough to really solve this problem by ordinary economic means, as we have somewhat unevenly solved it here.

*Q: Was there the impulse with them, Brazilian society, to do something about it?*

ARNOLD: Some Brazilians, yes. But was it a national priority? Not really.

**FREDERICK A. BECKER**  
**Political Officer/Staff Assistant**  
**Brasilia (1978-1980)**

**Brazil Desk Officer**  
**Washington, DC (1980-1981)**

*Frederick A. Becker was born in Missouri. He graduated from Washington College in St. Louis, and Berkeley and Claremont Graduate Schools. After entering the Foreign Service in 1975, his postings abroad included Bucharest, Brasilia, Quito, Panama City, and Managua. He was interviewed in 2004 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

*Q: Today is the day after Thanksgiving, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Rick, just to get this, you were in Brazil from '78 to when?*

BECKER: '80.

*Q: '80. Let's talk first, what was the situation in Brazil, sort of economically because that's always very important and politically at that time.*

BECKER: We had --and this was drilled into us at every turn -- a very high Carter administration priority on human rights and democratic development. Brazil under the military dictatorship was one of several southern cone countries so inflicted, was very much a part of our calculations and our concern as embassy officers. That said, Brazil's problem with the domestic democratic forces, the "disappeared" and the victims of the dirty war was not as serious as in some of the other countries in that area.

*Q: Particularly Argentina.*

BECKER: Argentina and Uruguay, particularly. It was much worse there, if measured by the body count, although Brazil went through a period of rather severe repression of political dissent in the early years of the dictatorship. By the time I arrived in '78, much of that police state repression had eased considerably. The Brazilian generals had made it very clear that they were not going to rule alone and that they always intended to turn the reins back to civilians at some point in time. Indeed, they left most of the economy in the hands of civilian technocrats, having probably learned the historical lesson that managing economies over time goes very badly under the best of circumstances. Indeed, they did not want to be tarred with the full weight of whatever was happening in Brazil, including an historic roller coaster of economic booms, inflationary spirals and bouts of calm and instability. At the time I arrived, Brazil was going through one of its hyperinflation phases and there was a lot of pressure on the central bank and the finance ministry to stabilize the economy. The Americans, paid in dollars, were pretty well shielded. Brazil had a crawling peg monetary policy whereby there were a dozen or more mini-devaluations against the dollar during the course of the year, so the 100 plus percent inflation was hardly felt by those of us who earned dollars. I understand the situation in Argentina at roughly the same time was much worse partly because the State Department bureaucracy could never keep up with severe hyperinflation. There was always a lag time between price hikes and USG salary adjustments, and the Argentine government did not have a monetary adjustment policy. Brazil also had a serious problem of uneven economic development, between social classes and between regions. There was the rich, self-sufficient and productive "European" part of the country in the South, and then there was the impoverished Northeast and the Amazon basin, which seemed to be impervious to most of the development incentives and the income and resource redistribution policies of the government.

The capital Brasilia, a new city, was only partly finished by the time we arrived in 1978, but it was already taking shape in terms of the class structure that Brazil reflected. There was a significant middle class, largely civil servant population in Brasilia, fairly affluent, mostly bureaucrats. A lot of mid-level bureaucrats flew home on the weekends, home being Sao Paulo or Rio. Airfares were not cheap. Satellite cities were emerging on the periphery of Brasilia, where working class and the poor lived and basically fed off of or survived on the basis of their dependence on the people in the capital.

*Q: Well, then.*

BECKER: The main issues we had with Brazil, in addition to human rights standards, revolved around the lack of free speech, assembly, and the right to choose one's own government. There was also a serious issue of Brazil's nuclear development. Brazil was in competition with Argentina. Both were developing ostensibly peaceful nuclear capabilities. They were not parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco or the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, and it was apparent from all the information we had that there was some spillover from their energy programs into potential weapons development. So we were very much intent on reining in Brazil's nuclear ambitions. But Brazil was on the verge of being a great power and was not about to be told by the United States or anybody else how to order its national policies.

*Q: Who was our ambassador while you were there?*

BECKER: Crimmins left before I arrived, as I indicated earlier, and there was no ambassador in Brasilia when I arrived. A couple of months later Robert Sayre arrived as ambassador. He had been ambassador to Uruguay and to Panama previously so he was an experienced chief of mission. If I can speak frankly, I found him -- compared with my first ambassador -- not at all equipped to handle the needs, the demands, and the requirements of directing a large full service multi-post mission, because it was not only the embassy in Brasilia but also two super-consulates general in Rio and Sao Paulo. There were also consular outposts in Salvador da Bahia and Recife on the northern coast, a public affairs office in Belo Horizonte, a major inland industrial center, and a consulate in Porto Alegre in the far south.

*Q: Sometimes when you have an ambassador who does sort of the ambassadorial thing and he has a DCM who is in charge of managing it. Did you have such a DCM?*

BECKER: We had a first rate DCM. His name was George High and he did have a fairly clear division of labor with the ambassador. My sense, however, was that the DCM carried much of the load both inside and outside the mission. Ambassador Sayre was not a vigorous, outgoing representative of U.S. policy. He preferred to speak Spanish despite the fact that it offended many Brazilians, and indeed on a personal level he was almost painfully shy in dealing with his staff. I learned most of this first-hand in my second year at post when I became his staff assistant -- against my will, by the way.

*Q: Well, we'll come to that, but let's talk about the first part when you were dealing with human rights and church relationships and also what there was of the legislature. The human rights,*

*what were the problems, how were we dealing with them?*

BECKER: Issues as I recall centered on freedom of expression, whether media expression or individual expression. The capital, Brasilia, was somewhat isolated and in many ways very artificial. Most of the political activity and most of the social concerns were in the rest of the country. I had the opportunity to do a fair amount of traveling to Sao Paulo and Rio and to the Northeast to consult with our consulates and to interview human rights activists. I found that the church-state relationship proved to be the most interesting element in my portfolio. The Catholic Church leadership – the Episcopal Council -- was seated in Brasilia and met periodically. The cardinals and archbishops represented constituencies throughout the country. I got to know many senior church officials. One of the most colorful was Dom Helder Camara, the Bishop of Recife, also known as the “red bishop.” Every Catholic country seems to have one.

*Q: Oh, yes.*

BECKER: The Brazilian church was motivated by liberation theology in a way that most other churches in Latin America had not been.

*Q: Explain liberation theology.*

BECKER: Liberation theology was an outgrowth of -- and this is coming from a Jewish boy who is trying to learn the dynamics of how the Catholic Church thinks and operates -- the Vatican II conference in the early '60s, which commanded the church and its representatives to become much more of a popular church, to become much more attuned to the needs of communities and people, and to call upon the church hierarchy to live the faith alongside the faithful at a most basic level. Latin gave way to national languages in the mass. Parishes became centers for social activism, often encouraged by and with active participation by the parish priests. This went all the way up. A couple of Brazil's cardinals, including the very influential Cardinal of Sao Paulo, Cardinal Paulo Arns, spelled “A-R-N-S,” was very much identified with liberation theology and the more progressive views of the church and its role in society. The church's activism and the struggle for human rights and democracy were closely intertwined. It was particularly interesting to follow church affairs with this in mind. The church was somewhat more shielded than other reform-minded sectors from the full weight of the military dictatorship, simply by its prominence, influence and tradition of autonomy. However, the Brazilian church was quite divided over liberation theology, as was the entire Catholic Church at that time. So there were many conservative cardinals and bishops that tended to act as a counterweight to this progressive trend.

It appeared to me that the government was also ambivalent about what to do about the church's left-leaning, anti-military tendencies. The ambivalence probably translated into a degree of tolerance that was not intended, but the church operated with a great deal of freedom. I don't recall a lot of active repression. This was well into the second decade of the military dictatorship. The dictatorship installed in '64 was already 15 years old, and the dictatorship and its civilian allies were already starting to get a little tired of the responsibilities of government and were talking about handing over the reins of power to civilian authorities. It was during this period that the generals actually set a date, 1985, when they would hand authority back to an elected

government. Although Brazil did have presidential elections, in fact the designated general or the general in charge passed the baton to another general. There was a presidential election and the inauguration of a new president in '79 while I was there.

*Q: How did we treat that?*

BECKER: We sent a fairly high level delegation, though it might have been even higher if our relations with Brazil had been more cordial during the Carter presidency. It was headed by Joan Mondale, the wife of the Vice President, and it included several cabinet members, including our secretary of labor. It was shortly before this event that chance fell to me to pick up the labor affairs portfolio. We had a labor attaché at our consulate in Sao Paulo, but the assistant labor attaché position in Brasilia had been assigned to an officer who had no love for it, no interest in it and found the work rather demeaning. He was desperately trying to get back to his consular specialty and so ignored the responsibilities to which he had been assigned. The DCM came to me one day and said, "There are five or six major labor confederations headquartered in Brasilia. They represent different points of view or a different slice of the labor movement – the labor aristocracy if you will -- whereas our labor attaché in Sao Paulo is an experienced man who has got his feet on the ground dealing with local trade union leaders, including a certain metal workers' union leader by the name of Lula."

*Q: Who is now president.*

BECKER: He's now president. I've followed his career from that point in time onward. I met him once or twice and was very impressed with him, as well as with a lot of the people who were around him. I was well aware of the entrenched nature of the military, and of the labor aristocracy in Brasilia that was at the beck and call of the military dictatorship, which allowed them to siphon off a lot of the funds paid for by compulsory union dues. Lula lobbied strongly against this practice. He was trying to establish some viability in labor movement, which had been decimated in earlier years by military repression and co-optation and which furnished few protections or benefits to the workers.

*Q: Was the military very close to what you would call the industrial complex, in other words big business?*

BECKER: Very much so. Keep in mind that the military dictatorship in Brazil was very thin and superficial. Most members of the military were not involved in political life and in fact most of the political parties operated at the state and local level. A sandbox legislative branch went through the motions in Brasilia. So, you did have civilian political activity, but it was at a low and rather anemic level. Nobody stuck their head up too high above the barricades, but the military counted on a great deal of support from an industrial establishment centered in Sao Paulo and other major cities, as well as entrenched rural interests. Brazil was expanding its aircraft industry, its arms production and its military sales abroad, all of which were products of the country's growing industrial strength. While I was serving in Brazil, the country became one of the top 10 industrial countries of the world, passing such traditional powers as Italy and Canada.

*Q: Yes?*

BECKER: Environmental issues were starting to raise their head because of clashes between indigenous (native) groups and an expansive modern agricultural sector as well as the power of the state that were intent on developing Brazil's huge interior, including the Amazon basin. The foundation of Brasilia in the 1950s was a manifestation of the expansion of industry and population away from the developed coastal areas into the semi-settled interior, Brazil's frontier if you will.

*Q: Well, was there?*

BECKER: But the military also counted on support from conservative political groups as well as the general population which, while restive over the harshness of the dictatorship, still recalled the political and economic chaos of the early '60s and saw the military as the guarantor of stability. Despite ensuring a degree of political calm and stability, the military was unable to establish a similar stability in the economic realm. A number of new economic policies designed to stabilize commodity and financial markets did not change basic Brazilian behavior, which favored expansionism, cronyism and spending without regard to the financial bottom line.

*Q: Where did you find the embassy sat? I mean was the embassy, one could it be divided? Often the younger officers want to do more to change the status quo and the more senior members feel this is the quo we're used to and we want to keep it this way. How did you find the embassy?*

BECKER: I found the embassy curiously passive with regard to the set of issues that I was concerned with. We had major issues with the Brazilians, but they were handled very much on a senior policy issue.

*Q: Like the nuclear issue.*

BECKER: Like the nuclear issue and indeed the human rights issue. I recall very few instances where I as a junior officer, even accompanied by the chief or deputy chief of the political section, would dialogue on human rights with Brazilian counterparts or at least with government officials. This apparently took place at fairly high levels. We made our points. It was about this time that our consul in Recife was expelled from the country for speaking out and for crossing the line, being overly active.

*Q: Who was that?*

BECKER: I think it was Rich Brown, later Ambassador Rich Brown.

*Q: Is he still in the Service?*

BECKER: He died suddenly in the past year. I found a lot of my activities curiously detached. I did my regular reporting to Washington, kept them informed. Actually, my magnum opus as a political officer was an update of a church-state report originally written by a junior political officer in Rio in the early '60s, about the time of the military takeover, by the name of Miles

Frechette, who rose to be ambassador.

*Q: Oh, yes, I've interviewed Miles.*

BECKER: I figured 15 years later we ought to do another study, so one of my major projects was to study the role of the church in Brazilian politics. There was actually a readership in Washington that was very interested in this topic. They wanted to know how deep, how profound and how influential the forces for change were in Brazilian society.

*Q: It seems that there would be a conjunction of interest of the expansion of modern agriculture into the Amazon Basin. You get the indigenous population, you've got human rights environmentalists and I imagine the church would be there. How did we, did that get into your portfolio at all?*

BECKER: Well, even though we had a large embassy and a fairly significant presence in Brasilia and the major Brazilian cities, it was just too big a country for a handful of diplomats to follow. I mean it was very difficult to just get on a plane and travel to Manaus or the border regions and follow up on a report of armed clashes between the military, settlers or corporate interests and indigenous groups. Frequently the word just didn't get out or it got out months and months later. It was exceedingly difficult to follow up. There was a lot of spot reporting that would pinpoint actual incidents, the kinds of incidents that would eventually find their way into human rights reports. Most of our consulates were not really well equipped or staffed to report on politics or human rights. They were very small, one-to-three person operations that were more interested in public affairs, running the U.S. libraries, or commercial facilitation. The church and the labor unions were conduits for information from the far corners of Brazil, but it was an imperfect reporting network. It was at this time, about '79 or early '80, that the Brazilian government made a significant decision to retaliate against our pressures on human rights and nuclear development, which they saw as intrusive U.S. policies. The government ordered our AID mission and our Peace Corps operation to leave the country. The official reason was that Brazil was a developed country that no longer needed development assistance. Ironically, Brazil declined our offer to support its membership in the OECD, the club of developed industrial nations.

Because I had an academic background, I spent a fair amount of time communing with academics at the University of Brasilia and other institutions of higher learning. I did some reporting on academic freedom and the role of the universities as an avenue for social and political activism. I found the quiescent, even supportive attitude of Brazilian universities toward the country's conservative leadership contrasted greatly with what I later found in other Latin American countries. The universities were there to train the new leaders of industry, the new generation of diplomats, the new professional class, and were not at all hotbeds of politics and civil unrest. In that sense, Brazil had a much more modern university system than what existed in other Latin American countries and one that was far more relevant to what the country was doing, which was trying to pursue great power status. If they had been cauldrons of radicalism, they would have been effectively quashed by the military regime.

*Q: Did you find there was a certain resentment of the United States, I mean we're a big boy now and stop interfering with us. Was this a theme that you had all the time?*

BECKER: There was some of that, it depended upon whom you talked with. There was also a good deal of envy of the United States because of the freedoms that we had, our scientific and economic accomplishments, the major social gains that had come from the freedoms that we exercise. Racial issues sort of fell into my portfolio and came up in a couple of contexts. We were asked by Washington to do more reporting on racism and cultural discrimination. However, the Brazilians just didn't identify with the stark color lines that our own society recognized or with the flashpoints that had taken place in U.S. history. We're talking about a decade after the passage of our major civil rights laws, the urban race riots of the '60s and the death of Martin Luther King. I had black or at least darker Brazilians of African descent coming to me and expressing a great deal of envy at the sharp distinctions between black and white in the United States, which they saw as a necessary precondition to a civil rights movement that basically had brought about great gains in equal rights and opportunity in the U.S. during the '60s and '70s. They could not get their own countrymen to identify in terms of racial antagonism or discrimination, because culturally Brazilians saw themselves as a whole spectrum of shades from the darkest to the lightest. It was still very much the goal of darker Brazilians to marry up and sire whiter children. Brazilian blacks, Afro-Brazilians if you will, attained success either in sports or in entertainment. There were very few black Brazilian political or economic leaders on the national scene. That said, the Japanese had been successfully assimilated, and even had a cabinet minister. Indeed, Brazilians prided themselves on being an assimilated society, a multicultural society that was impervious to the kinds of racial antagonisms that we in the United States had experienced, and which we were seeking to remedy in our own civil rights and human rights policies. There was a good deal of envy among Afro-Brazilians that the lines of cleavage in Brazil were not as sharp as they had been in the United States, and they were having a great deal of difficulty in developing an effective civil rights mentality or sentiment in the population.

*Q: I've talked to people who have served in Brazil who were African American and they'd say, you know, the divisions were there and whites who were dating darker Brazilians and all found, I mean all of a sudden lines came up. There was a lot more discrimination than one might.*

BECKER: Very much so. Again, you did not see darker Brazilians in the corporate world, in higher levels of national politics, or in academia, although they were very active in local politics. The top labor leaders and most of the top church leaders were all quite European in their physical appearance.

*Q: What about the indigenous population, the Indian population, was that pretty well kept within sort of almost tribal bounds or something?*

BECKER: I indicated that Brazilians were beginning to make a big push to open up the interior. Almost every month or two, there were newspaper headlines highlighting the discovery of a new tribe that had never had contact with the outside world. The Amazon was seen as a tremendous source of riches, which it is, and therefore an area that cried out for exploitation on manifest destiny and economic grounds. If Brazil could develop its resources, it would be the salvation of the impoverished North. That said, there were whole ways of life that would change and whole new forms of oppression that would arise out of a corporate-government alliance to push aside all obstacles to development. Those of us sitting in Brasilia could do little more than talk about

these issues. We were 1,000 miles from the Amazon, and we had only a consular agent in Manaus who had no reporting or advocacy responsibilities. We had closed our consulate in Belem, since it did not have much to do. We really didn't have any eyes or ears in that part of the country. When the ambassador traveled to the North, it was to show the flag briefly rather than to open new reporting avenues. He simply couldn't afford the personnel to send out to the border areas and to the interior to report on economic activity or human rights abuses.

*Q: Well, on the legislative side, I mean this is part of your portfolio, how did you find, what did they call it? Was it a congress or an assembly?*

BECKER: They had a full-fledged, organized congress, divided into two blocs, a two-party system if you will. There was a pro-government bloc, with right of center politicians and old-line regional patriarchs and powerbrokers, and there was a left-of-center opposition party. The legislators went through the motions, knew the rules of the game, and knew the lines they could cross and could not cross. Most were biding their time. Many were veterans and survivors of the pre-1964 flowering of democracy, and some were really afraid of their own past. They were allowed to operate within limited bounds and understood that things could be a lot worse. In many ways, all of them were bought off by the military government. They had position and benefits, and they were given a limited functional area in which they could operate. They could debate the budget. They could pass laws that didn't infringe on the national power arrangement. They had a functioning legislature, but it was strictly circumscribed by the constitution at the time and I think by their own lack of initiative or daring. These were the people who emerged in '85 as the core of the political leadership when the military finally turned over power.

*Q: When you were at that time, was there the sort of a feeling from the embassy that we're marking time?*

BECKER: Yes, I believe so. We had an issue focus. We understood that the military was there, they didn't have any effective opposition. We weren't beating on tier doors for them to leave power. We argued that they needed to make definite plans, a timetable, and prepare the country for return to democracy. We argued that elections had to be much more credible and had to be competitive, but by and large, we were dealing with a big country. We were dealing with a self-assertive country and a proud country. This is a quality that all Brazilians shared regardless of class or political stripe. They did not look to the United States as their salvation or even as their inspiration for the most part. They were proud of being Brazilians. They were going to find Brazilian solutions to Brazilian problems. The flip side of that was they didn't blame the United States for everything that went wrong in their country.

*Q: Yes, a delight.*

BECKER: In that respect it was delightful to deal with the Brazilians. They were mature. There were many points of disagreement, but there were also points of agreement. We were the two largest, most influential countries on the continent. One thing the United States wanted Brazil to do was play a more active role in international economic fora. We thought Brazil would take a much more responsible position on a whole range of international issues if they played with the other big boys. Some in Washington were frustrated with the knee-jerk leftist policies of left-

leaning Mexican governments, which were prepared to exercise clout in international affairs. Whether it was in the G-77 or the United Nations, Brazil was just unwilling to step up to the plate. We knew for example that Brazil maintained very vibrant ties to other former Portuguese colonies in Africa. We thought that Brazil could play a moderating or constructive role in Angola, where the civil war posed a threat to our interests in southern Africa. In Mozambique, there was a Marxist government at that time. We understood that Brazil had equities and influence in both countries, and we wanted them to play an active role congruent with our interest in trying to move Africa towards greater stability.

*Q: Was Argentina at this time '78 to '80 sort of the menace that was used in various things or not?*

BECKER: Yes, yes. Even though the demographics and the economics clearly show that there was no real competition -- the state of Sao Paulo out produced the entire Argentine economy. Brazil's economy, with all of its problems, was still very expansive. It was growing. Brazil was flexing its international economic muscle, whereas Argentina was in the pits. Its military had mismanaged its economy. It had allowed the feuds with the Peronistas and other popular political groups to dissipate its economic and political energies. But in Brazil the big focus was the threat posed by Argentina. My family and I had just arrived in Brazil in April '78 and I got the full flavor of all of the Brazil-Argentina rivalry during the World Cup in June of '78. Argentina was the host country and, as so often happened, it really came down to Brazil versus Argentina for the whole kit and caboodle. I mean the whole country stopped in its tracks to watch the drama unfold. All of the passion and all of the anger and all of the hopes and wishes and desires that the nation will redeem all of the promise of the past if only we could win the World Cup. Well, Argentina won the World Cup. You got a flavor through sports, sort of like the U.S.-Soviet competition at the Olympics.

*Q: In hockey particularly.*

BECKER: But nothing could match the frenzy, the insanity that took place during the World Cup month of June. We had just arrived in-country so we were not at all prepared.

*Q: How did you find the media in Brazil at that time?*

BECKER: It's funny. This was my first exposure to Latin American media coming from Romania. I mean Brazil was a free country as far as I was concerned. There were lots of consumer goods, people seemed affluent and generally positive by comparison, and the media reported on everything, or so it seemed. It was sensationalist media for the most part, headline seeking media. It was also highly competitive media. I'm talking about the print media. The electronic media was still pretty much in its infancy and TV was very much official TV. There were huge media corporations -- O Globo, the Rio-based media empire, and O Estado de Sao Paulo basically competed for influence through national newspapers and TV stations with national reach. Folha de Sao Paulo had an edgier format as well as more middle-of-the-road political content. It was a mark of the military regime's self-confidence that it tolerated a degree of criticism in the media. Most political issues of the day did seem to play out in the media. The media represented a wide spectrum of political opinion, but was a mostly harmless outlet for

those who had little active voice in the country's governance.

*Q: What about back to living in Brasilia did everything sort of shut down on the weekend and the people left or not?*

BECKER: It had that flavor. It was already getting to the point where it was exceedingly expensive to travel home to Rio or Sao Paulo for the weekend. Those who could continued to do so. It was a four day work-week, in some cases a three day work week, as those Brazilians, civil servants mainly, who could left town. Brasilia was like Washington, DC before the Kennedy Center was built. It was the seat of government and little else. When government wasn't operating, it was deadly dull. Social life revolved around sports and recreational clubs, and a lot of informal diplomatic work was done in these venues. The military attachés hung out at the luxurious army and navy clubs. There was also a diplomatic club in Brasilia, a tennis club, a golf club, a riding club and a yacht club, among others. Brasilia was set on a man-made lake, which was heavily polluted.

*Q: I would think it would get almost island happy there.*

BECKER: You did because the distances were so great. If you could not fly out to the coast, your option was to drive 60 miles or so to Goiania, the largest state capital in the region. It was a two-day drive just to get to Belo Horizonte. Unless you had a four wheel drive vehicle, you wouldn't think of driving all the way to the northeast coast. Air travel was the only way to escape Brasilia, so the capital was very much an island. But we had small kids, like many embassy families, and we were not inclined to go anywhere anyway. Because of its size, importance and complexity, the embassy was never very well integrated, even though we did live in an embassy compound. The more senior officers had very good housing across the lake -- spacious, modern, with great views. The rest of us were crammed into old, decaying, not very presentable apartment buildings, all of which had been concessions from the Brazilian government when the city was founded. The Americans got first pick of these apartments. Well, what happened was that those apartments 15 or 18 years later had been superseded by more modern construction, but they were still the ones assigned to us. The navy ministry's apartments were adjacent to ours, the foreign ministry's bloc of apartments was across the highway, the health ministry's was down the road. There was a common denominator. All of us felt isolated and ghettoized, and those of us who couldn't get out of town made the best of the circumstances. Of all my Foreign Service posts, Brasilia had the worst living conditions for most of the staff. Senior post management seemed highly indifferent to these conditions.

It was ironic that the political appointee ambassador who came on board in 1981, after career diplomat Sayre left, was so appalled at the situation that he immediately ordered the housing arrangements be modified, upgraded and made more livable for families. Officers were attracted to Brasilia only because it was an important post, families with small children and limited finances survived in Brasilia, but single people found the physical and social environment stifling. There was no cultural life to speak of. There were a few restaurants and movie theaters. Because we lived in a compound, privacy was a rare commodity. Everybody knew what everybody else was or wasn't doing. It just wasn't a very healthy living environment. As I learned during my career, living conditions, and the degree of support that post management

gives to that set of issues, are a major precondition for how well the embassy functions and how satisfied employees are with their overall working environment.

*Q: Speaking of that you ended up as staff assistant to the ambassador.*

BECKER: Yes.

*Q: How did you find that?*

BECKER: The new ambassador, Robert Sayre, came on board late in 1978 and decided that the ambassador to Brazil needed a staff assistant. However, the State Department was not programming new staff assistant positions even at major class one posts like Brasilia. The ambassador was intent getting one, probably more as a status symbol than as a management or support tool. He had a highly competent secretary, a senior secretary who resented anybody else assuming what she saw were her administrative prerogatives and roles, and especially her gatekeeper role. She saw the staff assistant as a rival. But the order that went out and the DCM, George High, assembled all the junior officers and announced that one of them would be chosen as a half-time staff assistant to the ambassador. He (all the junior officers at that time were male) would have an office next to the ambassador and his workload in whatever section he was being pulled out of would be reduced accordingly. The aide's responsibilities would be to go through the incoming cable traffic and correspondence for policy content, act as a gate-keeper for the ambassador, and manage some of the interagency office issues. This was obviously a role distinct from that of a secretary, even if the secretary didn't see it that way.

We were all lined up, five or six of us. I asked the DCM to take my name out of this running. I wasn't interested. I said something to the effect that I was happy and productive as a full-time political officer, and being a staff assistant was not part of my career plan. (I had already turned down one "opportunity" to serve as a staff assistant in an assistant secretary's office when I joined the Department.) I don't know whether that word went up to the ambassador, but I wasn't chosen that time around. However, the next year the JOs went through the same process and were told, "You the man!" I tried to decline, but was warned that you didn't decline such an assignment. After that, George High and I became very close. Whenever I had an issue I couldn't resolve myself, I went to him because the ambassador was not that approachable. Besides, I had this continuing and increasingly bitter feud with his secretary. I could not get her to be part of the team, to accept the new reality that had been imposed on both of us. I must admit that the job came with a rush of power, since there were senior agency and section heads that had to come to me to get access to the ambassador. I didn't have the fortitude to tell them that I was having the same problem getting the ambassador's attention. So I said, "Here's how you can solve your problem." Most of them seemed to go away happy that somehow, even though they couldn't get in to see the ambassador, I may have been the next best thing. Here I am a second-tour officer who's managing the relationships within the embassy among the senior staff, who were all powers in their own right.

*Q: Did you get any feel for the foreign policy apparatus of Brazil? It's often touted as being very good.*

BECKER: I did, because we got to know our Brazilian counterparts quite well. Many of them lived just across the way and we socialized.

*Q: Were they as unhappy as everyone else?*

BECKER: They're just as unhappy as everybody else. Most Brazilians are born and raised within 100 miles of the coast. When they are suddenly plopped 1,500 miles into the interior, the results are often highly stressful and distressful. The foreign ministry was the last ministry to relocate from Rio, and even though the capital was founded in the late '50s, they hung on for 10 years before they actually moved the foreign ministry to Brasilia. They were the last diehard contingent, and they continually recalled how wonderful it was when they were in Rio and bemoaned their current circumstances. So we had a lot in common, including the fact that we were all professional diplomats. Brazilian service had a rigorous entry process for diplomats, giving their recruits a two year apprenticeship, the equivalent of a master's degree, whereas we recruited people who already had practical experience and tried to turn them overnight into diplomats. They had a two-year A100 program and every Brazilian diplomat who came in already spoke fluent English and fluent French as well as Portuguese, and they understood Spanish as well because the two languages are cousins. They were all ready very well equipped with basic skills, but they were an elite service to be sure. Obviously you didn't get that kind of education coming off the streets and there were very few Brazilian diplomats who came from humble background. It was a career service in the sense that everybody from the bottom up, even the top people assigned as ambassadors and DCMs overseas as well as the people who ran the foreign ministry, were career officers. They had a lot of pride. Brazilian diplomats were respected and admired by most of other diplomatic services, and I think they were acknowledged by the European and other developed countries' services as peers, not as the patronage driven or throwaway diplomatic services that other developing countries have.

*Q: Did you get any feel speaking of that.*

BECKER: But they were tough negotiators, they knew what they wanted and they were all nationalists sometimes in the best sense of the word. You were dealing with them in a professional manner all the time.

*Q: Did you get any feeling there for how sort of the Brazilian at least at the center attitude towards its Spanish speaking neighbors all of whom were in one form of turmoil or another?*

BECKER: As I said earlier that the Brazilians were very nationalistic and very self-confident about their own identity. They were a great power. They knew that there were more Brazilians in South America than there were Spanish speakers. They tended to look down on the small countries as being in a different category, but they also understood that the Spanish speakers and Spanish speaking countries were more numerous and more influence worldwide. They were also aware of the disdain in some Hispanic countries about the Afro-Portuguese culture in Brazil. What Brazilians regarded as an element of national pride, the Argentines and some others treated Brazilians with a good deal of condescension and racism. The people at the top in most Hispanic countries, Mexico being an immediate example, were white European and proud of it, regardless of how they arrived at that "pure" state. I mean Argentina and Chile solved their racial problems

in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries by wiping out all of the indigenous populations and then not allowing African immigration.

*Q: Well, did.*

BECKER: The Brazilian foreign ministry, because it was a professional service, always wanted a much more assertive policy in foreign affairs than the society was willing to do to support.

*Q: Well, how did you survive your time as ambassador's assistant?*

BECKER: Poorly. Poorly. Well, I had gotten exceedingly good, in fact excellent EER ratings in Romania, but they tended to languish in Brazil particularly during the year that I was the staff assistant. If the ambassador had found value in what I did, it was not really reflected in my EER. The DCM was much more knowledgeable and much more appreciative about what I did and the political counselor who actually did the other part of my EER did not assert himself on my behalf, although I tried to get him to pry me away from what I found was a very thankless staff job. I turned down staff jobs throughout my career both before and since and probably with good reason. I looked myself in the mirror and said, "You are not that kind of person."

*Q: I've watched people, interviewed many people who have had staff jobs and often this is the key to success and all and I just know this wasn't for me. I'm just no good at that.*

BECKER: I know at the very beginning of my career, while I was still in A-100, I was invited up to the front office of PM because the executive assistant there saw my name on the list. We had been graduate school buddies. He had left graduate school earlier and so he was much more senior than me. He was going to do me a favor because they were looking for somebody, a staff assistant in that office at that time headed by George Vest, Ambassador George Vest. He regaled me about how important this job was and how we would be rubbing shoulders with senior State Department officials. I asked innocently, "Well, what would I be doing?" He said, "You will be taking papers from here and putting them there, and you will be organizing reading files for our boss, and you will be tracking events and issues and taskings and all of that for the bureau." I basically told my friend, "Thanks, but no thanks. I joined the Foreign Service to serve overseas and this isn't how I want to start out my career." I've been running from staff positions almost ever since.

*Q: Then, Rick in 1980 you were off. Whither?*

BECKER: It was impressed upon me that after two overseas tours I ought to go back to Washington, and it was also impressed upon me that the best job you could have in Washington - unless you wanted a staff job on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor, which I quickly rejected -- was as a country desk officer. But there were very few such desk jobs at my rank that I could move into. I was initially recruited to be the desk officer for Paraguay and Uruguay. I thought this would be a very good opportunity. Coming from Brazil, I wanted to continue working in the Western Hemisphere bureau, ARA at that time. I already had punched my ticket in the Southern Cone, and I envisioned a smooth transition to a Washington assignment.

Then the bureau informed me that there were very few officers in the Uruguayan and Paraguayan embassies in Washington who spoke good English, and I spoke only Portuguese, so they preferred to get a Spanish speaker for that job. They offered to put me on the Brazil desk, which had four people and needed an officer with recent Brazil experience. Nobody else had it. How would I like to be the economic officer, because this was the one job available on that desk? I felt like a supplicant, as there wasn't anything else coming my way. It sounded fine to me. I could continue working on Brazil and it would segue very well into the Department and Washington. This was before FSI had a Washington statecraft course and other tools that would ease your way in. Rather, you learned by the seat of your pants how to function in the Department. So, I came back to Washington. On my first consultation with the office director, he said, "You may want to start looking for another assignment." I said, "What, sir?" This was a senior officer. Later he would be an ambassador. He continued, "Well, you know, I want to be perfectly honest, I needed somebody who had served in Brazil. I haven't served in Brazil in 15 years. The other two officers in the office have never served in Brazil. I need somebody who knows the country, who knows the issues, has a feel for what's going on, but I really want a real economist and you're not one. So you may start looking around." Well, I sort of dismissed this as wishful meandering on his part, but when he mentioned it two months later I started taking him seriously. I figured this is not going to be a very warm, fuzzy relationship, and indeed for other reasons it turned out not to be a very warm, fuzzy relationship.

By mutual consent I decided I would curtail after one year on the desk, and I signed up for mid-level training. I was going to be assigned as labor officer in Quito, Ecuador, one of the very few people who went into professional training actually knowing where I was going afterwards. I had a year of training after that, but my education into the Department politics and bureaucracies was not an easy one. It was a very rough year.

*Q: He was in the front office there.*

BECKER: That's where I first knew Ron. It was quite brutal. It was itself an education, but there were a lot of pressures because Brazil was one of the key issue areas at that time. It became a campaign issue between the Republicans and the Democrats in the '80 elections. Were we being fair to a great power? Were we not getting what we needed or wanted from Brazil? There were several key people in the Republican campaign who were Brazil specialists and who definitely wanted Brazil to be a campaign issue. I was invited as a desk officer to address a world affairs forum in Connecticut during the fall of '80. I had been on the desk only three or four months. It was in mid-campaign and I found out that somebody in the Department didn't do his or her job. The office learned only a few days before I was to go up and speak on U.S.-Brazil relations that I would share the podium with an academic, Roger Fontaine, a Brazil specialist who was also a senior Reagan campaign advisor. His presence had been set up by the head of the local world affairs council precisely, we concluded, to entrap the State Department and make some headlines. The big question was whether or not the Department would pull the plug on me and substitute a more senior representative. My boss didn't show a lot of confidence in me, but decided either he couldn't spare anybody else or else this junior officer could be treated as a sacrificial lamb. Whatever I said could be disabused later on. I went up to Connecticut knowing full well that I was being set up, not only by the sponsors of the program, but by the State Department because they couldn't do any better on short notice. I thought I acquitted myself

fairly well, but it was a distasteful experience. I didn't win any brownie points with my boss, anyway.

I also had to learn how to deal with the media as a desk officer. This was very much trial and error. I felt in command of my subject matter and therefore confident to talk to the press. What I was not confident to do was to distinguish who was the legitimate press and who was not the legitimate press. Again, I was not tutored or mentored. I was just roundly criticized for even having contact with the media. So, all of that added up to a very unfortunate experience. I had a colleague on the desk who managed to stab herself with a pair of scissors because the boss' demands made her exceedingly nervous. At least I left that job without having shed any blood, anybody else's or my own.

*Q: Did you find though that when you got there, did you find that there was a problem on the desk, that they really didn't have any Brazilian Brazilness in their makeup?*

BECKER: I thought my recent experience brought value added to the desk. I'm not sure that in the overall scheme of things this mattered too much, since Brazil policy was being handled at a fairly high level, which is what frequently happens when you're dealing with an important country. You prepare papers. You have an embassy there which gives you all the raw material and provides all the backup that you need, but you're not flying blind. I had a feel for the country and I knew people in Brazil. Indeed, the same year I transferred there were a number of Brazilian foreign ministry officials that transferred to their embassy in Washington. I had a ready-made relationship with key people in the Brazilian embassy in Washington from the moment I arrived. That was one of the things I brought from my Brazil experience. As it turns out, it was not something that was valued. I think, given the opportunity, I might have been able to shed more light on Brazilian sensibilities, the limits of Brazilian flexibility on both the human rights and the nuclear issues, simply from osmosis, from having known Brazilians and having known how they reacted when we raised these issues, rather than looking at these issues in more or less academic or policy terms. Policy was being handled at such a high level that I don't think any of my inputs really were factored in. Had there been more Brazilian hands on the desk, I am not sure that it would have changed policy particularly. Brazil policy had been a divisive issue in the Reagan campaign.

*Q: Well, did you find, I mean you weren't there overly long, but was there a major change or did you see a real change in our approach to Brazil when the Reagan group came in?*

BECKER: No, I didn't. The Reagan administration came in with the idea that we could always extract more from Brazil on the nuclear issue than we were getting under the Democrats, and that our human rights concerns were overblown and needed to be removed from the negotiating table. But the Republican administration was not prepared to hit Brazil as hard as they said they would during the campaign. They would not go to the wall on Brazil's nuclear development because they were looking at bigger strategic issues. They very much wanted Brazil to play a more constructive role in international economic and political fora, so they pushed aside our hard differences despite their previous opposition to Carter administration policies. They were not prepared to do it any better.

**DOUGLAS G. HARTLEY**  
**Consul**  
**Salvador da Bahia (1978-1982)**

**Deputy Principal Officer/Political Officer/Consul**  
**Ri o de Janeiro (1982-1984)**

*Douglas G. Hartley was born in England to American parents and was educated at Eton and Harvard University. After entering the Foreign Service in 1956, his assignments abroad have included Copenhagen, Salzburg, Belgrade, Milan, Athens, Rome, London and Brazil. Mr. Hartley was interviewed in 1998 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

HARTLEY: I'll get back to Cal Berlin. Cal Berlin had been a consul in Recife. I had been paneled. Personnel figured, and I also figured, that I had been in Europe long enough. I wanted to go somewhere else. So they had paneled me to go to Africa, to Dar Es Salaam as an economic counselor, I think it was. Cal said, "Oh, don't go there. Go to Brazil. It's a great place, a wonderful country." He went on and on and on about Brazil and how great it was. But one of the places coming vacant was Salvador de Bahia. He said, "Well, go for it!" So I went for it, and was able to get the appointment to be the consul in Salvador de Bahia in Brazil. I was transferred back to FSI for Portuguese language training. And it was then that I met my present wife, Sondra. She was a friend of Bill and Cammie Whitman, who had been my predecessors as commercial attach e in Belgrade. I met her and we married just a month before I left for Salvador.

*Q: You were in Salvador de Bahia? Was this the "Savior of the Bay" or something like that?*

HARTLEY: That's right. The "Savior of the Bay."

*Q: You were there from what? Was it from '79 to '82?*

HARTLEY: Yes, '79 to '82.

*Q: How would you describe it? It's a post I have never come across before.*

HARTLEY: Well, I hadn't either. Again, it was one of these contrasts of life. I didn't really think about this at the time. But now, looking back on it, to go from London--which was the largest overseas posts in the world--to Salvador, which is probably one of the smallest overseas posts in the world was quite a contrast in itself. To go from being one of four assistant commercial attaches to being the principal officer was a nice little contrast. Salvador is the fifth largest city in Brazil. It's a city of about one and a half million. It's in the northeast, which is the poorer area of Brazil, a fascinating part of Brazil. It's not the Amazon region, it's not the tropical rain forest.

*Q: You're pointing to the map. It's just sort of just below the bulge of Brazil.*

HARTLEY: Yes, right. I was lucky. The consul in Recife was Guido Fenzi. Guido had a terrible task, because he was the only American officer there, and he had seven Brazilian states to cover, where I had a USIA officer--and I had a vice consul. And I had only two states. So I kept saying, "Well, wait just a moment--the state of Bahia is almost the size of Texas," which was true. It also happened that it was virtually empty. There was not a whole lot of activity out of Salvador, but an area of 222,000 square miles, a large and largely empty area. I replaced Peter Whitney. One of my predecessors that I have kept up with who has had a distinguished career is Alex Watson, who went on to become the assistant secretary for Latin American Affairs, was ambassador to Peru, and is now one of the heads of the Nature Conservancy. One of his first posts was Salvador.

We were about 1000 miles from the embassy in Brasilia. So we had the enviable position of being very, very far away from the embassy, which as far as I was concerned was just great, having been just two floors from the ambassador. We were left alone pretty well to do our own thing. Once we had satisfied the elementary reporting requirements, we could basically decide on our own plan of action, which we did. In a small consulate, you have to pretty quickly find out what your assets are in terms of what will make you seem attractive to the embassy - attractive enough that when the next reductions come along they won't close your post rather than somebody else's. I found that the best thing for me was the governor of Bahia, who was a very prominent Brazilian politician called Antonio Carlos Magalães, who is perhaps today the most powerful man in Brazil as leader of the Senate. So I got to know Antonio Carlos pretty well.

I soon realized that one of the most interesting facets of life in Bahia was the revolutions going on within the Catholic Church and the evolution of the evangelicals. So I did a lot of reporting on some of the activities of the Catholic Church and the political leanings of the Catholic Church, and the emergence of what were called *comunidades de base*, or basic communities. Actually, I did quite a bit of political reporting when I was in Salvador. The other thing that we had was a big cacao center for Brazil down south of there in Ilheus.

*Q: Were these political or religious?*

HARTLEY: At times the distinctions between religion and politics became blurred particularly under the tutelage of radicalized priests from seminaries in Italy or the United States. Perhaps the most famous person in Bahia is Jorge Amado, author of *Gabriela, Cloves and Cinnamon*, and chronicler of sagas depicting the lives of the life of the Brazilian "colonels" or landowners in the big cacao estates in the south of Bahia. I was fortunate in having two excellent officers, one of whom, John Dwyer, the branch PPA is now in charge of all Information Management in State... So I think we had a pretty hot little post there for a couple of years and I like to think we were highly regarded by the embassy. I used to go to the principal officers' conferences in Brasilia.

The ambassador at that time was Robert Sayre, who I always got along well with. You still see him in the halls of State. Dick Johnson, my old pal from Belgrade, who had been my boss there, had just left post as DCM in Brasilia - who I'm sure was helpful in my getting that post. If anybody says personalism is dead in the Foreign Service, they are wrong. George High was my deputy chief of mission. He was very helpful, a fine and conscientious person. I had no particular problems with the embassy while I was in Salvador, they let me be and appeared to be satisfied

with the product. I got my promotion to O-1 while in Salvador.

*Q: Were you able to exercise your commercial promotion skills there?*

HARTLEY: This was not a big market for U.S. products. The interest of Salvador was the U.S. investment there. There were U.S. companies that had invested there in something called the Polopetrochemico which is a petrochemical complex. It consisted of about 30 or 40 companies. By far the largest part of the U.S. investment was centered in Sao Paulo, of course, and to some extent in Rio. So we were, in a way, a backwater, but we did have some commercial activity. At that time Brazil was one of the world's leading cocoa producers so I got to know the people in the producing area (the south of my state) and eventually wrote a long analytical report which probably nobody read!

*Q: What was the political situation in your area during this '79-'82 period?*

HARTLEY: You will recall that in a coup in 1963 a leftist regime led by Joao Goulart was overthrown by the Brazilian military. While mild compared to Pinochet this was a repressive regime and triggered responses from the left such as the kidnaping of Burke Elbrick, the U.S. ambassador to Brazil, in 1970. The regime when I arrived, under General Ernesto Geisel, was kinder and gentler than its predecessors and opposition leaders returned from exile or jail. General Geisel was replaced as President by another General, Joao Figueiredo, in 1979 just after my arrival. Figueiredo had been head of military intelligence. The time I was in Salvador saw a strengthening of the political party structure in preparation for new elections, which ultimately occurred just after my departure in 1985. Though still a dictatorship, there was a certain degree of local autonomy and the beginnings of a freer parliament. The State of Bahia had a lot of interesting things going on. To the west were thousands of hectares of potential farm land which had been basically grabbed by a group of Brazilian parliamentarians in the early '60s and resold to a number of midwestern U.S. farmers as a fraudulent land scheme. Some of these came over and soon found themselves under attack. Most departed before I had arrived but one guy, Leonard Earl and his family, were made of sterner stuff. They were frequently attacked by armed gangs but returned fire and eventually killed a gang member. Leonard Earl became a fugitive. I made several trips to Barreiras, the wild west type city and principal city in that area, to try to demonstrate our support of this family and I also kept the governor informed. I don't recall what eventually happened, I think by that time I had been transferred.

*Q: Do you recall any radical students or union people or anybody, or were they pretty well suppressed in your area?*

HARTLEY: In my area I don't think there were any. It was never a very politically active area. It was rather typical developing or less-developed areas that were traditionally dominated by one, two, three, or four families. There was a patronage system, and the whole bit. It wasn't like Rio and Sao Paulo, of course, where there had been active student movements. The students in the University of Salvador were a pretty quiescent bunch.. The only problem we had was when the government decided in 1981 to raise the bus fares. Then there were riots in the streets. They overturned buses and caused some mayhem. All in all, it was a relatively quiet time in Brazilian politics. The end of the military era and the beginning of the new era, you had the rise of the

opposition parties. I found that after a couple of years, though, I had pretty much exhausted my resources in Salvador. I began to get a little restless. There's just so much you can do in a small post. There's not much to do in Salvador. It was culturally different and indeed fascinating. Salvador is the Brazilian center for Afro culture. There was little interest in classical music few concerts and I have to admit that I am geared to western European culture. Sondra was more into it than I was. Then, of course, there was the annual Carnival activities when the whole city ground to a halt. We used to participate though most of those who could do it escaped the city and the general noise and confusion. I found it a little boring. I didn't, frankly, find a lot of people as stimulating as I was used to in Europe. I missed Europe and I missed the States.

*Q: You mentioned that you were looking at the role of the church there. We're talking about the Catholic Church. What were they doing?*

HARTLEY: Well, there were factions within the Catholic Church. There were very radical priests and there were very conservative bishops. Dom Helder of Recife was a leading radical bishop. As I mentioned, the base communities had emerged. These were, I believe, a way to head off the protestant churches, the fundamentalist churches making inroads in the northeast among the poor there. The Catholic Church realized that it had to do something. Otherwise, they were going to lose out, lose congregations to the Protestants. So with the *comunidade de base*, they tried to get the churches back into the grassroots level, the village level by forming these communities that were socially active as well as being religious. So these were being established while I was there. The question was, "Were they effective? To what extent were they political? And were they really religious or were they a way for the left-wing church to infiltrate." So there was that aspect of it, too. There was a seminary in the University of Chicago, apparently, that was pretty radical, a Catholic seminary. Some of their priests were coming down. There were some fairly hot-blooded ones. And there was also legitimate concern about poverty in the northeast; conditions in the drought ridden backlands was and is appalling. It's something that everyone is right to be concerned with. But there was a question about how politicized was this concern. This is one of the things that worried the embassy. We can be concerned about poverty and do the most we can to alleviate it, but we don't want the poverty to breed communist ideology. So that's, I guess, why I was particularly interested in the *comunidade de base*.

*Q: What about the protestant church. Was this basically based out of fundamentalist American sects, and were they involved down where you were?*

HARTLEY: Yes, but they kept themselves to themselves. I wouldn't be able to quantify how many there were in my consular district. I was aware that they were spreading, but I was not actually in close touch with the Protestant churches. They themselves were fractured and fractious and they lacked a leadership structure to communicate with.

*Q: Why don't we talk about Rio? You were in Rio from '82 to '84.*

HARTLEY: I was there for two years. I was sent down there by Tony Motley. He was the ambassador who replaced Bob Sayre.

Motley was a political appointee from Alaska with a Brazilian background... He liked Brazil and

the Brazilians His father had been, I think, the head of Atlantic Richfield in Brazil, so Tony was brought up there, knew the language, and was a very good people person. He asked me to go to Rio and be the deputy principal officer there, so I did. I wasn't particularly pleased about it because I didn't really want to go to Rio. I wanted to get back home, as did Sondra, but we deferred to him. and I was both DPO [deputy principal officer] and political officer under the consul general, Sam Lupo, who had been the administrative counselor in Brasilia. We had some very active political goings-on. The opposition leader, Tancredo Neves was the governor of the state of Minas Gerais, which was in my consular district, so a tremendous amount of what was going on was actually in my consulate area. So I had to try to follow that as well as helping to run this large consulate general, which ranked up there with Frankfurt or Hong Kong.

We made some good friends in Rio and used to get out to Petropolis quite a bit. We had some friends out there. We had a lady in particular, our landlady, who had a beautiful house out in Petropolis out in the mountains above Rio. We used to go out there almost every weekend when I wasn't working. Sometimes I had to work weekends, sometimes not. I did not particularly like Rio as a town. I think, again, I had been spoiled by being my own boss. I got along quite well with Sam Lupo, but we weren't a tremendously close fit and I feel that he was a bit suspicious of me because of my close relationship with Motley. The political situation: I talked about the emergence of the opposition parties. Figueiredo, the president, had some heart problems, so he was sent back to the States to be treated at a hospital in Ohio - I think it was. Meanwhile, the economy, the inflation rate had reached incredibly high levels. All the time I was in Brazil they had real problems with the inflation and with their debt. They had an enormous debt. This just seemed to get worse the longer I was there and the debt would go up with U.S. interest rates. They were also preparing for democratic elections, so I interviewed Tancredo Neves in his office in Belo Horizonte, capitol of Minas Gerais.

Anyway, I was there for two years, and I cut short my tour. I could have stayed for three years, but I opted to stay for two and return to the States, which I did in 1984.

*Q: Did you find that Rio was a place that you had a lot of concern about Visiting Firemen coming in, whooping it up, having a great time, and getting into trouble? Or just the fact that you had to cater to these people coming through?*

HARTLEY: Yes, we had a tremendous load of congressional visitors, CODELs. Some of them were serious and some of them weren't. Steve Solarz from New York was an exception, a very a serious guy. He came through when it was the New Year's holiday, and he insisted in having appointments with the highest level of the state government during the New Year's season. That was not looked upon with any great favor. I should say that in 1982, we got a new governor of the state, Leonel Brisola, who is a famous left-wing Brazilian politician who had been sort of in cahoots with Goulart, the president who had been ousted in the 1963 coup. Brisola was one of the new opposition leaders and he and his party were able to win Rio State. Initially, he became mayor of Rio, and then later he became the state governor. He was always cordial. I remember when he was mayor of Rio, coming into the mayor's office and there he was seated with a delegation from, I think, El Salvador, no doubt from the opposition. I'm sure he meant for me to see that since the door was open.

**DALE M. POVENMIRE**  
**Labor Attaché, Labor Department**  
**Sao Paulo (1978-1981)**

*Dale M. Povenmire was born in Ohio on June 6, 1930. He attended received a bachelor's degree in political science from Baldwin-Wallace College in 1952 and a master's degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1953. Mr. Povenmire served in the U.S. Navy from 1953-1957 and joined the Foreign Service in 1957. He served in Santiago, Zanzibar, Asuncion, Oporto, Caracas, Lisbon, Sao Paulo, Rome, and Washington, DC. He retired in 1986 and was interviewed by Morris Weisz on January, 29, 1994.*

POVENMIRE: I was assigned as labor attaché to Brazil, but stationed at the Consulate General in Sao Paulo rather than at the Embassy in Brasilia. That was because Brasilia is fairly isolated in the interior while the country's industrial base and trade union strength is centered around Sao Paulo.

*Q: This has been an important issue in Australia, with its isolated capital at Canberra, its business center at Sydney, and its trade union strength in Melbourne.*

POVENMIRE: It can be argued either way. I know Ambassador Sayre was not terribly happy that I was in Sao Paulo because I was not right on hand to provide the Embassy direct input. On the other hand, for the kind of reporting I was doing, it was probably better for me to be in Sao Paulo. Being in Sao Paulo also allowed me to step into the role of deputy principal officer there at a post larger than two-thirds of our embassies and with six other agencies represented.

*Q: Do you think the ambassador feels that he has less control over the attaché when he is stationed away from the embassy?*

POVENMIRE: Probably so, although I don't think there was a difference of opinion over the kind of reporting I was doing.

*Q: I'm not referring to differences of opinion but, in the case you mentioned you became deputy to the consul general. The Department of Labor or the AFL-CIO might object because you had broad responsibilities countrywide and you possibly couldn't follow developments they were interested in. Maybe now is the time to discuss, with the reduction of labor attaché positions overseas, the degree that your labor function was sacrificed to more general responsibilities.*

POVENMIRE: Morrie, my attitude is that you have to balance overall U.S. Government interests with the resources available. With regard to meeting my responsibilities toward the Department of Labor, I've usually found that the Labor Department will respond to and support initiatives coming from U.S. missions abroad, but it seldom generates requirements on its own. My feeling is that because I was also engaged on broader issues I was perhaps more effective on labor matters, my input was taken more seriously, certainly at the country team level.

*Q: After this session I will tell you why, from my experience, I come from the other direction but let's continue. Sao Paulo was the trade union center. How about labor-management affairs?*

POVENMIRE: Likewise. The American Chamber of Commerce in Sao Paulo was sometimes the largest, sometimes the second largest, Chamber outside the U.S. It vied with Mexico City.

The labor confederations had their headquarters in Brasilia, but the confederations were far divorced from the much more significant labor developments at the local and federation level. For example, the really important labor leader in Brazil was Luis Ignacio da Silva, known as "Lula," who was the head of the metal workers in Sao Paulo's industrial suburbs. He was a populist leader who led several successful strikes and demonstrations. He eventually organized a political party, the Workers' Party, and was a leading contender in several elections to become president of Brazil.

I first met Lula in early 1978 during my initial round of contacts in Sao Paulo. I was invited out to his union headquarters. The meeting, held over lunch, was more in the nature of a press conference as a Swedish television crew and another Brazilian journalist were there to interview Lula. I was kind of an add-on and not the focus of the meeting. After the lunch, however, I had the chance to chat informally with Lula. He was interested that I had been in Portugal and indicated that he wanted to talk further in the future.

Shortly afterwards I returned to the U.S. for what I thought would be a short trip but it unexpectedly was changed into home leave. I had come to Brazil on direct transfer from Portugal. Although I met with Lula on a number of occasions later, I was never able to establish the kind of rapport that I sensed I could have had with him at the beginning. I think it was in part because of the delay in the follow-up after the initial meeting but even more because in the interim, there developed around Lula a cadre of people who were always very careful to stay close to him, to intervene, and to select his contacts. I regret that, because of the political prominence he attained. He has great charisma and native intelligence.

*Q: What finally happened to him after he lost the elections? Did he go back to the trade union movement?*

POVENMIRE: No, he is still the head of the Workers' Party. I have not kept up with Brazilian politics, but I'm sure he is still a major political figure there.

*Q: Did Lula have relations with AIFLD?*

POVENMIRE: He never had relations with AIFLD.

*Q: What about the individual trade unions?*

POVENMIRE: People from his trade unions would participate in AIFLD training programs. AIFLD had a training institute, IDASIL, located in Sao Paulo and run by Brazilians, some of the most capable trade union people I've ever had the privilege of knowing. It was a very worthwhile

program and generally accepted by the Brazilian trade union movement. People from Lula's unions would sometimes attend courses there, basic trade union training courses. Lula himself would never particularly identify with IDASIL or AIFLD at all. He probably felt it was beneath him.

*Q: How did you get along with the AIFLD group?*

POVENMIRE: I got along very well with the AIFLD people. I worked closely with the IDASIL institute. When I first arrived in Brazil I was pleased to find that Mike Hammer was the AIFLD representative, stationed in Rio. I first knew Mike in Caracas. He and his family lived close by there. He then went to El Salvador to work with AIFLD's land reform programs and after that was assigned to Brazil. Every time I went to Rio I would stop by to see Mike and we coordinated our efforts closely. About a year after I arrived in Sao Paulo, AIFLD asked Mike if he would go back to El Salvador. It was a real shock to hear on the radio on January 4, 1979, that Mike and two other AIFLD people had been gunned down by right-wing terrorists in El Salvador.

*Q: That was a real tragedy.*

POVENMIRE: It was a tragedy. You know, don't you, that Mike is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. It was authorized by a special act of Congress. I was able to help his son get a scholarship to the Fletcher School at Tufts University. He subsequently entered the Foreign Service.

*Q: Anything else on your time in Brazil? When were you there?*

POVENMIRE: From January 1978 until August 1981.

*Q: Let me ask, since you had a direct transfer and then home leave, what were you able to do on home leave that was helpful? Often people go out to a post and only find out after they are there of people back home they should have contacted.*

POVENMIRE: Morrie, I'm sure I went around to AIFLD again and saw Andy McClellan at the AFL-CIO. I think I stopped by to see Msgr. Higgins because the theology of liberation people were so important in Brazil. I would have seen the people in ILAB in the Labor Department and the Labor Advisor in the ARA Bureau. I think Dale Good and Tom Bowie were still in S/IL.

I think one of the more useful things I did in Brazil was to obtain a leader grant for a labor lawyer in Sao Paulo, by the name of Pizzanotto. He had been considered and rejected before but I was able to override the objections. He had what I think was a very successful trip to the U.S. I felt vindicated because he subsequently became the Labor Minister in the first elected Brazilian government, replacing the military governments which had taken over from Goulart.

*Q: I want to ask, how do you feel about these restrictions on leader grants, either because a person isn't quite kosher from the view of the American labor movement, or because there is some suspicion they are "leftists," when the labor officer believes that a candidate is a good gamble and not a tool of the other side?*

POVENMIRE: My feeling is that it is a situation which can best be judged by the Embassy, not exclusively by the labor officer because there may be sometimes overriding considerations. I think there should be overall Embassy input.

*Q: Nominations by the labor officer but an understanding of overriding considerations?*

POVENMIRE: Absolutely.

I helped to establish a direct Department of Labor to Ministry of Labor relationship which led to a number of productive programs. Labor Minister Macedo came to the United States. Bill Usery and Bill Gould presented programs in Brazil. I had the opportunity to meet Ray Marshall for the first time when he was the U.S. Government representative to the inauguration of Brazil's newly elected civilian president. We flew together from Rio to Brasilia. He was very impressive as Secretary of Labor.

**ROBERT M. SAYRE**  
**Ambassador**  
**Brazil (1978-1981)**

*Ambassador Robert M. Sayre became interested in the U.S. Foreign Service after serving for four years in the U.S. Army during World War II. He began his career at the State Department in 1949. Ambassador Sayre held positions in Peru and Cuba, and ambassadorships to Uruguay, Panama, and Brazil. He was interviewed in 1995 by Thomas Dunnigan.*

*Q: Well, after your experience as Inspector General, you were sent to Brazil in 1978 as Ambassador. What was the situation like when you arrived there? Did we have major problems with Brazil at that time?*

SAYRE: It was difficult for me to evaluate how bad they were. Because my experience up to that time working in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs and with Brazil generally, the relations with Brazil couldn't have been better. We were real partners. But when I went to Brazil in 1978, I think the relations with Brazil were the worst they had ever been. It all stemmed from the human rights policy of the United States. There had been some human rights abuses in Brazil, but the President of Brazil had dealt with it. He had removed a four-star general who didn't deal with the problem. And when his Minister of the Army objected to him removing the four-star general, he removed the Minister of the Army. The United States continued to accuse Brazil of human rights abuses. So we had a real problem on that. There was a problem on nuclear matters because we were not supplying Brazil with what we had agreed to in terms of helping Westinghouse build a nuclear energy plant and so on. The Brazilians went to the Germans to get the help because we said we couldn't help them. The Germans entered into about a thirty billion dollar agreement with Brazil and they were going to build four more plants. Without telling the Brazilians, Vice President Mondale, after he was elected, went over to Germany and talked to the Germans about

canceling the agreement. The Brazilians found out about it. What happened? The Brazilians canceled every military agreement they had with the United States, they canceled all other agreements. U.S.-Brazil relations just went to pieces.

By the time I arrived there in 1978, because my predecessor had been called back to do something else there had been quite an interim between my arrival and his departure. Nothing really happened in improving Brazil-U.S. relations until President Carter went to Brazil several months before I got there. He talked to the Brazilian President and the relationship began to improve, especially between the two presidents. But that was just before I got there.

*Q: Am I not right in thinking that historically our relations with Brazil have always been quite good?*

SAYRE: Oh, absolutely. I mean the Brazilians were with the United States in both the First and the Second World War. They had a division in Italy. They cooperated with us on all kinds of defense matters, economic matters, everything else; the relationship was great, but it came apart. I tried very hard to get all of these issues straightened out. I really only resolved two of them.

The human rights issue we got settled, and we stopped reporting the way we had been reporting. The Brazilians were really doing everything to straighten out the situation and in fact President Ernesto Geisal and President Joao Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo just got the human rights problem straightened out and that is what we reported.

We also reestablished the military relationship with a meeting between staffs of the Joint Chiefs of the two countries once a year. That is still going on. But the rest of the problems, my successors also tried to resolve, and we are still trying to work them out. The one I would like to see get worked out is the economic relationship. We need to get our economic relationship back together.

*Q: How large was the Embassy when you arrived?*

SAYRE: The twelfth largest Embassy in the world.

*Q: And how many subordinate posts did you have?*

SAYRE: We had eight.

*Q: Did you get to visit them?*

SAYRE: Oh yes; I visited every state in Brazil except a couple over by the Bolivian border.

*Q: Who was your DCM at that time?*

SAYRE: George High.

*Q: Oh yes, George High. What role did you give him? Did you divide the work between the two*

*of you or did you both concentrate on the same problems, or did he run the Embassy and you ran policy; how did that work out?*

SAYRE: George High ran the Embassy internally, and I dealt with the external side of handling relations. This was partly because I believe in delegation of authority, but secondly the Brazilian ministry Itamaraty wanted to deal with me; they didn't want to deal with lower-level officers. But our lower-level officers in the Embassy tried to deal with lower-level counterparts, and the relationship between the Embassy and the Brazilian government I think was quite good. In fact, Figueiredo, when I got ready to leave, somebody asked him, "Well how are U.S.-Brazilian relations?" And he said, "Well now on a scale of 1-10, they are back up to 8."

*Q: Which speaks very well for our Ambassador then.*

SAYRE: Well, George High did a great job.

*Q: Now Vice-President Mondale visited during that period, did he not?*

SAYRE: Yes he did and that helped improve the relationship also.

*Q: Yes, he has a winning personality.*

SAYRE: He couldn't come down for the inauguration because President Carter was out of the country, so he couldn't leave the country. His wife came. And as soon as President Carter got back, he came down and sat down and talked with President Figueiredo and actually I think that worked out better because he had a real chance to talk with President Figueiredo. If he had come down as Vice-President, there were so many presidents from Latin American countries there that I don't think Mondale would have had a real chance to talk to President Figueiredo.

*Q: Yes, much better to go one-on-one later.*

SAYRE: Absolutely. I think it worked out much better.

*Q: And you also had a visit from the Pope when you were down there?*

SAYRE: Yes sir; we had a visit with Pope Paul II. One of the issues that I discussed with Pope Paul II was the major dispute between Argentina and Chile over the Beagle Channel. Because they couldn't get it settled any other way, I had recommended to the Department of State in 1979 that because I thought both Argentina and Chile would accept the Pope, that he be asked to arbitrate the dispute. The Department did. He arbitrated it. They came to an agreement in November 1985. But between the time that I made the recommendation and the time the Pope agreed to arbitrate, the Argentine army went to sea to fight the Chilean navy. The Pope intervened before the Argentine navy started shooting at the Chilean navy; so a war was avoided between Chile and Argentina. When the Pope came to Brasilia in June of 1980 I talked to him about it. He was very pleased that he had been able to do something, get involved in it and negotiate a settlement. He negotiated a rather ingenious settlement and both Argentina and Chile accepted it.

*Q: I think that is a real feather in your cap, sir. And you can take great pride in that.*

SAYRE: Well, give the credit to Pope Paul II.

*Q: What was the situation with regard to this gentleman Daniel Ludwig and his Amazon development scheme?*

SAYRE: Daniel Ludwig had a huge project, the Jari project, up in northern Brazil near the Amazon River. As you know, Daniel Ludwig was a big shipping magnate and had a big shipping industry, but he also invested in Brazil. What he had been promised by the Brazilians in the Jari project was some 6 million acres. He wanted to have a paper mill and produce pulp and paper as part of the industry. As it turned out, the most he got was a million and a half acres. He had the paper plant built on a floating ship in Japan. They brought it over to the Amazon River at Jari. They sank the ship and the plant started operating. It was a very effective program. He kept planting new trees and cutting them down. They were making money, but he wasn't making as much as he wanted. They also were mining some material in the area which he used to make slick paper and he was shipping that out also. He had a huge bunch of oxen and mules which they used to drag the trees out of the woods because they couldn't take in tractors. If they took in tractors they would have turned the ground into cement and they couldn't plant any trees. One of the things that was very interesting to me when I visited the Jari project was to find that when they cut these trees down, it was a tree I think they brought in from Africa, it grew back up again in about six years, and then they cut it down again. And they said, "Well this is the fourth time; we don't know how often this happens." They also had pine trees.

They had a scientific program there to develop additional trees and they had about thirty thousand employees in the Jari project. But Ludwig just could not get the amount of land he needed to make it really as big a project as he wanted to. I talked to the head of the Brazilian President's household about this matter, an Army general, and explained to him that we had a serious difficulty here because of various kinds of problems.

I also talked to, when I came up to the United States, Ludwig's lawyer in New York about it -- a former Attorney General of the United States -- and asked him whether he wanted the United States government to be involved in helping solve this problem. The answer was, "No." So I quit. I didn't do anything more.

What Ludwig did was work out an agreement with a group of Brazilian businessmen. He had invested significantly. But my recollection is that about \$245 million had been borrowed from the Brazilians to do this project; so it wasn't all his money. The Brazilian businessmen bought out the project and they agreed to pay off all these loans. It is now a Brazilian company.

But the real problem was that the people in this area saw it was a real opportunity, and they made land claims and other things. Ludwig himself did not have a public relations operation. He didn't have a group to work with the Brazilian government and get all this straightened out. I asked him, "Why not?" I never got an answer from Ludwig or anybody else about it. I only talked to him once. We just happened to fly up to the Jari project together on an airplane one day. But it

was a remarkably good project and he had an excellent idea but it just didn't produce as much results as Ludwig wanted.

*Q: And now it is in Brazilian hands?*

SAYRE: It is in Brazilian hands, yes.

*Q: Did you notice any change in our policy toward Brazil when President Reagan took over?*

SAYRE: Not really. With respect to Latin America, Reagan's focus was on Nicaragua and other problems in Central America, and a few other cases. I didn't see any change in U.S. policy toward Latin America.

**MCKINNEY RUSSELL**  
**Public Affairs Officer, USIS**  
**Brasilia (1978-1982)**

*McKinney Russell was born in New York, New York in 1929. He graduated from Yale University in 1950 and served overseas in the U.S. Army from 1951-1953. Mr. Russel's career included positions in Germany, the Congo, the Soviet Union, Brazil, Spain, and China. He was interviewed on May 10, 1997 by G. Lewis Schmidt.*

*Q: What were your particular goals and results at that time? What were your major efforts in getting the program started?*

RUSSELL: The country had been under military dictatorship for more than a decade when we arrived. Since 1964, there had been a series of generals running the country, and there was still a general named Figueiredo in charge of the country. He was somewhat less of an autocrat and wanted very much to return things to democracy and worked fairly steadily towards it. One of our principal problems as USIS was to help encourage that, to project to Brazilians a real sense of how pluralistic democracy works, and keep their sense of the need to support it alive. It was less adventurous when I was PAO than it had been in earlier times. John Mowinckel whom I mentioned earlier, had been PAO in the late '60s-early '70s and he took a lot of chances with dissidents, maintained contacts with people who were on the political outs, and took a lot of chances. He was still based in Rio during his tour.

The problem of organizing our program in such a way that it was run centrally from the capital was similar to the situation in the German program, as I mentioned. We found that running effective programs required that we develop a very intense network of communication. We made a great deal of use at that time of the telex, in the same way that E-mail is now the communication means of choice of most posts. We sent from the capital by telex an overview of what was happening throughout the country in a given week. This went to all of the Branch posts early in the week and they fed back to us what was going on at their posts. It often worked out that Americans who were in the country as Fulbright professors or as visitors for some other

reason, by tightening the connection among the eight posts., could be programmed elsewhere in the country. For example, the novelist, E.L. Doctorow was in Rio to present a new book of his. When we knew he was there, we were able to arrange for him to come up also to the Brazilian capital and perhaps to go to Sao Paulo as well, for a lecture series. Those, I think, were among the principal goals, pulling the 8 posts together so that they cohered. Previously there had been little such cohesion. The PAO in Recife was perfectly happy to do things on his own and had hardly any reporting obligations back to Brasilia. The way I set it up, the Deputy PAO was the supervisor of the branches; I was the supervisor of the Deputy, the CAO and the IO and the Exec. In this way the Deputy PAO was a clearing point of what was going on, and he visited all of the branches at least twice a year. He saw what kind of programs were going on, so that the Branch PAOs had a sense that they were really working in a common cause, that they weren't just doing what they felt like doing. Some of the Branch PAOs in Brazil had distinctly weak officers. They didn't last a long time. There was a very weak officer in Porto Alegre who, after a year of non-performance, was eased out. At least once a year, we had a PAO conference where everybody came together. We didn't do it in the capital every year. We did in Brasilia one year, and in Rio, one year, then in Brasilia and then in Sao Paulo. It was extremely important for the PAO of Recife, for example, who otherwise would never even see Sao Paulo, to gain a sense of the country's major city.

Life in Brazil was a distinct change from Germany, our previous post. As strictly protocol-conscious as the Germans were, they were always on time. If they said they would come, they would come. Brazilians would say they would come, and either not come at all or come an hour late, or come themselves and their wives and come with their four cousins who were visiting them. We learned to be very flexible, and we learned also to enjoy and to give noisy parties. The Brazilians like a special kind of meal that they served called feijoada. We learned how to do that, how to prepare and enjoy it.

**GEORGE B. HIGH**  
**Deputy Chief of Mission**  
**Brasilia (1978-1982)**

*George B. High was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1931. He received a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College and attended Columbia Law School until 1956. Mr. High entered the Foreign Service in 1955 and served in Angola, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. Mr. High was interviewed in 1993 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

*Q: You left there and got a very interesting job as Deputy Chief of Mission in Brasilia. I take it this stems from your connection with Bob Sayre?*

HIGH: Yes.

*Q: You were there from 1978-82, so you had two Ambassadors?*

HIGH: Yes.

Q: *What was the situation in Brazil during this period?*

HIGH: Brazil was still under a military government. Ernesto Geisel was the chief of state and head of government. They were having some major economic problems because the economic miracle of the years prior to 1978 was beginning to fade. Brazil had just grown like Topsy after the military took over, but the steam was petering out and people were blaming the military for their difficulties. The politicians were becoming restive, the students were becoming some active once again, and Brazil was becoming increasingly independent and critical of the United States.

The United States was also coming out from under the impact of the early years of the Carter Administration's foreign policy. Carter had started off his administration being extremely critical of Brazil's human rights record and also of its effort to get nuclear reprocessing facilities from the West Germans. There was a contract with the Germans and nuclear plants were going up in Brazil. There was concern, which I think was confirmed later on, that Brazil was moving toward gaining a nuclear war capacity.

The initial steps the Carter Administration had made very public and were extremely damning of the Brazilian government, and the Brazilians had taken deep offense at this. This followed decades of very warm, very personal relations with the United States. Brazil had fought with the United States in World War II. Vernon Walters served with the Brazilian troops in Italy. He was the attaché in Brazil at the time of the military *golpe*. He was friends with Brazil's military leaders. Brazil was also a big recipient of assistance under the Alliance for Progress. Many of the Brazilian leaders in the private sector and the government studied in the United States under AID grants, and this had gone on for years.

There had been this awfully close relationship, virtually going back to Brazilian independence, and then all of a sudden, out of the blue, came these two very public slaps on human rights and nuclear reprocessing. It was a total surprise to the Brazilians and naturally, from their side, they were hurt and angered, whatever the American viewpoint.

The previous Ambassador, John Crimmins, had borne much of the brunt of that reaction. When Bob Sayre went to Brazil, the Carter Administration had had time to think more about this and to conclude that it needed to work on these issues in a more harmonious way. And so, as I understood it, our objective was to rebuild the relationship, certainly to pursue those subjects as well, but in a less public and contentious way. In effect, we should treat Brazil as a close associate and somebody who was worth our attention. That was our agenda in Brazil.

There were increasing Congressional visits to Brazil while we were there. Early on they were very positive. There were visits by American military officials to develop a dialogue with the Brazilians, to put life into what had been a very close relationship between the two military establishments. There was also an effort to encourage further American business interest in Brazil.

The head of the State Department's Policy Planning Council came to Brasilia and held policy

discussions with the Brazilians for the first time -- just as U.S. policy planning experts met annually with our major allies. The Brazilians had their own policy planning unit in the Foreign Ministry, modeled after ours. It was a natural partner to benefit from the opportunity to talk over world and regional problems.

The Brazilians seemed at first apprehensive about this. They felt that perhaps we were there to co-opt them. Antonio da Silveira, the Foreign Minister, had the reputation of being an ardent nationalist and of almost looking for ways to frustrate the United States, to show that Brazil was independent and had its own interests to look after. I saw no indication among any of us working on Brazilian affairs at the time of any idea that our object was to co-opt the Brazilians in any way. We wanted them to realize that we had many things in common, matters we could talk about and discuss, and that it paid both countries to try to resolve some of the problems that were existing between us so that we could work more cooperatively on matters of mutual concern.

Remember, in years past, we had encouraged Brazil to provide the general who led the inter-American force that intervened in the Dominican Republic. Years later they weren't very pleased with that role. The Brazilians might have some preoccupation of what we were trying to sell them this time. We needed to overcome that reluctance; we didn't have anything to sell them except mutual interest. That really was a lot of what the whole relationship was about at this period of time.

Bill Bowdler became Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs toward the end of the Carter administration. He visited us in Brazil. One of his comments to Bob Sayre was that he hoped that he could clear his desk enough so that he could give more time to Brazil than Brazil had gotten from the bureau over recent years. To his way of thinking, Brazil and Mexico were the keys to the American relations in the hemisphere. We needed to become more closely associated with both countries.

The truth of the matter was that really never happened on our watch. We got a little more time, a little more attention, but we were always second fiddle to those larger, more immediate problems that were overwhelming to anyone who was in the bureau at the time. There was the Mariel boat lift, difficulties with Mexico and Central America, and other crises that commanded attention.

There were some limitations to our diplomacy in Brazil, too. One element was the number of Congressional visits we had. Delegations came down to learn and to listen to the Brazilians. Initially that was helpful; it was new. But eventually there was backlash. These delegations, whether made up of one or two persons or usually more, would fly into Rio on Day One. They would go out and spend the night in Rio and maybe into the next day.

On Day Two or Three came their visit to Brasilia, about an hour and a half away by air. They would get into an airplane around 8 or so in the morning, fly up to Brasilia, arriving about 10:00 or 10:30. They would be taken to the Embassy for a half hour or forty-five minute briefing, a real quick one. Then they would go over to the Brazilian Congress building, and for an hour and a half maximum they would call on one or two leaders of the Brazilian Congress. With luck maybe it would be separate meetings with two people.

Next, the Brazilians would hold a luncheon for them. Spread around a big u-shaped table, there would be scads of people. There might be a little bit of talk around the table, more social than substantive. Someone would get up from the Brazilian side and say something substantive. Someone on the American side would get up and very briefly say, "We appreciate your hospitality; we like this dialogue and we need to do more of it."

Then the delegation would hurry back to its plane so that they could get back to Rio before the afternoon traffic jams and have one last night in Rio. Next day they would be off to their next country.

Too often the visits were redundant and didn't get much beyond initial exchanges between well-intentioned strangers, "We are in a hurry, give it to us fast, boys, and let us move on," was the message conveyed. That happened so often that I think the positive contributions of the visits began to deteriorate. There were a couple of Congressmen and others who were serious. One was Rubin Askew, who I think was in Congress and had been Governor of Florida. He had us take him out to one of the shopping centers in Brasilia, not to buy tourist things, but to see what the prices were in the supermarkets and in a department store to get some sense of how people lived. Occasionally, somebody who would stay long enough so that we could drive out of the capital into one of the satellite cities, where most of the workers lived, to see what those places looked like.

*Q: How did you find the Embassy working, first with Sayre and then with Motley?*

HIGH: There was a difference in personality there. Bob Sayre was very much of a person who stuck to business. He did do some small talk, but most of his time was focused on getting information he needed and doing his job. He was concerned about the welfare of his people, the morale of his people, but he didn't get into chit chat as easily as others. Some people felt that he was a bit distant and I thought one of my roles was try to warm that up and show that there was a personal interest.

Bob Sayre had a very good team. Initially he had Alfonso Arenales as head of the Political Section. Al was a one-man political section. He had served in Brazil a number of times during his career and was thoroughly familiar with Brazilian politics and personalities. He wrote very well. George Kenney was the Economic Section chief, and George was very able with a strong European background and Third World experience. Science was an important area, not only because of the nuclear issue but because we wanted to encourage scientific exchanges between the two countries. For much of the time we had Bob Goeckerman as the science attaché. Some time later, possibly about the time that Tony Motley arrived, the attaché was Dan Serwer, who is now DCM in Italy. The dialogue on science was pursued strongly by both attachés. Our administrative support was very goal-minded, first with Sam Lupo and then with Mac Gerlach. Bob Sayre also had a very strong Counselor of Public Affairs in McKinney Russell.

At the constituent posts, we had some excellent leaders in Terry Arnold at Sao Paulo, John DeWitt at Rio, Stu Lippe in Porto Alegre and Doug Hartley in Salvador de Bahia. Guido Fenzi covered Recife. The exchanges at periodic mission conferences in Brasilia were animated and helpful.

Morale in Brasilia had always been a problem, and it was a concern of ours, as well. I think it is partly because of the community there. Brasilia was one of those new cities, designed by a communist. Interestingly, the rich people lived in the center in apartment buildings, and the workers were all out in satellite cities that weren't necessarily nearby. Individual housing units were well started across the lake where wealthy people could have their own houses and didn't have to live in apartments. Brasilia really wasn't an outpost at the edge of a desert or the edge of the plain or jungle. It was on a grassy plateau, but it didn't provide the kind of city life most people were accustomed to.

Most of the Embassy personnel lived together in one or two adjoining, US government-owned apartment buildings. Initially, the buildings were purchased to provide American personnel with pleasant, well-cared for apartments; tenants wouldn't be subject to the eccentricities of different landlords in a pioneer city. But, the ghetto-like housing was bound to create frictions and unpleasantness. The Embassy and Embassy Residence had swimming pools. The Embassy had tennis courts, a club house, and very active programs to try to provide constructive outlets for individuals and families. The Brazilian ministries did the same thing, constructing sports clubs for their personnel around the lake.

Returning to the substance of our bilateral relations, the United States was concerned for decades over the stability of Brazil and the growth of leftist or communist influence in Brazil and the hemisphere. That was the stimulus for the Alliance for Progress. Our analysis in Brazil concentrated on what was developing among political parties, what was the military doing, how were the peasant leagues faring in the poor northeast. Extensive reporting over the years following World War II analyzed the political currents throughout Brazil.

Bob Sayre came to the conclusion that Brazil was more stable than that, and our preoccupation with developments throughout the country was overdrawn. Brazil no longer required that microscopic attention to internal politics. Our resources ought to be doing more critical work. Our interest was in getting Brazil to recognize its regional and indeed a worldwide leadership potential. We ought to be encouraging that.

He reclassified a position in the political section to carry out a dialogue with the Brazilians on international issues. There was some initial resistance on our staff to the change, but the Ambassador won out. The Brazilians, when the initial fellow came down to take over the job, were skeptical that there was anything to talk about. In a short time, they found the discussions beneficial to us all. Over the years the redirection of that position was a decision that paid dividends. It was an important part of the successful effort to get the Brazilians to talk with us about larger problems that were of mutual concern.

*Q: The Reagan Administration was elected in November 1980 and Tony Motley was named as Ambassador. He had been born in Brazil of American parents.*

HIGH: Of an American father who had been in the military or business there and a Brazilian mother. His mother lived in Rio while he was Ambassador.

*Q: How did this hit the Embassy when you heard about this? I know there was a lot of talk in the United States by those who were interested in political affairs.*

HIGH: My recollection is that it didn't have much of an impact at all on us in the Embassy. Tony Motley had made a private visit to Brazil beforehand and had called on the Air Force Attaché. He had been in the US Air Force. I guess as a candidate for the job he was looking around to see what the place looked like.

Everybody was anticipating that there would be a change but had no idea what direction it would take. There was the sense that more often than not the Ambassador had been a political appointee rather than a career person, or at least there was a fair chance it would be a political appointment. People by in large took it in stride and were just curious to see what the new person was going to be like.

The Brazilians, of course, were also curious. Here was this fellow who previously had lived among them and gone to school in Rio. What did he portend? There was an initial issue that Tony had to renounce his Brazilian citizenship to become the American Ambassador. He was a dual national at the time of his appointment. So he had to specifically take that step and then the Brazilian government had to act on it. It took them a while to put the final crossed t's and dotted i's to achieve that.

*Q: How did he arrive and how did he operate?*

HIGH: Tony Motley was a very open person. He was very quick to relate to people, very keen to get their personal input into what he wanted to do. He asked for advice, sought out people. At times he walked the halls of his Embassy, stopping in to see people, sometimes with a purpose, sometimes to chat. He was very concerned with people's morale and how they were getting on. His modus operandi was "I can't perform effectively unless I have good support and advice from my people." He didn't always do what he heard from us. In fact, there were a number of times when he didn't do what his staff recommended. Often as not, he was right and his staff was wrong.

I thought he was really quite tolerant of all of us. I am not quite saying that right. Let me give you an example. When he had been there only for a couple weeks and I was still very fresh as his DCM, we were trying to get the Brazilians to agree to an appointment for an official visitor who was coming down shortly. I don't recall, but the appointment was probably with the Foreign Minister. The Brazilians were dragging their feet on giving us any kind of an answer. This led to pressure from Washington asking what was going on and why couldn't we get the appointment. I learned about the acceptance of the request late one afternoon. In my role as his deputy, I should have picked up that telephone and called Tony, who was at home, to let him know. While that information was very important to us, other matters distracted my attention and I didn't call.

Lo and behold, that night we were both with our wives at the National Theater in Brasilia talking to another Brazilian official between acts. The Brazilian remarked about the acceptance of the proposed visit. Tony looked at me and said, "Oh, you knew this?" And I had to admit that I had been made aware of it about four hours earlier and had not gotten the word to him. I thought he

took that kind of nicely.

No one in our business likes to be caught by surprise, and this was a surprise, even if a nice one. Tony could have told me about it then or the next day. A look was enough to say, "You left me high and dry, fellow." In the service, one generally remembers subtleties.

People working for Tony Motley felt relaxed with him, but not to the tune of being complacent. You felt part of his team; you depended on him, and he on you. You wanted to do well by him and you wanted him to do well. He was very concerned about people and his staff. He went around and visited the consulates, made himself known there. Bob Sayre did, too. Both were very good about getting out to the consulates and had twice-a-year mission meetings that included the principal officers. So our officers were as drawn in by Sayre as they were by Motley through visits and meetings.

Motley went very quickly about developing personal relationships with the top military people and the top people in government. I guess there is a mixed picture there, particularly in the contrast you are suggesting with your question in terms of Sayre and Motley. Bob Sayre was much more traditional, if you want to use that term, in developing his relationships at the presidency and the foreign and other ministries. It was professional-to-professional.

When a border war nearly broke out between Ecuador and Peru, it was the United States, Chile and Brazil who were the guarantor powers. This all came in about 1981. Brazil played the central role in pulling the two warring countries apart. Joao Clemente Baena Soares, the deputy Brazilian Foreign Minister, who now heads the Organization of American States, was the coordinator. Bob Sayre worked very closely with him and with the Department in Washington. Baena was very professional. There were long hours of meetings between Sayre and Baena and reports of their exchanges in the long-distance negotiations. After agreements were reached and the fighting stopped, Bob Sayre gave a dinner for Baena to recognize his work in keeping the peace. Sayre gave Baena a fancy telephone with a plaque commemorating long-distance peacekeeping. In his remarks, Sayre observed that Baena often had a telephone at each ear as he talked to both parties. So, Sayre had very much of a highly polished, professional relationship with the Foreign Ministry leadership and with the Economics Ministry, as well. He had strong interests and background in economics and the issues dealt with were important.

Tony Motley came in as the new boy on the block. Every now and then he would do something that really was spontaneous and not necessarily diplomatic. He won very close relationships at the Foreign Ministry, as well, and certainly in other ministries of the government while I was there, based on his warm personality, hard work, and command of the language. He simply had to start running from a different vantage point because he wasn't a diplomat.

A final point I would make is that some political appointees are able to relate quickly and well to the Foreign Service as professionals, because they understand that we are there to serve and support them. Tony Motley was part of that school. Other political appointees are by nature suspicious and mistrustful of the Foreign Service for a variety of reasons. Maybe it is because we career officers serve both political parties, whichever is in office, or because of their lack, in some cases, of experience in diplomacy, or because of insecurity that they won't measure up.

Mistrust by the political appointees can breed mistrust from the Foreign Service side, and when it does, it is as unfortunate as it is counterproductive. Diplomats and politicians in those circumstances will never be the sum of our parts.

*Q: Was there any particular change in American policy towards Brazil with the new administration?*

HIGH: Relations with Brazil during the latter years of the Carter administration were substantially improved. For example, the Embassy sought to have assigned to the mission an American brigadier general to head the defense attaché's office. The objective was to reestablish the warmth of professional relations with the Brazilian military that had existed in earlier years. The Brazilians were unhappy that the defense attaché office was headed at the colonel rank. The Brazilians really wanted an Army man and a general officer.

That change was secured, but the first incumbent was an admiral. Later, he was succeeded by a general with impressive credentials and the language capability to further the dialogue between the services.

The Congressional visits continued. Economic nationalism and restraints placed on some of the U.S. companies in Brazil were issues beginning to enter the bilateral discussion.

Motley had to deal with some of those issues in his period of time in Brasilia. I was there for roughly the first year of his Ambassadorship.

One interesting event during that period was the visit to Brasilia of Henry Kissinger. The U.S.-trained president of the University of Brasilia had a program to invite prominent foreigners to the campus to speak. Kissinger came to Brazil to speak there and at several events in Sao Paulo and perhaps Rio.

I accompanied Kissinger to his talk at the university in Brasilia. It went well for awhile, and then there were loud noises outside. It proved to be a demonstration by students against his visit. A large number of students participated, and one of their tactics was to bang on the air conditioning vents that were decorative and went up the outside wall of the auditorium. Kissinger handled the interruption with aplomb, but the noise became so loud that he had to draw his remarks to a close.

Police reinforcements arrived, but the crowd kept Kissinger and his party in the auditorium building. We waited some time in an office, hoping the protesters would leave. They didn't.

Finally, Kissinger was placed in a police carryall parked in an inside passageway. He was to be driven out through the crowd. The carryall was filled with police and Kissinger sat in the back seat. At the last minute I jumped in the front seat on a policeman's lap. I didn't think it was such a hot idea for me to stay behind should anything happen to Kissinger in the vehicle. We zoomed out of the passageway. The students shouted, but didn't throw anything. And Kissinger was deposited at his luncheon site on time.

The anger of the students apparently was as much against the university administration run by a military appointee, as it was against anything Kissinger or what the United States represented. The students were also annoyed that they were excluded from the conference hall and couldn't participate. The audience was made up of prominent figures at the university and in the government.

Several years later, Kissinger's security guard assured me that he was not worried that anything untoward would happen to the former secretary at the demonstration. I am not sure my adrenaline told me the same thing at the time.

*Q: Was the Falklands crisis at that time or did that come after your time?*

HIGH: Yes, it took place while I was there. We had some communications from the Department and we were reporting positions taken by Brazil. But Brazil didn't become a large factor in the conflict. There was a British bomber which landed in Rio and the pilots were interned. Surely the British wanted Brazil to remain on the sidelines and provide moderating counsel to the Argentines. That was my perspective from Brasilia.

One more aspect of my assignment to Brazil related to my wife. Beth had the customary functions of being supportive of the Ambassador and his wife and of the wives and staff of the Embassy. We had a heavy social life.

Beth's greatest satisfaction came from working first as a volunteer occupational therapist and then as a paid staff member at the Sarah Kubitschek Rehabilitation Hospital in Brasilia. The hospital was new and had been founded by Dr. Campos de Paz, a leader in rehabilitation medicine in Brazil. Beth thoroughly enjoyed working with the doctors and other professionals at the hospital. The outreach this provided us among working Brazilians was also rewarding personally. Beth made a lot of friends for us and won the respect of her professional colleagues.

At this time the State Department was becoming very aware of the frustrations of Foreign Service spouses who wanted to work and pursue professional activity at overseas posts. The United States was mostly indifferent to the working spouses of foreign diplomats assigned to Washington. However, foreign countries generally had laws or policies prohibiting or severely limiting such opportunities for us. Because of this situation, the State Department began to negotiate reciprocal agreements with foreign governments to enable spouses of diplomats to work.

In Brazil, we decided to use Beth's situation as a trial case. Not long after she began her volunteer work in Brasilia, she was offered employment by the rehabilitation hospital. We sought permission for this from the Brazilian government, but there was resistance from the Labor and Foreign ministries. We worked on this for over two years. Finally, when it got down to the point of our willingness to have Beth sign a waiver of her diplomatic immunity insofar as her work was concerned; Beth signed and the Brazilians granted the desired work permit.

The last five months we were in Brazil, Beth was paid a salary for her work at the hospital. We hoped that would set a precedent for other spouses in the Embassy. I am not sure that hope

became a reality after we left. But the wives of other nations' diplomats were watching Beth's progress closely.

**GEORGE A. McFARLAND, JR.**  
**Political Counselor**  
**Brasilia (1978-1982)**

*Mr. McFarland was born and raised in Texas and educated at Southern Methodist University and the Universities of Texas and Princeton. After a brief journalist career, he joined the Foreign Service and was assigned to the Passport office in Washington. His subsequent overseas assignments, primarily as Political Officer, were in San Jose, Nicosia, Istanbul, Lima, Ankara, Brasilia and Antigua, where he served as Deputy Chief of Mission and Chargé d'Affaires. He also served as Cyprus Desk Officer in Washington. Mr. McFarland was interviewed by Lewis Hoffacker in 1999.*

*Q: But in the meantime.*

MCFARLAND: It's a hard issue to settle, but I was deeply disappointed. Okay, well after I went on from Turkey to Princeton and then started looking for an onward assignment, I didn't want to go back to Washington because the jobs there just weren't adequate. There was nothing good at all, so I started looking around overseas, and there was an opening as political counselor in Brasilia, which was at least equivalent to what I had had before and was still a stretch assignment. The only problem was that I had never been in Brazil, and I had no Portuguese, but I had had previous South American experience, and I had been political counselor in a Class I post, a far more challenging post than Brasilia, for that matter, and I had gotten an A in the course. But Robert Sayre was the ambassador there, and for some reason, over the overwhelming contrary advice of everyone in the Brazil Office, he asked for me as his political counselor. And then when I began challenging him on various things he may have regretted it, but anyway, we moved to Brasilia and it was another quiet time in another military dictatorship, but this time I had what turned into an excellent political section. It wasn't so great at first. I had inherited this same zero quantity from Harvard that I had been taxed with when I started in Ankara, but I persuaded him to move on, and people came in of top quality. I had three Ph.D.'s working for me at one point, having one who moved down from INR. My number two after a year or so is now an ambassador in Africa. I helped both of them. I gave both of them great reviews.

*Q: What about your Portuguese? Did you have time to study?*

MCFARLAND: I was given five weeks to adapt my Spanish to Portuguese. Unfortunately, FSI was not well prepared to do this, and -

*Q: That's not much time.*

MCFARLAND: It's not, no, and I came out of it with a basic knowledge of Portuguese, but

without fluency. I was slow in speaking, and once I got to Brasilia, there were other things to do besides participate in Portuguese. Anyway, in a year or so, I had enough to function in the embassy. And Portuguese and Spanish, you know, don't coexist very well in a person's mind unless he uses them constantly, and even then. I spoke Spanish at home with my wife and Portuguese with the Brazilians, but the two would cross over into one another. Even the native Spanish-speakers had that problem.

*Q: Buy you and Sayre got along eventually*

MCFARLAND: No, not really. Sayre was a very cold fish. He didn't go out and mix with the Brazilians. I picked up an excellent contact high up in the Foreign Ministry, and he decided he liked that, and that was his contact in the Foreign Ministry from then on. And he had certain ideas that were his and were fixed and he was not going to be talked out of them, and I had the temerity to tell him so. For one thing, he insisted that the military government was really a nest of democrats, in effect, and while he was off on home leave, I wrote a report on the corruption in the military, and when he came back he was just about ready to sack me. He demanded an immediate explanation. I had undercut all of his work for the two previous years convincing people in Washington that the military were outstanding people, and, well, they were moving towards an "opening," as they call it, toward democracy, but it was still a directive government, authoritarian with just the dressings of a military controlled parliament, but a military president and so on. And I fortunately was able to go back and give him a memo citing exactly the inverse, picking up all of this, that, and the other. And I didn't hear any more about it, and I wasn't sacked, but he was president of the Promotion Board. And it was only after Tony Motley arrived, a political appointee, that was far, far superior to Sayre, better than an FSO ambassador, and I finally got promoted in the senior service. By that time I was into my early 50's. I think I was 51 or 52. It was a little late. I should have had that promotion ten years earlier if I was going to do anything with it. And I suppose before I left Brasilia I was already seriously thinking about retiring. I asked for Ankara, which I thought I'd be a shoo-in, but just in case I asked also a DCM-ship in Lisbon. I had Portuguese by that time, fluent at it. And Lima, where I managed on a previous tour and then my wife's connection. And in each case it went to a favorite. And I was thoroughly disillusioned. And all the other jobs - a political-military advisor - I didn't care all that much about them, but they didn't happen anyhow. So I was thinking about having to go to Washington and writing another paper for a year waiting for an onward assignment and worrying about what this would do to my children, to be jerked around from post to post. And a job opened up, well below my grade, as DCM, but actually chargé d'affaires, in Antigua, in the Caribbean, with responsibility for Antigua, and St. Kitt's and Nevis, which became a republic two months after I arrived, and the three British Crown Colonies, Montserrat, and the British Virgin Islands. I thought it would be wonderful. And it sounded like the chance to be in charge of a post. And it was better than going to Washington, I thought, better than writing a paper and just killing time waiting for something. It turned out, by the way, that if I had gone to Washington, I would have been in Ankara a year later, because the DCM went out on time in grade.

*Q: But did you get to Antigua?*

MCFARLAND: I did go to Antigua in 1983, after my four years in Brasilia. I had, by the way, a

total of eight years as political counselor in two Class I posts from two different areas.

**CLARKE M. BRINTNALL**  
**Office of International Security Affairs, Department of Defense**  
**Washington, DC (1978-1983)**

*Brigadier General Clark M. Brintnall was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska. He graduated from West Point Academy in 1958. His career included service in Brazil, Panama, and Vietnam. Brigadier General Brintnall was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1996.*

*Q: Were you getting anything from the Brazilians, who, as you say, their main military is sort of "within call" to the Argentine border, isn't it?*

BRINTNALL: Yes.

*Q: A certain amount of feeling that this is not a very good army? Were you getting any of that?*

BRINTNALL: Well, yes. It made a lot of armies take a good look at their logistics capabilities. I think a lot of armies at that point looked at themselves and asked, "What could we do?"

*Q: Did this cause an increase in looking to the United States to help?*

BRINTNALL: Not that I am aware of.

*Q: What did they do about it?*

BRINTNALL: Well, they looked at themselves, principally. Brazil could not look to the United States. Remember at that time, we still could not provide security assistance because of restrictions imposed by human rights and nuclear proliferation legislation. We were also beginning to have problems with space launch vehicle technology. So, even if they wanted to look to us, there was not a lot we could have done at that time. We were barred by law from doing very much.

*Q: Did you feel the hand of Richard Perle? Was he there at that time?*

BRINTNALL: He was there at that time.

*Q: Because he is, I've heard him labeled "the Prince of Darkness." I mean he is a very strong and has very strong ideas-he had been a Congressional staff person and had come in and did you feel that he was a force of direction? Anyway, did you feel his hand?*

BRINTNALL: Yes, we felt his "hand," particularly in the area of the Space Launch Vehicle Technology. Richard Perle didn't want anything to...

*Q: Could you explain what that is?*

BRINTNALL: Brazil considers itself a major, sovereign nation with a need to have its own space program and launch its own satellites with its own technology. It doesn't believe that it should have to justify this to anyone. In order to launch a satellite, one must have rockets capable of doing so. You must also be able to guide this rocket into orbit. What is the difference between a civilian and a military rocket? Basically it is where it is aimed and what it carries. The U.S. Government was therefore concerned not only with space technology, but nuclear technology as well. The U.S. did not want to see Brazil develop a nuclear weapon and also have the capability to launch it. Our problem was to find ways to work with Brazil and find ways to introduce safeguards so that we could cooperate in these areas. Richard Perle and his team were properly concerned about nuclear and missile proliferation throughout the world. The problem was that Brazil was going forward in both areas. Just saying "no" wouldn't put the genie back in the bottle. I saw the problem as how could we work together with Brazil and develop such safeguards?

*Q: His position at this time in the Department of Defense was...what was he?*

BRINTNALL: There had been a reorganization that split ISA, or International Security Affairs, into two parts, ISA and ISP ( International Security Policy). ISP was responsible for NATO and global issues to include nuclear non-proliferation and missile technology.

*Q: Was the thrust of Pearl and his supporters that we are not going to give anything to Brazil because Brazil might cause trouble there or because somehow Brazil might tie into the Soviet Union?*

BRINTNALL: He didn't want to see any new countries acquire or develop these technologies. If we just said "no" long enough we could keep it from happening. Of course, that isn't true. Saying "no" may slow things down, but it won't stop them. Eventually, they will acquire the technology.

*Q: You find, as we were doing this that the French were pushing very hard their rocket technology. Were they kind of filling in behind it?*

BRINTNALL: We were concerned that this might be happening but it turned out that Brazil was getting its guidance components from various parts of the world. The French were supplying some, the Germans some. But not in a major way. But we were concerned about them developing these weapons and then selling them to pariah countries -- Iraq, countries such as this.

*Q: Well now, how did we look at Brazil at this time? Obviously you had to keep a very long watch on Brazil in one form or another. At this time, during the early 1980's-early Reagan, what was our attitude towards Brazil?*

BRINTNALL: It was that Brazil was very important, and we should try to work with them. But we were blocked from doing very much because of space launch vehicle technology and nuclear

issues. We commissioned an ISA study and divided Latin America into geographic areas: the Andean Region, Central America and the Caribbean, and the South Atlantic. When you say the South Atlantic this brings in a NATO emphasis to the area. NATO was interested in the Atlantic Narrows because of the Soviet submarine threat. Here was the best place to monitor their activities in the South Atlantic. We developed initiatives for key countries of each region. For example, it was at this time that the U.S. approved the sale of F-16's to Venezuela. In Brazil, we worked together to establish a series of joint staff talks in 1983 and they continue today. We also worked out some important exchanges to include one involving the U.S. Army Training Doctrine Command, or TRADOC, providing Brazil with up-to-date information on our Army doctrine. We did everything we could to try and bring Brazil towards us and share those things ideas given the limitations of the law.

Another initiative that I had a direct hand in was that of proposing that Brazil be offered the opportunity to participate in our space program. We had not yet had a foreign astronaut. This was proposed as a way to engender space cooperation between our two countries. It wasn't just hype. It didn't go anywhere until 1981. I was watching President Reagan's appearance in front of the Brazilian-American Chamber in Sao Paulo during the President's visit to Brazil, and I heard him make the offer to join us in space with a Brazilian astronaut. I thought the idea had died, but there it was, alive and well. But the Brazilians didn't take him up on the offer. It was too bad. I believe it would have been good for both countries.

*Q: Were these joint staff talks...what does this mean?*

BRINTNALL: They were held annually and covered a mutually agreed upon agenda. Included were such things as drugs, doctrine, the Amazon, space, and others. We agree upon an agenda. Things that we should discuss on an annual basis -- our way of looking at certain things. They tended not to be very controversial, but they were a means of exchanging thoughts and airing ideas at a fairly high level.

*Q: All this time this is going on, you still are very aggressive, at least from our perspective, with the Soviet Union with the Blue Water Navy, and you had Brazil which sort of dominated the South Atlantic, how is this-had cooperation fallen off on this aspect of our relationship with Brazil?*

BRINTNALL: Navy cooperation continued in the form of the annual Unitas Exercise where our Navy goes around South America and West Africa and holds exercises with their navies. This continued despite the other difficulties. Brazil had a modest Navy and it really couldn't provide the sort of surveillance in the South Atlantic that would be required to keep up with the very quiet Soviet submarines. Unitas was a way to maintain our good relations and to help keep an eye on what the Soviets were doing in the South Atlantic.

*Q: Were we still flying P-3's out of...?*

BRINTNALL: Yes, P-3's. These were an important means of watching the Soviet submarines. We were able to receive Brazilian permission to stage some P-3 flights out of Recife. This was not easy but this was important because it covered the Atlantic Narrows.

*Q: During the flotilla that started moving towards the Falklands, did the Brazilians sort of shut things down for us at that time?*

BRINTNALL: No. Not really. In fact, there was a British plane that landed in Rio during this period, and everybody was hoping that nobody would notice and that it would fly away. The Brazilians did not want to offend either the British or the Argentines.

*Q: One of the "V" Bombers.*

BRINTNALL: I don't recall, but it put the Brazilians in a difficult position. They didn't want have to take sides.

**KENTON W. KEITH**  
**Deputy Public Affairs Officer, USIS**  
**Brasilia (1980-1983)**

*Ambassador Keith was born and raised in Kansas City, Missouri. After graduating from the University of Kansas he served with the US Navy before entering the Foreign Service in 1965. An Arabic speaking Officer, Ambassador Keith served as Public Affairs Officer and/ or Cultural Affairs in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Syria, France and Brazil before his appointment as US Ambassador to Qatar. His Washington service included several tours in senior positions with USIA. Ambassador Keith was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.*

*Q: You were in Brazil from when to when?*

KEITH: From 1980 to 1983.

*Q: What were you doing?*

KEITH: I was deputy PAO.

*Q: You were located in Brasilia at that point?*

KEITH: I was located in Brasilia but my main responsibility was the supervision of the six branch posts and the program division. The "P" Division was responsible for the creation and implementation of programs and public diplomacy materials in an organized, systematic approach throughout Brazil. It was a time when the Agency was growing up as a public diplomacy agency as well. We recognized we could not have an impact across the board, that we had to put our limited resources in certain areas and try to develop much more sophisticated tools and approaches to our exchanges and so on. That was a very interesting time. I believe we really matured in that period.

*Q: In Brazil, how did you find the situation? You mentioned the colonels. You had served in Syria and other places.*

KEITH: Rather benign. Of course, I was not there in the period of the heaviest repression and at the same time one would have to say that what happened in Argentina's "dirty war" never happened in Brazil on that kind of scale.

*Q: None of the disappearances.*

KEITH: By the time I got there in 1980, there had already been some political liberalization. There had been a general amnesty and people who left during the troubles of the early '70s began to float back in and to emerge as professionals and lawyers and journalists and so on. They were free to act, to talk. The most noteworthy of the old revolutionary group, Figueiredo, was writing his memoirs. The whole period I was there from '80-'83, the country was preparing for elections, preparing for a transition to democratic government. One of the things that we helped with was the examination of constitutional issues and the building of democratic models. They were taking a pragmatic approach to the writing of a constitution and the establishment of a legislature and a professional legislative staff. We had much to offer. They also wanted people to come down who were ex-legislators, ex-senators and congressmen for advice about the role of the legislator.

It was an interesting time for us to be there. At the time, we had the president and the vice president in separate visits to Brazil. Figueiredo, the president, was a sick man in both real and metaphorical sense. He really was in poor health, and metaphorically the system had produced him, the generals, the colonels, was old and sick. They had been outgrown by the population. It was just inevitable that there was going to be this move to a democratic system. A new generation of technocrats, including a number of economists who had been trained at the University of Chicago, was rising to power. It was a very fascinating time to be in Brazil.

*Q: Were we at all tainted because our ambassador to the UN, Jean Kirkpatrick, had reached the attention of Ronald Reagan mainly on the theme that these authoritarian regimes in Latin America are really not bad as far as we're concerned? I would have thought that at least from the point of view of our people stationed in Argentina, we're watching this dying breed. This was not the message we wanted to give out.*

KEITH: No, it wasn't. But Jean Kirkpatrick never came to Brazil while I was there, the president and vice president did. Those visits had great symbolic importance. We were encouraging the move to democracy. The Vice President was Bush and the President was Reagan. Say what you will about the Republican administration of that time; they were professionals and they listened to the professionals in the field. At 6:00 am, we'd be there and Reagan, Shultz and their team would listen and ask questions. "Will this speech work? Are we making the right points?" I sat down with their speechwriter and we went over much of the policy material, and we could see how we had influenced it the final product. They were listening. I admired that even if I didn't particularly identify with that party.

*Q: Can you talk about the intellectual and political elite that was waiting to take over after the military stepped down? Were we working with them?*

KEITH: As I said, for better or for worse, a lot of the people who were running the Brazilian economy were out of the University of Chicago. We were working with the emerging political elites and with the academics. We were also working with the major media, helping to establish links between them and the U.S. The emerging elites were people who were not radicals, they were people we knew we could work with. They were for free markets, economic reform and democratic governance.

*Q: I would have thought there would have been difficulty. One, Brazil is a huge country. Two, the capital is not London, Paris, or Rome, where everybody gets together. They all live somewhere else. I would think that the sheer problem of the shadow government waiting to get in being in Sao Paulo or Rio...*

KEITH: The truth is, we were closer to those people than we were to the government. We had posts in Rio, Sao Paulo, Recife, Belo Horizonte and Salvador. We knew not only the emerging political elite but the cultural elite from George Amado to the hottest young photographer. They wanted to know us and we wanted to know them. They wanted a close relationship with us and we wanted one with them. We had a lot more in common with them than we had with the colonels and generals.

*Q: How about the colonels and generals? I would have thought that there is nothing more annoying than a dying establishment sitting there brooding while they're watching people pay attention to others.*

KEITH: The problems with the country were outgrowing them. The problems could not be handled anymore the way the generals worked. There was an inevitability about the change that was coming. By the way, the generals and the colonels were basically pro-American, too. They had been junior officers serving with the Allies in World War II.

*Q: Did you find connecting to the media, getting the word out, how was it best done?*

KEITH: Actually Brazil was the first post in which I felt no compulsion to “get the word out,” or to win hearts and minds. We had important cultural and public diplomacy equities all over Brazil, including an active collection of Brazilian-American centers in the northeast. In fact, our public diplomacy challenge in Brazil was different from any I had experienced in Turkey or the Arab countries. Brazil was already a modern state with a world-ranking economy. The economy of Sao Paulo state was second in Latin America after the economy of Brazil itself. The country had a crime problem in its large cities, but no internal instability or threat from outside. Its media, especially the large TV networks, dominated the Lusophone world, and its famous tele-novellas (soap operas) were popular throughout Europe and the Spanish-speaking world. There weren't any wars, skirmishes, or serious tensions with neighbors.

Culturally, Brazil was, for me, a fantastic new world of music, literature and art. And Brazilians already had a deep appreciated American art. They acknowledged the impact of American jazz

on their music and the influence of American writers

Our concerns about Brazil focused on two areas: the march toward democracy and their massive economic challenges. I've touched on the democratic evolution. Economically, the country was in chronic trouble. There was galloping inflation, which was a major worry. There was heavy investment in the Brazilian economy by American banks, and there was looming the almost inevitable default on the huge debt they owed to Chase Manhattan and other American banks. Their monetary policy and the IMF prescriptions were putting heavy pressure on consumers. So to put it mildly, we were confronted with different kinds of challenges than those I had known in the Islamic world.

*Q: The advent of Reagan on the scene... For those from outside, he was a movie actor and as an extreme right-wing person. Did it take a little persuasion of the people to trust Ronald Reagan?*

KEITH: Yes. There was a certain amount of that. I think that there was a period in which the people were trying to get used to the idea of Reagan, but he was so charming when he came to Brazil. Brazil was an important country for us and he went rather early on in his tenure. I think the power of his personal appeal and magnetism largely won them over. His speech in Sao Paulo to the State Legislature was pure Reagan, full of admiration for the Brazilian people and encouragement for their political evolution. He had only briefly glanced at the draft, but delivered it as if he had written every word himself.

**LANGHORNE A. MOTLEY**  
**Ambassador**  
**(1981-1983)**

*Ambassador Langhorne A. Motley was born and raised in Brazil. He received a bachelor's degree in political science from the Citadel in 1960. He then served in the U.S. Air Force for 10 years before being appointed ambassador to Brazil. Ambassador Motley was interviewed in 1991 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

*Q: Before you left for Brazil, did you get any training?*

MOTLEY: Whatever preparation I got, I got on my own except for the 3-day Ambassadorial Seminar. One of the problems the Foreign Service had -- and although it is working on the problem, it still has it to a degree -- is that it didn't know how to handle new Ambassadors, either career or non-career. Foreign Service officers know enough about the system so that they manage to get "read in" -- they go to the country desk and read background material and speak to their predecessors. It is an informal system. There wasn't a check list for new Ambassadors; we tried later to develop one. I made myself available in Washington at my own expense; there is no mechanism to put you on temporary duty. You are not on the payroll until you are sworn in. So, I made myself available. I knew enough about governmental processes from my state and Air Force experiences to know who to talk to. I made a point to see the country director for Brazil -- Lowell Kilday, later my Deputy Assistant Secretary and Ambassador to the Dominican Republic.

He was very knowledgeable, had served in Brazil and spoke Portuguese. I went to see him and struck up a good personal and professional relationship. I told him that I wanted to see people and to read and try to find out what was going on.

I am a competitive person by nature; I was determined to do a good job. I had been a regular Air Force officer -- I understood the feelings of the career officers toward political appointees. I, therefore, spent a lot of time learning about Brazil, but no one gave me a check list of "do's and don't's"; there is no such system. The problem, which did not exist in Kilday's case, is that most desk officers are young, second or third tour officers, who are awed by the idea of an Ambassador and are not going to tell him or her what to do. There is no book that tells the desk officer how to care and feed an Ambassador. When I became Assistant Secretary, we used to tell all Ambassadorial appointees to get to know their desk officers and the first thing the political appointees got is an "age shock" because the desk officer, who is to be their best friend, is a kid of 28 or 29. This raises some doubts in the Ambassador's mind. Of course, once you convince the Ambassador that this is the right approach, then you have to convince the young officer on the desk that he or she has to tell an Ambassador what needs to be done. So, at the beginning of the process, nothing happens. We later made vain attempts to fix that problem, but when I first got started in the State Department, I was pretty much on my own.

I was lucky to have Kilday as my "shepherd", but I also had the advantage of knowing my way around government -- State was not much different from other bureaucracies. I knew that Bud McFarlane was an important decision-maker and, in my appointment process, Tom Enders was not. By the same token, I knew that if I were to be appointed, I knew that Tom Enders was going to be my boss and I had therefore had to get along with him.

Foreign Service officers, who are supposed to be skillful at knowing the centers of power in whatever country they serve, do not apply these skills when they are in Washington. I have never understood that. When they come home, they lose their skills.

*Q: Did you receive any instructions before leaving for Brazil or did you set yourself some goals?*

MOTLEY: Tom Enders has one of the deepest and broadest intellects that I have ever encountered -- he is so smart and intelligent, that it may be one of his short-comings because he intimidates people -- he intimidated some of the political hierarchy which led to his leaving the job of Assistant Secretary sooner than he should. Tom, in his inimitable fashion, told me in a sweeping way that we needed to put a group together which would bring Motley into the fold and see what we should do in Brazil. So he spent 40 seconds on Brazil, giving these instructions, and then back to Central America. I know that is the process because when I took that job, that is what I had to do.

I was asked to write some stuff out of the blue, which in retrospect, was amateurish. There were a couple of specific ideas that were useful. Mainly, we were trying to re-establish a relationship with the Brazilian government which had reached a nadir in the Carter days. The previous President of Brazil, an "elected" military officer, had thrown out the Peace Corps and had thrown out the joint U.S.-Brazil Military Commission even though Brazil was the only Latin American country that fought along side us in World War II and is very proud of that relationship. There

was no economic assistance program; there hadn't been one for quite a while and they didn't want one. Relationships were not good; President Geisel was offended by Mrs. Carter's visit; he was most offended that the President's wife would be sent on an official visit -- like a mini-state visit. He sent his wife to meet her at the airport. Mrs. Carter considered herself to be a substantive person and all the messages from Washington emphasized that point; she would be empowered to negotiate on behalf of her husband. That didn't sit well in the Latin culture; they may have been wrong; that was not the issue. The fact was that the choice of Mrs. Carter to head a delegation was insensitive to the Brazilians' feelings.

That was the climate I entered into when I arrived in Brazil. As Tom Enders said to me: "Always pick your predecessor." I didn't pick my predecessor, but there was no doubt that in the Reagan Administration, the relationships between the two countries improved dramatically. I just happened to be along for the ride. I benefitted from the nadir that I found and was able to accomplish a number of good things. The relationship between President Figueiredo and Reagan did become very good and we managed to achieve a few substantive and a few perceptual goals. The climate was right, although you need to take advantage of that and have the ability to act on it. We were able to do that.

*Q: What was this working group that Enders set up?*

MOTLEY: It was a working group on paper only. I think it only met once. Kilday wrote all the papers. There were four or five issues that had been determined needed fixing. It was typical Department operation; the issues got fuzzed up. One issue was the re-establishment of the military relationship and how to do that -- encourage military visits, establish a military liaison office, etc. Another issue was to try to get the Brazilians quietly to sign the Treaty Tatlaloco which would have put the nuclear facilities under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguard, but would not confront the issue publicly a la Jimmy Carter. Another problem had to do with what I call the "Flying of the U.S. commercial flag overseas," or pushing U.S. business, which I was delighted to tackle.

It was a generic issue, but became a point of emphasis with the Reagan administration. We did make considerable headway on that point. I had a very creative commercial counselor -- and there aren't many creative counselors in the Service. Between the two of us, we got a lot done. He won the Commerce Department's silver award two years in a row. His name was Smelio Iodice, now in Italy, after a tour in Mexico.

Human rights was not on the agenda because it was just not an issue for the Reagan administration nor a problem in Brazil. Central America came later. But the papers were broad brush and it was left to the Embassy to put the flesh on the bones. In the area of military cooperation, I conned the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and some of the Chiefs of Staff to visit Brazil in the two years I was there. I went with them on their military tours.

Being an effective Ambassador requires as much work in Washington as in the city of your assignment. It stuns me to see the number of Ambassadors who don't understand that. Before I left Washington, I had seen every Secretary of important Cabinet Departments -- Agriculture, Commerce, Treasury, Defense, the Coast Guard Commander, the head of the FAA, CIA,

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the Chief of Staff of each of the services. On the Hill, I called on the foreign affairs committees and the Latin America subcommittee chairmen, although I didn't see the House members until after Senate confirmation -- the Senate is very sensitive on that point. I, of course, knew a lot of these guys, so many of the calls were actually re-visits. My theory was and is that if you encounter a problem in a large U.S. representational establishment like we had in Brazil -- we had an Embassy and two Consulates General and six Consulates; there were fourteen or fifteen different agencies represented, including a Library of Congress staff in Rio, somebody from the Maritime administration, someone from the FAA, plus the usual representation from Commerce, CIA, Agriculture and the military, DEA -- you had to make connections in Washington. You support the agency's representative in the Embassy by asking him or her if there was anything I could do for them while in Washington for consultation. When you send that signal to an embassy, they are going to pull together with you. An ambassador has to establish himself as the head of the whole embassy. The challenge for a Foreign Service officer is not to be seen as just the State Department's representative. The challenge for a non-career appointee is to make sure that the other agencies do not perceive him as having been "captured" by State Department or CIA or the military. All other agencies are looking for that "capture"; it is a challenge. The other Departments are no different than the Department of State; they also have bureaucratic log-jams that inhibit decision-making. If you have the ability to call Cap Weinberger, the Secretary of Defense, and ask him why it had taken so long to get a decision out of his International Security Affairs staff, for example, the next call you get is from the ISA Assistant Secretary whom I had called first and not gotten any results. He would ask why I called Cap and I would say that I tried him first, but had not gotten any results.

*Q: What were your views of the Embassy' staff when you arrived in Brasilia?*

MOTLEY: I had met the DCM, George High, before and I asked him to stay on because I was comfortable with him. The relationships between ambassador and DCM depends a lot on chemistry; whether the ambassador is comfortable with his deputy. You can complement each other and there may be many other reasons for a combination, but if you don't like each other, it is difficult. It is a very strange relationship which has no comparable situation; not even Captain-Executive Officer relationship in the Navy. My predecessor, Bob Sayre, who was a successful, experienced Foreign Service officer, an ambassador in several places, by nature a very quiet and shy person, had given the staff the impression that he was either mad at them or didn't care because of his demeanor. I had heard more about the Embassy before I left Washington than after I got to Brasilia. This happens to every ambassador. People just come out of the woodwork who want to tell you one thing or another. They all have axes to grind; so you listen. There are two cardinal rules: don't ever talk about your predecessor or your successor because no one will ever believe that you are objective about either and the chances are that you are not. The rap in Washington was that Brasilia was a sleepy Embassy that was not getting anything done. I am a great believer in "hitting where they ain't" -- that is, you can learn a lot from your predecessor and you can fill holes that he might have left behind. That is a good tactic; you can get a lot of things done that way. I had another advantage; I was unknown to the staff and they were unknown to me; a career ambassador would not be that way. I was just known as "some real estate salesman from Alaska", as Bob Sayre described me to a newspaper, which I didn't appreciate. I later mentioned that episode to him; we now get along fine after a somewhat rough start. I wasn't so defensive about the comment as I was fired up over this whole episode, as well

as the foot dragging that was taking place in the Ministry of Justice, which finally was resolved under pressure from my friends, not the Embassy.

When I arrived in Brasilia, I had a meeting with the Embassy staff and told them what I expected. My experience in government was that unless people know what is expected of them, they would sit there. For example, I told them that I get very upset, when after a meeting in which we decide to follow a certain course, some one changes that course without letting me know. If the course was not right, then the staff should come back to me for further discussion. But no course changes were to be made without my knowledge lest I go one way and the staff in another. That sort of thing sets me through the roof. Those were the sorts of things that I discussed with the staff.

I was well received by the Brazilians. They were intrigued by the idea of an American Ambassador who spoke Portuguese without a trace of an accent -- after all, I was born in the country and my mother was Brazilian. The Brazilian press reaction was very positive and very large which was a novel experience for the Embassy that was not accustomed to a lot or favorable press mention. That made a lot of difference to the staff. I tried to energize the staff. It was not a bad staff; there were one or two officers who terminated their tours early, and I wasn't too sorry about them. We all agreed that these curtailments were in the best interests of everybody; it was all done in a gentlemanly way. I went to see Clint Lauderdale, one of the principals in the Personnel Office and Joan Clark, the Director General, and reached an understanding with them. I knew how the government worked; so I went to see them to talk "turkey" with them. I didn't want to hear about panels and all the other procedures; I just wanted them to figure out how my personnel problems could be resolved. If I couldn't get satisfaction from Clint, I went to see Joan; he understood -- there were just some things that were beyond his level of responsibility. So we sorted out some of these personnel problems.

Three weeks after my arrival, we had a visit from Vice President Bush. He had a very successful visit, which we carried off very well. Working with an advance team was second nature with me; I was able to give the Embassy a level of expertise that they never had before. I told them not to fight the advance men; the only time that we should suggest something different is if it meant getting the Vice-President or me into trouble. Then we should argue; otherwise, the advance team should not be told how to re-invent the wheel; I told them: "Try it and you will like it." Foreign Service people don't like these events; there is a lot of grunt work that needs to be done for a Presidential or Vice Presidential visit. I went out and did the grunt work with them. I had a Foreign Service officer tell me that he wouldn't carry a walkie-talkie. I told him that he would; I carried one and he would carry one. They weren't that bad; he should try one. A lot of the visit preparation is grunt work -- detail work. A President or Vice President do not "visit" a country; they invade it. If anybody thinks differently, they don't know how visits work. When a President arrives, there are six-hundred Americans waiting for him; half of whom have been there for a couple of weeks. The Embassy has to support the operation; it can be overwhelming.

So we had the Vice-Presidential visit -- very successful. President Figueiredo visited Washington and President Ronald Reagan. Reagan reciprocated and came to Brazil for a visit. So we had a lot of these visible activities. Several Cabinet officers came -- Malcolm Baldrige (Commerce), Regan (Treasury), Bill Brock (USTR), Cap Weinberger (DOD), The Chairman of the Joint

Chiefs, the three military Chiefs of Staff, Block (Agriculture). In the Carter years, there had not been a Presidential visit, the Vice Presidential visit did not go well -- that was on the nuclear issue on which the U.S. and Brazil did not see eye-to-eye, no military chiefs, no Cabinet officers. Maybe one or two odd Deputy Secretaries who happened to pass through Brazil. There was no motivation-- the Brazilians didn't want it.

*Q: Did you urge these visits?*

MOTLEY: Yes, I believe that visits are helpful, even though they are a lot of work. I look at them from a positive point of view. Foreign Service officers see them as occasions, and they view Congressional visits this way as well, are very skeptical about such visits. I disagree with them on this issue. They are trained to take the risk out of everything -- they are well trained. They are trained to stay out of trouble because diplomacy to a large degree is meticulous work targeted at eliminating potential problems. That training teaches them that a Congressman can be a "loose cannon" who could be trouble; therefore they are wary of Congressional visits. Visits to them are a pain in the neck and can be risky. In fact, they are risky. But I tend to emphasize the positive utility of such visits. So I encouraged CODELs (Congressional Delegations).

*Q: Tell us a little about how you managed the nuclear issue in the 1981-83 period.*

MOTLEY: It did not go well and I will have to discuss this issue carefully because some of the facts were classified and may still be. It is also a very technical issue. Most Foreign Service officers and political appointees may have struggled through college physics and that was the extent of their knowledge. So when you get into the nuclear field, it is an absolutely difficult area. Most policy people -- including me, or their staffs do not have the technical knowledge necessary to arrive at certain judgements or decisions.

The questions were whether Brazil was developing a nuclear facility; if it was, how advanced was it; was it being developed for peaceful efforts or did it have more sinister purposes; why hadn't the Brazilians put it under international safeguards of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency; why wouldn't they sign the Treaty of Tlateloco. The building they were using was closed. There were reams of analyses from the Defense Intelligence Agency, from CIA and from other agencies, usually disagreeing. So the policy people had to sit in judgment of technical personnel whose findings were different. It is very difficult.

One of the great mysteries was that Brazil was one of the most pacifist countries in the Hemisphere. It didn't have a border dispute although it had ten neighbors. There are some Latin countries that have two neighbors and three border disputes. But the Brazilians viewed the question from an entirely different perspective. They said that it was the United States that had developed the atomic bomb and now wanted to deny it to every one else. It becomes a "Third World" issue. Proliferation for the Brazilians was a "Third World" issue -- "the have vs. the have-nots." That was a tough argument.

The problem was that you never knew in any great detail what the Brazilians were doing or not doing. There was another issue in the background -- not mentioned, but present. By 1981, Brazil had done a lot of business in the Middle East, both military and civilian. They had undertaken

huge construction programs -- five billion dollars each. They had sold refrigerators, frozen chickens, automobiles -- Volkswagen, Brazil, competing against Volkswagen, Germany or General Motors, Brazil competing against General Motors, USA -- in the Middle East. These Brazilian exports were bought by the Arab countries with oil, but in addition, the Arabs insisted that the Brazilians take the Arab side in the Israeli-Arab disputes. So the Brazilians beat up on the Israelis in the UN -- for example, the Brazilians voted for the "Zionism is racism" resolution. Every UN resolution the Arabs wanted, the Brazilians voted with them. To them, the issue was purely commercial. They had no hard feelings towards Israel, but the Israeli were greatly irritated and so was the Jewish community in the U.S., which is not without political clout. So, if you look at who was in the key positions in the Department of Defense and other places which were concerned with nuclear proliferation issues, it was Richard Perle and several others sprinkled around. They became anti-Brazilians because Brazil was anti-Israel. This fact really existed; people didn't talk about it; didn't write about it. But Brazil was viewed negatively by those who had sympathy for Israel. "The Brazilians are bastards on the Israeli issue; they shouldn't get an inch".

It made arriving at any rational judgment about the Brazilian position almost impossible. So the Brazilians became ineligible for Foreign Military Sales or the Military Assistance Program; there were a lot of road blocks put down by people grinding other axes -- in this case, the Israeli ax. That confused the whole issue.

In the middle of my tour -- 1982 -- Mexico and Brazil went broke. That started the debt crises. We, in the Embassy, were very active. I worked hard in securing for Brazil a bridge loan of \$500 million. This work directly involved the President of Brazil, Secretary of Treasury Don Regan, Secretary of State George Shultz, US Trade Representative Bill Brock and obviously President Reagan. I was the middle man between these top level U.S. officials and the President of Brazil and the Minister of Finance. For fiscal and precedent reasons, the Secretary of the Treasury did not want to make the bridge loan. George Shultz, who had been Treasury Secretary, was comfortable with the proposition. He didn't make economic and financial arguments, but wanted to get it done. The President wanted to get it done. He wanted to help.

Bill Brock had trade matters that he wanted to settle with Brazil. I had been in a bureaucracy long enough to know that what counted is what you have done today, not what you did lately. So I asked Brock what he wanted from the Brazilians and told him that I would obtain that concession in exchange for his support of the bridge loan. I had to make sure everyone was treated equally. What Brock wanted was Brazilian cessation to opposition to a GATT study on service industries -- GATT has only dealt with manufacturing -- and since more and more of the U.S. economy was becoming the service sector, Brock wanted GATT to do a study on services. Brazil and several other of the usual trouble-makers were blocking the proposal. The Brazilians are very skillful at it; with a small but effective portion of their Foreign Office, it is an ideological plus to stick the finger in the Yankee's eye. Their diplomats are "Third World" oriented; their Foreign Service is steeped in the U.N.-multilateral process. So I went back to President Figueiredo and told him what we needed. He said: "That is easy. I will give an order to stop our opposition". I told him that it would not be that easy. Sure enough, our Ambassador to GATT in Geneva reported a week later that the Brazilian position had not changed despite the President's order. That raised the level of frustration all around. So Figueiredo called in his

Foreign Minister and gave him hell. Still nothing happened; our Ambassador in Geneva called me to tell me that there still had been no change in the Brazilian position. Finally, on a Saturday morning, a relatively senior official of the Foreign Ministry came to see me at my residence -- an unusual event. He was visibly upset. The Brazilians have a very professional and capable Foreign Service; that is why they could give us such fits in Geneva. He told me that he had instructions to hand me a copy of a telex that had been sent to the Brazilian Ambassador in Geneva. The Brazilian Ambassador had been instructed to call our Ambassador, Mike Smith, in Geneva to read him these instructions. Ambassador Smith was then to call me to confirm that the Brazilians had received their new instructions. They were completely humiliated. What had happened was the President's Chief of Staff had called the Foreign Ministry and had said since the President's instructions had not been carried out, he would tell them not only what the instructions were, but how they were to be carried out. The Foreign Ministry's intransigence was holding up a loan of \$500 million. Smith called me and told me that he had been read the instructions by the Brazilian Ambassador and that he would hold the Brazilians' feet to the fire. Getting this accomplished in order to provide the bridge loan is part of the fun of the job.

*Q: This story illustrates that ambassadors and embassies still are necessary even in this era of direct telephoning and high speed cable transmissions.*

MOTLEY: One of the things I find interesting is the half-truism that says that ambassadors are irrelevant today because of high speed communications. There are some Foreign Service officers who believe that. The reality is that in a crunch it is the ambassador, if he is capable, who will get things done -- if he is not capable, it won't make any difference anyway. Let me give you a few recent examples. Al Adams, our Ambassador to Haiti who was there about two coups ago, went to see the Haitian President during a crisis and had a long chat with him, for about an hour and a half. He told him what President Nixon had faced during the Watergate period and told the Haitian that he should draw comparisons between his and Nixon's positions. No one had sent Adams any instructions to go see the President and to put his life at risk and to discuss Nixon. But Adams had twenty-five years of experience, was smart and decided to have a discussion with the Haitian on his own. This is not something you fax or xerox. Another example: Nathaniel Howell in Kuwait. He wakes up one morning in a captured nation in August 1990. For five months, in an Embassy under siege, he displayed the leadership necessary to keep the American flag flying, despite a siege which would not permit the importation of food and water. He kept the Embassy going; there was no rumbling. You don't do that by fax machine. You can go on and on with several other examples. The notion that ambassadors don't count and that they have been superseded by communications isn't true. The role of an ambassador has shifted over the years. You are much more accountable today than Averell Harriman was or any of the other great ambassadors. Ambassadors today are not only more accountable, but are responsible for many more things than the previous generations -- security, terrorism, the stewardship of American human and fiscal resources.

Adams is a perfect example. The Haitian President was prepared to bring the whole country down in flames which would create a real problem for the United States. Adams figured out a line of argument and persuasion which resolved the problem. Did it as far as I can tell on his own initiative. Somebody didn't send him an instruction on it.

*Q: Were you in Brazil during the Falklands War. How did it play in Brazil?*

MOTLEY: It was very interesting. In Latin American politics, the least liked country in South America is Argentina because it has been richer. Buenos Aires is really a European city. Argentina is more European than it is Latin. The Argentineans are considered to be arrogant. When Argentina got into a fight with Great Britain, certainly there was Latin solidarity, but there wasn't much emotion behind it. I had told the British that if they had invaded Peru -- if the Falklands had belonged to Peru -- they would have had a fire storm on their hands. But Argentina was a different matter. I had very senior government officials say to me that they hoped that the British would teach them a lesson. Of course, then they would go public and talk about Latin American solidarity. I told the British Ambassador the day after the war started that they would be viewed before the end of the war as the honorable enemy and we would be seen as the dishonorable ally. In essence, that is the way it turned out. Harry Shlaudeman, who was our very capable Ambassador to Argentina, sent fascinating cables which were repeated to us. Al Haig, who was shuttling between London and Buenos Aires, would refuel in Belem, Brazil, both coming and going. I would get into my attaché's airplane -- we had a twin Beech as the Embassy's airplane -- and fly to Belem to meet Haig. While he stretched his legs and walked, he talked about what Mrs. Thatcher had said and what President Galtieri had said. So it was interesting for me to eavesdrop on the negotiations.

The biggest pressure I had was to try to explain to the Brazilians why we were doing what we were. Whereas privately they would understand it, publicly they still had to condemn the British and talk about Latin solidarity. The Brazilians tried to calm down some of the extreme Latins. The whole of Latin America was going to leave the OAS or were going to form an OAS without the United States. Brazilians worked quietly in the background, urging caution. They were helpful in that sense. But I had to explain to Washington, that in public, the Brazilians would scream like all their neighbors. We did have one incident. A British bomber could not refuel in the air coming from a mission. And it could not make it to the Ascension Islands. It declared an emergency and asked to land in Rio. The Brazilian scrambled two fighters (by breaking the sound barrier on take off, they broke a number of windows on Copacabana Beach); they flew so fast that they went right past the bomber and by the time they turned around, the bomber was already on his final approach for a landing. He got permission to do so about the time his wheels were hitting the runway -- he was of course running out of fuel and had no choice. The bomber was still armed -- had missiles. I was called because the missiles were American made -- we had been supplying them covertly. These were advanced missiles and we didn't want anyone to get their hands on them. The British Ambassador got into the act, trying to protect the bomber and its crew. And I am saying to him: "Don't let them touch our missiles! Don't let them out of your (British) control". That brought on a three way conversation between the Brazilians, the British and ourselves. The Brazilians wanted to unarm the plane -- it was in the civilian part of the airport. They wouldn't let the crew sleep there. The plane had to be fixed with parts flown from Great Britain. That would take 24-48 hours. The RAF crew was capable of disarming the plane; the Brazilians wouldn't let them do that. We weren't sure they could. Gallows' humor prevailed: because the plane was pointed towards Guanabara Bay Bridge, which linked two main parts of the city. The missile, if it been discharged would have taken out the bridge. They finally resolved that problem. The Brazilians unloaded the missiles under British supervision. Then the question arose as what to do with the missiles. They wanted them placed in storage; we agreed but wanted

some one to watch. The Brazilians said that wasn't necessary. Finally, it was agreed that the sealed storage area could be opened only by two sets of keys; one would be held by the Brazilians and the other by the British. Good solution! We had ways of knowing what was going on and we found out that in fact the Brazilians entered the sealed room and looked at the missile. Fortunately, they couldn't learn much. Of course, they professed the whole time that they hadn't looked at the missile. We chose not to call their hand because that would have revealed intelligence sources and methods. It was an interesting event and the closest that we got to being involved in the Falklands War. Of course, the U.S. image got degraded because the leftist nationalists in Latin America were having a field day feeding on the emotions raised by a Latin island being attacked by British, assisted by the Yanks. I told them that we would help Great Britain; it was our mother-country. I took the offensive -- not looking for a fight, but also not being defensive about it.

One interesting matter that was important during this time. There were 81 embassies in Brasilia. The 20 odd Latin American ambassadors had an association and they invited me to join. My predecessor had elected not to join. I looked into the background, and I had the feeling that they would have liked me to join and were somewhat upset that my predecessor had not. No one could tell me that there was any harm in joining. So I decided to join and attend the boring luncheons once a month. When it was my turn, I would host them at the residence. It gave me an opportunity to take care of these guys instead of seeing them in the office. The American Ambassador still carried a lot of weight in most places and they would use me to find out what was going on and that would assist them in writing their reporting cables. So instead of seeing them one at a time in the office, I would see them all together and would save myself a lot of time. It was a useful device; besides I learned something from most of them. They spoke Spanish and I spoke Spanish; so it was an easy relationship.

Then came the Falklands War (or the Maldives Island War, as the Latins called them) -- to compromise I called it the "Falkinas" War). The Latin Ambassadors couldn't disinvite me from their association; so I remained a member while at the same time representing their nemesis. So we continued communications -- I carried messages between the Argentinean and British Ambassadors because they could not obviously talk to each other. They were of no great substance, but the two of them had worked an arrangement to keep out of trouble in Brazil. They weren't shooting at each other in Brazil. Both Ambassadors were pros and were trying to control the damage, and I could carry messages from one to the other.

*Q: How did you deal with the regime and the leftist elements?*

MOTLEY: Brazil's government was headed by a military officer. That had been the case for twenty years. The Cabinet consisted of both military (or ex-military) and civilian officials. As far as the left was concerned, I had told the head of the Brazilian Secret Service -- comparable to our CIA -- who was also a principal advisor to the President, that I would see everybody who was not under indictment or was a fugitive or someone against whom the government had some kind of process going. I explained that is the way the Americans worked. I told him that I would learn something that way and furthermore, this balance of contacts was expected of us. By dealing with everybody, the United States gained the credibility it needed. He didn't have much choice except to agree with my position. He asked me why I was telling him; I replied by saying that the

following week I would visit a man by the name of Brizola who in 1964 -- the year of the revolution -- had been the Minister of Labor and the then President's brother-in-law. He had incited the navy sergeants to strike against the officers which led to the revolution in which his brother-in-law was overthrown. He ran from the military who, had they caught him, would have undoubtedly killed him. He went to Uruguay. He loved Bobby Kennedy, then Attorney General, because he had authorized the issuance of a visa to him overnight so he could visit the US after being thrown out of Uruguay. Brizola had never forgotten that and after that, every time he came to Washington, he would visit the Kennedy family. So he had been in exile since 1964. When the "democratization" of Brazil started with election of governors in 1982, he wanted to become a candidate. The military decided to let all exiles return to start the process. So he was the big fish and I wanted to see him. I told the head of Brazilian Intelligence that he would know anyway since his people would be watching and reporting the visit.

So I went; I was the first Ambassador to see him and to this day, he has never forgotten that. He is now the Governor again of the Rio province. He lost the Presidential election in between. But he never forgot and that visit has always stood me in good stead. I saw the "responsible" left. I went to see the main leftist bishop. I had a marvelous conversation with him. I am a Catholic, born and raised in Brazil, educated by the Catholic Church. I stuck the needle to him a little because his was not the Church I knew as a child. I told him that I was confused; when I was a kid all the clergy wore habits -- you could tell who was who. The Mass was said in Latin and the clergy spent its time worrying about confirmations and First Communions. I then noted that we had talked for an hour and that he only told me about the political and social activities that he was involved in. So we had this long discussion mainly to make me feel good; I wasn't going to change his mind. I learned a lot about what they were up to which were essentially political activities.

*Q: Did you have any problem with the reporting of the Embassy? Did our officers lean too far to one side or another?*

MOTLEY: No. What we didn't cover too well, partly because it didn't matter, was the Congress. It didn't have much power. I tried to improve the coverage, but I don't know how successful I was. Subsequently, Harry Shlaudeman did build it up. He did a good job as did Diego Asencio, who was my immediate successor. Harry followed him and both built it up. The problem I did have when I arrived was the reporting from the constituent posts. That seems to be a problem in the Foreign Service which I did not recognize until I got to Brazil. It was probably just as well that I didn't recognize it because I might have gone after it in a conventional way and may not have solved it. When I got to Brazil, the Consulate General in Rio was bigger than 40% of our Embassies and the Consulate General in San Paulo was not too far behind. They were always headed by a senior officer and liked autonomy. One was called the "Duke of San Paulo" and the other was known as the "Earl of Rio". They did not like the Ambassador. Tensions were bad. I got there just after a new "Duke" and a new "Earl" had arrived. I had heard stories about these tensions. A lot of the argument was over reporting. The rub usually came between the Political or Economic Counselors and the Consuls General. So I called the two Consuls General in and told them that there were no "Earls" or "Dukes"; only one "King" and that was me. They could report whatever they wanted, but that if it were national in scope, it had to be sent to the Embassy and we would put it together with other information. If the matter was a local one, they could report

directly to Washington; I would let them decide which was which. If they made a wrong judgment, I would tell them. I had used such a system before; they had to make the decision between "local" and "national" and if they were wrong I would jump on them; that was better than us passing judgment on every report. I never had a problem with either one of them after that. The system worked just fine. But only later, when I was Assistant Secretary, did I realize that this was a perennial problem for all embassies. It did put pressure on the DCM to whom I looked to oversee the constituent posts; I didn't have the time. Of course, the rub is that if the DCM is energetic, he wants to become the Consul General who then resents the intrusion of the DCM or the Administrative Officer or whomever. I told all of them that they were big boys, experienced Foreign Service officers; they were supposed to be able to lead and manage and not get into fights with each other. I told them that if I had to referee, I would be mad and that their efficiency reports would so reflect. So they worked it among themselves.

*Q: Tell us about your relationship with the military attachés, which in Latin America, seemed to have played a role somewhat independent of the Embassy?*

MOTLEY: I have heard the same accusation. When I was in SOUTHCOM in 1964, the attachés were part of the MilGroups which we felt belonged to us and not the ambassadors. So I had a different perspective when I went to Brazil. I had worked with all of these attachés, and I had heard attachés complain about ambassadors. So I had seen the other side of the coin. The General and I would visit all the posts and would be hosted by ambassadors. I watched the relationships and it was good in some places and bad in others. By 1980, it was a new ball game. There is some truth to the allegation that except for the Army, the Services did not assign their top drawer personnel to be attachés. The Navy was the worst and the Air Force only a little better. The Army had gotten smart and had begun to give promotions to those officers that served as attachés. Brazil was one of the five Embassies that had General Officers as Defense Attachés. "Colonel" Dick Walters, now our Ambassador to Germany, was the Defense Attaché when Lincoln Gordon was our Ambassador. Castelo Branco, who led the 1964 revolution, had been Walters' tent-mate during World War II. So between Gordon's very good connections and Walters', they had the thing wired. They knew what was going to happen before the Brazilians knew. They also had Frank Carlucci and Peter Brintnall, who later became the Defense Attaché. Also, a Major, Art Moura, later became a general officer in the Attaché position. It was quite a crowd.

I had known all these guys from 1964. When I was in Panama in that year, Dick Walters was a colonel in Brazil. When the revolution came, they were so well wired in that people were convinced that the revolution was fostered by the U.S. government, which it wasn't. When McNamara, then Secretary of Defense, was briefed by Gordon and Walters, he said that Walters was the best attaché in the business and wanted to know why he wasn't a general. The Army didn't want to promote him because he was not a "Combat Arms" officer; he had never commanded troops. That didn't sway McNamara and so the Army didn't have any choice. Walters was promoted to Brigadier General. But the accusation about the attachés is not so true anymore.

We did make a mistake in Brazil in the sense that we rotated the job of Defense Attaché among the three services. I had seen this done before -- the dividing of the pot world -- wide among the

three services. There were a lot of arguments about these assignments, even into the "tank" (the meeting room of the Joint Chiefs of Staff). There were only so many general officers' jobs and so some rotated -- e.g. Brazil. One tour would be Army, the next Navy and then the Air Force. It is important to all services because they have ceilings on the number of general officers they can have and therefore could place one of them in the Attaché job. But in fact, it should not have been rotated in Brazil. That is an Army country. I had a Navy Admiral who was very good, but who was literally "a fish out of water." An Admiral in Brasilia? When he was to leave, it was the Air Force's turn, but I wanted an Army guy. I made a deal with the Army Chief of Staff. If I got the assignment to go to the Army, I could select my Defense Attaché. I told him I wanted Pete Brintnall, who was then a Colonel, but who had served in Brazil for Walters as a Major. The Chief said that Brintnall was a fine Colonel, but competition for general was tough. I told him that if he would get Pete on the list, I would get him the Defense Attaché job. He agreed. I then went to the Marine Corps Commander who voted on these issues along with the three Joint Chiefs and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. I got his agreement because it made sense to send an experienced officer to Brazil; the Chairman was an Army man who would vote with me. So I had the three votes necessary -- the Chairman, the Army Chief of Staff and the Marine Commander. The issue was raised; the vote was taken, we won. The Air Force Chief -- Charlie Gabriel, whom I knew -- called me half kiddingly and said: "You traitor!"

*Q: What was your impression of the Brazilian Government and its President while you were there?*

MOTLEY: The Foreign Ministry was very active -- a little old fashioned, a little ritualistic, but good. Oriented towards the Third World -- the G-77 (the group of Third World developing countries that band together at the U.N. (the Indians, the Bangladeshians, Libyans, Cubans -- all the guys that cause problems). They always have had that orientation.

Many of the military officers that served in a civilian capacity were very good. The government was very hierarchical. The President ran the Palace. He had three or four guys in the Palace that were key and whom I got to know quite well. I was very lucky that the President Figueiredo took a liking to me. It made a difference because the Foreign Ministry took the view that ambassadors dealt only with it. My predecessor stuck to that very much. He would call on other Ministers as well, but worked through the Foreign Ministry primarily. I saw right at the beginning that what I wanted to do -- improve relations -- was not on the Foreign Ministry's agenda.

In Mexico, which is run by the PRI, there is a left wing of the Party that wants to do things that the President doesn't want to do. The left wing of the PRI is more leftist than most Mexican Presidents. What they do historically is to give the Foreign Ministry to that left wing. Then it plays footsie with Cuba; Mexico has the largest Soviet mission in Latin America; they kick sand into the gringos' faces.

It isn't quite that simple in Brazil because there isn't just one party. But the Foreign Ministry is leftist, mainly nationalist and to a certain degree, anti-American. So I could see that was not the route to success. Also my style generated press support which did not sit well with the Foreign Ministry. You don't highlight one Ambassador when there are 80 others. Also, by highlighting the *gringo* you cause problems. My start with the Foreign Minister was bad. I could tell that

there were no good vibes between us. Because of Bush's visit and others, I got to know the President and the guys around him. I would call them and I would go to the President's Palace and see the Chief of Staff or the head of the military household or the head of the civilian household or the head of the Service -- these were the influential guys. Sometimes they would tell me that they would send a car and that I was not to use my car. So I entered the back-door of the Palace. Both the President and I had a tendency to talk plainly; we got along fine. He didn't speak much English, so that our conversations were in Portuguese. He was an old cavalry officer, and I could use his language having been brought up in Brazil. He loved to tell stories. He would invite me to the Brazilian version of Camp David. I was the first Ambassador to go there. I would go on Saturdays when he had "Churrascos," the Brazilian version of the barbecue. He would ride horses and then we would sit around and talk. The party would include himself, the Minister of the Army, who was his classmate, the head of the Air Force, who was also his classmate, the head of the Secret Service and me. These were the guys who ran the country. It would drive the Foreign Minister nuts. I would get more work done that way than in any other fashion. The Foreign Ministry people were effective, but they weren't interested in my agenda. So I had to go around them, and I was successful and to this day, that sticks in the Foreign Minister's craw. It was interesting that the Foreign Minister was the brother-in-law of the head of the Secret Service, but they had a totally different orientation. They were both nationalists, but the Foreign Minister was very much in the G-77 mold, worrying about the Third World -- North-South dialogue and all those related issues. The head of the Secret Service couldn't care less about that kind of stuff. The Foreign Minister knew that I was invited to these Saturday festivities and that he wasn't. It was a humiliation for him.

My presence and activities went beyond irritation; it became humiliation. And that degrades relationships. You don't really want to go to war with the Foreign Minister; you are in his country. I had to go around him and tried not to rub his nose in it to get things done because if I had had to depend on him, nothing would have moved. I will give you an example: I was trying to get one more military officer for our military staff in Brasilia -- what had to be known as the MilGroup until the Brazilians terminated it. The MilGroup was the military advice and assistance group -- training, tactics. The Attaché collects information; the MilGroup works on relationships between military, assist in training, they do troop exchanges, etc. I was trying to get an extra officer into the Embassy in Brasilia to start a Military Liaison Team. The Foreign Office fought and fought me on it. They said they didn't want it; they said that the Army didn't want it. All I wanted was one U.S. military officer. The Brazilian Purchasing Commission in Washington had 112 officers; I had someone count them. It was a nice perk for them. I went to the Minister of War and told him that I was trying to get just this one position. He mumbled something; so I told him that he didn't understand. If I were not to get approval for that one position, the U.S. government would re-examine the size of the Purchasing Commission in Washington. That got his attention; these were plum assignments. So he called the Foreign Minister and told him that he wanted the position approved today and slammed the phone. That was the end of that problem. The Foreign Minister knew that I gone to the Minister of War.

*Q: Did your style of operations have any impact on the relationships that your staff had to have with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs?*

MOTLEY: They tried to mend the many "rice bowls" that I might have broken. I should note

that the animosity was a personal matter with the Foreign Minister. Below him, there were a lot of close friends. The Secretary General -- the number two man in the Foreign Ministry, who is now the Secretary General of the OAS (Organization of American States) -- and I got along like a "house on fire." I still see him all the time. The Foreign Minister's spokesman, with whom I dealt a lot, is now the Brazilian Ambassador to the OAS. We used to lunch together once a month. The tensions didn't really permeate below the Foreign Minister except for a few guys -- their "bomb-throwers." In any case my staff didn't find doors slammed in their faces. The second thing my staff found is that they could ride my wave. My situation helped them. I would go see a Cabinet Officer and tell him that a member of my staff would come over and work out the details with his staff. And so it was done.

*Q: Didn't you find it a myth that the Foreign Service does not respond well to a Presidential appointee? Doesn't it care more about the effectiveness of the individual?*

MOTLEY: One of the things I said to the Embassy officers when I arrived was: "Look. I recognize that I am a political appointee and that I am taking bread out of some Foreign Service officer's mouth. I recognize that. If you resent my appointment, I understand. If you dwell on it, we have a problem." That is all I said and we never had any difficulties.

I can understand the resentment the Foreign Service may have. In explaining the Foreign Service view, I ask people to assume that every fourth general officer in the military services were a political appointee, and then I ask them what their reactions would be. That puts it in an entirely different context. On the other hand, it is in the interest of the Foreign Service at an overseas post to make the American ambassador look good. It doesn't make any difference whether he or she is career or non-career. The staff will be happier and look better if he or she looks good. It is that simple. That is the message I give to political appointees. The people in the Embassy want him or her to succeed and they shouldn't think otherwise.

*Q: Was there a problem with either you or your staff in representing the Reagan Administration? It had made a major change in U.S. foreign policy in the region.*

MOTLEY: I didn't have any problems with it. If anyone on my staff had any problems, they hid them from me. I didn't see it. Some of the demarches -- a presentation of U.S.' views -- were a pain in the neck; it was not a matter of whether you liked them or not; some were just more difficult to present than others. Some just muddied the waters; it wasn't a policy difference.

*Q: President Reagan came to Brazil while you were there. How did he respond to Brazil?*

MOTLEY: He responded very favorably. After becoming Assistant Secretary, I would see him about once a week in the Oval Office because he took a great deal of interest in Central America. It is interesting to note how various people view Latin America. It depends from which part of the USA one comes from. A Lyndon Johnson sees Latin America from a Tex-Mex point of view -- these are good old fellows and we treat them well; a very subservient role. If you are John Kennedy and come from Massachusetts you take a liberal approach and you worry about these poor down-trodden people who need our help -- we will nicely tell them what to do. A Californian, like Reagan, has a Spanish influence on a Mexican influence because the

Mexicanization of California was really a Spanishization. So they have a Spanish view which is different from the Texan, more knowledgeable and less altruistic than the Massachusetts point of view. I found Reagan's view of Latin American to be a friendly one, an open one with none of the hang-ups of the other two I have discussed. It was what I call a California view.

Reagan did take a great interest in Central America. We spent a lot of time on it.

*Q: How did you get appointed Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs in 1983?*

MOTLEY: I had managed the Vice President's and the President's visit to Brazil. I had brought the President of Brazil to Washington. It is fair to say that the impression in both the White House and the State Department was that I had done a good job in Brazil. The debt issue was handled; the GATT problem had been solved; Bush's visit had gone well and he had warm things to say about it; Reagan had been in Brazil and he liked it. So for a variety of reasons, I was viewed as having done a good job. In the Spring of 1983, I was back in Washington for consultation and I saw the President, Shultz and some of the White House staff. Tom Enders, who was the Assistant Secretary at the time, was under attack for our Central American policy. A lot was coming from the right wing "bomb throwers," but in an atmospheric type of thing. He was having problems in the White House because he was being attacked by the right wing. That situation creates problems for people who may not be of the extreme right, like Deaver, etc. But the Deavers of the world had to keep the trains running on time.

Enders was 6'7". He had a great intellectual grasp. Because of his physical size and intellectual strength, sometimes he intimidated people. That did not make him very popular. Shultz had mentioned to me the specific problem Tom had -- after his confirmation difficulties with Jesse Helms, which we got solved and I had a hand in that (he had served as Acting Assistant Secretary for a year before confirmation). Both Shultz and Bill Clark, then at the NSC, discussed Enders with me. The political side of the White House advised me that they thought that Enders would be leaving. Clark was down on Enders -- no doubt about it. I had heard that Jeane Kirkpatrick, then our Ambassador at the U.N., was also down on Enders, but I never discussed the matter with her. I didn't have that much to do with her; she may have had an interest in Latin America, but as far as I was concerned, she was at the U.N. and wasn't part of the Latin America policy development. But Clark was down on Enders and he asked me whether I would take the Assistant Secretary position. I said that Enders was there and was doing a good job. Subsequently, I found out that I was not the only person he approached on this question. I was somewhat startled by Clark's question and I reported the conversation to Shultz, whom I considered to be my boss. He seemed a little irritated with Clark's apparent meddling. George Shultz is a marvelous person; he just doesn't react well to situations of this kind. In any case, I returned to Brazil, but I was called back. Shultz talked to me; I knew that I was not Shultz' first choice, and I have kiddingly reminded him of that many years later. We became very close friends; I still see him and play golf with him and he has written me about his book. At the time he said to me: "If this comes about, will you take the job? The President would like you to take it." I told him that I didn't want to leave Brazil, but if that was the decision, I would of course take the job. What else could I say? I didn't have any choice; that is, I did and I didn't. After I returned they called me and said that the appointment had been approved, but that no announcement would be made -- typical Washington deal. I hadn't said anything to anybody.

Harry Kopp, who was my deputy and now my partner, didn't know anything. No one at the Embassy knew; my wife knew; my kids didn't.

The President took the shortest airplane ride in history from Washington to Williamsburg for the Economic Summit. During it, he announced my appointment. So I began to get these frantic calls from Ray Seitz, telling me that the news was on the AP wire. I was at a school board meeting -- ambassadors do a variety of chores. The way it worked out didn't permit me to follow all the protocol niceties -- see the Foreign Minister, tell the President, etc. But that is how the appointment came. I was acceptable to Clark because I had gotten some things done. A small NSC group involving senior White House, Department of Defense and CIA officials, had been involved in an activity that I helped orchestrate for them which turned out very favorably. That further enhanced my image with Clark and other senior officials. So I had NSC staff support. The right wing was happy, although they didn't stay that way. So everything was fine. The fact was that they wanted to get rid of Enders and almost anyone would have looked good. The biggest problem I had, when the story broke, was trying to keep Enders' team together in Washington. I had a lot of respect for them individually. That alienated me right away with the right wing. The moment the announcement was made I called Enders with whom I had a good relationship. I had a lot of respect for him. I assured him that I had not followed his advice about picking one's predecessor. He told me that he understood. I wanted him to know -- and he knew -- that I had not campaigned for his job. I also told him that I was going to talk to his staff, but I wanted him to tell them first that I was hoping that they would stay. They knew why he was being fired; their morale was low and no doubt they were looking for other opportunities. But I wanted them to stay. I called the secretaries and asked them to stay. I called the three deputies who were attending a symposium and got them out of a meeting and told them that I was trying to hold things together and that I would appreciate it if they would stay.

It didn't take me long to figure out that the opposition to Enders weren't upset by the policy; it was more a problem of implementing it in the way they wanted to. So they had to shoot someone and they picked on Enders. They accused him of secretly developing a "two-track policy"; he didn't do anything of the kind. But "two-track policy" became a dirty phrase, although we had it established for years. We just didn't call it by that name. The phrase fell in disrepute.

What got Enders into trouble was that the "heavy breathers" -- the hard liners -- Iklé, Menges -- were suspicious of anyone who spoke with the known "enemy." The Sandinistas were Communists -- Cuban style. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that they were a leftist group that wanted to carry out, in their words "a revolution without frontiers. . . It was an expansionist policy. We knew what they were all about. The hard-liners believed that you should not talk with the enemy, because if you talk to them, you give something away. So the thought of talking or negotiating with the Sandinistas -- i.e the second track -- was not acceptable and only raised the right's suspicions. Like all extreme groups -- left or right -- this right wing had some paranoia about what Enders was discussing with the enemy when no one was around; he might give something away. It was that part of the "two track policy" that created problems; the other "track" of interdicting arms and putting pressure on was alright.

*Q: How does one deal with this?*

MOTLEY: For a political appointee who gets things done in the State Department, although the circumstances are not unique to that Department, it is only a question of time before someone whines about you being captured by the bureaucracy. This is the first sign that someone doesn't agree with what you are doing. The rationale becomes that you "have been captured by the bureaucracy" or you "have done this or that". I dealt with it because I had good credentials with conservatives, including acceptable credentials with the extreme right. So I started from a base of "no suspicion," unlike what some Foreign Service officer might experience. I was ideologically acceptable. That was helpful.

Later on, I got into some fights with some of the "heavy breathers" because I didn't agree with some of their assessments or their courses of actions. At that stage, I became estranged from the "heavy breathers." I think that happens in every administration. I know people in the Carter administration who became estranged from his "crazies" on the left. Everyone has "crazies"; the only question is whether they are their "crazies" or our "crazies." Extremists all have the same characteristics: they are paranoid, they are suspicious, they have a "take no prisoners" attitude, there is no give in their positions which are usually dogmatic and ideologically driven and not in touch with reality. You may recall that in several administrations, the word "pragmatist" was almost spit out of the mouth of the hard-liners. Somehow they translated "pragmatism" as unpatriotic, etc. I saw leftist freaks in the Carter Administration who were equally as egregious and outrageous as some of the members of the Reagan Administration.

**JOHN C. LEARY**  
**Consul General**  
**Sao Paulo (1981-1985)**

*John Charles Leary was born in Connecticut in 1924. He received a BA in 1947 and an MA in 1959 from Yale University. He served in the U.S. Army overseas as a lieutenant from 1943 to 1945. His postings abroad have included Cherbourg, Dusseldorf, Istanbul, Tokyo, Ottawa, Vienna, Sao Paulo and St. George's. Mr. Leary was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 1998.*

LEARY: Well, I was assigned as consul general in San Paulo, Brazil. I came back from Vienna to Washington for six months of Portuguese language training. This was the first time in my career that I had ever had language training before going to a post. It was extremely helpful, because when I arrived at the airport in San Paulo, somewhat to my surprise I could understand what people were saying and reply to them. We arrived in San Paulo, as I recall, in the early part of 1981. We were there for about four years.

*Q: San Paulo was obviously an extremely large and important city in Brazil and in the western hemisphere. Why don't you talk, maybe a little about the role of the consulate general and the city itself?*

LEARY: Well, as you say, San Paulo is a really big city. It is one of the world's largest. At the time we were there the population of the metropolitan area was estimated at about 14 million

people. It's in a part of Brazil which enjoys a temperate climate. Quite warm in the summer, quite cold in the winter. An occasional bit of snow in the winter, but not very much. It's cold enough that you have to wear an overcoat at different parts of the year. The population of the city is an interesting ethnic mix. There are almost a million people of Japanese ethnic origin, descended from Japanese who came to Brazil in the early part of this century to work on the coffee plantations and other agricultural pursuits. The Japanese people worked very hard and saved their money and now they own a good part of the agricultural production of Brazil. Very active business people. There are several million people of Portuguese origin, Italian origin, Germans, many eastern Europeans, lots of Lebanese. The governor of Brazil, the governor of San Paulo state, for most of the time that I was in Brazil was of Lebanese origin. He told me that his father and his uncle immigrated from Lebanon. His father coming to Brazil and his uncle going to the United States and their families had become very successful in various walks of life. So, Brazil was a very interesting place from that point of view.

It also, like all big cities, had the problems of big cities. Congestion, pollution and unfortunately lots of street crime. It also had the advantages of a big city. Wonderful restaurants of all ethnic descriptions, lots of cultural life. It is clearly the economic center of Brazil. The state of San Paulo produces probably more than half of the total industrial production of Brazil and a large percentage of agricultural production. Because it is a big state and outside the major industrial center of San Paulo and its environs, there is lots of agricultural production. Coffee and soy beans, cattle. I recall one time when we had to tour the interior of my district, which included a lot of cattle ranches and vast open spaces. We were talking to a rancher who had some time before that visited the United States and had been to a King ranch in Texas. He said to me, "I found up there that the cattle were standing shoulder to shoulder. Down here we have plenty of space for them to go out and graze." It's still, in many ways, the land of opportunity, and there are still frontiers to develop.

*Q: Is San Paulo also the financial banking center?*

LEARY: Yes, very much so. Rio used to be, but the center has gradually shifted to San Paulo. Rio is still obviously very important, but many of the banks now have their headquarters in San Paulo. We had a very large American business presence there, which I should mention because that was a focus of a lot of attention by our office. Almost every large American company had some sort of operation in Brazil. General Motors, Dow Chemical, Corning Glass, and so on. We had some twenty thousand Americans registered at the consulate general. We enjoyed them being there, business firms, educators, and clergymen and others.

*Q: The consular district pretty much covers the southern part of Brazil, I suppose?*

LEARY: We had a consulate in Puerto Alegre that took the two southern states, but we covered the state of San Paulo, Santa Catherina and Monte Grossa del Sol, which is in the western part of the country. In square miles it was a tremendous amount of distance.

*Q: We you able to travel quite a bit within the District?*

LEARY: Yes, quite a bit. We made several trips out into the western part of the District by

plane. It was a long, long distance. We had one American business firm which had its own cattle ranches out there. It was a descendant of Swift Armour. And I visited their ranches two or three times.

*Q: I suppose San Paulo because of its industrial sector is also an important center for labor unions?*

LEARY: Yes, the national labor unions are headquartered in San Paulo. At various times, our Labor attaché in Brazil has been stationed in San Paulo. During the time I was there he was not. He was in Brasilia, but we had a political officer who focused a good bit of his time on labor affairs, while the attaché came to San Paulo regularly for visits and discussions with the labor unions.

*Q: You mentioned a political officer on staff at the consulate general. Besides the trade unions, how significant was the political life of San Paulo as it related to Brazil as a whole and Brasilia in particular?*

LEARY: Due to the population of the area, it was very significant and many of the leading politicians came from the San Paulo area. In the last couple of elections that I have just followed in the newspapers, some of the candidates have been published in San Paulo, the governor whom I mentioned from the Lebanese extraction, Carl Maluf ran for president. And in the most recent election, one of the labor leaders while I was there known as Lula, Louis Vanessa del Silva, I believe his full name was, was one of the candidates from the left-wing party. So we did quite a bit of reporting on especially conversations with from the politicians in our area to contribute to the embassy's country-wide reporting on politics.

*Q: One of the things that I have always been interested in, and I did some years after you were there, a few years after you were there, pay a visit to San Paulo, as well as to Rio and Brasilia. I have always been interested in the relationship between a very major consulate general and the embassy. And in the sense between San Paulo and Brasilia. San Paulo being a much larger city and Brasilia being a newer city. My impression was that a lot of the people who were in Brasilia, working for the Brazilian government, didn't really want to be there. A lot of them just stayed from Monday thru Thursday or Friday and then went back to Rio or San Paulo where there families were for the weekend. How did you experience the relationship between the two cities? But also, perhaps more importantly your relationship between the embassy?*

LEARY: Well, if you are talking about the Brazilian civil servants, that was very true. And it was especially true in the first few years after the capital moved from Rio to Brasilia. I believe that has changed a little over time as Brasilia has grown and people have raised families there and so on. But still, there is a great exodus from Brasilia on weekends as people were trying to leave for Rio, San Paulo or other areas.

The relationship between the consulate general and the embassy, I would say was a very positive working relationship. We had a lot of visits from embassy officers, beginning with the Ambassador all the way down, quite frequently. The Ambassador was in San Paulo for a two or three days each month. Political officers, military attachés, economic officers, and so on were

doing the same thing. We had easy telephone communications, so there was a great deal of exchange back and forth. We had, in San Paulo, quite a large staff. We had about some forty plus Americans representing a number of agencies. We had agricultural officers from USDA, commercial officers, we had a Trade Center in San Paulo which had a staff independent of the commercial officer there. We had a regional officer of the Internal Revenue Service. We had a very active post. A very big and active U.S. Information Service operation and I spent a good deal of my time working with them on various programs. So a lot of the job there was management of this fairly large post and maintaining contact with the embassy and doing a lot of the representational type work.

*Q: Who was the Ambassador while you were there? There were several during the period that you were in San Paulo?*

LEARY: Yes. When I first arrived in San Paulo the Ambassador was Bob Sayer an old Latin American hand whom I had known in previous incarnations. We just met when he was in the Department working on economic matters with ARA. He was succeeded by Tony Motley, who was there... I was there four years and Tony was there for two and a half, close to three. And then just at the end of my tour Diego Asencio came in as Ambassador.

*Q: You mentioned the U.S. Information Service operation which you were involved with and supported. I assume San Paulo is also a media education center as well as all these other things?*

LEARY: Yes, yes. Two major newspapers were published in San Paulo. Lots of TV operations there. The University of San Paulo was a very well-respected university. The Brazilian nuclear program and had its headquarters in San Paulo. As I recall there was a connection to a degree with the University of San Paulo in that the head of the Brazilian Nuclear Agency was a professor at the University.

*Q: The consulate general also had a very high volume consulate activity. Visas and passports, and you said that there were 20,000 American citizens.*

LEARY: Yes we did. We had a number of retirees who each month received checks. There were several hundreds of checks to distribute; Social Security beneficiaries and others as necessary. We had a very big visa operation. We issued about 50,000 visas a year. We had an office in downtown, we had the first six floors of the downtown office building and on busy days the visa line would stretch out the front door and run around the corner. We made every effort to organize ourselves internally to permit more people to get inside and to speed up the process and so on. There was always more demand than we could cope with.

*Q: What would you say was the highlight of your four years in Brazil?*

LEARY: Well, one of them certainly was a visit by President Reagan. This was in the late fall of 1982. We got word that he would be making a Latin American swing and coming through Brazil. There was a lot of debate in advance about just what he should do in Brazil besides going to visit with the Brazilian president and so on. They finally decided that he would come to San Paulo to give a speech on economic matters. That resulted in huge advance groups being sent to us and

we spent several weeks preparing for the visit. The final details of the visit were not decided until really, the last minute. And I recall that a somewhat embarrassing situation arose. We were told that he would probably be staying overnight in San Paulo and that there was a need for probably 600 hotel rooms which included the advance party, of course, and the people who came along on the trip, plus several hundred media people. So we desperately began calling all the hotels in San Paulo and I recall that Johnson & Johnson which had a big operation in San Paulo at the time and was having some sort of medical conference on the date that the President was supposed to be here and they had reserved large numbers of hotel rooms. I had to call the president of Johnson & Johnson and after some discussion he agreed to release 75 of his rooms to us. Then of course, at the last minute the White House decided that the President would not spend the night after all. So we had the duty of calling the people who had accommodated us and saying, "I'm sorry, we don't need those rooms after all."

But the visit itself went off beautifully. As the preparations went along one wondered whether it would happen, but in fact everything fell into place. The President arrived in San Paulo about noon time. The governor of San Paulo at the time had offered him the hospitality of the governor's palace, which was not only the governor's home, but the locus of the state government. They had a large auditorium which was ideal for the President's talk. So the President arrived in a helicopter outside on the grounds of the governor's palace and was there for about four or five hours for his talk, a reception afterwards and a couple of press conferences and then took off again for Brasilia.

*Q: So he didn't actually circulate more widely through the city?*

LEARY: No. Although the advance team had made several alternatives, one of which would have taken him around the city to various places. There were several things that were interesting in the way that it developed including the press and security. Obviously, the U.S. security people were concerned about keeping the President from harm and were proposing to put up metal detectors and check everyone coming into the building and so on, but the governor was adamant that he was not going to allow visitors to his home to be put through any sort of intensive drilling so there was a lot of debate back and forth. In due course, they reached a mutual accommodation and everything worked out very well.

A sideline to all of that, regarding my wife, we had assigned everyone in our office specific duties for the visit and we also had a lot of people come in from Brasilia and other posts in Brazil as well as around Latin America to help. At the last minute they realized that the President was going to be in the governor's private quarters until the time before his talk and after the reception and so on. The governor's staff would be there to serve coffee and provide assistance as necessary, but none of them spoke English and how were they going to deal with this. So I told them that my wife had not been assigned to do anything and she speaks Portuguese very fluently and I think she would be happy to volunteer. Nancy, I think spent more time with the President than anyone else in the official government and the president from Brazil.

*Q: Was Mrs. Reagan on the trip too?*

LEARY: No, Mrs. Reagan was not on the trip. This was billed as a "working visit" and she

wasn't there.

*Q: Did President Reagan go to Rio on this trip too?*

LEARY: No. He only went to Brasilia and San Paulo. Then he went south to Monte Vedao?

*Q: You know, one wonders some times with all the people involved and all the work for these visits, if they are worthwhile?*

LEARY: Yes, I think so. Reagan was really popular among the Brazilians, and he spoke in San Paulo largely to a business group and said a lot of things they wanted to hear. It was a worthwhile visit that got a very positive response.

*Q: Anything else that you want to mention on your tour to Brazil?*

LEARY: I think again, going back to the USIS effort, we had a lot of very positive results for programs we promoted, including visits of two of the major American symphony orchestras. The Cleveland Orchestra was there and the NSO (National Symphony Orchestra) had a visit. We had a lot of major groups like the Twyla Tharp Dance Company. As I have said, San Paulo had become quite a center of arts and culture and many of these visits were very stimulating to the Brazilians. I think they helped in terms of our mutual relations.

Among other visitors were some of our astronauts. I was impressed with the rapport they seemed to have immediately with everyone. The three that were there were very personable people and they were really viewed as heroes by many people. Just to see the way in which Brazilians from age ten up to age ninety interacted, it was great. One of the people we had was Vance Brand who had been a, I believe it was a commander of the first U.S. space craft to dock with the Russians. But in any event, one of the things that we arranged on this visit was a meeting with a woman who was the president of the Santos Duma Association. The Brazilians believe that Santos Dumont beat the Wright Brothers to the punch in getting a heavier than air object off the ground. But in any event, they had an organization called the Santos Duma Association. The president was a lady whose full name I can't recall. Her first name was ADA. She was in her, well into her '80s at this time. She had been the first Brazilian woman to have a pilot's license and she had flown the plane back in the '30s from Irradel Fuego to Northern Alaska. At the time apparently this was quite a feat. The museum that they had in San Paulo had a picture of her travels and they had her aircraft on display, signatures from various people up and down the western hemisphere. She was still a very lively person and I remember they presented Vance Brand with a metal from the Santos Dumont Foundation. She made a little speech and she said all the right things, including the fact that we were just following up on the real pioneers who made all this possible.

*Q: And her flight was in the 1920s?*

LEARY: Late '20s, early '30s.

*Q: Was security for you or for the consulate general an issue while you were there?*

LEARY: Yes, that's something that I should mention. We had a number of serious incidents in Brazil, including the kidnaping of our Ambassador in Rio at that time. In San Paulo, the British consul general, several years before I was there, had been attacked. So both we and the Brazilians were very conscious of security. So I had assigned to me, by the San Paulo state government, 24-hour body guards who rode with me in the car and stayed with me in the office if I was inside and so on. We had a, they were with me when I was up and out, but at home, at night, we had two guards that patrolled the grounds and the guards who accompanied me were off duty.

*Q: The guards at the residence were contracted through the consulate?*

LEARY: Yes. The two assigned by the state of San Paulo rode with me in the car and we had an armored car there. An old Chevy, which because of the heavy armor got about 5 miles to the gallon and was always breaking down. It was quite a number of years old. I never really felt threatened and there was seldom any personal threats against me. At the office we had a large number of bomb threats and rather active demonstrations out front, occasionally demonstrating against our policy in Central America, Middle East, or what have you. You always received very good protection from the Brazilian authorities who prevented things from getting out of hand.

While I was protected, my wife was not and she was unfortunately held up at gun point one time during that time. That was a scary moment. She had been out shopping and when she returned home, she noticed the neighbor whom she hadn't seen in a few days coming out of her home. She had put her car in the street and was locking the gate, so Nancy pulled up and got out of the car to talk with her and as they were standing there, three men came down the street, one of them holding a paper bag. They saw them coming and they thought they were going to try and sell something, but the guy pulled a gun out of his bag and said, "Open the gate and let's go inside." So they took them inside the neighbors's house and a car drove up in front and they stole TV sets and radios and in due course left and the women were not harmed.

*Q: The TVs were from the other house, not your house?*

LEARY: They were from the other house. As I said we had guards that were working there. So, my wife then went out and took a self-defense course and returned home one day with a board that she had broken in half with her hand. She said, "I am now conscious of my personal space."

*Q: Ain't that the truth. You mentioned the British consul general at some point in the past. Were there quite a few other professional consuls?*

LEARY: Yes, we had a very large diplomatic community of consulates. All the major countries were represented. Almost all Latin American countries. As I said, because of the ethnic make-up of the city, many of them had, as we did, a large number of their citizens to be responsible for, as well as being major commercial center.

*Q: You also mentioned that there were demonstrations upon occasion on U.S. policy during the Reagan Administration in Central America. Was that something that people continually brought up with you or was it more of manifestations in the form of demonstrations occasionally or*

*newspaper... ?*

LEARY: Yes, it was definitely demonstrations, usually by left wing groups. I think there was general support from a good part of the population for our policy there. The demonstrations, regardless of the subject, often included many of the same people. What normally happened would be a gathering in front of the office blocking the street and there would usually be anywhere from 500 to 1,000 people, often reported by the press to be considerable more than that and they would chant and raise signs and so on, and then they would ask to present a petition. So then someone in our office would receive a representative and he would come in and present a petition expressing their views on the issue with pages and pages of signatures. Sometimes we made an effort to check these, one against the other. It seemed from time to time that many of the same people were demonstrating, whether over Central America or the Middle East.

*Q: Did you get good support from the local police?*

LEARY: Very good. They didn't prevent the demonstrations, but when we learned one of these was going to take place, we often had advance notice, they would position some police in strategic positions just to be available in case there were any difficulties. They seldom got out of hand. In fact, they never got out of hand.

*Q: You mentioned the Middle East a couple of times. During the early 1980s while you were in Brazil, we were of course involved in Lebanon with the Marines and multi-national force and so on. You also mentioned the governor of the province...*

LEARY: State.

*Q: State, was of Lebanese extraction. Was Lebanon of particular focus either in the demonstrations or did that come up often in conversation, particularly with those with a Lebanese connection?*

LEARY: To some degree. There was a very large Middle Eastern community there. Mainly Lebanese, but there was also a large group of Syrians and others. Many of them Christians who had left the Middle East and come to Brazil and I guess other places in Latin America. They were, I recall, very sympathetic to the Gemayel family. I don't know very much about Lebanon, but they would frequently send a representative around to the office and ask to call on me and they would then explain how happy they were about the role the U.S. was playing in the area. Trying to establish peace and so on. I recall when President Reagan's visit was announced, they immediately sent someone around with a letter addressed to the President to thank him for the efforts he was making in Lebanon. While that particular ethnic group was concerned, I think, however other Brazilians weren't that focused on the Middle East.

*Q: At least part of the time concerned in a positive way, or supportive of what we were trying to do. Not so much critical. Okay. Anything else about Brazil from 1981 to 1985?*

LEARY: I think we probably covered most of the notes. One thing one can't be in Brazil very long without being a soccer fan. The Brazilians, during one of the years that we were there, the

World Cup took place in Spain and I was amazed at the focus of the country on what was happening in Spain. All of the games were televised, of course, and on the days that Brazil was playing, the city would shut down for two hours or so while the game was on. Even Ford and General Motors were shutting down their assembly lines because they knew that no one was going to be paying attention to their work. I recall that year we had meant to have our July 4th reception on July 5th because the 4th was a Sunday and not an appropriate day for a reception. But on Monday the 5th, Brazil was playing Spain, no, I'm sorry, it was Italy, and Brazil lost the game 3 -2 in the afternoon. Our party was in the evening and we wondered if anyone would appear at the reception, but finally they began to trickle in with very sad faces and the sole topic of discussion that evening was Brazil's unexpected loss to Italy in the World Cup that afternoon.

**EDWARD L. LEE II**  
**Regional Security Officer**  
**Panama City, Panama (1982-1985)**

*Mr. Lee was born and raised in Michigan, educated at Delta College and American University. After seven years service with the US Marine Corp, he joined the State Department as Agent in the Office of Security. Mr. Lee's entire career in the Foreign Service was devoted to Security matters in Washington and in diplomatic posts throughout the world. His postings as Regional Security Officer include Cyprus, South Korea, Thailand and Panama. Mr. Lee was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1999.*

*Q: How about Brazil?*

LEE: Brazil in '82-'85 was moving towards democracy. We generally did not have any major problems of a political nature in terms of protecting our people. The Brazilian government, although a developing country, is very developed in many respects, probably one of the more sophisticated societies in Latin America, the seventh largest economy in the world, so that tells you something right there. Our biggest problem was at our consulates in Rio and Sao Paulo where the hyperinflation of the currency was really increasing crime a lot. We did spend a lot of time training people, going through awareness programs, and that kind of thing. But we didn't have the rebel insurgency that we had in the rest of the region.

*Q: From time to time, we'd have an American military man assassinated in Sao Paulo, but that probably was earlier on.*

LEE: That was earlier. There were cases where people were being targeted, but actually during the period that I was there, we did not have any major political events really affecting what we were trying to get accomplished.

**LESLIE M. ALEXANDER**

**Principal Officer  
Porto Alegre (1983-1985)**

*Ambassador Leslie Alexander was born in Germany of American parents and grew up primarily in Europe. He was educated at the Munich campus of American University, after which he came to the United States and, in 1970, entered the Foreign Service. Speaking several foreign languages, including German, French, Spanish and Portuguese and some Polish, he served in Guyana, Norway, Poland, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Haiti, where he twice served, first as Chargé, and later as Special Envoy.. From 1993 to 1996 he served as Ambassador to Mauritius and from 1996 to 1999 as Ambassador to Ecuador. Ambassador Alexander was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.*

ALEXANDER: Brazil.

*Q: Okay, another language.*

ALEXANDER: Another language. I had four weeks of Portuguese.

*Q: Okay, today is the second of November, 2005. You took Portuguese for how long?*

ALEXANDER: Four weeks.

*Q: Did they have sort of a course that...*

ALEXANDER: They took a Spanish speaker and gave him a funny accent and turned him into a Portuguese speaker, exactly. It was a four-week course and I was able to pick up the requisite three after that course. So it wasn't difficult. Spanish and Portuguese are much closer than people who don't speak the languages realize.

*Q: The pronunciation is different.*

ALEXANDER: Very different. I wouldn't call it guttural. It's like comparing a French accent to an Italian accent. The languages are again, similar, but they are pronounced differently. This is Portuguese and Spanish.

*Q: So you went to where?*

ALEXANDER: Porto Alegre.

*Q: And you were in Porto Alegre from when to when?*

ALEXANDER: From the summer of 1983 until the summer of 1985.

*Q: Okay, describe where Porto Alegre fits into the Brazilian scene and what it was like when you went there?*

ALEXANDER: It was one of several consulates in Brazil. It is now closed. But at the time, it was the southernmost post we had in Brazil. So southern that, a year after I arrived, it was August, I don't recall the day, I was sitting in my office looking out of my window and I saw what I thought were snowflakes and I said, "no it can't be," because I'm in Brazil. But sure enough, it was snowing. It wasn't a blizzard, but snow is snow. We were that far south. I cite the snow to give a sense of how different that part of Brazil was from the rest of Brazil. When we think of Brazil it is a tropical country with all that implies, but it is a lot more. Where I was, the Brazilians were of German-Italian extraction. There were very few Afro-Brazilians. Again, when one thinks of Brazil, they tend to think of Africans, of the tall, beautiful, the mulatta, the women and the fabulous samba outfit. That was not a part of the Brazil in which I served. That doesn't mean you wouldn't see vestiges of it, pieces of it here or there, but basically I lived with what were the called the gauchos. Most Americans would think of them. But the same as the gauchos of Argentina. The pampas run through Argentina, Uruguay, southern Brazil. It has a very similar culture. They drink matte, they wear the whole gaucho outfit. They ride the horses.

*Q: Bolos?*

ALEXANDER: Well, bolos, no. They have them; I never saw them used. But it was a very different part of Brazil. It was, at the time I was there, not unlike what Texas was for many years to the U.S.: bigger than life, politicians were bigger than life. In fact, six of the eleven presidents, at the time I was there, had been from the state of which Porto Alegre was capitol. The gauchos dominated political life, Brazilian political life, for a generation. Many of the senior political officers were from that part of the country as well. It gave me an opportunity to have contacts with senior Brazilian officials that folks in the embassy did not have. It wasn't because I was better than they were, but I had an opportunity through the back door to meet these people through their families; through their parents, through their cousins or their brothers, sisters, what have you. So Porto Alegre was in many respects a good listening post into the inner bowels of Brazilian politics. Strange, because we were 2,000 kilometers from Brasilia.

*Q: Yeah, oh boy, you couldn't be farther.*

ALEXANDER: Exactly. But those powerful politicians, the military people came home on the weekends and they spend their vacations with their families. So again, through social events I was able to have contacts with some of these folks. I was able to assure the embassy that Brazil was going to end its 20 years of military dictatorship and have a relatively smooth transition to civilian military rule. And fortunately, I was right.

*Q: Were you the principal officer there?*

ALEXANDER: I was.

*Q: Did you have anybody else with you?*

ALEXANDER: I had a USIS officer, a consular officer and a small staff of Brazilian employees.

*Q: From your viewpoint down south, what was the state of Brazilian-American relations?*

ALEXANDER: My optic was a commercial one. Novo Hamburgo, which was a town not too far from Porto Alegre was at the time a fledgling shoe production center. But it was clear that the Brazilian shoe industry, which was headquartered there, was going to become quite large.

*Q: Lots of leather.*

ALEXANDER: Exactly. You've got it; that was a formula. Today I think, I read somewhere recently, that 20% of the shoes purchased in this country are of Brazilian origin. And there are a lot of shoes bought here. Indeed, that industry did become a very large and important one for the Brazilians. Their relationship, then, would have to be characterized as good, as positive. They were most interested in having access to our market and therefore having good relations with us. So, I would characterize the relationship from their perspective, not just the shoe people, but other people in the area, as very good and very positive. Brazilians liked Americans and frequently would compare themselves to Americans. They would say to me, "we're from large countries, we have a diverse population, ethnically diverse, we're a nation of immigrants, we dwarf our neighbors, etc., etc. I don't think they sought to model themselves after us, but they felt a sort of kinship with Americans in the main. I would have to say 99.99% of everyone I came across seemed to be very fond of Americans or favorably disposed to the United States.

*Q: Was there any ripple effect from the Falklands / Malvinas dispute. After trying to be neutral, we really ended up supporting the Brits. How was that felt where you were?*

ALEXANDER: This is not widely known; I don't think the Brazilians would admit to it, but they supported the Brits as well. They allowed our planes, I'm not certain about the British planes, but certainly our aircraft, which were used to support the British, landing rights in Canoas, the big military base in my consular district. Again, this was all hush-hush, no one spoke of it. The truth is that Argentina was the only military threat to Brazil. In the region there was no other country that could challenge Brazil militarily except Argentina.

*Q: Were they still going, from that silly from the American perspective, nuclear competition?*

ALEXANDER: Yes. They were. It was on my plate and it was a matter of some concern, obviously to Washington. On more than one occasion I publicly as well as privately was called upon to question the need for Brazil to consider a nuclear option, and usually the reply was the same. We have the same right as everyone else to pursue nuclear energy. I think that was the excuse.

The Brazilians flirted for a while with this nuclear option. I don't have information as to how far along they were in that, whether it was just talk.

*Q: Were you sort of given instruction to go out and take a look at various things? Or things like that?*

ALEXANDER: Not that I can recall, no, I wasn't instructed to look into that specifically. I had

discussions with my masters in the embassy about Brazil's nuclear program and their arms industry. I think all the mission officers, whether one was at a constituent post or in the embassy, we were conscious of the need to be aware of certain things that the Brazilians were doing or trying to do and report those things accordingly.

*Q: Who was the ambassador while you were there?*

ALEXANDER: Diego Asencio. He was a good ambassador. One thing I really appreciated about the ambassador was his allowing all of his principal officers to be mini-ambassadors. In fact, he tested me once, "you're better known in Brazil than I am." I said, "Well that's not true, you're the ambassador." He said, "Well, you get more air time nationally than I do."

But he was generally amused by that. He was in no way bothered by it or anything else. In fact, I think he felt privately, that was good. I want you to get out there. I don't care who does what as long as we're getting the job done.

*Q: Well, how would you get air time?*

ALEXANDER: I don't know, I think in part because the local media liked me for some strange reason. I used to dance the samba, for example. They'd never had Americans doing those kinds of things. But, I like to dance.

*Q: Were you a bachelor at the time?*

ALEXANDER: No. I was married at the time. I'd do other things. I would give interviews. My Portuguese was fairly good, and maybe that helped. When I tested, I tested at a 4+ when I came back. So that I think helped a bit.

I just gave interviews and a lot of times what I said locally would end up on the evening news nationally.

*Q: I take it that where you were was sort of the Texas of Brazil in a way. The military tradition was there.*

ALEXANDER: Exactly.

*Q: The cowboys.*

ALEXANDER: And again, as I mentioned, six of the eleven presidents had come from there. They had a very heavy thumb print on the country.

*Q: Brazil was still under military rule?*

ALEXANDER: It was. It made the transition to civilian rule in 1984.

*Q: When you arrived, what was the hand of the military?*

ALEXANDER: I think it was still fairly heavy. The then president, Figueiredo, was a general. The military ran the country. It was essentially up to them whether or not Brazil was going to have a civilian president.

*Q: Did they have the equivalent to major generals in the provinces? Or were they civilians?*

ALEXANDER: No. There were civilians in the provinces. The governors were civilians. I don't know if the Brazilian military were ever that heavy-handed. Their military were very involved in industrial and the political life in Brazil. There was some latitude for the civilian leadership. The head of the various states, in almost every instance that I'm aware of, was a civilian. That being said, the military had to give the green light to Brazil's reverting to a civilian president; which they did. I think they did it out of conviction. They felt the time had come and this was just not the way for the country to advance; with a military regime running the country. To their credit, they stepped back. They gave it up and the civilians took over. It was a rather unusual transition because the president-elect died before he could actually take office. So there was a period of several weeks in which the Brazilian body politic stumbled all over itself trying to figure out what to do. There was no precedent for this. The person who was elected, Senator Tancredo, poor man, just died. They finally settled on a formula which seemed to satisfy everyone. They made the vice president-elect the president. José Sarney. He took over. That was the end of that. The Brazilian military went back to the barracks, where they've stayed ever since.

*Q: Was there the equivalent of a dominant aristocracy, or the wealthy people, who were the power brokers?*

ALEXANDER: There were several old German families. I mentioned that the Germans and the Italians were the ones you were most likely to find in southern Brazil. The Germans were the most successful of the immigrants and they called the shots. They were the political elites and they were the economic and cultural elites.

*Q: Were we still on a lookout for Nazis in the area?*

ALEXANDER: When you say "we" I don't know if the U.S. government was actively pursuing Nazis in Brazil. But certainly the Israelis were and maybe others were. Yes. If Nazis were apprehended by someone, I guess they were taken to wherever: Germany or France or Italy, and tried. I do know there were many, many people looking for Mengele, for example, who was living in Rio Grande del Sol and died in Brazil; not in my consular district. I recall, I think, it was in Sao Paulo's consular district. But he had lived in my neck of the woods. In fact, I had a few Germans tell me that Mengele had lived there. So I think that was widely known that he and some of his cronies were in and out of the area. Given there was such a large German population, that's not terribly surprising.

*Q: Looking at your area, you had Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay all abutting.*

ALEXANDER: Paraguay no. But Argentina and Uruguay yes.

*Q: What about smuggling? This is a big business.*

ALEXANDER: Yeah, it's a big, big, big business. And it was especially big in the tri-corner area of Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil which was part of Sao Paulo's consular district. That was slightly to the north of me.

*Q: But you're closer aren't you?*

ALEXANDER: Yeah. And we had a lot of stuff coming through. But that wasn't an issue that was put on my plate. I just didn't have the resources to deal with that. It was my understanding that someone in Sao Paulo and Brazil followed that picture.

*Q: Well, it wasn't our problem in a way.*

ALEXANDER: Not as much then as I understand it is now. Today, I'm told that we're much more concerned about it because of al Qaeda terrorists reportedly taking root in the area there.

*Q: What about the ruling class, or whatever you want to call it? Did they send their kids to school in the U.S? Or did they send them to France or England?*

ALEXANDER: From what I can recall, their kids went all over the place: Switzerland, France, Italy, the U.S., Germany in some cases; some of them went to school in Brazil. So I don't know whether the elites had a favorite place to send their kids. I do know that the elites more often than not had vacation homes, or second homes, in the U.S. Whether they were of German origin, or Portuguese origin, or what have you, the U.S. seemed to be their second most favorite country. They felt comfortable in the U.S., I think more so than they did in the old country. Whether, again, Portugal, Germany, or wherever it might be. At the time they liked the U.S., they liked Americans, they were comfortable there. They were especially enamored of south Florida, Miami, like most Latin elites, they weren't any different. Now that I think about it, I think the first thing you do after you rob the national treasure is run off to Miami and buy an estate or a villa or something. These folks weren't doing that, at least the ones I knew. They were making the big bucks and they were buying big places in Miami.

*Q: How would you describe relations, from your perspective, of the Brazilians with Argentina and Uruguay.*

ALEXANDER: The gauchos liked the Argentineans because culturally they were able to relate to them. They had the myth of the cowboy, the gaucho. A lot of their customs: eating beef and the barbeque, and all that; they were essentially the same. I think in an everyday sense there was an antagonism. Politically, the Brazilians saw the Argentineans as being a bunch of lazy, wealthy competitors. Not so much economic competitors, cultural competitors. But again, I would like to say the Brazilians and the Argentineans didn't like one another, but my sense is that they did. They recognized that they were sort of quasi European nations stuck off in a non-European or non-North American part of the world. They had great soccer teams, they needed one another. The Argentineans wouldn't have been what they were without the Brazilian competition and vice versa. And I think in a lot of ways they admired one another. They were different enough that

they didn't have the contempt that the Chileans and the Argentineans had for one another.

*Q: Yeah. Did you get any high-level visits through there? Or were you pretty much out in the boondocks?*

ALEXANDER: I was out in the boondocks, mercifully so.

*Q: What were you doing commercially, promoting commerce?*

ALEXANDER: Not much. Again, we were probably the largest foreign investor in Brazil at the time. The Germans had some heavy-duty investments: a big Volkswagen factory and other investments. But the U.S., still, was the dominant commercial partner of the Brazilians. There just wasn't much for us to do where I was because it had been done. There was the Mars food group, the candy people. At the time they also owned Uncle Ben's Rice, I don't know if they still do. I know that they were very interested in growing rice in the south of Brazil. They started that while I was there. I spent a lot of time with them on their project, which they were able to launch successfully. They introduced the finished product, Uncle Ben's, to the Brazilian market. So, I don't want to imply that we had no commercial activity, or that I did nothing in that area. We weren't called upon to do much, and when we were, we did. Our time was spent predominantly on getting Brazil, to the extent we could contribute to that, getting Brazil to do the right thing: give up the military, move to civilian leadership, and join with us in trying to spread democracy in the region. That was our primary mission.

*Q: How much of a port was Porto Alegre?*

ALEXANDER: It wasn't much of a port when I was there. I think principally because Santos, which was in the Sao Paulo consular district, was the major port in southern Brazil. There was no need to go to Porto Alegre.

*Q: Well, Sao Paulo was a big industrial center.*

ALEXANDER: Yeah, big industrial. Sao Paulo was New York. But it was also Pittsburg, Cleveland and Detroit, and everything else.

**CLARKE M. BRINTNALL**  
**Military Attaché**  
**Brasilia (1983-1985)**

*Brigadier General Clark M. Brintnall was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska. He graduated from West Point Academy in 1958. His career included service in Brazil, Panama, and Vietnam. Brigadier General Brintnall was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1996.*

*Q: You were in Brazil from when to when?*

BRINTNALL: July of 1983 to July of 1985 -- 2 years.

*Q: What was the situation when you arrived in Brazil? In the first place what was the internal political situation and then we will talk about our relations.*

BRINTNALL: It was clearly moving towards civilian government. It hadn't gotten there yet. But that was the direction; there was no question. We still couldn't do a lot together because of nuclear and space launch vehicle issues. There was some concern about U.S. designs on the Amazon. This kept coming up. There was some distrust of the United States and its motives.

*Q: Could you explain what this would be?*

BRINTNALL: Brazilians have always looked upon the Amazon as a great national resource with gold, petroleum and other resources. It is their huge undeveloped area. They were concerned that other countries had designs on it for various reasons or wanted to turn it into an international ecological preserve. So they were always looking over their shoulder at other countries as they could become a problem for Brazil. This was the reason that in the 1970s, Brazil developed the northern perimeter highway. They spent lots and lots of money to build a highway along the northern border.

*Q: Did you find the Brazilians were looking with great concern to what became known as generically called the "Green Movement" which is ecology and I mean, one can hardly, and still today, the Brazilian Rain Forest is considered to be a world treasure and the Brazilians are squandering it and that sort of things. Was this an issue when you were there?*

BRINTNALL: Yes. It was and it still is. It remains an issue. It has been for a long time. There was a lot of mistrust and military relations were not close. We were preoccupied with Central America, and Brazil had no interest in Central America whatsoever. They said, "That is your war up there and it doesn't involve us." We were still concerned about Brazil sending arms to Iraq and Libya. We were beginning to be quite concerned about drugs and Brazil as a transshipment point. These were issues that Brazil didn't want to hear about. These were things that we wanted to talk about but they didn't want to hear about them.

*Q: How did this affect your job?*

BRINTNALL: I dealt on two levels in Brazil as most people do. There was the personal level. I dealt on that level with my friends and contacts whom I had for many, many years. They were not effected in any way. But on the official level, I had to ask for permission to travel everywhere like all the other attachés. I gave talks here and there. Once I spoke at the War College for example, I talked to the Command and Staff College, I talked on Central America but they really weren't interested. They wanted to hear about other things. They didn't want to hear about Central America. The things we wanted to discuss, they didn't want to talk about. Relations were correct but there wasn't a lot going on in terms of security assistance, in terms of military exchanges. But we began. We worked very hard. In 1983 we held our first Joint Staff Talks. Then the Training and Doctrine Command Exchange. So, we did what we could to

advance these mutual confidence-building measures.

*Q: Who was our Ambassador during this 1983-1985 period?*

BRINTNALL: Tony Motley had just left. Harry Kopp was the Charge for several months and then Diego Asencio became the Ambassador.

*Q: How did Asencio use you?*

BRINTNALL: Diego Asencio was a great Ambassador to work for. The country team meetings included all the principal sections so the Defense Attaché was represented in both the larger and small meetings. We would give him the military views on areas that were of concern to him. He took advantage of the Defense Attaché aircraft. He traveled in Brazil a great deal. He would take his attaché with him. It was a very cordial and very business like relationship, as well. We got along very well.

*Q: On the military side, did we have any concerns? I would think, you say there was a gradual return towards a democratic form of government, were the Attachés tasked with the force of sort of keeping the temperature of the military and would they revert to the old take over thing?*

BRINTNALL: Attachés are always tasked with taking the temperature of the military, no matter where they are. This didn't change. It was just a given. It was just something they do.

*Q: What were you seeing in the Brazilian military? How did they observe this stepping aside from power?*

BRINTNALL: By that time, they were pretty tired of taking the heat for the things that hadn't gone right. They were tired of the belt tightening and inadequate military budgets. Their budgets had been squeezed ever since the military takeover in 1964. One would think that this would not be the case with a military government, but it was. They were tired. Some said, "It is too early; the Communists are still out there; the leftists...we can't afford to do this." But, by and large, the military had had enough and wanted to leave government.

*Q: Were you seeing a Communist, or maybe not Communist but an extreme leftist threat within the military in the corporal level or maybe young officer? Was this a concern?*

BRINTNALL: It was of some concern and of course, there comes a point when you can't tell the difference between the extreme right and the extreme left. There comes a point where they join each other. The areas which would appeal to the extreme left would appeal to the extreme right as well-the ultra-nationalists. You know, "The Amazon is ours and we will have to fight the United States" or whatever it might be. So this is always an area of some concern. It is a concern today, not just for Brazil but for other countries, as well. It is behavior that doesn't bode well for good relations based on mutual trust.

*Q: Did you have trouble getting into the Amazon area?*

BRINTNALL: No.

*Q: I was wondering with Diego Asencio and your attaché's plane popping up the Amazon...*

BRINTNALL: No. I had no trouble whatsoever. All the requests for travel were granted. They didn't see a threat from the Attaché plane but they could see other "ghosts." For example, we had some exercises with Guiana. That troubled them. And there was our counter-drug effort. That concerned the Brazilians -- some said this was just a subterfuge for taking over the Amazon.

*Q: It is so odd to hear this from somebody. Because you know, taking over the Amazon does not seem a way at all.*

BRINTNALL: You know, it is like the dog chasing the fire truck -- what do you do when you catch it? What would we do with the Amazon?

*Q: There you are!*

BRINTNALL: But it is such a nationalistic issue.

*Q: How did you deal with that, in your talks and all?*

BRINTNALL: I would say for example, "Why would we want the Amazon? What would we do with it?" Just hit on it directly. It wasn't so easy of course, to knock down any idea of a green occupation of the Amazon. This was a little more difficult because I am sure there are some "greens" out there that would love to internationalize the Amazon. That was something different. But as far as the United States occupying the Amazon, it was pretty easy to respond it.

*Q: How about the drug business? Was your office concerned with the drug business?*

BRINTNALL: Yes. We were concerned with drugs. We kept trying to promote Brazilian military cooperation in the drug area. But there was a great resistance on the part of the Brazilians. The Brazilians saw this as potentially very corrupting issue for their own armed forces. You know, everybody is paid so poorly. Even the officers, the generals. So what do you do? You put some young privates, sergeants or lieutenants out there and they are faced with a bribe of many thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars? They were concerned about their involvement. They saw this as a police issue, not a military issue.

*Q: What was the American Embassy was seeing? What was happening with drugs in Brazil at this time?*

BRINTNALL: More and more Brazil was being used as a trans-shipment point. Drugs coming across from Paraguay for shipment to Europe and the United States. More and more use within Brazil. We saw it as a more serious problem than the Brazilians saw it.

*Q: You mentioned the nuclear safeguards and Brazil has always been high up on our list of concerns in the non-peaceful use of nuclear materials.*

BRINTNALL: Brazil said, "We are a sovereign country -- the fifth largest country in the world; we have the right to make our own decisions. We don't want to make a nuclear weapon or plan to make such a weapon, but we reserve the right to make one if we want to. This is our own decision." This is kind of hard to argue with. "You have your weapon, France has its weapon; why can't we have a weapon if we choose to? We don't want one but why we can't make one if we want to have one?" It was very tough. We didn't make much progress at the time but we have made progress in the past couple years on adherence to the nuclear safeguards. But still, at that time, it was very difficult.

*Q: Was this an issue that you got involved with?*

BRINTNALL: Yes. We tried to persuade our counterparts that there should be safeguards, not only for non-proliferation reasons, but also so that we could have greater cooperation between our two countries.

*Q: Did the Embassy use the attachés to pass on messages and things of this nature because it is still the lingering military?*

BRINTNALL: The attachés passed messages but everybody passed messages -- the political section, the economic section, the military section ...

*Q: This is no longer any Vernon Walters going and talking to the President.*

BRINTNALL: No. By no means.

*Q: What was the government like at that time? You say the military was slowly moving out. How do you mean?*

BRINTNALL: I didn't sense repression. Most of the cabinet positions and sub-cabinet positions were filled by civilians. They weren't military positions. Although the three military ministers had far more weight than they would have for example, in the United States. They had a veto power, but they were not making the day-to-day policy.

*Q: The rocket technology, was this getting anywhere?*

BRINTNALL: They were testing. They had their own series of rockets called the Sonda system. They have a very privileged location just a couple of degrees from the equator, Barra de Inferno, from which they launch rockets. Some Brazilians saw this as a money-making potential. They could launch rockets for other countries from this privileged location. So, it was still a very sticky issue. A very thorny issue. They were guarding the secrecy of this very carefully, this and the nuclear program.

*Q: Did you have any problems with attachés getting too close to the wrong bases and things like this?*

BRINTNALL: Well, we weren't welcome in the test facilities. They would take attachés for example, to the space launch facilities but there were limits to what they could see.

*Q: Were attachés in all countries-talking about the Soviet Union at that time, East Germany etc., often would sort of play games with the security forces that would follow them and try to see where they could get and all this. Even though our relations weren't of the coziest, our attachés were on, would you say, "good behavior"?*

BRINTNALL: Yes. We had generally, good access except, as I say, to the nuclear program and for what was happening in the space launch vehicle program. Other than that we had good access. We could visit military units.

*Q: Is there anything else we should discuss?*

BRINTNALL: No. It was an era, a time, of confidence building. A time for trying to put behind us the antipathy which had developed over the breakup over the nuclear accords. We were slowly returning to what I consider a good and normal relationship.

*Q: Did you find when you, not in a public posturing, but when you would sit down and have a drink with Army officers and all their understanding of why we did what we did in supporting the British against the Argentines?*

BRINTNALL: This was not a major issue. They understood this.

*Q: I mean, it hadn't aroused the emotion even at the time.*

BRINTNALL: No.

*Q: I guess the Argentines were not their favorite people anyway.*

BRINTNALL: No. The Argentines, I must say, came out of the war different people. Relations have become very good since the war, as good as they have ever been. There is a different attitude on the part of the Argentines. I really enjoy working with them. Not that I didn't before, but now they are viewing our relations a little bit differently.

**ALEXANDER F. WATSON**  
**Deputy Chief of Mission**  
**Brasilia (1984-1986)**

*Ambassador Alexander Watson was born and raised in Massachusetts and was educated at Harvard and Wisconsin Universities. In 1962 he joined the Foreign Service and was posted to the Dominican Republic, the beginning of an impressive career specializing in Latin American Affairs. His other overseas posts include Spain, Brazil, Bolivia and Colombia, serving as Deputy Chief of Mission*

*in the latter three countries. He had several Washington assignments, the last being Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. From 1986 to 1989 he served as United States Ambassador to Peru. Ambassador Watson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.*

*Q: You're off to Brazil as DCM and this is when, in 1987?*

WATSON: '84.

*Q: And you were there from 1984 until when?*

WATSON: Until 1986 when I went off to be ambassador to Peru.

*Q: All right. Who was the ambassador in Brazil when you were DCM?*

WATSON: My old friend Diego Asencio was ambassador. Now, how I came to Brazil is kind of amusing I think from an in-house perspective, if not beyond. I had decided it was a good time when I was in Bogota, now that I had spent all of my career virtually in Latin America, it would be a good idea to try something else. I had already been deputy chief of mission twice, so I thought I should do it one more time and so I sought the position in Australia and in Kenya and in India and several other places. Those are the principal ones, maybe someplace else in the Middle East. In every case I was turned down because these were the plum jobs reserved for the people in those areas that had had hardship posts and things like that. They almost laughed at me when I talked about going to Canberra or Nairobi. In India Harry Vaughan was the ambassador and he got 42 candidates for the DCM job, he got it down to two and he picked the other guy and with reason. The other guy was coming out of Washington where he had been dealing with issues that were relevant to U.S.-India relations, so I had no hard feelings on that. Deane Hinton had tried to get me to come to Pakistan as DCM, but I was first going to have to be consul general for a while at another post and then shift into the DCM later on. I said, that is just too tenuous for me, with all due respect. I love you madly, but I'm not going to do that. So I was headed for the senior seminar, which I really didn't want to do. Out of the blue, Diego Asencio called. I had been in touch with Diego. I had been trying to convince him that a couple of good people coming out of the embassy in Bogota he should look at for the embassy in Brazil. I wasn't thinking of myself at all. Bob Ryan was scheduled to be deputy chief of mission in Brasilia. Then Bob was nominated to be ambassador, I think to Mali, and so Diego was frantically looking for a DCM— any port in a storm. He called his own buddy, Alex Watson. I said, well, this is very hard because they want me in the senior seminar and Steve Low is running that whole thing and he says there is no way I'm going to get out of it. Diego said, watch me. I ended up as DCM in Brasilia, which is fine, because I really liked Brazil and had been there before, as you know, and I knew a lot about Brazil. I knew relatively more about Brazil than most of the other countries in the region. Off we went to Brasilia in 1984.

*Q: What was the state of relations with Brazil in 1984?*

WATSON: Well, they were pretty good. It was a very interesting time as I recall, because it was a period of shifting from the military regime, which began with the coup in 1964 to a civilian

democratic regime. You were in the last of the military governments obviously with General Figueiredo and they were moving towards a rather complex election and relations with the U.S. were pretty good as I recall. We had some trade issues, as we always had. One of the big issues was one I would say called incromatics which is dealing with the high tech computer industry where the Brazilian policies during this period were a highly nationalistic effort to foster the development of a domestic industry, good old fashioned American development policies, closing the borders and giving incentives to the local folks to try and develop the industry. It didn't really work very well because the industry was just moving too fast and you really had to have a certain technological base to be able to keep up with it. They were open to big mainframes, but not to small computers. I spent lots of time working on that issue. There were other trade issues as well. The computer, the Brazilian management of the whole computer sector and also combined with its nuclear pretension at the time developing a nuclear submarine and things like that. This all made it difficult for the U.S. to authorize the export of certain kinds of very high speed computers and things like that.

*Q: That was the Cray computers.*

WATSON: Cray computers of Brazil, that's right, good memory. In fact, subsequently when I was assistant secretary we worked these things out, but it was a difficult and contentious issue and we had other trade issues such as the ones you always have in the aviation area. What airlines get how many flights and how many seats and units and cargo space and I've sort of forgotten the technical terminology for all these things, but I spent some time. We had some state visits as well that were interesting, particularly of the president elect Tancredo Neves, who then died, got very, very ill before his inauguration and could not be sworn in, the vice president was sworn in, then the president elect died and the vice president became president, Jose Sarney. That whole electoral process was an interesting one, and a radical shift for Brazil, as they voted in this elderly political figure that had been, at certain points in his life, associated with Getulio Vargas, a former dictator and twice elected president of Brazil back in the '50s and somewhat on the left, the moderate left, of the political spectrum in Brazilian terms in those days. The difficulties surrounding his illness.

*Q: Because of his age and all, was he seen as a compromised figure, someone you wouldn't challenge? I mean people would say, well, let's get him in there and work it up so we'll really put a real leader in there?*

WATSON: No, I don't think so. I think he was pretty much in charge and in good shape as the campaign went on and became a very popular figure and I don't think anyone doubted that he would be running his own government. He was vigorous even though pretty old. I mean his illness came about by failure to attend to some kind of infection in his abdomen which turned into peritonitis and by the time they got to it, they didn't take him to the best doctors and by the time they got him down to Sao Paulo it was already spreading all over his body and he died. It's really a tragedy. With the proper medical care early on he probably could have been saved. That event tended to resuscitate the old Brazilian joke which is what is the best, what is the name of the best hospital in Brasilia, answer: the airline to get out of here and go someplace place. He chose to have his own old friends sort of personal physician about his own age take care of him when he probably should have gone to some more recently educated individual.

*Q: Were you there at the time when this happened?*

WATSON: Yes.

*Q: What was our reading on the vice president sort of before, I mean the vice president elect?*

WATSON: Jose Sarney who became president. Well, he had been a bit more conservative than Neves and came out of the military sponsor government party, the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party. I think he was viewed as sort of a relatively decent, but not very inspiring political leader from the northeast of Brazil and he was from the state of Maranhão if I remember correctly, a typical sort of conservative northeastern politician pretty good at pork barrel stuff, not an inspiring leader and somebody who had worked his way up in the political hierarchy by learning to get along to go along. When he became president he handled the difficult situation of becoming vice president and the sort of acting president in the absence of a real president who was in the process of dying and then the death. He handled all that stuff gracefully and well. When he became president he was I don't think not considered to be terribly distinguished president and there were a lot of allegations of some serious corruption around him near the end of his term. I was gone by then.

*Q: How did Diego Asencio deal with the Brazilians?*

WATSON: Everybody loves Diego. He was very good. He had been there before. He had been political counselor in the embassy when I was the consul out in Bahia and that's how we became friends. His Portuguese was fluent and excellent and he was very gregarious and he traveled around the country and made speeches and talked to folks. I think the president liked him and the people in the foreign ministry enjoyed working with him and he knew a lot of people up on the Hill from his days as, their Hill, their capital, congress as the, from his days as political counselor. Even in those days when the congress was officially closed by the military there are still a lot of congressmen hanging around here so we all got to know quite a few of them back in those days because I'd been in Brasilia before as I think I mentioned before I went to be consul in Bahia for six months. Even in that short time I got to know a great number of political figures that I renewed contact with later on when I came back.

I'm trying to think of what else happened. One of the most interesting things, one of these footnotes of history was the death of Joseph Mengele when I was there. This is perhaps not the place to go into any great detail, but there were some interesting wrinkles to it.

*Q: You might explain who Joseph Mengele was.*

WATSON: Joseph Mengele was the Nazi doctor, I guess it was Auschwitz, was it?

*Q: Yes, he was a dentist actually.*

WATSON: Yes, well, I don't know if he was a dentist, but he was a physician that was allegedly and I think it's true, but I'm just not too familiar with the history to be certain, but who was

doing experiments on people in the death camps. I'm pretty sure it was Auschwitz where he was, not one of the other ones, death camps where most of the people were Jewish and doing hideous experiments on them and he became almost a, his reputation almost became a caricature in some ways of the most extreme aspects of the Nazi regime. Joseph Mengele was an absolutely notorious figure long before he came to surface and dead in Brazil. The movie The Boys from Brazil, yes, was based on him and that sort of stuff, doing genetic experimentation and this kind of stuff. He had been living. He was always rumored to be everywhere. When I was in Bolivia I may have even mentioned this; we had a report that he had, that he was on a plane flying into Bolivia. I had to go out to the airport I think I may have mentioned this and I walked up and down the plane looking for him. Here Mengele, here Mengele as if he was going to stand up, but in any case. So, people were looking for him all the time and he turned up dead and having drowned in southern Brazil. We really weren't sure if it were he or not. We had the enormous good fortune, most people don't know about this perhaps to have as our consul general in Sao Paulo a very successful U.S. Information Agency Officer named Steve Dachi who by profession before entering the Foreign Service was a forensic dentist graduated, you know about this?

*Q: I've interviewed him.*

WATSON: Oh, he graduated, well, you ought to get the story from him.

*Q: But I'd still like to get it from you.*

WATSON: He was, he graduated from the University of Kentucky. Steve was a Hungarian immigrant to the United States if I recall correctly. I think he went to Kentucky as an undergraduate and then went to graduate school. In any case, here we have a case where the most important identifying features of Mr. Mengele were dental including a certain kind of an abnormality in his skull which is where the hair grows backwards inside and cuts and penetrates all the way inside of your mouth or something like that. Steve had actually done some studies of this in dental school and he had his mother-in-law go out to a warehouse in Hyattsville, Maryland and scramble around and find his old slides from those days and send them down there. He was out there over at the morgue and this is a big case. He's out there looking around.

*Q: A world class case, yes.*

WATSON: There's another dimension which I'd like to mention. At the very beginning, as soon as it was reported that this cadaver might be that of Joseph Mengele, everybody on earth wanted to come. The U.S. has this whole unit in the Justice Department that deals with these kinds of things. So, the U.S. wanted to send people down., the Germans wanted to send people down and the Israelis wanted to send people over. The authorities in Sao Paulo were resistant to this interference by all these foreigners as police forces around the world normally would be. I remember it was on a weekend and they called up the deputy foreign minister in Brazil called the secretary general of the foreign ministry \_\_\_\_\_ who was ambassador here and a guy I had known since I was in Brazil the first time. I got him on the phone and I said, Paolo, do you have any idea what's going on here, let me bring you up to speed. He was aware of the Mengele thing, but didn't know about it. I said, you guys could have a huge public relations problem here if you don't find some way to collaborate with these foreigners that want to come in. I'm not just

talking about the U.S. guys. I'm not even making a representation on the part of the U.S. government; I'm calling you as a friend who knows something about this stuff. I suggest you take a look at this stuff and see how you want to manage it because you're not going to be able to withstand the international pressure to have people coming here and look at this.

*Q: It looked like a cover up.*

WATSON: You try to manage it without that kind of participation it will have all kinds of consequences as you can imagine. He didn't mean to be told by me about this. He figured this out immediately and he called down to Romeu Tuma who was the head of the Sao Paulo police at that time and within a matter of hours these people were coming in as collaborators. I don't remember all the details anymore and I'm not even going to try to since you've gotten them from Steve Dachi, but Steve and I were talking on the phone every day about how we were managing this and how much involved we wanted to be and not be and how much we wanted him involved and not involved. Obviously we wanted to be helpful in a technical sense to the extent that we had this unique asset there, but to the extent that there were other people who could do this as well or better than maybe we'll step back a little because that's not really his job anymore, he's no longer a forensic person.

*Q: Consul generals don't normally do that sort of thing.*

WATSON: That's right, but also, he needed to help manage the U.S. presence there, the guys from the Department of Justice and make sure that they get the access they needed and make sure that the press understood what was going on and all the stuff you have to do in something like that. My recollection of this is that Steve handled this whole thing brilliantly well and eventually his work actually contributed to the positive identification that this really was Mengele. There were a lot of other questions about when the remains were dug up that remember he had died a while before and had been buried and dug up if I remember correctly. What they were trying to do was to identify this cadaver and skeleton and stuff and that's why this was important because it had gone right through the bone and all that stuff. I think he did make a positive contribution to the positive identification of this nefarious person. That was kind of a side story that took up quite a while.

*Q: Was there a concern that there was maybe no longer significant, but at that time a number of Nazis living in Brazil?*

WATSON: Well, there was for many years, not just a concern, but a presumption that there were Nazis under pseudonyms of course living all over southern South America, particularly Paraguay and also Argentina and Brazil. We all know about the one that was in Bolivia that was extradited back to France to Lyon where he was tried.

*Q: Barbie?*

WATSON: Klaus Barbie who was there when I was in Bolivia, too.

*Q: Where did Adolf Eichmann come from?*

WATSON: Eichmann, if I recall, was in Argentina. I think that's right, but... and there are others in Argentina now more recently that have been cause celebre. There is no evidence and I wouldn't suggest for one instant that any authorities in Brazil knew that this was Mengele and knew where he was. He was a guy living quietly in a little house in the countryside with his trees around him and things like that. He came and went and the more you start to unravel and talk to people in the neighborhood, maybe if you'd been a very inquisitive investigative reporter or detective, you might have figured something out, but he had a different name. I don't remember what name he used now. He'd been there for a long time. He was kind of a person that kept to himself, but was not viewed negatively by anybody in his little community at that point.

There were economic issues because Brazil as usual was trying to come to grips with inflation. It had taken off before and during the military government and then they institutionalized the indexation to the rates of inflation. This then compounds the inflation in effect and the Sarney administration took some rather dramatic steps to try to deal with inflation creating a new currency and some other things that had some impact for a while. But then because it didn't get to the underlying causes of it all it sort of started to come apart again. That was something else we were paying a lot of attention to. I'm trying to think what else.

*Q: Were we just basically observers of the Brazilian economic thing or trying to open it up for at least our products?*

WATSON: Well, we were always on these trade issues trying to induce the Brazilians to move toward a more open trading system a less restrictive one and reducing their tariffs and that sort of thing, a lot of which they've done since. Also, they were concerned about their inability to get inflation under control and what that implied for the exchange rates, it implied for investments, it implied for the poor in Brazil who are always hurt worse. As soon as you get your paycheck it would disappear because the inflation was going at such a fast rate. All of the sort of financial ledger demand which had to take place and unless people with income could do that, put their money into overnight accounts and all these kinds of games people were playing, all of them legitimate, but not necessarily the best uses of capital, but designed to protect themselves from the ravages of inflation which of course the poor can't do. We were concerned about that as well.

*Q: How about the big banks in New York, Citibank and all? Was this the time when they were loading the Brazilians down with loans or was this before or after?*

WATSON: I think this was after that if I recall correctly that it was in the '80s is when there were these big loans after the oil shock and everything. I think those were still going on, but I think most of them happened in the early '80s as opposed to the mid-'80s when I was there, but there was still concern about it. We were concerned about Brazil's ability to meet its debt service on these things.

*Q: Was Brazil working externally to be sort of the South American leader at this point?*

WATSON: Well, it was during this time that they sort of cooked up *Plano Cruzado* and I remember talking with Ambassador Frank \_\_\_\_\_ who was the head of the economic bureau if

you will of the foreign ministry at the time they were creating *Plano Cruzado* and it was really, that was just an idea, just starting to work toward it. Make no mistake about it, it had a clear political dimension. This was to not only open markets for Brazil, being the largest economy in the region, it was expected to benefit and the others were, too; it also was a device for strengthening the ties with its immediate neighbors which would be to Brazil's benefit. It was the largest, and perhaps the most influential, country, the others being Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. The latitude is quite small in Argentina, a country with traditional rivalry with Brazil, but in fact over the years a less powerful economy by far than the Brazilian economy.

*Q: You mentioned the computer world. Had the Brazilians seen this as the key to projecting itself within in the both internally and externally as something to master and manufacture?*

WATSON: I think it was a combination. It was good old fashioned Brazilian statist economics that had been undertaken and initiated in some ways back in the '50s and then reinforced to a considerable extent by the military regimes. Most of these politicians who came back and came into power in 1985, were from that time frame so they thought in those terms and even the ones that were younger. So, that's how the people sort of thought. There were the outside voices, and others, who screamed for more liberal economic regime so that was there. That was sort of a general approach.

The whole point is to reduce imports and create a situation, an import substitution model, so they had that whole way of thinking. Secondly, I think the Brazilians in perceiving that the computer world was the one of the dramatic new industries where a country could get really get a foothold, could make a name for itself and have a lot of business, etc. and so they wanted to develop that. No reason why it couldn't develop an industry like that. But once again you combine those two things, plus old fashioned nationalism was there during the military regimes and some of these people from the left are in the spectrum as well. Put those three things together and you get this recipe, but they didn't understand that the way they could best develop this industry would be to invite the American firms, particularly, but also maybe from other countries in there and then start to take advantage of the spin offs and develop the ancillary industries and then eventually maybe. I had a strategy at one point there. Diego sort of let me handle this stuff. My strategy was, well, anyone knows that a sophisticated industrial sector is going to need to have really a first rate computers in the future. We all go down to Sao Paulo and work with Steve Dachi, the consul general there I mentioned a few minutes ago, go around to the various industries. Steve would do most of this because that was his territory. We would talk to the big manufactures and say, you really need to have access to this technology or you're going to fall behind the rest of the world. Your government up in Brasilia is retarding your access to this by this rather primitive effort to keep it all out while it will take them a few years to develop it on their own. We would submit that it's in your interest to resist this policy and try to convince the government before they sign any others that they ought to adopt a more open policy on this. Well, this was not successful you may observe and one reason for it. I can remember this moment very clearly. I felt kind of naive. I was talking to a businessman who will go unnamed here because he's still around. Among other things, he ran a chain of hotels all in Brazil. I was talking to him about this theory. He said, well, wait a second, you've got to understand one thing. We have computers in all our hotels. They are Apple computers and they come in through Paraguay and we pay for them by the pound. That's how you buy computers in Paraguay by the pound, like \$12 a pound.

We bring them in, we have our own boxes made with our own labels on it and put these Apples inside there and you go to any of our hotels and you'll see these computers there. This is the most inexpensive way for us to do this by far. We have no interest, no interest in rocking the boat in this area. To the extent, this is really for personal computers and things like that, but that was the contentious area because the mainframes, there were limitations of what could be done. IBM and the big mainframe guys were in there making mainframes even though I think if I recall correctly there were some requirements that certain components, like some of the tapes and things had to be made locally or something like that. I realized that wow this is more complicated than I thought in getting these guys to stand up and make a fuss when they were benefiting by getting this contraband in from Paraguay. It's probably not going to be very successful.

When I had been in Brazil before I had noticed that the relationship between the embassy and Brasilia and the consulates general in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo were extremely strained and part of that was because the embassy used to be in Rio and then it moved up to Brasilia so they never got over it not being the embassy. For a long time they had more people in Rio than we had in Brasilia, like the ambassador and the top king was in Brasilia. There was a lot of tension over control. I remember sitting in my little post in Bahia saying if I ever get a position of employment in the embassy in Brasilia I will change this. I remember that when John Crimmins had been ambassador, Bob Sayre was inspector general. Bob Sayre I think criticized the embassy for trying to have too tight a hold over the consulates general. When Bob Sayre succeeded Jack Crimmins as ambassador he tightened it up even more. I always thought that was kind of ironic. When I came in that was after Sayre, there was Tony Motley and then Diego Asencio came in. I said, we're going to loosen this all up and this is ridiculous. There is no reason why every telegram that goes out of Rio and Sao Paulo has to come through Brasilia first and be edited by us. All it does it slow everything down. It's certainly a blow to morale as well as to efficiency. We're going to replace this primitive system with one which requires more frequent consultation among all the relevant people. This would be a clear message from the embassy to the consulates general what Washington is interested in and what we're interested in. If they want to do well, that's what they will report on and give them some clear understanding on where we stand on these issues so that they can shape their commentary and stuff in light of that. Nobody wants to have telegrams shot out by the ambassador saying please ignore this telegram we just received from Sao Paulo. You don't have to be heavy handed if you have communication. That is what we did and it worked a hell of a lot better. I'm sorry to say that after I left I understand it went back, slipped back toward the previous pattern where the DCM sat around spending most of his day editing other peoples' cables because that was a waste of time.

I also had to close a post. I had to close my old post. It broke my heart. Salvador the oldest consulate in South America unless \_\_\_\_\_ was and there was always an argument which came first, I never knew quite what the answer was, obviously I maintained that it was Bahia, Salvador de Bahia. What happened was the following. The Department said in its post closing frenzy which is all it knows how to do to reduce budgets they told us we had to close Porto Alegre in Brazil. We put up a valiant defense of why Porto Alegre had to stay open and this that and the other. We won, we convinced them. They said those arguments are telling. They said, okay, we're not going to close Porto Alegre, but you've got to close another post, which is completely unfair I thought, making a battle. What was I going to do, we only had two other posts. One was Salvador de Bahia and one was Recife. I thought well, frankly having somebody in the northeast

of Brazil was Bahia because there was a section under development that had moved out of the traditional northeast and in any sense it will always be northeast in a cultural way, its economy was much more linked to the rest of Brazil than it was to other parts. It was a much bigger state, a richer state, much more industry and tied in to some extent to Sao Paulo and Rio. It could be dealt with more easily out of Brasilia and elsewhere so I decided that I would keep Recife and had to close down my old post. We did a trick. We did several tricks. We closed the post, assigned a principal officer to Rio and then detailed him back to Salvador without the Department's actually knowing we did any of this. So, nothing really changed for a while until he got transferred. Diego Asencio opened a post without any permission from anybody. The president elect had told him he wanted a consulate in the district he was from and Diego was trying to please him and the Department wouldn't approve it. So, we just got a guy assigned to Rio and detailed him. The U.S. Information Agency wanted to have, they already had a cultural center in Bella Horizonte, so the USIA had a presence there and so we could move State in with the USIA presence and there was our little semi-official consulate for a while. Those were just little games we were playing. Diego was always very inventive. He did the Bella Horizonte. He was doing that even as I was arriving or shortly after I got there. I learned from that to be able to do the thing in Bahia.

*Q: Did you find in closing a post officially or something, do you get screams and yells from the local people?*

WATSON: Of course they do, of course you do. How important that is is another question to you. Maybe it's not very important. I always thought because I was out there in one of those posts. I was out there in a post that was called a listening post. A lot of the functions, I got a lot of the functions transferred to it, as I mentioned before, but a lot of those posts have a lot of limited things they do anyhow. They don't issue immigrant visas. Sometimes they don't even issue tourist visas, so they don't have an extensive support apparatus. They are not, in most countries... they are not a security problem. They don't have any marine guards or anything like that. So, the cost: I figured when I was in Bahia, mind you this is 30 years ago, it cost \$65,000 a year to run that post, all the employees, my salary, the rent, my secretary, administrative guy, the driver, I think that's about all we had, and maybe one handyman, all travel, everything. That's nothing. I thought that it gave us a presence in a part of a huge country where regions are important we would otherwise not have had. It also gave us information if you had the right people that were good at this stuff, information on these areas and you also; it's a wonderful training ground. That was one of my strongest points. You want someone having been one of these people; you want someone to be tested. You throw them out there on their own say here you are, figure out what you're going to do, this is how you have to report. You learn a lot about yourself, what you're relatively good at, what you're relatively not so good at. You learn how to set your own priorities and agendas. You learn how to focus, and you're sensitive enough to what's going on in the world in this case in Brasilia and Washington to be able to say something they want to hear. I think they're invaluable and I think when the Department screams about not having managerial competence, you could give some of these younger officers more experience out there running things and more training than I ever got and more counseling and mentoring along the way. You would have a chance to help people develop some of their managerial skills a lot more efficiently than they have so far. I hated to close this small post.

When I first went to Brazil, we had to close a post in \_\_\_\_\_ in the north of the Amazon, we had just closed the one in \_\_\_\_\_ which is just to the south of Sao Paulo as well as Porto Alegre, Rio, Sao Paulo, Bahia, Recife. We had a consul general up in \_\_\_\_\_ and maybe a couple of other consulates general. Since that time we're just down to Brasilia, Rio and Sao Paulo. I guess we still have something on Porto Alegre. I think we do and maybe Recife.

*Q: I think it's a mistake, but to close these things down, you can bring it down to a bare minimum. You were mentioning the nuclear issue. This was a theme that went throughout the time. Where did it stand and how did you deal with it with Brazil because Brazil and Argentina were both making nuclear noises. I mean it's the last thing in the world anyone wanted.*

WATSON: We spent years; the government spent a lot of effort on this. Ambassador Kennedy at that time was ambassador at large.

*Q: Richard Kennedy.*

WATSON: Richard Kennedy. And he had nuclear stuff in his portfolio, if I remember this correctly. He came down I think at least twice in the two years I was there to talk to the Brazilians and try to encourage them and the Argentines to do the right thing. Eventually they did it all on their own. Once you had civilian governments in both places it made a big difference. On my last trip as assistant secretary to Warren Christopher to Latin America he signed the deal in Brazil which allowed the sharing of missile technology and things, all of which had we had been not able to do because of the nuclear dimension which was poisoning our ambassador to do that. We had Dan Golden from NASA down there with us who signed all these things in the foreign ministry. I got a sort of mild satisfaction that he hadn't \_\_\_\_\_ this issue for a long time. Sort of like the computer issue we saw in \_\_\_\_\_ when he was ambassador here and in Lima he was the secretary general of the foreign ministry and I really worked out and USTR deserves a lot of credit for this. It worked out an arrangement to accept the, yes, this is now in the '90s, sets that \_\_\_\_\_ issue on the side and once again allowed when Al Gore went down there. We all went down there on a lightning trip to be able to sign some scientific, some broad scientific cooperation agreement which also had been put on hold for years because of the inability to resolve this issue. Those were some of the things. I'm sure there are many other things I can think of later on I can add back in here.

*Q: What about Brazil on the international thing, the UN and other places? What was our impression? Was Brazil helpful, not much of a player, or what?*

WATSON: Well in the multilateral area Brazil has always been a pretty good player. They take it very importantly. The fact that they always give the first speech at the UN general assembly as a result of their leading role in putting together the UN in San Francisco. They always give it great importance and their diplomacy is oriented towards the maximum advantage of those organizations and they're very effective and they were difficult to deal with at many times. Often I used to think that Brazilian diplomacy was a little bit like the Mexican which is a little bit like the French. They had a diplomacy which was designed to at least in some terms look like it was to the left, opposed to the U.S. and many of the other industrialized democracies and appealing to the less developed countries. At the same time their internal system was an extremely right

wing dictatorship run by the military, not that Mexico and France are exactly like that, but the dynamic of abusing a foreign policy in this kind of presentational way quite different from the reality in their own country. They fended off criticism and would hide behind other developing countries and say on their failings on human rights got reported. They were always fierce advocates of their positions and they are very good at manipulating these other organizations. People within the organization would be supportive of their position and they're quite good at that stuff.

We had been there before when I was in Colombia, that's where he made the classic remark at dinner in Brasilia about how glad he was to be in Bolivia. They never have forgotten that. It's like when de Gaulle left Brazil and was quoted as saying this is not a serious country. That will stick in people's historical memories. When I was there Vice President Bush came for the inauguration of Sarney. We didn't have as many visitors as we do now or as we should have had. Quite a number of members of congress, Bob Graham and Dick Lugar were the internationally oriented members of the senate came, quite a few congressmen came through of various persuasions. We didn't have as many cabinet secretaries at all as we have now.

*Q: What about the conflict in Nicaragua and El Salvador and all that? How did that play in Brazil?*

WATSON: Very far away. Not very important.

*Q: It was not sort of saying well the gringo is sticking at this and Latin Americans.*

WATSON: Well, if they needed to say that, they would, but they were not part of the contadora group or anything like that. They weren't really engaged in that. They were much more interested in organizing things in the southern half of the Western Hemisphere.

*Q: Well, by this time, Argentina, I guess we're about ready to finish on this, Argentina was not seen as a particularly threat or not?*

WATSON: Well, it's hard to know, it's difficult for me to judge that. Certainly in the circles where people were paid to think about threats and where their significance is enhanced by the significance of the threat, military places in particular and probably some elements of the foreign ministry, Argentina is viewed as a serious rival that has to be dealt with. I think that the more sophisticated people saw it as a way to deal with this was the \_\_\_\_\_ way as opposed to any browbeating. The nuclear issue was still open and like it or not the foreign minister didn't control that issue. It was the ministry of science and technology and even more importantly the military ministries, so that was a difficult one to get hold of.

I just want to make a note here on the record on this informatics issue or high technology or computer issue. John Whitehead, the deputy secretary of state at that time, was enormously helpful. He came all the way down to Brazil and helped me out in dealing with this issue to keep the Brazilians from taking a step that really would have forced the issue with us in a dramatic way in these international situations. I still see John Whitehead at the board of governors of the Nature Conservancy. I still see him with some frequency, but I just wanted to note that for the

record

**STEPHEN F. DACHI**  
**Cónsul General**  
**Sao Paulo (1985-1988)**

*Stephen F. Dachi was born in 1933 in Hungary. He attended the University of Oregon Dental School and then joined the Peace Corps. While in the Peace Corps he served in Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil. During his career in USIA he served positions in Hungary, Panama City, Brazil, and India. Mr. Dachi was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in May 1997.*

*Q: When you went to Brazil in 1985, what was the political-economic situation as we saw it and American interests there?*

DACHI: U.S.-Brazil relations have always been dominated by economic, trade, and investment issues almost to the exclusion of others, to a much greater extent than most anywhere else. Brazil had had a 20 year period of military rule that was coming to an end just as I was going down to Sao Paulo. We certainly looked with favor at this transition to civilian rule, although we never exerted much proactive diplomacy to get it to happen sooner. We got along quite well with the military regimes There might have been some minor exceptions, but not many.

So, the U.S.-Brazil relationship has always had an unusually small political component and an extraordinarily large economic component. One reason for this is that Brazil is very sensitive vis a vis all of its Hispanic Latin American neighbors not to be seen as some kind of a leader of Latin America, a trendsetter. They always thought it was more important to promote their interests in the economic sphere than to exert leadership in the Latin American regional context. They were, however, somewhat interested in playing a greater role at the United Nations, where they felt they were entitled to a permanent seat in the Security Council as the largest and most important country in the Southern Hemisphere.

As I was saying earlier, the most important political and ideological influence in the Spanish-speaking Latin American countries has always been wielded by Mexico, until they got into the economic reform and liberalization phase in the 1980s. They were the anti-American ideological trend setters. They were the ones that never broke with Cuba, the ones that voted for Zionism as racism in the UN and almost always opposed U.S. Latin American policy initiatives, just to show their independence from the U.S. This, in turn, was done to compensate for the obvious and painful reality that on the economic side they were totally dependent on the U.S. It was virtually impossible in those days for any Spanish-speaking Latin American country to openly side with the U.S. on any issue, for fear of displeasing the Mexicans and appearing to break solidarity ranks.

The Brazilians always felt they wanted to stay out of most of that. They did to some degree want to make it clear they were not under U.S. influence in any way, and there is certainly plenty of

nationalist sentiment in Brazil. On the whole, however, they felt that the business of Brazil was business. They didn't want to be Latin American ideological leaders. They were interested in exporting, investing, expanding their markets around the world and keeping the international banks they were "stiffing" on their massive foreign debt off their backs. This has always bothered a lot of people in the academic and think tank Latin Americanist community in this country, who all are much more politically than economically oriented and are always looking toward giving the U.S.-Brazil relationship a more heavily political character. It has never been in the cards, not during the military regimes, not during the unstable civilian regimes that followed, and not during this latest period of greater economic stability, progress, and growth that has taken place in the last three years under the most recent president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

When I got there, two things were noteworthy. First it was the period when the first civilian president, Tancredo Neves, was going to take over after 20 years of military rule. He was not popularly elected, but indirectly elected by state and federal legislatures. But he became ill and died before taking office. Then Jose Sarney, who had been elected to be vice president, actually became the first civilian president. So, this was an important historical transition.

The other thing, the really big issue, was that about six or eight months before, Brazil had passed the so-called Informatics Law that cut out U.S. trade and investment in the area of computers and software and eventually tried to squeeze the U.S. out of other high tech electronic market segments. This created quite a problem. It ended up becoming the first case where the United States brought a 301 action for unfair trade practices against another country under the U.S. Foreign Trade Act. From the standpoint of the birth pangs of the early days of economic reforms and globalization, this was historically a landmark case. That was just beginning at the time I got there. It was tremendously significant in a process (globalization) that today is far down the road from where it was then. That was a turning point. Those were the two things. I was up to my neck and heavily involved in both of them.

*Q: The two issues...*

DACHI: One was the conversion to democracy and civilian rule from the military and the other was the so-called Informatics Law. Informatics means what today we call information technology, everything that is computers, software, electronic controls, information and telecommunications technology etc. They used the word "informatics" in those days.

*Q: Why don't we deal with that first and then we'll go to the transition period. Why and what was this law and how did it impact on us?*

DACHI: This is really a big, terribly important subject. What was the thing about this law? First of all, Brazil along with most of the rest of the developing countries in Asia and Latin America, were still following the import substitution economic model. These economies were basically closed and the policy was to become as self-sufficient as possible by maintaining very high tariffs, stimulating and subsidizing public and private domestic industry, having huge state enterprises, and shielding the economy from foreign competition. We still see these giant state enterprises in China and elsewhere, including Western Europe. In Brazil, as we speak, most of the state enterprises have been or are about to be privatized and the economy has been opened

up.

In spite of having a closed, protected economy, Brazil had an unusual amount of foreign investment, more so than any other import substitution economy in the world. This seeming contradiction was more apparent than real and was an example of Brazilian ingenuity in trying to have their cake and eat it too. The case of IBM is one of many illustrative examples. They were allowed in, but once there, they became captives of the protected economy. They had to play according to the anti-competitive rules established by Brazil, which of course was fine with IBM, since they became its beneficiaries rather than victims. If they played along, as IBM and the most of the others who were allowed in in fact did, other foreign competitors including Japanese computer firms, for example, were kept out.

The basic rule was that no foreign company could get in the way of any Brazilian company that wanted to develop and dominate a particular market sector for itself. So, outsiders were allowed to come in, invest, and do certain things that Brazilian companies were not ready for or interested in, even though they were a foreign investor. In return for being “good companies” and playing by “Brazilian rules” they were then also protected against other foreign competitors as if they were a Brazilian company. This was done for a lot of industries.

The historically significant point here was that once the high-tech revolution broke out all over the world and started introducing personal computers, software, etc., this by definition meant that you could no longer have national barriers, and closed economies. It became impossible. No customs or tariff barriers could possibly keep such foreign products out. For one thing, they were absolute musts for any Brazilian company that had any hopes of remaining competitive in either the national or global marketplace. Secondly, it always was and still is child’s play to smuggle such products into Brazil through Paraguay and even in those early days contraband computers, software and electronic products were practically inundating the Brazilian market via that route.

Brazil was the first and only country that thought it could control the “foreign threat” from the high-tech revolution the same way they successfully did for all the other areas of investment, just like all the other countries in Southeast Asia, India and Latin America that were wedded to the import substitution economy. The latter all stopped short, however, of trying to extend that to information technology. That was a preposterous and unworkable idea.

In the case of IBM, which was already there, they took away many of the rights they had to make certain kinds of computers, and passed a law saying that personal computers, mini computers, and a number of other products could only be manufactured or assembled by Brazilian companies. They bought off IBM by allowing them to continue making mainframes and certain large printers, and so on, that were beyond the capacity of the newly-formed Brazilian companies, and allowed them to sell those at three times the “normal” profit. In effect they “bought off” or co-opted companies like IBM by cutting down their product lines by two-thirds, and then allowing them to triple their profits on the remainder, guaranteeing them a non-competitive domestic market and making the consumers pay for it by keeping out all the alternatives.

*Q: When was the law passed?*

DACHI: In the fall of 1984.

*Q: So this was just before you arrived.*

DACHI: Right. So, the main reason was to try to bring information technology into the traditional system of economic control and protectionism. But there were other reasons. We have to go back a couple of years to the Falklands War to understand the background. The Brazilians had nothing to do with that war directly, but when the Argentines managed to sink a couple of British ships with Exocet missiles, one of the most up-to-date versions of missile technology at the time, that they had bought from the French, everybody in Latin America was ecstatic. I wasn't stationed in Brazil yet, but I happened to be traveling through Bolivia and Chile. Chile was normally antagonistic toward Argentina, but in this case even they were excited. For a few brief days everybody fancied that missile as the great equalizer between the powerful developed countries and the poor, underdeveloped Latin Americans. They wanted to believe that even a relatively small country like Argentina, given a few Exocet missiles, could sink the British navy.

This had an incredible impact on Latin American minds. Who would have ever thought that a Latin American country could face down a powerful Western military force like that of the British. But what really happened? After they sank the two ships and fired a few more missiles, they ran out of them and had to get more. But the French said "No, there is a war going on. We're not giving you any more." The United States did its part, by weighing in with France not to sell the Argentines more of the missiles. All of a sudden, Argentina woke up to the fact that the "great equalizer" vanished into thin air virtually over night. As much euphoria as there was before, now there was this tremendous wave of revulsion that "These Westerners have got us again. When we really need this stuff, they cut us off."

The Brazilian military drew their own conclusions. "See, you can't rely on foreigners. We have to be self-sufficient in technology just like we became self-sufficient in everything else. We can't let foreigners dominate high technology, otherwise we can no longer assure our own national security. When we really need it, they're going to see to it that our country is defeated in a war just like they did with Argentina when the chips were down." So, the idea was spawned not just by the import substitution economists. In Brazil, the military regime labeled information technology as a national security issue. That would facilitate their subsequent decision to retain veto power over that policy, as one of several preconditions to turning the country over to the civilians in 1985.

The Generals were already aware of the fact that the time was coming when the military had to step back and let the civilians in after 20 years. This had to be a very delicately negotiated process, not only in Brazil but in every one of the South American, Southern Cone countries. In Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, even more so than in Brazil, the issue of amnesty to the military officers who had committed so many crimes and human rights violations while in power had to be resolved before there was a chance to get them to agree to a return to democracy and civilian rule. These military weren't just going to withdraw to their barracks, let the civilians take over and be put on trial for their human rights crimes.

In the Brazilian case, the political compact that the military imposed as the price for allowing the civilians to return was that the military would retain residual rights in certain areas. One of them was to retain control over policy for the Amazon region and the security issues, as they perceived them, that played themselves out there. That included veto power over any initiative the government might undertake to restrain logging and agricultural settlements in the Amazon rainforest, and the attempt to rein in the rampant burning and deforestation that was reaching new heights. The other was in high technology. They were going to have the final word and absolute control over what happens in the area of high technology. As far as the Informatics Law was concerned, the word of the military was decisive, "Yes, we have to be self sufficient, so we're going to build this into our closed economy and develop our own national industry." So, this was settled as part of the necessity of granting them their residual rights in the last few months before they actually left office. No one in the civilian domain, even had they wanted to do it otherwise, could have stood in the way.

There was a third area, a kind of mixture of politics, old, and new. Brazil has always been haunted by inflation, the kind of inflation we can't even fathom, up to 40-80% a month. One of the sectors that became astronomically profitable as a result of inflation was banking. You can imagine what interest rates are when there is that kind of inflation. So, to put it in the simplest possible terms, if banks can take three days to pay a check that you wrote and collect the money due to them in one day, that two day interval float between what they take in and what they pay out, they make a hefty profit. Actually, that is also how many other industries and companies survived in Brazil. Everybody was trying to do the same thing: keeping their heads above water by collecting in 20 days and paying in 30 or 40. You couldn't make any money by increasing production, because of the inflation.

For the banks, it was absolutely imperative to stay on top of the inflationary process, knowing they could make a ton of money if they handled it right. The way to make this thing work was to computerize the entire banking sector as quickly as possible. They decided that the quickest and cheapest way to do it was by developing their own domestic computer and ATM industry. So, it was the banks that decided, with full government blessing, to stake three Brazilian entrepreneurs to start up their own computer companies. They financed it, bought the stock, and literally controlled it lock, stock, and barrel. All of a sudden, three Brazilian companies popped up that were going to make Brazilian computers, obviously with "borrowed technology," to put it euphemistically, and they were going to have a huge, instant, protected, guaranteed market in the banking sector to help them get launched and compete against some of the most experienced, technologically advanced and cost-efficient multinationals. Without that protection, they wouldn't have had the ghost of a chance.

Not surprisingly, countless Brazilian and foreign companies, large and small, that had needs for thousands of new computers refused to buy these overpriced second-rate Brazilian computers built with pirated, obsolescent technologies. That was the beginning of a gigantic contraband operation that resulted in the smuggling in of American computers through Paraguay, to the tune of an estimated \$300-400 million a year. But none of it made any difference. Brazilian authorities turned a blind eye to it all for a long time, because there was too much money to be made at their end of the operation. The three Brazilian manufacturers were guaranteed to sell thousands of computers and all that goes with them, including tens of thousands of ATM

machines, to the banks that owned them, so that the banks could automate their operations and lock in these incredible inflation-derived profits. That is, in fact, what happened. In order to do that, they shut down the corresponding product lines of their foreign competitors, IBM, Hewlett Packard and what is now UNYSIS. They called the policy “market reserve.” Those were the main ingredients and the hardball tactics that signaled the inception of the informatics law.

In 1985, the year after the law came into effect, nobody appreciated or understood yet all the global dimensions and implications of what was happening. We were just dealing with the minutia. Nobody had the context. I certainly had no idea. But we knew that this law was damaging to U.S. economic interests. IBM was the first to start complaining. There were many others who soon followed suit. Soon enough though, many of them stopped complaining when they woke up to the fact that the government would “buy them off” by granting them market reserves of their own in product lines that did not impinge on Brazilian companies’ interests. Things got worse later in the year because after they did it to computers, Brazilian policymakers realized that you can't stop there. They moved on to software and the gamut of electronic products, optical scanners in supermarkets, electronically controlled windshield wipers in automobiles, computerized numerical controls for factory machines, and even computerized system controls for entire industrial production lines. So, this grew like topsy over the next 12 months. And in all these latter fields, buying off the multinationals proved to be much more complicated than was the case with computer hardware.

It was very tough back then to really know how exactly U.S. interests were going to be hurt. But by that time, there was something else going on in Washington. Democrats in Congress led by Richard Gephardt began to accuse the Reagan administration of not being sufficiently zealous in defending our commercial and economic interests in other countries and not backing and supporting the American private sector as much as the Japanese. In particular, the administration was faulted for not combating unfair trade practices against U.S. exporters vigorously enough. Remember that in those days the Japanese were seen as all-powerful in international trade, due to heavy government support and subsidies that allowed them to run circles around American companies. That sounds pretty funny today as we have witnessed the vaunted Japanese economy flame out in many areas, but it seemed real to a lot of people back then.

Section 301 of the Foreign Trade Act was available to us to press for resolving such unfair trade practice, and failing that, to invoke sanctions. The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), was set up to deal with this kind of thing, but the administration had chosen not to pursue any cases under section 301 up to that time. Now Congress was saying that they were going to take away from the administration some of the leeway that over the years it had given to the Executive Branch to deal with foreign trade. After all, in the Constitution, that function is given to Congress. There was a concerted move in Congress to tighten up foreign trade legislation and basically reduce the administration's flexibility in conducting foreign trade policy on the grounds that they weren't tough enough. So, by the summer of 1985, it became apparent to the White House that in order to head off these congressional initiatives, it was essential to find some device to start acting tougher and find some cases to invoke Section 301 of the Trade Act. That provision basically says that if a country practices unfair trade practices, we investigate it, determine what that unfair trade practice is and the extent of the damage it has caused to U.S. exporters, and try to negotiate a solution. If we can't negotiate a solution, we apply sanctions.

Sanctions have increasingly become a big part of our foreign policy, many times in ways that I think are counterproductive, but at other times, they make a certain amount of sense. This was one of the early steps in the intensification of that process in the foreign trade field. By August, the administration decided to bring a couple of 301 cases on an accelerated basis. It was deemed politically imperative to head off Congress.

So, in September, the first two 301 cases were brought by the administration. One of them was with Korea. I'm not familiar with that one. The other was with Brazil, specifically about the Informatics Law. It was obvious that this was something new and had potentially far reaching consequences. There were a lot of big American companies involved. The political decision was made at the White House that they had to move quickly on a 301 because Congress was breathing down their necks, and they picked this one. But because of the political urgency, they rushed into bringing the case before they really knew very much about exactly what the problem was in terms of the impact on U.S. companies.

The Informatics Law was a great topic of discussion even before I went to Sao Paulo. At the time, I didn't even know that there was a U.S. Foreign Trade Act, but it quickly became apparent to me that this thing was going to be an issue in our relations. Most of these companies and industries, both the Americans that were being harmed and the Brazilians who were the beneficiaries, were in my consular district. Sooner or later, I knew that I would have to come to grips with this topic. At the outset I was completely ignorant. I didn't know a chip in a computer from a chip in a chocolate cookie. I set out on my own to try to learn something about the computer business from the ground up. I started going around educating myself. By September, I had learned probably about five or 10% of what I needed, but it was a start. It seemed to me that I had learned a lifetime's worth, but compared to what was left, it was nothing.

Somewhere in late September, USTR decided that according to Section 301 it was time to start an investigation and prepare a report defining what our problems were. Then we would have to go to the Brazilian government to try to negotiate and resolve the problem. I ended up getting the task of doing this investigation and documenting the case in an environment in which nobody yet had any idea what the specifics of the problem were. Then, of course, they had to have it by November 10th or 15th. There was no way on earth I could get it done by then, but I did get it done by the end of the year. It was a hundred page report that brought out a lot of information, although in hindsight it still only scratched the surface of the totality of the problem.

*Q: It suddenly occurred to me that, alright, we wanted to use Brazil as a case to prove our point on trade matters and be tough, but at the same time I could see people on the Brazil Desk saying, "Wait a minute! We want to have democracy in Brazil and you don't want to put any pressure on this government as it moves into democracy." I would imagine that you would get caught between these two. How did that work?*

DACHI: That was precisely the way it was developing. The Brazilian government was trying its best to exploit that obvious division of interests. The Brazilian attitude was that Brazil and the United States have a broad array of interests across many issues. We are the two biggest countries in the hemisphere. We have always had cordial relations working out a multitude of

issues. Now they accused us of trying to create a confrontation about some petty commercial details and endanger the overall relationship.

The State Department was always resistant to the idea of another agency carving out a piece of the action for itself in foreign affairs. There was nothing they could do when the agency involved was the Defense Department, but having USTR moving into the picture in a big way, as was the case in this instance, was definitely distasteful. The whole idea of contentious economic and commercial relations muscling into the otherwise cordial U.S.-Brazil relationship, recently warmed up after the transition to democracy, was not welcome. At the same time, State was well aware of the fact that this was a White House initiative with a lot of Congressional pressure behind it, so they treaded very carefully and just tried to stay out of it whenever they could.

It was a little bit unusual. Here was a major new issue between the two countries, and State was content to stay as a mere observer in the background, showing no more than a minimum of interest and allowing all the action to pass to USTR. The agency that requested the original 301 investigation was USTR. So, from the very beginning there was a gap between the State Department and USTR. Our reports were going to USTR. Info copies were of course showing up in the Department, but the people who were responsible for carrying the case forward were in USTR. As is often the case in such situations, they were perhaps not as diligent as they might have been in keeping the State Department informed. The State Department was always a little bit peeved about not being totally in the loop, even if they wanted no part in the reaching of any tough decisions. But all of my phone calls and all of the things between Washington and, not only the consulate general, but more importantly at the Embassy in Brasilia and Ambassador Harry Shlaudeman, were per force done mostly with USTR.

It was new for the United States to take such an energetic approach to dealing with what in those days was defined as "unfair trade practices." The Brazilians, for sure, felt that maybe the U.S. government was not as aware as it should be that it was really taking a whole new direction in its foreign policy. Today, the administration deals with these issues with the highest priority as a matter of course. Many of the issues today even in presidential elections such as NAFTA, the World Trade Organization, and the trade surplus with Japan and China are really front burner issues. But back in 1985, we were only at the beginning of what has now become one of the dominant trends in our foreign policy. In those days, it was new. It was new to everybody. The Brazilian government, I'm sure, was not the only one. It must have been one of many that were waking up to the fact that the kind of protectionist practices they had been following without getting too much heat from the outside world were all of a sudden coming under much more intense scrutiny and were going to move front and center in bilateral relations with the United States. It started then.

*Q: Anybody serving in a country doesn't want to have an issue like this come up. It makes it difficult. I would have thought part of the reaction from the American side and maybe even from the Brazilian side, "Why us? Why Brazil? Why not the most blatant one, Japan?" Japan was really sticking it to us on all these things.*

DACHI: We were plenty concerned about Japan. But the reason that we were focusing on Brazil was because Brazil, one of the most important of the developing countries with a closed, import

substitution economy, took protectionism to a new and different level by extending it to the high technology computer, software, and electronics areas. That made the case unprecedented in nature. Brazil was the first and then ended up being the only country that tried to bring all of this new technology under the old closed economy system. They thought it was possible to bring high tech under the kind of protectionism that everything else had been under. That was exactly why you had to take this on. This was indeed plowing new ground. That was the reason Brazil was singled out.

*Q: How did this work out? What were you doing and how did you see it?*

DACHI: The first phase was to really define the problem. That had not been done. The Foreign Trade Act in Section 301 speaks of unfair trade practices. That was the terminology at the time: unfair trade practices. That meant that countries will play games with tariffs, varying interpretations of dumping laws, countervailing duties, and things that have come to be known as non-tariff barriers to spin the web of a protected economy. It turns out that we began laying on the table what eventually became the starting point for what the World Trade Organization is about today, even though it still doesn't include many of the areas like investment and trade in services that need to be in there.

Trade is where it began, but it was only one aspect. Investment is another, in many ways more important than trade. Brazil had a number of ways in which it was controlling investment, making regulations about how joint ventures were to operate, what percentage of equity could be held by foreign investors, how much a multinational company had to export of products made in-country in exchange for getting import licenses for components, raw materials, or intermediate products. In the latter case, for example, the country would liberate foreign exchange to bring in these components, but demand that the company export a certain amount and earn back for Brazil some of the hard currency expended in allowing the components to come in. So, one of the first points to come out of our investigation was that unfair trade practices is too narrow a term. What we were really talking about was both unfair trade and investment practices.

We also expanded our database both on tariffs and non-tariff barriers. The list of such barriers that surfaced in our investigation began to grow greater and greater. One non-tariff barrier is the regulation I mentioned a minute ago that says that if you're going to import, say \$10 million worth of components, you have to export at least \$12 million worth of finished product. That way, you're not going to undermine the host country's balance of payments. Every foreign company had to agree to a yearly contract requiring specific export target figures in each of the product categories they were manufacturing in Brazil. More investors went into Brazil than into most other developing countries with import substitution economies, because Brazil was the country with the largest population and therefore the one that offered the largest domestic market. A multinational corporation that wants to manufacture, which was the name of the game in those days (Services were still small potatoes then), would be attracted to Brazil because a large percentage of its production could be sold on the domestic market where they enjoyed all kinds of advantages in price, productivity, and efficiency.

At the same time, there were always limitations as to the profits that could be remitted, although these laws were generally quite reasonable. Brazil represented an almost ideal situation for a

multinational manufacturer/exporter, because of the balance between a sizable domestic market and a favorable geographic location as an export platform. General Motors would make transmissions there. Half of them would go into cars sold in Brazil and the other half shipped to other countries where GM automobiles were assembled, including the United States. Export requirements in exchange for import licenses was only the first step in the non-tariff barriers game. The next thing was, they would say, "We're not going to license your bringing in a certain component because we have a Brazilian industry that can make that component (That was the origin of the so-called National Similar Law.) If something similar is made here, you can't bring it in." Never mind if the quality or price of the domestic "national similar" was competitive or not. That expanded our agenda of issues.

*Q: This happened while you were in Brazil?*

DACHI: Some of these things were in place before, but we brought it all out into the open, defined it, and put it all down on paper to show that there was a whole mosaic of issues that came into play here with this Informatics Law. When a foreign company couldn't import a P.C. and couldn't assemble one there because only Brazilian companies were allowed to do it, that was a non-tariff barrier. Even though IBM had a plant in Brazil, they were no longer allowed or licensed to assemble personal computers in Brazil. As I said earlier, that was the essence of the market reserve.

The National Similar Law would come into the picture when a foreign company would want to import a product or component and SEI, the Brazilian regulatory agency would say, "There is a company here that makes that component." The import license applicant would retort that the part in question was not as modern and didn't have the latest technology that theirs did. Then SEI would decide who was right, almost invariably in favor of the domestic producer, and would deny the import license. Foreign companies would argue that they couldn't export the product if it contained second-rate components from the domestic market, and they would no longer be competitive in the international market. Accordingly, they couldn't comply with the export requirements Brazil was demanding in return for import licenses. But the Brazilian regulators almost invariably retained the upper hand. To overrule them required the personal intervention of the Minister of Finance. Occasionally one of the big multinationals with powerful political connections might succeed in winning out on a specific matter in the minister's office, but that was only the exception to prove the rule.

On all of these things, the Brazilians required the individual companies to deal with them on a case-by-case, company-by-company basis, insisting on confidentiality so that neither the companies nor the U.S. government could ever compare notes on how this policy was implemented on a countrywide basis. They did it pretty much surreptitiously. For USTR, this was new ground, to put together a road map of what in fact was the entire gamut of unfair trade and investment practices, and the specific regulations invented by Brazilian regulatory agencies to keep the economy closed and to make it work in a discriminatory fashion. By extension, these very same methods have been used by many other countries and still are. So, we really began to produce a documentary on the art and science of unfair trade and investment practices which USTR was able to put to good use in many other countries over the ensuing years.

*Q: How did you go about getting the data? I'm talking about you as the Consul General. You said you had already when you got there started to inform yourself. Did you have economic officers/trade officers at the consulate general who could help?*

DACHI: We had a small but very good economic section with excellent officers. The State Department tried hard to make sure that well qualified people were assigned to Sao Paulo in this area. But basically I did a great deal of this myself. As often happens, younger officers are really not in a position to take the lead when it comes to carve out new policy ground or risk creating turmoil with host country officials. I had some help from them, but I did most of it myself. Later on, the second and third years, they started participating and contributing more and more.

How did I do it? I started first by just talking to the American companies. It often took the Consul General to get these people to talk about things of such political sensitivity. This was a new issue, and it was new for the U.S. government to show such interest in the companies' dealings with Brazil. They were initially very uncomfortable with it. Every one of these companies had been there for years. Even though they were running into big problems in some areas, they had other product lines and other things where the Brazilian government not only allowed them to go on as before but would keep out competitors in order to help them become more profitable in areas that were not of immediate interest to the Brazilians. In exchange for being "good corporate citizens" and keeping their mouths shut about the new restrictions that were being applied in the high-tech field, they received more lenient treatment on other issues. So, particularly the big companies like IBM and Xerox were very uncomfortable, much more uncomfortable than the State Department, with this new administration thrust to get tough on Brazil for its Informatics Law. They were afraid that a huge part of their other businesses were going to be jeopardized because we were pushing so hard in one area, without due regard to all of the others.

The Brazilians very cleverly exploited this, just like they skillfully played on the divisions among American companies later on when the debt moratorium came into play. They, in fact, succeeded briefly in dividing the American business community along several lines. Xerox would tell us, "Stay out of this. We will work this out for ourselves." The Brazilians would tell them, "Look, if you play ball and you're a good citizen, we'll close our eyes to some of your other practices. We'll keep such and such a competitor out. We'll let you charge twice as much for this. We will give you an extra import license for something you want in exchange for your getting out of this other field that we want to reserve for ourselves. If you keep quiet about it, you're going to make money." So, for me or for any of us at the consulate to get to talk to the Americans, this was a very touchy business because they were under very real pressure from the Brazilian side not to be too candid with us.

What I did was a methodology that I learned in Hungary in the communist era where no one was willing to tell you too much about anything, but lots of people were willing to tell you one little thing. If you talk to a hundred people and get one thing from each of them, you'll have the whole picture even though none of them will give you more than one piece of information. That is indeed what I did. First I talked to the American top executives and then I would ask to see if I could see their plant. The foreman would take me around. The foreman was not as concerned about some of these things as the men up higher. They would tell me some things, sometimes on

the shop floor. Next I went on and asked to visit the Brazilian companies and they were also willing to talk to me. They very cautiously presented me their points of view, but each time I had a conversation, some new fact came out that I was pinning on my map. Before it was over, I visited the Japanese and the German companies too. Everybody was afraid to talk to me, but they were polite enough to receive me and try to give me a little bit. By the time we got through, I had most of what I needed.

*Q: How did it play out during your time?*

DACHI: The report went to USTR. They said, "Well, we've got a lot of ammunition here." The 301 says that once you define the problem, you try to negotiate it. So, the next phase after documenting all these issues, was a series of negotiations. On the U.S. side, there was Clayton Yeutter, who at that time was the U.S. Trade Representative. On the Brazilian side, it was Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima, who was the number two man in the Foreign Ministry. He is now the Brazilian ambassador to the United States. I was on the U.S. team and there were many others on the Brazilian team as well.

There would be talks to try to straighten this out, try to negotiate, see if we could resolve these issues. It was sort of a ping-pong match. The Brazilians would start out by saying, "You folks don't understand. There is really not a problem here. We work things out with each company. Clayton, you are looking at the big picture and you don't understand, Paulo Tarso would say. We have nothing but satisfied American companies with whom we've worked out all of these things in an amicable fashion." Then Yeutter would turn to me and say, "Steve, tell them about Westinghouse or the Varian Corporation." I would spell out the problem cases in detail, those cases to which the companies involved had no objection to being brought up. I would put on the table some of the most egregious discriminatory practices that had been brought into play. SEI was represented and was absolutely astonished. People would blanch. "How did the guy find all this stuff out?" There were people taking notes like crazy. They couldn't believe that we had actually documented and found out all these things which they had been doing under the surface and meticulously kept out of the public eye until then.

Their next tactic was to accuse me of singling out as problems only the cases of "bad American companies," companies that were "bad citizens" who were not willing to play the Brazilians' game. I remember at a reception one night at the Brazilian Embassy in Paris, where Sebastiao do Rego Barros, who was the number two man on the Brazilian team, said to me, "Tell me, Mr. Dachi, do you distinguish between good companies and bad companies among your Americans in Brazil?" I said, "I don't know what you mean." He said, "Well, you know, companies that cooperate and play a constructive game with us here and the ones that are looking to get unfair advantages and so on. The way you were talking this afternoon, you don't distinguish between good companies and bad companies." I said, "Mr. Ambassador, I have to confess to you that I've never looked at our companies as good companies and bad companies. I only distinguish between companies as either ours and yours." He said, "Well, we're going to have a lot of trouble then."

Clayton Yeutter was a great negotiator as well as a hell of a nice guy and he was trying to be very reasonable, but he couldn't get past this point, that the Brazilians refused to look at all this

as a policy issue between our two countries rather than a Machiavellian “rewards and punishments” game with individual companies. In the end, we couldn't get much to satisfy USTR. So, according to section 301, if you can't negotiate a satisfactory resolution, then, by law, you move on to invoke sanctions.

To invoke sanctions, hearings chaired by USTR are held in Washington. In which all interested parties including the companies that would be damaged by the sanctions and the companies that are complaining about discrimination against them can be heard. Then a list of products for sanctions and retaliation is drawn up. That series of hearings took place. By this time, things were becoming very unpleasant and tense in Brazil. It was becoming apparent that even though they had been willing to bet the house that this would never happen, it looked like the U.S. was really serious. We were really going to invoke sanctions.

The sanctions hearings surfaced the next set of issues. Some companies, including IBM, were uncomfortable with sanctions because they had something to gain as well as to lose by letting things stay as they were. But the toughest, biggest issue was, how do you apply sanctions? The trade law sanctions originally were based on the premise that if you don't buy computers from us in some kind of a fair way, then we're not going to buy computers from you. Well, Brazil didn't export computers to the United States. In fact, Brazil didn't export anything in the high-tech category. So, a serious question arose, can you retaliate with products that are not in the same category? This became a very tough issue to resolve. For example, Brazil was exporting over \$1 billion a year of frozen orange juice concentrate to the U.S.. That was one of their biggest exports. Were we going to place barriers to that? You couldn't do it because Coca-Cola and Procter and Gamble make orange juice in this country using Brazilian concentrate blended with Florida concentrate. You can bet your life that those companies were all represented with their lawyers to make sure their clients were not affected. That made such a step politically impossible. Every American wants orange juice on their breakfast table and all of it is a blend. We couldn't retaliate with orange juice.

The next biggest item was \$1 billion worth of shoes. But, President Reagan had said earlier that we were not going to play any games with shoes because we've got issues with shoes in Italy and in Spain, leather shoes, and in Asia with sandals and so on. He didn't want to open up that huge issue by singling out one country for sanctions, when similar arguments could be made in several other cases where invoking sanctions would not have been convenient for us.

That took the two biggest exports off the table. Pretty soon, a number of other exports were taken off the table for similar kinds of considerations. Finally, we came up with a sanctions list that made virtually no sense at all, consisting of miscellaneous items that almost nobody cared about. Inevitably, they were products imported by companies that were too small to hire high-priced lobbyists to ward off the sanctions. The Brazilian defense was, "How is it fair to retaliate against a machine tool or some other unrelated item for something that you don't like about computers?" So, it became very tough. Since that time, a similar dilemma has arisen on a number of other occasions when the U.S. decided to impose trade sanctions against foreign countries.

Brazil's attitude was, "We don't want sanctions of any kind." Our position was, "Some kind of sanctions have to be imposed." The situation came to a head in a unique way. There was one

young but fast growing company involved that didn't have a preexisting stake or physical presence in Brazil. That was Microsoft and the now world famous Bill Gates. Gates was big enough even then, however, that when he said, "No compromise" all the others who wanted to compromise were stymied.

The Microsoft situation was very interesting because it brought software into the equation for the first time. Up to then, all the biggest interested parties were in hardware. In those days, the leading Microsoft software was MS-DOS, which today is only found in museums, I guess. Every few months, Microsoft would come up with a new generation of MS-DOS. They all had a number attached to them. There was 3.3, 4.1, 5.2 etc. This saga began a year or two before the sanctions hearings, when the Brazilian regulatory agency (SEI) had decided that they were going to sponsor, or to be more accurate to subsidize the development of a "national similar" for MS-DOS software. They selected a small Brazilian software company with close ties to the military, paid them to develop a Brazilian MS-DOS version, (we considered it a pirated version), which they did. The deal was that in exchange for coming up with this MS-DOS-like "Brazilian software" SEI would keep the market closed and allow the Brazilian company to make a ton of money by selling it without having to worry about the "real" Microsoft MS-DOS. So they went ahead and did it. Now, all along, the controversy was, was any of this pirated? They insisted that they had developed this at home in its entirety. We insisted that it was pirated, at least in part.

Next, another new reality of the high-tech era came to the surface. While the Brazilians developed their version of MS-DOS 4.2, Microsoft was ready to go with MS-DOS 5.1. Brazil could close the market and develop their ersatz stuff, but they were too slow. They were coming up with software that was obsolete by the time it hit the market. Bill Gates was saying, "Fine, close the market for 4.2 and sell all you want. Let me bring in my 5.1 You don't have a national similar for that." They said, "No version of MS-DOS can come in." Bill Gates' position was firm. "In that case, I will insist that USTR must apply sanctions." The way our sanctions system works, the CEO of an important U.S. company can in fact do that because USTR considers that its mandate is to take action on behalf of the interests of U.S. companies.

I remember Bill Gates coming into my office one day. I didn't even know who he was at the time. He was not the giant that he is today. He sat in my office and told me, "I'm not going to go along with this. They can't do this to me." When it came time to play the game in Washington, he said, "I've got the leading software technology for computers all over the world. These guys aren't going to keep me out of Brazil by coming up with some pirated second-class version of it. If I let them get away with it in Brazil, they are going to start doing it to me all over the world. I'm number one. I'm the greatest and the biggest. I'm not giving an inch." Since he didn't have a direct investment such as a plant in Brazil, he didn't have a foot in both camps like IBM, Xerox, and all the rest of them, he just said, "No." He couldn't be bought off.

At this point Brazil finally realized that sanctions were really going to be imposed. They decided it was time to try and cut another Brazilian-style deal. They chose me as a back channel. They said, "All right, if we can't do it this way, look at this alternative. We know that Microsoft is going to come out with Windows software soon. What if we guarantee you that all Windows systems that Microsoft makes will be admitted, in exchange for you leaving us alone with our own MS-DOS? We can't put this on the table. We're just giving it to you back channel as a deal."

They were getting pushed to the wall.

The reason they had to try this was that the company they subsidized to develop their MS-DOS was tied to the military. Had they tried to revoke their license after having invested all the time, money, and energy into developing this second-rate software, they would have an impossible political problem on their hands. Alternately, if they allowed the real MS-DOS to come in, nobody would have bought the Brazilian product and the company would have gone bankrupt. The only way out that they could see was to “buy them out” with more money than the company could have made by selling the software in a closed market. They had done this before with private start-up companies they had subsidized that subsequently went bankrupt and were bailed out with this method. I had one friend in Sao Paulo who became a very wealthy man by selling off his bankrupt company to the state in this manner. So, they had a precedent for trying it again. When Bill Gates heard about it, he just laughed. He said, "I am making no compromises. Nobody pushes me around. I don't have to make any compromises. Either it's my way or it's no way."

In Brazil, there was a Supreme Council of Informatics that was a sort of board of directors for SEI. It had 16 members. They were all Cabinet ministers and military. This Council had been rubber stamping everything SEI had proposed since its inception. But in the case of Microsoft, they found themselves for the first time between a rock and a hard place. Sooner or later, it came down to the fact that the only way Brazil could avoid sanctions was to back down on this, have the Supreme Council overrule SEI and vote to license Bill Gates exactly the way he wanted it. We launched a discreet lobbying campaign that I carried out with the full support of Ambassador Harry Shlaudeman. It was one of the things that I feel the best about in my career because when we got through, that Council voted something like 16:6 to cave in and license Microsoft software. Of course, the threat of sanctions played a large role in that as well. That was a big turning point. Within two years, the Informatics Law was gone. We played that really well, I thought. We were the visiting team playing in someone else's field and we won. I just loved that.

*Q: Let me ask a couple of questions. Did you get any support as you were moving on this issue from other countries (the French, Germans, British, and Japanese)?*

DACHI: That is a very good question. They did what they always do. They said, "Terrific! Go get'em [them]! We're going to watch. We're not going to get involved. You are the only one that can play this kind of big power game, but we're behind you 100%. We are a few steps behind, but we support you totally. You're absolutely right. Do this." In real terms, they did nothing. They gave us a lot of “moral support.”

*Q: That and 25 cents will get you a cup of coffee.*

DACHI: Right. But they were delighted that we were doing it. It would be inconceivable to the French or the Germans to do something like this. Only Americans who are used to playing the superpower game take to this naturally.

*Q: Also, in a way, this appeals to the Americans in that there is a principle involved. Often, we'll go off on a principle rather than make deals. It's in our psyche. Would you say that?*

DACHI: It's true in general. But there is an additional, specific thing behind it. We have a Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, which prevents American companies from playing the kind of game that Europeans and Japanese play with impunity all the time. All of these kinds of corrupt practices and bribes that they use without a moment's hesitation is something that is legally prohibited to American companies and the largest majority of them don't engage in it. That means that the Europeans feel they can work things out in the traditional third world style, by pulling their own kinds of deals. They did it then and they're doing it to this day wherever they can. That is not available to us.

Let me give you a couple of other specific examples of things going on in connection with informatics during my time there. General Motors was upgrading the automobiles they were assembling in Brazil. More and more electronic components were coming into use, from electronic windshield wipers to disk brakes, sophisticated radios, cruise control and so on. GM has a subsidiary called Delco Electronics that has been part of General Motors since the 1930s. Delco Electronics developed the first electric starter so you no longer had to use a crank to start a car. It has been developing new products and more recently electronics for General Motors worldwide ever since.

One fine day, the Brazilians decided that Delco Electronics would no longer be allowed to supply electronic components to General Motors in Brazil. GM would henceforth have to purchase those products from a Brazilian company under the guise of the national similar law. The only fly in the ointment was that there was no Brazilian company making such components. So, they set up a new Brazilian dummy company and wanted to force Delco to sell, or to be more exact pass through its electronics through them. They in turn would then sell it back to General Motors as a Brazilian product. It created the absurd situation that GM couldn't import technology components for their own cars from their own subsidiary.

What made the Brazilians do it? It is common knowledge by now that corruption has become a highly sophisticated art form in scores of developing countries around the world, and Brazil has had its share of spectacular cases to come to light. Just a few years ago, President Fernando Collor de Melo was in fact impeached for corruption and had to leave office, an unprecedented event. In the GM case, the Brazilians set up a dummy company with the sons of three retired military officers. It was a paper company. It produced nothing, had no operations. They obviously offered no value added to the Delco products. All they wanted to do was get this stuff from Delco and resell it to General Motors. It was laundering General Motors' own proprietary technology through a fictitious company. That's a blatant form of corruption, even though it was set up ingeniously to look like a legitimate business in keeping with Brazilian laws. Again, this type of thing, another textbook example of the infinite variety of corrupt third world practices, is happening in lots of countries nowadays. I recently read a story of a similar giant scale scam in the pharmaceutical field run by the Algerian military. The Indonesians were pretty good at it too. It didn't surprise me that General Motors wouldn't have any of it. No company in its right mind would go along with that. Whether it would bother Fiat or Renault or Toyota, let me just say I don't know.

Westinghouse was another example. Some years earlier, they won a contract to supply the high-

tech equipment for a number of large energy plants in Sao Paulo state. Before the informatics law came in, they had installed what are called system controls, where the entire production line is regulated by a series of computers, a whole integrated, portal-to-portal system that is computer-controlled. When it came time to upgrade the plant, to come up with a new generation of technology, Westinghouse was not allowed to bid on modernizing its own high-tech system. Only Brazilian companies could bid on it. These to me were outrageous kinds of things. When we started putting such cases on the table in government negotiations, everybody feigned shock because these high-level officials don't normally either like to admit knowledge about such things or else don't like to get their hands dirty by poking their nose into such matters. Unless of course they have a piece of the action. At our first round of negotiations in Paris their reaction was to deny it all, but it was clear they were embarrassed. Whether they knew about it or not, obviously it was painful to have such shady practices brought out by a foreign delegation in a diplomatic negotiation.

*Q: As you were going through this, did the Brazilians try to retaliate against American firms. Were there problems? What about the American firms that, like IBM, had been learning to live with this situation? What was happening?*

DACHI: There was always talk of counterretaliation. When things were coming close to sanctions, they were always threatening to do that. (Recently, the subject came up in negotiations with the Chinese and they did retaliate. They bought a number of airplanes from Airbus Industries when they promised earlier to get them from Boeing. They got mad at our pressure on them in U.N. bodies on human rights). However, the options for Brazil at the time were very limited. They knew that in the end, if they start counterretaliating, they are going to be playing our game and nobody knows how to play the big power retaliation game as well as we do. They knew they would lose if they did that. What they did instead as a last resort was to try to divide the American business community. By the time the sanction hearings were held in Washington, they had almost won the game. Every company that was invested in Brazil backed down and was trying to work a compromise. At the hearings, most U.S. companies testified against sanctions. The only guy that couldn't be split off was Bill Gates. He didn't have anything by way of direct investment in Brazil, so in effect he had nothing to lose. As we said earlier, however, the Brazilians backed off at the last minute, Microsoft Dos software was licensed for import and the sanctions never came to pass.

They used the same strategy with the foreign debt. At the same time as all this was going on, they had also declared a moratorium on the foreign debt. They wouldn't (or couldn't) even pay the interest, much less the principal on their nearly \$100 billion foreign debt. That put the western banks, American, European and Japanese into a bind all their own. But soon, another "Brazilian solution" was devised which of course remained an unstated policy. Citigroup and a few others had large retail commercial banking operations in the local market. The Brazilians left those alone. In the hyperinflationary atmosphere of the times, the foreign banks were allowed to make the same huge windfall profits as the Brazilian banks. Those profits helped to compensate in part for losses from the medium and long-term debt moratorium. Then there were the short-term loans for commercial transactions Brazil absolutely had to have to finance essential imports. Those were also left alone, even allowing the banks to greatly increase their interest rates on them and thus recover a large part of the remainder of their losses. The net effect was that the

major U.S. banks also opposed the proposed informatics sanctions because they were spared major losses from the debt moratorium and allowed to continue operating freely in Brazil.

Then there was a large group of companies like Monsanto, Dow, Dupont, Eastman Kodak, the auto makers and the auto parts manufacturers that weren't involved in either the informatics or the debt moratorium problems. They never had any trouble taking out profits from Brazil and faced no new restrictions on remitting them in hard currency in spite of the moratorium. They initially made their profits in Brazilian currency of course. According to the law, they could take out more or less eight percent of their profits at no remittance tax, the next four percent at a relatively low tax and the next four percent at a much higher tax. (I'm not sure of the exact figures). They could go to the Central Bank with their Brazilian currency and convert them to dollars. The American banks, on the other hand, although they were receiving interest payments on the debt in Brazilian currency, could not go to the Central Bank and convert it into dollars. (The moratorium was on hard currency payments which all the loan agreements required.)

Given the volatility of the situation, it was not surprising that most of the CEOs from the 400 some American companies in Sao Paulo were down there visiting all the time. I was in on several dozen meetings in which these kinds of issues would be discussed. As I was saying, there was a moratorium on debt payments. On the other hand, Dow, Monsanto, Dupont, and the others could always take their profits in Brazilian currency, convert them to dollars, and take their money out. The large difference in the way American companies were treated led to a significant split between them, just as the Brazilians intended. I would have breakfast with the heads of Citibank, Chase and Manufacturers Hanover. Then there would be the guys from the other companies. They would inevitably start arguing vigorously with each other over the perceived favorable treatment one group was receiving over another. Obviously, the Brazilians split off all the manufacturers who were having no difficulty operating. The latter in turn were hassling the banks as to why they were making such a fuss about some stupid little interest on part of the debt, while keeping their other operations going at higher profits, and making it more difficult for the rest of the companies to work normally in Brazil. That was the Brazilian "divide and conquer" strategy. For a short while, it was fairly successful.

The story of the banks was revealing. Take Citibank, for example. It was the biggest one. To elaborate a little more, there are several kinds of debt. There is long and medium term debt. That is where the moratorium was in effect. There is also short-term debt. Short-term debt is what is used to finance exports and imports. In other words, if Brazil wants to import something, they have to come up with dollars to pay at the point of shipment. The importers wouldn't get their money back until they sold the product. Somebody had to finance that. So, the banks continued financing that trade and Brazil had no choice but to pay the interest on it. Otherwise, they couldn't finance their everyday import necessities. So, what did banks like Citibank do? They weren't getting paid interest on the medium or long term debt, but the Brazilians allowed them to charge three times as much interest as the market rate on their short-term debt. So, Citibank would make back what they lost on their long-term debt by charging more on the short-term debt. The Brazilians used that gambit to keep Citibank "playing the game and staying on the Brazilian side."

There was another component. Citibank had retail banks. They had Citibank branches all over

Brazil. As we briefly touched on earlier, when you have 40-60% inflation a month, banks make a lot of money in this kind of an inflationary situation. Citibank was making a fortune along with the Brazilian banks on their domestic operations. So, that was a Brazilian strategy, to play the Brazilian game, make a deal with every company consisting of “get hurt here but benefit there,” and so on. That is how it was working. So, even though the U.S. government was ostensibly acting to defend American business interests on informatics, the Brazilians were brilliantly managing their American investors and trade partners to divide their loyalties and keep them from lining up into a solid front with the U.S. government on the sanctions issue.

*Q: With the moratorium, did that get settled while you were there?*

DACHI: Over a period of many months, Brazil’s debt was restructured and the moratorium on interest payments ended. One avenue that was employed was what eventually came to be known as Brady bonds. On the informatics side, MS-DOS was licensed shortly after I left. Not long after that, there was another election. There was a new government, economic reforms and trade liberalization were introduced and the informatics law gradually disappeared.

*Q: What was the local situation for your consulate general vis a vis the Brazilian government? What were we observing and what were we doing?*

DACHI: In Brazil or in Sao Paulo?

*Q: Let's stick to your dealings in your consular district.*

DACHI: After this trade and investment issue, which was number one, there were two other big issues that were of great interest to the U.S. government and which were also basically playing themselves out in the Sao Paulo consular district. One of them was the nuclear issue. Both the Brazilians and the Argentines were suspected of working on a nuclear bomb at that time. They wouldn't sign the Treaty of Tlateloco, a regional version of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, but I should quickly add that since then, both Brazil and Argentina have gotten out of this business. That is no longer an issue. At that time, it was a big thing. The other problem was that Brazil had a very substantial arms industry. They made fighter planes, satellites, ground to air rockets, missiles, possibly nuclear weapons, and a lot of sophisticated conventional weapons that they were exporting to other countries, not all of which were on our list having the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. They did business with Libya, Iraq, and Iran. All of this was of great concern to us. A lot of that monitoring was going on through our consulate general, but obviously by intelligence agencies that I didn't directly control. But it was all playing there. People were very busy doing very important things.

In a more traditional and conventional way, since well over half of Brazil's gross domestic product is produced in the Sao Paulo consular district, which includes Sao Paulo as well as another economically significant state, Parana, to the south, we did a great deal of economic reporting. I would say we did about half the economic reporting for the country and about 1/4 of the political reporting. Again, a lot of the movers and shakers in the Brazilian political picture were from Sao Paulo. That also held true in the agricultural area. Brazil is a huge coffee producer. There is an international coffee agreement. Between half and three quarters of the

coffee in Brazil is grown in Sao Paulo and points south. Brazil is the second largest soybean producer after the United States and our biggest competitor in soybean exports to Europe. A lot of the soybeans were grown in that area. So, we had a very large agricultural attache operation just like they had in Rio. Both Rio and Sao Paulo had military attaches which is practically unheard of in consulates general. The country labor attache was stationed in Sao Paulo. The commercial office and the U.S. Trade Center in Sao Paulo was also to some degree a tail that was wagging the dog, because so much of the trade and business was taking place in that district. So, all of these things made that place unique, not to mention maybe 1,200 non-immigrant visas a day issued with a tiny staff during high season. That kept us pretty busy.

*Q: How did you deal with the governors of Sao Paulo and the municipal and state governments? What was your impression of how they worked?*

DACHI: As far as how I dealt with them, our dealings with these official state and municipal agencies were minimal. Government to government relations were carried on in Brasilia. Even the governor of a state like Sao Paulo with a population of 32-34 million people, bigger than all of Argentina, didn't have a whole lot to do with issues that were of interest in our bilateral relationship. I would say that 95% of it was a protocol relationship. There was very rarely some issue to deal with on the government side.

*Q: In this 1985-1988 period, were there problems with urban terrorists? An American military officer had been assassinated in Sao Paulo earlier on.*

DACHI: That had diminished very greatly by then. We were still on a relatively high state of alert. I certainly had a lot of security around me. I still had a fully armored vehicle and bodyguards and the residence was protected to a very high degree. But by that time, people were beginning to think that that was no longer essential. They started phasing it out shortly after I left. There was and still is a great deal of crime, but terrorism had abated considerably. Our residence, the car and everything, our procedures were still at a pretty high level of terrorism alert, but there was practically no terrorism anymore in Brazil by the time I got there.

*Q: Were there any other issues that we should talk about before we move on?*

DACHI: There is this transition business. That is actually just one story. Then the other, I don't know whether you want to talk about it or not. It's also a specific circumscribed case. In my first year there was when the remains of Nazi war criminal Josef Mengele were found and exhumed. I had a very key role in the investigation that allowed him to be identified.

*Q: Did this go back to your dental work?*

DACHI: That's right. That was an interesting story. Whether it belongs in here or not, I don't know.

*Q: We might tell it, but first why don't you talk about the transition?*

DACHI: There is only one story of my involvement in that. After 20 years of rule, when it

became apparent that they were going to let the civilians take over, the military, as we said earlier, made sure that certain areas in public business would remain under their control or influence. Secondly, they would only agree to an indirect election of the first civilian president. The man who was sort of chosen by a civilian consensus to be the man to run in this election was an old traditional politician, Tancredo Neves. There was a lot of suspicion that in the last minute the military would change their minds and somehow prevent Tancredo, as everybody called him, to be elected. Anyway, the election was held and he won. The Vice President was Jose Sarney. Tancredo Neves unfortunately died before his inauguration. But the circumstances of his death were most unusual.

On the surface, the case seemed to be simple enough. He developed some kind of tumor in the abdomen. They operated on him. Instead of getting better, however, he got worse. They performed all kinds of heroic medical measures, far too late to do any good, and he died anyway. What happened afterwards goes to show that the United States is not the only country that loves to be absorbed by conspiracy theories. The speculation about what really happened, and the suspicions and tales of dark conspiracies as to why it happened spread like wildfire. Our superiors in Washington also got caught up in the game of "whodunit." The temptation to suspect foul play was great, given that Tancredo seemed to be in perfect health until the sudden announcement of his operation, and the flood of speculation and political intrigue about his emergence as the military's chosen candidate was running rampant. Everybody was asking "what really happened, what are they covering up?"

The background to this story is enriched by an interesting coincidence. Ronald Reagan and Tancredo Neves were more or less the same age, in their early 70s. They both developed a tumor of the intestine in practically the same location, at practically the same period of time. The tumor of Tancredo Neves turned out to be benign. He was operated on and within six weeks was dead. The tumor that Ronald Reagan had in the same spot was malignant. Six weeks later, he was back at the White House giving a state dinner for the Prime Minister of China and was fully recovered. The difference, as it turned out and as I unearthed and reported, was a difference in the standards of medical care as practiced in the United States and in Brazil.

It turned out that poor Tancredo Neves did not die as a result of a political plot or conspiracy, but became a victim of a blatant case of "miscarriage of medical care." Standard medical and surgical procedures that were common knowledge practically since the beginning of this century were ignored and violated. The CIA was extremely interested in finding out what exactly had happened. The administration was interested in it too, because there was a risk that the transition to democracy could be imperiled if Jose Sarney, who didn't have the status and the prestige that Neves had, were to become president. So, we were concerned, but we weren't getting much information because Tancredo's doctors and the Neves family really circled the wagons and kept all information about his medical status out of the public domain. As always happens in such cases, that just brought rumors and public speculation to a fever pitch. Tancredo got worse and worse and finally died. And, nobody knew what the hell had happened. Certainly the Brazilian public didn't know.

How did we find out? By the time Tancredo Neves was so sick that he obviously was going to die, the family and his doctors finally called in an American specialist from the Boston area.

They swore him to secrecy. The man was a renowned specialist in emergency care. He had looked after several chiefs of state including various kings, queens as well as Leonid Brezhnev. He came and examined Tancredo, talked to all the physicians involved, but by the time he got through with that, Tancredo died. Even after his death, the specialist did not make himself available to anybody. No one in the family or among the Brazilian doctors was talking to anybody about anything either. Had any part of the truth come out at that point, it would have unleashed one of the biggest scandals in Brazilian history.

I “cold called” the American doctor at his hotel. I said to him, "I just wanted to say hello. I am the Consul General here. Is there anything I can do for you." He said, "I'm fine, thank you. It's all over and I'm leaving tomorrow." I said, "How about lunch?" He said, "Okay, we'll have lunch." We sat down to have lunch. I started chatting with him about my medical background and slowly, almost without realizing it, he began to tell me the medical story of what had happened. He had really unearthed this thing from a medical standpoint from beginning to end. Well, with my background, I was able to follow what he was describing, the terminology. I could tell from the beginning that this was extremely exciting. I decided to tell him that, unfortunately, I had an upset stomach and so every 10 minutes I had to excuse myself. Every 10 minutes, I would go to the bathroom and furiously write down everything he had said up to that point and then go back and talk to him some more. The end result was that I got the whole story. The whole story was basically that of a bunch of doctors failing to use common medical and surgical practice that had been well known and accepted for at least 50 years. They committed the most atrocious medical and surgical errors imaginable every step of the way. So, in that sense, they literally killed the man. They couldn't have, medically speaking, done any worse than they did.

There was a series of things there. It actually started with Tancredo himself and the fact that he was very suspicious of everybody and everything going on at the time. Plus, he didn't like to go to doctors. He refused to go to specialists early on because he didn't trust them. He insisted on staying with his own little village hometown doctors who truly didn't know enough about modern medicine. Tancredo himself made matters worse by refusing to consider the possibility that he may need an operation. So his local doctors gave in to him and treated his worsening abdominal pain with antibiotics, even though there were growing signs that he was developing a bowel obstruction. That was a horrible mistake, delaying the inevitable at the insistence of the patient, until the case became a life threatening emergency. Finally the obstruction did set in, and he had no choice but to go to some surgeons in Brasilia. They operated on him two days later. What they found at surgery, as we learned from our American specialist, was that a benign tumor of the bowel which should have been removed much earlier, had grown to the point of obstructing the bowel. Inevitably, an infection and an acute abdominal abscess developed, necessitating the surgical intervention that was performed.

That should have been the beginning of his recovery, but instead it turned into the beginning of the end. The surgeons in Brasilia acted unconscionably. They were so eager to derive maximum publicity for operating on the President-elect, they called photographers into the patient's room the day after the operation so they could have their pictures taken with him. They got Tancredo to sit with them on the couch, which in itself is not that big of a deal the day after surgery, and had their picture taken. But they made a fatal mistake. It so happens that after intestinal surgery, the intestines become paralyzed and stop functioning normally for a while. Without sounding too

indelicate, one of the things that happens is that you generate a lot of gas that has to escape some way. It can't come out in the usual channel because that is temporarily stopped up. For patients who have abdominal surgery it is therefore standard practice to put a tube through the nose into the stomach so that one can get rid of (pass) the gas. Well, Tancredo, not unlike many willful patients, wanted that tube out of there so he could get his picture taken looking like nothing had happened. The surgeons said, "Fine." They took the tube out so that they would have a nice photograph. But as every minimally competent surgeon knows, after all it was a routine surgical fact known for decades, once the tube is taken out you can't put it back in. What followed was as predictable as night follows day. Within three or four days his stomach, bloated with all the trapped gas, literally exploded. It blew up! The sutures opened and everything blew up. The infection that was present from the original obstruction and the ensuing operation spread all through the abdominal cavity, provoking a generalized systemic infection known as sepsis. It was criminal to allow something like that to happen.

But that was not the end of it. They compounded the error with two more crucial mistakes. They sewed his stomach back up with steel wire, once again cutting off all possible escape routes for the abdominal gases, and flooded the patient with a mixture of all the different antibiotics they could lay their hands on in the hospital pharmacy, to combat the system-wide infection that was now threatening the survival of the patient. That is the exact opposite of good antibiotic therapy, which calls for culturing the organisms recovered from the abscess and running laboratory tests to see which specific antibiotic they are most sensitive to. On the one hand, they failed to even take a culture, on the other, by mixing all the antibiotics together they made it impossible to subsequently test for sensitivity to any one of them. When you spend all your antibiotic bullets at the same time, if an antibiotic-resistant organism develops, it becomes resistant to the entire mix and you have nothing left with which to treat it. The result: the infection gets out of control, spreads all over, and the patient dies. That is what happened to Tancredo. (When Tancredo took a major turn for the worse, he was sent down to Sao Paulo into the care of some of the most prominent specialists in Brazil, but by that time it was too late).

I wrote this up in a cable called "The Death of a President." I wrote it up in medical terms, laicized a little bit, and sent it off. This created a sensation in Washington. Tony Motley was the Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America. He called me up and said that this was the only cable from a Latin American embassy during his time there with which Ronald Reagan was so fascinated he actually read it from beginning to end. I got a letter of commendation from Director William Casey of the CIA. He said the CIA doctors had read the whole thing from beginning to end and concurred with my analysis and description of the medical events that led to Tancredo's death. I was sort of a "folk hero" there for a while in the Agency because of this cable. So, on the one hand, this information showed that there was no military or other nefarious political manipulation. On the other hand, it was a dramatic story of how doctors had actually killed the President-elect of Brazil out of pure ignorance, at the very time when the finest medical techniques had saved Ronald Reagan from a cancerous condition that was far worse.

*Q: You might tell the story about Mengele. Who was Mengele and how did this happen in your consular district?*

DACHI: Josef Mengele was a doctor with the German SS. He was assigned to Auschwitz. At

Auschwitz, he was the man who conducted the bulk of the medical experiments on the inmates and, in particular, was doing all this research on twins that became so notorious subsequently. He was one of the major Nazi war criminals who was not in custody at the time of the Nuremberg trials. After the war, he hid in Germany for a while but then with the assistance of his family, which owned a farm tool company in Germany, escaped to Argentina, where he lived under an alias for quite a few years during the Peron era without much danger to him. After Peron was deposed in 1955, many of the Nazi war criminals hiding in Argentina began to feel less safe and Mengele for one, moved to Paraguay. He acquired Paraguayan citizenship under his own name. President Alfredo Stroessner the Paraguayan dictator was well-known for hiding Nazi war criminals, although Argentina was the most notorious of them all. They certainly protected a huge number, took their wealth, and so on.

In 1961, after about 18 months in Paraguay, Mengele moved to Brazil. By that time, the West German government was trying to look into his possible extradition. Another dangerous development for him was the fact that the chief administrator of the holocaust, Adolf Eichmann, had been captured in Argentina in 1960 by the Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service and spirited out to Israel, where he was tried, convicted and eventually executed. Mengele went to Brazil in 1961 and went back undercover with a new alias, Peter Hochbichler, after living openly under his own name in his last few years in Argentina and subsequently in Paraguay. He was taken to a remote farm in the interior of Sao Paulo state by a fellow Nazi who aided him in crossing the border, and he was sheltered there by an Austro-Hungarian Nazi couple for several years. They at first didn't know who he was. Later, they found out, but continued to shelter him. He eventually moved on to be harbored by a German-Brazilian couple with Nazi sympathies in Sao Paulo. (The wife was a teacher at the German school in Sao Paulo.) Eighteen years later, in 1978, he went to the beach in Bertioaga, a town not far from Sao Paulo with this German couple. While he was swimming, he had a stroke and as a result, he drowned. They buried him secretly under a false name. Even after all that time, everybody in the world still thought that he was in Paraguay. No one suspected he was in Brazil, even though his son had gone there clandestinely to visit him once before he died and once again after his death, to recover some of his possessions.

All those years, no one, not even in the network of the many Nazi fugitives hiding out in neighboring countries, really knew where he was. His family in West Germany always knew and had been in regular contact with him both by mail and through personal emissaries. But they had always paid off enough people in the local police in Günzburg, Germany where they lived, so that they could never find or seize any evidence. Then in 1985, about the time I arrived in Brazil, the last guy at the local police in Günzburg that they had paid off died or retired. At that point the German police raided the Mengele family house and, for the first time caught them by surprise and found some letters and other documents. Based on that evidence, they found out where he was living. They came over to Brazil, staked the place out in the Sao Paulo suburb of Santo Amaro and together with Brazilian police went in, seized the couple that had hidden him and learned that Mengele was no longer alive. The family took them to a grave where they claimed they had secretly buried him and the remains were exhumed. Then the large scale operation to determine if this really was or wasn't Mengele began.

The U.S. had just signed an agreement with Germany and Israel that we would henceforth

cooperate more closely on Nazi hunting operations. But the Germans were so eager to nail Mengele and get the sole credit for it that they actually came over and together with the Brazilian police staked out the house and exhumed his body without telling us. Of course, we didn't like that, to put it mildly. In any case, the Brazilians didn't buy into the proposition that all this was to be done in secret, and we found out about it when they invited a TV crew to the exhumation, which was then covered in macabre detail on national television. Within hours, a large group of people including hordes of journalists, were on the way down from the United States. The Justice Department sent a team of forensic specialists, including fingerprint and handwriting experts. A group of U.S. Marshals was on the way. The Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles was sending its own set of independent specialists. This was serious business.

As I was learning in a stream of phone calls about all these people who were coming down from Washington on the next plane, I happened to see Brazil's Minister of Justice holding a televised press conference stating that none of the American specialists would be given a visa, because Brazilians were perfectly qualified to perform all the necessary investigations and forensic tests and no foreigners would be allowed to horn in on that process. Within minutes, I got another call from Washington, where people already knew of the Minister's statement. They instructed me to do whatever was necessary to make sure that when that plane arrived early the next morning, everybody on it would be issued a visa on landing and be allowed to enter Brazil, a step Brazilian authorities had without exception refused to take in the past.

I requested and was granted an immediate appointment with Romeo Tuma, the Sao Paulo head of the Brazilian Federal Police, the legal controlling authority for decisions on visa issuance. On my way to his office, I thanked my lucky stars that I had made a courtesy call on Tuma shortly after my arrival in Sao Paulo just four or five weeks earlier, so at least we were acquainted.

When I sat down in Tuma's office, he of course was also aware of the statement the Justice Minister, his boss, had made a couple of hours before. I decided to try a personal approach. I told him of my childhood in Eastern Europe, of having lived through World War II, of having witnessed the holocaust. I mentioned the fact that six million people had perished in the holocaust and that Joseph Mengele had been one of the most infamous of the Nazi war criminals, in charge of sending people to the gas chambers and performing the cruelest of human medical experiments at the Auschwitz concentration camp.

Then I came to the point. I said there were still thousands of holocaust victims and survivors living all over the world, many of whom had been personally tortured by Mengele. I said, "Mr. Tuma, those people are still suffering today. Maybe their wounds have closed, but they have not healed. There is nothing more important to them than to find out what happened to Joseph Mengele. And those people, Mr. Tuma, have the right to be present, to be a witness to this investigation. The people coming down on that plane are coming to represent them. Please do not keep them out." The results of that little speech were stunning. Tuma, who had listened to me intently, said O.K. without a second's hesitation. The next morning, everybody was admitted to Brazil without a hitch.

By the next afternoon, the U.S. team of forensic experts was in place, ready to go to work. The Brazilians as well as the Germans put together their own teams. The Israelis, who have always

kept their distance from cases like this and choose not to get directly involved, just sent an observer.

My instructions were to follow this case for the U.S. government because, better late than never, we wanted to know exactly what was going on and we wanted to make certain that we knew for sure whether this really was Mengele or not. Nowadays, you can identify people by DNA. That was not yet the case back in 1985. You only had fingerprints and dental records. Of course, there were no fingerprints. The exhumation only yielded a skeleton. If you have dental x-rays taken of someone before he died and you are certain of his identity, you can take x-rays of the skull and match up the teeth very accurately. So, a bunch of people went to work on this. I was just an observer at that point. I was sitting in on all these sessions.

After about a week, the various forensic specialists started comparing and discussing their findings, using slides to project their data on the wall, and so on. The Germans were the most methodical. They projected a chart of the skull on the wall. On that slide, they had over 40 numbers or labels attached to each anatomical angle, curvature, and point on the skull. Through a technique called craniometry, you can match that up with photographs of the person you are trying to identify and measure those same features. Then you overlap them and if they match, you can make a pretty good identification. Well, they put this thing up on the wall. They had everything on that skull numbered for every single anatomical feature of the skull. There was only one thing on that skull that didn't have a number next to it. That was a hole in the left cheekbone which was clearly not an anatomical feature. It was a hole that to me at least, was obviously caused by a pathological process. With all the experts and scientists who were sitting there looking at it, not one of them had noticed it.

I took a look and said, "What the hell is that hole doing there?" They said, "What hole?" I said, "See that hole over there? You don't have a number by that one and that's not an anatomical hole." They said, "Really? What do you know about it?" I said, "Well, in my younger days I not only was a dentist, but I happen to have specialized in oral pathology and was a diplomate of the American Board of Pathology. Come and take a look at this skull." We took a closer look at the skull and, sure enough, it became apparent to everyone that this was most likely to be a pathological hole, not an anatomical feature. I am skipping over a lot of details. After several days of discussing and weighing the options they asked me to do the pathology work together with a Brazilian specialist and try to establish that this hole really was a pathological abnormality and not an anatomical feature.

*Q: When you say it was pathological, what do you mean?*

DACHI: It's from some kind of disease process that destroyed part of the bone rather than an anatomical feature. So, together with the Brazilian pathologist, we prepared some slides from the bone tissue and performed a microscopic examination. We established that there had been a long-term infection in the maxillary sinus of Mengele's upper jaw. From questioning the people who had harbored him, we knew that while he was hiding out in Brazil for years he would get big dental abscesses and infections with swelling in his face and that some years later he had had a root canal done. During his first few years in Brazil he had been afraid to go to the dentist because he was afraid of being discovered. So, since he was a physician, he would lance the

abscesses with a razor blade and drain the abscess himself. I am trying to keep this thing relatively palatable for you in language. So, basically he had an infected tooth for several years before he had a root canal done, and because this infection was not treated properly for so long, it worked its way into the sinus and eventually leaked or drained out to the face through the perforation or hole in the part of the cheekbone covering the maxillary sinus. By the way, there was a scar on the face that matched the hole in the skull that they didn't notice either. I said, "Hey, this is where the tract that the infection was draining through chronically over the years broke through the skin."

Once we established by microscopic examination that the hole in the skull was connected to the infected maxillary sinus, the officials in the Office of Special Investigations (of Nazi war criminals) at the Department of Justice had me come up to the Smithsonian to make a presentation of the evidence. They invited back all the forensic scientists who had participated in the original investigation and I presented the findings, speaking as a fellow pathologist. I showed them the results of the study and explained the whole thing. The findings were accepted as valid by all the specialists.

Then came the end game. The people from the Department of Justice said to me, "Look, in the meantime, we have studied Mengele's diaries that were found in the house in Santo Amaro. They have been authenticated by handwriting specialists who have confirmed that they were written in Mengele's hand. In the diary, Mengele made several notations about going to a dentist to have a root canal done. Obviously, there must be some dental x-rays from that root canal somewhere in Brazil. Would you be able to find them?" We all knew that if we could find the dental x-rays, we could do the standard, legally valid forensic comparison and definitive identification. I agreed to try.

When I returned to Sao Paulo, the first thing I did was to go to the Brazilian Federal Police. The diary was written in a crude, informal code, so it wasn't totally clear to any of us who that dentist might be. But I gave the information to the Brazilian police. They came back within two or three weeks and said, "We can't find him." Then the Justice Department, asked me if I would look into it further on my own since the Brazilian Federal Police wasn't able or willing to do it. I then undertook a detailed investigation. I broke the code of the diary. With that and with various other bits of information, eventually I found the two dentists who had treated him, one the specialist who had done the root canal and the other the general practitioner who had made the referral. Then I found the x-rays in the files of the general dentist. With these x-rays in hand, the forensic dentist from New York who was a member of the original team returned to Sao Paulo and the final identification was done.

This created an international problem that perhaps would be of interest to talk about here. But just to finish the dental part, there were a number of people who could not accept this evidence, even though medically it was beyond any argument. Five years or so later, the DNA tests which had come into use by then, were done and authenticated the findings. They validated what I had done. At that point, the German government finally accepted the identification. (The Department of Justice had accepted the finding immediately upon completion of my investigation in 1986.) The government of Israel has not said anything publicly one way or the other to this day. I should add, however, that the chief coroner of the Mossad came over to Sao Paulo in late 1986

and went over my work with a fine tooth comb. Afterwards, he came to my office and told me outright that based on his own review he was convinced that everything I had done had been absolutely correct, and there was no question in his mind about the validity of the identification.

*Q: So, there you were back in the dental business.*

DACHI: The first four months that I'm in Brazil, I'm doing the death of the President. Then I did Josef Mengele. Then I started on the informatics case. This was a pretty spectacular four month period.

*Q: Could you talk a little bit about social life in Brazil as the Consul General?*

DACHI: It was extremely busy. There was a huge American business community there. Brazilians, the ones we met, were basically very pro-American, particularly the older generation. Don't forget, Brazil was an ally of ours in World War II. They had an expeditionary force and fought along with General Mark Clark in Italy. Many of the younger people we had contact with, particularly in the business community, had gone to college in the U.S. So, we were very, very busy. We would average maybe one evening a month at home by ourselves.

Our principal base of contacts was with Brazilians of course. One of our most extraordinary experiences in Sao Paulo came from getting to know many of the prominent entrepreneurs, the "makers of modern Brazil" as they were popularly known, who had transformed the country from an agricultural economy relying on commodities like coffee and sugar to a modern industrial state. Brazil today has internationally competitive steel, aluminum, shoe, auto parts, electronics, and armaments industries, not to mention new agricultural commodities it has developed like oranges and soybeans where they are among the world's leading exporters. Many of these enterprises worth hundreds of millions of dollars each, were still headed in the 1980s by either their founders or the founders' sons. Very few of them had yet gone public.

It was a powerfully enlightening learning experience to meet these people and get to know them, the Fords, Rockefellers and Vanderbilts of Brazil, and get to appreciate the unique and remarkable personal traits of individuals who, almost single-handedly, were able to create giant, vastly successful industries and enterprises.

Then there was a large American community of about 20,000. There was a lot of contact with them. One small group was particularly fascinating. Slavery wasn't abolished in Brazil until 1888. In the U.S., it was abolished 20 plus years earlier. After the end of the Civil War, a number of southern farmers who didn't think they could survive the abolition of slavery and stay in business in the United States decided to move to Brazil to start new farms, both in the Amazon region and in some communities in Sao Paulo state. They have been there ever since. Of course they intermarried extensively, but their descendants still live there in various places, including in a town called "Americana." They have an entire American community structure there, and something truly unique, a confederate cemetery.

I went to visit them a couple of times. The thing that I most remember is that when I visited Americana sometime around July 4th one year, I went up on the platform to participate in a

ceremony. To my utter amazement they had the confederate flag flying and they played "Dixie." Once in a while, I would be at a ceremony in Sao Paulo where when I showed up, they played the national anthem. On July 4 when we had our receptions, we played the national anthem. To think that there was any place left on earth (outside the United States) where they played Dixie on July 4<sup>th</sup> kind of boggles the mind.

**JAMES W. CHAMBERLIN**  
**Science Officer**  
**Brasilia (1986-1988)**

*James W. Chamberlin was born in Miami, Florida in 1945. He received a BA from Principia College and a JD from the University of Alabama in 1972. He served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970 and entered the Foreign Service in 1973. His postings abroad include Sao Paulo, Bangkok, Brasilia, Warsaw, and Rome. Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed Mr. Chamberlin in 1997.*

*Q: When you left there in 86', where did you go then?*

CHAMBERLIN: To Brazil, to be the science officer in Brazil. I have only been a science "counselor" once, in Poland, although I had three jobs with essentially the same duties. In other embassies, the science officer often has the rank of counselor, reporting to the DCM, but not in Brazil, although my predecessor in Brazil had the title of counselor.

*Q: You were there from 86' to 88'. What was your job, the major aspects?*

CHAMBERLIN: Well, because I had been working on Brazilian nonproliferation matters for quite a while, nonproliferation was the main issue that I worked on. Other issues that took up substantial time while I was there were the environment and space. Space went hand in hand with proliferation; people were afraid that Brazil was going to build a rocket to launch its nuclear device, once it built a bomb.

*Q: What was the status of the nuclear issue?*

CHAMBERLIN: It was still tense. There were several on-going nuclear programs. Of course, there was the civilian electric power sector, which got some of its power from the US-supplied Westinghouse reactor. One of the most interesting involved an admiral who was said to be building a nuclear submarine, a submarine that would be powered by a nuclear reactor. Everyone in Washington was still worried that Brazil was in a nuclear arms race with Argentina. There was a shady character who was the head of the main Brazilian nuclear program, with offices in Rio de Janeiro. I believe his name was Rex Nazare Alves, and the initials for his nuclear agency were CNEN (The National Commission for Nuclear Energy). He was a guy who was always working behind the scenes, so you really never knew whether you could trust what he told you. He had his fingers in all the other nuclear pots, from civilian to military. He was the main person I had to

deal with on nuclear policy issues, along with the Foreign Ministry, which had a nuclear office. Although the foreign ministry had an independent role, some officers there were under the thumb of CNEN. The ministry's nuclear office appeared to have a strong connection with the military nuclear group. They had their own inter-agency meetings on nuclear issues. There was one man from the Foreign Ministry who went to all the closed nuclear meetings that gave us heartburn. On the Foreign Ministry's econ side and its international organizations side were other officials involved in nuclear matters, and they were much more reasonable. For me it was almost a "good cop/bad cop" situation. I discovered that even though the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was anathema to Brazil, they were not unreasonable about non-proliferation *per se*, if you separated it from the NPT. Every Brazilian believes that Brazil is destined for greatness; they will not accept second class citizenship in anything, including the NPT. They made it clear that they would not sign up for something less than the Americans did. On the other hand, Brazil had been one of the leaders in negotiating the Tlatelolco Treaty, the Latin American regional nuclear free zone treaty drafted in the late 60's. The US doesn't like it, because it allows for peaceful nuclear explosives; everyone says you can't tell the difference between a nuclear explosion that is peaceful and one that is not. Nevertheless, the officials on the econ and IO sides of the Foreign Ministry were big on Tlatelolco, since they or their predecessors had worked on it. It became apparent to me that they were amenable to being more active on non-proliferation matters under Tlatelolco, and most of the Brazilian policy makers, even those working on nuclear issues, were not interested in building a bomb. They claimed that Brazil was not an aggressive, militaristic country, despite its military leadership, and they appeared to have a much lower level of resistance to discussing non-proliferation under Tlatelolco than they did under the NPT. If you mentioned the NPT, you immediately ran into a stone wall. If you got down to the bottom line issue of whether they were going to build a bomb or not, I found that they weren't interested in one. The Foreign Ministry officials were smooth; they were true foreign affairs professionals, who had clout within the Brazilian government. It saw some hope on this issue, because there were influential people (the "good cops"), who were not involved in military, nuclear cabal. On the other side, there was a group of military and civilian officials that was interested in creating a domestic nuclear capability that no outsider could control, but it was not clear that they dominated Brazilian nuclear policy. They would never say they wanted to build a bomb, but clearly they left that option open, and they were trying to keep everyone else out of their program. They realized that there was a group of senior Brazilian officials who were open to working out a responsible international position on nuclear issues.

*Q: Well, were you able to engage any of our people in Washington to figure out how to work with these dynamics?*

CHAMBERLIN: I would like to think I had a role, but you never know exactly why things happen. A very fortuitous event occurred. The Argentines got religion on nuclear responsibility before the Brazilians did. While I was in Brazil, the president of Brazil was invited to Argentina. Unexpectedly, the president of Argentina took him to a secret nuclear facility at Bariloche in the mountains in western Argentina. He showed him the Argentine enrichment facilities and their indigenous reactor. Then, the Brazilians were on the spot to be equally open with the Argentines. That really broke the ice. At the same time, however, perhaps with my encouragement, some people back in ACDA (who normally were the main proponents of relying on the NPT rather than the Tlatelolco Treaty) began thinking along the lines of using Tlatelolco. At least one or two

people in ACDA were on the Brazilian side. So there was already a little dialogue in progress in the US, when the Argentines broke the ice. I think that it finally prompted the flood gates to open. Now Brazil and Argentina have a nuclear arrangement in place under Tlatelolco, although there are no standard IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) safeguards for this arrangement. Brazil, Argentina and the IAEA are working on this, but since my tour in Brazil, I believe that the possibility of a Latin American nuclear arms race has ended. That may be an exaggeration, but it's gone down tremendously.

*Q: What about the environment. The buzz words today are "save the Amazon." Surely you must have spent a lot of time hugging trees.*

CHAMBERLIN: Unfortunately, I didn't. I didn't even get a trip up to the Amazon forest, although I made a personal, tourist trip to the Pantanal. I spent a lot of time working on environmental issues, but at that time the environment wasn't as much of a diplomatic issue. I spent a lot of time trying to get good data on Amazon deforestation, the best source of which was usually satellite photography. My replacement in Brazil had to deal with what she called the CODEL from hell, a group of senators, led by Tim Wirth, who went to the Amazon and got a lot of press coverage. For the Embassy that moved the Amazon to the front burner. Meanwhile, the nuclear issue had improved so much that it could be moved off the front burner. While I was in Brazil, NASA came down with a planeload of equipment and did a major study on the Amazon, jointly with its Brazilian counterparts. Before NASA arrived, I spent a lot of office time getting clearances and talking to many government agencies, because Brazil was very suspicious about what NASA wanted to do. Number one, Brazil is always worried about foreigners doing research in the Amazon, because they themselves don't know what's in the Amazon. They have been particularly sensitive, ever since an American scientist found a mountain of iron ore there. They worry that another country will know more about the Amazon than they do. They are really tough on research clearances; so, it was a big hassle to get permission for NASA to come in. NASA wanted to do an all source study, using satellites, a heavily instrumented Convair 880 jet, and ground observers. They were looking at various atmospheric phenomena over the Amazon. The Brazilians finally agreed to the research and worked with NASA during the remainder of the two years I was there. NASA developed a good working relationship with its counterpart in Brazil, called INPE (the National Institute for Space Research). On space, I developed another "good cop/bad cop" relationship. INPE was the civilian "good cop" doing scientific research, while the military space launch program became the "bad cop," because Washington worried that their work would produce a ballistic missile.

The Brazilians had an equivalent to our forest service that should have been protecting the trees in the Amazon. However, traditionally the head of the agency was beholden to the timber industry. The regulators were not regulating the forests when I was there. One of my disappointments was my failure to help a career bureaucrat who was appointed while I was there. His appointment was an accident, because when the previous chief left, the timber interests did not have a replacement for him in place. I got an IV (USIS international visitor) grant for him to meet his counterparts in the US and begin to build some environmentally friendly contacts. Everything was going great, but within two or three months after his return from the US, he had been replaced by another agent of the timber industry. Fortunately, the forest service was not the only agency involved in environmental policy in the Amazon. Besides government agencies,

there was an active Green Party in Brazil; led by Fabio Feldman, they got quite successful in getting headlines in Brazil and help from environmental groups in the States. We didn't have any major environmental crises while I was there (except for the annual burning of the Amazon), or diplomatic incidents over the Amazon. The Green Party seemed to be getting more sophisticated -- doing less protesting, but using the political system more effectively. They proposed legislation, and environmental groups were lobbying successfully. There were other, informal contacts with US environmentalists. EPA representatives visited Brazil from time to time, but they tended to focus on urban pollution, rather than the Amazon. In Brazil, I learned that EPA liked to avoid the Embassy whenever possible. Tom Lovejoy, who became a senior official at the Smithsonian, had a long history of cooperation with Brazilians and also came down to Brazil periodically. He was a big help to a "Blue Ribbon Panel" delegation, led by soon-to-be Presidential Science Adviser Allen Bromley, in identifying joint scientific projects that the US had offered to fund in order to invigorate scientific cooperation between the US and Brazil.

*Q: Who was the Ambassador while you were there?*

CHAMBERLIN: It was Harry Shlaudeman.

*Q: Did he seem to take much of an interest in the science side of things?*

CHAMBERLIN: He did, I would say more often on environmental issues than on non-proliferation. I think he sometimes heard from people like the Rockefellers or the Ford Foundation on environmental issues. On non-proliferation, he got seriously involved only when Ambassador Kennedy (the Secretary's ambassador at large for nuclear matters) came to visit. I don't remember that the Ambassador personally made many *démarches* on any scientific subject. The few times that he would call me to chat about something, it was usually the environment.

When Ambassador Kennedy visited Brazil, I made him an appointment with the head of nuclear affairs on the Brazilian National Security Council. I had to fight for the appointment, because he was secretive and didn't like to meet with foreign officials. Kennedy did not like the appointment, because he had never met the general before. After fighting for the appointment, I was not invited to the meeting. Only Ambassador Kennedy and Ambassador Shlaudeman went, probably Ambassador Shlaudeman's only official call on a non-proliferation matter. Kennedy later told me that it was a useless appointment, because they just swapped war stories. (Kennedy was a retired Army colonel.) I think, however, that it was one more chink in the wall blocking non-proliferation progress in Brazil. The general had real power over the "bad cops" who worried us, and who also isolated him from us -- hence my problem making an appointment with him. I think it was useful for him to see that Ambassador Kennedy was not the devil incarnate, even if they didn't make any progress on substantive nuclear issues.

*Q: How was the scientific community in Brazil engaged in the political process, as far impact on policies?*

CHAMBERLIN: The scientific community was not too engaged politically, but it was too important to ignore. Brazil has a great scientific community. It's a big country; therefore, even by the law of averages, it must have a few geniuses. Brazil has its share, and the result is that

there are distinguished Brazilian scientists in many scientific fields. They have something similar to our NSF, the National Science Foundation, although it didn't have much clout. (I think it was called the CNPQ, the National Research Council). The head of the council was polished and politically astute. Although he was a pretty good lobbyist, in comparison to what other parts of the government were getting, he didn't get much. In Brazil, you have to distinguish the State of Sao Paulo from the rest of Brazil, because the state itself is so rich. The universities of Sao Paulo or Campinas, for example, have more money for equipment and faculty other universities. The state's environmental agency was better equipped than the national environmental agency. There were other avenues of funding, and there was enough money to support a reasonable amount of research in Brazil, but they could not sponsor world class research with their own money. Brazilian scientists would often do research in Europe or the US, and later return to Brazil to teach. Brazil wasn't financing much of the world class research that they were involved in.

*Q: Was part of the hunting license to keep an eye out for research and development that might be of value to American firms, and provide opportunities and send notice back to the States?*

CHAMBERLIN: Yes, but I didn't have a very successful hunt. I particularly hunted for biotechnology, which at that point appeared as though it would take off. The Brazilians had some good people working in that area, but I never found anything very promising. From the Brazilian perspective they could really have something to contribute, because they have the Amazon with all its plants and bugs that could contain substances useful in pharmaceuticals. I, at least, never found a good connection. American corporations were pretty good at taking care of themselves. The AIDS epidemic was just hitting Brazil while I was there. There was considerable interest in the issue, but mainly from the public health perspective of preventing the spread of the disease, rather than high-tech attempts at treatment. USAID had one officer remaining in Brazil; he and I often worked together on AIDS matters.

*Q: In '88 you left Brazil for where?*

CHAMBERLIN: I went to Washington to serve in the political military bureau. I was there from '88 to '90.

*Q: What were you doing there?*

CHAMBERLIN: The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). Going back to when we were talking about INR, at the end of my tour there, one of the political appointees from the Carter Administration had come up with, and pushed, the idea of an international missile proliferation agreement. When Reagan defeated Carter, the appointee left, but the Reagan administration was very interested in the idea of a missile control regime. Because of the change of administration, I ended up being one of the few people within the State Department, even though I was very junior, who knew anything about the issue. So, I helped to draft some of the first briefing papers to get the regime off the ground. The first thing we did was to make a trip to Europe to see if we could get our European allies on board. Thus, I was present at the creation of the MTCR. I continued to work on the MTCR in ACDA, but I left Washington for Bangkok before any agreement was signed.

*Q: What do you mean when you say a missile control regime?*

CHAMBERLIN: It's a non-proliferation regime to control the delivery system for nuclear, chemical or biological warheads, in case a country of proliferation concern were to develop them. We would at least be able to force them to deliver a warhead by air, which is a little easier to stop than delivery by missile. So, that's what it means -- limiting strategic missile delivery systems. The MTCR went through a long gestation process. At the very beginning we came up with certain guidelines about how much a warhead would weigh, how far it should travel to be considered "strategic," and what technologies were essential to these capabilities. These specifications were eventually included in the agreement. The MTCR was intended to address strategic implications, rather than tactical implications of missiles. Then we worked backwards from that ultimate goal. Because of my experience with Brazil's nuclear program and their opposition to the NPT, I wanted the new missile regime to allow for peaceful uses of rocket technology -- to follow the Tlatelolco Treaty model, rather than the NPT. But this idea ran into a buzz saw at DOD with Richard Perle and his minions. My colleagues at ACDA, who preferred the NPT model, were not too supportive either. I still believe that the type of regime I proposed would have been more easily justifiable and would have more easily attracted the adherence of the proliferating countries we were worried about. But it would have been harder to monitor and enforce. In the end, I lost, and enforcement carried the day, but it created headaches for me on subsequent tours.

I was not the only one who differed with DOD's approach to export control. When we were drafting the first version of the MTCR guidelines, I worked closely with Bill Root, the office director of the office in EB handling COCOM issues, who had worked on export control issues for years. COCOM already had specifications for controlling some of the items we wanted to control. One morning while I was working with Mr. Root, he was called away to the phone to talk to Richard Perle's office about some COCOM issue. When he returned, he was not happy, but we continued our work. We broke for lunch, but when I returned, his staff told me that he had retired, effective immediately, and would not be returning to work.

Now we have almost caught up with my new assignment to PM, but first a word about how my loss while in INR and ACDA came back to bite me in Brazil. The Brazilians had a national space program. They were planning to launch a small radio relay satellite with their own space launch vehicle. They also planned to place radio transmitters throughout the Amazon that would send out rainfall, temperature, and other environmental information. The satellites would collect this data from remote locations in the Amazon and relay it to a ground station for processing. So, Brazil wanted a new ground station to track the satellite and collect the data down-linked from it. They had one, older ground station, used mainly to receive images from the US Landsat satellite, and they wanted to build a new one for the new satellite. So, they solicited bids, and the Japanese won. I got an anguished call from the embassy's commercial counselor saying, the Japanese had won, but the existing ground station was American. Could we do anything to persuade Brazil to buy American? I had good connections with INPE, the civilian space agency; so, I called one of my contacts there. The INPE engineer said that they had always wanted to buy American, but a senior official had made the decision to buy Japanese, despite the recommendations of the technicians. The American bidder had been disqualified on a technicality. The technicians told us that if we made a stink, we could probably get the decision reversed. We escalated the issue

within the Embassy and pressed the Brazilians to reconsider. They reversed their decision and awarded the contract to the American company. I was elated. Then, a few months later, we found out that DOD had denied the export license for the ground station, arguing that it might be used for missile telemetry or some other military purpose. My INPE contacts, who had been my buddies, became my enemies. They asked, "How could you do this to us? If we had gone ahead with the Japanese bid, they would have delivered. We could have had the ground station built in a year, but you denied our export license." In Washington, the State Department was willing to fight to reverse the DOD decision and get the license issued. The fight went on for about a year; by then emotions had flared on all sides. Although approved, the ground station would always leave a bad taste in the mouths of the Brazilians. In the process of numerous phone calls to Washington trying to get the license approved, the office in PM handling the MTCR, asked me to come work for them. That's how I ended up working there. By this time, the Missile Technology Control Regime had been signed and was in operation. It's not a treaty. It's more like a group of unilateral undertakings, because other countries were reluctant to sign a treaty that reminded them of the NPT. Some of them had been burned by the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Now they were reluctant to take on the third world again for another non-proliferation regime. (If our proposed agreement had looked more like the agreement I recommended in INR and ACDA, we might have been able to negotiate a treaty, rather than the cumbersome arrangement that we ended with, but we'll never know.)

When I returned to Washington, the PM office was processing applications like the one in Brazil which had been turned down. Most of the decisions were made at inter-agency meetings. In addition to making decisions on licenses for US sales, we used intelligence to monitor whether other countries were selling controlled items that they should not have been selling, even if they weren't part of the regime. The big decision while I was there, was how to enlarge the regime to include additional countries. Originally I think there were seven countries, five big Western European countries, Japan and the US. The biggest question was, "What about the Soviet Union?" Next, "What about China?" Finally there were countries that were smaller suppliers or were on the borderline between being suppliers or buyers, like Brazil and Argentina.

The Argentines appeared to be building a powerful missile, the Condor, that violated the guidelines. In Argentina, once again, the argument was whether this rocket was for peaceful use or military use. Of course, the country building a rocket says it is for peaceful use, although others see it as ready to carry a warhead, or they argue that it is too small to be covered by the MTCR. We convinced the Argentines to give up the Condor missile, after beating up on them diplomatically for months, if not years. One of their main suppliers was in Italy. When we finally got to the Italians, they helped convince the Argentines to give up the program.

*Q: Did you have to handle Israelis with kid gloves?*

CHAMBERLIN: I can't say that we used kid gloves, but we did treat Israel differently from other countries. I think the working level of the State Department usually tries to treat Israel like other countries, but the pressure for favoritism comes from the policy levels, who usually have to clear any significant action. As a result, the process for demarching Israel was different from the way you would demarche India, Pakistan, or Argentina. My "special" country continued to be Brazil. Just before my tour in PM ended, the Office of Munitions Control accidentally approved

a license to carry out a process in the US to harden some metal, industrial pipe that the Brazilians planned to use for rocket bodies for their space program. Had the process worked as it was supposed to, our committee would have been consulted in advance, but because this was an unusual type of application, we were not. The hardening procedure was not clearly covered by the MTCR, but the hardliners on the inter-agency committee had a fit when they found that the pipe had already entered the country, and some had already been treated. Because it was not covered by the MTCR guidelines, and because we had assurances peaceful use only, from senior Brazilian officials that I knew personally to be men of integrity from my tour in Brazil, I argued forcefully to allow the process to continue. Although discussions of the matter were treated as classified within the US Government, because I was winning, someone leaked the matter to the Washington Post or the New York Times. (I don't remember which.) The leak created a (small) uproar in Congress, which knew little about the hardening process or the people in Brazil who had promised to use the pipes only for legitimate purposes. After I left PM, the deal was halted, and the remainder of the pipes were not treated. For non-proliferation, this was the "super-safe" course, but I believe that for non-proliferation to work in the long term, we will have depend on trust and cooperation as much as intelligence and threats. Reagan said to trust, but verify; for Brazil there was no trust. The US position that all Brazilians were untrustworthy, I think, set back our dialogue with Brazil on non-proliferation matters.

*Q: Were there any problems that you had, or issues that you had to deal with on this?*

CHAMBERLIN: About this time, the world began gearing up for a big environmental conference sponsored by the UN in Rio de Janeiro, UNCED (the UN Conference on Environment and Development), held in 1992. I got to OES just in time to do a lot of the spade work getting ready for it. At first our office had the main responsibility for UNCED preparations, but it was clear that UNCED was going to be too big an issue for our office to handle alone. The State Department created a new office which ended up being at least three times as large as ours, with many of the staffers seconded from other agencies. For our office, the biggest issue was the Biodiversity Treaty. I was the deputy director of the office; the director was Eleanor Savage, who was the lead negotiator for the treaty. The negotiations took place in Nairobi; so, Eleanor was gone much of the time. The general idea of the Biodiversity Treaty was to create a framework for identifying, using and protecting plant and animal resources. We already had the CITES Treaty (The Convention On International Trade In Endangered Species), but the Biodiversity Treaty was to go beyond CITES, in that it provided a framework for developing countries to grant access to flora and fauna that were not threatened or endangered. The treaty negotiations turned into a "third world vs. the industrialized countries" exercise, like many other environmental treaty negotiations. The developing countries wanted lots of money for development, and for allowing access to their natural resources, and so on. The Egyptian who was the chairman of the negotiations was very pro-third-world; as a result, the final document emerged very one sided. It went down to the wire, whether the US was going to sign it or not. In the end, we did not. In Rio, President Bush did not sign the Biodiversity Treaty, and it is still not signed today. I was not as deeply involved in the treaty as Eleanor was, but she was with the delegation in Rio when the final decision (or at least the official recommendation to the President) on signing it was made in Washington. As I began to work the issue in her absence, I was surprised that there were several officials in the Bush Administration who were not so

negative on the treaty, in spite of the general perception that Republicans are opposed to environmental issues.

Meanwhile a number of delegations in Rio were trying to work out a compromise that would be acceptable to the US. The Brazilians (I can't escape them) were working on the text of a compromise, which they circulated to find out what an absolute bottom line was for the US. The US delegation sent a classified fax to Washington about the proposed compromise. Someone leaked it to the New York Times. The day after the fax arrived in Washington, it appeared on the front page of the New York Times, which effectively killed any chance we had of making a deal, because the Brazilians were so embarrassed that they had appeared to be willing to sell out their third-world colleagues. On the US side, the article put the spin on the leak that the US Government was preparing to sell out the US pharmaceutical industry. The leak worked; it killed any chance of a compromise, and since then there hasn't been any enthusiasm for taking on a Republican Congress to get US adherence to the treaty. (Although some in the Bush Administration felt that fears about the treaty were overblown, I don't think that the Republican Congress would look at the treaty as objectively.) The FBI investigated the leak, but as far as I know, never found the culprit. My personal opinion was that it was someone in Vice President Quayle's office, since his office was leading the campaign against the treaty. I was struck by my "leak" experiences in PM and OES at how willing conservatives were to violate the law by leaking classified material. As a child of Vietnam, I had always thought that was something liberals did.

*Q: The Rio meeting was not an American diplomatic success. In fact we ended up sort of looking like the curmudgeon and all.*

CHAMBERLIN: From my perspective, after working on the environment in OES for two years, the conservative Republicans would not let us sign anything the least bit environmental. In Rio we ended up opposing every major initiative except Global Climate Change, where we had done enough fighting in the years preceding the Rio meeting to produce an agreement we could sign, because it was sufficiently watered down and toothless. On almost every other issue, we were at loggerheads with the rest of the delegates. As a result we got a black eye, rather than a positive image.

**HARRY W. SHLAUDEMAM**  
**Ambassador**  
**Brazil (1986-1989)**

*Ambassador Harry W. Shlaudeman entered the Foreign Service in 1955. His career included positions in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Bulgaria, and Chile, and ambassadorships to Venezuela, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, and Nicaragua. This interview was conducted by William E. Knight in 1993.*

SHLAUDEMAM: To go on to Brazil. I spent almost three years there. The issues were all trade issues. Brazil is not a country that is open to external influence with regards to its internal

politics. It is too big a country. But we had extremely serious trade problems which we worked on. I must say I spent a lot more time in direct communications with the United States Trade Representative (USTR) than I did with the Department. That and of course the debt issue, so of course I had a lot to do with the Treasury.

Q: *This was when?*

SHLAUDEMANN: I arrived there in 1986. I spent four-five months learning Portuguese, which was, needless to say, very useful.

Q: *Full time?*

SHLAUDEMANN: Not entirely full time, but almost.

Q: *Could you really gabble along?*

SHLAUDEMANN: Oh, yes. My Portuguese, which now is very weak, was really fairly good. In any case, this was another one of these transition periods. The Brazilians were transitioning from a military government to democratic government. The President, Jose Sarney, although he had been selected by the Congress and not elected popularly -- in fact, he was the Vice President but the President had died before he could be inaugurated -- still Sarney was the first civilian president they had had since 1964. It was a civilian administration and the big democratic opening was local elections and all that. The problems in Brazil -- we had these trade problems and the debt problem, but Brazil's own problem was that typical Latin American curse -- inflation -- which was eating away at them. Still is.

I found that an interesting assignment, and I think, fairly successful, but wearing. One of the problems is that Brasilia is an isolated capitol and the country is so enormous that to do an adequate job, you have to spend an awful lot of time on airplanes going long distances.

We also had, while I was there, the beginning of this great issue of the Amazon forest, and the burnings that so captured world-wide attention.

Q: *What is your feeling about that, on the basis of your experience?*

SHLAUDEMANN: I couldn't agree more. It is an enormous problem, but the real problem is the excessive population. This is where it comes from. You have a kind of circular migration. They start out in the north-east, which is as poor as Haiti or Nicaragua, and they would go south looking for work, to Brasilia, to Rio, to Sao Paulo. And then, not finding work, they would go north again, up the western side of the country and into the Amazon where they practice this cut-and-burn agriculture. I flew up there once, and you could see the fires all over, enormous fires. In any case, it is a huge problem and comes back to this issue of population growth.

In the Brazilian military, their position had been -- I remember this vividly in the 1960s -- that efforts to introduce birth control measures in Brazil were all a plot on the part of the US to limit Brazil's *grandeza* -- its grandeur, its greatness. Of course, the more people they would have, the

greater the country would be. The more people they have, the poorer the country becomes. It is obvious.

In any case, it was a very interesting tour and I had there an opportunity to do something that had bothered me for many years, one of what I think -- over my career -- has been one of the great weaknesses of the FS. That is the failure to promote American exports.

It first really struck me in Venezuela in 1975. You could almost literally hear the money swishing around in the streets. The country was filthy-rich all of a sudden, and they were importing machinery and capital goods from all over, but mostly not from the US. It struck me as I would go around to these new factories and training schools and what-not, you very rarely saw any US equipment. In Brazil, of course, we were engaged in a constant effort to promote US exports and this was a part of the trade problem.

*Q: What was the nature of the effort?*

SHLAUDEMANN: Well, the Department of Commerce had established a trade center in Sao Paulo -- this was one of the first ones. In the end, it was a failure -- it didn't work. I have some complaints about the Department of Commerce that go back a long way. But we did do an awful lot of trade shows. I spent a lot of time giving talks to business groups, Chambers of Commerce and what-not, in which I always made a pitch for the importance of the trade relationship - they were running these enormous surpluses with us on the trade account -- on the importance of a two-way trade relationship.

That would be about all in Brazil. By this time I was wearing out, and my wife was particularly wearing out. So I retired in June of 1989.

**STANLEY ZUCKERMAN**  
**Minister Counselor for Public Affairs**  
**Brasilia (1986-1989)**

*Mr. Zuckerman was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York and educated at the University of Wisconsin. After service in the US Army, followed by newspaper reporting and a position with the Governor of Wisconsin, he joined the USIA Foreign Service in 1965. He subsequently served as Information, Press and Public Affairs Counselor in Congo, Belgium, Mexico, Canada and Brazil. He also had several senior level assignments in Washington at USIA and the State Department.*

ZUCKERMAN: I left in the summer of 1986.

*Q: Whither?*

ZUCKERMAN: To Brazil, as minister counselor for public affairs. That was a stark contrast to

both Mexico and Canada. We were sent to Brasilia, a new capital born of the desire of President Kubitschek of Brazil to move the country, whose population was concentrated on its Atlantic coast, inland to a plateau 3000 feet above sea level, a vast plain of red clay and brush. When I looked at a map I could see that if you pushed Africa and Latin America together, that Lubumbashi in the Congo and its laterite soil was practically the same laterite I saw 25 years later in Brasilia, and they were virtually at the same latitude. It was remote, somewhat more quiet than we preferred, but increasingly livable, particularly after I had been in Brazil awhile. We had at the time seven USIS posts in Brazil. The headquarters was, of course, at the embassy in Brasilia, with large posts in Rio De Janeiro and Sao Paulo, and smaller posts in Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre in the south and Bahia and Recife in the north. We also had a widespread system of bi-national centers, one as far north as Manaus that was created and run by a wonderful man with great enthusiasm for the United States, and it was a great excuse to get up to Manaus, visit him and his board, leave some books or other gifts, and make sure they knew we appreciated what they were doing. There were, after all, almost a million people living in that city on the Amazon, which was a free port.

*Q: Didn't they have an opera house and all that?*

ZUCKERMAN: They had an opera house that was built during the great rubber boom of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was under repair when I was there. The New York Philharmonic came down with Zubin Mehta. He wanted to play in Manaus, but we had to tell him it was still under repair, but he still went up there to take a look at it because it is a wonderful little theater, similar to the one built during the silver boom in Mexico in Guanajuato.

*Q: You were there from '86 to '89. Who was the ambassador?*

ZUCKERMAN: The ambassador was one of the great career ambassadors of our time, Harry Shlaudeman. He is a very quiet man, reserved, somewhat shy, but probably the most utterly professional diplomat I have ever known. He arrived there just shortly before I did. He had been the Assistant Secretary for Latin America, ambassador to Argentina, Peru, Venezuela, deputy chief of mission in Chile, served several tours in Colombia as a young officer, and before he came to Brazil was special negotiator for Central America during the problems in Nicaragua. After his retirement the first President Bush, who later gave him the Medal of Freedom, talked him into going to Nicaragua as ambassador. Other than a tour in Bulgaria, he served his entire career in Latin American affairs.

*Q: He had been in some very difficult posts.*

ZUCKERMAN: Oh yes, and he had been negotiator for Central American affairs, largely dealing with the Sandinistas. He was a great golfer and if he resented anything viscerally about the Sandinistas when he was in Managua it's that they had torn up the only golf course in town and made it into a tank training ground. I met him in Washington when I was told of my assignment and he wanted to know my background, where I was from. I told him Wisconsin and of my political work there. He rubbed his head and said, "My God, the people's republic of Wisconsin." The first few months I was there, he would hold staff meetings and go around the table and ask questions and nod his head and walk out. I felt very distant. I didn't know if he was

at all interested in what we were doing. One day that first Christmas, between Christmas and New Years, I was for some reason working. I got a phone call, picked it up and it was Ambassador Shlaudeman on the line. He said, "What are you doing?" I said, "Well I am pretending to work." He said, "Want to play golf?" I said, "When?" He said, "Now." And we left the embassy and went to the golf course, and had a wonderful time. I think it was just his way of communicating to me that things were OK. We became quite close. We still correspond by internet. He is living in California.

*Q: Well what were the issues that particularly concerned you in Brazil?*

ZUCKERMAN: The issues that seemed most central to the relationship were economic ones. The Brazilian economy itself was strong but the country was in a constant state of financial crisis. While I was there, there was a terrible period in which price controls were imposed and food disappeared from the markets. My wife had to go out with a friend to a farm and, under the light of a bare bulb in a back room, this farmer cut meat for us that he wouldn't sell in town. The Europeans sent meat that was deep frozen as an emergency supply. The Brazilian press called it "carne mumificada" – mummified meat. It was truly inedible. The US was seeking to help out in stabilizing things and of course the IMF took the lead, but it was a very difficult time for Brazilians to get through this. There were also trade issues of enormous importance involving agricultural products, and Brazilian manufactures. Our markets were not as open to the Brazilians as they would have liked, and they were effectively barring us from entering into their computer market. As a consequence, Brazilians had to do with computers of local manufacture and design which were not suited to the very advanced state of most Brazilian manufacturing corporations.

The contrast between Brazil and Mexico was very great. Brazil represents two-thirds of the South American economy. The State of Sao Paulo at the time, maybe it is even greater now, had a GDP greater than that of Argentina. One of the reasons for the striking nature of Brazil's economic advancement is that, unlike Mexico, it has always welcomed immigrants. As in our own experience, they have attracted ambitious and entrepreneurial people from Italy, Germany, Japan, Russia, Poland, Syria, Lebanon, and Jews from all parts of the world, along of course with the original Portuguese and the only people who came without wanting to, the Africans who were enslaved until 1888, largely from Angola and other West African areas. The largest expatriate Japanese community in the world is found in the state and city of Sao Paulo. They number more than a million.

In Mexico, it is not impossible to settle as an expatriate, but difficult to become a citizen. I think only the refugees from the Spanish civil war were fully welcomed, as were a number of Jewish refugees from Hitler. The resulting difference is that, although autos are manufactured in Mexico, they are assembly plants of foreign auto makers – General Motors and Volkswagen and the like. The Brazilians, I believe, do more of the manufacturing of parts and participate in the design of cars. They also manufacture airplanes that are used by US and European airlines, particularly planes made by Embraer. They are also large arms manufacturers, who had been selling tanks and heavy weapons in the middle east, particularly to Iraq. The two best hospitals in the country are in Sao Paulo. One is the Einstein Hospital, one is the Syrian-Lebanese Hospital. I think this openness to immigration has given it a very different texture than Mexico. It has some

world class newspapers and very good television. Mexico has a powerful network – Televisa – but is surpassed by Globo, the Brazilian network that is probably the most successful in the developing world. It produced novellas – usually erotic soap operas – that are seen around the world in translation. Among the leading newspapers are the Jornal do Brasil in Rio, the Gazeta Mercantil in Sao Paulo (the Wall Street Journal of Brazil) as well as the Estado do Sao Paulo, Folha and several others. And the fourth largest news weekly in the world is Veja, produced by Editora Abril, the largest publishing house in Latin America, that prints more than 100 magazines. These are serious publications, producing good and usually responsible journalism. On economic issues however, as is the case with newspapers in most countries, even our own, they tend to take the side of their own country when there is a conflict on trade matters. The newspapers in Brasilia itself were particularly egregious, but everybody in government read the papers out of Sao Paulo and Rio.

*Q: Did you find it difficult doing your business situated in Brasilia as opposed to being in Sao Paulo?*

ZUCKERMAN: We had to be in Brasilia because the Brazilian government was there, which meant our embassy was there. But since the major media and cultural institutions were in Rio and Sao Paulo, I traveled there rather frequently, and tried to make visits to the other posts a couple of times every year. We had good staff at all of our posts. We had three Americans plus a large local staff in both Rio and Sao Paulo, including a book translation operation in Rio. We had good communications within Brazil by telephone, but the people who made a difference in the arts, the universities and the media were not in Brasilia. There were great universities in both Rio and Sao Paulo. There was a university of modest stature in Brasilia, the University of Brasilia, but the University of Sao Paulo was a great institution, as was the University of Campinas in the interior of the State of Sao Paulo. There were both church and public universities in Rio, good universities in Porto Alegre and elsewhere. Porto Alegre was full of surprises, with people in industry very interested in the arts and very strong media. I developed good relations with people in those cities. We opened up a new bi-national center in Recife while I was there that is still going, replacing one having been run by someone who disgraced us. It was not as much fun or as easy to operate from Brasilia as it would have been from either of the other two main cities, but we had close contact with our posts and the program was well coordinated. Today we have posts only in Brasilia, Rio and Sao Paulo. We have shrunk that much.

*Q: You mentioned the Universities. Did Brazilian universities follow the same pattern as so many other Latin American ones where there is very strong leftist Marxist anti-American student body. I mean it is almost dangerous to go into there.*

ZUCKERMAN: No. I mean certainly undergraduates, certainly in Latin America but even in America, you will find tend to have political views that are rather more to the left than in the general population. But I can't think of a university campus in which we couldn't speak to people and carry out programs anywhere in the country. It is just a different atmosphere than in many Latin American countries. We don't own any land that was once part of Brazil. There are certainly differences over policy issues, and Brazilians are temperamentally quite different from us. They are culturally a distinct and voluptuous people, and yet they like many of the same things we like, such as American style shopping centers and most American products. We were

of course criticized from the left. The designer of Brasilia, Lucio Costa, and the architect of its buildings, Oscar Niemeyer, were men of the left. Niemeyer was in fact a communist, and the city was laid out by city planners who had in mind very strict rules about how things would be organized. But from a sterile plot of land on an arid plain in the middle of nowhere, it has now really blossomed, because Brazilians will recreate the life style they love no matter where they are. The restaurants are getting much better. Outside of the Plano Piloto, the central plan of the capital, cities have grown up made up of people from the northeast who originally worked on the city who chose not to go home. Satellite cities like Taguatinga and Ceilandia and other towns appeared so that there is a large population on that high plateau now, well over two million people. They grow three crops of soybeans a year on that land; having been made fertile by the development of nutrients to enrich the clay and sand soil, and the climate is very congenial. They are vast exporters of agricultural goods – soybeans and elsewhere oranges and of course coffee – all of which, except for coffee – competes with our produce very effectively.

*Q: This is tape seven, side one with Stan Zuckerman.*

ZUCKERMAN: You have heard the song, “They Grow an Awful Lot of Coffee in Brazil,” they grow an awful lot of everything in Brazil, wonderful fruits, oranges. They make up the major imported source of oranges for the prepared orange juice we drink. It is a country of enormous diversity. They think of themselves as a future major power, and with a population of about 175 million or so, with vast resources, much of it unexplored, and a very productive population, there is no reason why they shouldn’t be world class. Now when Charles de Gaulle visited Brazil, he was said to have observed, “Ces’t ne pas une pais serieux.” --it is not a serious country. And I suppose by some standards that might seem true. Brazilians love to play so hard that they are not as productive as they otherwise might be, but that is not true of the places where things are really happening. It may be true in smaller cities that are right on the beach – like Bahia or Fortaleza, and it’s probably harder to work hard in Rio than it is in Sao Paulo. But they produce an enormous percentage of the shoes we wear in the State of Sao Paulo, and the traffic jams in the city of Sao Paulo occur not because people are playing hard but because they’re working hard, and the same is true in Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte. That is also true in cities most Americans have never heard of with more than a million people, like Curitiba. But they still find time to enjoy life,

*Q: Was there an impact or any observation by some of the, the extreme poverty in the cities that one hears about and the crime and all this?*

ZUCKERMAN: Well there is a tremendous influx of migration of rural people into the cities where the jobs are, where the wealth is. And as is the case in many Latin American countries, a lot of protection is given to squatters. If you leave your house unoccupied, and someone else moves in, it is not as easy to get them out as it might be in our country, but that isn’t what they were doing. They have been squatting on empty land. There has been a vast movement of landless peasants into the Amazon, into Amazonia, which is a vast region which includes land that is not jungle, but is part of what is known as Amazonia. That has given rise to a major issue between us on environmental concerns. It arose not out of encouragement by the USG to limit deforestation in the fragile Amazonian rainforest, but by statements by celebrities such as the British rock artist Sting and, more importantly, by a delegation of US Senators led by former

Sen. Tim Wirth and including heavyweights like Al Gore and the late Senator Heinz. They visited the rainforest and made strong statements asserting that Brazil was putting the planet at risk by allowing the Amazon to be destroyed.

It was one of the few episodes in which I thought the Brazilian press and government began to act in a manner that one would have expected in Mexico, with an explosion of vituperation for our interference in their affairs. They pointed to our own denuding of forestland in our early history in order to develop our country, and our arrogance in declaring that Brazil had no right to develop its own. There was in fact a very inefficient use of the rainforest arising out of clear cutting land that could then be used to raise cattle. But once you cut down the native vegetation, the land becomes less fertile because the nutrients in the soil are leached out by the heavy rainfall. Then the cattle farmers just move on to new forest areas and cut them down. There is an experimental station I visited with USIA Director Catto run by the Smithsonian that demonstrates the inability of forests newly exposed by the clear cutting of neighboring trees that makes it more difficult for them to survive the exposure to the elements.. We did point out to the press that there were more trees today from New York City to the Canadian border than there were in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, because most of those small farms had disappeared and the forests were allowed to recover.

We also did something that was possibly the most successful event of its kind that I had experienced in my public diplomacy career. We had formed a very strong friendship with a number of media associations, including the Brazilian associations of magazine publishers, of newspapers, of television and radio, and of journalism education. My closest ally was a man named Roberto Civita, who was president of the largest publishing house in South America, Editora Abril, which published more than a hundred magazines, the most important of which was *Veja*, the world's fourth largest news magazine. Ambassador Shlaudeman had given a very good speech which got wide attention, describing our own environmental movement, how it started and where it led, starting with Teddy Roosevelt who started with conservation, Rachel Carson who wrote her seminal book *Silent Spring*, and ending up with the present focus on ecology and the attempt to undo the damage done to our environment.

Then we held in Rio de Janeiro a seminar attended by 150 science writers from all over Brazil, and co-sponsored the event with the International Association of Science Writers, which was headed by an American at the Smithsonian Observatory in Boston. We got the UN development program to pay for two Asian science writers who wrote on ecological problems in the Philippines and Indonesia, and we brought in several American writers and a couple of U.S. based European science journalists working on the environment. The whole purpose of it was to demonstrate to the Brazilian press what the press was doing elsewhere in covering environmental issues, and how they were pressuring their governments to act against environmental destruction. It had an amazing effect in alerting the Brazilian press to the reality that they had a role to play in shaping public opinion and the environmental policies of their government, as well as taking the heat off us. Even though the worst of the storm had died down, all of a sudden a flood of very professional articles starting appearing about environmental problems in different areas of the country, Our program worked because we arranged contact for the Brazilians with their professional colleagues in other developing and European countries and not just with us. We didn't have a government speaker in the whole seminar. The speakers were all journalists, and

the suspicion that the Brazilians were being fed uniquely US policy faded. There is still an ecological problem in the Amazon, but the Brazilians are far more aware of it now than they were, not because of our pressure, but because of their own growing environmental movement.

*Q: How did Brazil, did they look toward the United States or towards Europe. I am talking about the business governing class and all.*

ZUCKERMAN: Well, the man who was the head of our Fulbright program, a very professional Brazilian academic, said to me one day, "You know, it is a terrible thing to be a colony. But to be the colony of an underdeveloped country was really worse." Today, Portugal is more dependent on Brazil than vice versa. Certainly there are ties to Europe, but they are more commercial than cultural or political. Brazil has far greater access to the American than to the European market. They had great markets in the middle east, particularly in armaments. If you take a look at what is going on in Iraq right now, one of the companies working for us in Iraq is a Brazilian company construction company that is experienced in very large scale projects, and who probably had had contracts with Saddam. So Brazilians are probably less parochial in their view of the world than many developing countries, to the extent that you can call Brazil developing. It is a mix of a highly developed society and a third world society. Rio and Sao Paulo, may have dreadful slums, but they still are world class cities, as are many other cities in the south. The northeast of the country and other areas beyond the reach of the burgeoning economy are still comparable to areas of the third world.

*Q: How about social life there?*

ZUCKERMAN: In Brasilia, social life largely involved the diplomatic community. We had some friends in the press, and others who had little or nothing to do with the Embassies, people Adriana knew through teaching at the University of Brasilia, others in business or professional life, and some in the Brazilian government with whom we established personal friendships. But Brasilia was at the time a diplomatic pond. It is the only place I had served where I went to diplomatic parties with some regularity. There were a few restaurants, and a rather nice golf course, which was a great source of relaxation but very much a social club for expatriates and the diplomatic crowd. But Brasilia was a rather isolated place, 700 miles from the coast. It wasn't easy to get in the car and drive somewhere beyond 10 or 20 miles without stocking provisions. So when you weren't flying out of the city, you were living in it. Being able to travel to the other posts at a certain point changed my attitude about Brasilia. Most Brazilian cities are somewhat chaotic, certainly it's the case in Rio and Sao Paulo. They are also hard to get around in and somewhat polluted. The government people were forced to move to Brasilia and hated it, but after awhile they were grateful that their children could walk to school without having their lunches stolen, and that the air was clean and that the slums were conveniently relegated to the shanty towns that had grown outside of the central city. Brasilia itself was close to living in a western-style suburb. Things have changed by now. The city is bigger and traffic is worse, but there is more to do and I think Cariocas – people from Rio – don't leave Brasilia on weekends to fly "home" as they used to. Brasilia is now home.

*Q: One of the things in the Foreign Service passed on for generations certainly for generations in the Foreign Service is that the Brazilian Foreign Service is first rate.*

*Did you get any feel for this?*

ZUCKERMAN: Oh yes. They are highly professional, highly trained, very proud, and very powerful compared to our State Department or Foreign Service, within the US government. You don't do anything in foreign affairs without going through Itamarati, the Brazilian foreign ministry. They are in charge. When there is someone in the ministry of mines or health or commerce who has the title of assistant secretary for foreign affairs, he is a Foreign Service officer from Itamarati. He is not a political appointee and he is not somebody from that agency. He is a diplomat. So can you imagine how powerful the State Department would be if it staffed every office in the bureaucracy that was called Office of the Assistant Secretary for International Affairs? And they are good; they know their stuff. They are good to deal with. The people we dealt with in cultural affairs, in educational affairs, and press relations were terrific to work with.

*Q: Did you get any feel for class divisions? I have talked to people who have served in Brazil, both African American and white, who said the Brazilians talk an awful lot about their one big happy family but don't believe it.*

ZUCKERMAN: There are more terms to describe people of color in Brazil than we have. Here it is largely just black and white. There are many more terms used in Brazil, from "preta" for very dark Afro-Brazilians, through "mulatta" for mixed blood to "morena" for lighter skinned individuals and I'm sure a number of other terms to describe subtle differences. Here, one drop of African blood has typically been used to describe an individual as black. There has certainly been more inter-marriage in Brazil, and mixed couples don't attract attention in most places. But if you are described as "preta" in Brazil you have far less chance of moving in that society than has become the case in the US. We had a regular interaction with Afro-Brazilian organizations that welcomed our bringing African-Americans to Brazil who could help them to understand how the American civil rights movement succeeded so well. A man I later made a film about, John Hope Franklin, was a guest lecturer and was adored by the Brazilians, especially but not only by the Afro-Brazilians.

*Q: He is an historian from...*

ZUCKERMAN: He is an historian born in an all-black town in Oklahoma, educated at Fisk and Harvard, who taught in black colleges in North Carolina but became chairman of the history departments of Brooklyn College, the University of Chicago and Duke University. He is now professor emeritus from Duke and Chicago and still writing. He is 88 and authored a book – "From Slavery to Freedom: The History of African-Americans", that is a standard text now in its eighth or ninth edition.

Slavery didn't end in Brazil until 1888. It was however, a different transition in Brazil than it was in the United States. Brazil didn't have a civil war. Some people say it is because of the Portuguese heritage of ameliorating differences rather than facing them head on. But they went from a monarchy to a republic, from slavery to emancipation, and from dictatorship to democracy without shedding much blood at all. They took more time to achieve those changes than we did, but with a lot less bloodshed. Today, if you are a light skinned person of African Brazilian heritage with talent, you can move anywhere. If you are dark skinned and you are Pele,

you can be the most popular man in the country, the soccer star. If you are born in a slum in one of the favelas above Rio, and don't get much of an education, your only hope is either that you have some talent that will catapult you out of your low station in life, or that you will find an illegal course to wealth. The state of Bahia, especially the city of Bahia, has an African culture with many African traits. The feasts of different African gods whose names I forget are celebrated there as they are in Nigeria and Angola. The famous Mardi Gras in Brazil really amounts to thousands of white people sitting in the stands watching black people having a wonderful time. But it's also true that intermarriage was accepted in Brazil long before that was true in the United States. There is ease of movement among the people who are of mixed ancestry throughout the society, but there are certain classes that feel that they are as isolated and as hopeless as were American blacks in the days of segregation.

*Q: Well is there anything else you think we should cover in Brazil? Maybe one on the cultural side, anything that we did that found the Brazilians particularly responsive?*

ZUCKERMAN: There were many American touring cultural events that would travel through South America. When we could latch on to one, and could find some money, we would try to get them to one or more Brazilian cities. We had a cultural attaché at the time, Frances Switt, who was a hard driver. She was not as popular among her staff as she was with those of us who appreciated the results of her work. She was a whiz at spotting a show, a Broadway show or a revue that was going to be in South America, and finding either an American or Brazilian company to back it, put some money up in collaboration with us. These events went over very well, since the popular artists in Brazil are a dominant expression of Brazilian culture.

Brazilian music, Brazilian dance, are world class, and are a very important part of the world's music. Certainly there is a great interplay among Brazilian popular artists and American. So many Brazilian artists have made it big time in the United States, Tom Jobim being the most famous. And American artists were appreciated by Brazilians, so when shows could come to town and Brazilians could come to see them, especially in Rio and Sao Paulo, they made a big hit. There was a time when the United States government could help underwrite the cost of a tour by the New York Philharmonic or other of our great orchestras. But those days have disappeared. Now we send small groups, and individual artists have come and played and have made important contributions. Brasilia was not a hotbed of cultural activity. It had an orchestral hall built for some reason as a Pyramid, which has nothing to do with Brazilian history, and with dreadful acoustics. It was designed by Oscar Niemeyer. The New York Philharmonic came on its own, with local underwriting, and the Israeli Philharmonic and the Leningrad Philharmonic came with underwriting by their governments and, in the Israeli case, by the local Jewish community. The music starved Brazilian audience was always the same, and it didn't matter what orchestra performed. It didn't make any difference. It was not what drove the relationship or affected it in any meaningful way. Educational exchange was much more important. We had a very good Fulbright program.

*Q: Well was there the pattern that developed in so many other countries in this period, of the young college graduates of the country would go to the United States to get their masters and Ph.D.s in some field, often technical.*

ZUCKERMAN: They would not only go to the United States, but to the University of Sao Paulo or Campinas as well and get a first rate Ph.D. in computer science. But the United States was sought after for its educational opportunities. We had a first rate system of educational counseling where students could come in and look through CD ROMs telling them about American universities. Not all of these students would go with American help. It is a little known fact that we had going, at one point, a huge export industry of American education. We are losing that now because of the current security restrictions. But at the time, there's no question that in terms of a destination for advanced education, although Brazilians went to Europe and elsewhere, the most desired education destination was the United States. Competition for Fulbright awards was very intense. Our bi-national Fulbright program in Brazil was the best that I had ever worked with.

*Q: Well you left there in '89*

ZUCKERMAN: Yes, in the summer of '89. I was supposed to stay until 1990, but there was a new director of the agency after the election, after the first George Bush became president, who was Bruce Gelb, Chairman of Bristol-Meyers Squibb. I was asked to come up and become the director for Latin American and Caribbean affairs in Washington.

**MARK LORE**  
**Deputy Director of Brazilian Affairs, Latin American Bureau**  
**Washington, DC (1987-1992)**

**Deputy Chief of Mission**  
**Brasilia (1992-1995)**

*Mark Lore was born New York in 1938, and graduated from Bowling Green State University. He served in the US ARMY from 1961 to 1964 as an overseas captain. His positions include Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, Luanda, Rabat, Brussels and Lisbon. Lore was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 26, 1998.*

*Q: Today is the 23rd of July, 1998. All right, it's now 1987 and you're off to the Brazil desk or whatever it is.*

LORE: Deputy director of Brazilian affairs. I reported into that work in the summer of 1987 after having left Lisbon.

*Q: You did that until when?*

LORE: I was deputy director for a period of something like a year. I don't remember the exact dates anymore. I worked for Dave Beall who was the director, Bob Gelbard was the deputy assistant secretary. After the year Beall was asked to move upstairs to become executive assistant to the assistant secretary and I took over as director of the office. So this is about late 1988, about the same time I was promoted to the senior Foreign Service.

Q: *So you did this from '87 to when?*

LORE: In the total time for Brazil in the Office for Brazilian Affairs from the summer of '87 to the summer of '92.

Q: *Wow, that's a good solid year.*

LORE: Five years.

Q: *Well, let's talk about the state of Brazilian affairs in 1987. Brazilian-American affairs and also the government in Brazil at that time.*

LORE: Starting maybe with the government; it was only two years after the government had returned to civilian rule in 1985. The military had left power. You had a weak civilian government with rather poor leadership, in part a development of circumstances. The first civilian president of Brazil replacing the military was to be Tancredo Neves, a very astute and well-regarded politician, although not necessarily a modern man. In any case, no one will ever know what Tancredo would have been able to do. He was elected in an indirect election that was allowed by the military as they walked out the door. Then Tancredo died on the eve of his inauguration, leaving the presidency with his vice president Jose Sarney. Sarney was a compromise candidate who had been a supporter of the military governments. He was not exactly what lots of folks had in mind as the first step toward a new day.

In any case, Sarney was a career politician of some ability, also a fairly well regarded poet. But he was both unwilling and, I think, unable to cope with the terrible financial problems that Brazil was having at that time. The country was essentially broke, inflation rates were very high, something on the order of 2,000% a year, and because of its foreign debt it couldn't really raise money on foreign markets. There were lots of big economic problems -- in true Brazilian style the new administration tried a number of flashy tricks to try to rectify things. They only succeeded in making things worse. So this created a lot of frustration. There was also at the same time a constitutional convention going on in the city of Brasilia. Those in the congress were double hatted as representatives to the constitutional convention. This meant the congress was doing even less than it normally did and it was distracted by the needs of writing this new constitution.

As in many countries under authoritarian rule for a long period of time - in the case of Brazil, 21 years - there were many wish lists around as to what people wanted to insert in the new constitution. Many political pressures had built up over that time, with attendant agendas. The new constitution quickly became unwieldy.

All this was going on when I came in on the desk. It contributed to rather scratchy relations at the time with the United States. We were in the midst of several very bad trade disputes that the Reagan administration was pressing for domestic reasons. Brazil was a country that, while important enough, was not the kind of country where the U.S. saw serious political costs to acting tough on trade. We were rather vociferous about disputes on matters like informatics,

computer trade, intellectual property and other things.

*Q: To be fair, they had a rather flourishing industry didn't they...or at least serving as a center of pirated things?*

LORE: Piracy was part of the mix here. There was indeed open circulation of pirated items, avoiding US copyright laws, such as computer software, music CDs, movie videos, apparel, etc. There were in particular questions of copyrighted software being distributed in Brazil; the big problem was more that, by manufacturing its own computers, computer hardware and software, whether licit or illicit and keeping ours out, Brazil was frustrating a very important part of our export potential there. This was the basis for the famous "informatics" dispute.

We were suffering from a trade deficit internationally and with Brazil. This was one of the areas where we felt we could really sell into Brazil. At the same time, we pointed out that Brazil was hampering its own economic and industrial development because its protected production of home-grown computers and software was not really world competitive without this kind of protection at the border. On the other hand, there was a feeling on the Brazilian side that they had overcome their military dictatorship, that their new civilian government was struggling and the United States, far from helping, was in fact looking for ways to be hurtful. I don't think that was fair, but I think that was part of the emotion that was around at that time.

*Q: Did Brazil have laws in place at this point, sort of, "We can do everything on our own" and trying to keep foreign goods out and that they would sort of produce everything themselves?*

LORE: Yes, they had strong national industrial policies, infant industry policies which had begun in the 1950s and were expanded by the military government. These policies may have made some sense in certain industries at a certain time, the automotive industry in the 50's, for example. But they had long outlived their usefulness. In addition, they had extended into areas such as computers which were not really appropriate for that kind of national policy. The difficulty in these matters, of course, is that the louder the United States yells about these things, the more the other government will use that opposition to rally its population against foreign protests. There was a latent suspicion in Brazil - which I think has now largely disappeared - that U.S. industry wanted to come down and basically take over Brazilian industry and markets and to hamper Brazilian development in the interest of exporting into a big market.

*Q: Pharmaceuticals, were they in this too?*

LORE: Yes. Brazilians did not recognize patents on pharmaceuticals. This was a big issue and remained one for some years.

*Q: If I recall too, it wasn't just Brazil but there was a spillover into...Brazil was surrounded by...I mean, most Latin American countries...and the borders were kind of... I mean smuggling was a pretty big business, wasn't it?*

LORE: Well, yes. It wasn't so much smuggling but Argentina also had counterfeit pharmaceuticals and didn't recognize patents on pharmaceuticals - in fact, does not to this day.

It's a remaining issue for us with Argentina. But I think that any time you have a large country and a major trader which follows practices which are egregious in the trade area and we don't have overwhelming political military, geopolitical stakes in that country - at that moment, you have a recipe for a hard line U.S. stance. The U.S. bureaucracy believes strongly that to ignore infractions from one direction makes it very difficult for us to crack the whip with others. So it's not surprising in terms of our own politics and enforcement of our own worldwide interest that we went after the Brazilians.

*Q: Would the U.S. Trade Representative, the USTR sort of lean on you to do things or did they go their own way, or?*

LORE: The Trade Representative's office at that time was cooperative with the State Department. There was not much distance between the State Department and USTR in terms of the strategy or the tactics of pursuing Brazil on these questions. There would be occasional differences and marginal differences on the operational side. USTR then and now doesn't have the horses to do all the work. They need to work cooperatively with State and Commerce, particularly if the U.S. was to be effective. I think the teamwork was pretty good in those years.

*Q: Well, let's stick to the economic side which in many ways was the name of the game, wasn't it? We'll move to the other side, but Chile had the Chicago Boys following...Chilean economists who had been trained in the University of Chicago, rather conservative economics, seemed to be working quite well. I was wondering whether there was anything the equivalent in Brazil or were we giving advisors or something to try to move their economy out of the mess it had gotten into?*

LORE: No, Brazilians are rather stubborn in these areas. Brazil sees itself as a large country with educated people and with its own way of doing things. They don't take advice easily from outsiders, particularly in the economic and financial areas. Nor would we, to be fair. They had very qualified economists. They had people who had studied in the States who could measure up to the best you would find internationally. But I think that the politics of the country combined with weak leadership did create situations where the Brazilian government tried to have it both ways - opting for easy fixes rather than taking hard steps towards reforming its own practices, particularly a tendency towards fiscal deficits. Admittedly, this is a painful thing to do. The budget deficit, both federal and state, were way out of line and getting worse and were an engine for continued and growing inflation. The problem persists to the present.

Brazil would not take advice from the IMF and avoided an IMF program feeling again that it was different and it didn't need that kind of help. The nadir of this whole period was the so-called Cruzado Plan in the mid-80's which was very, very popular and very, very irresponsible... The Cruzado Plan gave Sarney a great amount of support in the congress, but the plan ultimately collapsed. It artificially held down prices on all sorts of goods and commodities in the country for a short period of time, created a buying boom that then ran out of steam. There was no incentive on the production side, so essentially goods ran out and people were without goods on the shelves. This was a very serious period.

So you had a worrisome situation as I say, with poor leadership and frustration. The successful reassertion of civilian rule, restoring prosperity, all these goals seemed elusive. Brazil has always

thought in big terms. You know, "*grandeza nacional*." Brazil had gone through a period during the military dictatorship when it was growing at ten percent a year during the major economic boom of the 1970s and there was an idea that this could go on forever. It didn't, it collapsed after the oil shocks and the new government was not able to find the key to restarting growth. Instead there was terrible inflation, triggering Brazilian financial and trade measures which caused an adverse U.S. government reaction and, on the part of the private sector, a lack of interest in investment. Which meant that Brazil's economic relationships with the rest of the world were in very poor repair.

*Q: I have sort of the feeling that here is the colossus of the south and the colossus of the north and there really wasn't an awful lot going between them.*

LORE: That's right. Brazilian diplomats and others would come to Washington and would constantly harp on how we need a more positive agenda. What they were saying was, the U.S. only talks to Brazil when it has complaints. But there wasn't else to discuss at that time. In addition to the economic area we had serious problems with Brazilian long range ICBM-type missile development and with their nuclear program which had become a major flashpoint during the Carter administration but still remained a grave concern in Washington.

*Q: While the Brazilians were doing this nuclear weapons missile business, usually you can point to somebody, I mean, another country. Was this sort of a national pride toy, or were they concerned?*

LORE: I think there were those in Brazil who argued the United States only really pays attention if you develop nuclear arms and thus oblige attention. So this was something...this was perceived as a ticket into the first world so to speak. I think there was concern about the Argentine program as well. It wasn't exactly an India-Pakistan situation but you did have concern that Argentina and Brazil were verging on a nuclear and missile arms race.

*Q: We talk about we have to have a more positive attitude, more cooperation, you know, but frankly, what I'm trying to say is, what was there to cooperate about?*

LORE: There wasn't a lot. We also had at that time a fair amount of finger pointing on the environment. Tropical forest burning in the Amazon had just become a big issue. Brazil's record was not good. It was ineffectual at trying to control such burning. During the military period there had been a policy of actively encouraging poor settlers from the northeast to move to the Amazon for both political and demographic reasons. These people went out and burned plots in order to farm. This sudden influx of poor populations into the Amazon was environmentally very destructive and all of these pigeons came home to roost about the time the civilians took over. On our side there was a lot of gratuitous fingerprinting by U.S. Senators and others who would come down and give press conferences about what Brazil should do. I've always thought that the *Exxon Valdez* incident at that time, if it had any saving grace, was that it reminded many Americans that our environmental skirts, so to speak, were not all that clean.

*Q: Explain what the Exxon Valdez is.*

LORE: The *Exxon Valdez* was the oil tanker which ran aground off Alaska and polluted the shores of Alaska. It was a terrible scandal that still is not completely repaired today. It was a world-class environmental disaster and I think it reminded many American, particularly those in Washington, that environmental pollution was a problem in which nobody had a perfect record. In any case, the environmental issues began to turn around. In later years, they have not been as much of a problem with Brazil - largely because the Brazilians have become much more environmentally conscious.

With time, the trade disputes were largely resolved, or if not resolved, at least worked out in a way that permitted both sides to work them in separate, more technical channels. The financial problems, as financial problems tend to do, were corrected because they had to be corrected. There was just ultimately no choice. Brazil had to sit down with its creditors in New York and hammer out a deal. Brazil's strong point here was that the size of the economy and the relatively small size of the foreign debt, even though it was very large in absolute terms, compared to the Brazilian economy. It wasn't hard, ultimately, once you got over the political hurdles, to fashion an arrangement for a long term payoff of the debt. It's going along very well and it's proved quite absorbable for the Brazilians.

*Q: Were your bosses, assistant secretary for ARA and others saying, "For God's sake, come up with something positive we can do with this." Were you sort of sitting around saying, "What can we do nice," or something?*

LORE: Yes, there was a lot of that and I'm not sure how much we ever did come up with that was positive that made sense and that didn't cost money. But of course you didn't have much hope of getting budget allocations for Brazil, particularly given the generally hostile attitudes in Washington towards that country at that time. There were some successful attempts at developing scientific cooperation. Brazil has some world-class scientists who were educated in the United States and were used to working with American scientists. That was jumping on top a moving train. But beyond that, no, I think we were more or less obliged to wait for a government with which we could work more easily, and wait for the Brazilians to finish their constitution writing and to begin to talk seriously with their creditors about their debt. Those things came about in the late '80s and in 1992 a new government was elected with a modernist president, although he proved a failure for other reasons. But at least he took some steps to open up areas of dialogue we hadn't had in the past. That helped. That was Fernando Collor.

*Q: How did the nuclear issue work out during your time?*

LORE: It was always felt that you needed Brazil and Argentina to join hands and jump off the cliff together, so to speak. To take the initiative jointly. When both countries found themselves in the mid-'80s with new civilian governments, there was an opening for creative diplomacy. Brazil and Argentina engaged in some extremely creative diplomacy where the president of each country visited the nuclear installations of the other creating a basis, both for their bureaucracies and in popular opinion, for an arrangement. Brazil and Argentina negotiated an arrangement, an international control mechanism headquartered in Rio, which exists to this day.

This arrangement - called ABECC - is still often cited as a possible model for Pakistan and India.

Both countries avoided existing international control mechanisms such as the Nonproliferation Treaty to which they didn't belong. They based their actions on the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the Latin American NPT. But ABECC was well put together. It gained credibility from the international nuclear establishment and it provided the basis for presidents Collor and Menem to officially end their nuclear weapons and research programs.

*Q: Did we play any role in that?*

LORE: I don't think we played much of a role in the final solution. I think in years previously to that we certainly had made clear on our concern and our willingness to work with the two countries... I think that probably was helpful in getting across the idea that if they were willing to take the necessary steps we would be supportive, as in fact we have been.

*Q: Was there any change when the Bush administration came in '91, as opposed to the Reagan administration? They were both Republican, but I was just wondering if there was a change in attitude, or Brazil just wasn't that much of a focus of things?*

LORE: Latin America still wasn't a big focus but it became more of a focus in the Bush administration. The Bush administration created a program called the Enterprise for the Americas which was based on private trade and investment development, not on official aid flows. This was a region-wide initiative, it was not taken just for Brazil. In fact, I think probably the framers, the people that wrote it, largely in Treasury, didn't look at Brazil as an immediate target of this program given Brazil's problems. It has, in recent years, however, been very much the focus of U.S. trade and investment efforts in South America. So this wasn't viewed as a Brazil program, but it was welcomed by the Latins as something that made a lot of sense, that offered some carrots and didn't brandish too many sticks, which the Latins are always sensitive to.

The Bush administration also marched smartly away from its predecessors' Central American involvement. While Central America is not of any particular interest to Brazil, our fixation there had been frustrating to the large countries of Latin America because they felt that the U.S. was diverting all of its attention and resources into small guerilla wars in tiny countries. They believed that the U.S. really wasn't focusing on the major priority which was them. I think they were right. The fact that this was a self-serving argument doesn't mean it was wrong.

*Q: Speaking of wars, did you all get involved at all during the Gulf War when Iraq invaded Kuwait. I was just thinking that Brazil being a major country, did we make any overtures or do anything with them to get their support.*

LORE: No, Brazil was not prepared to do what Menem did in Argentina and that was to actually send some limited assistance to the Gulf. Brazil initially was not particularly helpful on the Gulf War question. Brazil had developed very strong trade relations with Iraq in the years preceding the war. Brazil had made a fair amount of money by providing arms to both sides, arms and vehicles.

*Q: Iraq and Iran.*

LORE: To both Iraq and Iran in the first Gulf War and Brazil was uneasy about its investment, particularly in Iraq where they were owed a great deal of money. So I think there was initially a tendency in the Brazilian foreign ministry to look for ways in which Brazil could stay on the sidelines. This was not popular in Washington but it wasn't terribly important either because essentially we had our coalition. We didn't really need the Brazilians we just wanted them to stay out of the way. They did so, so that was pretty much it.

*Q: You mentioned the foreign ministry and all. Within the American Foreign Service the Brazilian foreign service has a very high reputation. What was your impression when you were dealing directly with it, about how it worked?*

LORE: Of course, the impression I have is an impression that has been developed over many years. Not only from those assignments, but later on as DCM in Brasilia. The Brazilian foreign service is a very able, very impressive group of diplomats. Many of them are children and grandchildren of diplomats, although this tendency has lessened in recent years. It's a somewhat ingrown corporation, generally well off to wealthy, generally raised overseas, extremely well educated, classical diplomatists. These are people who are much better than we are at knowing the history and traditional practices of diplomacy. They suffer from, I think, the other side of many of the same qualities. They are somewhat elitist. They don't represent their country, certainly racially, or in class terms as well as, say, the American Foreign Service has come to. Their focus on traditional diplomatic practices and values sometimes blinds them to opportunities which might depart from those practices.

A case in point was when Fernando Collor, the president elected after Jose Sarney finished his term. When Collor came in he unilaterally removed many trade barriers and reduced trade tariffs in order to get Brazil to develop into a less protectionist, more open market global trader. I think this part of Collor's foreign policy was well conceived. There was a great deal of unhappiness about the program in the foreign ministry; they complained that Brazil was giving away quids without getting quos. In other words, if you were going to lower trade barriers, you don't do it unilaterally, but you do it through negotiations.

Well, I think one could argue that to provide a dramatic indication of new Brazilian direction this was the right way to go and to the degree that needed Brazilian investment relied on actually on getting these things done rather than having years of negotiations. It was much better for Brazil to get the resulting cash flows sooner rather than later. But the Itamaraty diplomats love negotiations. That's their stock in trade and sometimes they're criticized for losing the forest for the trees - negotiations become almost more important than what you're trying to achieve at the end. In sum, Brazilian diplomats are a formidable presence in their government. They have very strong support, generally, within the Brazilian government and from a succession of Brazilian presidents both military and civilian. They're much better placed in the power struggles in Brasilia than we are in Washington. They take good advantage of that.

I think that many of the more reflective diplomats at Itamaraty, however, recognize that there will be new demands and new things that are required as Brazilian democracy consolidates itself. As its congress becomes inevitably more active in foreign affairs, as other agencies of the

government assert their interest in foreign affairs more aggressively than they have so far,- Brazilian diplomacy will have to reflect more views and inputs from outside the formal foreign ministry bureaucracy. Another factor moving things in this direction is the consolidation of the Mercosur free trade arrangement with its neighbors.

*Q: This is a southern cone...*

LORE: A southern cone, Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, with Chile and Bolivia as associate members. Mercosur is seen as a kernel for the development of a broader South American trade grouping that would be an alternative to NAFTA if you will, and it's gone very well. But as you ground your foreign policy in such arrangements, I think it's a real question whether any foreign ministry, no matter how adept, is going to be able to exercise total control.

*Q: How did find the Brazilian media was covering the United States during that period? Or was there really much interest?*

LORE: There's a great deal of interest in the United States. Relatively minor developments in our politics or economics are front page there. There's a fascination with the United States, a love-hate relationship, we might say, with the press. The press in Brazil is very good. It's very lively, not always responsible, but it has had quite a good record of muckraking over the recent years to the point where they essentially got a president impeached for corruption through their discoveries and hard detective work in bringing out some scandals. But since Brazilian journalists are intellectuals, and I think it's fair to say, tend to be more to the left, the tone of press coverage is often rather cynical about the United States, that is often questioning and disparaging.

At the same time, the papers indulge themselves in long articles and features about Disneyland and various aspects of the United States such as our music, business and culture. Brazil, whether all Brazilians like it or not, is submerged in North American culture. You only have to go there to see the movies. listen to the radio. The character of the two populations has many similarities and I think that tends to encourage a interest, a fascination with American life.

*Q: How did you find the Brazilian embassy operated? Some embassies understand where power is and worked the corridors of Congress as well as elsewhere. Did the Brazilians seem to play that game or were they very active?*

LORE: No and I don't think they do much even to this day. They give lip service to the idea of working the Congress, but I don't think they really know where to start. In fact, I don't think they're alone. With the possible exception of Mexico, there is no Latin American embassy which really spends any time on the Hill. To be fair, it's a hard nut to crack. It's hard to get to see staffers, much less members. Diplomats can't open doors in Washington the way diplomats can open doors, particularly American diplomats in many other capitals. It is another world on Capital Hill, as it is for us to some degree, so you can imagine how our diplomatic colleagues feel coming from other countries. They are often frustrated by the difficulty of finding the locus of decision making on any particular issue at any particular time within the executive branch, let alone the congress. I have to admit, it's often hard to figure who's making decisions, if anybody.

Q: *Were there any other issues in this '87 to '92 period?*

LORE: From '87-92 drugs were becoming a major issue for the United States. Drugs came to be proclaimed as a major if not the major American preoccupation in Latin America. Brazil was not in the front lines in this area because they do not have a cocaine industry. The stuff isn't grown there or processed there. But Brazil, given the fact it borders on countries which do have this problem and is used as a route to ship drugs to the United States and Europe, both through ports and by air, became part of our drug focus.

Our relations with Brazil over this have been okay, Brazilians still don't give it as much importance as we think they should. They argue that it's just simply not as big a problem for them as it is for us. They argue that they've got populations which are undernourished, they've got regions of the country that are essentially lawless, they've got environmental devastation, they've got other major problems. So we have a difference in that area but it's one where we've agreed to disagree and cooperation hasn't been too bad - and is improving.

Q: *Were we keeping a...through our embassy but other means...of keeping a close eye on the military during this period? To see if they were going to get restive and try to move back in?*

LORE: There were those in Washington and in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs who felt that we should be more worried about the military. I took the position that we didn't need to worry about the military. The military, in Brazil at least, were exhausted. They had run the country for 21 years. They had run it basically into a sandpit. They left feeling unappreciated. Their professional expertise, their equipment, their doctrine was all hopelessly out of date because trying to run the country had distracted them. They had no appetite at all to come back in. It didn't mean that they wouldn't occasionally send a message publicly or privately when they felt that the civilians were going off course. But there wasn't really a saber behind that and I think that is still very much true.

It could come someday that you'd have a renewed threat, but it seems increasingly unlikely. Latin America - certainly including Brazil - does seem to be embarked on a period of sustained democratic rule. These democracies are not perfect by any means, they have their weaknesses, but they're not particularly susceptible to military coups. The situation in some of the smaller countries is less favorable, but certainly the big countries appear to be relatively stable. One has to remember that in Brazilian history, the military have only taken power when they were in effect invited by civilian factions to do so. In Brazil, unlike in some Latin American countries, there is not a military *deus ex machina* that decides on its own when it might take power.

Q: *Should we move on then do you think? In '92 whither?*

LORE: In '92 I was assigned as DCM in Brasilia. It was a natural development from being office director for Brazilian affairs. As these things develop, they're always somewhat haphazard. The new ambassador appointed in '92 by the Bush administration was Alec Watson. Watson was a Brazilianist, who had also had high-level assignments in other parts of the area. He knew Brazil very well. I think it's fair to say he was delighted by the chance to be ambassador to Brazil. He

asked me to come as his DCM. I did not know him well before then but we had had some phone conversations and I guess he might have valued my recent contact with the issues - he had not been working on Brazil in recent years. He had himself been DCM in Brasilia some years earlier. So I think he saw some value in having someone who was aware of the issues and personalities. As it happened, I took the assignment, went out in the summer of '92, but Watson never became ambassador. Late in the Bush administration, the Senate began to delay action on presidential nominations requiring confirmation and he ran out of time. The Clinton administration came in, renominated him to be ambassador to Brazil, but then ran into terrible problems trying to find an assistant secretary for Latin America who would be acceptable to various interest groups in the United States.

*Q: Particularly Senator Helms I guess.*

LORE: Well, not only Helms. They first decided on a black Cuban-American, a lawyer from Newark. The Clinton administration tripped over itself, as it did often in those first months, by not really focusing on the fact that this guy may have been a black of Cuban descent, but he wasn't one of the Miami Cubans, he was a Newark Cuban and he was looked at with some suspicion. I'd hope it wasn't racial, although there were some charges there was a racial component to it. But certainly, he was looked at with some suspicion by the wealthy Cuban-American community in Florida as someone who had been willing to travel to Cuba and to meet with Castro, so he wasn't a true believer.

So that nomination came under fire. The administration ducked for cover, went to ground and as often happens, then turned to a career diplomat who was non-controversial and well liked by both sides of the aisle. The result was that Watson suddenly found himself as assistant secretary for Inter-American affairs. The ambassador who was there, Rick Melton, remained for an extra year. I wound up working as his DCM. When Melton left, I served as *charge* for about seven months until the new ambassador, Mel Levitsky, took over. Levitsky has also stayed on longer than he intended to because of the difficulty in finding and confirming a replacement. He only just left last week.

*Q: Well let's see, you go in '92 and when did you leave?*

LORE: I went in the summer of '92 and I left in the summer of '95. It was three years.

*Q: We've already talked rather extensively about the issues up to '92. Was it pretty much a continuation of that? How did you find Brasilia after being away for so long?*

LORE: I found Brasilia extraordinarily comfortable. It's very isolated, a little boring and monotonous. You do not get the sense of color and excitement that you do in the big cities of Brazil. On the other hand, it's a very comfortable, easy place to live. A ranking officer of the American Embassy can go to three or four cocktail parties a night and still be home by 8:30 in the evening because the city is built for the automobile. There is a system of major roads, some of which really resemble our interstate highways, connecting the city's neighborhoods. So although there are more cars there now than there used to be, you still get around very, very quickly. The climate is good. The housing is extraordinarily good, particularly for higher-ranking

people (although morale has suffered in the past because lower-ranking people in the embassy lived in some rather undesirable apartments). The higher-ranking people lived in southern California type housing with swimming pools and extensive lawns. As for work, it's an ideal place for a workaholic because there's not much to do other than work on your tennis or golf game. Isolation was an issue for some; as DCM, I was able to travel around the country so, unlike some of my colleagues, I was able to see something of other parts of Brazil and deal with Brazilians in circumstances outside the capital.

I found that a major challenge of the job was to deal effectively with the problems of an embassy in an isolated place with a large staff from different agencies. We had a great many staff people who could not speak much Portuguese and they and their families often felt estranged from their surroundings. It was a community that had to rely on itself. There wasn't a greater American community out there, virtually the only Americans in Brasilia are those with the embassy. The other embassies were much smaller and, at the staff level, largely stayed to themselves. In the Brazilian community, one has to speak Portuguese - but even if you did, Brazilians in Brasilia essentially live a suburban existence where they go home every night and there is not a great deal of culture activity or interchange. You couldn't go downtown in the evening, for example, to participate in the culture and do things that brought you into the county. You went to a shopping center and you went to a movie, just like you do in the U.S.

All of this placed a very heavy burden on the ambassador and on the DCM and on their spouses to show some leadership in creating a cohesive community where people felt they had a home. It wasn't a nine to five arrangement. Several evenings a week, there were various kinds of embassy community functions where your presence was expected.

*Q: Were there any issues that you particularly were involved in? You were charge, so you must have had a piece of almost any issue.*

LORE: Well, we still had the trade issues. After all, we still have problems with Japan and the EU, so why not with Brazil? We did have quite a positive agenda, I think, on the nuclear side. That was developing very nicely during my time there. It had moved from becoming a negative to a positive. On drugs, as I say, I think that we're working out some areas for cooperation. I spent a lot of time personally on two issues where I thought that the embassy could make a big difference. One was on visas, where Brazil had a much more restrictive, less forthcoming visa policy for American travelers than we had for Brazilians.

We took some rather tough steps on restricting Brazilians in order to create pressure for change in Brazilian visa law, and we succeeded. That went through just before I left. So we were able to get a much better deal on visas for our citizens, which I think was important. It allowed us in turn to provide Brazilians with even better visa conditions. This is something we badly needed to do. Brazil is one of these countries, and there are a number of them around the world now, that with some prosperity and with lower airfares and with the attractiveness of the United States as a destination given our low costs for lodging, car rentals, etc., we've seen an explosion in demand for American visas. Our visa sections are just not equipped to deal with it. So we have to find some imaginative ways to deal with that explosion rather than just adding bodies to stamp visas. Rather than 20 visa officers to issue three-month visas, it's a lot better over the long run to have

five or six who are doing four- and five-year visas. Maybe one day we can do away with the visa requirement altogether.

*Q: Was there the problem that there was very obviously the relatively wealthy traveling class and then there were the poor people who were trying to go to the United States?*

LORE: Yes, the poor people of course ran up against the *bona fides* problem that we're all familiar. They're almost automatically rejected because it's difficult for them to establish where they get the money to make the trip to the U.S. and to sustain themselves here. The rich of course get their visas long ahead of time and have ways of circumventing the system - they don't have to stand on line, they send a driver and all the rest. It's among the middle class that has legitimate aspirations to visit Disneyland, or Disney World, where you have the big problems. It was cheaper for a Brazilian family from Sao Paulo to go to Orlando for a week or two weeks' vacation than to go someplace in Brazil. So it wasn't unusual, it was quite credible that people would want to go to the United States - but they may also be motivated by greater economic opportunities in the U.S. Our visa sections are just not set up to handle timely adjudication of visas for these large groups.

The other area that I got into was the question of reciprocity of treatment for official staffs. Our chief concern was to obtain better treatment for our people in terms of their household shipments and their imports. This involved their treatment by Brazilian authorities, port authorities, customs authorities and the rest. These might seem to be mundane problems but they impact significantly on mission morale and on our ability to attract high quality staff. We had less success on the reciprocity side than on the visa side. But these were two issues where I put a lot of time.

*Q: Usually when you have this reciprocity problems, it usually that means relations aren't very good between two countries, because basically it's bureaucrats giving the other country's bureaucrats a rough time. Was this it, or was this deliberate?*

LORE: No, I don't think it was deliberate. Much of it grew out of the fact that a Brazilian diplomat who comes to Washington really is quite self-sustaining here. He doesn't have to bring things from Brazil. He'll buy his Ford Taurus, he'll go to the Giant. He does better than we do because he has a tax card, but even if he didn't have the tax card, products here are relatively cheap and everything is available. Aside from the occasional specialty item, he never has to order anything from Brazil. So customs problems and import complications are simply not on his scope. On the other hand, an official American in Brazil wants to bring in far more - either because items are not available in Brazil or because they're available but they're of inferior quality or higher price.

Having to import into Brazil, one runs into all of the lingering problems of a bureaucracy and a mindset that still after, despite some changes, is still somewhat protectionist in nature. It tends to operate according to a system of a great many highly detailed regulations which no one obeys, but foreigners - particularly diplomats - have to obey because they're in a position where they have to. It's not that the Brazilian authorities were necessarily harassing Americans. Some smaller embassies in Brasilia, perhaps composed of less ethical diplomats, will take advantage of loopholes and bring in extra cars and do other kinds of things and make money. The Brazilian

authorities have the constant problem, as do we here in Washington, of not creating rules that give latitude to those less honest embassies.

So the American embassy, being the biggest and most visible, was forced to follow the rules to the letter. When the Brazilian government tried to introduce legislation into the congress to give us special treatment, reflecting reciprocal conditions, it did not prosper. Brazilian politicians immediately suffered an attack of "gringoitis" and decided that giving so-called favors to American diplomats was something Brazil shouldn't do. You can't win for losing.

*Q: You traveled around. How did you find the role of Rio and Sao Paulo particularly? Were they sort of almost autonomous? Brazil, I mean, is such a big country.*

LORE: Sao Paulo state cannot be compared to any state in the United States. Even California does not loom as large in the United States, politically or economically, as Sao Paulo state does in Brazil. This gives the governor a great deal of power. He enjoys more power, under current arrangements, than our state governors do. Sao Paulo as a state is bigger in terms in GDP and population, certainly GDP, than any country in Latin America other than Mexico. It's much bigger than Argentina. Sao Paulo is the engine that drives Brazil. The city is sort of a combination of New York and Detroit. Rio is still the sentimental capital of Brazil. It is the place that all Brazilians want to be from or want to go to. But increasingly it plays second fiddle to Sao Paulo. There are important businesses in Rio and probably will be for a long, long time; it is an important business capital in its own right. Over time, however, it's increasingly losing ground to Sao Paulo, which is the major financial and industrial capital of the country. Sao Paulo state is much larger as a state and has other big cities in it and other resources outside of Sao Paulo city. Rio suffers somewhat for not having much of a hinterland and thus politically doesn't have the same kind of clout in the federation.

*Q: I would think that sort of country representation-wise this would create a certain amount of frustration in Brasilia. Here you are stuck up in the hinterland and dealing with things where the engine and all and the consul general is sort of right in the middle of it. It's always been considered the equivalent to being an ambassadorial post. Did this cause any problem?*

LORE: It may be considered that by the consuls general in Sao Paulo, I'm not sure it's considered that by his/her supervisors in Brasilia.

*Q: I understand what you mean, but as far as posting goes, it's considered a very prestigious posting.*

LORE: Our last consul general there was Melissa Wells who had been ambassador to several countries. We do send former and future ambassadors to Sao Paulo. But it's not the embassy. It does not deal with the foreign ministry. It is not where the important conversations take place between presidents, between ministers of the two governments and so the opportunity for influencing country to country relations is quite limited. You have a big stage, you get to meet a lot of businesspeople, but I think your geopolitical influence is severely limited.

The Rio consulate general has shrunk in size and is being consciously downsized and

downgraded in terms of the rank of the consul general. It's not beyond imagining that some day we might not even have a post in Rio. Probably it's going to be a long time yet. But in fact we don't maintain anything like the staff we used to. In these days the push is on to close consulates and the fact that we had four - plus several consular agencies - during my time in Brasilia was remarkable. There are not too many countries in the world where we still maintain that many consulates. We've closed one of them so now we only have three, and I wouldn't give a lot of hope for Recife which is the number three, and as I say, even Rio might go someday.

*Q: We were talking about the Brazilian embassy and its access to Congress, which was almost nil.. You were mentioning that putting down the gringos is apparently a good solid Brazilian game. How about our access and ability to work in the corridors of whatever pass for the Brazilian "Hill?"*

LORE: I think we did quite well in that area on the pharmaceutical intellectual property issue, where legislation was needed. There was a visa bill that we got through, and a number of other areas where we could be useful. An embassy always has to be careful how much visibility it has in the host country's legislative corridors - particularly an American embassy in a Latin American country. But within those constraints I think we have been fairly effective. The potential for effective legislative diplomacy is limited in Brazil because the Brazilian congress, while improving, still is not a strong branch of government.

There are too many Brazilian congressmen and senators who are exceedingly provincial, who are corrupt, who do not, because of the Brazilian electoral system, always represent the interests of their district in the way that American congressmen would. Their political parties are weak; it's hard to lobby where party discipline is not strong. But on specific issues with specific people, usually legislators who have taken the trouble to become knowledgeable in certain areas like intellectual property, an embassy can have some effect.

*Q: How about access to the government from the president on down? How did you find that?*

LORE: Very good, very open. Brasilia helps. It is a place where obviously, people are very busy, ministers are very busy but their lives are eased by the fact that they're living in an administrative capital far from the distractions of Rio and Sao Paulo. There's better access to high levels of the Brazilian government in a place like Brasilia than there would be in a normal city where the government was spread around more and it was more difficult to get to people.

*Q: Was there anything else you think we should cover in this period?*

LORE: No, I think we've pretty much covered it. I was *charge* for a period of time. The Clinton administration was fairly new in office, so during my last two years in Brasilia - first as *charge* and then with Ambassador Levitsky - we had a succession of high level visits from virtually everybody you can think of starting with Al Gore, when I was *charge*. Gore was in for an overnight. It wasn't even overnight. He came in at about five o'clock in the evening and left at about midnight in Brasilia. We had a number of cabinet members and the USTR. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown was in and out several times since Brazil was given much more importance by the incoming Clinton administration as one of the "Major Emerging Market."

The Clinton administration created this concept of ten large emerging markets. This displaced the Enterprise for the Americas in a way, because it really focused on ten markets where we were to apply our trade development efforts, Brazil being one of them. So we saw an awful lot of people like Ron Brown. Madeline Albright came when I was *charge* and she was UN ambassador. We had Secretary of Defense Bill Perry, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Shalikashvili, and so on and so on. All of which was very good in terms of developing more of a dialogue at high levels with the Brazilian authorities, particularly on global issues and problems.

*Q: So in many ways the Clinton administration, because of its trade emphasis...Clinton was elected on the slogan "it's the economy." So this in a way by gravity pushed it towards Brazil as being a big market.*

LORE: That's right. The Clinton administration had and continues to have a strong emphasis on promoting foreign business overseas. The trade and investment potential for Brazil is enormous and that was recognized. In 1994, about six to eight months before I left Brasilia, Finance Minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso initiated the Plano Real, which was a bold but successful and very well executed attempt to stop inflation in Brazil and to provide a basis for growth and global engagement. The plan worked well, it got Cardoso elected as president later in 1994. Janet Reno came down on New Years Eve, 1994 to attend the inauguration the next day.

*Q: She's our attorney general.*

LORE: Yes. Anyway, Cardoso went on to preside over a rather startlingly successful economic plan called the "Plano Real," which he had initiated while still Finance Minister. It both stopped inflation and greatly helped the poorer classes of Brazil, inflation being the cruelest tax, as they said. All of this provided a good basis for the Clinton administration to push even harder the idea of engagement with Brazil on the economic side. Therefore, my Brasilia tour ended on a high note as we were entering into a period of really more active engagement with the Brazilians. Much of that engagement is in the private sector, not government-to-government, but that's probably as it should be.

*Q: But you helped prepare the groundwork.*

LORE: Well, governments can help prepare groundwork and then they can stay out of the way. Sometimes it's very difficult to stay out of the way. So I left Brazil in the summer of 1995. I think we've covered pretty much the major developments during my time as DCM.

*Q: Well, in '95 where did you go?*

LORE: In '95 I wanted to do something different. I had had what I felt was the large and exciting managerial challenge of being DCM of a very big embassy. I wanted to try something different. Many of us, of course, were reading tea leaves at the time and seeing that you could not count on an endless career in the Foreign Service and you ought to start thinking about other things. For these reasons I was attracted by an opportunity to go to the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island and teach strategy and policy, a course which used historical case studies of the use

of power. This was quite a departure, something I had never done before, and I enjoyed it very much.

**ROBERT E. SERVICE**  
**Deputy Chief of Mission**  
**Brasilia (1989-1992)**

*Robert E. Service was born in 1937 in China to American parents. He received a B.A. from Oberlin College and an M.P.A from Princeton University. His postings abroad have included Managua, Salvador Bahia, Mexico City, Santiago, Madrid, Buenos Aires, Brasilia, and Montevideo. Mr. Service was interviewed in 1998 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.*

Q: *You were in Brasilia from when to when?*

SERVICE: From November of 1989 to August of 1992.

Q: *Was Melton the Ambassador the whole time?*

SERVICE: Yes.

Q: *How did he operate?*

SERVICE: Who, Melton?

Q: *Yes.*

SERVICE: Very much like me. We are very similar. He is a professional, subdued, thoughtful, and careful about details. He likes to know what is going on and then follows up. He is very low-key, not emotional. He is a very decent person, a very sound person, and has excellent judgment.

Q: *I've done an interview with him. You had been in Brazil before hadn't you?*

SERVICE: Yes, I served in Brazil from 1963 to 1965 in Bahia, the old capital.

Q: *What was your impression of the Brazil you went to in 1989?*

SERVICE: Well, of course, I was in Brasilia. It is not an impression of anything, other than suburbia. It is not a city. There is no center. You have to work hard to occupy your time because there is no culture, there are no stores to speak of. It takes no time to get anywhere. All of the things that consume time in a normal city, you don't have. Well, what do you do? People who liked it were the ones with a lot of kids. It was a good place to raise them. Those who liked to play golf and tennis, and other outdoor things were very happy. I suppose there may have been a few others who liked it for special reasons. But, it is not the real world. Brasilia is not the real

anything. It hadn't changed much at all, a little more built up, than when I had seen it first in 1965. Brazil, itself, was poorer, not poorer in an absolute sense, but in a sort of psychological sense. Rio had become one of the most dangerous cities in the world if you want to believe our listings. And I do believe them in this case. Almost everyone in our Consulate General had had something happen to him or her. At most posts, that is a rarity. Brazil was going through a tough time for a variety of reasons, primarily because the economic model had run out of steam, and because of the vast disparities in income.

*Q: What was the government like at that point?*

SERVICE: I don't know how much you know of modern Brazilian history, but the military had run the place from 1964, when I was there the first time, until, I think, 1986. They agreed to step back at that point. The person who was to become President was elected, indirectly, but then died before he could take office. That was Tancredo Neves. His Vice President, Jose Sarney, became President. He was not an inspired or inspiring leader. I can't say that he was a bad one, but he was not a new broom, or new brain, or anything else. I got there just before the next presidential election. It turned out there were two of them. They have a system where if you don't get 50% the first time, you have a run-off with whomever finished second. There was a certain amount of excitement over a young politician from Alagoas, a poor northeastern state. Fernando Collor de Melo. He was only about 40. He was physically attractive, modern supposedly. He was the man who would lead Brazil into a bright new future. It was exciting to be there at the time. His main opponent was Lula, the leader of the Labor party. That, of course, worried the more conservative part of the population. Anyway, Collor won and everybody wanted to see what he could do. He wasn't very successful, and not entirely for reasons of his own making. Brazil is a very hard country to govern. It has a multiplicity of parties. The parties don't have much discipline. People move in and out of parties with great abandon. They have a federal system. I doubt if it gives more power to the states than we do here, but in a country with Brazil's history and its poverty and its inequities, federalism in some ways makes it harder to govern. Collor was eventually forced out of office because of rather blatant corruption. We were surprised. We had reasonable hopes that he would be a progressive president, and would do some important things. It turned out to be a rather tawdry episode in Brazilian political history.

*Q: Was it that the political system was essentially corrupt and this was the first time somebody was being called on it or was he corrupt more than was generally accepted in that society?*

SERVICE: Don't forget you had 20 years of military government. I suspect, at the beginning at least and maybe throughout, the Presidents were pretty honest and clean. I think the Brazilian military has a considerable degree of discipline and self-regard, and they had their brother officers looking over their shoulders. It was not common to have massive corruption at the top. Perhaps before the period of military rule there had been. But I think the country had come to expect more. Collor certainly promised more. Because he was so young, there was a temptation to think he was some brilliant politician. They found out that this guy was as bad or worse than the rest of them. I think that was disillusioning. Furthermore, we in the United States had demonstrated you could impeach a President. The Brazilians figured out that even in Latin America it was possible to impeach a President who breaks the rules excessively.

*Q: Were you talking with the various political powers during this time? First, were you beginning to see the discontent coming and building-up on this new man? Were they looking to the United States and asking us how we got rid of Nixon, and that sort of thing?*

SERVICE: As DCM I really didn't do much outside the Embassy. I did more in Buenos Aires than I did in Brasilia. But, as you know, the DCM job is mainly to run the Embassy and make sure everybody else is doing his or her job, while not interfering too much with what they are doing or their contacts. I, personally, was not talking with a lot of politicians. The Brazilians do not look to the U.S. for guidance or support the way some of the smaller Latin American countries do. Some may have expressed interest in the possible precedents from our own experience, but basically they handled it their way.

*Q: Were there any particular issues that involved you at all, during this 1989 to 1992 period?*

SERVICE: You mean substantive issues, issues with our relations?

*Q: Yes.*

SERVICE: I might tell an amusing anecdote. At one point, we were going to have a visit by President Bush. In fact, he eventually came. He came twice while I was there. Once was to the Rio Environmental Conference in 1992, but this was earlier. The White House advance people, as normal, got in touch, and said, "We want to do something environmental. Let's check out Manaus."

*Q: Manaus being?*

SERVICE: Manaus being a city on the Amazon, about halfway up. There are two main cities. Belem is further down river. Manaus is where the Rio Negro joins the Amazon. I met them in Manaus. We took them around to various major research places, this, that and the other thing, the Smithsonian project, the monkey man. We went down the Negro to the confluence of its clear waters with the silty waters of the Amazon, we even saw a pink porpoise or two. They kept saying, "No, no, it won't do." Finally, I was at my wit's end. There was a nice hotel there, called the Tropical, and there was a tourist boat that goes across the river and back. So we hired it and did the standard tourist tour across the river, a little walk in the jungle, something to eat and drink and then back. The advance people were delighted. It was manageable and it gave the right picture shots. That it had nothing to do with science or preserving the environment didn't matter. It was a classic example of appearance over substance. I guess that is what advance people are supposed to be good at.

*Q: Absolutely, this is their business. Timing depends what news show . . . when the 7:00 news comes on . . .*

SERVICE: Following up on that, we did have the World Environmental Conference in Rio in 1992. I sort of ran our operation. I was the nuts and bolts man to make sure everybody had an escort officer who needed one, that planes were met, etc. I spent two weeks at a hotel in Rio while this was going on. President Bush came for his second visit.

*Q: What was the role of our Consulate General in Sao Paulo? Is this almost an entity unto itself, or was this integrated with Brasilia?*

SERVICE: Have you interviewed Myles Frechette?

*Q: No, somebody else has. I just interviewed Niles Bond, who did it sometime before.*

SERVICE: Is Bond still around?

*Q: Well, he came down from Connecticut last week. He was 84 or 85. He was talking about how this is a different world.*

SERVICE: Bond was the Consul General in São Paulo, when I first went to Brazil in 1963. São Paulo has always considered itself almost an embassy, or better put a second embassy because of the importance of São Paulo, and also the fact that you usually had people in that job who had been ambassador somewhere else. This didn't happen always, but quite often. It can create friction from time to time. One ambassador, it may have been John Crimmins, insisted that all reporting, for both Rio and São Paulo come to the embassy for review before going on to Washington. They couldn't just send a copy to the embassy. We didn't do that when I was there, but I called up the CG in São Paulo from time to time to remind the Consul General that he was part of the Country Team.

*Q: I've been told that most of the political class, except those with children, gets the hell out of Brasilia on the weekends. Is this still true? And also that most official Americans would rather be in Rio.*

SERVICE: Less than it used to be. A lot of people eventually made their peace with Brasilia. They got used to the more relaxed life style. Our presence in Rio has continued to be fairly large because we had this embassy building there, which we held onto all this time. It was easy-pickings for any agency which wanted to set up a regional office. We had the Library of Congress there with 25 or 30 people, mostly Brazilians. The FAA [Federal Aviation Administration] had an office. So did the Defense Mapping Agency. And there were various others.

*Q: Back in the 1960s, I guess it was, Jack Tuthill went through what was known as Operation Topsy, which was to cut down on the American presence in Brazil, which had grown immensely. But, I am told that after he left, there was sort of gradual creep and we had an awful lot of people there again.*

SERVICE: When I was there in the early 90s, we had slightly less than 400 Americans. But, spread around the embassy, two large Consulate Generals, and two smaller consulates, . . . I think we looked for places we could reduce, but there wasn't any major reduction to be done.

*Q: I guess, too, when Tuthill was there, we had a very large AID presence.*

SERVICE: Yes, we had 1,000 people there. A lot of that was reduced. The Peace Corps was the largest in the world, and it departed in the 1970s. The Brazilians told us they wanted it to leave. There was no Peace Corps when I was there. AID was three Americans. The military had been cut way back. We used to have a big military presence there. USIA was in the process of cutting back. It had always had big operations in Rio and in São Paulo.

*Q: As you mentioned before, Brazil never really had a strong orientation toward the United States. Was it Latin American centered, or how about ties with Europe?*

SERVICE: I disagree with you there. Brazil, until at least the 1960s, was perhaps the closest country in South America to the U.S. They decided that because we were both continental size countries, had federal forms of government and racially mixed populations, there was a lot of commonality in our two experiences. This began to change after the military took power in 1964. I think the Brazilian elites realized that the relationship was lopsided. They had been attributing much more importance to it than we did. They were depending on the U.S. to be the guiding light and so forth. When we didn't reciprocate adequately, when they realized that our priorities were not necessarily the same as theirs, when we started to put human rights and non-proliferation at the top of our agenda, they felt that they ought to reduce the importance of the U.S. relationship substantially, and start to look elsewhere.

*Q: We weren't the big brother or anything like that at that point.*

SERVICE: Historically Brazil had a military rivalry with Argentina. That is no longer the case, in part, because Brazil had so far surpassed Argentina in economic size and power. Therefore the U.S. is no longer needed as a potential balance against Argentina. As mentioned, Brazil and the U.S. diverged sharply on a variety of issues in the 1970s and early '80s. Meanwhile it became possible for the first time to think in terms of an alliance of the South American countries, at least economically, with Brazil at the center because of its size. It's only now, after all these changes, that U.S./Brazil relations are starting to improve and to move back somewhat in the direction of where they were before 1965. But they will never go back to where they were because Brazil has greater confidence and more options.

*Q: How were we seeing the economy of Brazil during this period, 1989 - 1992?*

SERVICE: There was a certain amount of optimism when Collor launched his stabilization plan in March of 1990, when he came into office. But, it didn't last very long. It started breaking down very quickly. They really didn't make much progress in resolving a lot of the basic, underlying problems. There was little progress in reducing the size of government or the degree of state direction of the economy. Only now, under President Cardoso are they starting to have some success in bringing about the needed reforms. This has only been in the last year or two. Some of the needed change depends on revising the constitution. The constitution written in the late 1980s was a backward-looking constitution. It permitted, even encouraged, the country to retain a highly nationalistic, import-substitution model of development. When it was written, the world was moving in a different direction. Now the Brazilians are trying to undo it, but over a lot of opposition from entrenched interests.

Q: *Now, when the President who was removed for corruption, . . . his name, again, was?*

SERVICE: Fernando Collor de Melo.

Q: *Were we watching the military to see whether . . . if the political leaders didn't take care of this, did it have any appetite to do anything, or did they say, "The hell with this."*

SERVICE: Our sense was they were still recovering from their 20 years in power. They realized that they did not have the answers to a lot of the country's problems, and that the civilians had to work it out as best as they could. They weren't going to try to impose their answers. They didn't have any good answers.

Q: *They didn't want to get involved again. How did your family like Brasilia?*

SERVICE: My family at that point consisted of my wife and myself. Our kids were in college. They came down at vacation time and I think they enjoyed that. My wife found it rather unexciting. She had a few close friends and they did things together. Within two or three hours of Brasilia there were a number of small towns, selling gem stones or various types of handicrafts. You could buy a Topaz, or some other semi-precious stone for not too much. That would take up a certain amount of time. There were a few other extracurricular activities. We played tennis. I played golf.

Q: *It sounds as exciting as Canberra?*

SERVICE: Or Washington during its early history. Although Washington was probably always nearer to larger places than Brasilia was.

Q: *Well, why don't we pick this up the next time in 1992, wither?*

SERVICE: In 1992, I was leaving Brasilia for Washington.

**RICHARD H. MELTON**  
**Ambassador**  
**Brazil (1989-1993)**

*Richard H. Melton was born on August 8, 1935 in Rockville, Maryland. He received his BA from Cornell University in 1958. He later attended Wisconsin University where he received his MA in 1971. He entered the Foreign Service in 1961 and served in many countries throughout his career including Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Portugal, England, Uruguay, and Costa Rica. Mr. Melton was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on January 27, 1997.*

Q: *In 1989, you were nominated to be our Ambassador to Brazil. How did that come about?*

MELTON: A few months after my return from Nicaragua, the time came for Bureaus to make their preferences known for upcoming ambassadorial vacancies. A new Assistant Secretary, Bernie Aronson, had come on board, was now leading the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs. I was considered for a number of these vacancies and the conclusion seemed to be that I would be the Bureau's candidate for Peru. That was fine for me, and the long process began. I continued my work as deputy assistant secretary. I got to know Bernie better and better. Somewhere along the line, he decided that he wanted me to stay to be his principal deputy. We talked about that possibility several times. In the meantime, a vacancy had developed in Brazil. After making another effort to convince me to become his principal deputy, Bernie agreed that I should go to Brazil and was delighted to find out that I had been there before and knew Portuguese. So the powers-to-be decided to nominate me for Brazil rather than Peru. That was alright with me, even though I knew that there would be many candidates for one of the most important assignments in Latin America. Some of the candidates were good friends and some thought they were clear shoo-ins. The Bureau's decision to nominate me was a last minute affair; it had the support of people like Larry Eagleburger. So the front runners were swept aside at the last minute; that made for a number of hurt feelings--including among some of my friends who had sought the job.

As US attention turned to Latin America in the 1960s, Brazil was recognized as a potential economic and political force which made it somewhat different from the countries in the region. So the Department decided to train some people to be specialists on Brazil, giving them language and area training and several assignments to that country or in Washington working on Brazil matters. Steve Low was one of those officers, as was Alan Watson. The cadres developed in this way helped to provide some continuity to our approach. But by the late 1980s, this group of specialists had long since been disbanded; the systematic effort to develop a corps of Brazilian experts had long dissipated. We continue to pay a price for our loss of foresight in this area.

I knew something about Brazil having served there and having done some academic work on that country. So I was very happy to return to familiar territory. I arrived in Brazil on December 11, 1989--and stayed for four years to December 15, 1993. My confirmation process was again a delayed one--such delays had become almost the norm. Senator Helms and the Foreign Relations Committee routinely held up confirmations for one reason or another. Even after I had been nominated, there was an extensive period when no hearings were held--for much the same reason as with my Nicaragua nomination; i.e. Committee members trying to gain some advantage in their dealings with the administration by holding up nominations. So I sat around for months and months waiting for hearings. Once the hearings were held, the confirmation process went rather rapidly. My involvement in Central America matters was raised in the hearings. The "Washington Office on Latin America" and other critics of our policy distributed materials to Committee members opposing my nomination as an alleged "architect" of our "catastrophic Central America policy." Then there was a story from Brazil repeating an allegation that I had been present at the interrogation and torture of a political prisoner at the Recife federal police station. That story appeared in the Brazilian press and was noticed in Washington.

The Brazilians have an excellent Foreign Service which keeps the government well informed about the State Department and our Foreign Service. They were aware of my involvement in Central America and I think were mildly disturbed by that. When the Recife story came out, they

let the story run on to see how it would play out. That was not a normal pattern for the Brazilian Foreign Ministry. At the time, of course, the Brazilian government could have killed the story, if they desired, but in this case, permitted it to run on. I asked a number of people, including our Chargé in Brazil and a former Ambassador, Tony Motley, what might be done about the story--I had learned that in a confirmation process, the candidate has to take an active role if the outcome is to be positive. The advice was that I should respond firmly to this; that was in any case my inclination as well; so I did. Before doing so, I reviewed my reporting messages from that period and found that the only time I went to the federal police station was when I tried to ensure that two American priests, who had been detained, would not be abused by the police. My record in defense of human rights was directly opposite to the allegations coming from Brazil. So I got the Embassy to issue a brief statement to that effect. I was prepared to provide additional information and to bring forth witnesses from Recife on my behalf--including Archbishop Dom Halder Camera. The story faded and the Brazilian government granted the *agrément*.

In retrospect, I suspect that an informed network was at work against me. It consisted of people who had followed Central America for many years; they were activists both in the U.S. and other countries. Somehow my name had become part of their list of "wanted." Both the Recife story and those given out by the "Washington Office on Latin America" suggest that there was probably some linkage. None of the accusations had any factual basis, and they had no resonance in the Committee once it agreed to consider my nomination and those of others.

Brazil had gone up and down in importance in the U.S. administrations' foreign policy agenda. Henry Kissinger had paid some attention to Brazil. Prior to that, David Rockefeller had also drawn the government's attention to that country. Going back to WWII, a number of special missions had been sent to the region, including Brazil. But US attention to Brazil had been episodic, at best. We were focusing on a new set of issues in Latin America--now known as global issues--e.g. debt, the environment, non-proliferation and perhaps Mexico, all the Latin American countries were heavily involved in all of these issues.

There had been a negotiated debt settlement with Mexico which was a breakthrough. Brazil was next in line; it had the largest amount of debt, which impacted on many US banks. Citibank's foreign portfolio, for example, was heavily weighted towards Brazil.

When I went to Brazil, I had one item on my personal agenda. I was intent in laying to rest the false accusation out of Recife. That was done rather quickly. Although no formal apology was ever made by the accuser, his failure to press the case spoke volumes to the Brazilians. Of greater importance, were the global issues in which Brazil was an important player--debt, trade, nonproliferation (Brazil was a potential nuclear power, had the capacity to produce ICBMs, and was working on a nuclear submarine, and environmental. These were new issues; our past focus on such matters as the democratization of the country had receded to some extent, but remained important.

I arrived in Brazil just before a runoff in the presidential election. The two candidates were a largely untested centrist Fernando Collor de Mello and Luis Ignacio da Silva of the Workers' Party. At one point, about a month before the second round, the polls unanimously predicted a Lula victory. That raised questions about the impact of such an outcome on US/Brazil relations.

But in the end, Collar won the election. That opened up some new dialogue possibilities because he had run on a market-based approach to economics which implied policies quite different from those favored in Brazil for decades. So the future looked promising.

Let me talk about trade first. Brazil is a world-wide trader--about one third with Latin America, one third with the US, one third with the rest of the world. It has a very diversified market, with a large industrial sector. It produces millions of automobiles and large quantities of other manufactured goods. Brazil was developing its domestic petroleum industry, although it remained a major oil importer. It had a large steel industry. It was the world's largest exporter of orange concentrate, and a major player in the soybean and coffee markets, although coffee had receded in importance. So Brazil was a diversified trader and very important in all international trading regimes.

Our trade relationships with Brazil traditionally had been highly contentious. Brazil was protectionist in many sectors, barring US companies from competing in some important sectors. It did not protect intellectual property--at least to world standards. It did not generally cooperate with us in international trade negotiations; on the contrary, it frequently opposed us. So the trade relationship was frequently tense and in some aspects the most contentious part of our overall relationship. Brazil was therefore high on USTR's agenda. Our Trade Representative was Carla Hills at the time. She ran US trade policy--not the State or Commerce Departments. The Embassy worked closely with USTR and Ambassador Hills. She visited Brazil frequently and was personally engaged in negotiations and I think was highly effective. She became a well known personality in Brazil in light of her outspoken efforts to open Brazilian markets.

Ambassador Hills was deeply involved in steel trade discussions. Brazil is a major steel producer. There is an increasing dichotomy in steel production, with the U.S. moving increasingly towards specialty steels. Brazil has followed that pattern as well and is a tough competitor in the specialty steel market. The issue was one of pricing: was Brazil marketing its products at such low costs to warrant the charge of "dumping?" The statistics showed that Brazil was violating GATT rules by "dumping" its products in the U.S. markets. But it was a difficult case, in that Brazilian subsidies were less to a specific industry than to the Brazilian manufactured goods produced for export.

There's a similar issue relating to citrus products. Intellectual property protection was the third major trade issue. Piracy of all kinds was growing in Brazil. Brazil represents a large market for American films and videos. Performances by US entertainers were being reproduced and sold both in Brazil and overseas without payment of royalties. We were successful in negotiating an agreement with Brazil on intellectual property, although it took several years to get it done. Because we made progress, Brazil's unacceptable behavior in the intellectual property area did not attract nearly as much attention as, for example, our similar problems with China.

The determination of whether a country is "dumping" is complicated. The process is prescribed by US law. The examination of an alleged violation is initiated by a complaint from an American manufacturer, who claims he has been damaged. That is followed by a fact finding period, during which all parties submit data--including the accused foreign manufacturer. That raises the question of sovereignty; Brazil--and others--contended that the prices charged by its producers

was Brazil's business and not to be regulated by rules unilaterally established by the United States. Those countries maintained that we were violating their sovereignty, as well as established international norms, and declined to participate in the fact finding part of the process. Soon, they found that such a stance was not in their interest and Brazilian industries began to participate. After the presentation of data by all sides, a judgment would be rendered by an independent US regulatory body. Parts of the process are highly sensitive because, as a regulatory process, the parties are enjoined from using certain kinds of representations--those that might be considered as interference in a regulatory function. That made the process even more difficult for a foreign manufacturer.

A way out of this, of course, was through the establishment of an international process for the adjudication of such trade disputes, acceptable to all parties. GATT processes proved to be too weak. Its successor, the World Trade Organization, represents another attempt.

Coffee had historically been a source of contention, but by the late 1980s, it was far less important than before. Coffee did not account any longer for a major share of Brazil's exports. Efforts had been made for many years to bring some stability to the market; Brazil, as one of the major producers, had an interest in such stability. We had the example of the Organization of Petroleum Exporters, countries which had been a relatively successful cartel--for the first time. The Brazilians continued to harbor the hope that they could duplicate that precedent in the coffee area. The key was Colombia; if Brazil and Colombia could work together, the Brazilians thought that they would have the lion's share of the market and could then manage prices. Coffee producers, however, are not single minded on pricing which is one of the main reasons cartels don't often work--they lack the necessary discipline. There are various kinds of coffee, and countries tend to specialize in one variety or another, either in the "boutique" market or the mass market. The kind of coffee that usually is found in instant coffee comes most often from Africa. Brazil produces all kinds of coffee; Colombia focuses on specialty beans at the high-end of the market. Those variations tend to drive various countries into positions different from those of their fellow producers. Brazil, within the international coffee organizations, has always attempted to bring the factions together. We as the largest consuming nation had worked out an accommodation with the international coffee organization. But during my tour in Brazil these arrangements broke down. The producers fell in disarray and lost their production discipline--the Brazilian and the Colombians couldn't reach agreement. The consumers were also not united; at one extreme, the Japanese would pay whatever they were asked; they were less concerned about price than they were that the producers would grow the beans which they consumed. The Japanese were the major market for the best beans. The international coffee organization finally reached a crisis point; the producers overplayed their hand and we essentially let all arrangements and agreements expire.

That was not a catastrophic outcome for the Brazilians because, well before this period, coffee had lost much of its relative importance in the Brazilian economy. We in the Embassy, through USTR, were very much involved in the final stages trying to reach an accommodation with Brazil within the international coffee organization. The U.S. negotiator was Myles Frechette, who had been Consul General in Sao Paulo before going to work for Carla Hills. As it turned out, Frechette turned out to be the key US player during the unsuccessful end game. There were a few things such as research that remained after the expiration for a transition period, but

essentially the international coffee organization and its attendant arrangements no longer controlled the global coffee market.

Let me talk about debt a little bit. Brazil was the largest debtor to the U.S. banks. There was a vast amount of global debt, but much of it was not owed to American institutions. Our concern was two fold: the impact of the debt by developing countries and the potential impact repudiation of the debt might carry for the international financial system. The international financial system had made its own internal adjustments necessary to prevent a global crisis. So, by the late 1980s, that was a less pressing concern. The impact that this debt had on the financial health of specific US banks with major exposure in Brazil, however, remained worrisome. The banks had reached accommodations with Mexico, leaving Brazil as the major problem. The U.S. government--the Treasury--placed a solution to Brazil's debt very high on its agenda. I worked with David Mulford who was the Under Secretary of the Treasury responsible for the debt problem. Mulford came to Brazil even before the inauguration of President Collor, after the second round of Brazil elections--there is in Brazil as there is in the U.S. a short delay between the final elections and the taking of power by the elected government. We met in private with the Finance Minister-designate, Zelia de Mello and President Collor. We tried to lay the ground work for a cooperative relationship which would encourage a settlement of the debts. The settlement was of course essentially between private American banks and the government of Brazil, which was the guarantor of the debt. But of course there was a question of the role of the U.S. government--Treasury. It was clear that an agreement would require US government support, but at the same time it should not be at the expense of the U.S. taxpayer. The government could promote a dialogue and there were certain actions that it could take to guarantee the final arrangement. But there were other, more direct actions that Treasury could take which would have cost the U.S. taxpayer more than might have been acceptable. So there was a line which the U.S. Treasury could not cross, despite Brazil's and bank's understandable interest in having a third party--the U.S. government--absorb a substantial part of the costs and risks that an agreement might entail. So there were three parties involved in the negotiations all with somewhat different agendas. After a long tortuous process, agreement eventually was reached. There were many ups and downs and many highly emotional sessions attended by Brazilian financial experts and the American banks, usually led by Citibank which had the highest exposure. We served as facilitators rather than as participants in the negotiations. The Embassy monitored closely all negotiations with Brazil, even when the Embassy was not the lead US government institution. We had a Treasury attaché in the Embassy; I fought long and hard with David Mulford to keep him in Brasilia--Treasury was looking to make some personnel cuts and had targeted its man in Brazil as one of the potential savings. I did manage to get a six months extension, but I was not able to save the position in the long run, once the debt issue was settled.

Let me turn to environmental issues. The focal point, which came about mid-term of my tour, was the UN Conference on the Environment which took place in Rio in 1992. Almost from the day I arrived in 1989, we were pointing towards that conference. We wanted to ensure not only that we made progress on global environmental issues, but that this be done on effective and practical ways. We wanted to prevent the conference from becoming just another forum for the Third World to hit the developed countries over the head--figuratively speaking. Too many global conferences had determined that all the woes of the developing countries were the fault of the developed countries. So all problems in the developing countries should be paid for by the

developed countries. Conferences that had been in that mode were well known for their lack of success. We were trying to make sure that the Rio conference would focus on solutions which could actually be implemented.

The fact that the conference was to be held in Rio gave Brazil, as the host country, a vital role not only in the management of the proceedings, but in setting the agenda and determining the issues to be discussed. Brazil was expected to bring things together, as host countries had done traditionally--although no such formal role had ever been assigned to them. Brazil has a very capable Foreign Service, with a global perspective. Brazilian diplomats are at home in multilateral forums. Rio proved no exception.

The central issue was global warming. The key was to reach some accommodation with the Chinese which was and is--and very likely will continue to be--a major global "polluter." It unfortunately uses a lot of soft coal which is environmentally damaging fuel. So the focus was to try to find some solution which would commit China to reducing its output of environmentally damaging gases. In exchange, the developed countries, including the United States, would make parallel commitments.

Other countries were focusing on the U.S. and our practices--in part to divert attention from their own shortcomings. The view of the developing world was that the developed countries were trying to force the approval of rules which would be economically disadvantageous to the Third World--since the developed world had already gone through the environmentally-damaging stages of economic development that the developing countries were experiencing at the time. The developed countries, according to this view, had already used and discarded the basic technologies which were often the highest polluters. The developing countries which were using these technologies resented any efforts to force them to use more expensive and less polluting technologies. Of course, these newer technologies were manufactured in developed countries, further adding to the paranoia of the developing countries which saw this environmental thrust as a new form of colonialism and imperialism designed to block their development. This line found resonance in many parts of the world. So we had to find practical solutions to specific issues to try to avoid this ideological discussion.

We made progress; the conference agenda was shaping up. There was a question of whether the U.S. would participate at all in the conference because of the confrontational stance on the part of some of the participants. Finally, the decision was made that the U.S. would participate. The Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Bill Riley was appointed as the lead US negotiator. He had been the President of the World Wildlife Foundation; so he had good credentials with the environmental community. He came to Brazil on several previous occasions, and he had friends in Brazilian non-governmental environmental organizations. I got to know him quite well, and we worked together on conference preparations.

The U.S. had a number of environmental projects in its very modest assistance program. We used NGOs primarily to implement these projects. Brazil had been "graduated" from the list of countries receiving assistance; the small residual USAID program tended to focus on global issues like family planning and the environment. That gave us some good contacts in the field in Brazil.

We worked mostly with Bill Riley on preparing for the conference, but we also worked directly with our UN delegation in NY. The global climate change conventions that were due to be ratified became the key issues for the U.S. delegation. The drafts still left some serious problems for us, such as intellectual property rights which were not adequately protected as far as we were concerned. Bill Riley recognized that failure to reach agreement would be a serious blow to US prestige, particularly in the environmental community. He used all of his skills to find an accommodation. He came to Rio on the eve of the conference to see what could be done; we went to talk to the Brazilians. They also wanted an agreement to make sure that the conference would be deemed a success and that could only happen if the U.S. signed the center piece convention on global climate change. The Brazilians had come much nearer on many of the issues and were prepared to work with us to secure an acceptable agreement.

Months before the conference the decision was made that the President would attend, regardless of the outcome of the conference. There had been a debate in Washington on whether the President should come, given that our signature on the treaty was unlikely. President Bush decided--quite rightly, I believe--that the issues to be debated at the conference were major global matters. The U.S. had a legitimate concern about signing an agreement which didn't have adequate protection for American-developed intellectual property. While we kept trying to negotiate a fairer arrangement, not to have participated in a global conference which was attended by almost every nation would have been an abdication of the leadership role that we had sought to play. In the end we did not get agreement, and President Bush paid a price for this in the 1992 elections. I still think that an agreement acceptable to us could have been reached except for that one unfortunate episode. Even after that, there were efforts to try to breach the differences, but they were doomed to failure. By that time, there was no mediators left.

I had very good contacts in the Foreign Ministry and in the Brazilian government in general. Bill Riley worked with those contacts, especially with the Secretary General who was the policy manager of the Foreign Ministry--a senior career Foreign Service officer. We had a long meeting before the other delegations arrived in Rio. We developed the outline of an accommodation which would have allowed us to sign the agreements. Bill Riley sent back a NODIS (no distribution) message to the White House in which he spelled out the potential accommodation. The next day, that message was on the front page of The New York Times. It had been leaked by the opponents of accommodation in Washington.

The story created great shockwaves in the Brazilian Foreign Ministry. It had been working discreetly behind the scenes, and their work had been exposed by that article. No negotiator wants to be on the front page of any newspaper, much less The New York Times before an agreement has been reached. That article had the effect the opponents intended; it blew the agreement out of the water. There was no possibility after publication of reaching an accommodation. As is typical in such cases, no one admitted that they had leaked. The administration promised to find the culprit in 24 hours; there was the appearance of great concern and activity, but of course no one was ever punished. It was clear in this case, and in many others, that there were only a few people who had access to the leaked information, it should not have been that difficult to find the culprit. But, at least publicly, no one was ever charged.

US representatives, myself included, apologized profusely for this breach of confidence, but that did not prevent, for the rest of the conference, a chill spreading over relationships with people with whom we had been close. Riley was beside himself; he was greatly embarrassed by this episode and considered what his own actions should be. President Bush called Riley to try to calm the waters; he graciously brought Mrs. Riley with him to Rio on Air Force One. He tried to deal with the situation so that he would not lose Riley's services and still salvage something out of the conference. We continued to look for accommodations; when the President arrived in Rio, he began a series of consultations with the most interested parties, including the NGOs, in order to try to find a formulation which would allow the U.S. to agree to some kind of arrangement. But ultimately, a formula could not be found; the lines had been drawn too sharply. In retrospect, I think an agreement could have been reached had it not been for that leak.

The rainforest is the symbol of Brazil's environmental importance as well as its problems. The rainforest is important because of its impact on global warming; it is a huge area that falls primarily, but not exclusively, within Brazil's borders. The forest is the home for many species of animal life and fauna, some to be found there only. It helps replenish the world's oxygen supply and absorbs pollutants. As the rainforest is depleted--by timber cutting and burning--environmentalists are concerned that this will impact on global warming by reducing the amount of pollutants that the forest can absorb. This cycle makes the preservation of the rainforest a key ingredient in the fight against global warming. The rainforest is also important in the health area because it is the source of extracts that have beneficial effects.

On one level, the rainforest was an important aspect of our negotiations in preparation for the environmental conference. On another, the future of the rainforest was symbolic of the economic development of Brazil. The people who were trying to bring Brazil into the modern economic world saw the rainforest as the key to development of the Amazon basin. If the forest were to be preserved, as the strict conservationists believed, no economic development could be generated in the area. Schemes such as the preservation plans in Costa Rica and other places were seen as unviable in Brazil. The states in the Amazon basin were facing almost the same dilemma that an American county like Loudon in Virginia is facing today. Developers want to fill the empty spaces with housing and malls; that may not sound environmentally nor acceptable to people already living there. In Brazil, the issue in large measure came down to the political question of what jurisdiction controlled the rainforest. The Amazon states are currently led by people who are pushing development; they view a protected rainforest as an impediment to their goals and believe the "do gooders" who live far away are depriving them of the opportunity to raise their standard of living. The leading Amazonian governor ran on a platform that featured chainsaws--that was his symbol for his successful campaign. It attracted much support in his state--and comparable outrage in many parts of the world. He keeps being re-elected and I think is still the governor today. So the goal is to find an accommodation which would allow legitimate economic development while protecting the environment. In the short term, it is essentially an economic issue because it is very expensive to develop without damaging the environment.

The Brazilians were very conscious of the picture that some environmentalists were painting of their country--scoffers and destroyers of the environment. They made efforts in the pre-conference days, to improve their image. They created the position of the Secretary for the

Environment--a Cabinet level position. A well known environmentalist was appointed to the job; he had been a scientist who had made his reputation by finding ways to produce chemicals in an environmentally acceptable way. Everything that he did was carefully calculated to protect the environment. So he was highly respected by the global environmental community. His appointment was certainly an image plus for Brazil, but in the final analysis he didn't have as much an impact on policy development as he, and his supporters, might have hoped. He was another person with whom we had close relationships, particularly in the period leading up to the conference.

The proliferation issue, which encompasses the potential both for the development of nuclear weapons and for their delivery systems, was of great concern to the US. Brazil had the technical know-how and resources to develop both. As is often the case, there were two sides to this discussion. Nuclear energy has peaceful applications as everyone knows; the Brazilians staunchly maintained that their nuclear programs were directed entirely to peaceful purposes--they had no intent to produce nuclear weapons. They made the same case for delivery systems because that technology can be used for space exploration as well. The Brazilians had aspirations to participate in the commercial development of launch vehicles for such things as communication satellites, which they were also trying to produce. It must be remembered that, even though there is a wide gap between the "haves" and the "haves not" in Brazil, it has the human and other resources to compete in almost every area of science and technology.

What I found when I arrived was that Brazil was embarked on certain nuclear programs. It was also actively engaged in the development of launch vehicles. Our efforts in both areas were intended to get Brazil into the international regimes governing these activities so that some discipline could be imposed in both areas. In the nuclear area, that meant signing the nuclear non-proliferation treaty or an equivalent international understanding. That treaty and associated agreements allow for peaceful uses of nuclear energy; they prohibit any work on weapons or associated military inquiries. The Brazilians took the position then, which they still maintain, that the nuclear non-proliferation treaty was a one-sided arrangement which allowed the members of the "nuclear" club--i.e. those countries which already possessed nuclear weapons--to block any other country from developing its own capacity, not only for weapons, but in the nuclear field generally. In this, they were joined by other potential nuclear weapons states, such as India and Pakistan. The Brazilians reserved the right to test nuclear devices because they maintained that this was necessary for them to develop a peaceful nuclear capacity--which was allowed by the NPT. Even though as a matter of principle Brazil would not sign the NPT, it claimed it was already abiding by its provisions.

The U.S. position initially was to say that countries that did not sign the NPT could not expect any cooperation in the nuclear field. Over time, we moderated our view and decided that there were other ways to prevent proliferation beyond the confrontational stance that we had taken. Diplomacy is the art of finding satisfactory bridges between seemingly unreconcilable positions. The Treaty of Tlatelolco, named for the Mexican Foreign Ministry building in which it was signed, is a hemispheric nuclear non-proliferation agreement. The tenets of that treaty are compatible with the NPT. It became increasingly clear that, if Brazil would ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco, then our objectives would be largely met. So we shifted to pressing the Brazilians to

ratify the Tlatelolco Treaty. Eventually, the Brazilians did ratify the Tlatelolco Treaty, whose terms they continue to abide by.

My role in this area was first of all to convince Washington of the realities on the ground, including urgings to expand our perspective to include regimes other than the NPT to accomplish our purposes. Eventually, when the U.S. modified its position, our role was to convince the Brazilians to ratify the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which they had already signed. There were a lot of obstacles to this strategy; the possibility of using another vehicle to achieve some kind of control on Brazil's nuclear program had never been thoroughly examined. One of the reasons was an unresolved question about the implications of the Tlatelolco Treaty for nuclear power outside the hemisphere, but with territories within the region--the United States, the UK, and France. The other question concerned Cuba and what role it might take. Could you have a nuclear regime in the hemisphere without Cuba's participation? These were challenges that had to be overcome, but they were not insurmountable, once people accepted, in principle, that this was a viable alternative which could achieve US objectives on non-proliferation.

There were some in Washington, the "true believers," who were opposed to any flexibility on proliferation issues. The two aspects--weapons and delivery systems--are intimately related. People involved in these two fields tend to be the same people. Experts on strategic delivery systems also tend to be experts on weapons. Those who had traditionally guided US policy in this area still looked for certainty in this area. If they were satisfied with arrangements for weapons control, then they would move quickly to delivery systems to ensure complete satisfaction there. They insisted that every aspect of both complicated issues be settled before they would agree to anything. It was a strategy calculated to block any progress in an area where certainty is the most illusive commodity.

What we in the Embassy were trying to do is to take small steps, one at a time, which eventually might lead to a comprehensive agreement. We had a very pragmatic approach. There was no difference between the "purists" and ourselves on the final goal--bringing Brazil's nuclear and space launch programs into an international control regime which would have restrained the use of technologies for non-peaceful uses through a system of inspections and other internationally supervised control mechanisms. I don't think Brazil was ever viewed as a wanton destabilizer with aggressive intentions, but it was potentially capable of transferring dangerous technology to other less peaceful parties whose purposes might have been inimical to the US.

Let me turn to other subjects. Human rights issues were always on the agenda, with excesses being committed by the Brazilians--as they are still being perpetrated today. Brazil is a huge country organized along a federated system. Much of the law enforcement falls on the states and the municipalities. The reality in Brazil is that the writ of authority does not reach down to the local level in many parts of the country. The excesses almost uniformly are committed by local authorities--if authorities are involved at all. We encouraged in those cases an extension of federal authority in order to hold local authorities accountable for any deed within its jurisdiction. We went to the Minister of Justice, Jarbas Passarinho, to seek his intervention because, under some circumstances, he could invoke federal authority and jurisdiction in human rights cases. In other situations, we pushed the state or the municipality by dealing directly with officials at those levels to try to get them to take remedial actions--in addition to urging federal

authorities to be more vigorous in their pressure on state and local officials. Our interventions were not always welcomed by the Brazilians; we were after all interfering in domestic affairs of a democratic country. But human rights are also internationally recognized under the UN charter, and therefore an obligation of all states. That was a constant theme during my tour. In dealing with Brazilians there are certain issues in which the U.S. has to stake out its position and make that position, popular or not, eminently clear to all. What I and my staff tried to do is to make sure that people knew where we stood through press releases, public statements, speeches, and other tools of public diplomacy. For example, I would regularly write Op Ed pieces which were published in major Brazilian newspapers. We tended to focus on the Rio and Sao Paulo press which were widely read, and quoted in all parts of the country. I must have written dozens and dozens of these articles--almost on a monthly basis. That got our message out; these pieces were read by the authorities, who would frequently give me feed-back, particularly if they objected to my views. I was very careful in preparing these Op Ed pieces so that I could stand behind every word expressed.

In addition to public diplomacy, we worked very hard behind the scenes--in private--to advance US positions. Diplomatic conversations were strictly private; my interlocutors had to know what they said to me would not find its way into the public domain. As they saw that their confidences were respected, their trust in me increased. They may have preferred to have a less public American Ambassador, but eventually they accepted that this was part of my *modus operandi*. But having observed that their comments to me remained private, they became increasingly frank; we covered all issues in the most candid and bluntest fashion and no offense was taken because the officials knew that these were the views the U.S. presented in an unvarnished fashion. I think that was an effective way to conduct business. We obviously did not always see eye to eye. For example, toward the end of my tour, there was an egregious human rights case involving Indians in the northern states--apparent complicity by local authorities in murder and torture. We consulted with other diplomatic missions with an interest in human rights. I told the Brazilians that we would be sending an Embassy officer to monitor the situation on the ground. I sent her to Amazonia; she was accompanied by a representative of the British Embassy. When they arrived at their first departure point near the site of the incident, the local authorities blocked them from reaching their first destination; they were "detained" which brought a major and instant protest from us. Initially, the Foreign Ministry reacted very negatively--our action was an "infringement of Brazil's sovereignty." Eventually, the Ministry backed off; we had established our principle and would not back off. So there was always some tensions in our relationships with the Brazilians on such issues. The Embassy was set on promoting and defending US interests; the Brazilians did not always embrace that role, but I think in the end they accepted our advocacy as reasonable and appropriate, even if it made them uncomfortable.

Many observers, including me, view the Brazilian Foreign Service as one of the world's best. It is an elitist service, recruited from a large population. It is relatively small, by US standards--in the hundreds, not thousands. Traditionally, the officers are selected from the upper class. The requirements in academic attainment, including fluency in at least two languages, are very high. In addition a Brazilian Foreign Service officer can expect to go through a rigorous diplomatic training program before he or she reports to the first assignment. They are tested before each promotion. Great emphasis is placed on language skills, which reinforces Brazil's emphasis on multilateral diplomacy. In addition to Washington and a few other major world capitals, the key

assignments in the Brazilian Foreign Service are Geneva and New York--centers of international organization activities. The fast track for Brazilian Foreign Service officers is through assignments to Brazilian missions to international institutions. Brazil continues to assign its "best and brightest" to these posts. As a consequence, Brazilian senior Foreign Service officers are extremely knowledgeable about global issues and very much at home with multilateral diplomacy. A Brazilian Foreign Service officer, after several years of service, can be assigned to any of these multilateral organizations and find himself or herself immediately productive because there is virtually no learning curve. They are already familiar with the organization and usually know the staff well from previous assignments. Those elements combine to give the Brazilian Foreign Service its world class status; they are proud of that standing and work hard to maintain it.

While in Brazil, I was witness to some of the ramifications of the reunification of Germany. The East German Ambassador was recalled and the former West German Ambassador hosted the combined--East and West--German national day. The Soviet Embassy was our near neighbor; it was in a state of disarray as events unfolded in East Europe and the USSR. The staff was wondering what would happen next and what the future would hold for them. At the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Embassy was staffed by old line communists--at least that is what we thought. They turned out not to be so "old line" as policies changed rapidly in Moscow. The broad common interest asserted itself very, very rapidly between our two embassies. The Ambassador stayed on--I assume because there was so much turmoil in Moscow that restaffing the Embassy in far-off Brasilia was not a high priority. There was a draw-down in Russian Embassy staffing; as people left, they were not replaced. They had severe budgetary problems and little guidance from the Kremlin. We in fact became an element of stability, if not support, for our neighbors. I became a close colleague of the Russian envoy, who stayed on even after the dissolution of the USSR. All very ironic.

The events in Eastern Europe had a definite impact on the Brazilian political landscape. The Marxist parties, which had been around for a long time and tended to mirror the fissures in the communist world--hard line vs soft line--became rudderless as Moscow's leadership faded. An internal split took place. The minority of the "old line" spouted their ideology as if nothing had happened in Moscow. I refer to such people as Oscar Neimeyer, the architect of Brasilia and a die-hard communist, who never changed his views of the way the world should work. Then there was Ignacio Lula de Silva, the defeated Workers Party presidential candidate, and some of his party cadres who were quite unsure about how to react to Gorbachev and *glasnost*. They wanted to retain the Marxist underpinning to the state; they did not change gracefully. The orthodox communists were even more uncomfortable with events in Moscow and Eastern Europe. Their script had relied heavily on the existence of the Soviet Union; when the USSR collapsed and was not followed by another strong communist stage, the Brazilian communists became disoriented; they are probably still today looking for their agenda. For the Brazilian left, more generally, the demise of the Soviet Union demanded a long-overdue reevaluation of some of its own assumptions about the role of capitalism and its relationship to political freedom. This process continues.

An aspect of this process was the relationship of leftist parties to the U.S. Embassy. Even before my arrival, I had been the subject of scurrilous allegations by a member of the Workers Party. As

was my practice, whenever I was assigned, I scrupulously tried to be in touch with as many different segments of the host country's society as possible. In Brazil, I wanted the Embassy to have as wide contacts as possible, regardless of their points of view. The Workers Party was a democratic party; we made special efforts to reach out to it. Our labor attaché had very good contacts with the Workers Party; he did a good job of dispelling some of their misconceptions. Party leader "Lula," however, was still reluctant to be seen in public with the American Ambassador. I tried to call on him when I arrived in Brazil; he was "unavailable." Eventually, he became available--perhaps due to intense party reassessments following the collapse of the USSR.

As I mentioned, the environmental conference was the zenith for official visits. There were numerous delegations from the US: President Bush and his large official party, Senator Gore and his Democratic delegation, a bipartisan Senate delegation, and a similar House delegation. Everyone wanted to be involved in the environmental event of the decade. But each wanted his or her own moment in the sun--not to be shared with any other delegation. So we were spread rather thin trying to support all these various groups. But aside from that tidal wave of visitors, throughout my four years in Brazil, we did not lack for visitors. President Bush came several times. The U.S. delegation to the Collor inauguration was headed by Vice President Quayle--who also came several times. We had a number of Senators--e.g. Bill Bradley (D-NJ), Orrin Hatch (R-Utah). We had Cabinet officers come--e.g. Lloyd Bentsen (Treasury). Then there were many members of Congress--e.g. Dan Rostenkowski.

The Rostenkowski visit was quite memorable. He was heading his House Ways and Means Committee, which is a large group, all of whom came. The Chairman was known for the discipline that he demanded of his Committee--one of the last of the "old style" chairmen. If Members did not participate as he expected, he or she was told that they would not be welcome for other events on the schedule. There were several situations like that during the Committee's visit. In one, a breakfast meeting I particularly recall, was scheduled by the Chairman, but very few Members showed up after a long day previously. They were frozen out of meetings for the rest of the visit. He ran his Committee with tight discipline.

But I must also note that there was an element of personal discomfort for me associated with that visit. The U.S. Executive and Legislative Branches operate by different rules--what is acceptable for a representative of one may not be acceptable for a representative of the other. There is some merging of standards now, but there are still differences. For example, what a Congressman may accept from a supporter is different from what an Executive Branch representative may accept. These differences were highlighted during the visit to Rio by the Ways and Means Committee. The Chairman and Committee members accepted gratuities, in the form of a golf outing arranged by US corporate sponsors, which probably would have crossed the lines for an Executive Branch employee. I have a picture at home with me standing with President Collor and Chairman Rostenkowski--one was impeached and the other sent to prison for ethics violations.

I might comment briefly on my relations with President Collor. Prior to winning election Collor's public experience was limited. He served as governor of a small northern state. He had gone to university in Brasilia, which broadened his exposure to public life to some degree, but he had essentially lived on the periphery of the Brazilian political scene. Not yet 40; he was very

telegenic. He entered into a close relationship with Brazil's leading communication entrepreneur, who controlled the world's third largest media empire. Those facilities were made available to Collor who used them to articulate a reform message which was eagerly received. In the preliminary rounds leading up to the elections, he swept past all of his better known competitors who, by comparison, were perceived as old, traditional, tired, worn-out politicians. So Collor ran and won as an outsider. He had his political debts, which were larger than anyone realized at the time. But he looked like a fresh breeze which was underscored by his appointment of new people to key positions. He challenged the status quo; for example, he presented a fairly radical economic program to Congress and asked for immediate approval. But he quickly ran into difficulty because the basic political structure of the country remained unchanged; it was still a federal system with the power residing in the Congress and at the state level. The Brazilian President does not have any authority over Congress; he cannot force measures upon it. That makes reform hostage to a bargaining process with Congress, and the Congress demanded a high price.

Collor was personally stand-offish. I made great efforts to develop a relationship--to open direct channels. He was reluctant to join in. The Foreign Ministry supported this arms-length relationship because it wanted ambassadors to work through it--not unlike foreign ministries the world over. Brazil is a large country with an exceptionally strong Foreign Ministry--far more influential than our own Department of State. In Brazil, it is not the norm for an ambassador to have ready access to the President as might be true in smaller countries. As in the US, the Brazilian President has a large staff to filter information and control access and to support him. Some of my colleagues in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs could never seem to understand that norms for contact in countries like El Salvador and Honduras were not also approachable in Brazil.

Difficulties notwithstanding, I made a major effort to ensure that we had the kind of direct communications with President Collor that I thought were required. I did not want to see him every day; I just wanted to be able to reach him on those occasions when I or Washington thought direct access was required. But I must say that it took a full year to develop the kind of access that I thought was desirable--the "door guards" were very active and wouldn't let anyone through. It was not a situation in which others were allowed access which was denied to me. Far from it, diplomats were seldom received. I probably had the best access in the corps. In retrospect, that Presidential closed circle may have been connected to processes that were not evident at the time; the palace "guards" may have been trying to shield some unsavory aspects of the Collor administration, which eventually did become public.

Collor was young and impressionable, particularly by riches and imperial grandeur. He allowed the unchecked flow of funds during the campaign to continue on after his victory. The unsavory campaign fund-raising methods were continued after Collor took power; they then became graft and corruption. The campaign agents continued to take their cuts. Eventually, the Collor fund-raising system collapsed and he left the Presidency in disgrace.

The Brazilian media is evolving. Traditionally, the media has been very influential. With some exceptions, it has been a strong supporter of democratic practices. The largest papers were family owned and generally regionally focused. There are large papers, based in Rio or Sao Paulo,

which are becoming national journals. Like most things in Brazil, the media "heavy hitters" are now located in Sao Paulo--and increasingly are finance and culture. The political power is still dispersed within the federal system, which gives rural areas and less populous states disproportionate leverage. In other fields, the power is moving south towards the industrial, business, and financial powerhouse of Sao Paulo. So we had to build a relationship with the Sao Paulo power brokers. That places great responsibility on our consul generals in Sao Paulo and to a somewhat lesser extent, Rio. That makes it very important to have able principal officers at those constituent posts; in fact, we have assigned former ambassadors or ambassadors-to-be to Sao Paulo, which makes it unique. I like to describe Sao Paulo as a combination of New York and Chicago in their relationship to Washington. We have been fortunate in that our recent CGs in Sao Paulo have been officers of stature and competence. As it should be, the Consulate General in Sao Paulo is now the largest and most important constituent post in Brazil.

Rio had become less significant and that is reflected in the recently reduced staffing of the post. I think there was and may still be more support staff in Rio than actually required, but that is the lag effect--even after 30 years--of moving a capital from one city to another; the post which used to be the embassy tends to remain over-staffed.

It is of course frustrating for an ambassador to be residing in the capital when the vast majority of the country's economic, political, social and cultural fabric is being woven outside of it. Even frequent travel does not compensate for the isolation of Brasilia; you just cannot stay in sufficient touch with all parts of the country. So you have to adopt a strategy which in the first place clearly spells out your objectives--what is your agenda?; then you focus on those goals using public diplomacy as an indispensable tool. Secondly, you have to effectively use the constituent posts; they have to be part of the U.S. diplomatic program and must act in full coordination with other US establishments in the country. No constituent post can act on its own agenda. That may lead to communication problems; there has to be clarity as to who is doing what and how the work of each fits into the overall U.S. effort. The key to coordination is an effective communication system between the ambassador and the principal officers in the constituent posts.

Communications were increasingly easier from Brasilia, but the distances between the capital and the major centers in Brazil are still great and flights take several hours. We had a small Defense Attaché aircraft--a C-12--which was sometimes available, but was never intended to be a substitute for commercial transportation. It was there primarily to permit Defense Attachés to travel to remote areas--which was useful on such a vast country. But a chief of mission just can't be everywhere; it is a mistake to think that his or her role is to see and be seen in all of the 26 states of Brazil. To do so would be to abdicate other more important responsibilities. What I tried to do was to limit my travel to those cities and areas which were most relevant to our policy agenda. That took me most frequently first to Sao Paulo; then to Rio; and perhaps next, to the Fortaleza, the capital of Ceara in northeast Brazil. Ceara had a progressive government, and was the center of innovative activities in the economic and human rights area with which we wanted to be associated. By our presence, we wanted to indicate support for the ongoing initiatives. We hoped that in this way we would convey a message; in the Brazilian context, that was another effective way to let people know where we stood.

The sheer size of Brazil makes it a world power--at least in Brazilian eyes. Brazilian foreign policy focuses on global issues. Brazilian diplomats viewed Latin America as a potential restraint on the country's aspirations to play a global role. At the same time, Brazil wanted to be seen as the leader of South America. Its main rival was Argentina, but increasingly, Brazil's sheer size has made it the 800 pound gorilla in the region. It will almost inevitably be the dominant voice in South America. That fact translates into US concerns; for example, in the trade area, we had competing views on how the trade system in the region should be organized. Building on the North America Free Trade Area (NAFTA), we planned for an eventual hemisphere-wide free trade area. The Brazilians believed that these free trade plans were moving far too rapidly and that they would inevitably lead to the destruction of Brazil's protected industries, leaving the U.S. as the dominant economic engine in the region. Brazil preferred to start with a southern common market--Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay--led by Brazil. That common market, once consolidated, would be expanded to cover the rest of South America. Only then would negotiations be initiated with NAFTA--bloc to bloc, with Brazil facing the United States as an equal across the table.

The establishment of NAFTA opened a breach between Mexico and Brazil, which has not yet fully healed. Brazil had a rude awakening when Mexico joined NAFTA, because the foreign offices of both countries had previously collaborated on so many world and regional issues. Both had viewed management of the relationships with the U.S. as one of their primary foreign policy goals. The increasingly friendly relations between Argentina and the US, the Chilean economic renaissance, and the new Mexican economic relationship with the U.S. and Canada forced Brazil to rethink its approach to the region. But still for the Brazilians the focus remained largely a global one. They were particularly interested in the new WTO (World Trade Organization). They believed that a strengthened multilateral trade organization would provide Brazil a stronger voice, particularly in the settlement of trade disputes. Brazil's objective here was to put an end to unilateral actions by the United States, such as the anti-dumping sanctions.

The Brazilians viewed the OAS in much the same light; the Latins must form a bloc and deal with the U.S. from strength. In general, the Brazilian diplomats believe that only a united Latin America--led by Brazil--can successfully counter the U.S. will to dominate. Only if there is solidarity among the Latin American countries can they get a fair shake from the US.

Before we leave this discussion of Brazil, I might briefly comment on "Operation Topsy." This was an initiative that was begun in the 1960s by Ambassador John Tuthill and his Executive assistant, Frank Carlucci. The name came from Uncle Tom's Cabin, it was intended to characterize a process in which the U.S. mission just "grewed like Topsy" with no central purpose in mind. It was an accretion of agencies and personnel with a minimum of planning relating resources to policy objectives. So Tuthill identified this as a problem; it was a waste of resources, and it was an impediment to the achievement of US objectives. The Embassy was just too large. The Ambassador undertook to analyze the staffing against US objectives in Brazil. Carlucci was the action officer on this project. Tuthill made significant progress while he was Ambassador which coincided with my initial arrival in Brazil. Eventually, this effort ran out of gas as it ran up against bureaucratic imperatives; e.g. the era of large AID missions (Brazil at one time was the largest recipient of US assistance and the center-piece of the "Alliance for Progress"). This effort brought a large increase in US personnel and gave significant autonomy

to the AID mission director. When I was in Recife, there were some 200 Americans in the AID mission in northeast Brazil--as compared to the 3 Foreign Service officers. By the time I became Ambassador, more than 25 years later, the AID mission had been cut down to a small office in Brasilia to monitor the final phases of the assistance program--less than 6 people to manage a program of between \$10-\$20 million, with most of the accounting done in Washington. The aid program had been all but terminated following the US/Brazil disputes of the 1970s; military assistance was eliminated entirely and other assistance began a phase out process.

Brazil was never a center for assistance to other countries in the region because it was so different from its Latin American neighbors--language being the most prominent, but by no means the sole difference. Brazil does not see itself as strictly a Latin American country, as many countries in the region do. Despite its leadership aspirations, it has never been a regional center, unlike Uruguay and others that aspire to that role. Brazil did effectively project its interests in the region, but its focus was always beyond Latin America.

**JOHN D. PIELEMEIER**  
**Family Planning Program, USAID**  
**Brasilia (1991-1994)**

*Mr. Pielemeier was born in Indiana in 1944 and graduated from Georgetown University. He joined the Peace Corps in 1966 and served in the Ivory Coast. He served in numerous USAID projects in Brazil, Liberia, and Southern Africa. He was interviewed by W. Haven North in 1997.*

*Q: Well, let's go into your return to Brazil, 20 years later. Then we'll have all of your Brazilian recollections together. When did you return to Brazil?*

PIELEMEIER: I returned in 1991, almost exactly 20 years later. I had spent the previous year at the National Defense University.

When I returned to Brazil in 1991, the AID program was quite different from what it had been during my first tour there. This time I was the only "direct hire" AID employee, compared to the 101 "direct hires" when I arrived in Brazil in 1971. As I mentioned before, the AID mission in Brazil had been closed in 1977. However, the program had not been terminated. It was greatly reduced and changed in scope. A residual program was being run by a State Department officer, on a part-time basis. I think that the Family Planning Program had continued on a very modest basis.

The Family Planning Program involved working with non-governmental organizations [NGO's]. The federal government had not officially accepted the idea of family planning, but it was desperately needed. AID was the only donor willing to work in family planning at that time. The program slowly grew. Howard Lusk, who directed the AID Education Office in Brasilia when I was in Brazil in 1971-1973, returned to Brazil to be the AID Representative in 1985. His office was in the embassy in Brasilia. He had a very small staff consisting of a secretary and, I think, a

part-time accountant. When Howard decided to leave Brazil, I was working in the office of the AID Administrator. I knew that the position was coming open. By chance, I talked to a friend who had worked in Africa and who was looking for a new assignment. He said that he was learning Portuguese so he could work in one of the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. Knowing him well and considering that he would be a good person for the Brazil job, I encouraged Howard Helman to apply for the position and recommended him to my boss, Buster Brown. Howard became the second AID Representative in Brazil. I succeeded him as the third AID Representative of the new era.

By the time I returned to Brazil in 1991 the AID program had grown from about \$1.0 or \$1.5 million a year in 1985-1987 to \$6.0 or \$7.0 million a year. Gradually, it grew even more. I was not engaged in "empire building," but the total value of the AID program reached \$15 million by the time I left in 1994.

*Q: This was all on family planning?*

PIELEMEIER: No. What happened was that the same philosophy was applied in other areas. Brazil was perhaps of the first, "global interest" country in the sense that AID can't really deal with family planning on a worldwide basis if you don't deal with family planning in Brazil. Brazil is a huge country with a historically high growth rate. Similarly, it was clear that AID couldn't influence global climate change if it didn't have programs in the Amazon. AID also concluded that it couldn't deal with HIV [the virus causing AIDS] and AIDS [Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome] if it didn't try to reduce the disease's presence in Brazil, which has the second largest number of AIDS cases in the world. So family planning, climate change and HIV/AIDS became the three programs that were the heart of the AID program in Brazil when I was there in 1991-1994.

*Q: So our interest in Brazil was not in terms of the political, economic, or developmental perspectives?*

PIELEMEIER: That's right. It was largely because we were interested in dealing with global issues, and Brazil was part of that picture. In fact, when I returned to Brazil in 1991 there was no US Government to Brazilian Government program at all, because of nuclear restrictions on U.S. assistance. Brazil had not allowed International Atomic Energy Authority access to its nuclear facilities for verification of standards. Brazil also had been delinquent in paying its debts to the U.S. government. Because of debt and the nuclear verification situation, AID could not have a direct government to government program. We had to work through non-governmental organizations, states, and the private sector.

*Q: Cooperation with the NGO's wasn't prohibited by US legislative restrictions. Otherwise, our aid relations with Brazil were terminated as far as AID was concerned.*

PIELEMEIER: That's right. So there was just the family planning program and the "Partners of the Americas" program, which is an American PVO [Private Voluntary Organization] dating back to the "Alliance for Progress." The Partners Program was very strong in Brazil and continued to function. When I arrived, I tried to find out whether the old bilateral agreement with

Brazil still was legally in effect and to find a copy of it. We brought in our personal and household effects through the embassy as an Embassy Counselor for International Development. My status was that of Attache at the Embassy. The AID Representative's office was in the Embassy in Brasilia. None of our programs was approved officially by Brazilian Government. The Brazilian Government has a Donor Cooperation Office in the Foreign Ministry in Brasilia (ABC in Portuguese). Unlike other donor countries we did not work through the ABC. We basically obligated funds through direct grants or contracts or through "buy-in's" to Washington-based programs.

This arrangement gave us an extraordinary amount of flexibility. Once the other donor countries realized our ability to work outside government-to-government channels with PVOs and also with the private sector, we were a very envied donor. We were able to act flexibly and quickly.

*Q: Did AID permit this?*

PIELEMEIER: AID permitted it. We informed AID Washington [AID/W] what we were doing. We tried to avoid doing things that AID Washington would disagree with. AID Washington just wasn't directly involved in most detailed program decisions.

*Q: But AID had no objection to what you were doing.*

PIELEMEIER: AID/W gave us excellent support. I even had to turn away Washington money for programs that we couldn't manage due to our small staff. The only area where there was any problem with the Brazilian government was in the health and family planning area. We were encouraging the Brazilian Ministry of Public Health to take up family planning programs, and they were gradually beginning to do that. However, they were still reluctant to work with the same NGO organizations with which AID had worked in the past.

*Q: Why was there so much resistance to family planning?*

PIELEMEIER: Many Brazilians came out of the university communities during the military regime in the 1960s and the 1970s with a negative view of AID. They retained this view and were now in key, government positions in the various ministries. Some of their academic colleagues were still carrying this "intellectual baggage."

*Q: Was the fact that Brazil was a Catholic country much of a problem?*

PIELEMEIER: It's a Catholic country, but it's very much a non-practicing Catholic country. Unfortunately, abortions and sterilizations are the major methods of birth control in use in Brazil. We weren't encouraging either of those practices. We were encouraging the "cafeteria" approach to family planning by making other methods of birth control available.

*Q: Then you think that the opposition came from the view that family planning was an "imperialistic plot" and that it had been "imposed" by the U.S.?*

PIELEMEIER: The opposition came mainly from the old Left. We encouraged other aid donors

like the World Bank to use some of their resources to encourage family planning. We very much encouraged the UNFPA [UN Family Planning Administration] to become more involved and more active in promoting family planning. They hadn't been particularly "aggressive" in promoting the kinds of things that we thought should be done.

We were originally the only donor in this field and, later on, were pretty much the donor of choice in promoting family planning. I know that we were the first donor country to be involved in HIV/AIDS programs in Brazil. Our involvement in these programs began when I was in Brazil in 1991-1993. We also spent a lot of time encouraging other aid donors to get involved in HIV/AIDS programs.

*Q: But the Brazilian Government was not...*

PIELEMEIER: At this time strong leadership in connection with HIV/AIDS activity in the Brazilian Government was provided by a woman named Lair Guerra. Lair was one of the north easterners who entered government when the capital moved to Brasilia and eventually moved up more senior positions. She had worked in the U.S. at CDC during her career and also had worked briefly for Family Health International. Shortly after I arrived back in Brazil [in 1991] as the AID Representative, she came to see me. At that time I didn't know her background. Shortly afterwards, she was appointed by the Minister of Health to be the Director of the Brazilian HIV/AIDS Program.

She was a very aggressive person and eventually negotiated a \$100 million loan with the World Bank to help HIV/AIDS activities. With our relatively small program we ended up working with the Brazilian Government to design several of the components of a proposed World Bank program, such as the "social marketing" of condoms, working with the private sector on "AIDS in the work place," and dealing with condom logistics and procurement issues. These things would never have advanced to the point of a program proposal if AID had not been there. We worked hard to try to get PAHO [Pan American Health Organization] and the EC [European Community] involved with the HIV/AIDS programs.

*Q: Did you have an AIDS testing program?*

PIELEMEIER: No, at that time AID Washington had developed a specific methodology for AID projects, which it encouraged worldwide. AID worked specifically (1) with behavioral change through education, (2) with making condoms available, and (3) with STD's [Sexually Transmitted Diseases]. If you deal with these three issues simultaneously, you are likely to find that they build on each other and that will have a greater, overall benefit than you would have by dealing with any of them separately. We employed that philosophy in our new, AIDSCAP program in Brazil. We stayed away from areas like testing, leaving this to voluntary organizations.

*Q: You left it to people who were willing to be tested to determine whether they had HIV/AIDS.*

PIELEMEIER: I think that that was the kind of issue that we tended to stay away from for political reasons. We tried to stay away from sensitive issues like this in Brazil.

Going back to the family planning issue, we found, every once in a while, that there would be an article in one of the lesser newspapers which was a sort of Lyndon Larouche-type "plant." Basically, these articles would deal with the alleged "hegemony" of the countries of the Northern Hemisphere, the Atlantic Alliance "taking over the world," with Henry Kissinger at the heart of the effort. These occasional articles, also published in other countries, argued that U.S. family planning programs were meant to keep Brazil's population small and therefore keep Brazil "weak."

We discussed whether we should try to rebut these unfounded allegations, or whether we should simply ignore them with our colleagues in the press section of USIS [US Information Service] . After a while, we found that these articles would just "peter out," as no other newspapers would pick them up. These articles were, indeed promoting a dying issue, which no longer had an audience in Brazil.

I think that the family planning program in Brazil was very successful. The HIV/AIDS program was unique. Both of them provided models for the World Bank and other aid donors as they began to build their own programs. The AID Brazilian HIV/AIDS program is still unique because that it works with the private sector, with state governments in Brazil, and NGO's in the states of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo.

The third area which was "global" in nature was the environment program in the Amazon. It had been initiated before I returned to Brazil [in 1991], with help from Twig Johnson, who was the deputy director of the Global Bureau Environment office in Washington. He had been a Peace Corps volunteer in Brazil. As I understand the early history of the AID global climate change program, AID funded some organizations that were already active in that field and this helped to expand their work. By the time I returned to Brazil, AID was working with seven or eight American institutions, including the University of Florida, which was engaged in the most remote regions of the Amazon area. Other organizations included in the program the Smithsonian Institution, the Woodshole Institute, the World Wildlife Fund, the State University of New York, and one or two others.

I think that two, very positive things came out of the AID environment program. One is that these American organizations all worked through Brazilian Non-Governmental Organizations to carry out their activities. By the time I left Brazil, it was clear that we had helped establish a host of strong and capable Brazilian environmental NGOs working in the Amazon area. Not only did these NGOs exist, but they were linked up with each other, through the AID network.

We held an annual coordination conference with our environmental partners. At the first such conference only our American partners participated. At the second conference we also invited all of our Brazilian partners through our linkages. NGOs in the eastern Amazon were learning what NGOs in the western Amazon, over 1500 miles away, were doing. The NGOs traded personnel and research topics. They began to see this program as "their" program and they were truly pleased with it, because it was a program that was action oriented and not stymied by government bureaucracy. This occurred at the same time as the Brazilian government was pressing the World Bank for a major program supported by the "G-7" countries [a group which

included the seven most industrialized countries in the world]. The G-7 program would provide \$1.0 billion for projects in the Brazilian rain forest. Action on this government controlled program moved very slowly in contrast to the more agile AID program.

What happened? Well, our program, because of the work of all of these American groups, working in conjunction with their Brazilian counterparts, was making progress, and you could see the results. You could see new, tropical products being grown and marketed. You saw degraded pasture land being returned to secondary forest conditions. We financed research on how timber companies could reduce unnecessary deforestation by up to 40 or 50%, while keeping the same profit margin. This could be accomplished by taking four steps in advance of logging operations: mapping the high value trees to be cut, linking the trees in narrow trails, cutting lines which connected high value trees to many others, and using smaller "skidders" to tow the logs out of the forest.

There were many things that we were doing that became models for the larger, World Bank and multi-donor programs that came in later. I am told that, even today, this continues to happen. So the prescience of the people who started that program and the skills of the really wonderful people from the United States research community, who have been working in the Amazon area, have been put to good use. AID has fostered this program in most years with no more than \$2.0 - \$3.0 million in funding - a very cost-effective program.

*Q: What was the issue about the environment and the Amazon?*

PIELEMEIER: The issue involved climate change. The question was whether cutting down the forest essentially meant reducing carbon concentrations, because trees are essentially "sinks" or stores of carbon. Cutting down trees increases the amount of carbon in the air and thereby contributes to global warming. The major ways to reduce about reducing global warming at that were to reduce deforestation and, secondly, to reduce emissions from industrial plants and automobiles.

AID decided to stick with the "green" side of the program, rather than try to spread our small resources to also address the "brown" issue of industrial and automobile emissions. So we focused on deforestation. Our program goal was to reduce deforestation in the Amazon. The Amazon is a tough place to work, but it is an intriguing place.

*Q: Did you travel through the Amazon a lot?*

PIELEMEIER: We had an office in the Embassy in Brasilia but we didn't have any "clients" in Brasilia. All of our "clients" were involved in family planning programs in northeastern Brazil, environmental programs in the Amazon, and other programs dealing with HIV/AIDS and with drugs and drug awareness in the cities of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. So we were on the road a lot. I traveled a great deal, including trips to some of the more remote regions of the Amazon.

*Q: You were following up on the fertility problem countrywide?*

PIELEMEIER: At one time the fertility problem had been the only concern of the AID program

in Brazil. However, fertility rates had declined in many parts of the country, and the family planning program was now focused on northeastern Brazil, where population growth rates were still over 3.5% annually. On the HIV/AIDS program we decided to focus on just two states, rather than on the whole country. To have an impact on the environment, we decided to focus our efforts only on the Amazon. Of course, there were many other, environmental problems in Brazil. However, given the resources we had available, we thought we should focus just on the Amazon, which is a big enough territory.

*Q: Regarding the environmental program, are there some specific aspects which stayed in your mind? Did they work or did you think that there were lessons to be learned from what you had done?*

PIELEMEIER: One aspect that was a big help was the idea that you can get American and Brazilian groups to work together through their various programs. These annual environmental conferences I have mentioned helped to foster that attitude. We would sit down with individual representatives from each of these groups for three days in a hotel and prepare "logical frameworks." We prepared a "logical framework" for the overall program. We approached the problem in that way. Then we would say: "Okay, you, SUNY; you, Woodshole Institute; you, WWF [World Wildlife Fund] prepare your logical frameworks and think about how this fits in with your proposed level of achievements and relate all of your achievements to what we are trying to achieve here as a total program."

These groups found that to get to our overall program goals, they have to work with the other USAID grantees. They liked this approach so much that they asked to have a second planning session later in Washington to finish this collaborative planning process. They prepared their "logical frameworks" to measure their success. This really helped them to see whether they were working toward common objectives. We had a wonderful facilitator, Mark Renzi, from MSI, who helped with the planning process.

This experience was great. We encouraged a lot of "partnering" between our contractors and grantees. We would sit down with them every year and say dealing with deforestation or with certain policy issues, "Okay, what is it that we need and don't have in this program if we are to achieve this particular objective?" Basically, we tried to encourage them to come up with the information needed to decide where we would go in terms of the new program initiatives.

*Q: Was there any other aspect, including a technological aspect, that you found was worthwhile?*

PIELEMEIER: Many of the people involved in these programs had been doing research in the Amazon for many years. That made a big difference. There was a tremendous "mentoring" program which many of them carried on with young Brazilian students or academics.

Several of the programs have developed a "cadre" of Brazilian scientists. In fact, one of the things that we established before I left Brazil was a new program to develop the "next generation of Brazilian Amazonian scientists." Just as we had done with agricultural research some 20 years before, AID took the lead in training a strong cadre of research specialists for the Amazon.

To find people to work in the Amazon, you have to provide incentives and a cohort of trained people who work together to deal with some of these really major research issues in the area. I think this it is easier to do this with grant funding than loan funding that comes from the other major donor sources. We saw this as one of AID's comparative advantages, and we pushed it quite hard.

In general, I think that the programs were pretty successful. The amazing thing is that they have been so inexpensive, amounting to about \$2 or \$3 million a year for all of the seven or eight organizations which we funded to stretch our money. We would require the NGOs to provide matching grants. For example, we required a 100% matching grant, from World Wildlife Foundation for their program in the Amazon. And they were able to find the money from individual donations to WWF.

I think that the Family Planning Program continues to be relatively successful. People work very hard on that. It's a tough issue. The HIV/AIDS program was a very innovative program and AID, as the first donor to address this problem, provided excellent models for a future World Bank \$100 million loan.

*Q: What do you think were the principal features that made it successful?*

PIELEMEIER: We tried to do two things. We tried to encourage the Brazilians to set up organizations to import family planning "commodities," which were very expensive when produced in Brazil. We supported private sector organizations to import family planning "commodities" and sell them at reasonable prices to state and local governments through some of our NGO [non governmental organizations] intermediaries. AID also helped by encouraging the introduction of new kinds of family planning methods. One such device, "Norplant," has very recently been approved. To achieve this result, a lot of basic research had to be carried out very carefully, but the Population Council funded most of that.

*Q: What about the acceptance of the idea of family planning and a willingness to...*

PIELEMEIER: Acceptance seemed to be no problem. There was a much greater demand for family planning commodities than there was a supply. Even in northeastern Brazil the problem was not necessarily increasing awareness of family planning practices. Except in rural areas, awareness seemed to exist already, certainly among girls who had gone to school at least for a few years and who weren't extremely rural in outlook.

*Q: Do you think that education was a factor?*

PIELEMEIER: I think that if you can ensure that a young girl gets three or four years of education, her life will be changed forever, in terms of her ability to see things differently.

*Q: The best three or four years of her life.*

PIELEMEIER: Yes. We understood that three or four years were the minimum time needed in

school. Obviously, more is better. One of the other things that I should mention is that we had a very innovative training program. This did not involve sending people to university to get degrees. This program was organized and started up by a young Brazilian, Miguel Fontes, whom my predecessor, Howard Helman, hired. Miguel was about 22 when he was hired for this job. When I met him, he seemed to be considerably older than that, certainly more sophisticated, and had more presence. He ran this training program. The idea was to bring Brazilians together to work on a common problem, even though they came from different sectors and backgrounds. Sometimes, for example, in dealing with drugs, people in the Brazilian judicial system wouldn't cross the street to talk to people in the educational system. The same thing was true of people dealing with the health system.

The idea involved the use of "partners." We used this idea both in the "Partners for the Americas" program and the contract for training with SUNY [State University of New York]. The first stage was to identify key issues which weren't being addressed or were very timely. Then, whether the issue dealt with "anti-trust" or if it involved drug education, we would bring together key people to talk about what kind of short-term training would be most useful to them during a three week trip to the United States. In other words, what were their needs?

We would discuss their needs with them, perhaps in a half day session. Then, maybe two weeks later, we would have another half day session with the same people. The SUNY office would put together information on what kind of training was available, and how we could meet those needs through a program tailored for them in different parts of the United States. By the time they were ready to travel they had met together several times and gotten to know each other. Then they spent three weeks together, visiting these various locations in the US. The last part of the training program involved sitting them down for two days and having them prepare an "action plan" on what they would do when they went back to Brazil.

In at least two cases this type of "joint action plan" resulted in the creation of new NGOs [non governmental organizations]. A group from Sao Paulo established an NGO dealing with drugs which was "cross sectoral," an NGO that continues to function effectively today. The same thing occurred after bringing together lawyers from throughout the Amazon area and other parts of Brazil. When they returned to Brazil after attending one of our training programs, they established the first Brazilian "environmental law" NGO.

We saw this training not as an isolated training program, but rather as part of our overall program, which we would try to build on after they returned to Brazil. We would provide funds to bring the people in the training program together even after they came back to Brazil.

*Q: Why would they get together after they returned from the United States?*

PIELEMIEIER: After they returned to Brazil, we would bring them together and would also bring down a speaker from the United States they had selected, for example, to talk about "anti-trust" issues.

*Q: After they had traveled to the United States.*

PIELEMIEIER: Yes, this would be part of the "action plan" they prepared at the end of training.

*Q: As a group or...*

PIELEMIEIER: As a group, yes. There would usually be between seven and 10 people, at a maximum, in one of these groups. They would travel as a group during this two or three week period of travel in the United States. This was obviously a good opportunity for these people to get to know each other.

*Q: And they were from all over Brazil.*

PIELEMIEIER: This would depend on what the focus issue was. For example, a group studying drugs in Sao Paulo would come from that urban area. The members of the environmental law group came from places which made the most difference in addressing national issues, from Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, as well as the Amazon.

I tried to encourage the AID Training Office to take up this kind of program, using training money.

*Q: Well, that covers your second tour in Brazil. You were there for how long?*

PIELEMIEIER: I was there for three years [1991-1994]. We had a lot of visits, including one by Vice President Gore, and one from Mrs. Hillary Clinton.

I would like to say something about working out of an Embassy.

*Q: Yes, I would like to talk about that.*

PIELEMIEIER: We thought that we had a unique program. In effect, we were "forced" to work out of the Embassy. That's the way it was when I got there. When I called on the Ambassador, he said: "What you're planning to do with this program is probably much bigger than I had in mind. I want this to be a smaller program. I have received limitations on U.S. government 'direct hire' staff for Brazil issued in Washington. You are the only "direct hire" person, and there will be no other 'direct hire' staff working for AID here. We also have limitations on how many local staff we can hire. So we have to live with what you have presently."

Well, eventually, the Ambassador "mellowed" as he became more aware that the AID program was doing good things that were appreciated by the Brazilians. We ended up getting one other "direct hire" US employee, a health and population officer. This was Jennifer Adams, who was wonderful. We were also able to hire a few more local staff. I think that we went from three local staff, when I got there, up to about 10 when I left. It turned out that I hired just about everybody who is there now. We gave responsibility for project management to Brazilians. We found that worked well. This took a lot more "hand holding" and a lot more editing, in terms of their writing in English. We had to be very careful that they knew what to do and how to operate within the framework of the AID regulations.

However, in an advanced, developing country like Brazil I could hire a Brazilian who had a Ph. D. degree from Harvard to help to run the environment program. I did hire such a person. This woman was a recent graduate in biology. She was "dynamite." AID was able to hire a person like Miguel Fontes. The salary levels in Brazil at the time were still "reasonable" [in other words, "low" by American standards]. When we advertised for positions, we were overwhelmed with applications. I think that shows that, in the right setting, you certainly can work with local staff and have them manage projects successfully.

On the administrative side we worked through the Embassy. They provided our office space and just about everything else, except that we had our own vehicle. We had no driver. We drove ourselves. However, Brasilia wasn't that big, and, is so far from other cities that one doesn't drive a car out of Brasilia. You fly to other places. The joint administrative arrangement is called a "FAS" [Foreign Administrative Support] arrangement. Generally, this system worked all right. I was a member of the embassy committee overseeing the FAS. I had to spend a lot of time on it to make sure that systems were fair and AID got its share of the administrative support, without paying too much.

Another thing which affected our program was our philosophy of "concentric circles." We had a team approach. The core of the team was the AID staff. The immediate concentric circles included our AID contractors and grantees and other elements of the embassy. For example, part of our training program involved dealing with economic issues. I got the Economic Section of the Embassy to manage that part of the program. When we dealt with democratization, I got the Political Section to send somebody to an AID training course so that he could be the project manager for the democracy program. We didn't have the personnel resources ourselves. We tried to draw in other elements of the Embassy and make them part of our team.

We did the same thing with USIS [United States Information Service], in terms of trying to encourage them to know more about our program, so that we would get more PR [Public Relations] attention devoted to it. Many times we identified candidates for their training programs or they identified candidates for our training programs, because they complemented each other. Their key training areas were often the same as ours, on drug education, for example, since we all worked within the overall embassy strategy.

*Q: I imagine that in terms of the democracy program they were trying to do the same thing in that respect.*

PIELEMIEER: We were going very slowly on democracy and governance. We didn't have much money available, so we tried to do things without spending money. We arranged for a little bit of training and we tried to do a little bit of "anti-corruption" work. This was just getting off the ground when I left Brazil. Unfortunately, at the same time funding was being further cut back by the AID Latin American Bureau. There were clearly a lot of things that AID could do in that area.

In terms of the "concentric circles" idea we thought of our NGOs as part of our team, though at a different level. I think that many AID staff have a kind of "we-they" attitude toward contractors and grantees. They see themselves as being responsible for fiscal management and "keeping

contractors or grantees in line." What evolved in Brazil was an attitude that the contractors, grantees, and other people were more a part of our team, and we still follow this practice. We were trying to draw them in to help us to achieve our objectives together. We did a lot of "participation work" with contractors and grantees before it became, I guess, the "fashion." This was because often the grantees and contractors who worked in the field were very experienced in Brazil and often knew what was going on better than we did. So we would try to utilize their ideas and their suggestions on the environment, AIDS, or family planning programs.

*Q: In terms of your experience in Brazil, you obviously had two different perspectives. How would you compare and contrast the AID strategy in Brazil in terms of these two periods of time and how AID approached Brazil?*

PIELEMEIER: I think that, in general, each of the various strategies was probably appropriate for their times. In the 1970s AID had an opportunity to be a major donor, and Brazil was the right country in which to implement a major program. While there were political problems in working with a military government, there is no doubt that the activities of that era really helped stimulate a long term economic growth process which has been reasonably successful, though there are still lots of problems.

*Q: That program came out of the "Alliance for Progress"?*

PIELEMEIER: The "Alliance for Progress" was one of the stimuli behind it. When the Brazilian military regime took over [in 1964], this made it easier for economic decisions to be made on a technical basis, rather than on a political basis.

*Q: Was the rationale for such a major US involvement in Brazil decided on in the context of the "Alliance for Progress" climate?*

PIELEMEIER: Brazil was the most important country in Latin America and, according to Brazilians, it still is. I've recently heard something which I think is still largely correct. If you ask most Americans: "What are the three largest economies south of the Rio Grande River" in terms of political units, most of them will start with Mexico. Then they might say: "Well, maybe Argentina, Venezuela, or Brazil." Well, in fact, the three largest economic units south of the Rio Grande River are Brazil, the State of Sao Paulo, and the Municipality of Sao Paulo. Until recently, at least, these three political units have had a larger GDP [Gross Domestic Product] than Mexico.

So Brazil the "giant" of Latin America. It is still very important from the security and political points of view. Generally, what I saw in Brazil during my first tour in the 1970s was generally successful. When I returned to Brazil 20 years later, I was pleased to see things that remained from that period.

*Q: Did you see in your earlier period in Brazil any interaction between the AID program and US foreign policy interests? Did you get the impression that our security interests were trying to dictate what we should be doing or why we should be doing it?*

PIELEMEIER: During the early period [1971-1973] I was probably too young to know much about that. In a very large Mission I wasn't privy to discussions of that kind. I think that most of the IDI's [International Development Interns] were focusing more on how to get things done than on broader foreign policy issues.

I think that the AID strategy in the 1990s is also generally acceptable and appropriate. AID is only one element, and a rather small one, in overall US foreign policy toward Brazil. There are probably 18 US agencies represented on the Country Team in Brasilia. It is clear that AID had a role to play and that the Brazilians appreciated it. I think that the Brazilians will continue to appreciate it.

*Q: Did you find that the State Department was supportive of what you were trying to do in the fields of family planning, environment, and AIDS, or was it not supportive?*

PIELEMEIER: I was pleased to find that under two different Ambassadors and several DCM's [Deputy Chiefs of Mission] the State Department was "right on board." State Department representatives weren't "intrusive." At times, especially when we got into democratization and some of the political activities in which they wanted to take a "front seat," this was appropriate. So we didn't try to "freeze them out." We tried to use them, employing both our skills and their skills. In general, I thought that the relationship between the State Department and AID, in the Brazilian context, was a good one.

The Ambassadors were pleased with our aid program. The Ambassador there now has been very helpful.

*Q: Do you find that, even with a small staff, it's easy to manage a multi-million dollar program?*

PIELEMEIER: Part of the management aspect involved "buying into" already functioning global bureaucracy projects in family planning and HIV/AIDS, so we didn't have to do a lot of the program development work, as we did on our environment and training programs. In some cases we worked through AID Regional Offices in Bolivia or in Peru. We could do this when we needed their help. We also called in help from AID Washington for various things.

*Q: Were you involved in making grants, negotiating agreements, and all of that?*

PIELEMEIER: Oh, yes. In fact, there were times when I was forced to be the Contracts Officer because the AID people in the Procurement Office in Bolivia weren't sure that they knew enough about the matter and refused to sign the agreements. They said: "You take the responsibility. You sign it." So I would sign some of the agreements.

*Q: Were you involved in the approval of projects? Was that decentralized, or did you have to send everything to Washington?*

PIELEMEIER: Basically, we would handle program approval on a "strategy basis." For example, we developed an AIDS strategy for our new AIDS program. We obtained Washington approval for a five-year program. After its approval, we made all the operational decisions in

Brasilia.

*Q: Then you would design the project?*

PIELEMIEIER: Yes. We would design the overall program.

*Q: Did that involve the traditional process of project design or did you have a complete strategy with all that you needed?*

PIELEMIEIER: In this case we were working with "sub projects" and "sub activities." The "sub design" of the activities was mostly left with the users themselves, NGOs, state governments, or private sector groups. They would choose and design the activities for themselves. We would set up the criteria for approval. In most cases we would have proposals coming in from many groups working with drugs or with AIDS.

*Q: But this was a different programming approach than the traditional one, where you had a big project put together and then you got all the "t's" crossed and "i's" dotted before you could move forward.*

PIELEMIEIER: Yes, that's right. I think that the approach we used in the 1990s was more appropriate to a country at Brazil's stage of development, where Brazilians had the technical resources to design projects. Brazilian organizations can often do that, although sometimes, they still need American or European help for that purpose. I think that it would have been an embarrassment to use the old type of programming techniques in a country like Brazil at this stage of the game.

**DAVID E. ZWEIFEL**  
**Consul General**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1993-1995)**

*David E. Zweifel was born in Colorado on September 13, 1934. He received a bachelor's degree from Oregon State University and served in the U.S. Navy overseas for five years. He joined the Foreign Service in July 1962 and served in Brazil, Lebanon, Jordan, Mexico, Oman, Yemen, and Washington, DC. Mr. Zweifel retired in 1995 and was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on September 3, 1996.*

*Q: At the end of your tour, in 1993, you went back to your first post, Rio de Janeiro, as Consul General. You're one of the few officers I know of who's ever done that. Did you bid on this assignment yourself?*

ZWEIFEL: It was my reward!

*Q: All right. What were your emotions on going back?*

ZWEIFEL: I was absolutely delighted. Rio has to be among the world's most beautiful places to be. I can't conceive of a more open and gratifying environment in which to work.

*Q: How had the place changed? What changes did you notice after 30 years?*

ZWEIFEL: The changes were wall to wall, so to speak. When the Embassy moved to Brasilia, Rio was reduced to the status of a Consulate General. It is still a large post, with about 80 American and perhaps 250 Brazilian employees. I think it was our second or third largest Consulate General in the world. But during my tour, there were very large reductions. By the time I left, some 30 American and 100 FSN positions had been eliminated. It is a critical time for that post, not an easy work environment. But still, it was a wonderful place to end my career.

*Q: Quite a drastic reduction.*

ZWEIFEL: The city of Rio had also changed a lot, of course. Some of the deterioration which had occurred was the result, I believe, of a deliberate decision by the Federal Government to reduce the importance of the city.

*Q: What were your relations with the Embassy in Brasilia and with Ambassador, who was Rick Melton, I believe?*

ZWEIFEL: Rick Melton was Ambassador when I arrived. He was succeeded by Mel Levitsky. I enjoyed working with both of them very much. I had worked with Rick when he was Deputy Assistant Secretary in ARA at the time I was Director for Caribbean Affairs. So we knew and respected each other, worked well together. I had known Mel Levitsky when he headed the International Narcotics Management Bureau (INM) in the Department. I had high respect for him as well.

Both of those career officers ran an excellent Mission. Different personalities entirely, which you would expect from any two officers coming into such positions of leadership. Both of them wanted and got a situation in which the constituent posts - especially the large Consulates General in Rio and Sao Paulo - were expected to do a lot of political and economic work in addition to their other functions. As Consul General, I was also expected to be an active participant in the overall country reporting effort. It was up to my judgment whether our reporting should go direct or be routed through the Embassy. The Embassy rarely took exception to our decisions in that respect.

*Q: So you could do independent reporting?*

ZWEIFEL: Yes.

*Q: How often did you get to Brasilia?*

ZWEIFEL: I was in Rio for just under two years, during which time I got to Brasilia four times. And the Ambassador Levitsky came to Rio on several occasions - four or five times during my

time.

*Q: What were your relations with the authorities in Rio?*

ZWEIFEL: Rio continues to be an interesting listening post. Even though the capital and Federal Government are in Brasilia, many political figures tend to gravitate to Rio on the weekends and otherwise. With heavy work schedules when they are in Brasilia during the week, they ironically might be more accessible when they are in Rio. In addition, many prominent Brazilians chose to settle in Rio when out of government. For example, the former Secretary General of the OAS, Baena Soares. On the eve of his retirement from the OAS, he arranged to have that organization's General Assembly meet in Belem, Brazil, his hometown. But of course when he retired, he settled in Rio! Once when I called on him, he told me that the Federal Government had asked him to head an institute dealing with public awareness of foreign policy issues. It was a full-time and prestigious position. After thinking about it for a time, Baena Soares agreed to take on the assignment - but only on the condition that he would not have to live and work in Brasilia.

My regular interlocutors in Rio included former Finance Ministers, Foreign Ministers, State Government officials in the five states which comprised the Consular District. It was a good and interesting mix.

*Q: That made it very interesting for you as Consul General. You weren't limited to consular work per se.*

ZWEIFEL: Even in economic terms, although Rio is a distant second to Sao Paulo in terms of importance to the overall Brazilian economy, it is still a very important center. I used to point out to visitors that if any of three Brazilian states - Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, or Minas Gerais - was an independent country, it would thereby be the fourth largest economy in Latin America. Sao Paulo has an economy of about \$150 billion, Rio and Minas each have state economies in the range of \$50 billion. Each overshadows countries such as Chile or Colombia. The State of Sergipe, the smallest in Brazil and located in the very poor northeast of the country, has an economy the size of Bolivia's. The State of Espirito Santo - another of the five in the Rio Consular District - has an economy as large as that of Paraguay. So, you are dealing with economies of considerable scale.

*Q: You're talking about economics, but were you there when they had the bad inflation, when they changed currencies?*

ZWEIFEL: Yes. The 'Real Plan' came in June of 1994, during my tour. (The 'Real' is the new currency unit.) Up until that time, Brazil was experiencing rampant inflation. In economic terms, it was not hyperinflation because it never reached the point where Brazilians moved out of their own currency into that of another country's. That was the case, for example, in Yugoslavia where the German Deutschmark became the medium of exchange.

At the end, just before the changeover in currencies, it could be said that the inflation rate was either 5000% percent per annum - or zero! How could both be true? Well, the thing that made it

so was complete indexation on a daily basis. Through this mechanism - the daily adjustment of prices and wages - the inflation was 'squeezed out'. Of course, this indexation was not a good economic policy to pursue. There was no incentive for any savings or capital investment. Instead, people were counting on currency speculation to keep ahead of the curve. The 'Cruzeiro Real' - then the currency - was constantly and rapidly losing value. The impetus in a high inflation environment is to spend what you have before it loses value. The result is high expenditures on low value items or perishables. Restaurants - you had to eat anyway - were always crowded. People could not save to buy durable goods or an apartment, for example, but they could afford to eat out which was better than just losing the value of whatever money they had.

*Q: Not very healthy for the economy. What happened to stem that tide?*

ZWEIFEL: The decision was first to change the currency, in the process lopping off all the zeros. This time, there was some success. Then the government sought to open up the economy to imports. The availability of consumer goods helped hold the line. There were also attempts to bring about economic, fiscal and social reforms, essential if the 'Real Plan' was to achieve long-term success.

Despite some successes, Brazilian government expenditures for items such as social security are too high to be sustained over time. Interest rates are still usurious, discouraging investment. The government's objective is to prevent the return of high inflation, but the obverse may be low or no growth in the economy.

At any rate, progress is being made. There has been privatization of a number of sectors of the economy. The steel industry has been completely privatized. Similar efforts are being made in the electric energy sector, more modestly in the realm of telecommunications. So Brazil is headed in the right direction, although there is still a long way to go before the effort is fully in place and sustainable.

*Q: What about terrorism? Were you under any terrorist threats at the Consulate General while you were there?*

ZWEIFEL: No threats of a terrorist nature at all. Crime is a very, very serious problem, especially in Rio and Sao Paulo. There is a steady drumbeat of instances in which people are robbed, mugged, what have you. Murder rates are astronomical. Fortunately, this crime has not specifically been targeted against Americans or other foreigners, although they have been occasional victims. It was always necessary to be careful, on the alert, but there was no terrorism per se.

*Q: And anti-American sentiments, did you find much of that?*

ZWEIFEL: None whatsoever. Again, one of the reasons why I love Brazil and always will is that the Brazilians have always been confident enough of their own sense of nationhood, proud of their culture without being anti-American.

*Q: How about the drug problem?*

ZWEIFEL: Narcotics are of increasing concern in Brazil which is primarily a transit country with illegal substances moving through, in good part, destined for European markets. But narcotics is such a fungible commodity. It moves around, and passing through inevitably means that some of it stays, rubs off on the local society. So you have a growing drug abuse problem in the country. Much of the violence in both Rio and Sao Paulo is between and among drug lords or gangs which try to control local trafficking.

*Q: In 1995, you decided to retire.*

ZWEIFEL: The Service decided that I was going to retire.

*Q: Yes, well, that happens to all of us. I'd like for you to spend a minute or so giving what I'd call 'career reflections' How do you compare the Foreign Service today with what it was when you entered over 30 years ago?*

ZWEIFEL: First, let me say that I will always look back on the Foreign Service as having been a tremendous opportunity and a tremendous career. I enjoyed all of it, maybe not equally, but I enjoyed all of it. I was the beneficiary of what I would term the democratization of the Service. The Service, for the first time, was reaching out beyond the Eastern Establishment, beyond the Ivy League set, to try to draw in people of less traditional backgrounds than those which had dominated the career for so long. I've always appreciated that effort. I felt that it was a movement to enrich the Foreign Service, to challenge the imaginations of Americans who were interested in careers in foreign affairs in a way that, at an earlier time, they would not have deemed possible.

In my view, the challenge facing the Service today could be equally gratifying as the effort goes forward to better reflect the full richness of our society. The quality of the Service can remain very high as this develops, but only if there is a concomitant concern for professionalism and a sense of mission such as that which existed when I joined.

I am less confident that those two preconditions now exist. When I received my flag from the Director General, I commented - only partly in jest - that I entered the Foreign Service at a time when it was an honored profession. Nobody would think of harming an American diplomat, for example. The diplomatic corps was an elite group, highly respected, even envied. I then served most of my career when diplomacy was a profession. It became an endangered profession, or at least a sometimes very dangerous one. Colleagues of ours fell victim to terrorism. American diplomats were no longer held in the same respect. Now, we are told that the Service has become a job. Those now considering entry have the same outlook as all others of their generation. They come into the Service knowing that it will be a stepping stone to something else. That is a big change. And so, I noted, I was glad to leave before the Service became a part-time job...

The idea of a long-term commitment is not the same as it was, in my view. The sense of mission and dedication has changed. We can wring our hands and wish for the 'good old days', but those attitudes will not come back. Modern communications and transportation have also transformed

the Service. There is less and less emphasis and value on individual effort and contribution.

We are at a time when the standard of success in any department of the government, including the State Department, is not how well you do the job but, rather, how cheaply you accomplish your tasks. I am reminded of the axiom 'you get what you pay for'. I think that, over time, this will negatively be reflected in the quality of the Foreign Service. Because we are willing to put less of our resources into foreign affairs, we will be less able to attract top quality personnel into the Service. The system will suffer, the nation will pay a price. This is not meant to be predictive and certainly is not inevitable. But, as of this moment, I would have to say that the sense of professionalism, of pride, of devotion to a mission - the ideals which motivated you and me - are not there. Both within the Service and from outside, people are looking at diplomacy in an entirely different light.

*Q: Thank you very much, Dave. That was eloquent testimonial.*

**JOHN D. CASWELL**  
**State Department - Latin American Affairs**  
**Washington, DC (1993-1995)**

**Political Section - Deputy Chief**  
**Brasilia (1995-1998)**

*Mr. Caswell was born in 1947 in Massachusetts, raised in Massachusetts and Connecticut. He was educated at Franklin and Marshall College, the Fletcher School of Tufts University and the University of California, Los Angeles. After service in the US Navy he entered the Foreign Service in 1974. His foreign assignments as Political or Economic Officer include Rio de Janeiro, Lima, Brasilia, Lisbon and Sofia. In Washington, Mr. Caswell served in the Department's Operations Center and in European and Latin American Affairs. He also served two years with USAID's Regional Mission for Europe. Mr. Caswell was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2000.*

CASWELL: '95 as the Deputy Director for Brazil and Southern Cone.

*Q: Well, when you got to Brazil, what was the situation?*

CASWELL: Brazil was emerging from a period that was known as the lost decade, which referred to essentially the 1980s when Brazil really got hammered very badly in the financial crisis that rocked Latin America. It started out initially in Mexico but then it spread. Brazil has developed itself over the years in a very inward-looking, autarchic sort of country and economy. In part I think it's because it's a country of continental proportions and they always felt that the internal market is the important thing: "We have virtually all the natural resources that we need, except for oil, in a big way, and we can pretty much develop the way we want to do develop. We don't have to do adjust ourselves to do international market realities or whatever." Their sense of

isolation was also, I think, encouraged by the fact that they spoke Portuguese [rather than Spanish like the rest of South America]. They had a very strong sense of their own identity, their own uniqueness, and dating back in the 1950s they decided the way to develop economically was through import substitution. They decided early on, for instance, that a strategic industry to develop would be the motor industry, the automotive and trucking industry. As the country initially developed it would satisfy its transport needs by importing cars and trucks from the United States or from Europe, and then they said, "Well, if we're going to really get into the big leagues and fully develop and so forth, we need to have our own automotive and trucking industry. How do we build this industry when it's cheaper to import the cars and truck from overseas?" Well, the way you do it is you put up high tariff walls that will make it very expensive to import cars and trucks into Brazil, and at the same time you encourage the foreign manufacturers to build their own factories in Brazil to serve the Brazilian market. Thus Brazil would encourage foreign investment or, what came to do be even more typical of Brazil, they created state-owned companies in order to access the capital you need to build the factories or whatever, you create "a national champion", if you will, that can compete with the big foreign companies and can raise the capital to build a factory to do whatever, make steel. That was the way they developed the steel industry. They created a national steel company and that went and built the steel mills, but to allow that industry to develop and to reach its potential, you had to have very high tariff walls because initially these infant industries couldn't compete on a price basis with imported steel or imported cars or whatever. So then you create this industry. But then there's the classic problem of the infant industry which doesn't want to do grow up. It's very comfortable behind the high tariff walls, it never develops the efficiency required to compete internationally, so it can't export, and furthermore it produces sort of an inferior-quality product at a higher price because it's been protected from international competition. These industries become very politically influential. If the government ever thought about lowering the tariff, they would scream bloody murder and say, "You can't do that, you can't throw us out of business, you can't sacrifice the national interest." So they had a whole economic model that developed over the years that basically was a hothouse economy that couldn't really effectively compete and remained dependent upon new infusions of cash either in forms of investment or in the form of loans. Increasingly over the years the bulk of how capital came was in the form of loans and Brazil became more and more indebted, [but couldn't export enough to earn the foreign currency to pay back all the foreign loans].

*Q: These would be loans from abroad.*

CASWELL: Right, exactly, to finance the development of Brazil, but then once you got the development, it wasn't really world class, it wasn't really efficient, so it couldn't really pay for itself. Then when the financial crisis hit in 1980 in a big way, the so-called Brazilian economic miracle of the late '60s and '70s started looking very hollow indeed, and the Brazilian economy just really went into a stagflation spiral for over a decade. Well, they were just sort of emerging from this and beginning to engage in some soul searching about this economic model which they had been following and did it really work. As I said, they had a recession, prolonged recession, high unemployment; their government finances were in a terrible mess; they were amongst the world champions in inflation year in and year out; they got to do a point in about '93, I guess it was, when the inflation rate was just about 5000 percent per annum.

*Q: How can a person survive under that? I'm thinking about I get a salary or a pension, and all of a sudden essentially you have no money.*

CASWELL: What happened basically was that - how can I put it? - unsophisticated people who lived from paycheck to paycheck, the poor and the downtrodden - there are people in Brazil who are so poor they don't have paychecks - they continued to do scratch out some kind of existence outside the money economy either in the countryside or begging or thieving or selling small items in the streets of the cities or picking their way through garbage dumps and so forth; but the people who got hammered the worst by the inflation were the people who essentially did get some sort of money pay but who lacked the sophistication to take advantage of developments in the Brazilian financial industry which were set up to try to protect people from the scourge of inflation. Brazilians are rather sophisticated in many ways, and the financial and banking industry became adept at learning to live with high inflation rates by putting in - the phrase they used for it - 'monetary correction.' In effect they indexed the economy for inflation. They didn't try to end inflation. The government in effect said either, "Well, inflation can be benign," and/or "It's impossible for us to fully eradicate it, so what we need to do is develop a mechanism to make it possible to live with the beast." So they worked out an index for measuring how much the cost of living increased from month to do month, and as a matter of fact, in later days the monetary-correction index came down to day by day, but I think initially it was month by month. Then every price in the country, or virtually everything in the country, was allowed to do go up by that index. It would be adjusted monthly. So, say, you were paid 1000 *cruzeiros* a month when monetary correction was introduced, then once that happened your monthly salary at 1000 *cruzeiros* every month would be adjusted according to do the inflation rate of the previous month. So, say, the inflation rate the previous month was 10 percent, your 1000-*cruzero* salary the next month wouldn't be 1000 *cruzeiros*, it would 1100 *cruzeiros*. So if this happens and the adjustments were made frequently enough - your bank accounts also had monetary correction; it would pay interest plus monetary correction - if you had your salary and your bank account and enough things around had this index in place to protect you, like a full COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) in effect, you could be protected to a substantial extent from the inflation. Another thing that people who had money would do, obviously they wouldn't keep their money in *cruzeiros* sitting around, they would either go out and buy land or some other asset which they thought would appreciate as fast or faster than inflation, or they would get it out into dollars. I can't remember exactly when it happened, but it became allowable - it wasn't necessarily ever encouraged, but it certainly became legal - to do have dollar bank accounts with Brazilian banks in Brazil. You didn't even have to do move the money out of the country. So people in the middle classes and the upper classes, the monied classes, could protect themselves from this inflation. It was the working poor, if you will, who really bore the brunt. Since they are politically inarticulate and didn't really call the shots or could not bring to bear their voting power in a significant way in the way Brazil was governed, it was a fine system. The people who mattered, who had political power, could protect themselves from inflation, and the other people just got screwed. Well, they're just maids anyway - who cares? - or taxicab drivers or whatever. So the more you'd gotten into this inflationary situation, of course, obviously as soon as you get your pay, if you were a person of modest means, you went right to the grocery store, bought up a month's worth of groceries and necessities right then and there before the price could go up anymore. Then also sophisticated people would keep their money in interest-bearing checking accounts - this was another thing that they would do - and you would never hold cash. By the

early '90s you would never walk around with cash in your pocket because it was losing value as you walked down the street. If you had a checking account, you kept all your money in the interest-bearing-plus-monetary-correction checking account. If you walk into a drugstore to buy some medicine, you write out a check. If you walk even into McDonald's and you buy a hamburger, you write out a check. Then what happened was, part of this Brazilian flair for creative financing, your salary doesn't go far enough, say you want to do buy a hamburger today, October 31st, write out your check but you date it November 10th so it won't be cashed till November 10th. So in effect Brazilians were floating loans by back-dating checks. So that's how people survived. Anyway, getting back to do your question of where we were with Brazil in this period of the '80s and the '90s, Brazil was very isolated in its thinking, very inward looking, and did not have a very good relationship with the United States ever since the period of Carter when he criticized Brazil so sharply on human rights and even sent his wife Rosalynn down to do lecture the Brazilian generals on human rights. This was kind of the ultimate insult to the Brazilian generals, to do be lectured by a woman about how to do govern their country and how to respect the human rights of the Brazilian people. President Carter's other major concern about Brazil was their burgeoning nuclear industry and what we felt were ill-conceived and ill-concealed attempts to do get the bomb, [the ability to do build nuclear weapons, as part of Brazil's drive for grandeur - a bigger international role]. U.S.-Brazilian relations had not been good for some time. As a matter of fact, they had been rather testy.

When they ran into their financial problems and were having to renegotiate the terms of their debt, who were they negotiating with? American banks, it was largely American banks in the go-go days of the 1970s that lent them an awful lot of money. So there were a series of irritants in our relationship with Brazil over nuclear issues, over human rights issues, over economics issues, and just a general sense of rivalry, and over technology issues. Brazilians always had a concept that technology should be a free good and, even though technology may be developed other places at considerable cost, Brazil felt it should be available to the developing countries free or at a preferential rate. "We shouldn't have to respect patents and licenses, because they are barriers to our development." Well, there were a lot of these irritants, and in 1993 we were seeing a beginning of a rethinking in Brazil, particularly about economics issues and whether it made sense to have such a state-run economy, have an economy that cuts itself off from the world. "Maybe we ought to open things up a little bit more. Maybe we ought to do try to encourage more foreign investment, encourage more trade," that this is the way to develop the country and benefit the Brazilian people. This sort of thinking in particular was centered around a man named Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who at the time came to be finance minister in the Brazilian government in the administration of a man named Itamar Franco, who had come to the presidency after the total disgrace of his predecessor, who was one of the most corrupt in a long history of corrupt Brazilian politicians - Fernando Collor de Mello. This guy was a thief of staggering proportions, even to the point that he was impeached, the only Brazilian president who was ever actually impeached for crimes and malfeasance. Actually at the last minute he resigned before they could bring the vote of impeachment, but in effect he was impeached. Itamar Franco, who was this sort of nonentity of a provincial politician, was his vice president, and thus became president. He was a not-very-impressive president, and he'd gone through about six or seven finance ministers in under two years, things were going so badly. The one decent thing that he did in his entire administration was he had the wit somehow to ask Cardoso, who had been his foreign minister and was doing a good job there and was also trying to get Brazil to

open up and become less isolationist and be more attuned to the West. Franco had the wit to say, "You're doing a good job as foreign minister, but I think you could help me out more as my finance minister." Under Cardoso's finance minister they developed this thing called the Real Plan which was a currency reform together with changes in finance to do stop the inflation, which was wildly successful, stopped inflation dead. He pursued a whole bunch of programs that started in the Franco administration of lowering tariffs, improving conditions for foreign investment, and it provided a real opening. In effect the success of it led to Cardoso's election as president of Brazil. Cardoso was unusual among Brazilian politicians in that he was a very cosmopolitan, sophisticated guy who had read a lot, thought a lot, written a lot - he was originally a professor - and traveled a lot in the world, lived overseas when he in effect went into self exile during the Brazilian military regime. He had a vision for Brazil that was not a Brazil challenging the West or acting in an outrageous manner in effect or ignoring the West, but was trying to do get into the international affairs and playing like the big boys and being responsible and following policies that would open Brazil both economically and intellectually to the rest of the world. So it provided a real opportunity for us to begin to do work on some of these issues that had been festering in Brazil for 20 years.

*Q: From your perspective you had, I think, an Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs who was a Brazilian type...*

CASWELL: Alexander Watson, yes.

*Q: ...whom I've interviewed. He had a real feel for Brazil.*

CASWELL: Exactly, and the Brazilians were certainly aware of that, and I think it gave them a feeling that he was a friend in court and maybe Washington was going to understand Brazil a little bit better than maybe had been the case in the past. He certainly was a friend of Brazil. I don't think that's to do say that other Assistant Secretaries of State were hostile to Brazil. Basically it wasn't so much that Alex Watson came in or that I came in - I knew Brazil, too - but things were changing in Brazil and the old ways of doing things, doing business, and some of the old nationalist goals were becoming discredited within Brazil and were sort of falling of their own weight, and there was a new approach and a new openness in Brazil to working with the United States and other Western partners, to working with its neighbors. It used to be traditionally that Brazil and Argentina would be great rivals, rivals to control or provide leadership of South America. And their militaries - you'd go to their war colleges and they would have studies and plans and so forth. The hypothetical enemy [in Brazilian war plans would always be Argentina and vice versa]. The Argentines would think that the Brazilians would send tanks across and attack Argentina, and the Brazilians would think the Argentines were going to attack Brazil, and this is what their war plans were based on. That's part of the reason they wanted to have the bomb. The bomb was both to gain access to do something like the Security Council because the permanent members of the Security Council all had nuclear weapons, but it also was to do intimidate the Argentines, and of course we and the Brazilians know the Argentines had a program to do develop the bomb, too. It was mostly for prestige, the military rivalries and so forth. Well, anyway, one of the good things Collor de Mello did before he got run out of office was he quashed, he ended, the Brazilian military nuclear program, and he poured cement down the core that they had dug supposedly for underground nuclear tests

someday, and Carlos Menem did the same thing in Argentina, and started to develop a rapprochement between Argentina and Brazil which finally culminated in something called the Common Market of the South - the Spanish acronym is *Mercosur*; in Brazil it's called *Mercosul* - but it was also emblematic of this opening up of the economies and working in tandem with...

*Q: We were having the North American Trade Agreement - both under the Bush and then the Clinton administration - and Mexico was included in it.*

CASWELL: Brazilian nationalists would say that long-term one of their goals with *Mercosul* is to challenge NAFTA and to make sure that NAFTA doesn't expand into a hemispheric-wide thing in which the rules are all rigged just to favor the United States. Acting individually Brazil would have no negotiating leverage whatsoever versus Washington. Much better in this view would be to develop a counter-weight in *Mercosul* or *Mercosur* and then negotiate rules with NAFTA which would then result in a free trade area of the Americas which is more mutually beneficial for us all. Certainly there was that current of thinking within *Itamaraty*, which is the Brazilian foreign ministry. I think that part of the reason was also Brazil sought to establish a meaningful partnership with Argentina. We're a major trading partner with Argentina, Argentina is a major trading partner for us; together we can do better for our people than we can hiding behind our high tariff barriers just focusing on the national market. It's part of that same rethinking of the old discredited model that I was belaboring before.

*Q: What role were we playing in this, '93 to do '95, as things were changing? Were we pushing for anything?*

CASWELL: We were encouraging them all along to lower their tariffs, to open their economy more, to do trade and to do investment, but particular concerns we had that I was charged with overseeing fell more into I guess you'd say the national security area. Brazil had been a difficult country and in some ways - the term's overused - rogue country, a problem country, on things like non-proliferation issues and science and technology issues, arms transfer issues, political-military issues in general, and it affected things that we wanted to do, for instance, with Brazil in the science and technology area. By '93 through '95, because Collor de Mello had scotched the Brazilian nuclear weapons program, there weren't such terribly great concerns that Brazil itself was going to really develop the bomb, but we really wanted them to enter into a nexus of international agreements which would consolidate this non-proliferation progress and will make it more difficult if not impossible for Brazil in the future to backtrack from this sort of thing, because who knows what will happen in the future in Brazil. Maybe there'll be another military regime which will decide they want to do take up the process again. So we were after them to ratify a treaty called the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Tlatelolco is a suburb or district of Mexico City and there was a treaty signed there back in the late '60s that in effect made Latin American a nuclear-weapons-free zone. Brazil and Argentina had always refused to sign that treaty. We wanted them to do adopt full-scope nuclear safeguards with the International Atomic Energy Agency. This was something else they had rejected because they didn't want to have IAEA inspectors poking around Brazilian nuclear facilities with a free license in effect. They would allow some access, but very controlled, circumscribed access. And so there had always been concern about what was really going on at some of these facilities. As a matter of fact, in the period '93-'94 there was still some concern that, even though Collor de Mello had formally

ended the nuclear weapons project, there was concern that there were certain officers within the Brazilian military doing their own thing, pursuing activities that might possibly be of proliferation concern. There might be some potential. But if Brazil would adopt full-scope nuclear safeguards, rogue activities would be much harder to carry on without being discovered. Brazil also had a ballistic missile development program which again dated back to the military period, and it was always supposed that they wanted to have a delivery vehicle to deliver a Brazilian nuclear weapon or deterrent. After the end of the weapons program, the missile program continued under the new heading; it was to do be a space launch vehicle. It got wrapped up in the Brazilian sense of grandeur, which is very strong in the Brazilian military but also in their science and technology communities. It was felt that Brazil can do some world-class, or significant science if not quite world class, and that Brazil has certain natural advantages because of its geographic location for getting into the satellite launch business, because if you launch your satellite from close to the equator, you benefit from the rotation of the earth. In effect the closer to the equator, the rotation is faster; the further away from the equator you go, the slower it is. So you can launch a bigger payload into earth orbit if you do so from near the equator than if you do it from further south or further north in latitude. And so they felt they would justify their space launch vehicle program by saying, "Well, we can get into this business, and we're close enough to do it we want to proceed." Well, our government and to some degree also the Europeans and Japanese shared some of our concern that the technology that could be used to launch a satellite could also be the same technology that could be used to launch a warhead on a ballistic missile, not that Brazil would necessarily get into the business of developing ballistic missiles and selling them to do other countries, but if Brazil had that capability, a future Brazilian government might choose to do that. Or another alternate scenario might be that the technology would not be licensed by the Brazilian government but surreptitiously it would leak out and get to do a rogue state like Iraq or North Korea or whatever, because of corruption. A military officer who had access to the blueprints or whatever, for personal benefit might sell those to somebody. So we were very keen on getting Brazil to adhere to a thing called the MTCR, the Missile Technology Control Regime, in which governments of countries who possess missile technology control its dissemination, control its export. The Brazilians had never wanted to accept the controls and restrictions that were associated with MTCR and at the same time they were always trying to evade MTCR controls in order to buy missile technology which Brazil lacked. So if they couldn't buy the missile technology from the United States that they would like to incorporate into their own space launch vehicle, they would try to buy similar missile technology from the Russians or from the Germans through cut-outs in third countries or whatever. So we were trying through all of these things to get Brazil to adopt non-proliferation controls and to say they will abide by the rules of the MTCR so that they won't get access to nuclear weapons technology or to ballistic missile technology and to set an example for other countries that had also yet to adopt those rules.

So non-proliferation was a big foreign policy issue in the United States, and Brazil had been in effect on the side of the devil for a number of years. Many countries would turn around say, "Well, the Brazilians haven't adopted the restrictions. Why should be adopt this type of thing?" Well, if we could get the Brazilians on the side of the angels, it would be a major foreign policy achievement. My office asked, "Why would the Brazilians do this? What have we got to offer to them as an inducement?" Our inducement was, "The U.S. would like to cooperate with you in a number of scientific and technological endeavors, and if we could find areas where we could

work together, our nuclear community could work with the Brazilian nuclear community in terms of generation of nuclear power for peaceful uses. Our space community, NASA, had a strong interest in working with the Brazilians on certain scientific projects for two reasons: one, because the Brazilians had a pretty significant scientific community of their own; and two, because of where Brazil sits and because of the big chunk of the globe that Brazilian territory represents. A lot of the sort of science that NASA does nowadays is using space as a platform to do look back at earth, checking for things like global warming and so forth. Well, you have to have a satellite up there doing it but you also have to have ground stations to work with the satellite, and if you could have access to Brazilian territory, it was a good thing. Well, the Brazilian scientific community was very keen to work with NASA because that was like the seal of Good Housekeeping approval, that they were legitimate, they were worthwhile, they were world class, they were players, they were at the table. So we basically dangled NASA cooperation and to some degree nuclear cooperation and offered to reduce restrictions on things like sales of supercomputers and things like this to Brazil if they would play ball on a number of these nonproliferation issues. What happened was it was a great success story. During this period - and it began when I was Deputy Director in the office and continued the three years that I was in Brasilia - they basically did everything that we asked, right up through ratifying a nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) in 1998. This was something that they had refused to do for years. They would go on and on and on at the UN and international conferences. They were as rabidly opposed to the MCTR as India was and Pakistan. To turn Brazil around and get Brazil to sign these accords, to ratify them, to become an advocate of non-proliferation was a major change.

*Q: Was this a new generation coming on the scene?*

CASWELL: Absolutely. It would be a simplification to do say it was all Fernando Henrique Cardoso. He embodied it, but it was a generational change in terms of the people who ran Brazil and Brazilian institutions. The Brazilian Foreign Minister during this period, Luis Lampreia, was much more Western oriented and attuned than Brazilian foreign ministers...

*Q: Prior to this the Brazilians have always been considered to do have one of the most professional foreign services, but at the same time, when one looks behind that, it's been essentially not structured as foreign service. It's all defensive, not very positive. They can be well versed in how to stop something from happening.*

CASWELL: I think because it grew out of a tradition dating back to the Baron of Rio Branco and Rui Barboza, who were the great figures of Brazilian diplomacy at the turn of the century- (end of tape)

As I was saying, the Brazilian diplomatic tradition dates back to do the period when Brazil was, although territorially large, in international terms a small, weak country of the periphery which felt excluded from the circles of power and vulnerable, if you will. It was big in terms of territory, but it had a relatively small population base. Its economy was agrarian and depended on natural resources, and they felt as though they were not players in the international circles that counted and in that international system, in a world in which there were big powers, they could be in effect manipulated or victimized or controlled by greater powers from outside and what they needed to do was to use diplomacy as a way to blunt the superior political, military and

economic powers of other countries. It was a kind of a diplomacy based upon a neurosis, I think, that other people were out to control and take advantage of them. We're sitting on a lot of wealth and natural resources and potential, but we can't control it all, and if we don't look out, other people are going to come in and control it for us and control us.

*Q: How effective did you find the Brazilian embassy in Washington? Some embassies seem to know how to play the Washington game. In other words, you don't stick just to the State Department, you're on the Hill, you're in the media, you're in the powers of Georgetown, you're all over.*

CASWELL: The fast answer is the Brazilian embassy is better than most. I wouldn't say the Brazilian embassy was better than the good European embassies or the Japanese embassy, but they definitely understood that you don't just go to the State Department and you don't just talk to the desk officer. Actually just about the time that I started as Deputy Director in the office, they were having a major change of personnel at the Brazilian embassy. The outgoing ambassador, Ambassador Ricupero was a very bright man, sort of patrician and a bit on the academic side but was very good, and he was effective. But the guy that he was replaced by was Fleixa de Lima, who had been a lion of Brazilian diplomacy for years and years and was more rough-and-tumble and had a more of a nationalist edge to him than Ricupero. He was extraordinarily effective. This guy was very activist. He talked to do Alec Watson, but he basically didn't want to be seen wasting his time with any below the level of the Under Secretary of State. That was what he felt was his appropriate entry point. He was all the time pushing the envelope to see people at the seventh floor in the State Department, with some success, and he would call a lot over at the NSC and managed to get in over there, and he worked the Hill and he worked the media. He came here after being the ambassador in London. He had a younger wife. Fleixa de Lima must have been easily up in his '60s. His wife was probably 20 years younger than he was, a nice, personable, good-looking woman, and they were always great about giving parties and spent a lot of money and had a lot of style. Brazilians were great for bringing in acts and they had various Brazilian samba singers and bossa nova singers, and they would be all the time doing things, and then they'd have a party surrounding that and so forth and so on. They cut a very wide swath in the social circuit when they were in London. Somehow - I don't really know the particulars of it - Mrs. Fleixa de Lima got to be close with Lady Diana...

*Q: Princess Diana.*

CASWELL: ...Princess Diana, pardon me, and Princess Diana - I'm not a great student of her, but with her death and so forth you read these different things - I guess she was sort of an insecure, unhappy woman in some ways, and for some reason Mrs. Fleixa de Lima struck up a personal relationship with Diana and it was kind of like she was Diana's mother or an aunt or something like this. They not only played that for an entree in London society but they continued to work it here in Washington with some success. I don't know whether when you were around you paid attention, you looked in the Style section of the papers, but about every three or four months Princess Diana was here in Washington and she was staying at the Fleixa de Lima's house, and they were using her for the publicity and having parties featuring her to get in to see people, to make contacts with people on the Hill and newspaper community and so forth and so on. So they were very good about that sort of thing.

*Q: Brazil is obviously a very important country and often neglected, I think, in our relationship. How did things go during this '93-to do-'95 period, by the time you finished there? Did you feel things were really moving on the fast track as far as coming up with things that were of mutual benefit to the two countries?*

CASWELL: With Brazil, absolutely, because the major thing was that Cardoso got elected President. I ended up writing, if you will, a strategy or a think piece that the NSC asked us to do. It focused on where are we in our relationship with Brazil, which has been very problematic over history, and where can we go. We made the argument that the election of Cardoso as president - he took office on January 1, 1995 - offered a real opportunity to do build upon some recent progress that I was talking about, which was just starting with the nonproliferation stuff, the greater science and technology cooperation, that they were establishing a basis for more sustainable growth on the economic side, and therefore, the potential for economic partnership with them was growing and, with that, partnership in the political, broader political, way in tackling problems in the hemisphere and international peacekeeping issues because Brazil was coming into the Security Council in one of the rotating seats. So there were a lot of things that we could do with the Brazilians with Cardoso coming in as President. We saw setting the tone for the new administration and knowing about Cardoso's background, his openness to cooperating with the United States and seeing cooperating with the United States as precisely the way to get a seat at the big table, which had long been one of Brazil's traditional goals. But Cardoso saw a different way to get a seat at the table than the old confrontational way, as head of the Group of 77 leading the charge against the ramparts of the Western powers. So we argued, and we got an invitation for Cardoso to come and visit Washington in the first months of his administration to boost him to the extent that we could and cement a relationship at the presidential level that could be a resource for us in the State Department and people in the Defense Department, the Treasury Department and so forth, trying to do build a broader and deeper and more constructive relationship with the top political figure in a country that could be an asset not just in the region but globally. So there was a lot of hope there.

Argentina too, it was a very positive relationship compared to historically what it had been with Argentina. Menem also sort of turned things on their head. Argentina had made a career out of giving us diplomatic hotfoots over the years, and here was a guy who seemed bound and determined to become a preferred partner of the United States. Whenever we asked them to do something, he'd say not only, "Yes," but, "Yes, amen." It was a really remarkable change in that relationship. But we had limitations in what we could do with Argentina, and a lot of that came out of the Falklands/Malvinas War.

*Q: We'll talk a little more about Argentina the next time. Two questions: One, did the Brazilian-United States, going back to do the Pact of Rio or whatever it was in 1942 or something with the Ecuador-Peruvian border thing, did that flare up at all while you were on the desk.*

CASWELL: Oh, yes, big time.

*Q: I guess it's time to move on. In '95 where'd you go?*

CASWELL: I went back to do Brasilia.

*Q: You were there from '95 to do...*

CASWELL: '98. Initially I went down as the Deputy Chief of the Political Section but with the notion that I might possibly move up because the man who had been political counselor was expected to do retire during the three-year stint that I was going to do be there. In fact, that happened and I ended up the last two years being political counselor.

*Q: Who was your ambassador?*

CASWELL: Mel Levitsky

*Q: And how did he operate?*

CASWELL: Well, Ambassador Levitsky was a man who spent much of his career dealing with Soviet Union/Eastern Europe, but his first tour or so had been in Brazil way back in the mid-'60s. He had served a little bit in Brasilia and he had served up in Belém in a consulate we had up there at the mouth of the Amazon. So he brought some knowledge of Brazil with him and certainly a historical perspective and pretty good Portuguese. He was a very active ambassador, and he tried to do a lot of public diplomacy. He worked closely with USIS and he gave a lot of press interviews. He was very high profile, unlike some ambassadors who had preceded him who had been very much sort of back-room kind of guys that just went to the Foreign Ministry. Levitsky was a very public figure in Brazil, and he seemed to be respected for it. He was considered to do be a very effective representative of the United States. This was a period in U.S.-Brazilian affairs which was very, very positive. It was said repeatedly in the time period that I was there that U.S.-Brazilian relations were perhaps the best they had ever been in the history of the two countries. In large part this was because of President Cardoso and his internationalist views, who was trying very hard, kind of like Menem to have Brazil become a respected international player welcome at the table in the circles of the big powers, as it were, and to be taken seriously and to be a constructive player not just on issues in the region, in Latin America or South America, but internationally as well. So because of Cardoso' bent, his outlook, and the person he brought in to be Foreign Minister of Brazil, Luis Lampreia, who had spent a considerable amount of time in the United States and lived in Washington (he considered Washington almost like a second home), and also the Finance Minister, another man who had spent a lot of time in Washington, had worked at one time, I think, in the IMF, a lot of the people, senior people, in Brazilian government were attuned to the United States and U.S. news, and it made cooperation possible. They did a number of positive things in the nonproliferation area which we had been concerned about; they started doing the right things, and so this opened up the avenue for a lot of cooperation.

*Q: I was asking the question about how the Argentine embassy and the Chilean embassy worked in the United States. Particularly as a political officer, how did you work in Brasilia? They've got a congress. Is it called a congress?*

CASWELL: Right, exactly.

*Q: Was it comparable? Could you sort of walk the halls of the congress and go to do committee and staff and all that, or was it a different matter?*

CASWELL: Well, the Brazilian congress: it might be hard to believe it could be more disorganized than the American Congress, but in fact it is. There are many more parties in Brazil. We're talking at any time 15 to 20 parties might be represented in the Brazilian congress. The Brazilian parties themselves, there were about four or five of them that were major parties, but those parties were more parties in name, and they themselves were sort of incoherent and inconsistent. So it made the Brazilian congress this great amorphous mass that was really very preoccupied by domestic politics and domestic political issues. The Brazilian congress really didn't pay much attention to foreign affairs. There was the equivalent to do the House International Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, but they didn't have anywhere near the influence or role in shaping Brazilian foreign policy that the U.S. Congress has. So we would go to talk to Brazilian congressmen and staffs, and they certainly were accessible, and I think they liked the attention, but they always wanted to talk to us about visas, visas for their constituents or visas for their relatives or people who had friends who were living in the States who wanted to bring a maid. It was always those sorts of things they wanted to talk about, and we were usually wanting to talk to them about domestic politics, say, "What's your estimate of President Cardoso? Is he going to get his constitutional reform program through, or isn't he going to? Is his hand weaker or stronger because this happened or that happened?" It was always those sorts of things. So we would go over to the congress to talk and to learn more, but it was always about that, it wasn't so much about foreign policy issues. Now, the only exception to that was one issue which was called SIVAM, which was an Amazon surveillance project. Again, it came out of what I've mentioned before, this neuralgia that the Brazilians have long harbored that they really didn't have adequate control over the Amazon, that the Amazon was this great prize out there that was not being exploited, that somehow maybe someone might even come along and take it away from them if they didn't exercise adequate sovereignty. A program to try to begin to address that problem was the so-called SIVAM. Basically it involved a number of things, but where the United States got involved was a radar-monitoring surveillance element to do it, both land-based radar and airborne radar. The Raytheon Corporation got involved in bidding on this contract. When the SIVAM people put out requests for proposals, Raytheon, along with several others - there was a French group, there was a German group, and there was another American group besides Raytheon, I think. Anyway, what happened was Raytheon ended up winning the contract ultimately, but it became a political football. Because it involved money and spending and domestic issues relating to the Amazon, the Brazilian congress became very, very involved in the issue of SIVAM and whether the contract was properly let or not. When the French lost the contract, they alleged through their local supporters, who had hoped to get pieces of the action if the French had won the contract, that there had been undue political influence used, that maybe there was bribery going on, and so forth and so on. There was a commission of parliamentary inquiry in the congress looking into supposed sculduggery involved in the SIVAM contract. That was a big issue that involved the bilateral relationship, because we were lobbying in support of Raytheon's bid like crazy, right up to do the level of President Clinton himself, calling up or sending letters to President Cardoso saying how wonderful Raytheon's technology was and if there was anything that we could do to do help out. The Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown, made I don't know how many trips to do

Brazil, and we were really promoting this thing like crazy. We managed to come up with a big EXIM (The Export-Import Bank of the U.S.) funding, 1.3 billion dollars in credits to sell this stuff.

*Q: What was this? I'm trying to figure it out. Was this to prevent Ecuadorian planes from overflying the place?*

CASWELL: It had a number of angles to do it. National security was an element. It could have that element, but it was not fear of Ecuador or Peru more the issue of national security had nothing to do with the fear of Ecuador or Peru launching their air force into the Amazon. It had to do with the fact that the Brazilian authorities didn't have any idea who was flying over the Amazon or what was going on up there. There was no air traffic control, and so there were narcotraffickers. In effect what gave a big boost to getting full EX-IM funding for all aspects of the project was its counter-narcotics aspect, because parts of the project, as I mentioned before, involved airborne radars, and the systems would be put aboard C130 type aircraft. Apparently some of the equipment was considered to be "dual-use" equipment of a potential military nature and EX-IM, because it's a civilian agency, cannot use its credit to finance the purchase of military or "dual-use" equipment unless there's a certification that the equipment could be or is to be used primarily, or there's a justification to use it, for counter-narcotics purposes. So because of this angle and this concern in Brazil - and we as a government shared it - that parts of the Amazon airspace were being increasingly used by drug traffickers, and because the Brazilian air force didn't know what was going on, couldn't intercept these narcotrafficker aircraft, the Counter-Narcotics Bureau in the State Department, INM, certified that this project would be used, had a valid use, for this purpose, and with that certification EX-IM was able to certify those "dual use" elements, the key elements, of the project. Otherwise, the financing package would not have covered all of the equipment. The U.S. financing package would have been inferior to the French offer, and Raytheon probably would have lost the contract to Alcatel or Thompson or whoever it was that was on the French side - I forget now. So that was an important part of it.

Another part of the project which had its supporters in the United States as well as in Brazil was for environmental reasons. Apparently they could use some of this SIV AM equipment to survey what was going on in the Amazon, to pick up better forest fires, economic activity which was not licensed, not allowed, goldminers going into parts of the Amazon where they weren't supposed to be and digging everything up, or settlers going in and chopping down trees that they shouldn't have. The idea was that SIV AM could be the eyes and ears of different agencies of the Brazilian government. The Brazilian Government Agencies had responsibilities in the Amazon area but were unable to exercise those responsibilities because they didn't know what was going on. It wasn't a cheap fix, but it was a way of using technology to extend the reach of the Brazilian government into this big part of the country. That was an important project and, as I said, it went right up to the presidential level. It went on for an incredibly long time period. I remember the project coming out, being described, and getting calls from Raytheon, "Can you give me more information? We're going to do submit a bid," back in 1993 when I was in the Office of Brazilian Affairs, and Raytheon won the contract in 1995 just before I left Washington to go to Brasilia, and the reverberations, the parliamentary inquiries, the charges of corruption and influence peddling and so forth, and congressional investigations went on through '96 to '97. I don't think that the agreement was really basically finalized until just before I left in 1998, and

then they were just going into the first implementation stages. I'm not quite sure. They probably have some elements of the project up and running now in the year 2000, but I bet it won't be fully completed till about 2005 or so. Other than that sort of thing, the Brazilian congress basically said, "Whatever Itamaraty," which was the name of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry, "they're the professional - whatever they want goes." Congress had a role of ratifying treaties, but it was not a big contentious thing basically. The whole problem was to get them to ever do anything. Itamaraty would submit agreements for ratification, but then they'd say, "It's in the hopper, but we have no idea when those guys are going to get around to actually ratifying it." They weren't actively deliberating; they just took a long time to get around to ratifying agreements. [Sometimes a Congressman or a small group might hold things up - either because they disagreed on substance or to get government support on another issue.]

*Q: Had there developed a Brasilia life by this time? Before, everybody was trying to head back to Rio, but by this time was it a real city?*

CASWELL: Oh, yes, it was a real city. It had shopping centers, it had parks, and it had movie theaters, and it had its equivalent to the Kennedy Center for the culturephiles, and it had developed a little bit more variety. When it was originally designed, it was designed by an urban planner, Lucio Costa, and an architect, Oscar Niemeyer, who were socialists if not communists and were great fans of places like East Berlin and Moscow in terms of architecture. They felt that Brasilia would be a kind of a reaction to or rejection of the opulence and ostentation of the wealthy in places like Rio de Janeiro. What they wanted to promote was getting everybody to live in big apartment blocks, that everything looks the same. They also had a sort of a 1950s notion of modernity, and they were in love with - I guess they got this from the United States - they were in love with the automobile and freeways. So they built the city around automobiles and large apartment blocks and large government buildings, and most of the government buildings looked like big dominoes. They have a mall like the mall in Washington, at least in name, and along this mall they had all the different ministries, and it looked like a series of dominoes that some giant might knock over. But Brasilia is set on this high semi-arid plain with a city that's spread out over a huge area with virtually no sidewalks, no street life. To get anyplace you basically had to do drive there. For a long time they prided themselves on the fact they didn't have any traffic lights, there were no traffic lights. When I was in Brasilia, they were saying they'd just gotten their first traffic light in 1994 or something like that, because the city had grown to the point where they could no longer not have traffic lights. I guess I'm rambling. But that's why it had that sort of sterile feel to it. It was the antithesis of Rio de Janeiro, the antithesis of Sao Paulo, and that's why it was so unpopular with Brazilians, because Brazilians are very urban people and they're flashy, stylish people. They don't all want to live in big apartment complexes that all look the same, and they want to do have street life, so that's why Brasilia was so unpopular for a long time. Well, there are aspects of the city that remain sterile and so forth to this day, but with Brazilian genius for having a good time and for style and *joie de vive* and all that sort of thing, they basically had made it into much more of a city, and they created another part that was not part of the original plan that gave the upper middle class and well-to-do a suburban living style. It was almost like suburban southern California, in the area south of the lake and that's where most of the diplomats, for example, lived, and a lot of the people from the Brazilian Foreign Ministry lived over there, too. There it was a very nice, sort of suburban lifestyle, large houses, large, airy houses, and pools in the back yard, small shopping

centers, and it was quite pleasant. It was a good place to have a family. Its night life had not gotten to the point where it could be a match for Rio's or Sao Paulo's, but if you had a family, there was a lot more space for children and it was a better place to be than cramped and cooped up in an apartment in Rio.

*Q: Any sort of political challenges to the United States within the body politic of Brazil at the time?*

CASWELL: Political challenges? I can't say that there were. The major issues: Cardoso was trying to pursue a course of action that required constitutional reforms to do some of the things he wanted to do, to consolidate the process of opening up the Brazilian economy and privatizing the Brazilian economy and to get better control of the Brazilian budget, which was required if he was going to keep inflation under control. That was the major preoccupation of the Brazilian government, biting the bullet and making these reforms. The Brazilian Constitution is like the Manhattan phone book - it's very thick and specifies all kinds of things - to make significant changes in the Brazilian economy and regain control over the government budget, you had to change the Constitution, and so you had to get a two-third majority to make a lot of these changes. So this was politically a very difficult thing for the government to try to do and they were very much preoccupied with that. Those sorts of changes were very much in the interests of the American business community. Both people who had already invested in Brazil or people who wanted to think about future investments in Brazil or who wanted to sell in Brazil were very interested in the opening of the Brazilian economy and the stabilization of the currency and getting the fiscal reforms to get the budget under control so inflation wouldn't come back. All that was very positive.

On regional security issues the Brazilians, like we talked about before in the Peru-Ecuador process, they were very constructive. They were very helpful and supportive sharing our concerns about the threat to democracy, such as it was, in Paraguay. There was a rogue general named Lino Oviedo who was threatening a coup against the constitutionally elected president of Paraguay. There was a question of whether there'd be a coup in Paraguay. Paraguay's a funny country. The Brazilians used to joke that Paraguay was their Haiti, so they understood our problems with Haiti since they had similar sort of problems with political instability, crime, etc. in Paraguay affecting Brazil. Well, we would collaborate or we would coordinate closely with the Brazilians as well as the Argentines, who also had some influence in Paraguay, about problems there. As I said before, Brazilians were doing the right thing on a number of things relating to nuclear non-proliferation, missile technology nonproliferation, after years of basically challenging the U.S. position on these things.

The Brazilian government even agreed to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, the NPT, which was a major reversal. The Brazilians, along with the Indians and the Pakistanis, had been major remaining opponents. Brazil finally came on board with that and tried to cooperate and tried to bring pressure to do bear on people like the Indians to also come along.

Human rights, there was another question where for years and years we fought and tangled a lot with the Brazilians about human rights issues. Cardoso agreed and named in effect a kind of minister for human rights, as it were. Actually it wasn't a full-blown minister but a senior officer

within the Justice Ministry. After years of criticizing our annual human rights report, the Brazilian government began to put out its own human rights report, which was critical of the situation in various parts of Brazil where you had real problems with police running amok or landowners taking the law into their own hands, a lot of problems like that. The Brazilian government said they agreed there were problems and they were trying to do the right thing to protect human rights.

They were also trying to do the right thing in terms of stopping or controlling the environmental degradation in the Amazon. Maybe it wasn't always as much as we would have liked to do see, but they were moving in the right direction.

We did have some problems, but they were relatively minor ones. There was an extradition case when I was there involving a man who was wanted for arson and murder in the Seattle area - he was named Martin Pan - and he fled to Brazil because we didn't have a really good up-to-date extradition treaty with Brazil. It was a very antiquated and difficult extradition treaty to work, and I guess he somehow got the idea that Brazil would be a good place to avoid the long reach of U.S. law enforcement agencies. He hired a clever lawyer and we had a prolonged problem, because literally any extradition out of Brazil had to be handled by the Brazilian Supreme Court. So it was a prolonged process, it was a difficult process, and differences between Brazilian law and U.S. law, particularly as they define the crimes of arson and murder and the death penalty, made it very difficult to get him extradited. We ended up having repeated calls from Janet Reno, both to the ambassador and Brazilian justice minister...

*Q: Secretary of Justice.*

CASWELL: ...yes, our Attorney General Janet Reno to the Brazilian minister of justice. Eventually we succeeded, but it was a soap opera. It went on for three years.

*Q: We have all sorts of movies based on people from England and the United States heading off to do Brazil with their ill-gotten gains. This is where you go.*

CASWELL: That's probably where Martin got the idea.

*Q: Were we working on trying to get a better extradition treaty?*

CASWELL: Indeed, we were interested in maybe at some point getting a better extradition treaty, but as a first step we proposed negotiating something called an MLAT, a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, which would improve cooperation between law enforcement agencies. Indeed we were able to negotiate one, and when President Clinton came down to visit in 1997, we were able to sign it. That was one of about, I think, four agreements. One of them was this Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty which we signed. We were also in the process of opening up an FBI office in the embassy just as I was leaving. I think it has since opened. So I wouldn't doubt that at some point we would try to get a better extradition treaty with Brazil, because I think our current extradition treaty might even date to the 19th century.

*Q: Anybody who sees movies or reads anything knows that, if you get in trouble, head for Brazil*

*and take lots of money with you.*

CASWELL: Yes, and Ronald Biggs, who was the notorious man from the great train robbery in Britain of the 1960s, even went one step further and got a Brazilian girlfriend and got her pregnant. There was one aspect of Brazilian law that said that anybody who had a Brazilian child couldn't be extradited.

*Q: One of the more pleasurable ways of avoiding the law.*

CASWELL: That's right. Ronald Biggs was enjoying himself on a Copacabana beach for a number of years. As I said, Brazil, like Argentina, had period of history where they did challenge us internationally, regularly, frequently, and they seemed to do it with relish. But in the time period I was there in the 1990s, for instance, Brazil came onto the Security Council. Brazil was ambitious to get a permanent seat in an expanded Security Council, but they're frequently elected to one of the two rotating seats that Latin Americans have, and their turn came up again while I was in Brasilia. They cooperated very well with us both in New York and down in Brasilia. It got to the point where I used to joke with my counterpart who was the head of the UN division at Itamaraty, I said, "I ought to have a coffee mug here with my name on it, because I'm here every day." Sometimes I would get four or five messages with immediate precedence, on issues relating to the Security Council: "Go in there and sound out the Brazilians on this or try to get the Brazilians to support us on this resolution or that." Brazil was very, very positive on the need for Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions and insisting on full access for the UN inspectors, and all this was from a country that previously had pretty much supported the Iraqis really up to the time of the Persian Gulf War in 1991.

*Q: What about the media? How important did you find the media?*

CASWELL: The Brazilian media, unlike in the time period when I was there as a junior officer in the mid-'70s when the Brazilian media was censored and muzzled, was very lively in the time period of the '90s. Obviously there was no more censorship, and it was very competitive. You had all kinds of media: private television. There was no government television. Although TV and radio were private, there were several large networks, the biggest of which was called Globo, which means globe, and they were very, very popular and they had a nationwide reach. Brazilians of all economic and social classes watched TV, paid attention to TV, and probably got most of their news, to the extent that they paid attention to news, through the television. But Brazil also had a pretty well developed newspaper industry. You had flagship newspapers like the *Estado de Sao Paulo* and the *Journal do Brasil* in Rio de Janeiro, and Globo had a newspaper also in Rio de Janeiro, which were in effect national newspapers, and they were very, very high quality, especially *Estado de Sao Paulo*. I would put it on a par with the *New York Times*. *Estado de Sao Paulo* was in the Brazilian political spectrum a fairly conservative paper. It was pro-Cardoso and what he was trying to do, and they were favorable to the business community. But there were other papers that were just as good that were, to do put it in American context, liberal, that were critics of the government, such as *Folha de Sao Paulo* was one of those that was very critical of the Cardoso government. Then there were a lot of what in Britain is called popular press, sort of trashy, sensationalist newspapers. [And every major provincial city had its own newspaper, sometimes several.] So you could get a wide range of opinion and quality of news

coverage in newspapers in the country, and it was very competitive. These newspapers, I think were pretty much financially viable. It wasn't like there were a lot of them folding. I think if Brazilians cared to read the news, they could get just about anything that they wanted.

*Q: I would think as political counselor you would have to spend a lot of your time sort of melding reports, because you have Sao Paulo, which is the business center, probably the greatest one in Latin American, and then you've got Rio, where a lot of the life is and all that, and you're up in Statist Brasilia. In other words, you really have three different places hundreds of miles apart and all of that, so people aren't trotting back and forth so much there. How did you work this?*

CASWELL: I recall there were about five of us in Brasilia in the political section, and there was a political reporting officer in Rio, there was a political reporting officer, actually one full-time middle-grade officer, and a second junior officer who helped out in Sao Paulo, and then there was a consul up in Recife, which is one of the principal cities in the northeastern part of Brazil, who was also by trade a political officer and liked doing political reporting. So I would coordinate a lot with those officers in the field on reporting. I would suggest topic areas that I felt that they could contribute to our national reporting. Obviously if you're doing an election, national elections, they would contribute to that. They also had certain issues that were important issues within their consular district that could have an effect on the political climate in the country and the government's handling of them, particularly human rights issues, labor-related issues and strikes and crackdowns. There was also a labor reporting officer in Sao Paulo and we would coordinate his reporting. So, yes, a lot of the national political reporting we would do out of Brasilia, but I was always anxious to get the Consulates to provide some counterpart reporting or contributions to what we were reporting. I guess it was Haldeman or Erlichman in the Nixon administration who asked the question, "How's it playing in Peoria?" We were always looking for that sort of angle, how are the government's policies playing out in terms of popular reactions or impact in the major population centers of [Brazil, in our reporting because sitting in Brasilia you could easily suffer from the myopia of just hearing the government's viewpoint.]

*Q: At an earlier time I sort of understood that you had these governors who were sort of semi-autonomous, not warlords but more than just being a governor of a state. They were dukes, I guess.*

CASWELL: They were, that's true and it is still true. Still the political system is rather decentralized. As I was saying before when I was talking about the national political parties, in effect they were national political parties in name, but the reality was there were these different regional barons within the parties, so, for example, the PFL, the Liberal Front Party, might have one sort of character in northeastern Brazil and a rather different sort of character down in Sao Paulo, and that reflected the personalities of the king-makers in those particular districts, and many times those people were the governors of the states.

Governors had a lot of power. It was curious, they would also not only have the power within their own states, but also over their state's congressional delegation in Brasilia, because there was revenue sharing. The way tax monies were divvied up, a lot of the federal money wouldn't necessarily stay with the federal government. It would get transferred to the states and even to

the large cities. In the time period that I was in Brasilia, the big city mayors got a bigger cut of the federal resources. And since the governors could control a lot of the spending, how the money was spent, through patronage and through deciding who was going to get this contract to build the new courthouse or to build this or to build that, they had a lot of political clout, because controlling money controls political power.

But it was even worse than that, and this was one of the things that the Cardoso administration was trying to come to grips with. Historically in the United States we have a pattern where states generally are required in their own state constitutions to balance their budgets, and if somebody runs a deficit, it's the federal government, it's the federal budget, which might get out of control, if you want to say that. Brazil is just the opposite. The states didn't seem to feel any need at all to balance their budgets. Not only did they take the money that Brasilia gave them through these revenue sharing automatic transfers and spend that, but they'd spend even more. I don't know why - I guess it was even constitutional - there was a requirement that the central bank would have to lend money to the states to cover what they had spent beyond their means. So this was in effect encouragement for fiscal irresponsibility on the part of these governors. They would spend and they would spend and they would spend, especially in election years for political reasons, and Brasilia always ended up picking up the tab. The result was that over the years states built up these tremendous, tremendous debts to the central bank which they could never pay back. All they ever did was negotiate rollover agreements. Cardoso and his finance minister were trying to get this process under control, and this was one of the constitutional reforms they were trying to get through Congress to stop this abusive practice. But, of course, because the governors have a lot of political power, they had political power because of these spending patterns, they could dictate almost to their state delegations in the congress, "Don't you vote for that." As of the time I left Brasilia, they still had not gotten this under control. They were trying to negotiate using these rollover agreements on the debt coming due. They were saying, "We'll only agree to do roll over your state's debt if you agree to do these strict spending guidelines." They were trying to get it under control that way, but it was difficult.

*Q: Was there any particular point in going around and pressing the flesh of the governors and all that?*

CASWELL: Oh, certainly, and because usually from the ranks of the governors were the future presidents of Brazil recruited, yes, you would want to get to know these people because some of them were going to be powerful voices in national politics. Even if they didn't run for reelection, they might leave that job as governor but then become a senator, and then in a few years they would go back and run for governor again because the governorship was really much more powerful than being a Federal senator. They were always employed but they would come and go as governors. Cardoso was never governor of Sao Paulo, he was a senator from Sao Paulo. But his immediate predecessor, Itamar Franco had been governor of Minas Gerais. Here's an example for you - the man who was president of Brazil before Cardoso, after he left the presidency, he got angry at Cardoso because he felt that Cardoso was too big for his britches or whatever, so he decided to plan a comeback, so what did he do? He got himself elected in Minas Gerais again, and as governor of Minas Gerais he did give Cardoso a bad time on some issues relating to this deficit spending and basically trying to obstruct Cardoso's efforts to get Brazil's deficit under control, which then caused problems with Brazil's international credit ratings and

caused Brazil's international borrowing costs to go up, all because of this one disgruntled guy who was the governor of Minas Gerais, and he's probably planning to try to make a comeback and someday become president of Brazil again. It's interesting to see that, after you've been president of Brazil, what's the next best job? to be governor of Minas Gerais. The President before him, Fernando Collor de Mello had been governor of his state, Alagoas. So, yes, even from a dinky little state like Alagoas - someday the president of Brazil may be the governor from that state.

*Q: Did you have problems traveling around the country?*

CASWELL: No, they have well developed airlines in Brazil. Because of Brazil's size, early on they developed airlines and they had several domestic airlines, so you can fly to any of the state capitals. You have your choice of flights just about anywhere.

*Q: Was it hard to find money for this, for you all?*

CASWELL: Well, the ambassador had obviously the biggest representational budget and travel budget, but they were pretty fair in terms of apportioning out monies for traveling. We would also try to take advantage of the defense attaché's office, which had access to an aircraft. They would use that aircraft to fly out to defense bases, military installations, around Brazil, and you could hop aboard those flights and go off to talk to local mayors or the governor or lieutenant governor or whatever.

*Q: Were we keeping an eye on the military by that time? Obviously we keep an eye on them, but were we feeling pretty comfortable with the military being out of politics?*

CASWELL: Totally. The situation with the Brazilian military in the 1990s was kind of like the situation with the Argentine military in that the prolonged time period in government in the 60s through the 80s had come to be seen as corrosive of the military institution by the military itself. The military lost popularity. At first when they took over and they threw out João Goulart in 1964, they were seen as saviors, the Brazilian military. People thought in 1964, oh well, they'll just be in, they'll sort of set things on an even keel, and then they'll get out and they'll turn it back to the politicians again. Well, that didn't happen. For a few years the military had their detractors, but then they had their supporters in the business community because military rule ended the inflation and the economy was going along pretty well for a few years. Then the economy turned sour and concerns about human rights abuses and so forth increased. By the 1980s or so, the economy got so bad, the military was very unpopular, so they basically decided it was time to go back to the barracks. What they found was that the longer they concentrated on doing their military job - and in Brazil that means a lot of it had to do with focusing on the Amazon because in many parts of the Amazon the only agency of the Brazilian government that makes any appearance or provides any services is the military. So the longer they did that, the more popular they became. So by the mid-'90s or so, the Brazilian military was totally professionally oriented. They were beginning to get themselves involved in international peacekeeping operations. They had been looking at what the Argentines had been doing and decided maybe that was a good mission, together with the Amazon. By that time the Brazilian armed forces were once again the institution in the country that was held in the highest popular

esteem. The armed forces enjoyed popular confidence way above politicians and used car dealers.

*Q: Well, they'd learned their lesson, too.*

CASWELL: Yes, I think they had learned their lesson. There was a substantial difference in the generations, however. They had a military club, they called it. Particularly down in Rio de Janeiro, this Military club still had disgruntled old retired officers who harkened back to the old days when they were in government or the military was running the show. They felt as though things maybe weren't being run all that well by civilians in Brazil - there's too much crime and there's too much lewdness on the TV and there's too much disorder, and the press can say anything. Those guys are still disgruntled, and maybe some still think the army should be running the government. The generation that now makes up the active duty general officers and the colonels and the lieutenant colonels and so forth, however, no, they don't want to take over and I don't think they have any inclinations towards trying to run Brazil.

**THEODORE WILKINSON**  
**Political Counselor**  
**Brasilia (1994-1996)**

*Theodore Wilkinson was born in Washington, DC in 1934. He received his BA from Yale and his MA from George Washington University. He served as a lieutenant in the US Navy from 1956 to 1960. He entered the Foreign Service in 1961, and his postings include Caracas, Stockholm, Brussels, Mexico City, Tegucigalpa and Brasilia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on January 11, 1999.*

*Q: When you arrived there in '94, what would you describe as America's interests in Brazil?*

WILKINSON: Secretary Christopher came to visit in the spring of 1996, and I was his control officer and went with him on several of his conversations. I thought he put it very nicely at one point in talking to the foreign minister, when he said, "Brazil really can move South America because it's the dominant country of the continent, and when Brazil and the United States are on the same wavelength, we can move the entire Western Hemisphere. And if together we can move the Western Hemisphere, we can move the world." That, of course, is not always the case, but coordinating our goals and policies with Brazil gives us a nucleus of very important solidarity on the basis of which we can achieve a great deal in foreign policy. Brazil and the United States have traditionally not been on the same wavelength. Brazil, throughout the '60s and '70s, probably through much of the '80s, was a Third World country, and was notoriously difficult to manage in international organizations, often not only opposing U.S. points of view but leading contrary movements in the north-south dialogue and sometimes also on security issues. Today, particularly under Cardoso and under his foreign minister, Luis Felipe Lampreia, who is a very sophisticated and American-oriented foreign minister, Brazil is independent and not always in agreement with the United States, but much more tractable and much easier to deal with; and our

interests continue to be in improving that relationship and maintaining that mutual understanding that I think we developed in the last four or five years. Former Brazilian foreign minister, Celso Amorim, is now the ambassador to the United Nations, where Brazil is a member of the Security Council.

He is less helpful and attuned to our wavelength than the current foreign minister, Lampreia. But one example of our interests, and I'll talk a little bit about Brazil's foreign relations when I do that, the Brazilian Foreign Ministry is usually called Itamaraty. That name comes from the palace in Rio where the Baron of Itamaraty had, in effect, given his palace to the government when Brazil became a republic in 1889, and the Foreign Ministry was housed there until the capital moved to Brasilia in 1959. So Itamaraty is very much like the Mexican Foreign Ministry. It's staffed with intellectual people, artists, authors, very proud of their heritage, many of them sons and grandsons of former foreign ministers and cabinet ministers, somewhat democratized, but nowhere near as democratized as the American Foreign Service has become, and a little bit condescending towards the less aristocratic American way of dealing with foreign affairs. Cardoso himself began to change the system to make it somewhat more democratic, and after the beginning of the Cardoso administration, Brazilian diplomats told me they were very happy that people were finally being assigned and promoted on the basis of merit and not on the basis simply of personal friendships. The Brazilians, as evidence of their movement towards the U.S. and growing sympathy for United States foreign policy goals, became members first of the missile technology control regime, an effort sponsored by the U.S. to prevent the proliferation of missile technology. They agreed that they would not allow exports to "rogue" regimes, and then they moved one step further - they had already moved in the previous administration of Fernando Collor to proscribe nuclear weapons, together with Argentina, from their two territories - they converted that commitment into a more general one by becoming parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in the Cardoso Administration.

I was also very impressed when the new foreign minister, even at the beginning of his tenure, announced in his introductory speech that Brazil was going to focus on improving its own record in human rights and would collaborate much more effectively with the UN and with the U.S. in trying to improve human rights performance worldwide. One of their principal diplomats is now the director general of the organization set up in The Hague to police the chemical weapons treaty that is now entering into force.

I also wanted to mention, with regard to the Brazilian Foreign Ministry, that they're paying much more attention, as we are, to non-governmental organizations. That in effect is another example of democratization, where Foreign Ministries, as ours does, draw on the advice and expertise of non-governmental organizations in formulating policies. So we're listening to the experts on the outside, and the Brazilians are doing the same.

So those are some of the thoughts that I was struck with about Brazilian foreign policy and its relationship to the United States during those years that I served there.

*Q: Who was our ambassador while you were there?*

WILKINSON: Our ambassador while we were there was Mel Levitsky. Levitsky is now retired

and teaching at the Maxwell School at Syracuse. But I worked very closely with him. I liked him a lot, and we're still close.

*Q: Were there any particular issues? It sounds like this is really almost a feeling of pleasure working with this new government that came in, that you were both on the same wavelength and that, while there might have been differences, you were really going in the same direction. Did you feel that way at the time?*

WILKINSON: Yes, very much so. Christopher, when he came, in 1996, his last previous visit to Brazil had been in the late '70s, when he was the deputy secretary of State, and he had come down with the message that Brazil was not cooperating with the United States, in particular in the nuclear area. Brazil had just reached an agreement with Germany for the Germans to export nuclear technology and build a number of reactors, the by-product of which could have been used for nuclear weapons, and it was not going to be satisfactorily controlled. And we insisted with Germany and with Brazil that that deal not continue because Brazil was not committed not to produce nuclear weapons. He also was spokesman of the Carter human rights policy, and Brazil's human rights record was being criticized. It was a military government, and there were people who had disappeared. So Christopher had an unenviable diplomatic task in the 1970s, and he was happy when he came in '96 to be able to say, "I no longer have this kind of problem to talk about. The only problems we're talking about are the kinds of disagreements that one has with close friends about how best to achieve something." An example of the kinds of disagreements we had was on the pace and organization of the "Free Trade Area of the Americas" [FTAA]. We had agreed with the Brazilians and others in December, 1994, really just after I got there, at the Miami Summit Conference, the Summit of the Americas, organized by President Clinton, and a keystone of American policy in the hemisphere, to broaden the NAFTA or - if you will - to start from scratch and create a hemispheric free trade zone. And the U.S. at that time, hoping to get "fast track authority" for these negotiations from the Congress, was pressing very hard to move fast on this front in 1995 and 1996. The Brazilians' concern was that their own Southern Cone common market was still in its early stages and wasn't really ready for a complete open market for the entire hemisphere; that their "Mercosur" group, which consisted of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay (with Chile and Bolivia in association), couldn't stand free trade competition directly from the United States yet, and that the pace should be a lot slower. So in the years '96 and '97, we sparred with Brazil about how fast this operation should go, and in the end, when President Clinton was unable to get fast track authority, which he needed to negotiate fully, it became clear that we too were not ready for that accelerated negotiation, and so the issue became a little bit moot. Now the only issues between us and Brazil of any great importance, I think, are how to organize international efforts to improve the environment, given that Brazil has such an important role. And we, of course, want Brazilians to do their best to preserve their own forests and curtail environmental degradation. And Brazil, although committed to that goal, is having difficulties implementing it in its own vast country and is saying, in effect, we need more international help. If we're going to be given so many responsibilities, who is going to help us with the costs? And our attitude is kind of "Don't bother me with the costs; just do it." So that creates a certain amount of disagreement and tension. Of course, the other area of disagreement with Brazil today are our financial norms and the international financial institutions telling Brazil to curtail costs and restore the balance of the federal budget at a time when they're finding it very difficult to do that constitutionally and

legally.

Q: *Were relations by this time pretty good with Argentina?*

WILKINSON: Relations with Argentina were very good. The Brazilians had a tendency and still do to take decisions unilaterally and then tell their Mercosur partners afterward what they've done to increase or lower tariffs and decisions they have been forced to take by international financial pressures. Their neighbors would like to be consulted before they do it, but the neighbors have really no choice because Brazil is so much larger and more... Brazil's economy is probably four or five times that of Argentina and maybe 10 times that of Chile.

I wanted to talk a little bit about a couple of high-level visits that we had, not just the Christopher visit I mentioned before but also the First Lady's visit. The First Lady came-

Q: *You're talking about Hillary Clinton.*

WILKINSON: Hillary Clinton came in the fall of '95, and I was also responsible for that visit. And at least I was control officer for most of the time, and then I was eventually succeeded by a new deputy chief of mission, Lacy Wright, who came to become DCM in the fall of '95. But in the organizational phase of getting ready for Hillary Clinton's visit, her advance team came and went to the state of Bahia, which is the state of the most traditional patriarch of Brazil, a sort of Brazilian "colonel" type who you might compare to an old-style southern landlord, a "king maker." He's now a senator, but he's been a governor three times, and when the advance team said they wanted to go and look at the possibility of her visiting the city of Salvador in the state of Bahia, they said, "We don't want to have any protocol; we just want to go down and look at possible places that she might visit, including in particular public health facilities and social welfare programs, but the governor doesn't need to bother to see us." So we call down and talk to the governor's office and say, Look, this is what we want to do. We don't want any protocol and no visits to the governor *et cetera* for the advance team. And that night I got a call from Senate President Antonio Carlos Magalhães, the king maker, who proceeded to tell me in the most earthy Portuguese for about a half an hour just exactly what was wrong with that idea, that it wasn't appropriate for this team to go down, and they should see the governor first, and they should be in the hands of the governor, who should decide what they were going to do when they were down there. And that was a very difficult problem. We eventually smoothed the ruffled feathers of the Brazilians, but it was not easy to deal with the White House advance team, because they didn't want to be bothered with any of the niceties of international diplomacy, particularly in an area where ladies were not even expected to travel much on their own. There was a lady mayor of the city of Salvador, elected against the opposition of these more conservative so-called "Liberal" politicians who are, in effect, of a very conservative bent, and the governor and the senator all hated her because she was too leftist and because she wanted to educate prostitutes rather than isolate them. She was forward looking, and they were not. So we were also walking into the middle of a domestic political mine field, and that was quite difficult.

Q: *How did the trip go?*

WILKINSON: In the end it went all right. I'm not sure that she left without... I mean, she

personally is a charming and very skillful politician and probably would make a very good senator, so she personally made a very good impression, but her advance team left some bitterness that was never completely dispelled.

*Q: This seems to be a constant problem no matter what administration.*

WILKINSON: No matter what administration, no matter what party and in what country. I'm sure you hear this constantly from people who are telling their oral histories about what difficulties they have with advances. I had a similar problem with Secretary Christopher's visit six months later when it was proposed that Secretary Christopher visit Brasilia for 24 hours, where he would meet with the president and the foreign minister, and then he would go to São Paulo, where he would give a speech to 750 businessmen who had changed their plans, interrupted a Chamber of Commerce weekend at the beach - they were all going to have a retreat, but they'd canceled it - and arranged to be in São Paulo on Saturday for the Secretary. And then he was going to spend a third day in Brazil in Manaus, where he was going to symbolically show his interest in the environmental side of diplomacy; he was going to plant a tree and visit a rainforest and do some symbolic stuff there that would show our American interest in environmental aspects in Brazil. Washington decided at one point, because of events elsewhere, that the Secretary couldn't afford to be gone as long as they had originally foreseen and that he would have to curtail his visit to Brazil by one day. Therefore, they would drop São Paulo. He would go to Brasilia and then go to Manaus, and he would leave high and dry these 750 businessmen who had canceled their weekend away at the beach in São Paulo. This was about a week or 10 days before the visit when it would have been impossible for them to reschedule their original retreat. And of course we said that this was a ridiculous thing to do. You have the most influential businessmen in Latin America, and you're going to stand them up at a time when we're trying to promote American business. And we were told that the policy wonks were in control in Washington, and that the Secretary was about to give a speech on the environment a month later incorporating environmental issues as a cardinal element of American foreign policy, and therefore it was essential that he go to Manaus, and to hell with the businessmen in São Paulo. So ultimately, luckily, whatever it was - it was something to do with the Middle East negotiations - attenuated, and the Secretary was able in the end to spend all three days in Brazil, and the issue disappeared.

Another issue at the time concerned travel in Brazil. The Secretary was coming with his wife, and the ambassador and Mrs. Levitsky proposed to meet and travel with them on the airplane from Brazil to São Paulo to Manaus. And I got a call from Maura Hardy, who is now our ambassador in Paraguay, a young lady who has done very well, because she was a junior officer in Mexico when I first served there in the early '80s, on her first tour. But now she's an ambassador. She called to say there wasn't any room on the airplane for Mrs. Levitsky to do at least one leg of the trip in Brazil. That she would have to fly separately in commercial. And I said to Maura that I thought that she or whoever was responsible needed to rethink that because if the Secretary was flying with his wife, he probably would not want to kick the ambassador's wife off the airplane; he'd want somebody else to get off the airplane and fly commercially. And Maura Hardy said (at that point I was about six months from retirement), "You wouldn't want to jeopardize your career over this issue, would you," as if she were trying to threaten me to drop this point about the ambassador's wife. And I said, "I'm not about to drop it, and I don't think

that Mrs. Christopher or the Secretary himself is going to want to hear the ambassador's wife was kicked off the airplane." And in 30 seconds she had reversed course and agreed to put her on the airplane - silly point, but it just illustrates to me the arrogance of people who tend to see everything from the perspective of convenience of the Washington group that's on this mission, and everything else has to fall by the wayside.

Q: *You then retired in '96, is that right?*

WILKINSON: I retired in the summer of '96. I came back and did the retirement course and then returned to Brazil.

Q: *And do you want to talk about the Ecuador-Peru problem. I find it interesting because I have an interview whose name escapes me right now - it's a well-known name - who was a junior officer on that desk in the early 1940s, who said he was called up by Sumner Welles, who said, "Young man, they're having trouble down in Peru and Ecuador" - this is right in the beginning of World War II - and I want you to settle it. I don't want to be bothered with that sort of thing." That was the beginning of our becoming a guarantor, so I'd like to pick it up now some 50-odd years later. What were you up to then?*

WILKINSON: Well, that's interesting. I wonder who that was.

Q: *He got in trouble with the Un-American Activities Committee, and he was closely associated with Lillian Hellman, who was such a Communist, and this got him in a great deal of trouble. I'll come up with it soon.*

WILKINSON: How interesting. Well, I'm just working on that now because I'm doing a case study to be published for SAIS and the Maxwell School on the Peru-Ecuador negotiations, principally on the dilemmas for American policy involved. And what happened in 1942 was that the two countries had basically struggled over their boundaries from the days of Atahualpa and Huascar in the Inca era and all down through the Spanish colonial period and after independence from 1822 to 1941, and in 1941 the Peruvians, incensed by the Ecuadorian unwillingness to sign a treaty giving up some of their traditional claims, went to war, conquered part of the country, and then negotiated from strength in January, 1942, in Rio de Janeiro at a conference of the foreign ministries of the hemisphere, at which we were represented by Sumner Welles. And even Welles was busy. Cordell Hull was somewhere else. Welles, who was under secretary, was our negotiator at this meeting of foreign ministers, and we pretty much told the Ecuadorians that we had just gone to war with Japan and with Germany and we couldn't afford to be tinkering with a minor border dispute in Latin America, and therefore please sign this treaty, which basically spelled out where the frontier was going to be. It wasn't really a bad treaty from the standpoint of Ecuador because it was very close to the *status quo*, but the *status quo* was a situation that Ecuador didn't like because they had lost bit by bit large portions of the territories east of the Andes and stretching all the way down to the Brazilian border, which they had claimed for centuries before. And they didn't even get access to the Amazon River. They considered themselves to be an Amazon country, but this treaty did not appear to give them access to the westernmost tributary of the Amazon, which is called the Marañón, in what is now northern Peru. So they were not happy with the treaty, but they signed it *force majeure* and then over the

ensuing 50 or 60 years have been trying to find ways to reinterpret it, modify it, or get away from the commitments in the treaty to restore their national dignity and get the some kind of at least nominal access to the Amazon. So that's the story of the Peru-Ecuador dispute in a nutshell. What happened in 1995, when I got involved in it first, shortly after coming to Brazil, was renewed hostilities in one of the disputed areas of the frontier in the Andes, a distance of 50 miles or so from the Marañón, the upper Amazon, but where Ecuador was still trying to preempt a little bit of disputed territory, and the Peruvians resisted, and hostilities soon became quite intense. There were up to 5,000 troops from both countries in the area, and air support was being called in by the Peruvians to dislodge the Ecuadorians from positions up in the mountains. And the guarantors - so designated because they had agreed to guarantee the treaty of 1942 - the U.S., Brazil, Argentina, and Chile, were called once more into action. And in a series of intensive meetings in January, 1995, in Brasilia, then in Rio, then back in Brasilia, we - that is, Alan Watson at first assisted or in company of Mel Levitsky, our ambassador in Brazil, and then Luigi Einaudi subsequently as the special envoy taking Watson's place in the thing (because Watson, as assistant secretary, couldn't sit in Brazil and work on this problem constantly) worked out a declaration. The declaration told the Peruvians and Ecuadorians that we would send in a Peace Observer Force to the area in question, but that in return they would have to pay the costs, and they would have to agree to negotiate a final solution to these remaining areas of dispute, where the interpretation of the 1942 protocol was still being contested.

Then the next question, which was how to organize and dispatch this observer force to the border, what it would consist of. Our Washington team left the site leaving the ambassador and me to work out the details of this force. The Brazilians were to lead it, but the United States was to provide the helicopters, the logistics, in effect to support the force. While we were talking about this, in late February it was agreed that an advance team would go out and look at the area to see how the force could be constituted, and this advance team consisted of a couple of Americans, a Brazilian general and a couple of assistants, some Argentines, and some Chilean military. And the force was due to leave on the morning of, it think it was, February 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**GILBERT J. DONAHUE**  
**Deputy Principal Officer**  
**Sao Paulo (1994-1997)**

*Gilbert J. Donahue was born in Virginia in 1947. He received his bachelor's degree from American University in 1968. His career included positions in Mexico, Ivory Coast, Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, and Brazil. Mr. Donahue was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in April 2000.*

*Q: So, you were in Brazil from August 1994 until when?*

DONAHUE: Until July 1997.

*Q: What was your job?*

DONAHUE: I was deputy principal officer in the Consulate General and head of the combined Economic and Political Section, which also included labor reporting.

Brazil is one of our multiple post missions. That is, in addition to the embassy, there are several constituent posts, including some cities that are more important than the capital city where the embassy is located. In Brazil, both Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo are more important culturally and economically than Brasilia. Other countries with similar characteristics are: Australia, Canada, China, India, South Africa, and Russia. One of the challenges for such a mission is to maintain open lines of communication between the embassy and the posts, coordinate closely on the implementation of the mission plan, and utilize the knowledge and strengths available in each post for the benefit of the overall mission. Brazil was a considerable challenge in this respect. The vast size of the country and the high cost of travel meant that mission personnel were not able to see each other very frequently. Although the entire country is Portuguese-speaking, there are significant regional differences, and each city where the mission had an office has a distinct personality. That meant that there would be a different way to arrange meetings and get things done. Although each of our multiple post countries is distinctive, they all require a special approach to management to ensure that resources are being put to the best use.

*Q: Sao Paulo is the guts of the Brazilian economy. What was the economic situation as we saw it in 1994?*

DONAHUE: Brazil had gone through a very long period under military rule during which its economy had been laid waste. For much of the 1980s, Brazil had experienced double-digit inflation year after year and even triple digit inflation in some of those years, which had really destroyed the middle class and had made life quite difficult for the lower class. Just before I arrived in Brazil, the first president under the new constitution had allowed a new currency to be established with financial management rules that aimed at drastically reducing inflation. This currency was called the Real and was established at one dollar to 90 centavos of a real. So, it was stronger than the dollar when it was established. It did lose ground while we were there so that it got to be at parity with the dollar and then became worth less than the dollar. Nevertheless, it did bring inflation way down. Within the first few months, it brought inflation down to a single digit and then subsequently to close to zero percent per month. So, let's say five percent annually, which for Brazil is historically very good. That had an enormous, galvanizing impact. The person who had been responsible for that policy was the Finance Minister, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who subsequently became President. He was elected in the fall of 1994. Before going down to Brazil, I attended several briefing sessions in the U.S. where academics and others were speculating on whether Cardoso would indeed win the election. It was not certain. His main opponent was a man named Lula, who is a longtime labor leader and has a considerable following, especially in Sao Paulo. He was the head of the Workers' Party. He had never won elected office, but he had always shown well in previous elections. At one time during the summer of 1994, he was actually favored to win based on opinion polls. But the real plan, which actually came into use in July 1994, had shown such success by September and October that it won Cardoso his office as President.

*Q: What kind of things were you involved in? Who was the consul general at the time?*

DONAHUE: At the time that I arrived, the Consul General was Phil Taylor, who had previously been DCM in Guatemala. I was there for his last year as consul general. About the time I arrived, there was a new ambassador, Melvin Levitsky, who went out in the summer of 1994 and wanted to take advantage of a new President, a better economic basis and so forth to bring about a better relationship with the U.S. It was an important time for the U.S. in Brazil. We had had periods of estrangement in our relationship with the Brazilian government during the period of military rule in the 1970s and 1980s. We had gotten along quite well with some of the generals but not with others. We had everything to gain from developing a cooperative relationship with the civilian government and wanted to make it work. We also saw opportunities for U.S. business investments in Brazil and exports from the U.S. We felt that the establishment of a strong currency that was dependable would benefit both of those aims. I think it did. Sao Paulo is the third largest city in the world, certainly the largest in Brazil. Therefore, it had the most voters and a very substantial number of the deputados and senators in the Brazilian Congress. Brasilia is 30 years old now, but it's still seen as a new city where a lot of people from other parts of Brazil do not want to spend any more time than they have to. So, the deputados and senators from coastal Brazil will be in Brasilia typically Tuesday through Thursday for a session and then hightail it out of there to spend as much time back home as they can. Our ambassador found that when those people were in Brasilia during their very short business session, they were too busy to be seen by diplomats. They had more leisure time and were more accessible back in their homes. So, a lot of times, he would visit Sao Paulo and Rio to carry out federal business as much as to show the flag in the provinces because that was his best opportunity to see these people. For Sao Paulo, that was true even for cabinet members. Fernando Henrique Cardoso is from Sao Paulo and chose for his cabinet many people from Sao Paulo. Many of them had come from state positions, and serving on the cabinet of the Sao Paulo state governor was seen as a stepping-stone to the federal cabinet.

*Q: Who was consul general? Who replaced Phil Taylor?*

DONAHUE: Ambassador Melissa Wells replaced him. She was in Sao Paulo for several reasons, mostly personal. Apparently, she had been offered an ambassadorship in South America that went to a political appointee. She had a son living in Sao Paulo, married to a Brazilian, and thought that this was a nice thing to do for her final tour. She had every expectation that this would be her final tour and that she would spend time with her son and grandchild. So, it was most unusual for someone as highly ranked as her to accept a non-ambassadorial position, but she was really delighted to be there. She had previously served in Rio, so she knew Brazil, but she had not served in Sao Paulo.

*Q: During the military time and maybe before, there was a strong wave of "Let's produce everything we can in Brazil." It very much imitated what happened in India. How was that when you arrived there?*

DONAHUE: You've asked about Brazil's industrial and labor policy. It has quite a history. In America, for some reason, Argentina's president, Juan Peron, is better known as having been a strongman who emerged in the '40s and '50s and held sway over Argentina for a number of years. However, there was an equivalent in Brazil, Getulio Vargas. The federal capital was in Rio at the time, so he was more closely associated with Rio than with Sao Paulo. But he had an

incredible impact on the entire country. He fostered a pattern interlinking government, industry, and various social institutions, including labor unions, connecting them together in much the same way that Mussolini did in fascist Italy. There was a kind of French intellectual underpinning to this. Brazilian academics and the Foreign Ministry have a close association with France, with French academic institutions, and with French intellectuals. So, they resisted communism of the Soviet type, but they had a strong affinity for this state-sponsored socialism. There were quite a few rules that were very vigorous, and similar rules had been applied in other parts of Latin America. Nevertheless, I think the Brazilian situation was quite unusual. Partly because of the large size of the country and the need to mobilize substantial capital for its development in some areas, large state enterprises were formed. That included Petrobras, the primary producer and supplier of petroleum in Brazil. However, even now Brazil can produce only about a third of its needs, so it continues to be an oil importer. Nevertheless, Petrobras was a government monopoly, in that sector. Brazil has incredible mineral wealth and there were several large state companies established to oversee extraction of the minerals and the development of infrastructure needed to get to those minerals, which are often in far-flung places. The major company in that sector was the Companhia do Vale do Rio Doce. Virtually all of the railroads had been nationalized and were running as either federal or state corporations. The largest federal one was Fepasa. Brazil had an aviation industry, which still exists but operates more like a private sector company, the main company being Embraer. Then Brazil in the 1970s and '80s realized what was taking place in computers and wanted to develop its own homegrown IBM, a computer-making enterprise that would compete in every way with IBM. By the time I arrived in Brazil, that latter enterprise had already died. Its strength had been in small mainframe computers. The Brazilians eventually realized they could not compete in the PC computer world with the IBM system. So, IBM and other computer companies had already been welcomed back into Brazil by the time I got there. The other major areas where government had strong control were power and communications utilities.

During the period I was in Sao Paulo, efforts were taken to allow private sector competition in wireless communications and then finally the sale of state companies. So, utilities, telecommunications, telephone servicing, railroads, even toll highways and mineral enterprises were being privatized while I was in Brazil. The next big thing was the privatization of the banking sector. Part of the problem was, a lot of face was involved. Brazilians aged 60 and up, and even some younger members of the major families, felt that Brazil derived a great deal of prestige from having large industries of its own in many of these sectors. They resisted sale to foreigners. But they also resisted sweetheart deal sales to other Brazilians.

Many of the small and medium sized companies that had operated under some degree of trade protection, but were not national companies and did not have national or state financial contributions, found it very difficult to continue to operate. During the period of inflation, many wealthy Brazilians and companies as well had been able to stay afloat by playing financial games in their accounts. They would try to collect their bills from creditors as early as they could and delay payment of debts as late as they could. The normal pattern during that period was, an exchange rate would remain fixed for about a month and then would change. So, if you had a foreign purchase, you would try to pay it when your Brazilian funds would buy the most dollars and so forth. You would try to maintain your cash flow at a high level. This was the primary way that many of Brazil's banks made their profits during that period. What happened under the real

plan when inflation was brought down very low was they could no longer play that game. They had to learn to operate their business on the basis of true costs that they could project over time. In other words, when you are dealing with five percent inflation, you probably could project your cost for the next year. This had been impossible under an inflation level of several hundred percent inflation per month. So, they really had to revalue their assets, determine what their true costs were, whether they could afford the payroll, important things like that. Many of the smaller and medium sized companies were quite hard pressed and either went belly up or had to sell out. Many of them did sell to foreign enterprises or entered into a joint venture with foreign enterprises.

*Q: In this 1994-1997 period, I've always thought of Brazil being more oriented towards Europe and maybe Japan than towards the U.S. trade wise and maybe intellectual wise. Was that true or not?*

DONAHUE: I think that has historically been true. Certainly, there has been a clear orientation toward Europe. Also, historically, there was a very strong competition with, and probably mutual hatred, of Argentina, the largest neighbor. Both countries have tended to deride each other. There were several significant changes during the early 1990s that affected those relationships. For a number of reasons, Brazil and Argentina found it useful to try to foster and establish their own common market. This is called in Spanish Mercosur. In Brazil, it's Mercosul. It's the same organization. The original four members were Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay. Subsequently, they've added as either full members or associates Bolivia and Chile. The idea was that they saw the growing importance of the EU as a trade block. They saw the establishment of NAFTA. They saw what was taking place in Southeast Asia with ASEAN, APEC, and so forth. They realized that they would gain greater strength as a trading union, if for no other reason than the bargaining power in the GATT context. However, the two countries also saw benefit in eliminating trade barriers with each other. The strong members of this particular arrangement are Brazil and Argentina. The other countries essentially will take whatever scraps these two countries provide them. Most of the trade was between Brazil and Argentina. Argentina was already several years ahead of Brazil in its process of economic reform. It established a link between its currency, the peso, and the U.S. dollar, and had succeeded in curbing inflation. Argentina had already privatized a number of state enterprises. Brazil saw that as a model. The Brazilian politicians used a positive public regard for Argentina's policy as a means of selling politically what they felt was needed in Brazil. It became useful politically as well as economically to have this arrangement with Mercosur. As a result, southern Brazil and northern Argentina developed a very close, cooperative economic relationship. Major corporations have factories in both countries where they sell the product in either country and many of their suppliers are the same, especially in the auto industry. Argentine production may be supplied from Brazil and vice versa. That was previously not possible. That has allowed their production to become more efficient and to withstand pressure of the international market. The galvanizing force for this was the Uruguay Round with the recognition that all tariffs on products would be dropping towards zero and the previous kind of high tariff wall that many of these countries had maintained in order to foster their own national industries was not going to remain; it just could not be kept.

*Q: What was your main occupation?*

DONAHUE: My job was equivalent of a DCM in an embassy. Sao Paulo was a large post with maybe 35-40 American officers and 200 or so Foreign Service national employees. We had a large consular district when I got there that grew even more. During the period that I was there, we closed our consulate in Porto Alegre, the capital of Rio Grande do Sul, the southernmost state in Brazil. So, our consular district went all the way down to the Argentine border. A lot of time was spent in traveling the consular district, making sure that we had good relations with the states and principal cities, that we knew what was going on. There was substantial interest on the part of American business in many of those states, even the landlocked ones where a lot of agricultural production was taking place. I managed consulate operations from the standpoint of making sure the needs of the various sections were maintained. I was also the principal interface with the American Chamber of Commerce, and served on the trade and investment committee. Amcham was the only organization that could support us when we had high-level visitors, and we relied a great deal on the Chamber to put together programs or provide a venue for our ambassador when he came to visit businesspeople, and when Secretary of State Christopher made a visit.

I also spent a lot of time with people in the financial community. Just before I arrived in Brazil, the Department of Treasury had pulled its Treasury attaché out of Brasilia. I guess they had had one or two local people, FSNs, in that office. The office was closed. They really did it without any prior notice to the State Department. Ambassador Levitsky was quite unhappy with that decision. State did not increase the staffing of the Economic Section in Brasilia nor did the Embassy have someone with the same kind of background and credentials as the Treasury person. So, I worked very closely with my counterpart in our embassy in Brasilia to make sure that there was enough financial reporting. There was certainly a need for it. There was a close interest in following what was going on with inflation, whether the other reform policies that the government needed to take place were going to be done, what the impact on the financial markets would be, and so forth. The main commercial banking center for Brazil was Sao Paulo. The main stock market, the futures market, all of that was in Sao Paulo. So, we spent a lot of time following those markets. Sao Paulo was also the major center for agricultural trade. In fact, the Cargill representative for all of Brazil was in Sao Paulo. Cargill is a major grain buyer in the world and provider of seeds for farmers that cooperate with it. Sao Paulo and Santos, its port, were also the primary centers for the trade of coffee and cocoa, the principal Brazilian commodities sold in the world market. Sao Paulo state was the largest producer of sugar. In the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other parts of the government, they followed the sugar prices on a regular basis. So, there was a lot of activity of the economic type.

I also oversaw political and labor reporting. We had a Labor attaché. There may have been only one other Labor attaché on the continent of South America. That would have been in Buenos Aires. Our Labor attaché spent a lot of time with the major unions that were headquartered in Sao Paulo and he reported on union activity. That would include safety of workers; child labor, which became a big issue; and human rights related to labor. With the political officer, we worked closely together on the issue of human rights. Back when I first arrived in Sao Paulo, I drafted our contribution to the Embassy's Human Rights Report. We sponsored a number of nascent or developing civil society organizations, NGOs, operating in the area of civil rights, children's rights, women's rights, improving race relations, the whole panoply of social/political

issues. On many occasions, I backstopped our political officer in those efforts and helped expand the consulate's contacts.

*Q: How did you find dealing with the Brazilian government and business community?*

DONAHUE: At the personal level, I think Brazilians are very approachable and easy to get to know and nice. Depending on what we wanted to do, we did find either ideology played a role or some old gripe against the U.S. There had been times in our history since WWII when the U.S. and Brazil had been closer or more distant. During WWII, Brazil was our ally and was the only Latin American country that actually supplied troops to the war effort in Europe.

*Q: To Italy.*

DONAHUE: That's right, under General Mark Clark, the Brazilian Expeditionary Force. So, there were times for our national holidays when Brazilians would show up and they'd be delighted to be there. We usually had a Brazilian veterans contingent at the American Fourth of July celebration. We also had several different groups of Brazilian alumni of American academic institutions. Most of them were delighted to be of support and were still actively trying to improve academic exchanges between the U.S. and Brazil. That having been said, the University of Sao Paulo had a kind of left-leaning heritage. Although we never were frozen out of the university, and several of us went to speak there, including myself, there were clear limits to our access and influence there. I spoke to several graduate level classes on comparisons and contrast between the U.S. and Brazil and the importance of technology and also globalization. It was well received. Nevertheless, when we were looking in our planning process for the visit of President Clinton and we were searching for a place for him to speak, the university did not seem really thrilled to offer itself. We decided not to push. We had thought this would have been a great opportunity for the university. Its leadership didn't see it that way. The University of Sao Paulo has a center for North American studies, which is headed by a very gifted and brilliant Brazilian woman, married to a Scot. I think her understanding and knowledge of the U.S. is extensive, but she had a very conservative, anti-communist, anti-socialist orientation that made her not necessarily work well with some other members of the university. So, sometimes we found that our association with her colored our overall involvement with the university. We felt that maybe new people would have to come to the scene before we could establish the kind of relationship we needed.

*Q: Did you run into something that has gotten bigger now in Europe and the U.S., a resentment about globalization and too many foreign firms coming in, like McDonalds, American movies, and that sort of thing?*

DONAHUE: It was beginning to become apparent. In an effort to head it off, I was trying to address the issue of globalization with the group of people who would have been able to understand or take on board what I was trying to get across. It is not clear what the impact of globalization will be on anybody. However, by eliminating barriers and making things more efficient, it's going to have an impact, and people will not be able to either be as passive or as laid back as they have in the past. Without a doubt, and I think Brazilians realized it, globalization was going to affect their way of life. They saw a number of Brazilian industries

that had been household names in Brazil be bought out by foreigners or go bankrupt. On the other hand, they also saw some opportunities for them. During the period that I was there, there were pretty good jobs available for all graduates of Brazilian universities, especially in economics, accounting, law, or technologies, certainly engineering, computer work. Brazilian young people recognized that many of these opportunities came from increased trade opportunities. From the standpoint of their lifestyle, they were able to get products in Brazil that their parents could not even dream of. They saw that there was a clear connection between market reform in their marketplace, lower trade barriers, and improved lifestyle. They also saw that workers were going to be displaced. I think it was the students who would have been more left-leaning and more sympathetic towards the workers that would have been more resistant towards globalization. Students who were the stars and the ones for whom there would be opportunities in almost any industry, either Brazilian or foreign or even international, they clearly saw that they were going to have a great opportunity under globalization.

*Q: What about labor unions?*

DONAHUE: The labor unions were the most resistant. It was a challenge for us because historically, while we had not shared the same ideological cast of the Brazilian unions, which was decidedly leftist, nevertheless, our union-to-union relations had been good. There had been about a 20-year period when the AFL-CIO maintained a field office in Sao Paulo with someone from the AFL-CIO. The person who had held that position for 20 years left Brazil about the time I arrived. A person who stayed only a few months replaced him. I don't know why. It doesn't make sense. That individual after the hiatus of a few months was replaced by someone who really thought he was there to stay. He was a young person in his 30s from a family with a strong labor association in the U.S. He was going great guns ahead. He was pulled out after about a year because of political machinations within the AFL-CIO here. It had nothing to do with what he was doing in Brazil. I think the AFL-CIO here said, "We can't afford that office. We're going to close it" and they closed it. The Labor attaché and I spent a lot of time on this issue. I think that he ended up picking up a lot of the work, although it's a different kind of work. Nevertheless, the interface with unions had to be maintained by somebody and it ended up being done by our Labor attaché. There were a number of reasons why this relationship was important.

Many large Fortune 500 companies had key investments in Brazil and they were being beefed up with new capital during the period that I was there. They needed to do this because – and this is how globalization was affecting their industry – as a result of the GATT Uruguay Round trade barriers were dropping to zero. The original basis for which many of those industries were in Brazil was no longer tenable. They could not operate behind a high tariff barrier. Some of the car makers like GM and Ford were producing cars with 1950s or '60s technology. However, at that time, a car retailer could import a brand new car from Detroit for not much more than what an individual would pay for a Brazil-made car. That situation was not going to last. So, they had to find a way to produce a current model car at a cost that would be reasonable and would enable production to remain in Brazil. To do this, they had to bring in a lot of capital equipment to improve the quality of their production lines. They had to enter into a different kind of relationship with their suppliers. Part of that was true under globalization anywhere that the auto companies operated. They were trying to reduce the number of suppliers, gain greater control over them, and have just-in-time production to avoid large inventories. This required major shifts

in Brazil, from improving customs handling at ports to developing more efficient and more secure transportation. It meant trying to get a better deal for power supply. All kinds of things that they had to work out.

All of this affected government as well. Changes needed to take place like the privatization of utilities. Education had to be universalized and improved. During the period I was there, Ford established a goal that by the end of 1996, 100% of their workers would be literate. When you think about it, that's amazing. The workers had a rather low level of literacy. The trade unions were also very interested in this process. Previously, many workers in the auto industry were originally from farm areas. They had moved from rural areas inland to the coast to work in the auto industry, or they had come from the impoverished northeastern part of Brazil. Many of them had been illiterates. They had not had educational opportunities before they arrived there, but as long as all they needed to do was to hammer something, they could do that. However, it was necessary to operate computers to make a quality car. Workers had to make decisions as to whether something was being done right or wrong on the assembly line. Much of the more difficult or dangerous work was already being done by robotic equipment, so the actual work that a worker was being asked to do involved less brawn and more brain. The labor unions became concerned that the auto industry would not always be able to employ the same number of workers as at present. Many of the people who had worked for a company that was going out of business would go nowhere. There would be nothing for them. This was also an inevitable result of the process of the privatization of state enterprises because for the purchaser of the ailing enterprise, one of the initial things was to let go about half of the workers. So, there was a lot of labor dislocation in the Sao Paulo area, some of it at the white collar level.

*Q: I would imagine this would have meant a certain amount of resentment toward the United States since we were the modernizer.*

DONAHUE: That could be understandable, but in fact, many of the foreign investors in Sao Paulo were European companies. Some of the companies that were playing fast and loose with Brazilian regulation were European companies. For example, American companies (and we worked hard with the American Chamber of Commerce on this theme) wanted to be seen generally as pro-community and meeting a standard that more closely approximated the standard in the U.S. rather than some standard in Brazil. We wanted American companies to really be seen as good corporate citizens in every respect. I think that they generally were. Brazilians liked to work for American companies. There were some companies that they definitely did not like to work for. One Korean automobile company found it hard to attract Brazilian laborers, and certainly did not get the quality of worker that Ford and GM had. Both Ford and GM sponsored educational activities in the communities where the workers lived. To my knowledge, they were the only major corporations that did that. The European companies were the ones that in my view were more likely to engage in corruption or skirt Brazilian law. That was an area where we did try to pay attention. When there were corruption charges, when there was bribery involved, it usually involved a European company. Another thing is how the various chambers of commerce operated, their style and the style of the country's consulate. The American Consulate General in Sao Paulo was the largest and the one with the broadest range of interests, because our interests included drug interdiction, for example. We had an enormous visa operation and there was a very large number of American citizens who had various needs. We also had an important

notarial service function because many contracts were being written involving American law. But we also had competition with European countries to have political influence in the community and to provide commercial advocacy for our industries and exports. What set the American Chamber of Commerce apart from the chambers of the French, the British, the German, and the Japanese was its strong welcome for non-Americans to join. Therefore, in many ways, the American Chamber of Commerce became a kind of *de facto* international chamber of commerce. I think there was a more strict requirement to be an American citizen or to be an official for an American company if you wanted to serve on the board of governors. Nevertheless, at the committee level, we had very active participants who represented important Swiss chemical companies or important German industrial enterprises and so forth. I think they found it worthwhile for their commercial intelligence, but they also did make a contribution that benefitted the rest of us as well. Therefore, by attending certain key American Chamber meetings, I had a sense of what all foreign investors were doing to a greater degree than when I attended a meeting of the German Chamber of Commerce, for example.

*Q: I would think, too, that by having this, through Congress, we've set stricter standards for our work abroad, that in a de facto manner, we were setting standards for the rest of the community.*

DONAHUE: I think that's right. It was important for us to be associated with good citizenship and playing by the rules. When we go into foreign governments, we're always asking them to play by the international rules.

**NADIA TONGOUR**  
**Senior Political Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1994-1997)**

*Nadia Tongour was born in Turkey and raised in South Carolina. She was educated at William and Mary and Stanford Universities and taught at several colleges before joining the Foreign Service in 1980. Primarily a Political Officer, her Washington assignments were in the fields of Soviet and Soviet Bloc affairs as well as Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Her foreign assignments include Brazil, Barbados and St. George's Grenada, where she was Principal Officer. Ms. Tongour was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.*

TONGOUR: But, in any event, I soon had to return to the cycle of bidding on normal tours of duty. In fact, that had started even before I went out to California because the bidding cycle in effect begins sometimes more than a year in advance. In my case, I found out after I arrived in San Francisco that I would next go to Rio de Janeiro, by way of a short course in Portuguese. Consequently, after leaving California in the summer of 1994, I came back here to Washington and spent three or four months at our Foreign Service Institute studying Portuguese. And in December of 1994, I headed down to Rio.

*Q: Good heavens. This is quite a change.*

TONGOUR: Isn't it?

*Q: You were in Rio from when to when?*

TONGOUR: I was there for two and a half years, from December 1994 to the summer of 1997. The reason for this slightly unusual period is that I curtailed my tour by a few months in order to get onto what was called the summer cycle for the Department, since most jobs become available then. .

*Q: Well, how did this come about? I mean, your Caribbean time could not carry over to Rio and the rest of the time you were pretty much, you know, Eastern Bloc.*

TONGOUR: When I went out to San Francisco, it was just a year and a half, and we left a year later. While I was well aware that from a career standpoint it would make sense to go next to Georgia or Moldova or elsewhere in Eastern Europe, I thought it might be very difficult from a family perspective. So I consciously bid on assignments that I thought would be satisfying and that would allow for nanny care and all that goes with it. Having already served in Latin America (my first posting in Mexico) and done a stint in the Caribbean, I was not out of the question as a candidate for an ARA, now WHA (Western Hemisphere Affairs), posting. And the other part of it was that Rio de Janeiro was at that time one of our largest consulates, having something on the order of 70 American direct hires and a much larger contingent of Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs); nevertheless, it was a consulate and many ambitious officers would have had second thoughts about serving in such a post. In a way that might have been a mistake for those who wrote of Rio or Sao Paulo because Rio had long been the political capital of the country and many of the most prominent Brazilians, the movers and shakers, still tended to scorn the inland capital of Brasilia, which then still lacked charm, and spent as much time as possible in their home cities of Rio or Sao Paulo. In other words, Brazilian political leaders of that period had somewhat of a commuter existence, spending Tuesdays through Thursdays in Brasilia and the remainder of the week and all holidays in their home cities. For political officers this was wonderful in that we gained access to many officials who might have been too busy to see political officers in Brasilia since their time there was devoted to attending congressional sessions or other required activities. Back home, however, they tended to be more relaxed and accessible to us. Of course, Rio was a beautiful city to live in, with numerous advantages as well as some drawbacks.

*Q: What was your job?*

TONGOUR: I was the senior political officer. We had a combined pol-econ section. I actually wound up running the section for about seven or eight months during a staffing gap, and for a month or two I served as Acting Consul General, again because of a gap between the former and prospective Consul General.

*Q: Who were the Consul Generals when you were there?*

TONGOUR: My first year the CG was David Zweifel, who subsequently retired from the Foreign Service, but may still be around doing WAE work. Subsequently, James (Jim) Derham

took over. He spent a number of years in and out of Brazil and the region as a whole and most recently was our Ambassador to Guatemala.

So, as a political officer, what did I do? The Consulate covered five states in Brazil. Many people do not realize that Brazil is larger than the land mass of the lower 48 United States. Consequently, it was comparable to covering the Eastern Seaboard of the U.S. During that period, there were numerous elections -- municipal, local and state -- and I would do the normal political reporting on these. I had contacts across the spectrum of society in Rio and met with political and societal leaders. I was very active in recommending people for visitor programs, the so-called International Visitor Program as well as other grants. Of course there was considerable reporting on drugs, crime, and street children which represented a major social issue. I also dealt extensively with various NGOs in the society and worked closely with them, providing whatever assistance we could. CODELs, congressional delegations -- we had a lot of them, some more credible than others. One such CODEL which I will never forget -- the head of which is still a congressman -- managed to time its visit for Easter week where there was absolutely nothing in terms of work going on. The members were absolutely appalled that most of the jewelry stores would not open just for their visit. I remember accompanying this CODEL to a fancy restaurant and a reporter and cameraman showed up from the local press; the head of the delegation was outraged that the media had been allowed to show up and he actually raged at us because he assumed the Consulate had permitted or even encouraged the press to appear. His main concern was that his constituents would not like to see him out gallivanting around Rio in this way, and the pictures might get out.

*Q: Who was this?*

TONGOUR: He was one of the Burtons (Dan, I think) from the Midwest, and he still rants quite a bit. I heard him on the news just recently bashing a critic and calling him a liar. I found myself thinking about "pots and kettles". In any case we had our share of people like that, and we definitely organized meetings, trips and other outings for them -- as well as the obligatory jewelry stores. Still it was a fascinating experience.

*Q: What was the government of Brazil like at the time?*

TONGOUR: Well, the government was one we were quite keen on. Traditionally, Brazil had a policy of one-term presidents; reelections were not allowed, until the presidency of Cardoso who was at the helm at that time. An amendment to allow for re-election of the president was a major development of the period. Cardoso, the immediate predecessor to the incumbent Luis (Lula) Ignacio da Silva, was considered a moderate reform-minded president who, in fact, succeeded in more or less stabilizing the currency, a phenomenal achievement given that Brazil had had skyrocketing inflation on and off for decades with tragic consequences for the country. Just before I arrived there was a shift to a new currency, the "Real", which at least initially was more or less pegged to the dollar, with an exchange rate that fluctuated but for some time stayed fairly close to a one to one rate. The Real was fairly popular and remains the currency still. In any case, the Brazilians amended their constitutions, thereby allowing Cardoso and subsequent presidents to run for re-election. Overall, it was a positive period. There were inevitable disagreements but we were very favorably disposed toward Cardoso's administration.

*Q: How would you characterize the attitude or attitudes towards the United States at this particular time?*

TONGOUR: Brazilian intellectuals and Brazilian activists basically were very skeptical about the United States. The problem in Brazil is that while traditionally the Brazilian left, including the Workers' Party (PT), for example, that current President Lula comes from, had its share of corruption and problems, these were nothing compared to the kinds of shenanigans that the more right wing parties were involved with. Moreover, since the right wing parties had traditionally been associated with the dictatorship that had controlled Brazil for many years and were also the parties of the landed aristocracy or the ranchers in the Amazon, timber cutters -- in other words forces that were not environmentally-friendly or progressive -- they tended to be more sympathetic to the U.S. For our part we were sometimes ambivalent, and to use the old cliché, we sometimes held our noses when dealing with some of the less savory groups, viewing them in some instances as the lesser evil. In other words, the USG as a whole was still uncomfortable with Latin American leftist entities. We have grown much more comfortable with Lula in recent years but then our government was still less than thrilled with the idea of some of these leftists coming to power. Now the history of the Brazilian left is quite rich and colorful and includes members of what was known as the Sim Terra Movement which supports landless workers. This group did not exactly embrace the policies of the USG. I would have to say that personally speaking, one great satisfaction came from being able to travel to some outlying areas and actually meet some Sim Terra members -- when they were willing to meet with me. I felt that when they were willing to meet and share their views, it was a real breakthrough and I learned a great deal about what they were working on.

*Q: Did you sense that the leftist movement was interested in what was happening in the United States or were they sort of almost genetically forms of suspicious or opposed to it?*

TONGOUR: Both. I think they were suspicious and "genetically" predisposed to oppose us. On the other hand they are educated. I mean, for the most part they came from the educated elite. One sad aspect related to the Brazilian left is the continuing dichotomy between the extremely poor and extremely rich. This is not some figment of someone's imagination. Yet, the people who tended to be the leftists, with rare exception -- a few did work their way up the ranks -- were children of fairly comfortable, if not outright affluent parents, who read and kept up and knew what was happening in the outside world. They did not necessarily dislike the United States as an entity but they certainly were not predisposed toward the U.S. government.

*Q: In your area were there any sort of crises or anything, at least from your perspective, that you had to deal with?*

TONGOUR: Crises is probably too strong a word because essentially the kinds of things that were of interest to Washington revolved around issues of narco-trafficking, corruption and how to make our assistance more effective. We were concerned about fighting crime and narco-traffickers and wanted to support the police;; at the same time, cops were involved in the killing of street children. The quandary we faced was how to help people who might be doing good on one front when some of those very people were not necessarily predisposed toward us. These

were the types of issues we discussed, namely given limited resources should we send to the United States potential leaders who might now be critical of the U.S, Could they be brought around to understand our viewpoint, etc? I don't think you could say that there were major crises in our relationship with Brazil at that time. To be sure there were various pressures, including from environmental groups and NGOs to take a strong stand on developments in the Amazon or on human rights issues. On the latter, we really did try. I personally met with a lot of NGOs who frequently came in and provided invaluable information on human rights abuses in Brazil. But the problem was that most human rights abuses in Brazil were not officially being carried out by the government of Brazil. What does one do when an off-duty cop -- a cop by day, a paid security guard by night -- kills kids at night or goes after people who then disappear.

*Q: Why were they killing people, killing children?*

TONGOUR: Children were only one small segment. The case that became most famous, the so-called Candelaria Massacre involved the killing of children. But such killings were rare. The disappearances, the rounding up and abuse of victims was more common. A few years before I arrived, there had been what many described as an invasion of locusts, of children and teens roaming the beaches and robbing tourists and others. Officially, the police would clean that up, because after all, for a city such as Rio de Janeiro, tourism is a major industry. So, the police were there to clean up the beaches, and they did. Crime was definitely a problem and the favelas (slums) were breeding grounds for drugs; the police would invade these areas and clean them up. Some of the people rounded up were quite young, but the overt actions of the police were viewed as legitimate. The other aspect, their off-duty work, such as what occurred outside the Candelaria Cathedral in downtown Rio were more brutal -- resulting in the killing of children who were literally sleeping in front of the church. Apparently storekeepers in the vicinity did not like to see these children sleeping on the plaza in front of the church. They considered it bad for business. Who paid whom, who did what to whom, was never clarified but eventually some off-duty policemen were tried for the killing of half a dozen or more kids and the wounding of others. The so-called Candelaria Massacre became a visible problem, creating a sense of outrage among the more enlightened members of Brazilian society and the outside world and spawned considerable social activism. One of the people I got to know well in Rio, who was related to the UN Rep Vieira de Melo, was very involved in working with street children after this massacre. She was a woman who came from a very wealthy family. Yet she wound up working with these kids. And I am talking not this street group or that street group; there were thousands of children who are essentially living on the street, living in squalor in cardboard shacks.

*Q: Where do they come from? In other words, are they disconnected from at least their mother or something like that?*

TONGOUR: Some of them are not disconnected from a mother or other family members. In fact, some come from families that lived in the cardboard shacks. The woman I mentioned invited me to go with her on one of her visitations to see a group of kids she often brought food. Many of them slept under aqueducts or bridges where they created cardboard shantytowns. These children ranged in ages, and sometimes they lived with a parent; thus, they were not always alone. However, the parent might actually have been working somewhere. Alternately, a 10 or 12 year old might well have run away from an abusive situation or be living with one parent in the

cardboard shanty, but that parent might be somewhere working as a maid or in some menial profession. Their backgrounds and where they came from was unclear. Many were clearly from rural areas and came to the big city to find work, given their bleak situation elsewhere. Things have gotten better in recent years, but 10-15 years ago there was considerable poverty and many such squatter settlements. Then, too, there were many favela kids who would come down from the hills to sell "whatever" (Chiclets and odds and ends) on the streets. Sometimes these were runaways from abusive situations, but often they would simply leave their favelas during the day and return at night. The worst off had no where to go and simply slept under any available arcade in downtown Rio. One could spot them any evening when walking around the city; they would be sleeping on the sidewalks, under building arcades if they were lucky. Fortunately, the climate in Rio is generally mild so this is feasible.

*Q: Well talking about this, how did you find living in Rio? How was the living there?*

TONGOUR: I loved it. I loved it notwithstanding what I've just been saying about the dichotomy between the haves and have-nots. You know, it is a beautiful country and a beautiful city. I used to jokingly say that God was kind to Rio but man made a mess of it. I lived in a wonderful old apartment overlooking the sea and facing the famous Sugarloaf Mountain and I could also see the statue of Christ out of the corner as well as gorgeous scenery all around. The apartment was in a previously very fashionable neighborhood on a still highly desirable street. It's always dangerous to generalize about a nationality but I must admit that I generally found Brazilians to be very nice, regardless of their class or educational level. They tended to be warm, friendly and fun. In short, I got to know many people, a cross-section of society and seemed to be invited everywhere. The Consulate as a whole had excellent access. I personally traveled all over the country. However, it is true that one can develop a somewhat distorted view after a while and stop being "shocked" at the visible social problems. That's one reason why it was good to go out with the woman I was telling you about and meet others like her; otherwise, it would be too easy to stop seeing the whole picture. I remember a dear friend of mine visiting me from the U.S., and I took her to a town about 40 miles away, a beautiful hill town called Petropolis, which was the traditional summer home of Brazilian royalty in the old days. We drove for some miles through poor areas, with low-lying favelas interspersed with trashy tire shops and grungy small businesses and after a while she asked "doesn't this bother you?" And DI asked "what?". She replied: "All this poverty." One does get a bit inured after a while or at least stop really seeing that clearly. I think this becomes a danger for the upper classes who live phenomenally well, who are educated, cultured and basically have everything -- and then there are the rest.

*Q: Well, I do not know, a phenomenon which may have gone away, but I have talked to people who served in Rio during the '50s and '60s and all and said particularly the men began to pick up the habits of the locals, where all of a sudden they were, you know, this was at the embassy at the time, they sort of had mistresses and all this. I mean, this became quite prevalent and a real shock. Was this still going on?*

TONGOUR: Well, I am sure some may have but if so, people were discreet. Like anywhere else, there were divorces and people who remarried locals. But another aspect of life in Brazil that is worth mentioning centers on the social side, notably Carnival. Anyone visiting Brazil during that season would invariably describe it as an enjoyable experience, with Carnival being wonderfully

fun, colorful and unique. Undoubtedly, they would also mention the incredible amount of near nudity; some would wonder how this would square with the fact that Brazil is a predominantly Catholic country. I think one particularly noteworthy characteristic of Brazilians is that they seem much more comfortable in their own skin than most of us are. I don't mean to say that every Brazilian is beautiful, but rather as a generality, they seem much more relaxed about their bodies or less insecure in that regard.

*Q: Well speaking about skin, the Brazilians talk about being sort of not racially motivated but I am told by those Americans who go there, particularly those of some color or observant found that they are very racially stratified.*

TONGOUR: I am glad you brought this up because, in fact, this may be one of the less attractive features of the country, which is ironic because many tend to think of Brazil as a racially mixed paradise. The situation is not quite that simple or straightforward, and, in fact, sometimes even seems paradoxical. I recall an incident that occurred during the visit of a popular American gospel group Sweet Honey in the Rock which performed in Rio and had clearly not done its "homework" on the issue of race in Brazil.

*Q: Oh yes, it's a famous group.*

TONGOUR: Yes, it is. During her opening remarks, the leader of the group began the program by gushing about the racial harmony in Brazil and how wonderful it was to be in this racial paradise. The audience did not boo her but made sounds indicating their lack of acceptance of her interpretation. And it was a very racially mixed audience. Now most Brazilians would be quick to assert that they are not racists, that Brazil is not a racist society but rather that it is class-based, and admitted highly economically stratified in such a way that if you are successful, you are considered white. There is no caste system, and Brazilians correctly maintain that there is certainly greater fluidity than in the American South, where historically even the smallest percentage of "black blood" would define you as black. In Brazil, if Pelé, the soccer star, wanted to consider himself white he would be white. But what they did have and what they probably still do have is an informal type of segregation in certain quarters --- separate facilities such as "service elevators" for those who do not dress a certain way or look as if they don't "belong". An African-American Foreign Service Officer gave me an excellent and irksome example of this. She noted that if I entered an apartment building wearing grubbies, no one would ask me to take the service elevator but if she, who happened to be our Cultural Affairs Officer, was having a "bad hair day" or simply casually dressed, she might be asked to take the service elevator. So the Brazilian view is that there are strong class distinctions based on economic development, not race. That said, there is a lot of emphasis on being white. Another example comes to mind. I had as nanny for my son a beautiful young woman who could be described as "café au lait" in color but she always insisted she was white, while noting that her grandmother was not. She was quick to emphasize this distinction, and she was far from alone in this regard.

*Q: As a political officer, how important was the church? Maybe not the Catholic Church but also maybe the Evangelical Church. I mean, what was going on?*

TONGOUR: Oh, religion was definitely an important theme while I was there. First of all, on the

Catholic side there was essentially -- not exactly a schism which would be too drastic a term in the Brazilian context -- a division within the ranks. Actually there were at least three types of Catholics: the totally non-practicing; the casual "I was born a Catholic but not really involved types" which I'm not really considering at this point, as well as the activists who themselves were divided. On the one hand there were the more conservative, traditional Catholics, some of whom would be comfortable with the Opus Dei crowd in Mexico, but perhaps a bit more liberal. On the other hand, you had the "worker priest" types, activists who generally espoused some form of "liberation theology"; this group also included many of the Bishops of Brazil. In fact, the ranks of Brazilian Bishops were also split between the more conservative and activist wings. The sense among those who followed religious issues was that the worker priest tradition in Brazil was basically quite admirable. Again, these more leftist priests might not be politically to our liking but they were sincere in their commitment to social justice and so on, whereas the other group was more traditional and possibly more venal, if you will, in terms of how they lived. The predominance of the more traditional Catholicism in a way served as a catalyst for the growth of Evangelical Movements, partly in reaction to perceived flaws in the more established Catholic Church. The Evangelicals really stressed "moral behavior" and toe-ing the line with regard to not drinking, working hard and making something of oneself. In fact, the of Evangelical emphasis on getting ahead and prospering was phenomenally popular. I became acquainted with several young people who were working on the management side of one of these Evangelical groups. This group had radio stations, classes, churches throughout the country and abroad -- including Florida for Brazilians who had moved there. It was a major enterprise as well as a way for many people to put their lives in some sort of order. Very often the ones most drawn to the Evangelical movement were the poor as well as those who had previously had major alcohol or drug problems.

*Q: Was this translated beyond the personal lives into political movements?*

TONGOUR: Yes, but I would not call it a "movement" at least at that point in time. However, I do recall that one so-called Evangelical candidate was elected either Mayor of Rio de Janeiro or perhaps even Rio State Governor after I had left, and he had been a very effective "preacher man" earlier in his career. In addition, I know there were candidates in other states that were running for various offices essentially as Evangelicals -- somewhat along the lines of the recent Huckabee candidacy here.

*Q: Did you find that sort of a ruling or the establishment, the white establishment and all was getting kind of nervous about the Evangelical movement and the left wing, I mean, things that Lula came out of or what?*

TONGOUR: Well, Lula was not an Evangelical.

*Q: He was not an Evangelical but I mean, you know, I am talking about both the Evangelical-*

TONGOUR: And the left.

*Q: -and the left.*

TONGOUR: Certainly, certainly. But again, for different reasons. Most leftist politicians were not Evangelicals; if they had any strong religious background, it would more likely be of the "worker priest", "liberation theology" traditions. That said, the Evangelicals were somewhat of a threat to many of the more established, traditional politicians. The left, at least, was viewed as a known threat. They had already had to deal with the left in the past and knew where leftists were coming from, but they really were uncertain about where this new Evangelical fervor would lead to politically.

*Q: Well, did you find, as sort of the top political reporter that the consular general- was there a problem in breaking loose from the sort of embrace of the wealthy, the glittering class and all that or not?*

TONGOUR: The first Consul General I served under was very well connected to what you term the "glitterati". The second, Jim Derham, also socialized a great deal but he was an Econ Cone officer and was more interested in seeing the entire economic picture and more curious about different strata of Brazilian society: And I have to say, they both gave me a certain amount of latitude. I recall later rereading my EERs (evaluations) and thinking, did they really let me do this. When visiting dignitaries or CODELs came to town, I would stage different kinds of events for them in addition to traditional CODEL type activities. For example, I set up a visit for our DCM (from Embassy Brasilia) to see a street theater performance, sponsored by an NGO which supported the Transgender and HIV/AIDS community, including the actors. So, we did on occasion break out of the normal strictures, but sometimes it was hard.

*Q: Oh, it is very difficult.*

TONGOUR: We often received tickets to performances and sometimes we even sat in the Mayor's box at the Opera House and even the Governor's box on occasion. They were our "hosts" which made it tricky sometimes when we pressed them on human rights issues or other concerns.

*Q: Well, I am just looking at time; this is probably a good place to stop. And we will pick this up- think it over, if there is anything else we should talk about while you were in Rio but you left there in '96, was it?*

TONGOUR: Ninety-seven, but before we leave I might mention that I received a somewhat unusual award during this period, which probably says something about the extent of my contacts in the community. A Brazilian women's organization, based in Rio, every year honored 10 or so "women of the year" for various contributions both to women and the broader community. Usually a woman diplomat was included in the ranks of those selected and my last year in Brazil, 1997, I was one of the recipients of this award. I have to admit I was touched by the gesture and appreciated my inclusion.

**LACY A. WRIGHT**  
**Deputy Chief of Mission**

## Brasilia (1995-1997)

*Mr. Wright joined the Foreign Service in 1968 after earning degrees at Mendelien College and Loyola University. His foreign service took him to Vietnam both during and after the War. Other assignments took him to Milan, London and Bangkok as well as to the State Department in Washington, where he worked with International Organizations in matters concerning refugees, and UNESCO affairs. Mr. Wright was born and raised in Springfield, Illinois. Mr. Wright was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.*

WRIGHT: I went to Brazil, also as DCM.

Q: *And you were in Brazil from '95 to—*

WRIGHT: '97. I was there two years.

Q: *How did you get that job?*

WRIGHT: Well, by the time I left Jamaica, partially, I think, because of the Haitian matter and the way that the Jamaicans and, I guess, the embassy had performed, my stock was fairly high in ARA, so I think I pretty much could almost have had my pick of the jobs that were open at that point. In fact, I had a couple of other offers to be DCM's in embassies. What I went after, actually, was not this job but was another job in Brazil, and that was consul general in São Paulo. It turned out that the ambassador, Mel Levitsky, had really three jobs which he considered to be about at the same level, and he had all of them in mind when he offered me any of them, and those were consuls general in São Paulo and Rio and the DCM-ship. Well, my chances of going to São Paulo went up in smoke when Melissa Wells decided that she wanted to go to São Paulo. Melissa had been ambassador a couple of times. She was, it was thought, coming to her last assignment, and she decided that for family reasons—that is, her son lives in São Paulo—that she would like to have her last post there. And once she decided that, that was that. So that job vanished, but I then switched my sights and I was chosen by Mel Levitsky to go there as his deputy.

Q: *What was the situation in Brazil during this two year period that you were there?*

WRIGHT: Well, it was a pretty good situation in the sense that Fernando Enrique Cardoso was, still is, president. He had been elected pretty much on the strength of his plan to save the local currency, called the Real Plan, in which he had founded a new currency, pegged it pretty much in the beginning to the US dollar, and then did everything possible to defend it while he was minister of finance, and did end the very high inflation from which Brazil had suffered for a long time. So it brought that all to a stop, and that lasted, it guess, from about 1993, when it started, and it's still going strong. I think inflation this year in Brazil will be about seven per cent; it probably used to be about that much per day.

And Cardoso not only did that but he instituted a number of other economic and social reforms. He himself is a man of real stature, a man who had made a career for himself as an academic

before becoming a politician and who is personally irreproachable, who has lived in a number of countries, speaks three or four different languages fluently, including English, of course, and who, for the first time in a long time, maybe for the first time ever, has provided the Brazilians with a president who has real respect internationally.

*Q: How did Mel Levitsky, who's a regular Foreign Service officer, use you?*

WRIGHT: First of all, when I went there, I knew little about Brazil. I'd never been there before, so I stayed, I would say, in large part within the embassy and looked to the administration there. Naturally I did a certain number of things outside, too, but I would say that, more than some other assignments, I spent a lot of my time on administration of the embassy. Mel Levitsky, on the other hand, knew all the issues between our countries backwards and forwards. He didn't need any help in those areas at all. So I would say that generally that was the division of labor.

*Q: I've never served in Brazil. I understand that São Paulo is becoming more important in contrast to Rio as a post. You, as the DCM and managing it, did you see a development like that?*

WRIGHT: Well, I didn't see anything develop during my time there, but certainly, from our point of view, yes, São Paulo is a more important place. Rio is still a very important city, but it's one which I wouldn't call it a shell of its former self, but it's lost a certain amount of the pizzazz that it had as São Paulo has become more and more an economic powerhouse. You know, when you stop to think that, I think, the state of São Paulo or maybe it's the city has a larger economy than all of Chile, you begin to get some idea of the enormous size and sophistication of that area.

*Q: Well, looking at Brazil, I mean, you hadn't been in Brazil before, and this is the colossus to the south. But it has been going through, you know, almost from the beginning, has never quite lived up to what it should be. How did Brazil strike you?*

WRIGHT: Well, what you're referring to has been captured in an aphorism, which is "Brazil is the country of the future, and always will be." I think, yes, that may have changed. Probably many of the reforms that have been introduced are irreversible. Privatization, for example. Just the other day, a part of Brazil's national telecommunications company was auctioned off for \$18.8 billion, much of it to MCI, so the whole telecommunications system will probably in the end bring in, I don't know, \$30 or 40 billion to Brazil, and once they privatize it, they'll have a terrific telecommunications system, by the way, which they certainly don't have now. So that's one example of a very important infrastructure area which is being transformed in Brazil to the great benefit of the national treasury, as well as the citizens. So in other areas, in the nuclear area, we used to regard Brazil as a kind of bad boy of South America, along with Argentina, always fiddling around with things that they shouldn't be. That's all a thing of the past. Human rights—there are still horrible human rights travesties—*travesties* is not the right word—incidents in Brazil, but I'm convinced that the government is serious about human rights. They have good people in charge in this area in Brasilia who are very much trying to do the right thing. It's going to take a while longer, but they're moving in the right direction and trying very hard to cope with that situation. Probably Brazil's most serious long-term problem is education. They have a very poor primary and secondary educational system, but they also have a terrific minister of education, who is making big changes in that area, so as you look around the landscape, even

though they still have very big problems—they have a horrible income distribution in Brazil, which dovetails with their horrible education system—all that having been said, things are moving in a very good direction.

*Q: Did you find any sort of tension between the United States and Brazil at this point? From time to time, for most of the time, there have been—not like Mexico and the United States, but still it's this "We're big, we're grand, we'll do it our way." And it sort of put us off. How do things stand?*

WRIGHT: Oh, absolutely. And I suppose the most dramatic and constant way in which this manifested itself was in our consular operations, because for a while there we were constantly being accused by somebody or other of unfair, biased, nasty treatment at the consular window. For a while it became almost comical, and these accusations of bad and unfair treatment... There are two things. One is not getting your visa—that's unfair treatment because he should have gotten his visa—and secondly, bad treatment, where "I not only didn't get my visa; they insulted me." And this was mixed with the racial question, because most, I guess, of the people that turned up like this were black, and so we were accused of being racist. Now, in a country which doesn't have a very good record, in our view, with regard to racism, but which thinks it does, this was a pretty galling accusation to have to face for our consular officers. So for a while there, it was almost every week somebody new would pop up in the newspapers with some variation of this kind of accusation. So it was a difficult period in that sense.

*Q: What about the Clinton Administration that had been in power now for about three years of so, a couple of years when you got there. Of course, we had problems all over the world, and I assume Latin America wasn't very influential—I mean, there wasn't much interest in this in the Clinton Administration. Or am I wrong?*

WRIGHT: Well, I think you're a bit wrong. For one thing, Clinton did a good thing in appointing Mack McLarty as his special envoy to Latin America. McLarty did a kind of low-key but, I think, effective job of going around and stroking people and letting them know that they had a line through him to the White House, and I think this worked. Meanwhile, the Brazilians themselves think that they have a good line to the White House via a good relationship between Cardoso and President Clinton. For example, President Cardoso was invited only about two months ago, in June, I believe, when he was on his way to the special session on drugs at the UN, to have dinner and spend the night at Camp David, supposedly only the second leader in the entire Clinton Administration to have been given that honor. So when I, shortly after that, talked to one of the senior people at the Brazilian Embassy, he really made a point of saying how pleased they were at that. So I think in political circles, the Brazilians believe that they enjoy a privileged relationship with President Clinton.

*Q: During the time you were there, did we try to use our good relations with Brazil to further some policy, either world policy or Latin American policy?*

WRIGHT: We did use these relations with Brazil in the question of the Peru-Ecuador conflict. We, along with Brazil and Argentina and Chile, I think—

*Q: 1942, I think.*

WRIGHT: Yes, it's been going on for a while, but broke into hostilities a few years ago, border dispute. There are these four guarantor countries, of which we and Brazil are two. So Brazil has been influential in that. On an official basis, Brazil was very helpful in keeping in line the Paraguayans, about two years ago, when there was question of a possible coup attempt in Paraguay by General Oviedo. Paraguay, of course, is right on Brazil's border. And the Brazilians let it be known to General Oviedo that they would not look kindly on a coup by him or anybody else. And this was a departure for the Brazilians, which like to portray themselves as very much staying out of other people's business, and a very good departure, in our view.

*Q: Well, is there anything else we should cover, do you think, in Brazil?*

WRIGHT: I will say, with regard to Ambassador Mel Levitsky, that serving with him really illustrated to me in a way that nothing else ever had how singular a contribution a career ambassador can make in an important country. He was, first of all, a very intelligent, very tough, very knowledgeable man, but a man also who knew the Department and Washington backwards and forwards. He knew how embassies were supposed to work backwards and forwards and took an interest in every aspect. And it's been my experience that political ambassadors, who generally have been very successful people—otherwise they would not be ambassadors—first of all, don't know how embassies work and are always struggling to learn and tend, I think, to settle down on one or two or three or five aspects of things and pretty much have to let the rest go. And so that's one of the big differences in having a career ambassador. And I think that Mel Levitsky performed superbly in every aspect of running a large mission like this, and my only regret is that I didn't serve under somebody like that earlier in my career.

**GREG THIELMANN**  
**Deputy Principal Political Officer**  
**Brasilia (1995-1998)**

*Mr. Thielmann was born and raised in Iowa and was educated at Grinnell College and Princeton University. A specialist in Political-Military Affairs, he held a number of positions dealing with such matters as Strategic Proliferation, Arms Control and Missile Programs. He also served abroad at several posts in the capacity of Political Officer and Consular Officer. His last position was Chief, Office of Analysis for Strategic Proliferation and Military Affairs in State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. Mr. Thielmann was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004*

*Q: Okay, well this is probably a good place to stop. In '95 where did you go?*

THIELMANN: After the Germany desk I was planning on going to Germany. But alas in the strange ways of personnel, of two jobs that I had my eye on, one was eliminated. The sure fall back went to the special assistant to the head of the European Bureau, and I ended up going back to Brazil as a political officer.

*Q: This was from your first tour.*

THIELMANN: It was my first tour, and it ended up being my last foreign tour. So back in the same political section in the same embassy—

*Q: And you were there from '95 to when?*

THIELMANN: To '98.

*Q: Okay, well, we'll pick this up the next time at that.*

*Today is the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, 2005. Greg, all right, we're off to Brazil. You were, I assume in Brasilia. You were in the political section. What were you doing there?*

THIELMANN: I was one of the more senior line political officers there. It was a little demoralizing to me when I first got in the embassy because I literally was sitting in an office just two down from where I was at the beginning of my foreign service career in 1977. It seemed a little bit as if I was moving up the political ladder like one rung after seventeen years. That kind of overstates the degree of change. But all of us in the political section actually divided domestic responsibilities and foreign affairs responsibilities. So, for example, because of my background, I dealt with all of the political military issues involving Brazil. I was the one who interfaced with the defense attachés. I had some of the Brazilian political parties--and there were quite a few--in terms of keeping track of them and some aspects of national policies. So that's really how I started my three-year tour. I might just mention an interesting tidbit on the language front: I came back into a Portuguese refresher course shortly before leaving for Brasília again. There had been a seventeen-year interval since I had last served in Brazil, and there was very little opportunity to maintain my Portuguese during that time. In the intervening time I had served in German-speaking and Russian-speaking posts. So it was a very interesting experience of trying to extract from the far corners of my mind those Portuguese words, and I remember one little problem I was having. I kept inserting like one Russian word in my Portuguese sentences, and the frustrated Portuguese teacher after a while asked me who this person was that I kept mentioning, but it was just a Russian word that was sort of mixed into a Portuguese construct. So I found that obviously learning Portuguese the second time was much faster than the first, and it was. My language was pretty serviceable when I arrived at post.

*Q: Well, first who was the ambassador when you arrived there? What was the state of Brazil at the time and then Brazilian-American relations?*

THIELMANN: The ambassador was Melvin Levitsky, and one of the interesting things about the relationship with Brazil was that during my first tour it was, one could say almost at the nadir. It was during the Jimmy Carter years. Human rights and nuclear proliferation seemed to be the main components of our Brazilian policy at the time. Of course the military dictatorship at the time resented deeply both of those policy initiatives. Much had happened in the intervening time. One of the things that happened was that Fernando Henrique Cardoso was elected president in Brazil, and his rule followed some extremely mediocre Brazilian presidents that were either

corrupt or incompetent or both. So there was unfortunate squandering of an opportunity during some of those intervening years when Brazil did have a new constitution which needed some tweaking and reforming. But there was only a ten-year window for doing that, and ironically just as the president came onboard who knew how the constitution needed to be changed and where the reforms needed to be, that ten years elapsed. So he had to do it in the hard way with I forget what kind of a majority it was, but it was no longer 51 percent. It was either three-fifths or two-thirds needed, which is extremely difficult to get in the Brazilian congress. Anyway in terms of Brazilian-U.S. relations the circumstances were really very favorable for a significant improvement in the relationship because the president of Brazil had values that were very similar to our own.

*Q: Who was the president?*

THIELMANN: Cardoso. One had also during my tour Bill Clinton as president, and Clinton and Cardoso were very much on the same wavelength. I mean whether one wants to call it sort of the new Democrats or kind of democratic reformers or whatever. The same kind of triangle that made Blair a very effective European interlocutor with Clinton. So on a number of issues like nuclear nonproliferation where Brazilians had, one might say, a Gaullist approach of feeling the injustice of a regime that put nuclear powers into one category and all non-nuclear powers in another category. So they persistently and stubbornly refused to be a member of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty during all that time. During my tour they finally agreed to coming on board. They basically made the intellectual decision to abandon those elements that were interested in nuclear weapons and long range missiles. When they made a very effective agreement with Argentina basically to open up each other's nuclear facilities to mutual inspections so that they would eliminate any suspicions that either was seeking nuclear weapons and long range missiles. This agreement with Argentina in effect placed all the restrictions that the NPT would, but they refused to sign the NPT because it was a deep-seated emotional and historical position for them. But the NPT was one of a number of areas in which the long-standing differences between U.S. and Brazil started to close. I really see in a lot of ways the period as being kind of a golden era between the U.S. and Brazil in terms of bilateral relationships.

So just as my first tour there was a close hand glimpse of all the problems resulting from a deteriorating bilateral relationship, this time I could see the potential of favorable circumstances allowing for a lot of productive work by diplomatic entities. This included with us over that period a number of VIP visits, which would result in deliverables. I mean, Clinton made his first visit to Brazil while I was in the embassy, and his wife made a separate visit. The Secretary of State made a visit independently and then with the President and former presidents. George H. W. Bush visited Brazil when I was there. Jimmy Carter visited Brazil when I was there. A lot of other Americans came to the country while I was there.

So anyway, back to my job. I was in this very interesting job. For the first time in my career it was a job that did not seem to require me to come in every weekend like most of my other foreign jobs. It was not a crisis situation. But it was an opportunity for a lot of very good and interesting work. It was also a very pleasant family situation because my wife as a former Peace Corp volunteer returned to a country where she was quite fluent in the language, actually more

fluent in terms of colloquial Portuguese than I was. She had middle class Brazilian friends in Juiz de Fora and some other Brazilian cities. This provided a useful opportunity too because the American embassy people would really have contact only with the elite, the power elite of Brasilia who were very rich and very privileged people or the lower classes who would shine our shoes or pick up the garbage and everything. There wasn't a whole lot from a Brasilia living perspective in between. I valued a lot having some contacts over the course of three years with my wife's previous Peace Corp contacts, who were schoolteachers and other people who would fit solidly in that middle class role.

*Q: You had the political military portfolio.*

THIELMANN: Yes.

*Q: What was your impression of the Brazilian military. Had they really gone back to the barracks? Where were they recruited from? I mean looking at it as a foreign analyst, how would you characterize the Brazilian military at that time?*

THIELMANN: Thinking back on it, I would say that the Brazilian military was pretty solidly back in the barracks in their own state of mind. There were a lot of bad memories associated with their period of rule even for themselves and the way they looked at things. The military there sees themselves as sort of the national savior, as different than the corrupt politicians and so forth. But they I think felt very burned by that period too because they looked back on it as a period that corrupted the Brazilian military instead of the military cleansing the country. They were sensitive to the human rights abuses, although not quite sensitive the way we would've liked them to be sensitive. I think they did not really purge people who had sordid records or whatever. But I think it's fair to say that most of the leadership of the Brazilian military was not like the stereotypical Latin American military that was interested more in suppressing unpopular movements rather than in some sort of national mission. They had a lot of kind of uniquely Brazilian notions about their calling to defend the Amazon. Now the threat to the Amazon they wanted to defend was kind of an imaginary U.S. threat.

*Q: Yeah, I mean how we were going to take it over.*

THIELMANN: Right, it was kind of hard to keep a straight face sometimes listening to some elements of the Brazilian military talking about U.S. designs on the Amazon. The Brazilians were very suspicious of even the most innocent things, the cooperative programs to work on malaria and all those tropical illnesses where U.S. military could really make some valuable contributions really to world health. During my period there there was a long running conflict over the Brazilian attempt to establish a surveillance system that would allow them to police air traffic over the Amazon in a more effective way called SIVAM (English – System to Guard the Amazon). There was some corruption in that program too and there were a lot of suspicions.

*Q: This is the drug smugglers?*

THIELMANN: Yes, that was—

*Q: On behalf of Bolivia and—*

THIELMANN: Right, that was certainly part of the motivation. From a Brazilian perspective it was very much an attempt to maintain or even in some cases establish sovereignty over extremely sparsely settled region with indigenous peoples and others that one might say had questionable loyalty to the Brazilian government. During that period also there were insurgencies in Columbia and Venezuela that caused some border problems with Brazil -- not arguments over where the border was because Brazil was quite proud of the fact that many years ago they had established borders with which all of their neighbors agreed. But it was more a kind of the spillover of insurgencies where the people would either want to use Brazilian territories as a refuge or would want to exploit one part of Brazil. Protection in the Amazon was really after the Brazilians threw off a lot of their silliness about the conventional war with Argentina which was sort of their "raison d'être" (reason for being) for many years. The Amazon really emerged as let's say, the core defense mission of Brazil that enlivened and gave esprit to a lot of the Brazilian military efforts.

Now Brazil's military also still had a counter insurgency role in effect or a role to establish order when police authorities couldn't handle things -- a bigger role than the U.S. or Western European militaries had. But the Brazilian military was not keen on doing that kind of thing. It wasn't the same kind of military that some of the other Latin American countries would have. But it was a very proud military too.

Just a final thought about it is they were suspicious of the United States. Their egos were constantly bruised by having the U.S. prefer the Commander in Chief of the Central Command being their interface instead of the Pentagon. The word theater commander was very offensive to them. They didn't see themselves as a theater. So there was a constant struggle. They wanted to do business with Washington, and Washington wanted to go through the CINCENCOM to deal with the Brazilians. The Brazilians harbor a lot of grudges personal and otherwise. A Brazilian general told me about going to the post office in the United States and someone wanting to sell him postage for Belize instead of Brazil. Obviously all these years later it was still bothering him that that happened. A Brazilian admiral told me on the occasion of a ship visit about the U.S. military's plans to invade Brazil at the beginning of World War One, which I thought was another sort of silly Brazilian excursion. Then a couple of months later I read in the Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute, a magazine to which I subscribe, an article laying out the U.S. plans for an entire Marine divisions to seize the northeastern part of Brazil in order to have a launching pad for the invasion of Africa. Apparently this was a real plan, and it was part of the leverage in the negotiations with the Brazilian government, which ultimately resulted in a Brazilian invitation for the U.S. to establish our largest air base in the world during World War Two, in Natal, Brazil. So the Brazilian admiral had it right. I naively thought the U.S. would never do that kind of thing even though of course we had invaded Iceland to take over airbases there. Anyway, that was the complexion of the Brazilian military when I was there.

*Q: Where did the—*

THIELMANN: Oh I'm sorry, one more thing. The composition of the military was increasingly middle class and lower middle class, a very different composition than the Brazilian foreign

service for example, which continued to be a very much elite organization. The Brazilian military was getting to be the kind of place where people of color, that is to say darker-skinned Brazilians, could actually serve as officers, unlike the pattern fifteen to twenty years earlier when as some commentators noted that if you saw the Brazilian army marching by, you could almost tell the rank by the shade of the skin. It was becoming the kind of institution the U.S. military has really become -- where merit was more important than socioeconomic background.

*Q: Was the military tackling the way our military has women in the ranks?*

THIELMANN: I think not the way the U.S. has. I can't remember right now what the legal rules were for women. But I rarely saw women.

*Q: How about the Brazilian politicians? Were they a different breed than you'd found before? I mean, overall was Brasilia really the capital by this point I mean in thought, in word or in deed.*

THIELMANN: Brasilia really was the capital, and that was a dramatic change between the late '70s when I was there and the mid to late 1990s. Brasilia for a number of years was a very artificial construct, and the government had a rough time keeping the legislators in Brazil when all of them really longed to be back in Rio. I could never really get over the fact of their departure. When I returned to Brasilia you had a whole generation of condongos or Brasilia-born natives who saw everything about Brasilia as being their norm and didn't pine for the beaches as previous generations had. Even the appearance of the city was dramatically altered. When I was there, there were still a lot of bare red earth and termite mounds between the apartment buildings.

*Q: I remember seeing a movie called Our Man from Rio or something. It was a French movie. It showed all this red dirt piled up and these modernistic cement buildings.*

THIELMANN: There were still a lot of city neighborhoods that were still to be constructed. I mean there were kind of vacant lots still when I was first there. When I returned most of the original plan -- and it's a planned city -- basically looking from 10,000 feet or a mosquito or a bird depending on how you wanted to look at it, but all of the pieces of that bird's body had been filled in the second time I was there. So even some of the shantytowns of the city of Brasilia had become more established and looked more like regular Brazilian towns. Some of the ways in which the urban planners had unrealistically decided this is the side of the building where the people are going to enter and this is the path that the people will take walking to this building. Of course life had intervened, and some of the footpaths had been turned into concrete and everything. It was a more livable, less raw kind of place when I was there -- a lot of tropical flowers and vegetation. It was really a very attractive city in many ways with a San Diego-like climate, high and dry as a characteristic.

*Q: Well, as a political military officer did you work with our military to explain the sensitivity of the Brazilian military. I would think that you and the attachés had quite a job preparing visitors from Washington -- particularly military visitors but others about the sensitivity over fleet visits, and everything else for them to understand that they're not just coming to another friendly country.*

THIELMANN: Yes, we constantly had to do some missionary work with visitors, and we had very savvy attachés for the most part. Certainly the Defense Attaché was extremely good, and his written briefings for either the Secretary of Defense or visiting generals were always very good scene setters for them. So fortunately we were pretty much on the same wavelength on the kind of things we would prepare civilians for. But it was very difficult to get U.S. military officers that were accustomed to going around Central America ready for Brazil and to get out of their heads that, no, you're not going to just tell the Brazilians what kind of status of forces arrangements you want to have or arrangements for this or that. It was also similarly hard to acclimatize some of the civilians who would come to Brazil because Brazil is really kind of a great undiscovered country in the U.S. political mind. Brazil would occasionally have a crisis or something that would enter the minds of members of the National Security Council, and then there would be fifteen years during which they would never think about Brazil at all. The fact that half of all Latin Americans live in Brazil does not correspond to the attention that Brazil gets in terms of visitors and the time of U.S. national security managers and key decision makers. So a lot of what we would do would be continuing effort to inform and update Americans who were involved in foreign and defense policies on what the realities were. The business community of course always understood Brazil's importance because there were enormous investments there.

*Q: You were there during the Clinton visit. How did that go from your perspective?*

THIELMANN: It went very well. We had several so-called deliverables, initiatives, things that were launched in preparation for the visit and then announced during the visit. So we regarded it as extremely successful, successful at altering somewhat the Brazilian image of the U.S. as sort of a heavy-handed imperialist. Clinton because of his personal qualities loved the visit. I mean, Clinton, the musician, reacted very well to the African-Brazilian musicians that he encountered, and Clinton is such a natural in these kinds of visits. He could connect with people of all levels. He had a great intellectual meeting of minds with Cardoso, and yet he could just as effectively interact with street musicians. So it was a great visit.

There is one little personal embarrassment for me in that I believe that I was the one who drafted what I believe was originally a limited official use summary of the Brazilian political context and which was then used in a briefing package for American journalists. I'm not even sure if it started out being written as confidential or whether it was limited official use. But anyway, it ended up in the hands of the press, and they picked out one statement that I believe I had penned about corruption being endemic in Brazil. This got out to the Brazilian press, and, of course, they were extremely indignant that the U.S. would characterize Brazil in this way. It ended up blossoming just as the President was arriving. He ended up apologizing to the Brazilians for this characterization. I always thought it was an unusual and dubious honor to write words that the President of the United States then had to apologize for. Of course, on an intellectual and analytical basis, I stand by what was said, and it was not written for public consumption. Obviously I would've been more diplomatic in the way that I stated it, but this was a very consistent theme of our political analysis. If one looked at the Brazilian political picture, all politics is corrupt in a sense, but especially the Brazilian Congress is very much a function of -- or let's say ordered by -- money and influence, and the Brazilian political and business culture was really infused by that as well. So when organizations like Transparency International would rate countries around the world in terms of corruption, Brazil would usually rank pretty high.

The Brazilians themselves in analyzing this problem would share a lot of the sentiments in their own analysis. But it was just unfortunately presented.

*Q: Did you find being in Brasília a difficult place to sort of cover the country because of São Paulo and Rio or other places. Was it difficult to work out of it?*

THIELMANN: I would say no, but one of the problems we had, of course, was as in most places the travel budget was somewhat limited. We had the usual sense that we were penned down in the embassy by the responsibilities of the time, and travel opportunities even when the money existed were more limited than we would want. The country's enormous. The land area is the same as that of the continental United States. We did have fairly good plane connections from Brasília, but it was a challenge as it is any time you have a number of constituent posts and a particular challenge in the economic sector since the vital beating heart of Brazilian economy is in São Paulo, not in Brasília. So it was a challenge, but it was one that I thought that we handled fairly well, and this is probably a good segue into what happened after I had been there one year. Our political counselor retired.

*Q: Who was that?*

THIELMANN: That was Ted Wilkinson. The deputy political counselor, my boss, moved into the political counselor position, and I became the deputy political counselor. So whatever reservations I had about that very modest move up in the seventeen years seemed a lot different after one year in Brasília when, as political counselor, I had more of an involvement in the management and the orchestration of political reporting throughout the country. I tried to be very conscious about orchestrating how we would report on national events, nationwide elections and everything with close coordination from the political officers in our constituent posts or in some cases with the principal officer who was the only officer. That was challenging and enjoyable because I realized that I liked that kind of coordinating, managerial function of sort of orchestrating how a number of posts do a coordinated and coherent job describing what's going on in the country to the Washington audience. There were also opportunities for me to travel to the various posts, meet with some of the people doing the reporting and make some of my own personal contacts. One of the most memorable of my trips was a trip to Marabá which was a city in the Amazon that had a real Wild West flavor to it. It was one of those cities where there was only marginal control by civil and police authorities. There were huge disputes over the ownership of land. There was an influx of poor Brazilians who had been granted little pieces of land along some of the highways by the Brazilian government as part of a land reform program. There was in the general region great mineral wealth, huge iron ore deposits, and it seemed like a real natural for me to plan a trip there with one of the political officers that was reporting to me as deputy political counselor. He was the one who was drafting the human rights report in fact and, since this was an area where so many of the abuses originated, we thought it was a natural for a trip that actually had us both going into the region through different angles. I went through the state of Maranhão in northeastern Brazil, and then I took a Brazilian passenger train that was run by a big iron producing company all the way into Marabá sort of an all day trip. He approached from a different direction, and then we were planning to spend several days together, but the ambassador originally thought this was too extravagant to have two officers going to the same place. We had to make a pitch to him with a justification to override his own reservations.

It turned out that about a week before we were scheduled to arrive, there was a massacre of peasants at a rural road junction that became one of the most significant human rights development in the entire year. So the timing of our trip, while fortuitous, was really the perfect thing for the embassy to report on this development including both of us inserting ourselves into the interrogation of some of the people involved and having that kind of first hand account. We got some coverage at the time also as being the first diplomats going into the area to investigate this and manifesting the U.S. government's concern about the allegations of what had happened. While part of it was accidental in terms of timing, I thought this was really a great use of embassy resources to combine human rights reporting, political reporting, on the scene with some of the let's say more academic or distanced commentary from an embassy perspective.

*Q: Well, how about the local officials? I'd think they'd be kind of unhappy to have you mucking around there.*

THIELMANN: There was a combination of reactions. Certainly some were not happy to see us. There were a lot of non-government organizations operating in the area that were very happy to see us, delighted to see some manifestation of concern for some of the things that they had been complaining about for a long time. But even some of the politicians were people who were trying to do their best in difficult circumstances, and they were not happy at all with the massacre that took place, and it was not as uniformly hostile as one would suspect in that kind of situation. So that was one of the highlights of my tour there. Another thing related to the human rights front should be said. The human rights report was still resented by the Brazilian government as probably it is in almost all countries. But we had a kind of unique glimpse there. Since I had this vivid memory of how much the U.S. inserting itself into human rights during the time of the dictatorship was resented. There was a fascinating meeting that we hosted in the embassy between the visiting former president Jimmy Carter to Brasilia and a group of Brazilian human rights organizations including representatives of the Brazilian government's human rights commission. The incredible thing about this session was people roughly my age in their fifties or in their forties telling Jimmy Carter about the importance of the U.S. position on human rights events at the time in the late '70s when there was a lot of open oppression. Some of these people who had been in prison at the time, others in exile, others who were now serving in government were part of the opposition movement and the pro-human rights movement at that time. So there was almost unanimity around the table about what a vital service the U.S. had performed in the human rights profile at the time. It was a good reminder that the way it seems at the time is not always the enduring legacy of a particular policy.

*Q: No, I have to say I was in Korea at the time in the late '70s during the Carter thing, and we had North Korea thirty miles to the north, and so many divisions poised to come in. We were very unhappy with this. Why are we monkeying around with human rights? We've got a real problem here but in the long run, I mean it took time but it has become part of the vocabulary, world vocabulary.*

THIELMANN: Yes, the human rights report is something that a lot of people turn to. Amnesty International does one too, but the U.S. government does have certain sources that others don't have, and so it's become a much quoted reference document.

*Q: Did you have a problem with the human rights report while you were there?*

THIELMANN: I would say we were quite successful, successful also in getting it through the Department, which is always a challenge.

*Q: That's the real negotiations.*

THIELMANN: And also in not arousing more than the usual kind of grumbling about hypocrisy, and I'm quite proud of it. I mean the glory goes to the drafter really. But I feel very good about it not being vulnerable to attack. We, no one really, found us deficient in our statement of facts.

*Q: Where were students going at this time? Were they going to Europe or were they going to the United States? Where was the flow of young people going?*

THIELMANN: At my time students were still going to the United States overwhelmingly, and this was very significant because in another generation there was a whole series of Brazilian intellectuals who were educated in Europe, and Cardoso was a good example of that. I mean, he was very French-oriented in terms of his education. Even though he later spent time in the United States while he was in exile from earlier Brazilian military governments. But there's a strong sort of European continental Brazilian intellectual thrust, which of course originates in the fact that the colonizer was Portugal, but it kind of extends into a broader European intellectual thrust.

*Q: You've said an awful lot when you get into intellectual thinking centered in France, in Paris.*

THIELMANN: Yes, I think that's right. Culturally and temperamentally Brazilians were quite happy throughout the Latin-speaking world, and Italy would be another place, but in terms of the intellectual centers I think more Paris and secondarily Portugal in terms of the traditional education of the Brazilian elite. But the U.S. was still a very powerful magnet when I was there, and since I left of course, I have wondered about how our visa restrictions have changed that now.

*Q: It's a concern. Did you find when dealing with Brazilian politicians and the military that they understood the United States? This was always a problem. America's a complex country, and our politics are difficult for an American to understand and yet they drive what we do, and it's nice to have a political body that understands at least where you are coming from. Did you find this?*

THIELMANN: I found what I usually find in other countries -- that the understanding of the United States and all of its complexities even among educated natives is not very astute. In the case of Brazil, though, there was so much more Brazilian understanding of the U.S. than there was American understanding of Brazil. Put in that comparative context, I would say the Brazilians seemed to actually understand the United States fairly well. In terms of the Brazilian elite, not only had they been to the United States, but their kids were sort of raised in Disneyland or so it seemed. They, the Brazilians, visiting the United States absolutely loved New York City. California, or let's say the more cosmopolitan coastal U.S. was something the

influential Brazilians, had a lot of personal contact with. They still had kind of a Hollywood version of the United States in many ways. As my wife told me when she first went to Brazil, in the smaller villages and even some of the larger cities in the rural areas, they were shocked to see that she didn't have blonde hair. I mean, there was that kind of very simplistic image of the United States. Even in the more sophisticated circles that I would run in, there was often surprise when the Americans did something that didn't fit the stereotype of a kind of heavy-handed imperialistic approach to issues. So it's hard to say the Brazilians really understood the U.S. and all of its nuances, but, in comparison with some of the other countries that I've served in, they had a pretty good knowledge of their big brother to the north.

*Q: How Latin American was Brazil? I mean how much did they look to their other neighbors or were they really a different world and these just happened to be appendages onto their geographic position?*

THIELMANN: I think Brazil is a place unto itself in many ways, but it is also increasingly a Latin American country. There was always a lot of similarities, of course, but in terms of Brazilian consciousness, they were bigger and better than their neighbors. So they would almost be offended to see themselves as just one of several South American countries. Yet politically speaking the Brazilians realized that their own weight is not always sufficient enough to get our attention or to lobby effectively for political change or economic change. So before I arrived in Brazil the founding of Mercosur [Spanish: Mercado Común del Sur; English: Southern Common Market] or as the Brazilians would say Mercosul ["Mercado Comum do Sul"]--

*Q: That was--*

THIELMANN: The Spanish would say Mercosur.

*Q: The common market of--*

THIELMANN: The common market of Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile and I guess Paraguay [Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay]. I've forgotten now. This was something the Brazilians were very serious about. They wanted economic integration to occur there before NAFTA or before a hemispheric integration occurred, and they were trying to woo the Chileans in that direction.

*Q: Well, were they looking at, you know, the Chilean model which seems to be the most successful one in that whole area. Were you hearing things of envy about Chile or inquiries? Obviously the size difference is tremendous.*

THIELMANN: I think intellectually there was interest in that. But the Brazilians were so proud of being Brazilians that it's very hard for them to envy any of their neighbors. There's this long rivalry with the Argentineans, and the Argentineans were kind of proud, sort of European-South Americans, and would have a little bit of that kind of racist looking down at the Brazilians as being this horrible mix of races and disorderly people. The Brazilians, so many of them, saw virtue in their mixed blood and in their dynamism and had their own reasons for not seeing the Argentineans as a model for them, but I think that it almost goes the same way with Chile too. I

mean Chile and Argentina are both kind of heavily European racial kind of places in a more temperate climate zone, and Brazil didn't necessarily see models in these countries as being directly applicable to them.

*Q: Did Mexico play very much of a role or is too far away?*

THIELMANN: I'd say it was just too far away. The real economic powerhouses are Mexico and Brazil now. I mean in a lot of ways they're in kind of the same category. Also in their suspicious and defensive attitude about the United States, they're in the same category. So Brazil and Mexico would often have common cause in political attitudes and positions, but it was really too far away. Brazilians to the extent that they see themselves integrated in a region of the world are South Americans and have much less sort of kinship with Central Americans or Mexicans. However there is also a consciousness about being part of the hemisphere, and one can see right now in the large Brazilian contingent in Haiti that Brazil does take it's OAS [Organization of American States] role and the hemispheric role seriously.

*Q: What about other embassies there? Often the American embassy is the embassy the other embassies come to to get information and all that. Were there other embassies, i.e., those of countries playing a role like European Union or anything like that?*

THIELMANN: I think that's true on economic issues. I mean there were European Union representatives. I wasn't as close on economic issues. So I would say from my political perspective we had good and friendly relations with a number of other embassies there, and the ambassador certainly met with some of his colleagues. But I wouldn't say that we relied too heavily on them. The Canadian embassy or some of the Scandinavian embassies or the European embassies that tried to keep track of political developments would certainly be worth talking to in terms of getting their perspective or maybe hearing from some of the people that they had spoken with. But in general we had so many more people to cover the issues, and there was such a difference in scale that we could do a lot of things that the other embassies really couldn't do. It wasn't the kind of relationship you would have had with the embassies that were of roughly of equal size.

*Q: Given the seventeen-year difference, you arrived there in '95 and all, the communication revolution really had hit by that time -- the ability to email, telephone easily and all that -- how does that affect your operation?*

THIELMANN: The question of communications was a very dramatic difference between my two tours. I remember well a little ways into my first tour we started getting a summary of the Walter Cronkite evening news program. I remember that that was kind of our connection with developments in the United States or it was a much better way to find out about what was happening. I think the whole week was condensed into an hour, and we would play it over lunch at the cafeteria. Telephone service was not very good when I was there before, and it was very expensive to call the United States. So we were really connected only by letters with home. When I returned, of course, cable news was big. We had a choice of a lot of Brazilian television stations, many of which were quite sophisticated and produced soap operas for export to all kinds of other countries. The Brazilians themselves were extraordinarily well plugged in. I'm

obviously talking now about the elite, but even middle class Brazilians had discovered the cell phone, and I think the Brazilians took to cell phones like almost no other culture has. One would see them everywhere, and the Brazilians would like to talk and keep in touch with people by phone. I think cell phone use increased exponentially. So the country was much more in touch with itself and the outside world when I was there than previously.

*Q: What about dealing with Washington? I mean, it would appear that fast communications and all this would mean that Washington didn't really need to have an embassy because it could all be done by fax or telephone or what have you. But I've heard on the ground that actually it means the embassy sometimes has a greater role in presenting things and all because it can get into the planning stage of presenting a demarche or what have you rather than getting it and not being able to have that input. Did that affect you at all?*

THIELMANN: Brazil was still far enough away and enough off the beaten track that I felt our embassy there and the constituent post still played a pretty central role. I mean as I said before I thought that Brazil only sporadically entered the consciousness of high ranking Americans, and so that really left to the ambassador more of the business than would be the case in some other countries. So I felt that we had a little bit more leash on some of the initiatives than we might have had in other places. Most embassy officers felt that we knew better than Washington about how these things should be handled in the field.

*Q: Well, then you left there in '98.*

THIELMANN: Right.

**LUKE KAY**  
**Consular Officer**  
**Rio de Janeiro (1998-2000)**

*Luke Kay was born in Greece in 1969. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan in 1991 and attended the School of International Studies, Bologna. After joining the Foreign Service in 1998 he has held positions in Brazil, Ethiopia, and Uruguay. Mr. Kay was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in June 2004.*

*Q: So, you were in Rio from when to when?*

KAY: I went to Rio in '98 and was there till July 2000.

*Q: What was Rio like at that time?*

KAY: It was fabulous! It really was. Obviously, crime is an issue, infrastructure (or lack thereof!) is an issue; corruption obviously. But it's just a fabulous city. I mean, it really is. Top notch, world class.

*Q: What was the US Consulate General doing there at this point? Had Brasilia really taken over as... At one time Rio was almost the de facto of capital.*

KAY: It was. It was the de facto embassy until they built up Brasilia as the capital. When I cleared the building that would become the Consulate General in Rio, it was the embassy building, twelve stories tall. Downtown Rio de Janeiro. And in 1960 it moved, as you know, to everyone's chagrin; the diplomats and Brazilian civil servants with a view of beautiful Rio had to move to the middle of nowhere in Brasilia. But, I loved Rio! But I was one of the few Americans there who also so greatly enjoyed working in Brasilia. We had two or three of what you would call "mini tours." Actually, I had 2 TDYs (temporary tours of duty) in Brasilia, and I loved working there as well.

*Q: What type of work were you doing down in Rio?*

KAY: In Rio, at the consulate office, as you know, only Consulate General Rio de Janeiro handles immigration for all of Brazil, so we had a mini-tour, if you will, within the section in which we would rotate between Non-Immigrant Visas (NIVs) and Immigrant Visas (IVs). We did a little bit of everything as well as American Citizen Services.

*Q: Who were the Brazilian immigrants?*

KAY: Brazilian immigrants would emigrate to the U.S. They came mainly from a state of Brazil called Minas Gerais ("General Mines"). It's in the center of the country, the Pennsylvania of Brazil, if you will, basically half way between Rio and Brasilia, and it really began as a nucleus in Boston, many of them would immigrate illegally to greater Boston. This nucleus became a catalyst for Brazilians from that state to immigrate to the US. Of course, this is the rule; there are many exceptions to the rule, but Brazilian migrants would tend to go from Minas Gerais to metropolitan Boston, legally or illegally.

*Q: Did you get a feel for what they were doing when they got to Boston?*

KAY: Yes. Obviously low-pay, high-labor jobs like washing dishes, painting homes, cleaning homes, taking care of children, or doing construction, those types of professions.

*Q: How about non-emigrants, did you do that, too?*

KAY: Yes. Visitors at the time. It was before the devaluation of the real, the Brazilian currency. So, at the time, of course, obviously the Brazilian purchasing power parity, the real was very strong, stronger than the dollar. So Brazilians would come to the U.S. for bargains. It was cheaper for them here. So they would flock to Disney, Orlando, Miami, all that.

*Q: Did many students go to the United States?*

KAY: Yes, at the time, yes. Again, because of the purchasing power parity, it was cheaper for Brazilians to study English in the U.S. than in Brazil. Many of them would study in the US.

*Q: Was there much of a refusal rate?*

KAY: There was. Obviously, above, well above 3%, so they did not at all qualify for the visa waiver pilot program (VWPP). However, again, before the devaluation, rent was manageable. We'd have long lines, huge numbers, and unmanageable visa application rates.

*Q: What did you think has grabbed this?*

KAY: So, then, of course, as you know, in January of '99, the Brazilian crash came: their currency was devalued by 50% overnight. It went from about 1.12 to the dollar to 2:1 overnight, really. Two to one. Eventually it would go up to three to one! So, their currency lost most of its value.

*Q: Did it stop, the visa application rate?*

KAY: Oh, yes. In addition, concomitant visa prices went up to about a hundred dollars but felt like it had gone up almost 300% in reels due to the Brazilian currency's devaluation.

Okay, so we were mentioning the Brazilian devaluation in '99, January, where basically they lost 2/3 of the value of their currency. From a selfish point of view, we Americans were paid in dollars in Brazil. It was great because my take-home pay suddenly doubled overnight, as if I had gotten free cash, free money. Before, when I had arrived, I have to mention, I have to emphasize, Brazil was a very expensive place because the currency was basically too strong or over-valued. It was very expensive for us. It felt more expensive than in the U.S. Hence, all the Brazilians traveled to the U.S. With the currency crash, their lives just went down to zero because it really squeezed out the middle class. The rich could still travel in style, and the poor would still go illegally. But the middle class, the bona fide tourists or travelers, could not afford to anymore.

*Q: How did you find some of the spirit within the consulate general?*

KAY: It was very good, a good working relationship, an excellent Consulate General there named Cristobal Orozco originally from San Diego, I believe. We enjoyed a very good working relationship among the groups. Of course, at time USIS formally became part of the State Department, we had a going away USIS party. It was very good, the atmosphere.

*Q: Up in Brasilia, was that a different world?*

KAY: It was. It really was a different world, work wise and everything. I mentioned I enjoyed working there very much because you didn't have to go through any other channels. We were at the center of it all in terms of the embassy and the capital. So there, again, I had obviously consular work during two TDYs. They liked me and appreciated my work enough to invite me a second time. I met with the Ambassador. We had a charge d'affaires at the time for almost the entire time and dealt with the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, called "Itamaraty," kind of like the equivalent of Foggy Bottom. It was a fabulous place to work. I loved it work-wise.

*Q: How about both in Brasilia and in Rio, from your perspective? How was social life?*

KAY: The social life in Rio was obviously excellent, focused so much on the beach and outdoors. The closest you could compare to would be in L.A. or Miami in the U.S. to Rio. Brasilia was in many ways kind of like an Ottawa or Canberra, a small provincial capital city.

*Q: What about getting out and around the beach? What about the crime problem?*

KAY: The crime was a very major problem. I was mugged twice in Brazil, the only times ever in my life. Crime was a major problem. You couldn't leave anything unattended because it would "walk away" immediately. You got used to it in the sense that you became street smart. I knew people who were mugged at gun point. It was a scary situation, but you kind of dealt with it.

*Q: Did you find Brazilians sort of open?*

KAY: Yes, very friendly people, very open. Interestingly enough, they don't have that fixation that Europeans do. What's your ethnic identity or oh, you can't be American if you're Greek, or you can't be Korean if you're American or whatnot. Brazil is also a country of immigrants, as are most of the republics in the Americas. They also have Brazilians of Japanese descent, of Italian descent, of Angolan descent, every color under the rainbow. So, it wouldn't phase them if we had a Chinese-American or Latino-American or whatnot. They were also a multi-cultural society. That was very refreshing to know that all of us the Americas have a common bond of diversity.

*Q: How did you feel the Brazilians you knew felt about the United States?*

KAY: Most of them were very positive. Again, this was obvious before the devaluation when many of them could go to the U.S. to study, travel, work, or just visit. And very positive. They liked it very much.

*Q: How was Carnival?*

KAY: Oh, Carnival amazing in the sense that one week the city came to life. They had street carnivals, parades, floats, shows, and more parades. Of course, the major nights of Carnival everyone would go to the Sambodromo, kind of like our Hippodrome. The Sambodromo resembles a stadium where all the bands and parades would march through. I was in Carnival along with our head of the former USIS (who would later become the Consular General when our CG went to Brasilia); we were in the parade itself. It was fabulous.

*Q: What were you doing in the parade?*

KAY: I was dressed up. You all wore the carnival costumes, and you would Samba. Those who didn't know how to Samba would basically fake it so to speak. It was just fabulous. It was an all night affair, just amazing.

**RICHARD A. VIRDEN**  
**Deputy Chief of Mission**  
**Brasilia (2002-2004)**

*Mr. Virden was born and raised in Minnesota and educated at St. John's College in Collegeville, Minnesota. He joined the Foreign Service of the United States Information Service in 1963 and served variously as Information, Press and Public Affairs Officer, attaining the rank of Deputy Chief of Mission in Brasilia. His foreign posts include Bangkok, Phitsanulik and Chiang Mai in Thailand; Saigon, Vietnam; Belo Horizonte, Sao Paulo and Brasilia in Brazil; and Warsaw, Poland, where he served twice. Mr. Virden also had several senior assignments at USIA Headquarters in Washington, DC. Mr. Virden was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2011.*

*Q: When you left there, where did you go? You left in 2002?*

VIRDEN: I went to Brasilia as the DCM. So my final two years in the Foreign Service were as the deputy to the ambassador there in Brasilia. The ambassador, Donna Hrinak, had been a friend since we'd studied Polish and then worked in the embassy in Warsaw together in the late 70s. She asked me to take on the Brasilia job, so I went down there and we had two great, productive years together.

*Q: All right, well, in the first place, let's talk a bit about her. How did she use you and the embassy?*

VIRDEN: Well, both Donna and I had served in Brazil before, so we both knew something about the country. In my case, it was a long time ago, back in the 70s. She'd been there as a political officer in Sao Paulo in the 80s. She was fluent in Portuguese as well as Spanish. She was an area expert, having spent all her career, but for that one assignment in Poland, in South America.

She had been an ambassador three times before this elsewhere in South America. So she was a real expert on the region. She maintained very high level contacts with the president, other senior ministers, and political and business leaders in the key cities of Rio and Sao Paulo.

Her outreach meant I spent more time running the mission. It was a large one. We had about 900 employees, representing 18 U.S. agencies, at the embassy and in the Rio and Sao Paulo consulates general as well as a small consulate up in the northeast, in Recife.

We had been there only a few months in 2002 when Brazil elected a new president. This was Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a lathe operator and union organizer who never went beyond an eighth grade education. He grew up in a family of something like 22 kids, part of the time living in the back room of a bar in the port city of Santos.

And now suddenly -- well, not suddenly, he'd run several times previously and lost -- he'd been elected to lead the fifth largest country in the world!

It was an exciting moment, and a great personal story, but what might it mean for relations between our two countries? Here, I believe, we in the embassy helped ensure that the answer was positive.

Shortly after we arrived, Ambassador Hrinak organized a strategic planning meeting, a wide open brainstorming session in which the members of the country team were asked to muse about questions such as, “What are we doing in this country? What should we be doing? What do we need in order to make it happen?”

We picked everyone’s brains and I then put the best ideas together into a long range planning telegram we sent to Washington; it said our goal should be a “mature partnership,” one in which both countries acknowledge that so much binds our two large multiethnic democracies together that we should not be blown off course by every small dispute that comes along.

We laid out our rationale, goals and proposed initiatives to pursue them. We quickly got a favorable response from the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Marc Grossman, who said he really liked the cable and asked what he could do to help. That was a chit we soon cashed.

When Lula was elected shortly thereafter, Brazil choice was met with considerable skepticism in Washington. Many in the Bush Administration feared he might be another Hugo Chavez who would join forces with Venezuela and Cuba. There were lots of dire warnings like that. Our response to such thinking was to say, in effect: “Wait a minute, don’t jump to conclusion, give this person a chance; this is not what we’re hearing, don’t pay so much attention to rhetoric, but watch how he actually governs.”

That argument won out, and President Bush took some of the steps we suggested. He sent a conciliatory, non prescriptive note of congratulations to President Lula and invited him to an early visit to the White House. The visit took place and Presidents Bush and Lula, two men who could hardly have had more different backgrounds, actually got along famously; they really did, the whole six years they were in office together.

I those of us in Brasilia then can take a little of the credit for persuading Washington to keep an open mind about Lula and give him a chance, not to jump to premature and negative conclusions. And in fact he governed much more moderately than from the extreme left, as critics had warned.

*Q: When you got there, were there any major policy differences with Brazil, or not?*

VIRDEN: Oh, there were lots of them, sure. How to deal with terrorism was one. There was fundraising going on, in our view, down in the Arab communities down in the tri-border area with Paraguay and Argentina. Are you familiar with that area?

*Q: No, no, I’m not.*

VIRDEN: At any rate, there was concern there and the answer we would get back is, “Well,

they're raising funds there for legitimate charitable organizations that do good things for widows and children" in the Arab world, and so forth.

There was not a meeting of the minds about that, so there would be a lot of back and forth about people who were allegedly raising money that was ending up in the hands of terrorists.

And then there were the drug wars and how to deal with drug trafficking, a perennial bone of contention between us.

There was also a major negotiation going on trying to develop a free trade zone for the entire hemisphere, all 35 nations. It was a very ambitious undertaking, a goal set by the hemisphere's leaders a decade or so earlier. A deal between the two giants, Brazil and the United States, was essential to the overall pact, and we spent a lot of time trying to reach an understanding. I remember sitting in on a full days of discussions as two brilliant officials – our trade czar, Robert Zoellick, and Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim – bobbed and weaved and tried to find common ground. In the end, though, the mountain was too high to climb.

*Q: Well, let's look at terrorism and Iraq. How did our action in Iraq play while you were there?*

VIRDEN: Very badly. The Brazilians, who are basically pro-American, friendly towards Americans, were strongly against us on this issue. That's not just anecdotal, public opinion polls were done and showed nine out of ten Brazilians opposed to the war.

We had protests in front of our installations in all of the major cities in the country, too, and our security people had to contend with sometimes violent outbursts. Brazil has an Arab community and that's part of where that was coming from, but basically Brazilians saw the war as unilateral and unjustified.

*Q: Did they understand our efforts in Afghanistan?*

VIRDEN: Yes, they did, but let me mention an anecdote that I thought was meaningful. One of the senior advisors to President Lula said to the ambassador and me one day that "You know, when America was attacked on 9/11 we were with you on that. Three thousand innocent people died. That can't be tolerated. We have to condemn terrorism and fight against it. Everybody is with you in that effort." In fact, Brazil had demonstrated that support by joining in voting for the Organization of American States resolution condemning the attacks of 9/11.

Lula's advisor added, however, that "It's also true that every day 30,000 innocent children die of poor health care or malnutrition. Where are you in that battle?"

His comment reflects the priorities of a country like Brazil, where the struggle against poverty, hunger and disease remains front and center. When Lula ran for president in 2002, his campaign theme was '*Fome Zero*,' or "Zero Hunger." And once he was inaugurated, that's where he directed a lot of his effort, to notable success.

When Presidents Bush and Lula spoke back-to-back to the annual UN General Assembly meeting in 2003, Bush spoke exclusively about terrorism and security and Lula talked about

bread and butter issues. Brazilians are not alone in believing that in our preoccupation with security the United States often overlooks other things that also matter greatly.

*Q: Speaking of that, was Brazil in a position where it could do anything for hunger abroad, but did it have to sort of concentrate on its own problems?*

VIRDEN: It was doing a lot in Africa, not only about hunger but also fighting AIDS. It was and is one of the leaders of the world in coming up with new drugs, generic drugs at an affordable cost to fight AIDS.

Again, it was particularly in Portuguese-speaking areas, but also some of the other countries of Africa as well. There was a real partnership there and Brazil was out front and one of the leaders in that area.

When Lula came into office, Brazil had an estimated fifty million people living below the poverty line, most of them in the northeastern part of the country. By the time he left office eight years later, thirty million of those had been lifted above the line. It's no wonder, then, that when he left office at the end of 2010 he had a popularity rating in the mid 80s!

*Q: How was it during your time, with Lula and his government?*

VIRDEN: Well, it was a left of center government and ours was conservative, so there were some stark differences there. But Ambassador Hrinak actually knew Lula and some of the other leaders of his workers party from her previous tour in their stronghold of Sao Paulo. Her personal relations were excellent with them.

Despite that, we had our share of differences, often over trade questions and some of these issues that we've just been taking about. Brazil wanted some things from us that we could not give them. For example, one of its highest priorities is to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council; wherever their president and foreign minister traveled they pushed for a firm commitment to support Brazil's aspirations.

As you probably know, Brazil is a member of the BRIC group of countries and is campaigning hard for this UN reform and its own candidacy.

*Q: Yes, well, you've got India, Japan, Germany, particularly.*

VIRDEN: Or in South America. If South America's going to get one permanent seat, should it necessarily be Brazil? The Argentines say, "Well, why not us?" and Mexico says, "Why not us?" and you've got that in every region of the world.

Brazil makes the case that the arrangements in the UN Security Council were made in 1945 and reflected that world but don't really apply to the world we have now. It's a reasonable argument, but how do you get beyond that to a new agreement?

*Q: How were relations between Brazilians and Americans? What was Brazilian opinion about*

*Americans?*

VIRDEN: I would say Brazilians are essentially pro-American. You had certain leftist elements within academic circles that harbored a certain amount of old line anti-Americanism, but more broadly the country was very favorable to Americans.

Most of the families that can afford to send their children abroad to study send them to the United States, rather than to Europe or Australia or anywhere else.

There was lots of movement back and forth. Something like a million Brazilians live in the United States. Unfortunately, as many as two thirds of them may be here illegally; many of those get in by way of Mexico, which they can enter without a visa.

And this is, again, is one of the points of friction between us. Brazilians believe we should give them the same status we give our European friends, who do not need visas to visit the United States. We explain the law, but they continue to push the point and resent what they saw as continuing discrimination.

*Q: How did we see relations with Venezuela, Hugo Chavez?*

VIRDEN: Well, I think the Bush Administration saw Venezuela as a real problem child and was concerned initially that Lula might lead Brazil into the same category, but he did not. Even though Lula tried to be friendly with Chavez, he seemed to regard Chavez as a poor politician, a military man with an authoritarian approach lacking the flexibility required in a democratic society. But still, Brazil wanted to have it both ways, to have good relations with us and with Venezuela, too.

As I was saying a little earlier, I'm glad that our government did not fall victim to painting Lula with the same brush as Chavez, because he was a very different sort of leader.

Now, among the problems we did have with Brazil at this time were a lot of trade questions. After all, Brazil had become one of the top ten economies in the world.

We also had a lingering internal tax dispute over whether we should be paying into Brazil's retirement system for our 600 or so Brazilian employees. Because there was no agreement on that, we were blocked from selling any of our properties. We needed to get rid of some of our unsafe, no-longer-appropriate installations, particularly in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. We did a lot of wheel spinning over this but eventually did acquire, remodel and dedicate a good, well-located site in Sao Paulo.

In Rio, we had a property right in the heart of the city with a splendid view of Guanabara Bay, but it fell far short of today's security standards. Even if we could find a way to divest ourselves of it, we were challenged to find an affordable alternative that was safe and also allowed us the access to people needed to do our jobs. This has become a classic dilemma for U.S. installations in many parts of the world. We were still stymied in Rio, as of the time I left there in mid-2004.

*Q: How about Brazil and Argentina? How stood relations between those two powers?*

VIRDEN: Very tricky. They were skeptical of each other, kind of rivals. Brazil was doing better than Argentina. Argentina traditionally had often been much more developed than Brazil, and those roles had been reversed. I haven't served in Argentina, but the perception in Brazil was that Argentines were jealous of how well Brazil was doing.

The two countries were trying to negotiate a trade pact, as part of a small regional group, but I would say the bilateral relationship was still kind of tense; there was no love lost. The rivalry would often be manifested out in soccer, where both are traditionally among the world leaders. Brazil, of course, is in a class by itself in soccer, but Argentina would challenge that status at times.

Brazil won the World Cup again in 2002 and returned home to a jubilant welcome. About a half million people turned up for the occasion in Brasilia – the capital's biggest crowd ever. The excitement was infectious. In Rio, the celebration on Copacabana and the other beaches went on all night.

*Q: What about the Amazon? Were we raising the ecological issue of the Amazon?*

VIRDEN: Yes, we were, and so were some of our congressional delegations that came through. A couple of those went up to Manaus, in the heart of the Amazon, looking into that among other issues up there.

By the way, we did have, the Smithsonian Institution was up there, doing some projects on preservation of the rain forest. They had some people based up there in the heart of the Amazon. NASA and the Center for Disease Control were also engaged in the Amazon.

One of our defense companies, Raytheon, had sold Brazil an electronic surveillance system for the whole Amazon region and was putting equipment in place during this period. Primarily it was supposed to help detect drug trafficking, particularly by aircraft.

This was more than a billion dollar deal, with lots of questions about getting the contract completed in time and how the information collected would be used. Among our concerns was avoiding an incident such as happened in, I think Peru, where an aircraft carrying missionaries was shot down in the belief it was ferrying narcotics. That was very much on our minds.

Brazil wanted the surveillance system for lots of reasons; drug trafficking was one of them, but so was identifying mineral deposits and other valuable resources in these remote, inaccessible areas.

And, of course, control of Amazon. As I said earlier, Brazil's sense of vulnerability about its hold on that vast region, its fear that a vacuum might be filled by others, was the main reason the country's capital was moved from the coastal port of Rio to the inland city of Brasilia, back in the 60s.

Brazilians are determined to defend their sovereignty over the Amazon and very alert to potential inroads by others. More than a half dozen other countries border on the Amazon, and the potential for border friction is huge. The U.S.-provided surveillance system was meant to help Brazil maintain control and also better harness the region's resources.

*Q: Our military and the Brazilian military, were there efforts made for them to sort of get along?*

VIRDEN: Well, we do have a long history of military relations with Brazil. They fought with us in the Second World War. Many military officers studied in our country. And historically, a lot of their equipment has come from the United States, so there is a solid formation to work with.

I would say that our bilateral military relations at this time were reasonably good, though many of our military relations were frustrated that they were not even better. We do not have any military bases in Brazil, but we do have a variety of military units within the Mission. During my time, that included Army, Navy and Air Force Attaches; Marine Guards; and a small military assistance group that was helping with training and acquisition of U.S.-made military equipment, such as fighter aircraft.

That latter involved a spirited competition with the French and Russians, among others. Ambassador Hrinak, I and other senior officials spent considerable energy in the effort. Our limits on technology transfer were one barrier we had to overcome. U.S. prospects were hindered by our earlier decision not to join the International Criminal Court. Restrictions imposed by Congress on ICC members prevented us from providing training programs and concessionary terms for equipment purchases. The collateral damage included some palpable cooling in our relations with Brazilian military officers. Our officers would point out that training programs promote long term cooperation between the armed services of the two countries; if we can't provide it, they will go elsewhere for it. So that was one of the fights we were waging at this time; Brazil hadn't yet made a final decision when I left in 2004.

Another contentious issue back then involved some overzealous U.S. security elements who wanted to come to Brazil, undeclared to the Brazilians, to scope out how they might do certain antiterrorist actions, such as in extreme cases snatching alleged terrorists in Brazil without coordination with Brazilian authorities.

We refused to allow them to come down, declined to give the required country clearance. So that was a fairly rough internal battle we waged at that time.

*Q: Oh, yes?*

VIRDEN: Well, had the Brazilians learned of any such thing, it would have done great damage to our relationship.

*Q: Oh, yes. There is this element that has no conception of the repercussions of something like that.*

*What about the Drug Enforcement Administration? Was this a difficult element to deal with, or*

*not?*

VIRDEN: Yes, it was, because the DEA agents are used to carrying weapons and this is where the rubber met the road for us. They had trouble accepting that they were only to be there as kind of liaison and advisors to the Brazilians. That's not what they're used to doing. They wanted to be operational and to be authorized to carry weapons, which the Brazilians would not permit. The ambassador and I were the heavies in insisting that Brazilian law had to be respected.

The Brazilians are in charge of law enforcement in their own country and that runs against the proclivities of DEA people who want to go out and do the job. So this was another major conflict. Brazil is a sovereign country that gets to create and enforce its own laws; if they don't want foreign drug agents carrying weapons around Brazil, then you can't do it.

*Q: Was drug smuggling a major problem?*

VIRDEN: Not drug production, but smuggling, yes. There was a fair amount of drugs passing through.

*Q: This was mainly from Bolivia, wasn't it?*

VIRDEN: Bolivia and Colombia, too, up in the Amazonian region in the north and it was also having an effect on Brazilian society. Those slums, or *favelas*, as they call them, in Rio, in particular, but also in Sao Paulo and some of the other big cities, there's a drug culture in there. It's illicit drug money that makes these places run and causes perennial security problems.

This issue is going to be in the spotlight soon because Rio is scheduled to host the World Cup and then the Summer Olympics, the World Cup in 2014 and the Summer Olympics in 2016; Brazil will have to find a way to cope with the crime and drug problem in Rio and Sao Paulo during those games.

*Q: One reads about the criminality in those cities.*

VIRDEN: Well, yes, Sao Paulo has an average of thirty violent deaths every day! And Rio has an average of about twenty. Those are huge numbers by American standards, and most of it is drug related crime.

In Rio, these *favelas* are on a hillside overlooking the city. Geographically, they are in a strategic position, they can block the major arteries and they have sometimes done that in the past.

There was a major movie about this called "Cidade de Deus", or "The City of God," that came out four or five years ago. What it depicts is the violent world of those slums and the drug and crime bosses who run them.

It's a major internal threat for Brazilians, one they're grappling to resolve; they have tried various things and are still doing so now in a major push to get ready for these huge sporting events.

Good luck to them! Some of these favelas are in areas that the police can't even get into, much less control over time, because of the criminal hold on the people who live there.

*Q: How'd you find Brasilia? You're back after some time. Had it become a real city, yet, or what?*

VIRDEN: Well, it had grown considerably and become a genuine metropolitan area. It's a planned city, of course, laid out by a socialist designer according to his concept of how people should live, not their own natural choices. So it didn't grow naturally and you can sense that; some of the government buildings seem sterile and dated. It doesn't yet feel like the capital of one of the world's biggest countries, an emerging power.

But Brasilia is a pleasant place for family life; it's calm, orderly; you don't have huge traffic messes. The city's cultural life is developing impressively, and the diplomatic whirl is quite active. There are many attractive neighborhoods and more home swimming pools per capita than anywhere else I know of. There are spectacular sunsets, and the weather is comfortable all year round.

We had a beautiful home in Brasilia with a view of the capital's skyline that prompted one of my predecessors to exclaim, on first seeing it, that he'd died and gone to heaven. We enjoyed the house and especially the marvelously friendly and competent three-person staff who made us feel so at home there.

You have to admire the boldness of the Brazilians, to move a capital from a jewel of a city in Rio de Janeiro to the middle of nowhere, literally, and make it work. Brasilia may never replace Rio in Brazilian hearts, but it has become a vibrant city in its own right. Bringing a capital to life out there, way back in the hinterland, is a remarkable achievement, and you have to salute it.

*Q: How about relations between the embassy and the huge, dynamic powerhouse of Sao Paulo?*

VIRDEN: Well, yes, Sao Paulo is all of that. Relations were very good. Sao Paulo is a consulate general and it just got a spacious new facility, opened up while we were there and in fact we needed that. The consul general and I and the ambassador were in regular conversation and travel in both directions was frequent, as was the case with our consulate general in Rio.

The business community is huge there, as you might imagine. More than 400 of our American Fortune 500 companies have offices down there, and the Department of Commerce has a huge business promotion operation there, second only to its program in China. Sao Paulo is the economic hub of all of South America; it produces cars, airplanes and a whole range of advanced, sophisticated products to complement Brazil's world leadership in agricultural commodities like coffee, soybeans, corn and sugar.

Rio de Janeiro remains an important center as well, and not only for its cultural life and tourism. The huge oil deposits discovered off its coast in recent years will only add to its economic significance. Cities like that make Brazil in many ways an advanced modern economy, but the

country also has some very poor areas, a land of real contrasts. Here, again, President Lula deserves great credit for the dramatic gains made in reducing the gap between the very rich and the rest of society during his tenure.

*Q: Well, you left there in, what, 2004?*

VIRDEN: We did, we left on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004 and I retired the next day, July 1.

**LAWRENCE COHEN**  
**Political/Military Affairs Officer**  
**Brasilia (2002-2005)**

*Mr. Cohen was born and raised in Pennsylvania and was educated at Dickinson College, and the Universities of Pennsylvania, Tel Aviv, Chicago and Northwestern. Entering the Foreign Service in 1980, he served variously as Economic, Political and Political/Military Officer at posts in Mexico, Honduras, India, Hungary, Nigeria and Brazil. In his assignments at the State Department in Washington Mr. Cohen dealt with Foreign Assistance and Environmental and Scientific matters. His last post was in Afghanistan, where he had two assignments with Provincial Reconstruction Teams. Mr. Cohen was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.*

*Q: It is 2002. I will let you take over.*

COHEN: The assignment to Brasilia was not one we had anticipated. In the fall 2001 Marla and I agreed that we would extend for one more year in Lagos. It was a hard decision, especially for Marla. She did not like her work environment. Lagos itself was tough. But we really appreciated AIS where David was in elementary school. While stationed in Lagos we also received the maximum education allowance for sending out eldest to boarding school in the United States. Abby attended Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire, an excellent school. That was an incentive to stay. At the time the Department was considering extending special needs differential (SND) funding to Nigeria. Under SND, if you agree to extend an extra year at a selected hardship post, you would receive an additional fifteen percent in pay.

We weighed the upsides and downsides to staying in Nigeria. The ledger came slightly to the plus side, so we thought that this would be the best for us. Ambassador Jeter heartily approved my extension for an additional year.

In late 2001, we went on R&R to the states. We returned from R&R and found a surprise. Ambassador Jeter had been back in Washington. While there, he sought a replacement for me. Jeter really was an African hand and, I suspect, he felt comfortable surrounded by *his* people. I was certainly not an Africa hand, nor a part of the Africa Bureau mafia. I had not served in Liberia or previously worked West African issues. Moreover, since I was resident in Lagos, the usual back-stabbing gossip may have been at play in Abuja. I suspected much of the section's

good work was being overlooked or belittled. DCM Tim Andrews' management of the mission was just short of a fiasco. He possessed jaded views about the Lagos staff. And my successor could be easily moved to Abuja.

I discovered the Ambassador's perfidy. I inquired first to Consul General Hinson-Jones. She was perplexed as well. I contacted the front office. The DCM confirmed the story. He threw me a bone, however. "Why don't you stay and continue to work in the section?" In essence, I would be working for my replacement. I should have told him to shove it. I simply said, enunciating my words clearly through the typically poor connection, that my departure from Nigeria was "etched in stone." We were leaving at the end of my tour, just a few months away.

At that point, it was January. The summer cycle jobs, particularly the good ones, were pretty much gone. Almost no jobs were available. I discovered how difficult it was to crack into other parts of the Africa bureau. Earlier, I had the impression that the Africa bureau treated its officers with deference and respect. Certainly, AF enjoyed a reputation for taking care of its own. But my experience with AF at the time was indeed sobering. The bureau left me high and dry. By most measures, I had performed an outstanding job in a difficult environment. Economic reporting was going smoothly. Relations with local contacts could not have been better. But the strains between Lagos and Abuja seemed to be worsening. The front office in Abuja cared little for its people in Lagos. After that, I never wanted to go back to AF and have nothing good to say about the bureau.

I was considering two possible postings. One was in Sarajevo. It was a good job. The other position in Brasilia was not as good. Either Brasilia or Sarajevo. The Sarajevo position offered the advantage of being in-cone, hardship money, and a European posting. There was a distinct downside, however. Children between the ages of five and seventeen were not allowed at post due to land mines. Perhaps the land mine issue was an exaggeration. All of our children then were within that age range. For her own job Marla was seeking positive feedback but was not really getting any.

Brasilia was situated in a civilized country. The job there specifically was political-military affairs. I was not really excited about it. But Marla was getting positive vibes from Brasilia about a job. And we heard from the embassy Community Liaison Officer (CLO) that the American School in Brasilia was quite adequate. One night I had this revelation in my mind. I worried about Sarajevo; for the sake of the family, it was best to decide on Brasilia. Marla was angry with me for deciding in this manner, but she preferred Brasilia. We took the Brasilia assignment.

The assignment required some language training. I had Spanish earlier. We finagled thirteen weeks of Portuguese, not the full program. We went into Portuguese language training and reached Brasilia at the end of October 2002.

*Q: You were in Brasilia from when to when?*

COHEN: We reached Brasilia in late October 2002, just a couple of days after the election of President Lula. I departed post in June 2005. Marla stayed on until August 2006.

*Q: Can you talk about Brazilian-American relations when you got there?*

COHEN: It was certainly an interesting time. First, the Oct. 2002 election of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, the Partido de los Trabajadores (PT) or labor candidate, as Brazil's president. Many viewed Lula's election as a sea change in Brazil's political paradigm, certainly a rejection of the moderate-conservatism of incumbent Fernando Henrique Cardoso of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party. Lula's pending presidency unnerved Washington. Did it portend a leftward shift in Brazilian foreign affairs and domestic policy? Would Lula exhibit a strong populist stance with regards to trade issues, etc.? In the run up to the election, when it became more apparent that Lula would be the likely winner, Brazil's currency, the *real*, kept declining. By the time we arrived, the real fell to approximately four to one dollar. That was an extremely low rate of exchange. The purchasing power of US dollars was unusually strong. For us Brazil was a bargain, we stocked up at Brazilian stores. It was a good time to be holding dollars.

On the exterior, President Lula reflected his labor-PT heritage. To his credit, he brought in some moderate -- perhaps pragmatic is a better word -- people into his administration. Others were straight out of the PT philosophical camp and sounded little different from the leadership of Brazil's radical 1960s student movement. Of course, some of Lula's closest aides *came* from that leftist movement; some had been student leaders when Lula began his rise in the Sao Paulo labor movement. Lula's smarter advisors realized the difference between reality and rhetoric. As it turned out, some of the economic policies under Lula tended to be pragmatic.

Lula was inaugurated president on January 1, 2003, New Year's Day; Brazilian presidents are always inaugurated on New Year's Day. The inauguration presented challenges to the United States Government. Washington could not decide which senior official would represent the USG at the inauguration. Usually, for a Brazilian presidential inauguration, Latin governments sent the foreign minister. Often, presidents attended. Brazil, the second largest democracy in the Western Hemisphere, is an extremely important country for the United States. One would think a high level U.S. delegation would attend the inauguration.

Yet, in the week prior to the inauguration, no delegation head was identified. The disarray in Washington as to who to send was becoming an embarrassment. Secretary of State Colin Powell evidently was reluctant to attend. Perhaps the fact that the inauguration was on New Years Day dissuaded senior cabinet level officials from attending. Also, there may have been a lack of enthusiasm for Lula specifically. In any case, at the last minute the U.S. Government sent U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Robert Zoellick to represent President Bush. Despite the embassy's assurances that Zoellick's position was a cabinet level one, no one in Brazil bought it.

That the United States selected the USTR to represent it instead of a "senior" official pissed off the Brazilians. They felt snubbed. On a particularly sensitive occasion, Brazilians of all walks of life recognized that the low level U.S. delegation was proof the USG had not favored a Lula victory. Lula himself apparently felt that he was being treated cavalierly. He described Zoellick as the "sub of a sub." At least half a dozen heads of state from Latin America attended the inauguration. Fidel Castro was treated to rock star status. The presidents of Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina attended. Numerous foreign ministers, some from Europe, came. Yet the United States was represented by the Trade Representative. "Is that all that the U.S. thinks of us?" We are just

a “trading partner?”

*Q: When you said the name, it did not ring any bells.*

COHEN: A few years later, Robert Zoellick served as Deputy Secretary of State. Today he is head of the World Bank. But he was not at State then. I believe Zoellick’s attendance instead of the Vice President, Secretary Powell, or another prestigious cabinet level official demonstrated, at the least, benign insensitivity. Brazilians interpreted it as a signal how we viewed our bilateral relationship -- that trade is the most important aspect of our bilateral relationship.

*Q: Was there a debate over who would travel to Brazil on New Year’s Day? Were there forces in our government which were reluctant to grant any accord or open a hand to the new president?*

COHEN: I do not know. I was not privy to deliberations in Washington. I suspect it was a combination of factors, including New Year’s Day. But remember what was happening in late 2002. This was the lead up to the war in Iraq. The USG pressed hard for support at the United Nations Security Council. Brazil was about to take a rotational seat at the Security Council. It stood to reason that the USG would do everything possible to placate the new Brazilian government. I suppose the attitude in Washington towards Brazil was tinted without focus to its importance. Everything outside the Middle East was being cubby-holed. Latin America, it seemed, had fallen off Washington’s radar screen. In the war on terror Brazil was not perceived as a “team” player. Brazil had not demonstrated support for the pending attack on Iraq. In fact, the GOB expressed displeasure with the direction of U.S. policy. From my perspective, the U.S.-Brazil relationship was sour because we permitted it to become sour.

*Q: Let us talk about this relationship. Who was the ambassador?*

COHEN: The ambassador was Donna Hrinak, a high flyer who had been ambassador in La Paz, Caracas and Santo Domingo. She was extremely sharp, spoke Portuguese quite well, and appealed to Brazilian audiences. But she had some noteworthy ambassadorial flaws which hurt the embassy terribly.

The relationship between the United States and Brazil has always contained some stress. Towards the U.S., Brazilians often display some deep-seated inferiority complex. I thought Mexicans possessed such a psychological scar. But after serving in Brazil, I felt that Mexicans display less of an inferiority complex vis-à-vis the United States compared to Brazilians. Brazil views itself as almost our equal. It is a vast country of 170 million, immense compared to any of its neighbors. Brazil contains more population than the rest of South America combined. Brazilians felt the United States did not provide the respect that Brazil deserved. Looking at this from the Brazilian perspective, they were probably right.

From the beginning of the Bush administration in January 2001 until weeks before our November 2004 presidential election, Secretary of State Colin Powell had not visited Brazil. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld first visited Brazil in March 2005, after he had been in office over four years. He transited Brazil on a meaningless trip through the region. To my knowledge the only cabinet level officials who traveled to Brazil during the first term of the

Bush Administration were Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill -- a fiasco of a trip -- and, I believe, the energy secretary.

Within four years of a presidential term, one would expect the president or vice president might have visited, perhaps during a swing through South America. Certainly, the secretary of state might come through a few times. Would not the defense secretary visit the hemisphere's second military power? How about the secretary of commerce or agriculture? The USG demonstrated through neglect an attitude towards Brazil that fed that country's inherent skepticism. I do note that during the second Bush term, many more high level visits were conducted. Since late 2005 President Bush has been to Brazil twice.

*Q: Was there a message that we were trying to send? Were we miffed at the Brazilians or was it particularly a matter of disregard?*

COHEN: It was probably the latter more than the former. Perhaps some in the U.S. Government were miffed about Brazil, for whatever reason, petty or not. But until October 2002 when Lula was elected, the Cardoso government was quite popular in Washington. There was no evidence the Bush administration did not like Cardoso. It just seems that while Brazil was always out there, the USG leadership did not seek to demonstrate our close relationship with Brazil.

I pose another example of benign neglect. In the 1990s, the Clinton administration had bi-national commissions with a number of countries, including Mexico, Russia, Ukraine, and China. High level, cabinet meetings were held in each other's countries, chaired perhaps by the vice president, like the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission. Even if there were not many practical outcomes to these extravaganzas, they played well in our partner country. Mexicans pointed to the high level attention. All those cabinet secretaries flying to Mexico for a day! The Russians seemed to take the commission meetings seriously. I know that these commissions demanded the attention of busy senior officials. But the return on investment of time seemed high. Brazil may not have required a full commission, but regular high level meetings would have helped reduce the many bilateral irritations that kept cropping up.

*Q: I think all of us in the Foreign Service have heard that the Brazilians are supposed to have probably the most effective Foreign Service. I have heard this many times. And yet when I think about it, I cannot think of anything that Brazil has done in these thousand interviews I have conducted. Except for people who served in Brazil, the country does not come across my radar.*

COHEN: Perhaps I can explain. Near the end of my assignment in 2005, I drafted a three-part mega-cable on Itamaraty, the nickname for Brazil's Ministry of External Relations (MRE.) Itamaraty comes from the name of the building which houses the MRE's head offices and reception rooms. It was designed by Oscar Ribeiro de Almeida Niemeyer, the architect who drew up most of Brasilia's government structures. I was familiar with how MRE operated. I dealt with it on a daily basis. My think piece examined Itamaraty in great detail. The following were some of my observations:

Brazilian diplomats are selected in a very competitive process, not dissimilar to the U.S. Foreign Service Officer selection system. However, the Brazilian Foreign Service does not reflect the

broad breadth of Brazil's culture and ethnic make-up. The selection system is severely tilted towards Brazil's elite. It is akin, perhaps, to the State Department process of the mid twentieth century. What the U.S. Foreign Service looked like two generations ago.

*Q: Many are the sons of diplomats.*

COHEN: Very many. The candidates tend to come from the same schools. One does not see Brazil's poorer classes represented. Afro-Brazilians are invisible. The mosaic of Brazilian society is not reflected in Itamaraty.

Officer candidates who enter the Foreign Ministry, Itamaraty, are all highly educated, talented, and highly motivated. The Foreign Ministry puts all its new officers through an intensive curriculum, one or two years, at their Rio Branco Institute in Brasilia. Rio Branco is Brazil's counterpart, albeit smaller, to the State Department's Foreign Service Institute (FSI). Brazilian Foreign Service Officers are not so much trained as indoctrinated. Many enter Rio Branco with advanced degrees. Why teach political science to incoming Foreign Service officers who perhaps have advanced degrees in this subject? Training should fit the needs of the individual officer. Look at the U.S. Foreign Service. Most new Foreign Service officers and specialists have extensive academic background from many universities. They may require specific training to become management or consular officers. They receive technical and language training to meet the requirements of the job. Yet new Brazilian Foreign Service Officers receive at Rio Branco the equivalent of another college degree in political science. All must be proficient in certain languages and receive language training to reach that proficiency. The requirement for English was exceedingly high. One official at Itamaraty described the level of English required by candidates was equivalent to an English degree from Cambridge University. The candidates must also master Spanish and, until a few years ago, French.

In a country of 170 million people, many capable people have some linguistic capability in English and Spanish. French is more of a stretch. But the fluency in English that was expected by Rio Branco weeded out most Brazilians who spoke English but not polished English. Brazilian elites who lived abroad as children, often of diplomats, sons and daughters who attended the best schools, they achieved linguistic mastery.

Ironically, in 2004 MRE announced that to level the playing field for all Foreign Service applicants, it was dropping the English language requirement. This brought much derision from many directions, including Brazil's media. Some pundits asserted the dropping of the English requirement was a knee-jerk anti-American jab. (Of course, some pointed to the fact that the name of the language is English, not North American!) The truth is that English is a necessary skill anywhere and especially for diplomats. What was needed was not a canceling of the prerequisite but a lowering of the ridiculously high linguistic standard required by candidates to a level more akin to a Foreign Service Institute 3/3.

Selected candidates are put through a rigorous program at Rio Branco which inculcates a "Brazilian" way of looking at things. The doctrine is reflexively anti-U.S., perhaps a residual of MRE's old guard leadership, many of whom came of age in the 1960s and still possessed a jaundiced view of U.S. foreign policy. These old men ran MRE with an iron fist. Much of their

rhetoric we would consider “leftist.” The Rio Branco curriculum then taught to the incoming Foreign Service officers reflects their own attitudes and biases. It’s a Foreign Service that has some of the sharpest guys on the planet. Unfortunately, MRE attempts to “brainwash” them. The younger Brazilian Foreign Service Officers I knew seemed to me too savvy to fall for the leftwing rhetoric. But all knew that to get ahead they had to kowtow to the party line laid out by the Itamaraty high command.

*Q: Again and again, I interview people and ask what embassies played a role? Sometimes it is the Scandinavians; a lot of times it is the French or the British; sometimes the Germans; obviously the Russians. But never do I hear the word “Brazil.” The only time I have heard about a Brazilian diplomat was the one who headed the UN mission in Iraq and was killed in August 2003. He is the only Brazilian who has ever raised any profile.*

COHEN: Sergio Vieira de Mello was the Special Representative of the Secretary General in Iraq. But here is the irony. He was hardly a Brazilian. He studied at the Sorbonne. He joined the UN in 1969 and had been a United Nations official until his death. I believe he resided in Switzerland. De Mello spent his entire career with the United Nations. He was a United Nations bureaucrat, not a Brazilian diplomat. However, in death, Sergio de Mello’s legacy was basically usurped by the Brazilians. He became this super Brazilian diplomat. It was a message of nationalism and protest against the Iraq War which “cost us the life of our dearly beloved Sergio.” That, I think, is still typical of Brazil. That the one well known Brazilian diplomat who rose above the mediocrity did not rise through their system; he rose through the United Nations system.

*Q: You said that our Ambassador possessed certain skills and had some famous flaws. What were they?*

COHEN: Ambassador Donna Hrinak possessed some noteworthy skills. She performed well with Brazilian audiences. Brazilians liked her *schmaltz*, they admired her *vida*. Ambassador Hrinak understood the Brazilians in that regard. She had served in Sao Paulo; her son was born in Brazil. She understood Brazilian culture.

When Ambassador Hrinak took over, she presented Washington with a list of possible things that could be done to improve U.S.-Brazilian relations. Some items on the list were completely illogical. But I guess it’s an ambassador’s prerogative to advocate the impossible or illogical. To anyone who observed what was happening in Washington at the time, some of her proposed initiatives were clearly dead ends. For example, she proposed reintroducing the Peace Corps into Brazil. The last Peace Corps volunteers left Brazil in 1980. Ambassador Hrinak understood Brazilians but perhaps she did not understand Brazil. She pushed hard for Peace Corps, yet she failed to see the obvious. The GOB did not want to have the Peace Corps back. A Peace Corps presence is a sign that a country is under-developed, that it needs help. Brazil does not view itself as needing help. Having Peace Corps volunteers would indicate Brazil remains an underdeveloped country. Hrinak never seemed to understand some of those very basic things.

Her worst flaw, however, was management of the mission. Ambassador Hrinak thought she knew how to run a mission. But her technique was divisive. She played officers off against each other. She divided the embassy between her confidants and the rest. I suspect she trusted most

those officers who were Brazil hands, just like Ambassador Jeter wanted his West Africans colleagues for Nigeria. Unfortunately, she trusted and favored some to the exclusion of other competent officers. This divided the embassy dramatically. As ambassador, she had a clearly defined role that could not be replicated within the mission. However, she also wanted to be her own political counselor as well. This suppressed differing opinions. It was difficult to express other views to her, as it would be for many chiefs of mission. "Madam Ambassador, I do not think that would be the right choice." There was no way to vent differing opinion without her taking it as criticism. The DCM, Dick Virden, was compliant and took no issue with her, even to defend the mission from her whims or when she made questionable decisions that affected performance and morale. To me, that was an abrogation of responsibility. A deputy chief of mission must serve as an intermediary, be the bearer of counter-arguments, and soften any hard edges presented to the staff by the boss. He failed on all counts. Ambassador Hrinak could be extremely abrasive and abusive to her staff. And there were instances of possible waste, fraud, and mismanagement that never emerged into the light of day.

*Q: Can you think of any that, at least generic ones that were a problem?*

COHEN: One that comes to mind pertained to her son. At the time, he was about 17 years old. I never met him so my perspective is second hand. He attended high school in the U.S. where his father resided. The ambassador succeeded, with the collusion of Dr. Scotty from Office of Overseas Schools, in getting him designated as a special needs child. I do not know if it was ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) or another learning disability. That was not important. By having her son designated as special needs, he was entitled to receive the full education allowance for boarding school in the United States, perhaps \$35,000. Others within the embassy community who knew better than I, asserted the boy was no more worthy of the learning disability designation than most teenage boys. Moreover, the boy's father was resident in Florida. Under normal State Department rules, with a custodial parent in the U.S. he would have to attend local public school and receive whatever special needs pertained within the school district.

Meanwhile, the American School of Brasilia (EAB) was grossly substandard. We and other families had been misled into thinking the school met basic education standards. EAB was mediocre, particularly at the higher grades. In essence, it was a Brazilian school with a crust of U.S. curriculum and standards. Our son in sixth grade was doing work he had performed two or three years earlier in elementary school. However, the education allowance for sending a child elsewhere for schooling was perhaps \$14,000 or \$16,000, the EAB tuition. In order to continue our daughter at boarding school in the U.S. meant we were out of pocket for over half the away school expenses. We had no choice. Because their children were in the majority at EAB, Brazilian families ran the school. It was in their interest to keep tuition low. So EAB was choked for money. The program suffered accordingly.

The ambassador exploited her relationship with a particular State Dept. official to obtain, essentially, a free ride for her son at boarding school in the U.S. At the same time, she was adamant that the school in Brasilia met proper education standards and was adequate. This meant we were stuck with the low education allowance and it prevented staff from shifting their children out of Brasilia.

What was her purpose to having EAB not fall below the “adequate” label? If EAB were determined to be below education standard, attracting Foreign Service personnel with children to Brasilia would become even more difficult. As a Foreign Service post, Brasilia is chronically underbid. If word was spread that, at this supposedly family-friendly post, the school was inferior, what families with adolescent kids would bid on Brasilia? Ambassador Hrinak insisted that the truth about EAB be glossed over. One community liaison officer quit when forced by the front office to present the school in a more favorable light than the CLO, who had children in the school, was willing to do.

I will present a second example of the ambassador’s impropriety. In the fall 2002, the new management counselor, Rafael Mirabal, arrived at post. He decided to hit the ground running. A day or so after his arrival, Raphael asked his office management specialist to set up an appointment with the house manager at the ambassador’s residence. He felt it was important to meet with residence staff to learn the condition of the residence, any personnel issues, etc. Ambassador Hrinak blew a gasket. She shouted at Raphael and dressed him down for talking to her staff without going through her. Her behavior was grossly unprofessional. While staff members at the ambassador’s residence are employees of the ambassador, they are paid by the U.S. Government, not the ambassador. The management counselor is within his right to speak with them, check on housing conditions, and correct any problems. A good relationship between residence staff and the embassy management office is imperative for proper operations. Reportedly, there had been operational issues at the residence prior to Raphael’s arrival. If the ambassador was unhappy that she had not been asked personally by Raphael to meet the residence manager, she should have spoken with him in private.

This incident poisoned the ambassador’s relationship with her management counselor from day one. There was no reason for the ambassador to have been vocally abusive in front of others. Raphael was forced to depart post before completing his tour.

Why was Ambassador Hrinak so peeved? Perhaps it was because she herself was involved in an unusual deal with her housekeeper. Although not first hand, the information was common knowledge within the embassy. When she came to post, the ambassador shipped an automobile. Since the vehicle was imported by a diplomat, no Brazilian taxes were required to be paid. Of course, ambassadors never drive a personal automobile in country. Ambassadors enjoy use of embassy vehicles driven by trained drivers. The purpose of bringing this car to Brazil apparently was to pass it along to the housekeeper and avoid payment by the purchaser of Brazilian taxes.

Reportedly, the ambassador paid her residence manager three times the going rate for that position. That would be a tidy salary, paid for by Uncle Sam. None of the embassy’s management counselors -- including the interim management counselor -- nor the embassy’s human resources officers would approve the salary contract. Instead, she signed it herself. During a subsequent Inspector General (IG) inspection, this contractual arrangement was identified as a deficiency that required immediate correction. The ambassador assured the IG that the matter would be fixed, but it never was.

As I mentioned, the embassy suffered from mediocre morale, a situation I attribute, in part, to

Ambassador Hrinak. This was unfortunate. The living conditions in Brasilia were, by far, the best I ever experienced in any of my overseas assignments. Yet, Brasilia was my worst assignment. As far as U.S.-Brazilian relations, it was like watching a train wreck every day.

*Q: You mentioned Secretary of Treasury O'Neill's trip.*

COHEN: I believe O'Neill was the first cabinet secretary to visit Brazil after Lula's election. The trip turned into a fiasco. Although the Secretary had earlier approved billions of dollars in IMF lending to bail out Brazil, he later made comments concerning money in the country being siphoned off to Swiss banks. The Brazilian press had a field day. But it showed how little serious attention the Bush Administration gave to Brazil. While Washington focused on the finance and trade relationships, little was done to boost the political relationship until well into Bush's second term.

*Q: Was there the equivalent to a "Friends of Brazil" within Congress or anything?*

COHEN: A "Friends of Brazil" group existed but I know little about it.

Brazil did attract its share of congressional delegations (CODELs). CODELs generally transited Brazil over weekends. Somehow, because of scheduling, all of them had to spend a weekend in Rio de Janeiro. Funny how that happens! Perhaps, one semi-substantive meeting is scheduled. Then, two days off at the Copacabana. Foz de Iguacu was usually on the travel itinerary. Sometimes, they passed through Brasilia. While some of the CODELs were not serious, some were.

*Q: Let us talk about your job. You were the political-military officer.*

COHEN: I was the deputy political counselor in charge of political-military issues.

*Q: What were we interested in?*

COHEN: The United States and Brazil enjoy a long history of military cooperation dating back to the Second World War. Because of German U-boat attacks on Brazilian ships, Brazil declared war on Germany and Italy in August 1942. President Franklin Roosevelt described Brazil as "the springboard to victory." The United States utilized air bases in Brazil's northeast around Natal to send planes to Africa. Brazil's northeast corner is relatively close to the curve of Africa. During the war the second largest U.S. naval base in the world was located at Recife. The navy used the base to patrol against German submarines.

Later in the war in 1944, Brazil sent the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (BEF) to Italy. They fought in the northern Italian campaign alongside a mosaic of troops from many nations. Hundreds of Brazilians lost their lives in battle. Brazil takes great pride that it was our ally in World War II. It was the only serious military action that Brazil has seen since the mid-nineteenth century. Yet, Americans and American history books seem to have forgotten or just ignored Brazil's wartime role. I venture to say that most Americans could not even confirm that Brazil fought with us in World War II. This was an important facet of Brazilian history and we

ignore it. The Brazilians find this difficult to comprehend. “We were allies; we fought side by side with you against Nazism; we have a shared history.”

*Q: Unlike Argentina or Chile which were in bed with Hitler.*

COHEN: Even some American historians probably would get it wrong. There are still some World War II veterans in Brazil. They are regarded as heroes. Most major cities and even many small ones have museums commemorating the BEF. Brazilians are proud of the former relationship with the U.S. military, the exchanges, and the officers who attended U.S. military schools, who studied jungle warfare at Fort Sherman in Panama. The Brazilians are proud of their own Jungle Training School near Manaus. Our military relationship was strong and deep. Yet, from 2003 onwards, we basically stiff-armed them. The principal culprit was the American Servicemen’s Protection Act (ASPA), specifically, the act’s instruction that agreements be negotiated under Article 98 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). I do not know if anybody ever raised this. Have you ever heard of this?

*Q: It sounds like a SOFA.*

COHEN: It is not unlike a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). The American Servicemen’s Protection Act, introduced by Senator Jesse Helms and passed in 2002, states that its purpose is to protect and shield American military personnel and other U.S. officials from prosecution by the ICC. Early in 2001 the Bush administration discontinued U.S. involvement in the ICC and nullified the Clinton administration’s signature of the instrument creating the ICC, the Rome Statute. When the ICC was created, negotiators of the Rome Statute noted that previously existing agreements, such as SOFAs, dealt with protection of military personnel and some countries might want these agreements to take precedent. When a crime had been committed, the agreements might oblige the country to return the accused to their home country for prosecution. Article 98 of the Rome Statute was designed to take these discrepancies into account. Essentially, it allowed countries to opt out, through bilateral agreements, from ICC jurisdiction.

The real purpose of the ASPA was to weaken the ICC. The act prohibited U.S. military aid to countries which are a party to the ICC. It exempted NATO and major non-NATO allies however. All others are required to sign Article 98 agreements with the U.S. They must agree not to send each others’ citizens to the ICC without the permission of the other country, or undergo discontinuation of bilateral military assistance. Under the Clinton administration, this had not been an issue. But with the ideological Bush administration, the issue became paramount. Of course, the war in Iraq may have had something to do with this.

Let me provide a scenario. An American accused of a war crime such as genocide resides in Brazil. As a signatory member to the Rome Statute, Brazil could send the individual to the ICC in The Hague. But with an Article 98 agreement in place with the United States, the U.S. would have to provide express permission for the extradition. GOB permission would be required to send a Brazilian citizen resident in the United States but wanted for a war crime to the ICC.

Unfortunately, the ASPA goes beyond a SOFA. It stipulated any elected or appointed official, not just military personnel. In a country where the U.S. has a military presence, a SOFA protects

our military personnel from being arbitrarily picked up and shipped off to The Hague. A Status of Forces Agreement makes sense in a country with U.S. bases. But where no U.S. bases are present, such as in Brazil, and there never will be, the imposition of such protections can be counter-productive. The administration effort to line up every non-NATO country in order to arm twist these countries into signing Article 98 Agreements was heavy-handed and fraught with diplomatic dynamite. Everyone knew it was an ideological campaign more than anything else.

In practical terms, no country, in my opinion, would arbitrarily ship American citizens to the ICC. Unless we are speaking about Iran or North Korea, in which case the ICC is irrelevant, the United States can retaliate in some other fashion in the case of arbitrary arrest and extradition of its personnel. But the ideology was clear. The U.S. refused to allow its citizens to be subject to the ICC.

Embassies around the world in 2003 and 2004 were ordered to press reluctant governments to sign Article 98 agreements with us. Some heavy hitter countries like Marshall Islands, Tonga, Tajikistan, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Maldives, Nauru, Bhutan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo signed on. For most of them, it mattered little. "Who gives a damn, we will sign on" like the coalition of the willing. Other countries, like Brazil, were more reluctant to knuckle under to the U.S. demands.

To those who chose not to go along with us, our message was "screw you!" We delivered the Article 98 pitch from Washington. Teams came to Brasilia. The Brazilians listened graciously. They nodded their heads and served us cafézinho. At the end of the day, they were not going to agree with us. To do so would have been terribly unpopular in Brazil. It went against Brazil's entire philosophical grain. Brazil strongly favors multilateral institutions like International Criminal Court. The U.S. sought to undercut the Court. They absolutely objected.

Our shortsightedness had a severe cost. Countries that did not agree to sign onto Article 98 would suffer ASPA-mandated penalties. Most countries which signed on did so, I suspect, because they did not want to suffer the loss of any military assistance. It was a toss away issue for most. Sign on the dotted line so military aid is not interrupted. What did Brazil get from us? Given the size of their GDP (Gross Domestic Product), it got peanuts.

So we cut off our military assistance to Brazil. The program was small, essentially just a couple of million dollars for subsidized training and exchanges. If Brazilian military officers wanted to attend a U.S. military school or academy, they now had to pay full retail price -- a price that could run easily into six figures. I called it the "Saudi Arabia price." Our retaliation against Brazil had the predicted effect. They told us "screw you!"

The Brazilian military immediately decided to send its personnel to academies and schools in other countries. The Brits stepped in immediately. So too did the Chinese, the Russians, and the French. All of a sudden, Brazilian military officers who normally would have been educated at American institutions -- who would have preferred to come to an American military academy -- went off to Paris, to China, even to Vietnam! The number of Brazilians attending U.S. military schools declined very sharply.

Was this in our long-term interest? Of course not! It was idiotic. I cannot think of a more shortsighted method for burning bridges. Instead of breeding a favorable attitude toward the United States military, Brazil's next generation of military leadership was now to receive training under different (non-U.S.) military systems. And it had been the Brazilian military, not their diplomats or their civil servants, who had long viewed the United States favorably. We punished our supporters. Brazil's anti-U.S. Civil and Foreign Service chuckled about our own anti-American policy!

*Q: I take it that this was way above your pay grade.*

COHEN: Absolutely. I was just a witness to the fiasco.

*Q: From your perspective how did we get along with the military at that time?*

COHEN: On an individual basis, the military got along very well. On a number of occasions I escorted our Defense Attaché and Military Assistance Group officers on site visits. Brazilians held a higher regard for the American military than for any other military in the world. It was not so much because of our prowess. I believe it was because officer for officer, the Americans were more confident and open. Most U.S. military officers assigned to Brazil understood the country. They shared a camaraderie with the Brazilians that did not exist with the Russians or Chinese. The Brazilian military sincerely wanted a closer relationship. It was most sad to see how our administration behaved towards them. Because the other kid did not want to play the game by our rules, we took our marbles and went home. I am afraid Brazil's current crop of junior officers may be less amenable to us when they reach the senior ranks in 20 years.

*Q: Was this fiction, did this come from within Congress, or was this from within the administration?*

COHEN: The American Servicemen's Protection Act was passed by Congress and signed by the president. I doubt one in fifty congressmen today could tell you the ins and outs of that act. But think of the name: American Servicemen's Protection Act. As a congressman, how could you justify voting against it?

It was a Republican effort, no doubt, a reaction, pure and simple, against the International Criminal Court. The Clinton Administration had supported the ICC. The rhetoric of the Bush Administration against the ICC was caustic and vindictive. To Brazil's credit, it stood on principle. As I noted, it would have been impossible politically for them to have gone along with us. Many times we sent this message back to Washington, subtly but clearly.

*Q: How did we view President Lula?*

COHEN: At the beginning the Bush administration was very nervous. Washington feared that Lula could become a second Chavez. This was before Chavez became even more antithetical to us. Lula clearly is not the sharpest knife in the drawer but he is savvy. He surrounded himself with intelligent people. Plus, the Brazilian Civil Service and the Ministry of External Relations would not let him stray too far. So Lula did not take Brazil off its traditional path. As year one

then year two of his administration passed, Washington's feelings about his performance became more positive. But it took almost three years from the time Lula was inaugurated before President Bush visited Brazil. Our major issue with Brazil was trade, specifically the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA). Brazil, however, sought a relationship that went beyond this -- not as a trading partner with the United States, but as a co-equal partner of the United States.

*Q: Was there anything else, from your perspective, where we could work together with Brazil?*

COHEN: We actually had some success working with Brazil. The U.S. assisted Brazil with creation of an aerial surveillance system over the Amazon called "SIVAM" (System for the Vigilance of the Amazon.) Using U.S. technology from Raytheon, SIVAM provides complex surveillance of the Amazon from locating aerial intruders, drug runners, to locating environmental degradation. Drugs flown out of Colombia and Peru flew unhindered over the Amazon. SIVAM now could track these airplanes.

A lot of strings were placed on high level U.S. technology due to proliferation concerns. In other areas of our political-military relationship, the difficulties in providing certain U.S. technology created problems. One area concerned jet fighters. Brazil sought to replace its antiquated, 30 plus year old squadron of Mirage fighter jets. Given the size of its economy and the size of the country, Brazil's air force was surprisingly obsolete and puny.

Ironically, Brazil's leading export to the United States is aircraft. Embraer 145 jets are ubiquitous for short haul flights throughout the U.S. Airplane components are the number one export of the United States to Brazil. Aviation is a very major industry. But Brazil does not manufacture high performance military aircraft which is what they wanted.

The Brazilian Air Force (FAB) flew antiquated Mirages. What fighter do they go with next? Brazilian manufacturers could assemble fighters. But did Brazil go with Mirage again, Russian MIGs, used Lockheed F-16s, or a Swedish aircraft? The competition was fierce. Then the Lula administration decided that it could not afford the \$760 million plus required to outfit a new jet fighter squadron. The issue became a real mess.

Brazil does not need a squadron of high performance jet fighters. Fifteen or eighteen fighters in a country the size of Brazil was an almost meaningless deterrent -- but great for air shows and national days. The FAB intended to station the fighters around the capital, Brasilia, for defense. Brasilia is in the center of the country. Who would ever attack Brazil, let alone Brasilia? From a strategic point of view, I could not fathom why Brazil needed new jet fighters, except perhaps because some of the neighbors had them. There was much pride at stake, even though the proposed squadron was going to consume a huge chunk of Brazil's military budget.

In the fighter competition, the United States offered up used F-16s being eased out of European air forces, in Holland and Belgium. With an upgrade of the avionics by Varig Aviation in Brazil, the jets could serve Brazil's needs -- and at reasonable cost. That was the game plan. Brazil would get value added and technology. It was a pretty good deal. However, many senior Brazilians were convinced that the U.S. would not carry through on the tech transfer. The

controversy with AAMRAM (air to air medium range missile) technology was fresh on their minds. In 2002 Peru became the first South American country to receive approval to purchase the missiles. But many in Brazil feared the U.S. would not allow the technology to be sent to Brazil, despite our assurances. The competing jet fighter consortia kept pressing the issue in order to dissuade the Brazilians from purchasing the F-16.

Dead end military technology had burned Brazil, and continued to do so. The Brazilian navy has had a nuclear submarine program since 1979. The SNAC-2 program was still being funded. If all went well from here on out, the first of three nuclear submarines *might* be commissioned in 2018. The program began during military rule when both Argentina and Brazil were in a nuclear weapons dual, of sorts. Since then, Brazil and Argentina signed on to the nuclear nonproliferation treaty (NPT). Brazil's military had been out of power since the mid 1980s. Yet, this submarine program still went on. Brazil poured millions into the one nuclear submarine program. It made no sense. The country does not need a nuclear submarine. Brazil does not even need submarines, but a nuclear one was just absolutely ridiculous.

The Brazilian military had these white elephant projects from which they just could not wean themselves. This was a sad commentary about the Brazilian military. What are Brazil's strategic needs? I believe the answer is small scale. Brazil requires patrol boats capable of navigating the Amazon Basin and the coastal littoral. Not big expensive boats. Brazil needed a brown water navy and slower aircraft that can shoot down or intercept drug runners.

*Q: That is a fairly simple, F-5 or something.*

COHEN: Whatever. Most aircraft entering Brazilian airspace are prop planes. Instead of thinking in terms of the real threat to Brazil, the drug trade, the military seemed convulsed by late generation jet fighters and an extended blue water navy. What were the strategic risks to Brazil? I felt the Brazilian defense philosophy missed the point.

*Q: What happened in the fighter competition? Did anything happen?*

COHEN: My understanding is that the Lula administration did not budget the funds for the fighters. When I departed Brazil, the prospects for the fighters looked pretty bleak. These fighter jets cost a lot of money, funds the Ministry of Defense did not have. The Lula administration had a lot of demands on it for resources from various constituencies.

*Q: Were there any reflections of Bolivia and Venezuela which were making rather radical turns to the left? Argentina which has been sort of a rival of Brazil?*

COHEN: Brazil is South America's elephant. Important issues in Brazil were out of scale to even Argentina. Brazil, in my view, cannot change quickly. The election of a populist president like Lula was not going to turn Brazil 180 degrees. Brazil has too much depth, like a heavy ship it cannot turn swiftly. No, I did not sense that events elsewhere in South America had extraordinary influence on Brazil. I felt Brazil had a greater influence on its neighbors than vice versa. Frankly, Brazil and its South American neighbors really did not understand each other well. To be on the same continent and share borders with all but two countries yet not fully

comprehend your neighbors surprised me. Perhaps it was the difference between Hispanic and Brazilian-Portuguese cultures.

Brazilians tended to be inward looking. Like the United States it is a continental country. Brazilians perceived themselves as special. Nowhere was this more evident than in football. To Brazilians football-soccer was not just their game; it was their psyche. Victory against the world was almost an entitlement. That Brazil would play in the World Cup Final was taken as automatic. And defeat was not just a downer, it was a national disaster, especially if the national team lost to an inferior opponent. For most countries, just getting to the finals is considered to be an accomplishment -- except, perhaps, for the major European powers like Germany. For most, defeat would be hard to take, but life goes on. Brazilians perceived themselves as special in football. They took extreme pride in many things, like football, yet they frequently behaved like children.

Permit me a couple of examples. Sometime in late 2003, the U.S. imposed fingerprinting on incoming visitors to the U.S. It was a consular requirement: all visitors to the United States would be digitally fingerprinted upon entry to the U.S. This program was in response to terrorism fears. Perhaps others have explained this. Brazil took our action personally. The U.S. was targeting not the world, but Brazilians! The press played it as an “anti-Brazilian” act on our part. What happened? A judge in Mato Grosso or some other remote state ordered that Brazilian immigration officials take reciprocal action with American visitors landing in Brazil. On January 1, 2004, a new security process was set up.

American citizens arrive at Sao Paulo’s Guarulhos Airport – usually after an all night flight. A long line of travelers wait to pass through immigration. Brazilians and diplomats waltz right through. A separate entry line, separate from other third country nationals, was created just for U.S. citizens carrying ordinary passports. It was the longest, slowest line. All the U.S. passport holders were fingerprinted and photographed holding up a sign with their name on it. Reportedly, the process lasted on occasion up to nine hours. After the Americans departed the immigration area, the fingerprinted cards were probably tossed. The process was created simply to be a nuisance on U.S. passport holders and to send a message to the U.S. Government. Did the USG care? Of course not!

Two weeks after the new procedure was created, an American Airlines pilot was fingerprinted and held up the sign, showing his middle finger in the process. He was arrested for making an obscene gesture to airport officials. The Brazilian press had a field day. The pilot was released after American Airlines paid a fine of almost \$13,000. Soon after, miraculously, the Brazilians installed electronic digital fingerprinting equipment and the long line dissipated.

My second example concerns a journalist, Larry Rohter, who was Rio Bureau Chief for The New York Times. In May 2004, Rohter wrote an article, printed on an inside page of a weekday edition of the newspaper, which referred to concerns among some Brazilians about President Lula’s predilection for drink. It was true, of course. The Brazilian President often had a beer or a *caiparinha* in his hand. The article suggested that perhaps Lula was sending the wrong message to Brazilians about alcohol. But it was an article on the inside of The New York Times that is read one day, forgotten the next, and turns into fish wrap the day after.

The nothing story in The New York Times became a huge issue in Brazil. Lula was upset and ordered Rohter's visa to be pulled and he be expelled. The Ministry of Justice justified the banning, saying the article lied and was "offensive to the honor of the president." Rohter was married to a Brazilian, had Brazilian children, and had lived in Brazil for years. Then, to complicate the stupidity, the GOB sent an official protest to the United States Government – as if The New York Times was an organ of the Government!

Initially, the Brazilian media jumped up to defend Brazilian honor. The labor unions and various leftist groups joined the bandwagon. The U.S. was criticized and the NYT article cited as another example of our patronizing attitude towards Brazil. After reflection, however, the mainstream Brazilian press realized its error. If the GOB is permitted to expel a foreign journalist for such an article, what might this mean for freedom of the press in Brazil? If a newspaper publishes an article critical of the president, could the government pull its newsprint? Former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso described the government's behavior as an "overreaction." That was an understatement. I told my Brazilian colleagues that they did not get it. The incident, just like that of the American Airlines pilot, make Brazil into the biggest joke on the planet, worthy of a monologue by David Letterman or Jay Leno, America's leading late night satirists. Eventually, cooler heads prevailed and Rohter was not expelled.

I point out these incidents to reflect on Brazilian propensity to blow things out of proportion when it came to the United States.

*Q: How did the Iraqi War play while you were there?*

COHEN: Poorly. I frequently marched into the Ministry of External Relations (MRE) with demarches from Washington requesting Brazilian support for the United States at the UN Security Council. At the time Brazil held a rotating chair on the UNSC. Following the script, I emphasized the war was not about oil. Marla and I thought the war was a terrible blunder. Even if everything the administration said about Saddam Hussein was completely true, which we did not believe for an instant, we perceived no overwhelming threat to U.S. national security. Certainly, any rational or well read thinker, or anyone minimally familiar with that part of the world, could comprehend the ludicrous idea of a Saddam Hussein-Osama bin Laden connection. Sadly, I missed the point though about oil which my Brazilian counterparts claimed was the true rationale for invasion.

I knew the talking points I delivered were bullshit. But more importantly, my counterpart across the MRE desk knew it was bullshit. There was no way that we were going to convince the Brazilian Government to support the war. The demarche was hardly worth the paper upon which it was printed. But I always got a nice *cafézinho* during my visits to the ministry. And we had nice conversations.

Brazil's philosophy towards the war was completely at odds with the Bush administration. Irrespective of the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) question, the GOB did not perceive a compelling reason for taking down Saddam Hussein. It was a firm believer in the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections. There was no love lost with

Iraq. But Brazilians of all stripes were viscerally against U.S. policy.

I can contribute a few interesting stories about Iraq. Soon after we arrived in Brasilia, in December 2002, Marla and I attended a diplomatic reception, the UAE National Day. It was held in the large ballroom at the Blue Tree Hotel, probably Brasilia's best. The Emirates put on a really nice spread. This was our first diplomatic reception in Brazil. I walked up to two men - the first two people I met. I tried to start up a conversation. I introduced myself. One gentleman responded that he is the Iraqi ambassador. The other man was the Libyan ambassador. Perhaps I was not wearing my hearing aids. The background noise was deafening. I understood the Iraqi, but I could not understand the Libyan; I thought he said Bolivian! So I began to speak Spanish! That was pretty dumb. Imagine being at your first diplomatic reception in country, going up to the first two guys you meet, and they are the Libyan and Iraqi ambassadors. This was three months before the invasion.

Months later, I discovered the Iraqi was not really the ambassador. He was, apparently, the embassy civil administration officer. But he called himself the ambassador. The Ministry of External Relations could not even say what he was. Later, I was asked by the ministry to try to figure out the fellow's actual title!

After the war and following the provisional authority administration, an Iraqi government was formed. I urged MRE to allow the re-establishment of an Iraqi diplomatic presence. Before hostilities, the Iraqi mission located on a prominent Brasilia highway, was essentially abandoned! Weeds grew from the embassy property. Graffiti was spray painted on the embassy walls. Cars in the embassy parking lot were not moved. The building, a real eye-sore, stayed like that for two years.

I encouraged the MRE to support an Iraqi mission. Apparently, Brazil never broke diplomatic relations so Iraq was welcome to reopen the embassy. I recommended to Washington and Baghdad that the newly established Government of Iraq reopen its embassy in Brasilia. With Brasilia as a base, the Iraqis could reestablish a presence in South America. At the same time, the Government of Brazil was eager to expand relationships throughout the Middle East and Africa.

In May 2005, the GOB planned to host a major summit between South American and Middle East countries, the South American-Arab World Meeting. I pressed MRE to make sure that the Iraqis were invited. They were. The Brazilians welcomed reopening the Iraqi embassy - they too wanted to alleviate the embarrassment of a vacated mission on a main arterial highway. At diplomatic receptions, I occasionally ran into the Iraqi "pseudo-ambassador." He was a lot friendlier to me than he had been the first time we met at the UAE reception. I guess he was not too closely affiliated to the Saddam Hussein regime. About a week before the May 2005 summit, the GOI sent a small team to reopen the embassy. I was probably the first diplomat to visit it. Except for the Spartan furniture, the place was vacant. Bare spots on the wall indicated where Saddam's picture once hung.

*Q: By the time you left were you beleaguered with the news coming out of Iraq?*

COHEN: I did not feel beleaguered. We knew early on that the real war was in Afghanistan. I

was curious about what was occurring there. In early 2003 a cable from Washington asked for volunteers to man provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan. The first PRTs were just then being established. I had been in Brazil six months and was disheartened by my job and unenamored with the embassy. Despite a good family atmosphere, from a work perspective I was unhappy. I contacted the Afghan desk and inquired about the request for volunteers. After some dickering, I agreed to serve on a three-month stint. No one within the embassy could stand in my way for a temporary assignment to Afghanistan.

In late 2003 I served in Afghanistan. I will talk about that later. I never personally supported our Iraq policy. But I was very willing to serve in Afghanistan.

*Q: Based on your time in Brazil, was there a general feeling of support for our involvement in Iraq?*

COHEN: I have yet to meet a Foreign Service Officer who felt that we made the right choices and implemented the right course of action in the invasion and occupation of Iraq. There must be some out there. None of the Foreign Service Officers with whom I discussed Iraq, even those who favored taking down Saddam's regime, had "drank the kool-aid." Most Foreign Service personnel recognized that the real battle was taking place against al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and not in Iraq.

Brazilians, when I returned from Afghanistan, were very interested in hearing about my experiences. I received much vocal encouragement from Brazilians who supported us with Afghanistan.

*Q: Is there anything else we should talk about regarding Brazil?*

COHEN: Most of my views about Brazil have been raised. I again refer to Cohen's First and Second Laws that I mentioned earlier. Embassies and consulates reflect the cultures in which they are located. Certainly in Brazil this was absolutely the case. And to be successful, embassies require chief of missions and deputies who possess different personality characteristics. The failure of leadership was not just the ambassador; it was also the DCM. In Brazil's case, this was an excellent example of both laws.

Ambassador Hrinak was replaced by a political appointee, John Danilovich. He was a businessman, closely tied to the Bush Administration. He was an ambassador right out of central casting; he looked the part more than anyone under whom I served, with the possible exception of Ambassador John Negroponte. Danilovich had a warm, open personality; he did not put people off, nor did he lose his temper. He did not castigate subordinates or dress them down. From that perspective, he was a dramatic improvement over his predecessor. Ambassador Danilovich was not an earth shaking envoy. He made some errors and perhaps focused on things that were distractions – like his residence. But at least he was pleasant about things

*Q: Cohen's first law is that embassies and consulates reflect the culture where they are located?*

COHEN: Yes.

*Q: From some of my earlier interviews I go back to when our embassy was run out of Rio. One of the things that I have heard again and again was most of the male officers ended up with Brazilian mistresses because that is what Brazilian men had. The hours between three and five were mistress times. Was this going on at all?*

COHEN: It certainly was not going on with me! I suspect that it was not as prevalent as perhaps during the earlier generation when the embassy was in Rio. Socially, Brasilia cannot hold a candle to Rio. I can imagine Rio in the 1950s, 60s and '70 and the almost idyllic lifestyle. To my knowledge, perhaps a few middle aged gentlemen in the mission fell into the routine you describe.

Brazil, the saying goes, is not a serious country. I am not sure whether I concur fully.

*Q: Did de Gaulle say that?*

COHEN: Maybe.

*Q: I think de Gaulle said you really cannot take these people seriously; I may be wrong.*

COHEN: Some aspects about Brazilian culture should not be taken too seriously. But the Brazilians desired nothing more *than* to be taken seriously. That was a passion, to be taken seriously.

Perhaps you recollect The Simpsons episode that stereotyped life and culture in Rio. The Simpsons is a cartoon family, one of the most popular shows in the U.S., shown weekly on U.S. television. It is satirical and slapstick. I understand this particular Simpsons episode spoofed Brazil with images of scantily-clad big bosomed women on the Copacabana, street crime, etc. In Brazil many people took the episode as a personal affront! They just did not get it. Of all people, Brazilians usually understand how to enjoy life. Perhaps too much! Yet, Brazilians seemed to take serious things that were unimportant or, when taking a step back, even humorous, for example, a message of passive and harmless resistance to authority, like giving the middle finger in the airport.

There were many things about Brazil that I appreciated. Brazil is a Catholic country with a strong strain of Evangelicalism. In many ways Brazilian attitudes were incredibly, refreshingly liberal. How can one be fun loving but lack a sense of humor or irony? This contradiction in the Brazilian psyche confused me.

*Q: After Bamiyan you went to Brazil?*

COHEN: Yes. The Afghanistan assignment was a TDY, a temporary assignment of three months. I returned to Brazil and continued my assignment there.

I mentioned earlier the challenges we had with the Brazilians, problems with our own policy. We also had issues within the embassy. I will provide one example.

During U.S. presidential elections, embassies and consulates host election night events, usually handled by the Public Diplomacy (PD) section. Journalists and other local contacts are invited. Since the 1980s, U.S. missions have had the capability to receive some sort of live television hook up, including Voice of America, the USIS WorldNet system, and later CNN. U.S. elections are our special opportunity as Americans to show off our true democratic traditions. Having live feeds from the U.S. provide real time drama.

Every country in which I served had a democratic tradition or process of some nature, perhaps decades (Mexico, India, arguably Brazil) or just a year or two (Honduras, Hungary, Nigeria, even Afghanistan). Locals seemed to possess great interest, affinity and eagerness to compare electoral processes and talk about U.S. democracy. In 2000, the Lagos PD section hosted a well attended election night party for the presidential elections. The event received good local press coverage. Invariably on election nights, participating Americans attempt to explain the Electoral College system. Different commentators, perhaps a local political science professor, sometimes speak on election topics.

As we approached the November 2004 elections, the embassy front office seemed uninterested in an election night event. I inquired of the public affairs officer. His response stunned me. Given the sensitivities from the Iraq War, the ambassador and DCM apparently feared inflaming Brazilian anti-Americanism. Brazilian public opinion overwhelming opposed the Iraq War. On Iraq resolutions, Brazil had not been very helpful to us at the United Nations. However, embassies do not treat U.S. elections in partisan fashion. I urged that we at least honor the democratic process. I was told "If you want to do it, do it."

However, the embassy did not the event on the embassy compound. Plus, there was no budget. The Marine Security Guard Detachment consented to host the event at the Marine House. Marine House in Brasilia was spacious with a large common room perfect for a large flat screen TV. I organized the event, obtained the red, white, and blue decorations, and sent out invitations to the diplomatic community, government officials, journalists, and academics. Turn out was not overwhelming, but it was okay. We served traditional American election cuisine: hamburgers and hotdogs. I set up an Electoral College tally sheet for tabulating the Electoral College votes. Ambassador John Danilovich showed up. He was all smiles when incumbent President George Bush pulled ahead. Even today I still cannot fathom why an embassy would not want to exploit election night for a big event.

After I returned from Afghanistan, I conducted outreach to Brazilian audiences, usually college students, to explain our mission in Afghanistan. Afghanistan was still pretty exotic in 2004. I possessed a lot of nice Afghan pictures which made a good PowerPoint presentation. While Brazilian popular opinion may not have been supportive of U.S. efforts in Iraq, Brazilians possessed inherent sympathy for what we were doing in Afghanistan. In the back of my mind, I held the possibility that Brazil, which was by then deeply involved in Haitian peacekeeping, might become interested in contributing in Afghanistan. I delivered presentations in Portuguese and English, answered lots of excellent questions. I was not prepared to speak about Iraq. Brazilian college students understood our objectives in Afghanistan and, I sensed, supported them. To assist the Defense Attaché, I gave a similar talk to military attachés. They were far

more interested in some of the military aspects of what was going on.

From a policy and reporting perspective, I do not feel I accomplished very much. I mentioned a long investigative cable about Itamaraty, the Brazilian foreign ministry. Alessandra Lisboa, the political section FSN, and I examined the Brazilian Foreign Service's complicated written and then oral exam, at the questions asked on the exam, to gauge its bias. We made some startling conclusions. Yet, at the end of the day and after drafting a long three-part cable with dozens of paragraphs, the political counselor, Dennis Hearne, sat on it. Despite the research and the light it shed on a particularly difficult topic, the analytical report never saw the light of day in a cable back to Washington.

*Q: Often you get these reports, you put the work in, somebody pops up, that is not what I really wanted. Were you able to send it?*

COHEN: I forwarded a few draft copies back channel. A think piece like that is not typical spot reporting. Moreover, the topic was in the post reporting plan. When you finally do the research on a think piece, some conclusions may not fit into preconceived notions. I am sure this happens to many reporting officers in the course of their careers. It may be too difficult to alter the conclusions since the analysis may point clearly to drawing those conclusions.

I will mention again what we surmised. Even though Brazil's Foreign Service is highly regarded and respected throughout the world, it is also severely flawed. One key reason is the manner by which it selects its officers which leads to the paucity of minorities, especially Afro-Brazilians, in their Foreign Service. The process tilted towards the children of diplomats and others from Brazil's wealthy and well-connected elite. Many spent time abroad, a rare opportunity for most Brazilians. The self-selecting process assured a very narrow Foreign Service, similar to the United States two, three generations ago.

Brazil's "leftist" foreign policy results, in part, from the leadership of their Foreign Service, of Itamaraty. The radical student generation of the 1960s is still in charge. They are the elder statesmen, so to speak, of Brazil's Foreign Service. They assure that their curriculum is taught to their new Foreign Service officers. In Brazil every incoming Foreign Service officer goes through a rigorous one-two year program at Rio Branco. The program includes language study and political science. In the U.S. system candidates are not "re-taught" history and political science; in Brazil the system indoctrinates these officers into Itamaraty's vision of what they should be.

*Q: I have always been dubious about it. Imagine if I ask a Brazilian diplomat when you were in school, what sort of summer jobs and after school work did you have? Where did you get your hands dirty? You do not find much.*

COHEN: I suspect not. It is almost like an aristocracy. All Brazilian diplomats are extremely sharp and sophisticated. Person for person, the Brazilian Foreign Service Officers were absolutely professional. But all reflected, to some extent, Brazil's very narrow elite. Brazil is a democracy, certainly. But the bureaucracy centered in Brasilia overwhelmingly controls the country and puts our bureaucracy to shame. Brazil's foreign ministry, unlike the State

Department, is the strong right, or should I say left arm of government. Not quite true with us -- unfortunately.

*Q: It is interesting when you think about it. I made this point when we talked about this before. With all its size, the well trained Foreign Service and all – and I have been doing interviews for 22 years -- the impact of Brazil on other countries, from our observation, is nil.*

COHEN: I agree. Given its size, its sheer ability to dominate South America, its economic power, its potential, all these factors, Brazil remarkably is a relative pygmy when it comes to global influence, despite incredible natural resources and a huge industrial and agricultural base. The nation produces brilliant bureaucrats, including members of its Foreign Service. Yet at the end of the day, it is remarkable how little Brazil influences the world. Brazilians are aware of this, I suspect. During the last five or six years, Brazil has built bridges with African nations, with the Middle East, with other countries in South America. Under President Lula, an enormous effort has gone into building relationships with non-traditional partners, particularly African countries beyond the Lusophone countries of Angola and Mozambique. In an effort to boost Brazil's importance, President Lula traveled widely throughout the world.

I noted before that in 2005, Brazil hosted the Arab-South American Summit in Brasilia. The event reflected Brazil's new foreign policy ambitions. From the Arab countries, only a couple of leaders attended. We were successful in getting new Iraqi President Jalal Talabani to attend. Some South American leaders showed up. Argentine President Nestor Carlos Kirchner came and left very quickly. Alan Garcia from Peru was there. Clearly, Brazil is seeking to be a major global player. Lula reached out to China. In an exchange of visits, Lula went to China in May 2004 and Chinese President Hu Jintao traveled to Brasilia that November while on a South American tour.

When dealing with the Chinese, Brazilian diplomatic negotiating skills were severely tested. Some felt Lula gave too much to the Chinese on trade. I will not get into the details. Perhaps it was a wake up call to Brazilian diplomats as to how good the Chinese were at protecting their own national interests. To its credit, Itamaraty seemed to recognize its inherent weakness and tried to do something about it.

What about the bilateral relationship with the United States? As I mentioned, during the first Bush term, the administration gave scant attention to Brazil. Secretary of State Colin Powell arrived in Brazil in October of 2004, just weeks before he left office. That was the first secretary of state visit to Brazil during the Bush administration. Imagine a secretary of state not going to Brazil in four years. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld visited Brazil in March 2005. That was his first visit, even though Brazil the Western Hemisphere's second largest nation next to the United States.

Bush reached Brazil in November 2005 after, I believe, he attended meetings in Santiago, Chile. He transited Brazil on a weekend, a Saturday night. He deserves credit for stopping in Brazil, I guess. A stop over in Brazil on a weekend sounds like a typical CODEL's visit to Rio de Janeiro. Is it a sign of seriousness when you arrive on Saturday and leave on Sunday?

*End of reader*