

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

DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY L. DEAN BROWN

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INTERVIEW

Q: Ambassador Brown, I'm very happy, indeed, to have you join us here this morning. What we're after is to get information on the Foreign Service and on foreign affairs and on foreign policy. I'd like you to feel free to say anything you feel like, on an unclassified basis. I think it probably would be helpful if you could start out and tell us a little bit about how you got into the Service, what your background was--starting in kindergarten, if you want to--how you first got interested, and then pick up and go over the various posts you've had and the things that have happened.

BROWN: Well, I went to a rather innocent, quiet little school, formerly Methodist, called Wesleyan University in Connecticut, which I never finished. Instead I went into the Army.

While I was in the Army in Europe, serving as an infantry lieutenant, I read in the Stars and Stripes about the Foreign Service, of which I had never heard of in my life. The ad said that, if you wanted to take the Foreign Service exam, you could have three days leave in Brussels or Paris where it would be given.

As I was living in a tent in the boondocks, I said, "I've been to Paris. I want to go to Brussels. I've never seen it, so I'll find out somewhere what this Foreign Service is all about, but I'll take the exam." And that's what I did.

Q: I take it you passed it the first time?

BROWN: Yes, I had no problem passing it. By the time I take the oral examination I was a civilian, it was held in Washington; at that time they were only taking veterans. A great mob of people took the oral exam, in 1946. My class, which then was in July of 1946, had all served in the Armed Forces.

Q: In those days, you took, as I recall it, a slight training for a few weeks at the Foreign Service Institute before you went out?

BROWN: Yes. We had about three or four weeks; State was forming a new class every week. The classes were about 15 or 16. The Foreign Service Institute, at that time, was in that building near the Washington Hilton Hotel, which is now somebody's embassy.

Q: Because a year or so later, it moved down, I think, to C Street, where the new building now is but in an old building. Because I came along a year later under the Manpower Act, and that was where I did my brief thing.

Well, did you go right out to Leopoldville which, I note, was your first post?

BROWN: Yes. You remember, we always had the choice of posts, so I put down Belgium, and they announced that I had come very close. I got to the Belgian Congo, which is better than most people at the time. I should have learned not to pick a country with a colony. [Laughter]

Q: What did the post consist of at that time?

BROWN: Well, the post covers what are now, probably, ten or twelve independent countries, but it consisted of a consul general, of which there wasn't one when I arrived, and three temporary, war-time-appointed officers, all of whom left shortly thereafter. We did get a consul general in, but the post was never more than three or four people.

Q: What were the principal functions?

BROWN: I could never figure out what the functions were. We did fly the flag's, we had some consular business, and I started out doing economic work. I just saw that there was a gap there. The consul general didn't know what exactly to do with these new people, so I wrote economic dispatches.

Q: This had to do with raw materials?

BROWN: Yes, largely raw materials, the mineral and agricultural wealth. This was a very tightly-held colony at the time. There was no political action of any kind; we had very little contact with the Congolese people.

About the only contact I could remember was a man in a little truck, who ran a successful truck farm, who delivered food to the consul general. His name was Mr. [Joseph] Kasavubu, and he became the first president of the Congo, but nobody knew who he was at all, at that time. [Laughter]

Q: So you established very early contact.

BROWN: I had to talk to him. [Laughter]

Q: Did you have much contact with Portugal at that time, either with our embassy there or with the Portuguese Government?

BROWN: Well, not Portugal, but we used to do our own courier work. We had, at that time, a very nice, little consulate general in Luanda, Angola. So I'd go down every couple of months, carrying what courier there was and bringing back fresh fish, with which we always filled a big sack.

Q: This is your background for being, later, on the administrative business?

BROWN: The other part of it is, here we have all of these countries to take care of, and they were largely missionaries, very little American business, but there was a big Rockefeller interest out in the Congo, which I used to visit. It was a cotton-mill. Our total travel funds for a year for all the staff were \$50.

Q: So that didn't get you around-the-world cruises.

BROWN: No, it sort of got you either on the ferry going to Brazzaville, which we had to do once a week as we had interests there, or you got someone else to pay for it. Pan Am, the Rockefellers, or someone else would pay for the travel of our people. Kind of ridiculous, involved in when you think of it.

Q: You were there about a year and a half, and then was that sort of the normal term for a first post?

BROWN: Yes. I mean, everybody got very sick. I came back and was in an Army hospital for a couple of weeks, and then was transferred to Canada.

Q: What was this, amoebic you'd get?

BROWN: Yes.

Q: I had it some years later on the east coast.

BROWN: We all got that. Yes.

Q: Now, this Saint Johns, New Brunswick--a very pleasant place as I know nowadays because I vacation in northern Maine.

BROWN: Yes. It's a nice little town. There was no reason for a consulate there at all. We were three officers headed by a consul, I was doing all the political and economic reporting, and a vice consul did the consular work. When they closed it down, it made no difference at all.

But, at one time, in that little tiny province of New Brunswick, they had three American consulates. We'd keep wondering how we did that all those years, and why.

Q: It always seemed to me later on, we closed up a few too many.

BROWN: Well, we had modern communications, and when the economic importance of New Brunswick, all the Maritime Provinces, went down, the posts became redundant.

Q: Then you moved down fairly shortly, I take it, to Ottawa.

BROWN: Very quickly. What happened was, Ottawa asked me to come and work there temporarily. I worked there for about six weeks doing some catch-up-economic reporting for them. Then they transferred me to the political section. So I spent less than a year in Saint John.

Q: Less than a year in Ottawa or less than a year in Saint John?

BROWN: No, less than a year in Saint John.

Q: Then, basically, you did political work after the first in Ottawa.

BROWN: Yes.

Q: By this time, were you a French linguist already? I mean, did you speak French?

BROWN: Yes. Never very good. I could never speak it very well.

Q: Of course, in Saint John's you didn't need it.

BROWN: Certainly didn't need it, no, but we used to go down a lot to Quebec and Montreal.

Q: Your French used to sound pretty good to me because I was fairly illiterate for Latin languages. [Laughter]

BROWN: Just speak quickly, and that will fool the Americans, anyway.

Q: It might get you by in Quebec, but in Paris, no way.

BROWN: One time I was driving in Quebec and drove into a gas station. As I did, I put the brakes on and skidded.

So the guy came out there and, in impeccable French, he said, "Il faut fixer le lining de brake." [Laughter] That is pure French Canadian. I understood every word he said.

Q: Wonderful! [Laughter]

BROWN: Laurence Steinhardt was the ambassador and Julian Harrington was the DCM. Laurence Steinhardt was killed in a terrible airplane accident, in one of the embassy planes, along with several other people. Stanley Woodward, who had been chief of protocol for Harry Truman, came up as ambassador. So most of my service was with Stanley, who is now over 90 and whom I see quite often because he's remained a very close friend.

Q: Were there any unusual problems in Ottawa?

BROWN: No, it was still a small embassy. We were still in the days of small embassies. There were two of us in the political section. Dick Bird was the counselor, I was the other one. The economic section was small, but it did include one illustrious character, and that was Phil Habib, who was, actually, assistant agricultural attaché at the time.

Stanley Woodward was a marvelous ambassador because he simply said to me and my wife, and to Phil and his wife, and to the labor attaché, who had come out of the-- International Garment Workers Union in New York--Joe Godson and his wife, he said, "Whenever I travel, I want you three, or you six, with me." It was marvelous. We traveled all over.

Q: You filled up the attaché plane?

BROWN: We filled up the plane, which was a converted B-17 bomber, and flew all over Canada.

Q: So you got your early sightseeing in.

BROWN: Nothing really was unusual there. As I say, it was an old-fashioned embassy in which the staff never saw anybody's telegrams. You did dispatches, but you didn't see what the brass was doing, except the ambassador used to keep us informed, but not the minister. It was that old style of embassy where everybody went in on Saturday morning, and the minister came around to check the guard's book to see if you'd come in and volunteered to work on Saturday morning.

Q: Most of us later had to work on Saturday morning in order to catch up with the paper.

BROWN: Well, that's often true.

Q: Well, that lasted until 1952, roughly, or something like that, and then you moved.

BROWN: I became the Canadian desk officer and finally got to see the cases. We were quite involved in military discussions. The desk officer in Washington knew far more than the junior officers in Ottawa because of the lack of downward communication.

But the most notable thing that we got through was the St. Lawrence Seaway Treaty, which was a long, hard, complicated, internal, political fight in the United States. The way it got through is an interesting example of how you can do things in diplomacy. I had the idea that we weren't getting anywhere with the government. We knew that President Eisenhower had to make an NSC decision in favor of US participation.

So I wrote a draft letter from the Secretary of State to the secretary of the NSC saying, "This is a draft of what the State Department might say."

I had someone approve it, a lawyer. And then the same thing happened in the Department of Commerce and in the Corps of Engineers, and all of that. So we all had draft letters which we circulated to the chiefs, so that when I finally sent my draft letter up to the Secretary to look at, it was accompanied by favorable comments from every other agency--they were all drafts. And that way, we sent a unanimous opinion from the US Departments' concern--all of them--over to the NSC, and the President said, "Yes."

Q: Now, the NSC was pretty fully operating by that time.

BROWN: Yes. You had the NSC and the OCB.

Q: I have a note here that you were also, at one time, assistant to the assistant secretary.

BROWN: I moved on from the Canadian desk.

Q: Who was that? Perkins?

BROWN: It was Livingston Merchant, aided by Jamie Bonbright, Wally Barbour, and hiding in an apartment building, Julius Holmes, because he wasn't allowed in the State Department at that time.

Q: Great man, Julius Holmes.

BROWN: Absolutely. I used to go, every night, with the cables on the streetcar, with all these cables stuck in my pocket, to show them to him; little notes from Livy and the others about what they wanted him to think about the next day. It was an incredible performance. I always thought, if I'd been arrested on that streetcar, I'd still be in Leavenworth! [Laughter]

But Livy Merchant, of course, I think was one of the greatest of our Foreign Service officers, a great teacher and a very wise, decent man.

Q: I didn't work that closely, but I did work for him briefly in the Department. He went to Canada, of course.

BROWN: Yes. He went to Canada twice.

Q: Well, I guess it was a little early that the great Canadian spy trials occurred.

BROWN: Yes.

Q: Did that affect you at all?

BROWN: No. The US ended up with a overt CIA operation. The FBI backed up.

Q: Then you moved on to a place, I guess, where I first laid eyes on you, and that was Paris, wasn't it?

BROWN: Yes.

Q: And there you were very active in the most chaotic political situation that I ever encountered.

BROWN: You know, a new government every week, and sometimes twice a week--the collapse of the Fourth Republic, the inability of the parties to govern; all the disadvantages that proportional representation gives to parliament, since anybody with five per cent of the vote gets people put in. All that disadvantage--a general corruption and malaise all through the Army. Don't forget, you are in the aftermath of their Vietnam, and in the beginning of their loss of North Africa. First in Tunisia and Morocco, and then the real sticky one of what to do about Algeria, which led to the end of the Fourth Republic. I left at the end of the Fourth Republic.

Q: And supervised it from Washington, more or less.

BROWN: Yes.

Q: Supervised the decay of empire. Do you want to say a little about your operations there (in Paris)? Because I think that was, to my knowledge, a very interesting job you did there.

BROWN: What I did was, I did the internal politics, minus the Communist Party, which we weren't allowed to associate with. It was handled by Walter Stoessel doing the liaison with other people, mostly the foreign office and the minister of interior.

No, I did the internal stuff, which meant that I went to the parliament just about every day, and talked to the deputies. But I guess the most interesting factor of it, when one thinks of how diplomatic history is made, with it was the role of Sir Gladwyn Jebb, a long-time British diplomat in guiding US policies. Our ambassador, Amory Haughton, after listening to Sir Gladwyn, decided that De Gaulle was not going to come back. The senior staff had been assured by various people that no, the Fourth Republic would go on and there wouldn't be anything even remotely like a coup or military takeover.

One of the problems was how, at the very end, to put De Gaulle in legally. That is, was how to get the assembly to vote for him. That was extremely difficult because all of the non-communist left was united against him, and the socialists were the key.

My boss was Bob Murphy (understanding in the Department). I got my instructions at home by telephone and often reported by phone; Matt Loomer (later Ambassador for Somalia) was the key figure on the French desk. I told the Socialists: "I have a message to you from Bob Murphy. He wants to make sure that the Socialist Party at least splits in half in the vote on De Gaulle. Those who are adamant against him can vote against him, but everybody else really has to vote for." And they did.

Q: For De Gaulle.

BROWN: Yes. The French desk back in Washington knew all about what I was doing; it often passed on Mr. Murphy's orders. The embassy or at least part, did not.

I also did telegrams on what was going on; for instance, that the police had just had a national strike, and a prominent French political official had said had said; "This is the end of the Fourth Republic."

It was a very dramatic excerpt to witness a police raid at the National Assembly, and the assault of deputies in their offices. That's the least of it.

The military attaché, didn't believe anything that I said, or cabled. He sent a full colonel to sit in the office to watch me type, so that the attaché office could write a cable denying immediately what I was dispatching. The attaché kept asking me after; "Who are your sources in the French military?"

I said, "I'm not telling you my sources, any more than you could get the CIA to tell you their sources. That's one thing we don't do, because all you'd do is probably turn them in and get them arrested."

And another fine officer, Russ Fessenden, was doing our military liaison there. He told me what his French sources were saying; it was about the same.

Q: Considering the trouble that we later had with General De Gaulle, people today might wonder why we were so anxious to get him in. You've alluded to this.

BROWN: Well, we were trying to avoid violent confrontations in the streets. There was already a lot of violence in Paris; I was gassed many a time going out. We didn't want complete chaos from which the communists could profit.

Q: And there was nobody to do business with, or almost. I mean, you couldn't do business with anybody because they wouldn't be there tomorrow.

BROWN: They wouldn't be there, or they wouldn't have our policy. Their policies were idiotic; economic, political, and international; the country was starting to fall apart. I mean, everybody knew, who had ever read anything of De Gaulle, what he would do as president. He said it in book after book after book of what France has to be: an independent country with its own Army and its own power. So everybody would know that there would never be a European army or, really, that American officers would have control over French officers, which is what the French thought NATO was. So you had to expect that. But on the other hand, you needed order again. There is an old Arab proverb that says, "Twenty years of tyranny is better than a day of disorder."

Q: That's a very interesting point. You've probably forgotten it, but I'll never forget I happened to be in Paris that first week in May '58, when De Gaulle was coming in. I was assigned to Washington at this time, but I was there temporarily, and I would see you come in to the Embassy from the Assembly every night, nervous as a cat and shaking, practically.

BROWN: I had a great couple of companions. My British opposite was Michael Palliser, who later became their permanent Under Secretary of State, the highest job in the British foreign office, and was knighted. My Israeli companion later took over the African department of the Israeli foreign office, headed the radio and is a professor now at Haifa University. I see him about every two years or so. We had some other ones, a good Dutchman. A small group.

We met regularly, about once a week, about six or seven of us, and this is where the prominent politicians of the Fourth Republic came for lunch. They were smart, and they wanted to deal with the people who were going to write political cables. They dealt with ambassadors, but here was a group whose good talks were held with no holds barred. We had Mendes France, Guy Mollet, and Mitterrand. We dined them all. It was a fascinating experience.

Q: Great! This is the kind of thing we're trying to get at in this oral history. You left Paris. Incidentally, who were some of the other people in the embassy? Bob McBride was there.

BROWN: Bob McBride was there most of the time I was there. Bob was the deputy political counselor who reported directly to Douglas Dillon, the ambassador. The political counselor was Bob Joyce, a nice man, but Bob was really in charge. The other officers there were Frank Meloy, later killed in Beirut. Frank was handling the Far East. Walter Stoessel was handling the Soviet affairs.

Q: Who was the minister?

BROWN: Well, several. Cecil Lyon came in later. Charlie Yost was there for a while. So these were all very good people.

Q: Yes. Then back to Washington after you got Mr. De Gaulle well installed.

BROWN: Yes. I was very briefly in RA, but only for about two or three weeks, and then transferred to Western Europe, to what was called French Iberian Affairs at that time.

Q: Interesting thing. There you were again still presiding over the liquidation of empire in all of Europe.

BROWN: Then, of course, Kennedy came in and we had the paratrooper, Jim Gavin, as ambassador. Jim had one idea that he was going to carry out, and that was that he was going to give the nuclear knowledge to the French, including submarine technology and the bomb. So this is what he aspired most of the time he was there. Of course, President Kennedy would have nothing to do with it. He liked Gavin, but he stopped it cold.

We did have a series of meetings with the French on nuclear submarines, in which our people couldn't say anything. But nothing came of that.

We did have, of course, De Gaulle's decision to get out of Algeria, which led to the coup of the generals, which almost succeeded, except that the conscripts in North Africa and Algeria refused to obey the orders of their officers; the result failed.

There's another little vignette of what goes on in the world, because where I was sitting in the State Department was two offices down from Bill Porter, who was in charge of North

Africa. Bill was, of course, later ambassador to Algeria and later Saudi Arabia. Bill Porter was a great radio ham. He listened to short-wave radio, especially to the French military--Paris, Pau, and Algiers--we were ahead of the curve as a fast moving situation because of what Bill had heard.

Q: This was news broadcasts?

BROWN: No, no, no. These are the people chatting to each other on short-wave, one general calling the other, with mysterious words. "Are you ready to do this?" It was very clandestine. It was not the news, no. The news was all censored at that time.

Q: This was the State Department's NSA.

BROWN: Exactly. That's what it was. Instant NSA. Thank God for it.

Q: Absolutely. I worked with Bill. Of course, Bill was there when I was there. I remember I had to make a routine of coming in at 3:00 every Sunday afternoon to see if they had the cables going out, because if not, they would say they couldn't find me to clear them!
[Laughter]

BROWN: Then, of course, you had the creation of the OSS, which led to a lot of killing in Paris.

Q: Creation of the OSS.

BROWN: It was a secret organization. Disaffected Army officers said that even if they had failed in the coup, they were going to carry terrorism into France. At that time, there was wide use of plastic explosives. Every police station had sand bags piled up about eight feet high around it. The police wore flak jackets and helmets; a lot were killed. De Gaulle's people organized a counter-terrorist organization which ran around and killed many OSS terrorists.

Q: This was almost Lebanon.

BROWN: Almost Lebanon. Yes. In the end, it broke the OSS. I met De Gaulle only a couple of times. I know who he was and what he is. I'd read his books. I was impressed by him. I mean, this was a man who had some idea of leadership, certainly a patriot, with a vision of where he wanted to see France go. He wanted it to be a modern country. He was the guy who said, "How can you run a country that has 400 kinds of cheese?" He was kind of right that way.

Q: You put in nearly four years, didn't you, in WE?

BROWN: Yes.

Q: Then you had a vacation.

BROWN: That's right. I happened to have at that time a very good friend working in the personnel department, John Jova. John Jova came to me one day and said, "Dean, you're going to have to go to the War College." I said, "I don't want to go to the War College." He said, "Well, how about London?" I said, "Sure!" And I went to the Imperial Defense College for a year, and it was a great experience, one of the best years I ever had.

Q: Probably got you some contacts that were helpful.

BROWN: Yes. We saw far more of the British, particularly the British military and upper civil servants, than most people in an embassy, who deal with them all the time. Our apartment had extra bedrooms; we took people during the week, and people in the country would say, "Come on. Stay with us." In return, we were out every weekend. It worked out very nicely.

Q: I must say I was conventional and went to our National War College, but I found it was very useful.

BROWN: Oh, yes. In the end, it's all very useful. Frank Meloy managed to do a couple of them, including the Imperial Defense College.

Q: Did he?

BROWN: And the NATO Defense College. He did a lot of different schools.

Q: From there you went, I take it, to Rabat as DCM.

BROWN: Yes. While I was in Paris, I always tried to keep in touch with the Americans, because there are a lot of knowledgeable ones. One very knowledgeable was John Ferguson, an international lawyer associated with George Ball who had the brilliant idea that Americans and Finns should have branch offices within the Common Market. So John was there, and I met John socially and we talked a lot. He was chosen as ambassador and he simply said he wanted me to come as DCM. It worked. I said, "Sure." We had a great time.

Q: This worked well, and he was a good, solid, informed man.

BROWN: Exactly. He was well plugged-in in the United States and very sensible. He did not have clientitis in Morocco, which too many of our ambassadors there have had.

Q: That's right, particularly political ambassadors, I think.

BROWN: They often think they're the ambassador of Morocco, or whatever the country is, to the United States, which they're not.

Q: We have a certain amount of brokering, but . . .

BROWN: Yes, some pretty bad examples in recent years.

Q: Orient the listeners a little bit on the history of Moroccan independence and so on.

BROWN: Morocco had only been independent for a couple of years. The former king, Mohammed V was a fine man. He had been exiled by the French at one time. Morocco had a very large colony of Jews. This is natural as when the Spaniards drove the Moors out of Spain, they also drove out the Jews. The Jews went with the Moors to North Africa. During World War II Mohammed V refused to allow the French in any way to apply the Vichy laws to the Jewish population. And to this day, Moroccan Jews have a great deal of respect for Mohammed V and for his son Hassan. Hassan was a young man when Mohammed V died. Averell Harriman and I were traveling around the world together; President Kennedy sent to Morocco to represent the United States at Mohammed V's funeral. I was the bag carrier. So I had seen the country and was delighted to go back to it.

The king at that time was flirting with everybody, the Communist Chinese, the Cubans, the Russians, and us. It wasn't really until later that he decided that all that flirtation was worthless and that he'd better stake his flag in Washington, which he has done.

Q: For a while there, he was choosing up sides more on what people did in the way of supporting Algeria than anything else.

BROWN: Things like that, yes. That he was compelled to do. The Tunisians and Moroccans had the Algerian rebels in their country, more in Tunisia than in Morocco, but nevertheless, they did support them and there were certain problems, of course, with the French all along, just as we had in those days.

We had important bases we left in Morocco which we received from the French, not the Moroccans. There was a large naval installation at Kenitra, which was more than just a naval operation. It meant we had independent communication sites around the country. We also had three major air fields from which SAC operated. All of these facilities were viewed as important. Yet it was inevitable, since we had never negotiated any of this with the Moroccans, that sooner or later, something was going to have to change. That's basically the thing that John Ferguson did (and which I did in between), dealing and negotiating not only with the Moroccans, but you had to negotiate, in a sense, with the French, and you certainly had to negotiate with the Pentagon, which didn't want to give the bases up.

I was at one meeting one time when Curtis Le May was there, when he slammed his fist on the table and said, "If those goddamn Moroccans can come up with \$300 million, we'll

give them the bases!" Of course, they didn't have more than three dollars in the whole country.

The odd thing about this all was, I think it's another example of how things get done in odd ways. When I was at the Imperial Defense College before coming to Morocco, one of my fellow students was a SAC officer. We used to talk about SAC. He told me that, "They're going to phase the B-47 out." I got to Morocco, and here was the Defense Department saying it was absolutely essential to have the air fields for B-47 use against the Soviet Union.

I said to John Ferguson, "Mr. Ambassador, there's something phony here. The State Department is obviously parroting what they get. Why don't you go back and talk to the President and some other people and find out what they really want you to do."

I said, "And when you do, you bring up the fact that you understand the B-47s are being phased out, the plans are already there, and they'll be gone in a few months, anyway."

So he did. And he was right, because it turned out that really the only thing the people wanted was the communications bases, Kenitra with its golf course and the other little bases that were attached to it. So we were able to phase out the bases. The B-47s left; they all went to the junk pile and were never used again. So that was all done, and it was done very neatly, because the basic thing was: how do you move out of a base without moving out? We could give the air fields away. One of them now is the major airport at Casablanca, and that was fine. We helped finance that. The other two drifted back into the desert. I mean, they were worth something to us at one time. Once you leave them, there's no reason for them because they're in the desert.

Q: Archeologists in another hundred years will wonder what all that cement is under the sand there. [Laughter]

BROWN: An interesting story I remember was that Soapy Williams came through. John Ferguson became very ill and went home, never came back, so I was left in charge for about a year at the end. Soapy Williams had just made his big appearance down in Rhodesia, where he'd gotten in a battle. Soapy Williams, of course, was the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs appointed by Kennedy. He came in, so I asked him if he wanted to talk to the staff. He said, "Yes, but I want to talk to all of the staff. Get all the Moroccans."

I assembled them in the courtyard. He told them the story about how he'd been in Rhodesia and pushed around, and how he had said "Africa for the Africans." And he wanted "everybody here at this meeting to know that this was American policy: Africa for the Africans." The problem is that most of our employees were French or Moroccan Jews.

My driver and I took Soapy to the airport. As we were driving back, the driver said, "I have to talk to you."

I said, "What?" He said, "I'm leaving. I'm going to Spain."

I said, "Why?" He said, "Well, I heard him say, this Secretary of State, "Africa for the Africans." I'm not an African." And half our staff left within a couple of months.

[Laughter]

Q: Soapy was the best-intentioned guy that ever lived.

BROWN: Absolutely.

Q: And he did a lot for the African Bureau. I mean, he made the African Bureau, in a way.

BROWN: Exactly.

Q: But he certainly--well, he listened a little too much to Wayne Frederick, I'm afraid.

BROWN: That's right. I think Wayne was his eminence grise.

Q: Was there anything else in Morocco that you can think of?

BROWN: We started with one of the first Peace Corps programs there. It worked well, but it was extremely difficult because of the natural suspicions of a rather xenophobic security system that they had there.

Q: This was always a problem. I had the Peace Corps at the same time in Somalia.

BROWN: It was not easy to do in the beginning. Everybody was suspicious of them. And the Peace Corps kids were doing their thing, too.

Q: On the whole, it worked very well in Somalia.

BROWN: We had Sargent Shriver come out there and talk. Actually, trying to revolutionize the volunteers about what they were supposed to be doing. Well, you've got to be careful in an autocratic one-party country as to how fast you want to educate the people on what they, the Africans, should do about their future, or they'll go to jail.

Q: Democracy is a great thing, but . . .

BROWN: But other than that, no, it was the fumbblings of the new African countries, as you remember. The early days of Africa were extremely difficult, because all of a sudden they had to start planning, doing some real planning, and not turning around and having somebody else do it for you. You have to decide about your land.

Q: And you don't have very many educated men.

BROWN: And what are you going to do about land? All the good agricultural land, was held by French colonials. They had a population that's growing by 3.5% or 4% a year, and enormous unemployment. These are some of the problems that have to be dealt with.

Q: I think Morocco has done as well as most.

BROWN: It's done as well as it could.

Q: A little more advanced than some of the countries.

BROWN: Yes, but they could do better. They simply have not educated the people yet. There is still a great mass, maybe 40% illiteracy in that country, and that's too high.

Q: Then you got back to the Department for a short tour there.

BROWN: Yes.

Q: By that time, had Soapy left, or was he still there?

BROWN: Soapy was still there. So was Wayne. I ran, for a month or two, North Africa, and then did Central Africa, which was largely the Congo at the time. Mack Godley was Ambassador in the Congo, later it was Bob McBride.

Q: About that time, I met Mack in Nairobi. I was getting full stories in the Congo. Then how did you come to get appointed? Because this is sometimes interesting as to how you get your first embassy.

BROWN: You see, Soapy was there, and he was replaced by Joe Palmer.

Q: You were talking about Joe Palmer. He was very cautious.

BROWN: And very much interested in the future and well being of the Africans, and then very angry about remaining parts of colonialism, particularly the Mozambique-Angola problems, as well as South Africa and all the things going on there. So Joe was not exactly keen to fight a war, as we were fighting at that time in the Congo. We had our own Air Force, which consisted of Cubans, believe it or not, a very large Air Force. We operated funny little planes, but also B-26s and then one-engine planes, but they were fighter-bombers. We were keeping the Air Force under the supervision, of course, of a private company which reported to--

Q: Air America?

BROWN: It was actually called WIGMO.

Back in State the Congo was run by a combination of Averell Harriman and George Ball. I reported to them. Averell Harriman was pretty tough, and he talked to the President. The President said, "We're going to support unity. We're not going to support the break-up of any countries in Africa, because that will be chaos in the long run. They can count on our support for a Unitary Nigeria and a Unitary Congo."

Q: We took a lot of heat on that.

BROWN: Oh, we took tremendous heat from our own people and abroad. So we used to deal a lot with the Belgians. I used to fly over to talk to Foreign Advisor Harmel, and I was very close at that time to Stevie Davignon, who was Harmel's chef du cabinet at the time. We worked out a lot of things together.

Q: Then how did you come to go to Senegal?

BROWN: There were many ways to communicate with the President of the United States, and Lyndon Johnson was President. If you understand Lyndon Johnson, you understand how to communicate. That is, at 3:00 in the morning, he's got nothing to do and he wants something to read. So there was a piece of paper produced by the secretariat in the State Department called "The President's Evening Reading." It was done about 9:00 or 10:00 at night, and if you were around, you could get something in it. And there wasn't anybody to check with; you just put it in. Because no one was going to see that except the President. The Secretary of State wasn't going to see it or anybody else.

So I produced a lot of stuff for that thing on various things, and Lyndon Johnson liked it. He called in his chief of staff and said, "How long has he been in Washington?" They said, "A while." He said, "Get him an embassy." So they called me to the White House. A guy says, "What do you want?" I was smart enough not to say, "What's vacant?"

I knew what was vacant. So I said, "I'll take Senegal." He said, "Good. I thought you were going to ask for one of the impossible ones."

Q: You are fairly unique as a Foreign Service officer to have had that access to the President.

BROWN: No, others did.

Q: I had it, but because I was in the congressional relations group, he mistakenly thought that I was one of his boys. [Laughter] He wasn't gentle. He didn't like the East Coast establishment.

BROWN: Not at all. You had to make sure that Lyndon Johnson understood that you worked your way through college. If you told him that, you were okay. But if he thought that your father had paid for you to go to Harvard, you were dead with him.

So then I went to Senegal. Senegal is a pleasant African country. The president was a fine gentleman, a poet. He earned his Ph.D. in the same class as Georges Pompidou. He had been a minister in the French Government right all along before independence, and he was a urbane gentleman, from a very small tribe, which allowed him to rule the country, because if he had come from one of the major tribes, then everybody would have been in big trouble.

Q: The other major tribe.

BROWN: Yes. So what have you got to do there? Not much. I mean, it's a nice, pleasant place. There are a certain number of bilateral problems. But I found that the president of Senegal, when I would go see him, I would take a bunch of little pieces of paper along, the bilateral things, he'd say, "What are they?" I'd mention them. He'd say, "Okay, fine. Just give me those papers. I'll take care of those." Because he didn't want to talk about that; he wanted to talk about the world. He was not interested in talking to ambassadors about nickel-and-dime problems: should AID build a little bridge across this river or not? That sort of thing. Every time I'd go to the States, which I did frequently, because I went to the U.N. for a while and then I worked on that big task force of Diplomacy for the '80s, and that took a lot of months out of my tour there, but every time I'd return, I'd get a phone call from his office. "The president wants to see you." And he'd say, "What's going on?"

Q: When you came back.

BROWN: Yes. "What's going on? Let's talk. Let's narrow it down. I don't want to talk about bilateral. What is the attitude of Washington towards African states? What do they think of the radicals? Are they ready yet, as some of us are, to try and set up an African initiative with South Africa?" Things like that. And that made him a very fascinating man.

Q: Was he of reasonably common sense about the major problems, or was he sort of an ideologue?

BROWN: Oh, no, no. Very common sense. He just thought that the Sékou Tourés and the Nyereres and some of the more ostentatious dictators, particularly the ones that had spouted socialism while practicing concentration-camp politics, he just thought they were for the birds.

Q: Yes. Nyerere is a perfect example.

BROWN: Perfect example. He said, "I'm a socialist." Everybody's a socialist in Africa. They can't mean it. They know collective farms won't work.

After he'd retired, I went to see President Seuzhor in Paris. We had coffee with his wife, just the three of us. I said, "Now, Mr. President, you got your country to independence. You were president for a long time. You are one of the few presidents in all of Africa who ever resigned his office and then left the country for a while so your successors could carry on."

I said, "I know you'll probably go back some day. I assume you'll probably live as modestly there as you do here," which was very modest indeed. The whole apartment was about as big as this room. I said, "For Africa, what's the most important thing?" And he said, "That in the good universities they continue to teach Greek and Latin."

Q: That is pure Paris, of course.

BROWN: How about that? [Laughter]

Q: I must say the French did a fantastic job of--

BROWN: Well-educated people. That's right.

Q: They took care of that sort of thing and it seems to have paid off because the French colonies have been stabler than the British ones.

BROWN: Yes.

Q: Interesting thought.

BROWN: So that was that. That was Senegal. As I was going through into the third year of Senegal, I said to my wife, "I know what we're going to do for the rest of the year. Let's get last year's date book out, because we'll be doing the same thing." And she said, "Oh, God!" [Laughter]

I'm trying to remember exactly how it worked. I guess I was back on leave or consultation or something. I was wandering around, and I was called in, first of all, by Joe Sisco, who said he wanted to see me. He said, "Dean, you're going to go to Beirut as ambassador." I said, "I don't know anything about the Middle East." He said, "That's the idea."

Then I went around seeing some people that I knew, saying, "What's going on?" They said, "Well, the President and Henry Kissinger are fed up with the reporting from the Middle East. They don't understand a word of it. All these people are experts, Arabists, and it's all too long and too complicated."

I guess it was Eagleburger or somebody on Kissinger's staff, said--

Q: Possibly even Bill Macomber had something to do with it, it occurred to me.

BROWN: No, no. It was Kissinger. I was back in Senegal by then. I was called and told to report to San Clemente and not stop in Washington. The President was out at San Clemente. So naturally, I stopped in Washington. They said, "All the signals have been changed. You're going to go to Jordan and Bill Buffum is going to go to Beirut, and there are going to be some other changes." I said, "Is that why I'm going out there?" They said, "We assume so."

So I went out there. Thank God somebody told me, because when we got out there, the President grabbed me and said, "Now, what are we going to do about Jordan?" We walked around the lawn there, the President striding, with me trying to keep up with him.

Q: He just assumed you knew.

BROWN: Yes. He thought somebody would have told me, that I knew something about it. All I knew about it was what I had read in the papers, but that's usually good enough.

So then I went to Jordan. The primary thing about that was that this is the moment that Henry Kissinger, from his NSC chair decided to seize the Middle East, to take it away from Secretary Rogers. And he did. The President said: "Keep me informed. Remember what I need. I don't want that State Department garbage. Keep me informed."

So that's what I did. I mean, I ended up, at times, writing cables to go to the President, and making sure something also went to the State Department. I wasn't going to play that game, that Henry wanted. Henry wanted to operate as he always does his own people abroad, who primarily report to him. He was out to get Bill Rogers. I've never known why, but he humiliated him in every way.

Q: Poor Bill really never knew what hit him.

BROWN: I don't think so. Henry hit him; that's what happened.

Q: Yes.

BROWN: He got hit with a German tank.

Q: As long as Bill had Elliot Richardson to handle Henry, he did all right, because Elliot got along with Henry.

BROWN: Yes, that's right.

Q: But Bill never did. Bill was stiff-necked about it.

BROWN: Yes. Well, so I went out and shot off to Jordan.

Q: Who were you replacing there?

BROWN: Harry Symmes. Harry Symmes hadn't been there for months. He had been-- well, politely, PNGed by the king. He was an Arabist, and he had offended the king by saying Jordan wasn't safe to visit. He left.

Q: Quietly.

BROWN: Yes. So he left in the spring after some bad riots that had taken place in Jordan. Among other things, they had burned up Harry Symmes' car, which made him very cross. I wouldn't blame him; it was a nice Lincoln. [Laughter]

But when I arrived there, I couldn't even get into the country. I flew, instead, to Beirut with my wife and installed her with friends to sit there and wait. She waited there for many months. I flew down under a false move. I drove by the embassy and then said, "Let's go to the house and I'll leave my bags." I went to the house, I looked at it, soldiers around. I looked at the people around and I said, "Leave the bags in the car." I went back to the embassy, unpacked in the embassy, which we didn't get out of for several weeks because the war started within about 24 or 36 hours. This was the big Black September of 1970. That embassy was under fire. They shot every window out of the place. I'm glad I never went to the house, because I finally got to the house sometime later and it was really blown up. Everything.

Q: So you really had to start and rebuild there physically.

BROWN: Oh, yes, yes. I didn't live in the old embassy residence for about nine months. I rented a house. We also moved the chancery. The old one was a bit shot up, it was located right in the middle of an area where the various factions such as FATA, the PFLP, the PFLPGC, and the ALP were located. All these people had separate headquarters and separate machine guns and bombs and all of that. You could get shot at from any direction.

Q: Were they shooting at each other?

BROWN: No, they were shooting at the Army. What was fascinating was that up until that moment, the king had catered, in a sense, to the Palestinians. He had agreed that they could set up these headquarters, they could have troops there, and all that. The governments, the prime ministers, were Palestinians of leftist nature. But that wasn't enough for the Palestinian leftists and ordered it a general strike. They called on the Army and the Air Force to desert, and that was it. That finished the game. The king just said, "Fine. We'll kick out the civilian government and put in a temporary military government."

The city of Amman, for instance, downtown was forbidden territory to the Army or to the government people. They governed from the edges of town. But the real thing is, the soldiers didn't desert. The general strike didn't work. The people did not leave the Army.

There were two divisions that were almost all Palestinian, and not one man deserted. Some of the Air Force non-coms deserted, about 200, and that's about all. So it broke the real strength of the Palestinian claim that they could take over that country anytime they wanted. It was a very courageous act on his part.

One reason he did it, just shortly before I arrived, he went to review one of the largely Bedouin armored outfits. From the antenna on the top of the commander's tank was hanging a brassiere. The king said, "What's that for?" And the commander replied, "If we're going to behave like women, we might as well dress like them."

Now, a king has a hard time taking that, and the king said, "I understand." And that's when things changed. But that's the way it happens in those little Arab countries, dramatic things.

Q: I suppose it was a little while before you could establish contact with the king under these circumstances?

BROWN: Well, yes and no. I had some radios. When I arrived I had to reduce staff quickly. There was one plane leaving in the afternoon, I ordered about half the staff to depart. I just went, "You, you, you, go." Then I said to the rest of them, "You come to the embassy; you stay at home with your two-way radio. We've got to have outside people." So even the political officers in the embassy are left, some of them on the outside, some on the inside. Same with the CIA, same with the military. So that we had good, experienced people on the outside, and we were in touch with each other by radio and they could get in touch with me. So a couple of them were able to get in touch with the king and the military headquarters where the king was. So we were in touch.

We also had a little police post nearby, which still operated. Our embassy was protected by Bedouin soldiers, about 25 of them, and several of them were wounded in the war. No one was killed, fortunately. But we did have communications, so I was in direct touch, of course, with the State Department by radio. I was also in touch with Beirut and Tel Aviv by Single side-band, and then we had our walkie-talkies. The king had one of our walkie-talkies and I could talk to him. But we had to be careful as the rebels also had walkie-talkies.

Q: There never was a time when the king was not reasonably responsive and had good relations with you?

BROWN: Excellent.

Q: He more or less had to.

BROWN: We finally got out of the embassy and they sent a column of tanks in, and Hugh Horan, my political man, and I went too see the king. We didn't get back to that embassy for a couple of weeks. We opened up another embassy. Then about three weeks

later, Zaid Rifai, who was with the king, called me up to say, "Dean, it's time for you to present your letters of credential." I said, "Yeah, I guess we've forgotten about that."

So I and the senior staff put on suit and tie, and went to see the king. It was the first time I'd ever seen him in a tie. He said, "This is a very formal ceremony. I'm wearing a tie." We handed the papers over and then went on to business.

He was charming to work with, and the Jordanians were very good. The prime minister was Wasfi Tel, later murdered in Cairo by Palestinians. He was a strong man; he had to be. The war didn't end in September. It lasted to next spring.

Q: That was in November of '71 that Tel was assassinated.

BROWN: Yes. Yes. He had broken the last guerrillas or whatever you want to call them. They had left the country, some seeking refuge in Israel from the Jordanian troops.

Q: Wonderful piece of history. On the whole, do you give the king most of the high marks for this?

BROWN: I give the king high marks because he established a good relationship with the United States. I give very high marks to President Nixon, who understood the problems. Practically the first message I had from him was, "The minute you can see the king again, pass him this personal message. I haven't discussed it with anyone. I want him to know that we will make up every loss he's had in the way of military equipment in fighting this and fighting the Syrians:" (the Syrians had invaded Jordan at that time).

Q: I'd forgotten that.

BROWN: You know, to be able to go and say, "He hasn't even gone to the Congress. He just said this is his commitment to you." Then within a couple of days, I was able to go back again to him and say, "And we will help you modernize your forces. Yes, this is a commitment. We won't talk about money yet. This is just a commitment that the President will go and get the money to modernize your forces," which was very important. They really had some pretty poor stuff.

Q: Did we also have economic programs there?

BROWN: We'd had large ordinary economic programs there before the revolution. I had gotten rid of all the AID people in the embassy. There weren't any after September. I was the only ambassador, I guess, who's ever been AID chief. I got myself appointed the AID chief and made FSO Bill Wolle, who was the economic officer, my deputy to run the AID program. I mean, the detail part of it. Yes, we did a lot of reconstruction right away. Their main canal, which waters the Jordan Valley, was totally blown up and had never been repaired.

Q: By whom?

BROWN: By the Israelis during the '67 War. That territory was largely deserted. It was the Crown Prince with whom I dealt on anything having to do with economics, because the King of Jordan is very much like General De Gaulle. When you discuss economic things with De Gaulle, he said, "That's for the quartermaster." His eyes glaze over. The king was sort of that way too. His younger brother Prince Hassan was the action man. We established a group the World Bank, the Germans, EEC, ourselves, and the Jordanians and redid that valley. We put hundreds of thousands of people back where there was virtually nobody. A very successful farming place now.

Q: Good.

BROWN: We could do anything at that time with AID, because we could just get the White House to make phone calls. Each time I would always say to the Crown Prince and to the director of the Central Bank and to the head of the Planning Commission, all of whom were still around, say to them, "I'm a serious man on these things. Don't give me any silly ideas. Let's not have any projects that will be in the funny papers. I don't want that. We don't want that reputation. You want to be able to go back every time you see the President and say, 'We are using your aid intelligently,' in contrast to some other places. Every single project has meaning to it." And it did.

Now, of course, it's back in the hands of the AID administrators, and you've got dozens, maybe hundreds, of people around.

Q: What is the main strategic function of Jordan, as far as we're concerned?

BROWN: The main strategic function of Jordan is that it is essential to peace in the Middle East. Without Jordan being involved one way or another, it won't work. You've got to have a sensible, moderate, non-leftist government in Jordan for peace to work in the area.

Q: This is a buffer against Syria and Iraq, more or less?

BROWN: Yes. That's basically what it was.

Q: It also is protection for Israel, I suppose, in a sense.

BROWN: Well, in a sense. There are no raids ever, I mean since 1970. No raids against Israel from Jordanian territory.

Q: How did you finally earn a rest out of this? I suppose before you left, it got to be sort of normal living again.

BROWN: It got to be normal living. Then we went through the '73 War. By then, Henry was ready to take over the State Department. That was clear. Then I got another one of those phone calls to go from Jordan and, once again, go out to San Clemente. But there it was to talk to Henry about how he was going to organize the State Department. The people who were there were Bob McCloskey, Bill Sullivan, Larry Eagleburger, Phil Habib. Phil Habib came in from Korea.

As you remember, he was looking around for new names and new people. He wanted new faces. Henry Kissinger had collected lists over the years, very interesting, at the NSC and as a professor, of people in the Foreign Service whom he'd met that he liked. He had also asked other people for lists. In other words, he would have gone to the Rockefellers and said, "You've done a lot of traveling. What people have you met?" So he had all those lists, all anonymous, about 15 or 20 of them on pieces of paper, some with only ten names, sometimes 20 or more. But the lists were mostly named FSOs who had served in Europe, got, nevertheless, a good selection. I didn't know what I was to do when I was back in Jordan and was told: "You're going to be in management, a career man in management." Like in the days of Loy Henderson.

Q: Yes.

BROWN: In that sense. Then I came back, I guess around late '73. I came back at Christmas, but after his administration was pretty well in and he had all the new people there, many of whom he changed within six months. He was pretty brutal to people.

Q: Yes. With everybody. But he took care of people, too, in a sense.

BROWN: Oh, he was very good about listening to other people's arguments. You might have to fight your way through them, but if you had a good argument and could persuade him that his reasoning was faulty or his analysis weak. He didn't say as some do: "Get rid of the objector!" He wanted "no-men" around, a few, and he wanted people who were ready to comment on things not in their field.

Q: But he didn't want people proving him wrong.

BROWN: Yes, that's right. He didn't like people running out and giving anonymous interviews or that sort of thing.

Q: Or talking directly to the President.

BROWN: Or that. Oh, yes, yes, yes. After all, if he could run a back-room operation himself, he knew how people could run back-room operations, and he didn't want it.

Q: Fascinating thing. So you came in about the end of '73, beginning of '74.

BROWN: Yes.

Q: What were the major problems you had? You had the whole thing of running the Department.

BROWN: Running the Department. It was badly organized. We had a personnel system that preoccupied itself with the Foreign Service officers and ignored the Civil Service. The Civil Service was largely black; their concerns were very high and they were frustrated. The system had not, as we now know from all kinds of suits, treated women fairly. Yet the culture had changed and it was time for State to change.

Then I think the Secretary said that he was all in favor of a personnel system and a director general, but he wanted that system to be responsive to his needs, and that was hard. He wanted senior personnel assignments taken out of the hands of the director general and put more directly in the hands of the Secretary.

He was having fights with the older Foreign Service. Should we mention names? Why not? He started fighting with two senior officers. Marty Hillenbrand and Bill Porter, it was unfair. But you want to remember that Henry always believed he knew Europe better than anyone and Germany even better. Marty Hillenbrand was a highly skilled professional officer. Unfortunately, he ran afoul. It was regretful lots of others had to walk. He wanted Don Easum as assistant Secretary for Africa; Don was good. He had impressed the Secretary somewhere along the line. But Don didn't agree with the Secretary's attitude toward Africa, which was "to hell with it." Don made the mistake of saying so in a speech somewhere, and Henry literally said, "Fire him. Give him Nigeria." He went to Nigeria. And so on.

He wanted to run the NSC and the State Department as two separate offices, with him as the head of both. You and I know that that ain't the best way to run the show.

Q: Well, that isn't what it's intended for.

BROWN: No, and I don't think it works. You put two staffs at war with each other. You get the NSC staff not only nit-picking, but actually running operations, as we've just seen with Colonel [Oliver] North.

Henry was, I think, one of our greatest Secretaries of State and maybe also one of the worst.

Q: Certainly one of the most brilliant men.

BROWN: Absolutely.

Q: Probably the most brilliant. That was one of the troubles.

BROWN: That was the fun of working with him. He was a brilliant man.

Q: I don't know why we use the past tense. He's still.

BROWN: Well, he was a brilliant man then. I'm not sure what he is now. Everybody has sort of a love-hate relationship with him. It was either love or hate or it was love-hate. I always enjoyed him, because I thought he was absolutely so impossible at times that you could just go home and roar with laughter about it.

Q: What are the things that you personally did during this period that you remember as important or significant or fun?

BROWN: We started on the process of change, of putting in better control. It took a long time, because I had to deal with an impossible set of congressmen. I remember Wayne Hayes and John Rooney.

Rooney was very difficult. You remember the old whiskey fund.

Q: Yes.

BROWN: I think was the one who got Rooney to include the representation fund, which he called the whiskey fund. And it hadn't been changed in years, and people were really beginning to suffer. I used to go and sit in Rooney's little house with him, drinking his whiskey and explaining that I, too, came from Brooklyn.

Of course, Wayne Hayes wanted things--money, jobs.

Q: Wanted to be ambassador to Paris.

BROWN: Among other things, yes. Don't forget he'd built every residence--he'd built magnificent residences for all our people in Mexico because he had a contractor who contributed largely to his election. I gave a big retirement party for Rooney. I had everybody there, including Ford, the Chief Justice, all the congressional leaders, the Secretary, lots of top brass, I made a laudatory speech, how he was always a real friend to the State Department. And everybody thought that was nice. Then we never did it again. We never cow-towed to his successors. We dealt with them, but none of that business of detaching chunks of the Department to go and travel with him, as they did with Wayne Hayes. My predecessors always went out with Wayne Hayes everywhere he went. I just said, "We're not going to do that anymore."

But I used to drag Henry down to the Congress to talk to people, go to their parties. He was very good at it. He would always do it. He'd say, "Dean, if you need me." He'd say, "Do you really need me?" I'd say, "Mr. Secretary, I want to tell you this. You may be a difference of \$10 million to \$20 million in our budget."

Q: So for \$20 million, he'd go down.

BROWN: Go down and have a couple of drinks with Wayne Hayes or whatever was required.

Then what else I was trying to do then was make sure that the budget management process was handled in my office and not simply that I was informed of it. The first time it happened to me, I was informed that I was supposed to testify the next day and "Here's your testimony." I said, "Never do that again. You didn't even tell me that a hearing had been called. Nothing. We don't do that." I would sit there and memorize numbers so that I could deal with some congressmen, but I wanted to be in on the number-making process. And that's what happened. I brought in administrative officers into M, which had never been before, and started them on the process. So now you have the whole budgetary thing handled from M, and the administration does it elsewhere. So my successors have had a much easier job.

Larry Eagleburger, who succeeded me, carried the ball. He knew exactly what we were doing in the way of management, how it really worked. He went on with it, and others have followed.

Q: Of course, they've been through the wringer financially.

BROWN: They've got this new guy in there, the first thing he said is, "We're going to have management by objectives." And I thought, "Oh, my God!" I remember Fred Malek, who was at the White House at the time, called me up and said, "The State Department is delinquent. You're going to have management by objective." I said, "We certainly will." I said, "It won't work, because you can't quantify. We're not making widgets and we're not managing forests. It's a very esoteric business." So I can do good parts of it, but the real essential part--

Q: Passports you can do it with.

BROWN: Exactly. All of that. Not on essential things like personnel management. So I left in '75, and I left because I was stuck. I said to Henry one time, "We've got to do something about salaries." We were all about \$36,000 at the time. No changes had been made for years. The White House had ruled out raises for State. I said, "Look, I have to have an exception."

He said, "All right. What do you want to do?"

I said, "I want you to set it up." So he and I went to talk to the President. I argued for a long time with President Ford about this, and he said, "I can't do that. I can't treat the Foreign Service as an exception."

Q: What were you talking about? Assistant secretary-level jobs?

BROWN: No. I'm talking about the whole Service, ones, twos, at the salary ceiling.

Q: Bumping up against it.

BROWN: Yes, so that everybody above the rank of GS-14 wasn't making the same pay, which is what was happening. So back in the car, Henry said, "Well, you tried and you lost." I said, "I quit." That's when I quit. I couldn't argue that senior people would leave. I said, "I'm going to go out and look for a job." And I did, regretting it many times.

Q: [Laughter] Well, some of the more interesting things in these interviews have to do with what people did after they retired. I know you did something that was very significant in the foreign affairs field. Do you want to go into that?

BROWN: Very quickly. While I was still in the Department as our Rodger Davies, our ambassador to Cyprus was killed. We looked all over the Department for someone to go out there and do it, take on the embassy temporarily. No one wanted to do it. So I volunteered to go there for a couple of months. Henry remembered that.

Then just after I retired, I had a telephone call from Eagleburger, saying, "Come to State. Be here tomorrow morning by 9:00 in the office. Henry wants to talk to you about going to Vietnam." I said, "Come on."

But I went. By then, even Henry had thought that one through, because he said, "What do you think of that?" I said, "That's crazy. The place is falling apart. You can't pull Graham Martin out and send a new ambassador to Vietnam and expect him to do anything when he doesn't know anything about the area. It would just be a big panic." He said, "How do we handle the problem?" I said, "We could set up an inter-agency task force on Vietnam. That place is going to fall any minute. The government has panicked, no money to operate with." The Secretary agreed. He said he'd tell the President. I suggested he say that he was sending down a order to establish this job immediately. I wrote the order and made it say that I was responsible to the President through the NSC and not to the State Department.

Q: This was a task force?

BROWN: This was the task force which, in the end, ran the last few days of Vietnam, got out all the Americans. We had more airplanes operating than any Air Force in the world at that time, at Tan Son Nhut Airport. We had the biggest helicopter fleet, and we were pulling out, as you know, tens of thousands, eventually 125,000 Vietnamese, largely those who had worked for the US Government and were at risk. We had to put them somewhere so we set up camps. We had camps out in the Far East. Later we had camps in the United States, so we could bring them into the United States. We enlisted the help of voluntary agencies to help us process and move these people. Of course, we had to go to Congress to get money, because there wasn't any more money. We were in total violation of the anti-deficiency act. We were spending money without an appropriation. The

military spent a lot. Finance officers came to my office every day and gave me the bill. I signed it. Got hundreds of millions of dollars.

Q: You were personally . . .

BROWN: I said, "I'm not going to get any pension. I'll have to live to the year 5,000 to pay this out of my pension." But we did that, and I stayed with them until we got it all done, and then many months later went to see the President and said, "Mr. President, it's time that this became civilianized, out of your office, out of the State Department. It's HEW, and Cap Weinberger should get it."

Q: Ambassador Brown, you were just talking about winding up the task force on the end of the Vietnam situation.

BROWN: Yes. Task forces have a way of hanging on, and they're very dangerous, because in the end, the task force always interferes with the operations of the normal bureaus who should be doing the work. Also, the task force has stolen a lot of good people from offices, and they really should be going back to do their regular job. Really, what you want is a "sunset law" on a task force, and that's essentially what I forced through. It would have gone on forever, but by persuading the administration to take it out of the State Department physically, to make the director not responsible to the President of the United States, and not have White House access, and to put it over under Mr. Weinberger at HEW. That was done and it worked out very nicely. We actually returned money to the US Treasury out of the appropriations we had; that happens rarely.

Q: Roughly, what date are we talking about now, that you wound this up?

BROWN: The summer of '75. It really went on for another two years, but by then it was basically handling the welfare problem of the Vietnamese and others in the United States. It was a welfare problem.

Q: And there was no major emergency by that time.

BROWN: No. No, no. We had done what we had done, and our policies became normal again.

Q: Then when you finished that, you went on to the Middle East Institute?

BROWN: I went to the Middle East Institute, where I was president. The next year, King Hussein was coming on a visit.

Q: Is that, by the way, a professional job?

BROWN: Yes, full-time job. The next year, King Hussein was coming on a visit, so I went out to the airport, Andrews Airport, and I stood at the very end of the line. So Henry

came down the line with him, and he looked at me. I said, "Hello, Henry." He said, "Got your car here?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, come on straight to the State Department."

I got to the State Department, and he said, "Why don't you go to Beirut?"

I said, "What for?"

He said, "Mac Godley is very sick and he's back here. We don't know if he's going to get well enough to go back, and it's a real mess out there. Everybody tells me we should have somebody out there in charge of the place." He said, "Also, I can't understand a word they're saying. They send these long, lengthy telegrams about people I've never heard of and parties I've never heard of." He said, "Why don't you see if you can go out there and talk to those people and see if you can have some influence."

I said, "Sure, I'll go. When should I leave?"

He said, "How about this afternoon?"

I said, "Sure."

Q: You were going out as what? Just as a personal representative?

BROWN: A personal representative of the President, yes. Special envoy and representative of the President.

I said, "I'm not going to do it permanently. I don't want to go back into the Foreign Service. I'll do it for a couple of months."

So I flew to London, and on to Beirut. It was pretty awful, because this was '76. The war hadn't really started. The civil war, which is still going on, started in '75. But by my time it had become intense. Every group had lots of arms. All the politicians were trying to use the Palestinians against each other. Everyone was at everyone's throat.

The Maronite leadership--the president is always a Christian Maronite in Lebanon. The Maronite leadership was deathly afraid that the leftists, which were the Druze and others, were getting support from other leftist regimes such as Syria, Iraq, Libya, Algeria, all that, and that they were really threatened. They wanted help.

So I went around and saw all those politicians, and it was a hairy business because it was a full-blast revolution, blowing up everything. I had a car; I had two cars shot up on me, but not badly. Then after a while, I didn't use embassy cars; I hired taxis. Went to the airport in taxis.

Q: Did you have any armor underneath your cars in the embassy?

BROWN: Yes, yes. Well, two were armored.

Q: So you had some. That still isn't going to help you very much.

BROWN: It isn't going to help you very much. It's all right. It gives you that measure of protection as long as you control your driver. I learned in Jordan how to control drivers, which is you tell them to turn; don't let him tell you when to turn. And in Beirut, I always drove with a pistol aimed at the driver, and a bodyguard, whom I didn't trust at all. He's the one who betrayed Frank Meloy when Frank was killed. The driver was killed. They were an untrustworthy group of people.

I went to see Raymond Eddé, a well connected Maronite Rome, prominent family. His whole garden had been blown up by an artillery shell. He said, "It's all your fault. This is what the CIA did to me." I said, "The CIA didn't arm those people to blow up your garden." He said, "Mr. Ambassador, you're very badly informed." [Laughter]

Q: They certainly managed to get themselves into an almost incredible situation.

BROWN: Impossible situation. I finally came back. What I suggested to Henry is that we think very seriously of getting another ambassador out there who didn't know the area very well, but who had been in tough posts. Frank Meloy was the one. He had had Salvador and Santa Domingo. Frank came, and I flew out. I said I didn't want to be in town when Frank came, because he should be in charge. So I met him in Rome, and we spent three or four days in Rome, talking together about all sorts of things. Then he went down there, and shortly thereafter he was killed.

So the President asked me to go back, and I said yes. I found a plane ready to go. And my wife called up Henry Kissinger and said to him, "This is June. You can't do it." And she said, "If he can do it, he can go back and get Frank's body, but he's not going to go back there and serve in that place again. Frank was one of our best friends; he's just been killed, and I don't want to lose my husband that way."

I just went back, got Frank and the other bodies and brought them back to the States. Then pretty much stayed out of Lebanese affairs thereafter.

Q: Had you remained as president of Middle East Institute while you were doing this?

BROWN: Yes, sure. Sure. I got former Ambassador Ray Hare to come back, and sit in while I was away. Ray's a very fine man.

Q: Well balanced.

BROWN: Well balanced and informed on the Middle East as anybody, far more informed than I am or anybody else.

Then in a couple of years, I left that. I still go out to the Middle East myself about every few years. I just was out there in the late spring, mostly in the West Bank and Gaza.

Q: Are you doing some consulting work?

BROWN: No. I'm chairman of the American-Near East Refugee Aid, which was set up after the '67 War to help refugees; we do economic projects on the West Bank. So I know many of those people, the mayors and the town councilmen, those people out there. So I go out and see them regularly, because this is the only way you can find out who these people are, as you know, on a regular basis. People go out to the Middle East and talk to some guy and say, "Tell me really what's going on." Then they listen to the answer and write it up. Of course, the fellow is telling them what he wants them to hear or what he knows won't hurt him. You have too many Americans, for instance, who go out to places like that, go talk to people on the West Bank, and then go see an Israeli general and say, "Such and such happened," and the general says, "Who told you that?" The next thing you know, that poor Palestinian is in jail.

So the only other story I'll tell you about the connection, just two, one is, of course, Shirley Temple and I ran the course for ambassadors for many years, starting with Carter and going all the way through until about a year ago. It was very amusing; we saw them all. Every single ambassador had to come. The Secretary always insisted that would be part of it, four or five days with us, and visit some of the other agencies, to get some sort of a feel. They also insisted that all the career officers had to come. I knew we couldn't teach anybody very much; all we were trying to do is give the political appointees a little more sense of security in dealing with career people.

Shirley Temple Black and I did it together. We ran it. We'd bring people in to talk. Then we'd talk to them in between. It was just an idea of trying to make them feel at home, that it wasn't that alien a culture they were joining, and that they could look around at the people who were working for them and have a measure of trust in them. We said, "The success of young staff people is dependant, to a large extent, on your success. If you fail, they'll be tagged with it, so they want to help you."

Q: I take it that Madame Black is a pretty intelligent woman.

BROWN: Absolutely.

Q: I've never met her.

BROWN: Oh, she's first class. I met her when I was a delegate at the U.N. many years ago. She was there.

Q: It's a tough cross to bear, having been Shirley Temple, and becoming . . .

BROWN: She's intelligent; very down to earth; and well-informed. She has a very supportive, good husband, which is very useful. Charlie is a commercial fisherman. But I think this is an illustrative story which I think is kind of amusing. After I'd come back from Lebanon, things got very bad, and they decided they were going to pull all the Americans out of Lebanon, have a big evacuation. Phil Habib called me up and said, "Dean, can you come over and talk to me?"

I went to see Phil, and he said, "Listen. There's going to be this big meeting with the President in Lebanon. I'm not going. Henry's going." Henry was still, of course, in charge of NSC at that time as well as the State Department. "Henry asked me to ask you if you would go with him to the NSC meeting."

I said, "It's kind of odd, isn't it? I don't work for the government. I have no connection. I haven't read any of the cables. I haven't talked to anybody."

Q: Were your clearances still extant?

BROWN: Yes. I always kept those up. I think they've lapsed now, by the way.

So I went to the NSC meeting with Henry and Defense Under Secretary Bill Clements and George Brown, representing the Joint Chiefs of Staff, George Bush, Director of CIA, and Dick Cheney, now present Secretary of Defense, who was Ford's assistant, and President Ford.

Q: Cheney was in the budget?

BROWN: No, he was chief of staff to Ford. So we're all sitting in this room, and the subject is the evacuation of services from Beirut and how to do it. The problem and proposed solution was presented by Henry, speaking as NSC secretary, not as Secretary of State, "This is the consensus, Mr. President, of other people here." That is to say, Defense and the Joint Chiefs. CIA and State, "That we have to go in to Beirut with a very heavy force, this we could involve four or five squadrons of fighter aircraft, fighter-bombers, all over the city. The services would be taken by convoy to Damascus over the mountains." Out came the maps to show all of this. Clements chimed in and so did George Brown. George Bush was the map man.

Then Henry looked at me and he said, "Mr. President, Dean looks very skeptical."

I said, "Mr. President, this is crazy! This is absolutely crazy. We're going to get a lot of people killed doing this. I don't care how many planes you put in the sky or how many troops you land, it's through mountainous land."

Q: It's like the Khyber Pass.

BROWN: Yes. I said, "It's a long way. All kinds of things can happen. Besides, you know, Beirut doesn't operate the way other places do. What happens is, some guy gets out of a taxi cab, opens the trunk, pulls out a mortar, fires five shots at you, puts the mortar back in the taxi cab, and leaves. So then your offshore ships and your bombers bomb where he was, and he's in somebody else's neighborhood. That's the way it works."

He said, "What do you think?"

I said, "Look. Here's the embassy. See this beach right here? That's the old polo ground. That's under the control of Arafat's Fatah. Those are the people that guard the embassy area. Just take some barges, landing craft ships, announce in advance that you're coming in with the American flag flying with no arms on board. None. You're just coming in to take off the Americans right off the beach there. Run them right up on the beach. They'll all come there, they'll get there."

The President leaned over and looked at Clements, because he could see the real inspiration for this. He said, "Well, this is no time to be macho. Do what he says." And that's the way it was done.

Then on the way back, Henry says to me, "Good job." He says, "That's what I wanted you to do." I went back to tell Phil Habib. He said, "You did exactly what you were supposed to do. Everybody knows that." [Laughter]

George Brown got me in the hall of the White House, put his arm around me, and said, "Thank you." And he'd just been proposing a totally different course of action. I think they were in that position where they were all trying to out-macho the other, be the toughest guy in the room. And none of them meant it except probably Clements.

Q: That's fascinating.

BROWN: So that's enough of that. Let's go to the club. I've got to get my shoes shined! They're filthy.

End of interview