Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR THOMAS J. DODD

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is May 9, 2001. This is an interview with Thomas J. Dodd. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Tom, let's start at the beginning. Can you tell me when and where you were born and something about your family.

DODD: I was born on March 29th, 1935 in the District of Columbia. I'm a native Washingtonian born at the old Georgetown Hospital. I'm a rare species.

Q: Tell me about your mother and your father.

DODD: My parents, Grace Murphy Dodd was from Rhode Island, and my dad was a Connecticut native. He was then working in Washington with the Department of Justice. He was working in the area of civil rights. You couldn't call it the civil rights division, but that was the area where he specialized and as a matter of fact tried a couple of cases in Arkansas. One of them was the mayor of Little Rock for lynching. My dad went out there and tried the case and won it before a jury. Those were difficult days I'm sure. He tried several of those cases around the country, lynchings and so forth, but that was his work in the 1930s when I was born in the District.

Q: Let's talk about the background of where your parents families came from.

DODD: My father's family was from Ireland, his grandfather, as well as my mother's. My father's family settled in Norwich, Connecticut, and my mother's family settled in Westerly, Rhode Island. My grandfather ultimately became the wholesale paper business. My father's father was a contractor in Norwich. They used to say in Norwich, "Who made the world? Tom Dodd and his horses." My mother was educated in Rhode Island but came to Washington and graduated from Trinity College in 1928.

Q: Oh, yes, obviously of a Catholic family.

DODD: Yes. My father went to Providence College and Yale Law School and also, as I say, joined the Department of Justice in the 1930s as one of Herbert Hoover's earlier FBI agents.

Q: So he was a part of the FBI?

DODD: Yes, he was. He was probably one of the first agents, then was active in the pursuit of Ma Barker and John Dillinger and so forth.

Q: I'm surprised in a way, knowing Herbert Hoover's proclivities, that we would have we would have the equivalent to a civil rights unit there. He was pretty much a small-town southerner from DC, wasn't he?

DODD: Yes, as a matter of fact. Homer Cummings was the Attorney General from Connecticut and actually brought my dad to Washington. That's how my father ended up working for the Department of Justice in the 1930s in the Roosevelt administration.

Q: Did you ever get any stories about Hoover in the family?

DODD: There are many stories about Herbert Hoover. He supervised his FBI agents very closely. We learned early on that my dad was a rather independent agent. While he liked the service, I'm not so sure he really loved the discipline that went with it. But he certainly participated in some very significant work in Wisconsin, Little Bohemia, the Battle of Little Bohemia. Where John Dillinger was sought but not found. My parents then lived in St. Paul, Minnesota. Ma Barker also lived in St. Paul! So those were interesting days.

Q: Did you mother have a job, or was she a housewife?

DODD: No, I'll tell you an interesting story. She graduated from Trinity in 1929 and with a group of young women, three or four of them, went to New York and got an apartment on the west side, and found work. She kept a newspaper headline that said, "9,000,000 out of work" the day she was hired in an insurance company. She always used to brag about it. But after she married my dad - they raised six children - my mother worked at home. But she always maintained a very, very active writing career, not necessarily as a published scholar, but wrote articles for newspapers. When my dad later was in public life, in fact all the years he was in public life, my mother wrote a column for Connecticut newspapers from Washington. She was a painter, and led a very active, engaged, busy life and not just simply trying to discipline a brood of six children.

Q: Did you feel ties to Connecticut while you were in Washington?

DODD: Yes. In fact, I always have. My wife still chides me a bit about 'going home' someday. I'm one of those people born in Washington but raised in Connecticut. I came back to Washington in 1953 to school. But since then, even though my parents lived in Connecticut and came to Washington, I always considered myself really a "nutmegger," a Yankee from Connecticut, and I still do. I've always felt Washington is a very difficult place to say is home. It's very hard. In fact, most of my friends that I know today are from somewhere else and have always been from somewhere else living in the District. My wife, who is a native Washingtonian, has lived there all her life and feels very much part of the city.

Q: For schooling where did you start school?

DODD: I started to school, went to grammar school, in Lebanon, a small town in Connecticut. There was a cluster of small towns called Lebanon, Basra, all had Biblical names. This was in the 1940s, and I remember that most of my classmates were DPs (displaced persons), children who had no parents, were refugees during and after the Second World War. So I grew up conscious of the cultural differences of people. But the most important thing was they were my friends. I had a wonderful exposure at a very early age, exposed to a diverse world and suffering people.

Q: What was the business of Lebanon?

DODD: Lebanon historically was George Washington's New England war office. It was a lovely old town, about 800 to 1,000 people. I mentioned George Washington's war office. He lived in a home that was right across the street from us. Our home belonged to the son of Jonathan Trumble, the artist.

Q: What brought your father back to Connecticut?

DODD: To practice law. He practiced law actually in Hartford, which is about 32 miles

from Lebanon, so it was considered a long commute then, with chickens, pigs, and sheep. We were really city dwellers in a rural Connecticut town.

Q: Do you recall any of the teachers?

DODD: I recall them very well. In fact, maybe the older you get, the better you remember. I recall two or three who were sons and daughters of Eastern European refugees, which made for wonderful classes then in the fifth and sixth grade. Geography, I always remember, was important. Again, I want to emphasize I wasn't conscious of the fact that I had people from that part of the world as teachers, but I look back now and I think how extraordinary because I knew so much about the world when I entered high school. I think it was a direct result of the influence of those teachers.

Q: How about at home? You say you had five brothers...

DODD: Five brothers and sisters.

Q: Did you all sit around the table, and was this one of these things where you get together and discuss things?

DODD: Looking back over the years - and I think my siblings would agree - we spent most of our lives debating and arguing politics and world affairs that my dad was interested in. He always either evoked or provoked debate and discussion. We didn't talk about real estate or the stock market; we talked about politics and world affairs, because in 1945...

Q: You would have been 10 by that time.

DODD: My dad went to the Nuremberg trial with Robert Jackson. That was a turning point, I think, for me and my sister, Carolyn, and brother, Jeremy. We're close in age; we were 10, nine... My dad would talk a great deal about the trial. He made us very much aware of the horrors of the Second World War and the Holocaust. Subsequently we used to meet many survivors of the Holocaust at home in Lebanon. So it was a turning point for me, 1945 and '46, because my dad was away at the trial, became then executive trial counsel when Justice Jackson returned home. My dad was, of course, away for about a year and half. His letters to my mother and her to him, daily letters, have been preserved. We've edited and published them.

Q: Good, because that's something you don't want...

DODD: It's a great treasure, because in those letters we've come across some extraordinarily interesting things, notes written between several of the defendants at the trial to each other. Those letters are now at the University of Connecticut along with my dad's Nuremberg papers. That period was an interesting turning point for me. I became more curious and interested in world affairs, international affairs.

Q: Where did the family, from the time you were aware of it, where did it fall politically?

DODD: My parents were Roosevelt and Truman Democrats. I always remember in 1948 my dad seconded Harry Truman's nomination in Philadelphia at the Democratic Party Convention. They couldn't find a Democrat in New England to do it. My dad remembers seconding his nomination about two a.m. in the morning. I heard it on the radio. Of course, most of the country had gone to bed when Truman gave his acceptance speech. My dad said that night when he delivered the speech, he electrified the delegates. My father was walking out after his speech and Truman said to him, "You know, I'm going to win this," and my dad said, "Well, I hope you do," but most people didn't think so. Then, of course, in the subsequent campaign in '48 they both traveled the country. Again, we were Roosevelt and Truman Democrats, a rare breed in Lebanon, Connecticut.

Q: Your father then ran for Congress?

DODD: No. He was certainly interested in politics - there's no question about it - in 1948, and there was a lot of discussion that he might run for governor in that year, but he did not. He ran for the House of Representatives in 1952, and that began his Congressional career in the House. Then he went to the Senate in 1958. He was in Congress until a year before he died in 1971.

Q: He ran for Congress when?

DODD: He ran for Congress in 1952.

Q: So you would have been in high school?

DODD: Yes, I was in high school. I was a junior in high school.

Q: Where did you go to high school?

DODD: I went to a wonderful old school, Cheshire Academy, founded in 1789. I say a wonderful old school because it had a large number of students from abroad. In fact, just next week I'm going to give the commencement address there commemorating the arrival of the first foreign students in 1812. It continued my interest in international affairs.

Q: You were there from when to when?

DODD: Let me get my dates straight here. I was there from 1949 to '53.

Q: I just went to my 55th reunion.

DODD: A great old school. I'll always remember the headmaster there, who was a remarkable human being. His name was Arthur N. Sheriff. He always made a point of having students from abroad room with U.S. students. I had a Cuban roommate. This was before the Cuban revolution. He was a wonderful guy. He spoke no English and I spoke

no Spanish. But over the months, we began to pick up our separate languages. That was the start of my interest in Latin America.

Q: While you were at Cheshire what sort of things were you interested in? Were there any particular areas that you became interested in?

DODD: Yes, there were several of them, two areas: first, as I mentioned, the Foreign Relations Club, which was interesting. But I also got very interest and remained active in the theater, amateur acting. I used to do some summer stock theater, too. Donald Towers was director of fine arts and theater. I also enjoyed very much playing soccer and fencing, maybe because there were Spanish speaking Latin Americans on the teams.

Q: How about reading? Were you a reader?

DODD: I was. Again you point to teachers. My history teacher was George Houghton He was a great lecturer. Of course, it was European history, and I used to read biographies. I loved biographies of European historical figures and remains so to this day.

Q: With your father running for Congress, did you get involved in the campaign?

DODD: I did get involved in the campaign. I actually did throughout his career. Let me be specific. I would be given a schedule and speak in high schools around the state. Often people said, "Well, there are no votes in high schools." No, but the point was really to get out and explain what an election was. There were teachers, and, of course, parents who might have heard about my talks. But I do remember several times debating with representatives of my dad's opponents in high schools, some colleges. I went out on the road with a schedule and covered different parts of the district then and the state later when he went to the Senate. But I loved it, I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Q: Were there any drawbacks, people who were emotionally involved in the other side?

DODD: There always were. But I must say in all honesty I don't ever remember in all of the years doing any campaign for him ever running into any unpleasant experiences. People, of course, disagreed with you and did so publicly and openly. But it was very civil. I don't ever recall being embarrassed, humiliated, or feeling especially uncomfortable discussing and arguing points in politics. There were some contentious issues in that decade of the fifties, McCarthyism, the Cold War, for example, but there was a climate of civility and I liked it.

Q: You mentioned McCarthyism. How did that fall out, because your father, coming from the J. Edgar Hoover school...?

DODD: I'll tell you a very interesting story. McCarthy was very, very critical of Abe Ribicoff, who was then governor. I always remember my dad went on radio and condemned McCarthy for criticizing Abe Ribicoff, condemned him frequently. So he was an oddity in a way, being an Irish Catholic condemning the tactics of a Catholic member

of Congress. But my dad felt his actions were horrendous, destructive. And I always had a great deal of respect for him, because it took some courage. He was criticized for that, very, very harshly criticized for it. That was one of several stands he took on things that I admired tremendously, because he thought they were right.

Q: While you were at Cheshire, did you know what you wanted to do, where you wanted to go to school?

DODD: This is an interesting thing. When I was invited to go up to Cheshire several months ago, the headmaster wrote me and said, "We've been spending a year now commemorating some 150 years of foreign students here, and we've invited several visitors from abroad. We'd like to have someone who graduated from the school who's gone abroad and had some experience abroad, too." And he said, "By the way, your class picture says 'Professional interest and occupation: To go into the U.S. Foreign Service.'" It was kind of interesting. And so I'm going to pick up that theme.

Q: Obviously you were not in an isolated community. You'd lived in Washington; you'd had all this experience. So many people who get this never heard of the Foreign Service until much later. Did you know about not the Foreign Service so much but diplomacy and...?

DODD: Yes, I did. Let me explain, and I think I can be precise for you. When my dad was at Nuremberg, he met two people that had a tremendous impact on him and I got to know. One was a man named Edmond Walsh, formerly of Georgetown School of Foreign Service. He did a lot of interviewing of several German political scientists and a man named Leon Dostert, who set up the simultaneous translation system at Nuremberg and later established the Institute for Language and Linguistics at Georgetown, later the School of Linguistics. But through them we met people who were in the Department of State who were at that trial in different functions. I remember meeting a lot of them, and I thought their work was fascinating. Of course, it was the end of the war and many Cold War issues were emerging. These were people who spent a lot of time at our house and it added to my interest and curiosity.

Q: Did your teachers at Cheshire sort of add onto this talk about things that were happening?

DODD: Some did, yes. I always remember George Houghton, my history teacher. Yes, many of them did. Arthur Sheriff, the headmaster, was always interested in international affairs. We used to meet at his house on weekends, I remember. He always seemed to create an environment where there was a lot of mixing of students from abroad, from all over the world. That was a foundation, my dad's interest and people he met and knew at Nuremberg at the end of the war.

Q: Did you know where you wanted to go to university?

DODD: Yes, I knew exactly where I wanted to go, and that was to Georgetown's Foreign

Service School. I wanted to study languages, and I applied and registered at the School of Languages and Linguistics, again the Institute of Language and Linguistics, which was downtown here in Washington on Massachusetts Avenue. When I arrived in Washington in the fall of 1953 to go to the Institute, my parents were upset because the Institute and most of its students were downtown. They were older, much older. So I switched to the School of Foreign Service, which was on campus. Many were my contemporaries in age. I remember Melissa Wells, who then joined the U.S. Foreign Service, was a student there. She was a night student because women weren't admitted to day courses. But she took day courses anyway. It was an older, more mature student body than college, so I had a nice mix on campus: my classmates in the Foreign Services School were more, as I said, mature, more professionally oriented - they wanted careers in international service - and then my college associates and friends on the campus.

Q: Father Walsh, was he quite a presence then?

DODD: Father Walsh had suffered a stroke about a year before I entered, so he was infirm and he was no longer running the school. But he lived on the campus and I used to go visit him. But he was quite ill, referred often to the Nuremberg trial, but he was really quite ill and died while I was at Georgetown. I believe it was 1956, '55 or '56.

Q: Any teachers at the School of Foreign Service that particularly grabbed you?

DODD: Oh, yes, there were some that were really well known. I suppose if you ask any graduate of Georgetown's Foreign Service School since 1945, the name of Carroll Quigley would come up; Jan Karski, who headed up the Polish underground in the Second World War and first reported the Holocaust.

Q: President Clinton...

DODD: Clinton referred to him on several occasions. Jules Davids, who helped John Kennedy write Profiles in Courage, taught United States diplomacy. Carroll Quigley taught world civilization. It was called Development of Civilization - really the development of Western civilization actually. I don't remember him so much for the content of his course, but he taught us how to think and how to think historically, which led me to the study of history, the discipline of it, the approach to it, the schools of historical thought, methodology. I remember those things. He was quite an orator and a dominant force in the classroom. You didn't disagree with him very often or easily.

Q: Did the student body at the School of Foreign Service divide itself off from the government, the business group, in different ways?

DODD: No, as I recall, we were all of a caste. We all took basically the same course work. It was very rigid all the way through and there were very few electives. I remember I went to Spain to school, to the University of Barcelona and the University of Santandare for a period. I'll always remember I didn't get permission to take any courses over there for credit. I wrote the regent, Frank Fadner, said, "I'd like to get some credit." He wrote

back and said, “Thank you for your run-on sentence paragraph,” and so on and corrected my English and said, “I’ll give you credit for some languages.” I’m told by the registrar and the dean of the Foreign Service School that I may have been one of the first Georgetown students to get credit for studying abroad. To answer your question, basically we were all required to take foreign language and be competent in it - that is, for writing and speaking. Some students were interested, yes, in international trade, but those weren’t really majors or concentrations when I was there.

Q: Why Spanish?

DODD: That goes back to Cheshire, my prep school, my roommate, a Cuban, introduced me to Venezuelans, Mexicans, and Peruvians, and the list goes on and on. So I learned Spanish, pursued it, then Portuguese. When I went to Georgetown I’ll always remember my prep school roommate said, “Be very careful of Puerto Ricans. They’re dangerous people. They steal and so forth.” So I asked roommate from Spain. I remember one day the door to my room opened shortly after I arrived and in walked a blond, blue-eyed fellow. I said, “Oh, I’m glad your Spanish and not Puerto Rican.” “Well,” he said, “I am Puerto Rican.” That was my second lesson in diversity of the Hispanic world. We became great friends and I met many people from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and other Latin American students. So my interests in Latin America really did not follow a discipline, history, language, or culture. It was friends. The first course I took as an undergraduate with the InterAmerican System offered by William Manger, the former Assistant Secretary General of the OAS.

Q: You were at Georgetown from when to when?

DODD: I was there from ‘53 to ‘57.

Q: These were Eisenhower years?

DODD: These were the Eisenhower years, exactly.

Q: How Catholic a school was it? Today, as we both know, it’s....

DODD: Georgetown was a Jesuit college - the School of Language and Linguistics, the Foreign Service School, the College of Arts and Sciences. It was a Jesuit university, no question about it. If you were in the Foreign Service School and lived off campus, students lived relatively independent lives, that is, no restrictions on attending mass and so on. But if you were on the campus, you wore a coat and tie. You sat in a dining room for a breakfast, lunch and dinner that was served. Maids cleaned your room and made your beds. It was a young gentlemen’s hilltop institution. But my experience in the Foreign Service School, I think, was more maturing, because the Foreign Service School did have students of other faiths, several students from abroad, so it was broadening for me. A Jesuit university like Georgetown was truly one of the first international institutions of higher learning in the U.S.

Q: I was born in 1928. I'm not a Catholic, but I grew up with the feeling of the dominant force in the United States in the Catholic world being Irish Catholic and it was sort of anti-intellectual and a lot of rules: you eat fish on Friday, you don't go to this movie, you don't go to that. For a young kid it seemed pretty intolerant.

DODD: It was not easy. I come back to my response to one of your earlier questions. Both of my parents, grandparents and my great grandparents lived in small New England towns - Westerly, Rhode Island, was a small community; Norwich, Connecticut was a small community. Their friends and relatives lived in farms. So most of their contacts and mine growing up were with non-Catholics. When I went to Georgetown, my interest generally tilted towards my colleagues in the Foreign Service School because there was more of a diverse community. But again I emphasize it was an experience I remember vividly that living on that campus with college students from the more traditional Irish Catholic was also a great window of interest for me. I didn't know them before. They were called lace-curtain Irish. They went to Canterbury and Portsmouth Priory. There was an elitism there. They didn't graduate from local parochial high schools. That was kind of a shock for me.

Q: Your father by this time when you were in there, was he already in Congress?

DODD: Yes, he was in Congress.

Q: Did you find yourself getting involved, or were you disagreeing with your parents as most kids do?

DODD: I used to go down to the Hill a lot and listen to sessions of Congress. I enjoyed it, and I used to bring my friends down. They enjoyed sitting in the gallery or going to committee meetings, hearings, and so forth. But I didn't really make a habit of it, and I don't remember really focusing on it. I thought my life was more important obviously, but I did pay attention to what was going on there. I remember evenings in my parents' Georgetown home with Eugene McCarthy, Phil Hart, and others.

Q: The Cold War was really going hot and heavy at that time. At the School of Foreign Service how was the Soviet Union or the "Community menace" portrayed?

DODD: I will always remember a fascinating course I took in Russian history. It was fascinating because it went way back to pre-medieval Russia, the expansion of Moscow and so on. We would read about and listen to great discussions on Soviet expansion. But I also remember the lectures were particularly good in describing earlier Russian czarist expansion in Eastern Europe, Slavic nationalism, and so forth. We received a very intelligent approach studying history and reading daily newspapers on the Cold War. It was not necessarily considered a barracks or a battleground for the Cold War but rather rational interest on the part of historians who taught it and personally experienced the onslaught of Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe. We looked at it. I'll always remember getting a lot of understanding of Russian history, its expansion, the Westerners and the Slavophiles, as they were called.

Q: What was your reading on Latin America while you were there?

DODD: My idea of Latin America was twofold. One was mariachi bands, cigars, and frijoles. The second was a course called InterAmerican Issues. It was taught by a man named William Manger, who was the Deputy Secretary General of the Organization of American States. It was on a Friday at six o'clock in the evening. I'll always remember my roommate saying, "Why would you take something on Latin American on a Friday at six o'clock?" But I'll always remember hearing all of these friends from that part of the world talk about their homelands. This was the only course that was connected to what William Manger taught.

Q: Which is significant in today's....

DODD: It's significant. And I remember Georgetown had a Latin American Studies Program. It was a graduate program and maybe one of the first in the United States. We undergraduates were allowed to take the courses. So I just took the plunge, took the course, and remained friendly with William Manger for the rest of his life. He died a few years ago. So I crept into Latin America ever so slowly with friends, colleagues, and even sold the Encyclopedia Britannicas (the Spanish edition) in Mexico to raise some money to pay for my graduate school tuition. But I edged into it more through experiences and than to study the discipline of Latin American history and then into the profession, the historical profession.

Q: You'd gone to Spain to study Spanish. This was in college?

DODD: This was in college, exactly. You could take a semester or two.

Q: Did you get any feel for the Franco regime?

DODD: I sure did. I went to the University of Santander, which was in the Basque country, and I'll always remember visiting the homes of fellow students. They spoke Basque, but all the classes at Santander were in Spanish, which of course made it much easier and possible for me. Of course, Basque was not allowed to be spoken or used in schools. Yes, I did get a feel of the Franco regime. It was harsh, no question about it, and there was not much political debate there.

Q: I don't know how it was in the late '50s, but for a considerable period of time Franco was seen to be sort of a good, strong, good man within some of the Catholic community, because the left that he fought...

DODD: Republicans.

Q: ...the republicans, very anti-clerical.

DODD: Very much so.

Q: A lot of killings on both sides...

DODD: Very much so.

Q: ...of priests and nuns and commissars.

DODD: You could see the scars on both sides in that civil war back in the 1950s. But it was a harsh regime. But later I paid attention, later on when Franco brought back Juan Carlos, the grandson of the last king, and placed him in the military academies and so forth. Of course, that was his strategy to bypass any political parties. Ultimately, I think it probably was quite an extraordinary approach, and it worked. The incumbent king, occupant of the throne, is a democrat. He respects the constitution.

Q: When you came back, at a Catholic university did Franco come up, or was this a matter of your saying, "I was there and it's not so great?"

DODD: I don't recall it really being an issue when I returned. The great debate over the Civil War, at least among historians, hadn't really emerged yet, although - now you press me on this - I remember there were a couple of faculty members who were very critical of Franco. They may have been of Spanish ancestry or maybe partisans of the republican forces, the loyalists. But it did come up, I remember, at Georgetown among a couple of economists on the faculty who were particularly critical of the Franco regime and the lack of human rights, civil rights. But while a student there, I don't remember, in fact I don't recall, student getting caught up in any debates.

Q: It was not a time of acting....

DODD: No, no, no, it was not a time of acting, no, it certainly wasn't, although I remember much later, later on in 1966, I was in Portugal on a Gulbankian fellowship and Salazar was still prime minister, very old and ill, but I remember then there was a lot of unrest at the University of _____ among students and of course in Africa, Portuguese Africa.

Q: When did you get your first taste of setting foot into this area south of the Rio Grande?

DODD: South of the border, it was when I was an undergraduate at the University of Iberoamericana in Mexico City in 1955 and '56.

Q: Let's talk about the Army before we get to.... This is '57.

DODD: This is '57. I was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Counter-Intelligence Corps.

Q: Had you been in the ROTC?

DODD: Yes, I was in the ROTC for four years. I was commissioned a second lieutenant in the CIC, the Counterintelligence Corps. I went to Fort Holabird. I was assigned to the school, a first tour there, and when I left I started graduate school, and then I was called back up again in 1961 when the Berlin Wall went up, I was assigned to the 49th Armored Division at Fort Polk, Louisiana. I was assigned to a military intelligence detachment there as a first lieutenant.

Q: When you went in, you were in the Army initially from when to when?

DODD: It was six months initially. Then you had extensive Reserve duty to perform.

Q: Six months, so you really didn't get much....

DODD: No, not until the second tour. I was what you called a Reservist and then I filled a slot.

Q: Let's finish up the military career. This was when the Berlin Wall went up?

DODD: The Berlin Wall went up.

Q: Kennedy activated the Reserve.

DODD: National Guard units, too.

Q: This was a rather tense time.

DODD: It was, very tense. It was the Texas National Guard, and they were activated, federalized, whatever you want to call it, and sent to Fort Polk. We assumed we were going to West Germany and got ready for it. We stayed right there and had war games in the old Fort Polk reservation where Eisenhower and several of his contemporaries back in 1940 earned their stripes. But it was interesting work, counterintelligence as a military intelligence detachment. We were a good corps of hard-working people. Of course, we had many different assignments, but I was primarily in charge of division security. That meant the physical security of classified information. Also, we offered courses, training courses, on security. It was an interesting assignment that ultimately helped me decide to enter academia.

Q: I always think that the military really got you out to mix and mingle with a lot of people.

DODD: It sure did, no question about it.

Q: It's unfortunate, the ideas, turn you into a war machine, but it's damn good experience for young people.

DODD: I'll always remember the G2 - the G2 is the intelligence officer - calling me in one day and he said, "I want you to teach the division a course on counter-intelligence" - I couldn't spell it - and he gave me five or six manuals. So I had about 9,000 people to teach counter-intelligence. I read up on the subject as much as I could, prepared my lectures, and discovered I thoroughly enjoyed teaching. When I left there, I decided that's what I would do. I'd go back to graduate school, which I had already started. I decided to go on for a Ph.D.

Q: Your M.A. was in what?

DODD: Latin American studies.

Q: Where?

DODD: George Washington University.

Q: Could you compare and contrast, from your experience, George Washington from Georgetown at that time.

DODD: George Washington University was basically a trolley car university, downtown. Most of my classmates, colleagues, there, worked full time. They were from different parts of the country. I met a few from Central America. It was a far more diverse group than I remember at Georgetown. I also recall George Washington then in the early '60s was well along the way in promoting or encouraging interdisciplinary studies, much further along than Georgetown. I found this very valuable and interesting, extremely interesting. You took literature, political science, history, all in a Latin American studies curriculum.

Q: When you were getting your master's, was there a concentration?

DODD: Really you took courses in political science, history and economics, so they were evenly distributed. I ultimately concentrated in history with a William Columbus Davis. He was the resident Latin Americanist at George Washington. So I concentrated in history and then I took the next step. I continued on in Latin American history. But in those days, you had to have a minor in American diplomatic history and European diplomatic history, because it was assumed that when you got a teaching job in the United States then, you had to teach a European survey or an American diplomatic survey, then you were allowed to teach your Latin American history.

Q: With Latin American history, at that time did it divide itself off? In a way, Mexico always seems to be on its own.

DODD: It was Mexico and Central America, and then you took the Caribbean, the Spanish Caribbean. You took Cuba and the Dominican Republic and then took French Haiti. Then you studied South America. You took the Andes, a history of the Andean countries, and you took a history of the Southern Cone and then Brazil.

Q: When were you going after your doctorate, what years?

DODD: I was going after my doctorate from 1961-62 to '66, about four years.

Q: While you were doing this, looking at this, with Castro taking over Cuba, did that play much of a role at that time?

DODD: That was 1959, but I'll tell you: by the time I finished my Ph.D. in Latin American history, Castro had created an extraordinary opportunity for young Ph.D.s in Latin American history, because there was a great deal of curiosity about this fellow and his challenge to the United States. So when we entered departments with Latin American history, students wanted to study Cuba. Fidel Castro was a great boon to Latin Americanists of my generation, like the Sandinistas at the other end of, '79. But Castro was not really a contentious figure at first, but more, I think, an object of great curiosity and fascination for us as we were going through academic programs, no question about it. Most of us admired him tremendously. I remember going down on the mall when he came here (Washington, DC). But we weren't ready to put on bands and carry rifles to go to Cuba. Curiously but maybe not so curiously, when you're a Ph.D. candidate, it may be something like studying medicine. You shut out the world. Your colleagues are only those who are studying with you, and I've often been fascinated by that. We weren't in the streets.

Q: What was the subject of your dissertation?

DODD: My dissertation was on the United States' intervention in Nicaragua in 1927 in which the United States Army supervised presidential and congressional elections, 1928 and 1932. One of those figures, a young officer there, was a fellow named Maxwell Ridgeway. I worked on the records here on the archives and then went to Nicaragua and did a lot of research there. When I finished the research in Nicaragua in 1965, I stuck my thumb out and went to Argentina, hitchhiked several months traveling through Central America, Colombia, and down the west coast to Argentina. That was probably one of the most enriching experiences of my entire life.

Q: What was your impression? You'd been studying this area, and all of a sudden there you are.

DODD: What impressed me the most and struck me the most were two things: one, the enormous diversity among these Latin American states that we call Spanish speaking. That was my first shock. From Costa Rica to Peru, those are light years away in people ethnical, racial characteristics. The second most important thing that struck me was the great divide between the Indo-American world and, if you call it, the modern world of the city of Latin America. I was astonished. I remember spending several weeks in an Indian village in Peru hearing no English and no Spanish. What struck me was the enormous divide between those two, the Indo-American and the Hispanic America, the Spanish world, the urban. That shock just struck me by its enormous and profound differences. At

the end of the long trip was the fact that these people hadn't really risen up in rebellion more often or sooner. I was curious. The poverty was so extreme, the illiteracy, and it was a painful shock, because most of my friends in college, graduate school, were from middle to upper middle class families. They nor I heard anything about the poverty, illiteracy, or the Indo-American world.

Q: What about when you were in Nicaragua? What were you picking up about, one, what was the residue of the American experience there and then about Somoza?

DODD: There were two parts of the residue of the American experience. There was the Somoza regime which you could feel as a dictatorship. You could see Iacho Somoza anytime you wanted to. He was not president when I was there. A fellow named Rene Shick was president; he was a hand-picked Somoza candidate. But you could meet anyone in the administration, the Somoza regime, if you wanted to, and they were, of course, very pro-United States. I was a graduate student researching elections and got help from the minister of education to get in the archives. But once I set out in Nicaragua to talk to old Sandinistas, old followers of Augusto César Sandino - and there were many of them - I had many interviews, too, with Emiliano Chamorro. When I moved away from officialdom, you began to feel the intensity of the dislike for the Somoza regime. I met students in the National University. You could see the origins, the beginnings, here, of discontent. It was nowhere near the FSLN organized stage, but they were dissidents and they were being pursued. They were not effectively organized, but they were there. And then, of course, a lot of the names came up later, during the '70s. So it was a three-tiered thing, Somoza officials and family, those who had memories of the '28 to '33 period of U.S. intervention, and then those who were forming the nucleus of the anti-Somoza period. So I got a taste of it right across the board.

Q: Was there a feeling when you were there in Central America - this was some years after the Arbenz business - that the United States was keeping its finger in the pie?

DODD: No question about it. The United States ambassador was a proconsul in that period. We were everywhere. Stability, of course, was more important that democracy in the Cold War era. But very interesting - the caveat to my story - there was a career Foreign Service officer named Aaron S. Brown, who was the U.S. ambassador in Managua. He was a wonderful human being. I used to check in with him every now and then because he was very helpful in helping me understand political parties. There were so many of them. But when I saw him, I could only see him, or only chose to see him, in a barber shop right on Avenida Roosevelt on every Thursday afternoon. He was well liked and well respected. He was a good man. He understood the country, and I think he was greatly admired and respected, respected by the Somoza regime. I also remember a lot of Nicaraguans, the shopkeepers, always expressed a great deal of respect for him. And then, of course, in 1965, Lyndon Johnson went into the Dominican Republic. Of course, I felt it. In fact, I was on the road in Ecuador, and they said, "Your country had just intervened in the Dominican Republic." I said, "Of course, it hasn't." I didn't want to believe it, but again the heavy hand of the United States was still felt.

Q: You were in the graduate school. I would think it was almost the normal separation between the graduate student and the academic world and the government, the government getting in there and messing around and the academics usually take a somewhat anti-American government line.

DODD: There was not an "us and them" attitude principally because fellow classmates and professors came from academia and the government. We may have differed on many subjects, but constant contact and association limited, even ended, early hostility.

Q: One of the things, of course, on all our missions, not just there but everywhere else in the world, one of our concerns was the Communist menace. Did you see that as being a valid problem?

DODD: No, from my perspective as a historian of Latin America, it was not a problem because I saw basically - at least I always like to assume I did - political agitation, Socialist Party or Communist Party, as manifestations of gross injustice within Latin American states. People can argue, "Yes, but they were tied with the Cubans," or "they were tied with the Russians." Some were. But I saw it really, in Central America especially in the '70s, beginning in the '60s, as movements that were determined really to correct a grossly unjust political and social economic system. I think history may justify this comment. But now we look at Central America and we find all FMLN people now in congress, the mayor of San Salvador, Sandinistas in congress. Once they were given basically the opening for political participation, insurgencies ended. And that was my argument from the beginning.

Q: When you were working in Central America but elsewhere too, did you find yourself having to resist being coopted by the 10 big families or the 20 big families? Each country seemed to have these.

DODD: There was no question about it. As I mentioned earlier, I went to high school and college with members of the old families. When I went back there, I looked them up. Sometimes I stayed with them, had dinner with them, lunch, whatever. But I had a very good, healthy perspective on it. I knew it was a minority, because I worked in the archives and went to the universities and saw where there were people from a far different circle of friends. Did they know I was with the opposition? I don't know. It certainly didn't seem to make any difference. But I was a foreigner, I was studying their history, and intended to be eclectic in my choice of friends and so on who showed interest in my work. I had terrible experiences teaching Latin American history in the '70s. I had classes, for example, where sons and daughters from the same family were either Sandinistas or old Somoza allies, in the same classroom.

Q: Speaking of families, did your father take much of an interest in Latin America, or was he elsewhere?

DODD: He had a tremendous interest in it, although he never spoke a word of the Spanish language. He was on the Foreign Relations Community. Interestingly, the father

of Carlos Salinas, the former president of Mexico, was in the senate. My dad got to know him and they established what then became or has become the Mexican-American Parliamentary something. They meet every two years. My dad had long encouraged us to study Spanish. He used to say that probably there would be more people speaking Spanish in the United States than English. It was motivated in part because my dad had two sisters who were linguists and they taught Spanish and French and German. Language was always important, and my dad spotted the Hispanic world and encouraged all of us to learn about it. In fact, all of us really took a interest in Latin America ultimately in some way.

Q: As you sort of hitchhiked around, were you able to sample the American embassies or consulates?

DODD: I rarely never went to them simply because my work was focused on research, toiling in archives and libraries. For a student, the U.S. embassy was a remote, distant institution.

Q: You got your Ph.D. in...?

DODD: 1966.

Q: Did you know what you were going to do?

DODD: Absolutely. I wanted to teach - there was no question about it - I taught a course in European history at George Washington University. It was in the evening. At the end of the course a woman walked up to me and said, "You know, my husband and his department at Georgetown Foreign Service School are looking for a historian. His name is Carroll Quigley." I had taught Mrs. Quigley for a whole semester and I didn't know it. She said, "I think you'd better call him up. I think he might like to have you." So I went right over to Georgetown and started to teach. I knew exactly what I wanted to do when I worked for the Ph.D.

Q: So you started at Georgetown in 1966?

DODD: In 1966.

Q: And that was it.

DODD: And that was it. However, during the course of your career you teach elsewhere. I taught in Mexico, for example, in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Q: During the late '60s what was Georgetown like at that time? We're talking about the protest movements.

DODD: It was slow coming to Georgetown, but by '68/'69 Georgetown exploded with student unrest, demonstrations, closing down classes, classrooms, and so on. Yes, like its

contemporaries elsewhere, the University was engulfed in the Vietnam War. But generally the student body was conservative, supporting the war longer than most universities.

Q: How did you deal with this, and how did you feel that the University dealt with this?

DODD: I dealt with it in this context. I remember having classes, setting aside a class to discuss the Vietnam War. But I held to a syllabus of a course. I felt it was important for those of us on the faculty to maintain some integrity to the academic environment, not simply just throw your hand up and say we're going to have an off-street liberal arts program. So I worked through the system but allowed the flexibility for students to deal with it. I took, for example, Vietnam, the intervention in Guatemala in '54, the Bolivian revolution of 1952, the Cuban revolution of '59- revolutions and nationalism. A group of us then in the department of history ultimately taught courses in Regional Histories. We taught freshmen a course on the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America called Empire and Independence in the Modern World, which studied nationalism and revolutions like Vietnam. It explained basically the ethnic, cultural, and political upheaval of the '60s.

Q: Did you get hit with the grade inflation and all that?

DODD: Sure did, absolutely.

Q: I think we're still suffering from this now.

DODD: Absolutely. We were hit with grade inflation largely because, at least initially, a failure in a course could send a young person to Vietnam. That's when I began to see grade inflation become a real problem. Most of us on the faculty had some difficult times with it. We really did, very difficult times.

Q: I would imagine it would be very hard.

DODD: A 'B' for me going through school was a good grade. But it was a catastrophe in the late '60s. The pressure, I always say, begins at home. I think these kids got through high school with A+s; we were looking at those on transcripts for admission to Georgetown, and then they expected to be perfect when they got there.

Q: And now, I'm told, it's reached almost a business thing. "We pay for the school, so we deserve..."

DODD: A ticket to graduate school or law school or whatever it was. I talk to colleagues at Georgetown now, many colleagues, around the country. Teaching is very difficult today. That's one issue. Another one is just getting their attention in a classroom when they're sitting there with laptops. I don't know whether I'll go back into teaching. I'm weighing it very carefully. I'm not so sure I could do it. It's not easy, and I talk to colleagues who are very tired and very frustrated and discouraged.

Q: During this time - we're really talking now a period between '68 until you became an ambassador - did you see a change? You said you had several Fulbrights.

DODD: Yes.

Q: How did you use these?

DODD: There were two types. One Fulbright was given to several academicians around the United States in the field of Latin America, history, anthropology, sociology, literature, and political science. We went as a group to Latin America and visited countries for a few months. When arriving in a country we had joint seminars with colleges in universities. Then we pursued our particular fields of interest, like meeting with historians and so on. It was a wonderful experience. I received a Fulbright later on for research on a Honduran political leader, the life of Tiborshio Cariesa, Honduran president in the 1930s who'd been active in politics in Honduras from the turn of the century to 1969..

Q: What was your particular area?

DODD: My area was Latin American History, Diplomacy, the foreign policy of Latin American countries, which I had started to teach at Georgetown. It was a new field undertaken by Harold Eugene Davis at American University, a great scholar, great Latin American historian. I began to teach that course: the diplomacy and foreign policy of Latin American states.

Q: What was your impression of how well Latin American history was taught in Latin America?

DODD: Basically Latin American history for sometime was taught as official history. They didn't have the rigorous independence on the part of academicians. Today as before, most academicians in Latin America have full-time jobs in administrations, so they bring with them, I always say, the baggage of their party and ideology. It's changing. Maybe the Internet and computers are doing a lot of that. They now work with their U.S. and European counterparts learning more about their disciplines. They are becoming more independent today, not because of jobs or better pay but, I think, because of more contact with other parts of the world.

Q: Also, one hears about the tradition of independence of students during the time they're students. They sound like a rather unruly crew as far as getting to sit down and listen to lectures and that sort of thing.

DODD: It's true today - or, I should say, less so today. But generally students find more interest in organizing political parties and planning an agenda for when they take power. Oddly and paradoxically, if you meet ministers or vice ministers today in Costa Rica or Uruguay, where I spent the last eight years, you will find they were student activists in

their day. So part of university training in Latin America experience is really training for the time when you take appointive related office. It's a training ground. It was the same, for example, in the law school at the University of Havana when Fidel was there. You study but you also do a lot of politicking and making friends and alliances.

Q: Were there different teaching techniques? I think our teaching has moved much more into the dialogue and away from the lecturing. At Georgetown did you find that you were moving into a different style of teaching?

DODD: Yes, no question about it. I could sense it. Students were coming into the Foreign Service School from good high schools where there was more collegial work done. Yes, I could see signs of that, and then sometimes when I went to Latin America and tried to teach a seminar, students there still sit behind desks with pen and pencil waiting to hear what you say. I found that rather difficult because I used to give lectures when I was chief of mission....

Q: Dry up.

DODD: Absolutely dry up. But a lot of my colleagues at Georgetown, more senior colleagues, found it very difficult with that change. Teaching case studies in InterAmerican diplomacy - using simulation exercises - prevented me from drying up. It was a new way of teaching.

Q: You came in at...

DODD: I came in with a straight lecture form, follow the script, and you did it right from the podium. But by the time I was finishing at Georgetown, it was a vastly different experience.

Q: Speaking of Georgetown, Georgetown moved from being a Jesuit school to being an Ivy League school essentially. There was a very deliberate effort to cut loose. Who was the...?

DODD: Tim Healey.

Q: Father Healey very deliberately said, "The best of the Catholic schools is going to be competitive with the best of the liberal arts schools." Did that start while you were there?

DODD: It did.

Q: This must have caused some strain.

DODD: It caused a great deal of strain. There were those on the faculty, I remember, who felt strongly that teaching should be the center of the pedagogical experience or at least of what a faculty should do. Then there were those who said, no, research should be the soul. During my period then Georgetown wanted both scholarly pursuits within

publication and excellence in the classroom. I think many of us found that difficult. It was not easy. It was very hard to research, write and publish and teach all at the same time. I remember my colleagues at Harvard and Yale were given offices in a library. A library, that's where your office was, because you were supposed to write. Then you give your graduate seminars or, if you give undergraduate courses, you give the lectures but your teaching assistants did the spade work. We didn't have that. It was very difficult and very stressful. Time Healy helped to establish blocs of time with fellowships and grants to research and/or to teach, to write.

Q: On this, I would think that you would have a good number of people who were in the academic world, particularly with so much emphasis on 'publish or perish', who aren't very good teachers. They don't empathize.

DODD: No, they don't, many of them don't. Yet in my case, I found when I was researching something and writing something, my courses were better, much better. I felt good about giving a lecture because, while some of it was out of a textbook they were reading, some of it may have been out of what I was finding or culling from an archives. And students like that. At least I found that good students like to have someone in there who can say, "Well, that's not what I've been finding in the archives. I really enjoyed that stage, when there was some research and writing going on and there was some teaching going on - not easy but it was fun.

Q: Also the history field. I got a master's in history but I was a Foreign Service officer. I've always been interested in history, and there was what I thought was a horrible period of time when the computer first came in and all the historians were running around getting voting data, trying to find sort of the philosopher's stone from the damn computer. Everything was quantified. Did that hit you?

DODD: No. I think this must have hit after I left for Uruguay, although it may have just started. But a lot of it was graphs and quantifying things for political scientists and economists, yes. I'm aware of this. I was just beginning to see signs of it when I left eight years ago. There has been an interesting article about that in one of the leading journals in my field. The historians now become so bogged down in data that they're losing sight of some of the big picture and the reading public.

Q: Most of the history that I enjoy reading has been written by newspapers.

DODD: A couple of colleagues and I were talking about this the other day. I was saying some of the good histories: David McCullough's biography of Truman - Doris Kearns Goodwin, an academician. But she's one of the popular historians - there really are some serious scholars writing good narratives, too.

Q: And McPherson on the Civil War was knocked down because he wrote popular books.

DODD: Exactly. I always say, if you want to attract students and you want to attract people's interest in history - and I think it goes for anyone regardless of your field or

discipline - you have to make it engaging, readable, and somehow, some way, connected to their experience.

Q: Something has always disturbed me: the idea that there was a difference between a political scientist and a historian. Looking at it, I guess, with prejudice, if I open a book and I see too many graphs and things like this, I just shut it and go somewhere else. Did you find yourself caught in this? How did you view political science, scientists?

DODD: I always found political scientists interesting, because my colleagues in that field or discipline were usually very good at creating what they call a paradigm, a model. Then when teaching jointly with them, the historian can fill in the story, embellish the cause with results of events.

Q: Could you tell me: I think I know, but what is a paradigm?

DODD: It's a system. It's a certain kind of social system or political system or an economic system. We historians work on precedent; we look on antecedents; we cull from the past and see if there are any lessons that can be learned in the present. And that's where I found history for me valuable and instructive.

Q: When you were teaching at Georgetown, you must have become involved in a symbiotic relationship between Georgetown and the State Department's Foreign Service.

DODD: Yes, very much so. We used to have Foreign Service officers in the School of Foreign Service. They called it in the "diplomat in residence." I found them interesting and helpful. I say 'helpful' because it was wonderful to have them around in a seminar when you're teaching diplomatic history of Latin America. Maybe one of them had been in an embassy. They brought a great deal of practical information to a course and to the faculty. Many of them were very helpful in linking together my history courses with what you would need in taking a history of Latin America in how you practice diplomacy. And they were good critics. They found that there was a lot of material we were doing that was repetitive.

Q: Were many of your students looking towards...?

DODD: Sure. I ran into students every week in both posts. On several occasions I'd go in to see a foreign minister with my colleagues in the embassy and we'd sit at these long tables. It would be a difficult, contentious problem, and I'd look over in the corner of the table and there would be a student waving at me, and I'd say, "I hope you did well on the course." I ran into Foreign Service officers from home and professional diplomats in Latin America all the time - journalists, lawyers, doctors, all former students.

Q: You were there during a period of time when there would been sort of an earth change in Latin America, which before had been sending its elite to Europe. In Argentina, Britain was called home.

DODD: Absolutely, England or France.

Q: By the time you'd gotten there, this had really changed.

DODD: This had changed, no question about it. The bulk of applicants and interest in Fulbrights increased significantly, although unfortunately the awards have not been as plentiful for economic reasons. But now students flock to the United States for their undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate work. In Costa Rica, just about anywhere I'd go, I'd run into former Fulbrighters. There are over 1,000 Fulbrighters in Costa Rica, and that's a country of only three and a half million people. And the focus, of course, is on their professional experience in the United States. There are many other reasons, of course, but our universities have just boomed financially and Europe's have suffered. Many cabinet officers in Latin American administrations, the "teamocrats," are graduates of our business schools.

Q: Yes, and mostly universities really depend now on the foreign students.

DODD: They do, even though, I'm sorry to say, less than eight percent of our American high school students study a foreign language, which is disturbing. But certainly the interest from Latin America is growing for the United States.

Q: Separating the time when you were the chief of missions in two countries but prior to that - you were talking about Latin American diplomacy and all of this - what were you seeing, as you studied this and getting feed back, about the diplomatic corps of various countries?

DODD: I saw the professionalization of their foreign ministries; that is, they're beginning now to train, to educate people to become professional diplomats. Costa Rica now is moving dramatically in the direction of recruiting people to study in the foreign service academy and to reduce the number of political appointees. This has been true in Washington and elsewhere. Brazil has had a first rate career service since the early 20th century.

Q: It used to be this was where you sent the erring second son.

DODD: Exactly, and as your political fortunes declined, too, you were sent abroad. This was true in the United States in the mid-19th century. But they are clearly becoming more professional. None of them had reached or was approaching the Brazilian foreign ministry which is, of course, first class.

Q: You know, I heard something, and it was a particularly good comment. Everyone talks about the professionalism of the Brazilians, but I've had a couple people say, "Yes, but you take a look at it and essentially it's the Brazilians using all the tricks in the trade and great knowledge to say no." In other words, it really doesn't advance anything, and they all come from one class, and they're very good at what they do, which is really to keep Brazil Brazil.

DODD: In many ways it's true. It certainly still remains today an elite - I should say the profession draws from the Brazilian elite. There's no question about it. If you put on a roster the names of Brazilian diplomats abroad, it's a *Who's Who* of the descendants of late 19th century, the golden age of Brazilian diplomacy.

Q: Your father left the senate, but when did your brother come in?

DODD: Christopher ran for the House of Representatives in 1974. Bill St. Onge, who was the Congressman from what was called 'a shoestring district' - that's the area running along the East Coast - died suddenly. I'll always remember Christy and I were driving along in my Volkswagen and he said, "Which one of us will jump in?" I said, "Well, you live up here. Go ahead. I'm back in Washington." So he did and ran in '74 and has been in Congress ever since.

Q: You obviously come from a political family. Did that bug ever get to you?

DODD: It never really did in the sense that I wanted to jump into elective politics. I love politics, I love to talk about it, I read about it, but I really loved what I was doing. I love teaching. If I had gone home to teach, yes, I might have gone into it possibly. But then I was here in Washington teaching a subject I loved very much, and I didn't want to break that, go back home and change careers.

Q: Teaching at Georgetown, living in Georgetown, did you find yourself using your knowledge about Latin America? Did this suck you into the power world, people, Congress and other people, who were looking for information as well as...?

DODD: Many times I would meet with my brother Christopher during the 1980s when Central America was in such upheaval. Once in a while, he might bring another member of the Senate along with him - Mathias from Maryland, and Sarbanes - and we'd talk about Latin America. But our conversations were always based around this framework. I gave them what my brother said, "Latin America from the bottom up." They knew some assumptions from the top down, policy issues. Sometimes I would suggest history books for members of the Foreign Relations Committee and my brother would get them xeroxed and pass them around. So I approached my contacts as an education experience - I liked that. But I never wavered from offering what I thought as a historian to be helpful to practitioners whether they were Foreign Service officers or members of Congress.

Q: _____ if you watch people who kind of lose their roots and....

DODD: I didn't do that. I was a happier person as a result of it, because I knew what I liked to do and I felt I could bring something to the table. In 1981 I taught at the Foreign Service Institute teaching Central American history. I remember my first introductory lecture was on geography and pre-Colombian or pre-modern Central America, and the course ended about noon. I remember the dean called me in and said, "You know, these people are going down in the next few weeks. They need a more contemporary

approach." I said, "Okay, I'll revise the syllabus." I decided I didn't want them to think they were bringing a current events instructor in, they read the newspapers as much as I did, I'd give them something a little more in depth. But anyway, I always used to tell that story.

Q: How did you come out at the university during the '80s - talking about El Salvador, Nicaragua, and the Reagan administration? All of a sudden, the whole focus was on the Communist menace that was going to hit Brownsville, Texas. How did that hit you as your own thought, and the students and contemporaries?

DODD: For me it was a golden opportunity, and I seized on it too. I got invited all over the United States to speak at colleges, universities, Chambers of Commerce, and the rest of it, on what the roots of the Central American crisis were historically. I found that this was probably the most useful period of my life in terms of not the academician but really being a spokesperson for my profession, trying to help people understand. People were eager to read books on Central American history - and there weren't many good ones on the subject. But it was an invigorating time. I was not overwhelmed and disappointed, because I saw it as a window to explain the roots and the causes of these events, civil wars, insurrections and rebellions as being symptomatic basically of flawed economic and political systems. Interesting, if you looked at Central American in the 1980s, which countries experienced civil wars? Of course Nicaragua and El Salvador, the two countries where probably political participation, broadening of the political spectrum, was constricted and narrowed in the late '70s, where countries like Honduras with poverty, the political system functioned because it was open, or relatively speaking it was more open than its neighbors, even though poverty was more endemic and severe. I explained, "El Salvador with a middle class? Nicaragua, a booming modern economy." But I said, "The failure was that in those two states, even while the economic situation improved, political rights were obliterated. That sometimes produces revolution and violence." So to answer your question, it was not a wonderful era in terms of the struggle that these people experienced. But from a professional historian's perspective, it was our chance (Central Americanists) to explain the roots of civil war and politics in that region.

Q: I find the interesting thing is somehow during this period, what you call the glitterati, Hollywood and all, picked up the side of the Sandinistas and all... You had this sort of the Who's Who of the entertainment world and the academic world and the sisters, the Merino sisters, and everyone else getting involved on the side of the Sandinistas.

DODD: Because that was the popular way to propagandize social revolution and revolution, especially the opponents to the Somoza regime. What I tried to explain was that the structure of the old Augustus Cesar Sandino regime (as proposed in the 1920s) was similar to the party organization of the FSLN in the 1980s. It was disciplined, well organized, thinking of changing a whole system, political and economic. But I said then that there were within that huge organization (FSLN) people who were greatly anxious to improve basically the political process in Nicaragua. Of course, many of them left disillusioned, but there were many others. But yes, the Nicaraguan Revolution became popular, perhaps because it was a second Vietnam. That's why the burden here on

historians was particularly severe.

Q: Did you find people who wanted you to come up with a thing showing that this was a great positive movement and all that?

DODD: Yes, many were disappointed. I wasn't explaining basically that these were all good people. Trying to replace a politically corrupt system was something better. I was trying to point out as a historian it was symptomatic there of economic and political problems that both Nicaragua and El Salvador had experienced and needed changing. When the Asians' peace plan emerged, when you were tying in all of these political groups to the same process, internal reconciliation, I said, "If we left it to Central Americans, as we did previously many times, and working with Mexicans, you could reach an amicable solution." This happened. So to people who thought it was the moment of reaching paradise, I said no. Nor was it here a time to retract and to push back things.

Q: Did you find the student body was taking much of a stand on this?

DODD: Yes, they were. They were taking a stand opposed to the Somoza regime. I think in most cases, or in the case of El Salvador the FLMN as it was called, yes. But I think in the case of El Salvador there were more instances where presidents and political leaders were showing a strong tendency to be more cooperative. Duarte, for example, comes to mind. Students, graduate students, others liked him. He was liked in Congress. He went to Notre Dame with many members of the House and built on these relationships. These were examples where there was a great deal of connectedness with Central America on the part of U.S. citizens and institutions. Georgetown's Jesuit community had close ties to the Catholic University in El Salvador. That further deepened my students' involvement in these, too.

Q: You also missed the period which came later of political correctness, too.

DODD: Yes, I did, I missed that. That was just beginning to emerge.

Q: It was not one of the great moments. It represents control.

DODD: Basically, I did keep up with journals in my field, Latin American history, while I wrote. But I could see it permeate the article and treatises into the field of Latin American history that it became almost impossible for a historian to reach a kind of consensus cause and effect in history. Unless you used the right language and the right reference racially, sexually to this or that gender, you could be criticized and condemned.

Q: I think we can stop at this point... We'll pick this up withy how you got into foreign affairs as a practical thing.

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Today is August 2, 2001. Tom, were you, prior to your appointment, sort of keeping up

with people, bring them in, who have been involved particularly in Latin American affairs in the Foreign Service, not only our Foreign Service but other people's foreign services and all? Were you bringing them into your class work?

DODD: Yes, that was part of the structure on the course on Latin American diplomatic history that I was teaching at Georgetown. There were case studies in inter-American relations, crises of one kind or another, and so that course, taught over the years, involved professionals, skilled Foreign Service officers, from the U.S. as well as from Latin America. This is a great resource here in the city. We brought them over to the School of Foreign Service, both the undergraduate course I taught in Latin American diplomatic history and the graduate program, master's of science and foreign service. So I brought in the practitioners and worked along with them in those case studies.

Q: I've never served in Latin America but I've heard many people say, particularly dealing with Mexico but some of the other places, that the foreign affairs side usually is sort of the reserved playground of the left within the political spectrum in a country, particularly Mexico and all, because in a way it doesn't make that much different to the powers that be, so they can kind of beat up on the Yankees there.

DODD: I think that it true to some extent. Foreign affairs and foreign affairs ministries in the last few years, during my tenure, since 1992 and '93, have become more professionalized. In Costa Rica an effort has been made to create a cadre of career professionals. Many new Foreign Service officers going into the ministries, foreign ministries - in Uruguay and Costa Rica - had studied in the United States, so they had a more measured and, I think, a better understanding of what we're about up here. So the era of simply bashing the Yankee to gain some political stature doesn't really hold anymore, at least certainly in the two countries I was accredited to.

Q: It's a natural extension, but had you had any experience, either as an expert of consultant or anything like that, in the foreign affairs field other than being a teacher prior to your appointment as ambassador?

DODD: It did. Back in the '70s, Stu, I worked on a contract basis with the Policy and Coordinating staff in the Department of State reviewing, reading and sometimes writing papers dealing with Latin America.

Q: What does that mean? What were they looking at?

DODD: Actually, as I recall, these were like position papers dealing with Latin America. They were looking for accuracy; were there enough themes that were in these position papers on how to begin to implement some foreign policy; that reflected basically a reality in dealing with Latin American countries. My recollection was dealing with Central American and the Spanish Caribbean. I also gave lectures out at the National Defense University. I chaired the Central American Seminar at the Department of State Foreign Service Institute and at the InterAmerican Defense College. So I applied some of the tenets of Latin American diplomatic history to those courses. At Georgetown

University, there were many people from the U.S. Foreign Service and from the foreign ministries of other countries. I worked closely with these people like team teaching courses from time to time.

Q: Well then, let's talk about when you got actually employed, took the queen's shilling. How did that develop?

DODD: You know, it's always been a tradition in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown that you should put some time into public service. Of course, most of the attention was focused on the Department of Defense and the Department of State. So when Madeleine Albright was named to the U.N., I kept encouraging her over the years to get involved, and she did, in political campaigns....

Q: She had been a faculty member or not?

DODD: She was a faculty member. Madeleine was there probably 18 years or more. So I always encouraged her and she did me, and so in 1992 when the governor of Arkansas was elected President, she, of course, went to the U.N., and then there was the opening or the possibility of going to Latin America. But I wanted to pick a country that was a democracy where you could really work on strengthening democracy in a small country, and Uruguay opened up. In the spring of '93 I had a syllabus all ready for fall '93. As much as I was, of course, interested in Latin American diplomatic history, I wasn't absolutely certain that going to a post as a chief of mission would be the easiest or maybe the best thing to do. But I thought about it and went to class one day and was mulling about it in class. At the end of a class, and in the back of the room, I heard a voice say, "Oh, for heaven's sake, why don't you put your money where your mouth is? You've been talking about public service and work for time. Apply some of your theories." It was a rather shocking and a rather abrupt thing. It was too late to say, "Who said it?" so I went back to the office and I decided I'd do it. But again, it was a quantum leap. Even though I had been in and around diplomats and been to Latin America often, worked in the archives of foreign ministries, it was a leap across a stream into the unknown.

Q: Unlike so many other people who've had this appointment who were not coming from within the Foreign Service, you were probably far better acquainted with the terrain and all this.

DODD: Yes, I think that's correct. I certainly felt comfortable after I decided, yes, I would go ahead with this, because I made the rounds of the Department of State and met former students, former colleagues that I had known, former chiefs of mission to Uruguay specifically. There were several of them retired here in the Washington area. A couple of them lived elsewhere, but there were several of them, three or four. I remember Woodward, Robert Woodward - by the way, who just died. I had wonderful visits with him. He was living in Washington back in the '90s, and I had long visits and conversation with him. I took notes from these former chiefs of mission. And there were others: Malcolm Wilke, who actually was living in Uruguay and Chile; Richard Brown, my predecessor, of course, was there, and I saw him after he came up; but there were a

couple of others that I had seen and talked to about the country. Dean Andrew Steidman at Georgetown was very helpful. He relayed the do's and don't's of running an embassy. I kept copious notes. I still have them. They've been invaluable because they not only assisted me on the details in the big picture of running an embassy but they've also been helpful to people I have subsequently assisted as COMS.

Q: Without going through the whole list, what are some of the big do's and don't's?

DODD: One of the big do's that I learned about from some experience at Georgetown when I headed up a program in the graduate school for Latin American studies. Be visible, be seen, and make a point of visiting colleagues who are working with you. That was something that interested me, because going to an embassy there is the temptation of getting in the elevator in the basement and going directly up to your office. I never did that, or at least I didn't do it often. I stopped on a floor each week and visited offices. I always visited the consular section in the mornings before they got started or at the end of a day. A big don't is do not micromanage an embassy. Let people do their jobs.

Q: It took me almost a year to get George Kennan to come to the counselor section when I was in Yugoslavia, honest to God. He was on the fourth floor, I think, and I was in the basement.

DODD: Mary Ryan, the Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, was very helpful. I went to see her, and the big 'do' was to visit the counselor section. Don't do it every day obviously; don't do it mid-morning: the window's open and they're busy; but check in there at the end of a day. So what I did in both countries was have a coffee hour with them once a month at the end of a day. I did it with the other sections. So again, you asked me the big 'do': Be visible; visit; let them know when you're coming, don't pop up at busy hours - that's just interference. See the Marines; always stop and say hello to them. I had breakfast with them twice a month at their house early in the morning. Those are the big 'do's'. A big 'don't': There are always issues coming to the table; don't make a decision on any key issue, whether it's bilateral with the government or something the Department of State is asking about, until you bring everybody into the picture. There were many times I ultimately had to make decisions and, of course, people were unhappy. But they were unhappy that their position or their views were not taken. Yet they were heard, and that was key. I learned that really from academic life. A dean or a chair of a department in a university will "sink" if they don't bring in people at the ground level. So that was something not to do, that is, to disregard their interest.

Q: How about the ambassador's training seminar, ambassadorial seminar? Did you find that very useful?

DODD: I did find it very useful, and I found it more useful in the details, the 'do's' and 'don't's.' What I learned most from that seminar was the role of different agencies and departments in an embassy. I really learned for the first time that it's just not all foreign service. On the contrary, it includes a wide range of agencies and departments. I learned basically how to coordinate and consult and to pay attention to what they're doing.

Q: Also, wasn't there, at that time and, I think, still, quite a lot of emphasis on what are your legal responsibilities?

DODD: That's right; that's all part of it, with the different agencies and the military. That was key, very important, what authority, for example, you had over the armed forces.

Q: How big was your seminar at that time?

DODD: I believe it was somewhere between 15 and 20.

Q: It was right at the beginning...?

DODD: That's right, in '93. It was the beginning of a new administration.

Q: There was a problem that often occurs and that is the political appointees - this wouldn't apply to you because you'd been around the block - the political appointees, many of them, are coming out and they're told, "Watch out for those Foreign Service people; they're going to stick it to you," and a lot of suspicion, which usually wears down but it's an inhibitor.

DODD: Yes, I agree, I did hear, and I've heard it even after my years began, that is, after I arrived in Uruguay and would go to conferences of one kind of another. What I think may have been the turning point or help at least in my era were the meetings of chiefs of mission from Latin America. I understand that was a first. I remember - I forget his name at the moment, a wonderful guy, the Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs; I'll think of it in a minute...

Q: Alec Watson.

DODD: Alec Watson.

Q: I'm interviewing Alec.

DODD: He's wonderful. I have enormous respect for him. He brought together the chiefs of mission for Latin America. That was helpful, to answer your question. I think it helped to smooth out some of the tension or maybe suspicions. I noticed with many colleagues who were political appointees, there were no longer feelings without regard. They were more comfortable, more confident on calling on them, the career people, the professionals.

Q: You'd already studied Uruguay as part of your parish anyway. From the desk before you went out there, what were you getting about Uruguay? Where did it stand, its importance, and how things were going there?

DODD: The picture that I got initially was that it was a democracy but really one that

was fragile, that had a military regime with some very difficult times in the ‘70s and ‘60s. The urban insurgence movements challenged institutions. The judiciary was not strong. The congress, yes, exercised considerable authority, but most of the incumbent officers, ministers, were people that had been tested during that time of the late ‘60s/early ‘70s during the insurgency. So it was a country that I had to tread carefully in terms of resurrecting old wounds but had to spend a lot of time fostering, encouraging, really building deeper and stronger democratic institutions. Last, Uruguay was always a key player resolving regional conflicts. I began to think of ways to initiate this.

Q: Were there any major outstanding issues between Uruguay and the United States that you felt you’d better get in and settle?

DODD: No, really not. In fact, my sense from the Department was that things have stabilized, it’s quiet, and I remember saying to Alec Watson, “Well, basically then maybe what you want me to do is stay off your screen.” I said, “How about being creative?” He said, “Yes, let me know what you’ve got on your mind,” before I got too creative. Basically to get right to the point so I don’t leave this hanging: I then subsequently suggested to him and another Deputy Assistant Secretary that maybe being creative would be two things: one, begin to do some reporting on Uruguay’s role in MERCOSUR and look more carefully at the interior of the country and its MERCOSUR border ties to Argentina and Brazil in trade matters.

Q: Could you explain what that is?

DODD: Yes, basically to look at the Southern Cone’s efforts to create a common market. Uruguay, being highly literate, politically stable, it would be interesting to see how and what role it was going to play in MERCOSUR. And in that context I pursued that. We did a lot of economic reporting on MERCOSUR from the perspective of Uruguay, that is, looking at Uruguay’s border, ties, and economies with Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina.

Q: Well now, M, how do you spell the last name?

DODD: MERCOSUR.

Q: Merco means market.

DODD: Market, exactly, of the South. So that was a major objective and it meant, of course, that I had to do a lot of traveling in the interior to get to know the *intendentes* or governors. What I was interested to see basically was just what kind of role Uruguay would play in this southern market. It turned out ultimately, before I left, that Uruguay would become the administrative capital of MERCOSUR.

Q: What countries considered themselves MERCOSUR?

DODD: Brazil, Uruguay as I just mentioned, Argentina and Paraguay. Chile has since become an associate member of MERCOSUR, so it covers an enormous amount of

territory.

Q: I would assume Uruguay could put itself in the middle because Argentina and Brazil are sort of rivals, and Uruguay being smaller but with a very literate population fit in between literally and figuratively.

DODD: There was a change during my tenure that I think was very significant in Uruguay's role here. Yes, historically Uruguay always played its neighbors one off the other. This was axiomatic. It was fundamental in order to survive, survive invasions. What happened in the post-Cold War era was that Uruguay then became more engaged with its neighbors. It would try to get Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay to deal with economic issues not political matters, and to use Montevideo or Punta del Este, the famous resort, as a conference center. There were several meetings, in fact ongoing meetings, between presidents, foreign ministers, ministers of economy who would meet in Uruguay. It was more engaged with the neighbors to bring them together in Uruguay, not create or exacerbate tensions and frictions between those major powers like Argentina and Brazil.

Q: I would imagine they would be in a way taking heart but maybe be apprehensive of the North American Trade Association, NAFTA, that was going on between Mexico, Canada, and the United States.

DODD: Yes. Brazil has been in the last few years highly suspicious of NAFTA and the United States' effort to promote a Western Hemisphere trade agreement. But during my tenure there as chief of mission, MERCOSUR really decided not to go it alone permanently but to build a South American common market and then at some future date hook up with NAFTA and create a Western Hemisphere free trade association. MERCOSUR then actively looked to Europe and the European Union as helpful first and obviously becoming a new market for MERCOSUR and its exports. So when I was there, MERCOSUR looked very closely to Europe, away from NAFTA.

Q: Chile was high on our list that President Clinton was trying to get fast-track agreement to basically put Chile into the NAFTA association. Was that considered to be we were playing in the MERCOSUR's back yard? Was that a little bit dirty?

DODD: Chile became an associate member of MERCOSUR, because the fast track failed. But now (2002), the United States and Chile are negotiating a free trade agreement. The United States is reaching out to Chile, having moved along very rapidly and very effectively in its fiscal and economic reforms, privatization, making it, of course, a very, very, very likely and good candidate for NAFTA.

Q: Well now, how about Uruguay? Were we taking a look at Uruguay, because Brazil is so huge that's always unique no matter what you think about Latin America? Argentina has had almost terminal problems. But were we thinking of Uruguay next after Chile?

DODD: No, that never became an issue. We were looking at Uruguay as a politically

stable, predictable country that would be helpful in creating regional stability in that area and being a key diplomatic agent in terms of getting the Argentineans and the Brazilians, and the always volatile Paraguayans into the pattern of creating an orderly Southern Cone market system that ultimately might reach what is called ACLA, or the Western Hemisphere free-trade association. Uruguay was not going to be plucked out for a free-trade agreement with the United States.

Q: Let's talk a bit about the government. When you arrived, what essentially was the government and how did you deal with it?

DODD: The government was headed by Luis Alberto Localle, a member of the Nationalist Party, a center right party, extremely friendly to the United States. One of his interests was to privatize the state-owned, state-managed industry, and the government was anxious to privatize the telecommunications industry, too. So they were especially solicitous of me and the embassy to help and to encourage this and to bring the United States' Small Business Administration down to show them how this could be done. Our relations were very good with the Localle administration, very friendly. He had traveled and studied in the United States, so he knew Washington. He was succeeded by a man named Sanguinetti, who was a member of the Colorado Party, the center left. It was not necessarily unhappy with the state-owned, stated-managed industry. Sanguinetti - I've described him - and, by the way, I even mentioned this to him when I saw him frequently - I said, "You're really a Europeanist." I said, "You're more comfortable with French than you are with English," and he said that was true. So Sanguinetti was a more distant...

Q: When you say Europeanist, you're really talking about the labor socialist....

DODD: Absolutely, Italy - he was of Italian extraction, very fond of his country of origin, and was very supportive of the labor movement in Uruguay, which, of course, is very powerful. So there I had a challenge. For example, when I would ask to see him on a matter, he would say, "By all means," but met him at his home later in the day. I suspect or always felt that he did not want a highly visible contact or association with the U.S. ambassador. So I saw him always at his home in his library in the late afternoon. And I must say, they were always very productive sessions. He was always very frank with me, very honest, and also very interesting. I think he's truly one of the best informed Latin American leaders today. He knows the history of that part of the world. He always had something that was helpful to say about how I might look at another country in Latin American, how Washington might deal with it, and they were always very incisive and helpful.

Q: Let's say the president of Uruguay asked the American ambassador, "You know, if you're dealing with Paraguay, you ought to do this." Well, you can pass this on, but this will end up to the American ambassador to Paraguay as being a bit gratuitous.

DODD: I didn't pass it along. But I must say, there were problems with Peru, I remember, and Sanguinetti said to me something that was very interesting. He said, "You know, Peru has never won a war." And you know he's right, "You must understand it's a

country that constantly chafes under that sense of defeat." He never really said, "This is how you deal with President So-and-so," but he had more themes, historical themes that I thought were very helpful in terms of dealing with the country's contemporary policy that appeared contentious, fractious, or overly sensitive. I found those kinds of observations very helpful, very helpful. He was well read, extremely well read, not so much on U.S. history and literature unfortunately; again, Europe was his focus of attention.

Q: Did you find, say, that the French ambassador or others were wooing Uruguay?

DODD: Yes, there's no question about it. I got to know the French ambassador fairly well. I could tell that he was very comfortable there, as were most European ambassadors. My closest colleague was the British ambassador. He always said, like me, the record of Great Britain in the 18th or 19th century was not all that commendable. We were not necessarily the outsiders - I don't mean to say that - but my colleagues, other European colleagues and continental colleagues, were very comfortable there, very comfortable. The Sanguinetti government was very solicitous of their interests. I'm referring specifically to meetings that the European Union ambassadors had. There were always Uruguayan representatives there. So there was a lot of ongoing dialogue and discussion with the Europeans in Montevideo. But when Localle was president, I don't think the European ambassadors were anywhere near as close to the government. Localle was much more solicitous of me and the United States with respect to trade missions if he could get them. I saw a distinct change when Sanguinetti came in.

Q: Did this translate itself into any action or inhibiting things. let's say, when Sanguinetti came in?

DODD: There were a couple of votes that the Uruguayan representative at the Organization of American States and at the U.N. cast - with respect to Cuba, for example - that were not in tandem with what the Department of State. So, yes, but this was not the case again under the Localle administration. They were much more helpful and solicitous of our interests.

Q: Tell me: on the subject of Cuba - by this time Cuba was kind of on its own - from Uruguay with a leftish government, a socialist government, was there sympathy for Cuba, or was this a place to sort of show their independence? How was Cuba viewed?

DODD: Well, it was a combination of both. Uruguay under Localle simply was not sympathetic to Fidel Castro and made no pretense of being neutral on it. But Sanguinetti was clearly sympathy towards the Castro regime. In fact, there was discussion that Castro might even visit Montevideo during my period there. There was no question but that Sanguinetti was sympathetic to Castro. That is that he should be recognized and brought into the family of Western Hemisphere. This might have been - I'm not certain - an effort to be more independent. But I think Sanguinetti worked closely with the Europeans on European states that were equally sympathetic towards Castro.

Q: Because the subject of Cuba has come up, when you were teaching and all, obviously

Cuba was always there, and there's much more of a debate now than there used to be about whether we've done ourselves more harm than good in trying to isolate Cuba rather than to overwhelm them by allowing visits and getting in and all that. What was your personal feeling on that?

DODD: My personal feeling, Stu, was I thought, and still do, that the time had long since passed when we should recognize Cuba and engage it, that is, bring it into the Western Hemisphere councils, the OAS, and there we could be much more maybe effective with colleagues in pressuring Cuba to be far more humane on human rights and other issues, the distance at arm's length always created problems. As chief of mission in Uruguay, I always was the outsider. In Costa Rica, the Costa Ricans would always say, "What are you really going to do about Cuba?" They were watching carefully, of course, at their neighbors change views like Honduras. So I was constantly under a lot of pressure to be candid about something that I knew was not going to change or didn't expect to change. That got to be very tiring, because it also closed other possibilities of engagement with Cuba.

Q: In a way it sounds like people I've dealt with - and I had little to do with this - with our policy towards Israel dealing with Arab countries and all that. You knew what the political realities were, and there was no point in arguing it, but it was awkward.

DODD: It did impact on several occasions on other things I was trying to do but I'd always kind ran into this issue of sanctions, economic sanctions, against Cuba. That always clouded or crowded out other things that I wanted to get done with these two small countries. And, again, I was also pressed and asked, "What do you really think? What is really going to happen in Washington? Will they change?" and so forth, and I had to stick to the party line obviously.

Q: But those that really had to deal with it understood the politics of the thing?

DODD: Yes and no. I don't think the Uruguayans really grasped the politics of pressure groups here in the States. The Costa Ricans, on the contrary, yes - geographically closer to the United States, the contacts, of course, are so numerous and diverse. The Costa Ricans caught the picture in terms of Congress, its position obviously on the Cuban question and the embargo, those who were for it and against it. Members of the Cuban-American community and Costa Ricans knew each other well. But the Uruguayans were infinitely more - again, maybe geography had something to do with it - simply did not get the full spectrum of different opinions and views in the United States.

Q: Where did upper middle class, bright Uruguayans go to college?

DODD: Europe - France, England, Spain and Italy. This is changing and I could see some movement in the direction towards coming to the United States. Costa Rica is completely the opposite. The upper middle class of Costa Rica comes to the United States. In fact, without exception - maybe I'll have to check this some day - every minister in the Figueres (Jose Maria Figueres, administration that was in power when I arrived) and the

Miguel Angel Rodriguez Echeverria government all had attended United States universities earning degrees from U.S. universities. So, again, to go back to my point, there was clearly a better understanding of the United States and its diversity in Costa Rica, more so than in Uruguay.

Q: Was it part of your portfolio to try to get more Uruguayans up to the United States for a significant period of time - I'm talking about maybe either being educated or getting a good, solid visit - and sort of woo them away from this European connection?

DODD: Yes, and let me be precise. This was not done by any directive from the Department of State, but surely with the declining amount of money and funds, the Fulbright program, for example, we had to turn to other resources to do this. I relied heavily on Partners of the Americas. It was established in the 1960s with the Alliance For Progress. The sister state with Uruguay was then and still is Minnesota. So we encouraged academic exchanges, farmer-to-farmer programs. In other words, we made a special effort to do just that, to do it through the state partnerships. I didn't give up on Congress and trying to get money, but certainly I had to be more resourceful in doing this.

Q: I would think that our business programs in universities would be particularly interesting to the Uruguayans.

DODD: No, I have to tell you there was very little activity in that area. The National University in Uruguay is an antiquated institution. It needs some fundamental reform. They simply have not been offering those kinds of courses to attract the attention of undergraduates, nor had there been much interest on the part of the American Chamber of Commerce then in this area. The state Chambers of Commerce, for example, Florida, Texas and California, had not shown much interest in Uruguay. This may have, of course, changed since I've been there, but certainly not during my tenure.

Q: Was there any way that you could call upon the academic mafia, of which you were a bona fide member, through whatever contacts you had with the University of Florida or Minnesota or something, and say here's a good hunting ground, particularly for masters' degrees in business and things like this?

DODD: I went to the Library of Congress in the Hispanic Division. I got help from them, yes, in tapping some university representatives to come down, from the business schools, humanities and social sciences departments for research projects, and for librarians, too*-. That, of course, would have been the interest of the Library of Congress. We did a lot of work in that area to develop programs and library exchanges through the Hispanic Division of the Library. The Hispanic Division put us in touch with other universities who in turn then developed contacts with the libraries in Uruguay.

Q: This was a period - it continues but was really picking up speed - that was the rise of the electronic communications. I'm thinking of programs, computer programs, computerization, and it was really revolutionizing things. Was this impacting much in

Uruguay?

DODD: I worked very closely with the binational centers all around Uruguay and was able to get computers into all of the binational centers in Uruguay, about 28 of them. It was just beginning, the importance of rural schools as well as schools in Montevideo to get linked up with the high tech and the computer age. Again, we put in the computers and then hooked up the binational centers amongst themselves and with the major center in Montevideo. We were starting this and it was in its early stages, but we got at least the infrastructure, the computers in place. This was my major achievement as COM in Uruguay.

Q: Was the government leadership plugged into this revolution that was coming? We could see it in the States.

DODD: Barely. The Minister of Culture showed some interest, but we were mostly - we, I say the U.S. embassy and then the United States Information Service, an agency then - we were really cutting new ground and turf and we were on our own. There was really no noticeable or significant assist from the government. Costa Rica was something entirely different.

Q: We'll go to Costa Rica, but let's talk about the Ministry of Foreign Affairs there, this was your principal contact?

DODD: It was my principal contact.

Q: What was your impression of the Ministry and, say, the Uruguayan Foreign Service and its apparatus?

DODD: The Foreign Ministry was small. It was a competent and skilled career foreign ministry. But the bulk of its activity, you could tell, the busy work of the Foreign Ministry was with European powers, European states, and with some growing interest in Asia and Japan, Taiwan, Korea, commercial relations during my tenure with growing interest for the Uruguayan Foreign Ministry. I'm not sure there was even a ministry of foreign commerce in Uruguay. So economic and commercial interests were surfacing. The foreign ministers, with whom I was in close touch and very friendly - obviously their native language was Spanish, but if you couldn't speak Spanish, you then had to speak French or maybe German. They could not speak English. I warned my successors: you've got to learn Spanish or French in the Foreign Ministry.

Q: What was your impression, and you were getting also from your colleagues, about the professionalization of the Foreign Service?

DODD: Very slow. It was mostly political appointees, but Sergio Abreru, who was Foreign Minister when I first arrived in the Localle administration, was interested and very anxious to create more career service and had established, if my memory serves me correctly, actually a commission to do it, to study it, to begin to look at it. But when I

arrived there, there were a few career people, mostly the political appointees.

Q: It's been sort of an accepted thing that the Brazilian Foreign Service is particularly good, although I've heard some criticism of it saying it's all very nice but these are all mainly the kids of diplomats. They speak a couple languages but they don't know their country. They know Rio and Saõ Paulo, and they're good lawyers, but that doesn't really-

DODD: It may be one of Latin America's oldest foreign ministries, but certainly it does not draw from a very wide or broad spectrum of universities and colleges in Brazil. It's still the sons of Rio Branco, the old Brazilian diplomats, yes.

Q: What about the universities there? Correct me if I'm wrong, but didn't the Tupamaro guerilla movement really come out of the universities?

DODD: Correct, exactly.

Q: You know, one always thinks of Latin American universities as being full of red-hot leftists who become red-hot rightists after they graduated, but could you describe the universities?

DODD: The National University in Uruguay is today, sadly and, I think, tragically, still center for a lot of rhetoric from the left. It's too bad, because the university was politicized back in the 1960s, and at least when I left in 1997, it had not recovered. The National University in Uruguay was, in curriculum matters, that is, programming, in terrible shape. Many, many, many Uruguayan academicians left during the late '60s and into the '70s.

Q: Were they driven out really...?

DODD: Yes, driven out, and they found good jobs in the United States and Western Europe and did not come back. It was a very sad thing. The Catholic university in Montevideo is a good one. It's solid academically. It's private, of course, and independent, so there were far more interesting and exciting programs being introduced, one of which you've asked me, about business M.A.'s. Business administration was introduced in the Catholic university during my period there. There was, as I say, a far more rigorous academic program in the Catholic university. The National University students would take an average of something like seven to eight years to finish. It became essentially a podium for political rhetoric. When I was there, it continued to do so. I have to say sadly it was not regaining its once very prominent stature.

Q: Were we making an effort to - 'penetrate' is the wrong term - to open up the university to the American view of things?

DODD: Many times I suggested and offered as an academician to go to the National University to just visit the students or faculty members, maybe even try a lecture or two.

But I was asked not to. If I had gone to the campus, I might have just provoked or created here an outburst of not so much anti-Yankeeism but maybe anti-government. They were fearful of that. I did go to the Catholic university, gave papers there, to read papers on U.S. diplomat relations with Uruguay. Academicians from the States appeared at those conferences and from elsewhere in Latin America. But I was told not to do it at the National University - not that the subject of my lectures would become a point of discussion, but my presence there would. I felt very unhappy. I was very disappointed about that.

Q: That's really very sad.

DODD: That was very sad, because I felt comfortable in universities and I don't mind criticism, I like it, but they - they, my colleagues in the embassy - felt it would be perhaps more damaging than helpful.

Q: What were sort of the resources of Uruguay at that time?

DODD: Really basically farming. The rural part of the country has had at its base the cotton export that remained very important, meat industry, too. Those are the basic exports and had been traditionally. When I say meat and cotton, you could talk about 19th century Uruguay. Efforts were being made to diversify that economy, moving into different types of meat products. They were getting into the fruit export and some industry. But it was slow moving. Uruguay was then in the early 1990s still struggling to find markets for cotton and meat. Again, that was something they were doing 100 years ago.

Q: It strikes me that Chile has learned to play the seasonal thing in fruits; in other words, when it's summer in the United States, it's winter in Chile, and vice versa. So when you want grapes, you get nice grapes in January. It would seem that Uruguay could play that both in the United States and Europe.

DODD: It could do that, yes, but it was basically the planting. The Ministry of Industries was essentially looking at what was traditional and how to diversify that. Again, as I mentioned, in the fruit sector, that certainly was being examined and there was some movement in that area, canned fruits, not just plain apples and oranges but canned orange juice and so forth. But, again, Uruguay is still, was then in the '90s, a managed economy, a state-managed economy, so that there were not many incentives for private manufacturers or people in the agricultural sector to do much that was creative or innovative.

Q: Well, it does sound like it was a very conservative economy which didn't give much room for the entrepreneur.

DODD: No. In fact, I used to have meetings once a month with the business community of Montevideo, which included some U.S. citizens, heads of companies there, and Uruguayans, of course. I spent four years with them trying to find ways to get these

businesspeople involved in the politics of foreign trade and so forth, and had a very difficult time of it because they were not politicians. Since they hadn't gotten into that profession, they were also very, very, very cautious about even pressing their cases with governments, particularly the Sanguinetti administration.

Q: Around there were there examples of other countries that were beginning to move, what we call globalization, but where things are moving very rapidly, particularly electronic communications, computerization, world trade, and all this, which requires very precise management. And it sounds like Uruguay was very poorly situated in terms of government, education, and everything else.

DODD: Exactly, in that context. This was in the early 1990s. It is a literate population, politically stable, socially stable. In other words, it had all of the basic elements to enter the global economy.

Q: It didn't have sort of an Indian underclass.

DODD: No, it didn't, nor a black underclass - but a large middle class. In other words, these were all elements and factors that would attract high-tech industries. But, as I mentioned, there was no planning, no strategy. Now, I may be dated since 1997.

Q: What we're doing is we're capturing the time.

DODD: The time, and that's what's important, and from 1993 to '97 there was no planning in that area and in that direction. As I say, there was no ministry of foreign commerce. The Ministry of Transportation was thinking in terms of rebuilding the old railroad system.

Q: Were there any shocks? You know, the United States, when it turns around, changes policy, or increases tariff - did you run across any problems?

DODD: Yes, I did, in a couple of cases in Uruguay's meat exports. The Agriculture Department on several occasions stopped the entry of Uruguayan meat into the United States. This caused a major and abrupt crisis. The Department of Agriculture did not have a representative in the embassy in Uruguay, so there was not a close monitoring of the country's exports to the United States. Processed meat, for example, from McDonald's became a major issue. Ultimately McDonald's and several meatpackers in Uruguay worked out an arrangement so that things quieted down. But up to about 1994/'95 Uruguay simply exported to the United States and hoped for the best. They weren't carefully watching the sanitary needs obviously of our importers. So from time to time their exports would hit, shall we say, the meat ax without carefully watching.

Q: Were there any issues that the United States was concerned with that may have caused concern or demonstrations or something in Uruguay? Maybe it's so far away - the Balkans...

DODD: Overall our bilateral relations were good on most fronts except the ones that I mentioned, the Cuban question, the embargo. That was always not contentious - that would be an exaggeration - but it was sensitive. There were no great issues. As I say, we in the embassy worked more in a positive vein promoting the integration of Uruguay into MERCOSUR. I spent a lot of time on economic reporting from the borders of Uruguay with its neighbors looking at education and trade between and amongst its neighbors, which was moving along very rapidly, as a matter of fact, faster than what official Montevideo was prescribing. The school teachers from Brazil were teaching Portuguese in Uruguayan schools in the northern part of the country. In other words, integration, education... Uruguayan students, we noticed and encouraged, were studying in Brazil, southern Brazil. It was much easier to get there and cheaper than to go to Montevideo to go to school. So, again, on those issues we were working in a very positive vein. There were not contentious issues, to answer your question, with Washington that brought people into the streets.

Q: What were relations, say, with Argentina? Argentina is certainly economically almost a basket case. It looks like it should be doing very well.

DODD: At the turn of the century and in the early 1900s Argentina was somewhere like maybe the second or third developed country certainly in the Western Hemisphere, in the Western world. But that was Buenos Aires, not Argentina - that's a vast difference, the province of Buenos Aires. But relations with Uruguay were always - not always; I have to be careful here - were problematic. Specifically when Argentina would devalue or maybe stop the export of Uruguayan cotton or meat to Argentina. It would provoke a crisis. Relations were problematic always with Argentina. With Paraguay relations were rather good, as a matter of fact. Historically there's a large number of Uruguayans of Paraguayan descent. Families are closely linked and tied with Paraguayans.

Q: It's a river tie, isn't it?

DODD: Oh, sure. The Rio de la Plata and the Uruguay River. And in Brazil relations are good with Uruguay. As I mentioned, the borders there or schools and different joint business ventures with Brazil. Frontiers are poorly marked and there is an entirely different language and culture in the Uruguayan-Brazilian borderlands.

Q: So Brazil's not conceived as the colossus to the north?

DODD: No, not today. Although historically Brazil and earlier Portugal occupied the Banda Oriental (today Uruguay). Now Uruguayans in the northern part of the country work very closely with Brazilians. In fact, you can cross those borders and not realize you're even in Brazil or back into Uruguay. But with Argentina trade relations are very, very contentious. The Argentinians historically have been generally perceived by Uruguayans as arrogant, feeling much more culturally superior, better educated, and bigger and better in every way. They vacation in Punta del Este on the Uruguayan Atlantic coast, and they're simply not perceived as happy visitors - they're happy but the Uruguayans aren't. In other words, Montevideo has always been treated or perceived by

Argentineans as kind of Buenos Aires many years ago, and this, of course, has been an irritant.

Q: So for businesspeople would Saõ Paulo be more in Uruguay the place to wheel and deal?

DODD: Certainly for Uruguayans who live in the central and northern part of the country, but Buenos Aires is still important. You'll have flights now between Montevideo and Saõ Paulo, yes, regular commercial flights, but the heavy-duty traffic is still across the river by plane or boat to Buenos Aires.

Q: Is Buenos Aires the place you go to have fun?

DODD: You go to have fun. You have really especially good meals, good restaurants, theaters especially good, symphonies. Culturally Buenos Aires is a great city - there's no question about it - and this is an irritant for its neighbors, Paraguayans and Uruguayans.

Q: What about the problem of smuggling and all that? I'm told that Paraguay is...

DODD: It's open.

Q: This is its main industry.

DODD: It's its main industry. The amount of smuggling, drug trafficking clearly became a problem across the Paraguayan borders and from Brazil into Uruguay. Uruguay became a transit point to Montevideo and out to the Atlantic for shipment to Europe.

Q: On drugs, this has always been a focus of our policy. How involved did you get?

DODD: I was deeply involved. DEA, of course, had representatives in the embassy...

Q: Drug Enforcement Agency.

DODD: Drug Enforcement Agency. We were considered primarily with transit issues, overland issues and by river.

Q: Who was transiting from where?

DODD: From the Andes through Bolivia and through Paraguay, mostly through Paraguay, and the Uruguay River down to Montevideo and out to Europe and the United States. Drug consumption in Uruguay was not necessarily a serious problem when I was there. We did not work on preventive issues and rehabilitation; it was transit.

Q: The pattern usually is that for a certain period of time they say, "The drug problem is your problem" - talking to the United States - "and not ours. We're just transiting through." But pretty soon this begins to seep through, and the money and the addiction.

DODD: The addiction begins to work its way. But when I was there from ‘93 to ‘97, it was transit; transit issues was my paramount interest.

Q: You mentioned their close ties to Europe, and, of course, Europe is also a consumer, Western Europe, of drugs. Did they have the equivalent of a DEA, or were we left to carry that?

DODD: We were left to carry out a lot of the work. The Ministry of Interior was not well equipped to deal with this, so our DEA, our Drug Enforcement Agency, was basically trying to set up an infrastructure, a drug enforcement office, in the Ministry of the Interior. When I was there, we were working on the basics of it - finding computers to put into an office. It was rudimentary and not in any way, shape or form sophisticated to deal with it alone. I think they were moving along and developing a cadre of good people in the Ministry of Interior, but it was in the early stages.

Q: What about our military? Did we have ship visits? Were we involved there?

DODD: In the early stages, yes, our military in the embassy was working with their counterparts, the Air Force, the Army and their Navy, on drug issues, primarily drug issues. There were a few ship visits but not really that many. The paramount interest for the Air Force and the Army and the Navy was to develop basically training and get some equipment for interdiction, drug interdiction.

Q: Very early in the Clinton administration they had a major Latin American meeting in Miami.

DODD: The Miami Summit of ‘94.

Q: How did that go?

DODD: Those things sometimes create more anticipation than the successes. But it certainly set into motion the pattern of subsequent summits, again, going from Miami and then to Chile (‘98), and then recently to Quebec (‘01). So these summits have been moving along and setting agendas, so in ‘94 the Miami Summit set the agenda for a free-trade agreement - and then the time was set for 2005 - but an agenda was set on other issues, not just free trade. It created the structure for more exchanges between our departments, Department of Justice, our DEA people, for example, working with their counterparts. So in that period ‘94 to ‘97 I was in the stage of just setting up the framework for more dialogue between our departments and their ministries. The Ministry of Interior, I should add that, too.

Q: Did Uruguay see itself as a leader or more of a follower in international, particularly OAS or whatever you want to call it, in that area?

DODD: The focus of its attention during my tenure there was basically working with

MERCOSUR; as I mentioned before, playing a key role, the administrative center, the coordinator of MERCOSUR. But in many ways too a small country with a big international reputation more for its stability, its democratic tradition. It spoke out under Sanguinetti on human rights issues - with the contradiction that it recognized the Castro regime. But it felt by recognizing Castro it was important to engage him, too. But on those issues of human rights, yes, it perceived its role as being high profile in the international organizations. But for practical purposes, on commercial issues it was focused on MERCOSUR and much of its attention was directed in that area.

Q: What about Puerto Rico? Sometimes this is an issue of Latin Americans who say, "Oh, you should free Puerto Rico, or whatever you're doing." We keep holding referendums. The Puerto Ricans don't want to leave, but you get beaten up on it.

DODD: I was asked frequently about Puerto Rico. My response was, what has happened in Puerto Rico is that through several plebiscites, referendums, Puerto Ricans chose the commonwealth status, or a free associated state. I said that throughout its history - or I should say really since the 1940s under Munos Marin - they've had elections and in some cases plebiscites and referendums. "Do you want independence, do you want statehood? Do you want to continue the commonwealth status?" They have chosen that direction. So I said, "We've always been basically open in the sense choose what you want. We have not dictated the commonwealth status. If they want to be independent, that's their business." Stu, maybe I wasn't all that persuasive with student groups and faculty members, but I never got much criticism back, because when I threw it back in a sense in their laps by saying, "The Puerto Ricans choose the form of government they want. They have a representative in Congress that cannot vote in the House but they can vote in committees," and I said, "That was a step forward, and because they wanted it and we accepted it, so they can move to a voting representative in the Congress if they make that choice of statehood.

Q: How did you find your embassy as an operating unit?

DODD: Sometime ago, I guess when I was talking to you earlier in the interview, one of the great joys I had working in the embassy in Montevideo was I had so many former students who were career Foreign Service Officers but also from the Department of Commerce, DEA, and so on. It was a superbly well organized embassy. I was especially fond of and appreciative of the work of the Foreign Service nationals. These were the Uruguayans in the embassy. I think any knowledgeable U.S. citizen in the embassy would tell you that, that they were really the backbone of an embassy. They had the historical memory of the place, they were well educated. I found a splendid embassy and people that I grew to like. I've always been grateful for their patience and tolerance of this political appointee.

Q: How was your DCM or DCMs?

DODD: Wonderful, Jerry Whitman, and Nancy Mason succeeded him, career Foreign Service Officers. They were first class. They knew their jobs. Basically I set out initially

by saying the buck stops at my desk. I used the word or I described, I said, "You work on the plumbing of the embassy, and let's look at the mission statement, and my job is to get out of the embassy and sell this mission statement, and we support all of the different agencies in it," and that's how it worked. They were happy managing the day-to-day operations of that embassy. I was happy giving speeches, visiting governors of the states, working on the mission plan's agenda, and working closely with what is now called the Public Diplomacy Section. It used to be the United States Information Service and, of course, that was press, radio, cultural affairs. That's where I focused my attention.

Q: What about the press? How did you find the Uruguayan media?

DODD: The media, professionally it was wanting in some areas. But overall our relations with the press were excellent. But we were proactive in that. Again, the USIA, Public Diplomacy now, made a special practice, I did, of having a luncheon every month with editors and working members of the press of the major newspapers, both from Montevideo and in the interior. I would package a trip to the interior which would include meeting with the regional press, radio, some television. That was the bulk of my work. Again, implementing the mission plan meant a lot of leg work and a lot of traveling, which I liked, and they were happy to have me out of there, out of the embassy. Your DCM was looking at the administrative side. If something came up, of course, that was intractable or couldn't be resolved, obviously I had to deal with it. But aside from what I mentioned about being visible and working the floors and paying attention to what people were doing, my job was to get that mission plan working.

Q: Then in '97 you left there?

DODD: I left in September of '97. I was there exactly four years.

Q: So how did your next assignment come about?

DODD: How did that come about? I got word from the Department saying that the career person was leaving Costa Rica and there was a big battle over who would be that person's successor. Apparently they decided to not select either one of those career people. So I was in Montevideo and they said, "Well, get ready for another round of it." Then my brother Christopher, who was in the Senate on the Foreign Relations Committee, said, "Yes, Costa Rica's been a battleground. It's a lovely country. It's a nice place to be assigned to. Would you want it?" And I said, "Yes." I had to be careful about my tenured position at Georgetown, although they were very liberal in granting me leave for four years. At Harvard, you know, you only get about 18 months. So to get to my point, yes, there was an opening available, and I said, "All right, I'll make a career choice. I'll go for four more years, but I'll have to give up my tenured position at Georgetown," and I did that.

Q: I forgot to ask. Are you married?

DODD: Yes.

Q: Let's talk about the wife. Would you talk a bit about the most important part of a mission, and that is the distaff side, your wife.

DODD: I was married in 1970 and then divorced and remarried, so I was a bachelor in Uruguay, but I was married in Costa Rica.

Q: I thought we would stop at this point, because I would rather have a good, solid session on Costa Rica, so we'll obviously pick up about your wife and also the whole thing about Costa Rica.

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This is August 13th, 2001. Tom, I can't remember. Did we cover how you got to Costa Rica? Yes, we did. Okay, so you arrived in Costa Rica when?

DODD: I arrived in the late fall of 1997.

Q: And you were there until when?

DODD: Until this year, 2001.

Q: What was the situation in Costa Rica and also in Central America in 1997 when you appeared?

DODD: Basically I would describe it simply, that it was a region at peace, politically stable, and for anyone who worked or traveled in Central America a decade earlier in the 1980s during civil wars, intraregional conflicts, social upheaval, it was an entirely new stage, a new panorama, peace, tranquility, political stability. It was a remarkable change from one decade earlier when I was there on a Fulbright. That was the first and the most dramatic, but not surprising for me since teaching and traveling there periodically, I could see the evolution of change in that region from Contra wars and Sandinistas, revolution, civil war in El Salvador. It was extraordinary. You asked me precisely Central America but Costa Rica in general. When I returned to Costa Rica in '97 as chief of mission, of course, things had changed in the decade. But it was still, as it was in the 1980s, the bastion of political stability and social tranquility. That was the one constant in Central America among its nations.

Q: Prior to that had any of the powers, including the Sandinistas tried to mess around in Costa Rica or Ollie North and our NSC, an awful lot of people were playing games and they really didn't pay much attention to boundaries.

DODD: There was great migration in Costa Rica from all over Central America, mostly political refugees in the 1980s. In fact, one of the biggest problems I had soon after I arrived was the demining process along the Costa Rican and Nicaraguan border where hundreds of land mines had been placed by Contras and Sandinistas. So, no, there were

no boundaries, and Costa Rica was the haven of U.S. Contra military operations up in the northwestern part of the country. In fact, property there was expropriated - a man named Hall - that was used as an airstrip by Ollie North. When I got to Costa Rica, I had to deal with a lot of the legacies of what I call the land and air use of Costa Rica by combatants of Central America.

Q: We'll come back to that, but when you arrived there, did you have any sort of instructions in your attache case or in your mental attache case?

DODD: Yes, I did, at least in my mental attache case. This was a - I've always described, and I think it's correct - Costa Rica, a small developing country with a huge, enormous international reputation on several fronts, a country whose representative were very active in international organizations like the OAS, the Human Rights Commission, the InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights. When I arrived, Costa Rica also had a seat on the UN Security Council. So when I arrived, I was dealing with a small country, small in population and size, but with a very, very prominent role in the world stage. So in my attache case basically were several objectives. First was to deepen and strengthen Costa Rica's democratic institutions, because they in turn would have an impact on its neighbors: that is, a court system which was transparent or become stronger, decentralized government in Costa Rica, which it was trying to do to get more local authority to cities and towns. This too would have an impact on its neighbors. So my agenda basically was to begin to work on those two major issues, how to strengthen Costa Rica's democracy but make it significant for its neighbors. Again, for me to say or even suggest or imply to Costa Ricans that they needed help in maintaining a democratic institution would have been ludicrous and out of order. But to help them strengthen their institutions to help their neighbors was, I think, not only a legitimate objective, but I think it really was serving our interests at the time.

Q: How did you find your embassy when you arrived?

DODD: It was a fine team of people really. It was a large embassy, by the way. There were several other departments represented at the embassy along with the Drug Enforcement Agency, Commerce for example, the Central Intelligence Agency. In other words, it was a large embassy for its regional role. In other words, just as important as working with Costa Rica, we had to work with its neighbors on drug enforcement, on interdiction, for example. So I would describe it as a fine team of seasoned and experienced people with a considerable amount of service in other parts of Latin America. These were not people who had been earlier assigned to China or Afghanistan, or who were brought in from way outside. There were good linguists helpful to me over the four years. There was a very fine and maybe, according to State Department assessments, the finest Foreign Service nationals. These were really first-class professionals with considerable service. We're talking about 30 years, 40 years service. They were called FSNs, Foreign Service Nationals.

Q: They're so important.

DODD: Their work was fundamental to me. In many ways, I said to my U.S. colleagues often, they're really the backbone of an embassy. These people have great historical knowledge and memory, and they can bring to the table lots of things that are helpful.

Q: Who was your DCM?

DODD: I had two DCMs. Linda Jewel was my last DCM. She was from the United States Information Agency. It was an interesting appointment in the selection because it was at the point that the Agency was then going to be merged with the Department State, and I'm a strong advocate of public diplomacy. I think it's a fundamental aspect in the conduct of our relations with our Latin American neighbors. And she knew the press and cultural affairs. So coming from the Agency was, I think, a special and a unique talent to get that experience, and I thought that was important and very significant.

Q: Let's talk a bit about, before we get to the issues, the government of Costa Rica. How close were our ties to them, and had the decade of turmoil before sort of wounded our relationship?

DODD: Our relations with the Costa Rican government were simply excellent when I arrived. I did not have to repair any fissures or great damage in any way, shape or form. There were sticky problems, land expropriation cases, squatters appearing on U.S. property in Costa Rica. The legacy though that I should be very candid and up front about was that in the decade of the 1980s the United States was probably spending as much as $350,000,000 a year in Costa Rica through AID, and then it was stopped. Maybe less than five years before I arrived there, AID left Costa Rica. So on that point there was, I think a very difficult legacy. We didn't have the money to spend and to hand over to Costa Rica on every project that they proposed. In fact, I had little or no money. I basically had to wrestle with the problem, "We don't have the money but we may have ways and means to help you get help." I really became a facilitator to show them basically how and where to get help from non-governmental organizations in the United States, maybe other agencies at here that might help them on projects. I spent four years doing that. I didn't have money to hand out directly. I developed the expertise with colleagues in the embassy in how to be good agents essentially for providing assistance.

Q: Tom, could you explain why we'd been spending all that money and then we weren't spending any money?

DODD: Basically we were spending that money because this was back in the '80s, this was Cold War diplomacy. We would spend as much as needed to fend off either dictatorships, insurgencies that Washington felt were alien or inimical to the interests of the United States in the area. The Cold War abruptly ended that policy of propping up neighbors because we wanted stability at all costs to basically an era where we perceived no challenges to our security which meant, of course, that Congress was not about to underwrite essentially checks for a U.S. mission abroad unless it was obviously of great significance. The emphasis changed then - or the term 'security' - from essentially external threats to basically regional threats like drugs. Drug interdiction became defined

as a new type of security threat to the United States, so that monies then flowed fairly frequently and in substantial sums in that direction.

Q: What kind of a government? Who were some of the personalities you were dealing with?

DODD: I was dealing first with the son of the founder of modern Costa Rican democracy, Jose Maria Figueres. His father, Don Pepe Figueres, led the famous and very significant 1948 revolution and civil war in Costa Rica, abolished the military in 1949, wrote a new constitution, became president, in fact two or three times. I was dealing with the son of the founder essentially of modern democratic Costa Rica. The founding father of modern Costa Rica, President Figueres' father, created basically a welfare state, a patrimonial state, and the son, with whom I was dealing, was trying to modify it dealing with the new global economy of privatization of state-owned industries and attracting foreign technology. So I was dealing with a member of the same family but a president in another generation, a younger generation, who was coping more with the global economy, something that his father did not have to deal with in 1948. It was a friendly government and, of course, the President, Figueres, pressed me over and over again, and I saw the significant of it, of trying to attract foreign companies, U.S. companies and specifically high-tech industry. He attracted the Intel Corporation to Costa Rica. He did so in a manner that has helped to transform and change the Costa Rican economy.

Q: Was there a Georgetown connection in Costa Rica?

DODD: Huge, it was huge. You know, I'll say to colleagues now, and it's becoming more apparent to me, "The legacy of your teaching as an academician generally takes a while." The benefits, if you want to call them, and the rewards of teaching who reappear as they become mature and enter professions. Every day I ran into Georgetown graduates, ministers, vice ministers, members of the National Assembly, businesspeople, lawyers, doctors; and, second, I also ran into Fulbrighters. I was awarded two Fulbrights in Latin America. There are over 1,000 Fulbrighters, former Fulbrighters, in Costa Rica. Imagine that, in a country of just under 4,000,000 people. So there, of course, we did lots of work with the Fulbrighters and Georgetown graduates and former students. I had a huge network of friends and associates. To go back to your earlier question, the change in U.S. policy there, I didn't have the resources of the U.S. government to spend, but I had a huge resource of support from the private sector. We organized the first Fulbright association in Costa Rica to raise money creating more Fulbright scholarships. I had a huge network of former students, graduates and, as I say, from the Fulbright association, which may be per capita one of the largest in the world.

Q: Well now, how about employment for these people who just be membership in this group you were mentioning and other groups? It seems like you must have had a rather highly educated cadre.

DODD: Highly educated. As a matter of fact, you may know, general knowledge, Costa Rica's about 99 percent literate. You will find it in the professional classes of people both

in the public and private sectors. Many - in fact, in the government, well over half of them, have studied in the United States. They have advanced degrees here, as President Figueres did, the President whom I had to deal with initially, and the next President, Miguel Angel Rodriguez Echeverria holds a Ph.D. from the University of California. So, again, these people studied in the United States at a very high and sophisticated level of education. Therefore, working with them was very easy and mutually beneficial, because they understood us so well; with our faults and great attributes.

Q: Was their sort of the ten families running the place or something like that, that you hear about in other Latin American places? You didn't have the military, but I was wondering if they had that family...

DODD: No, you don't have that family network, although there are families that go back to the late 19th century, the great coffee families, yes, but generally you find Costa Rica has one of the strongest two-party system in the world that go back to the 1940s. So, no, to answer your question, you deal with political parties and their ideology.

Q: Really disparative income, is there?

DODD: No, there isn't, not by comparison with other countries in Latin America. There's a substantial middle class in Costa Rica, well educated. By no stretch of the imagination do you talk about a few families dominating the political process. They don't, although they play a role in it, but parties are not identified by the names of families who are in them.

Q: Indian population?

DODD: Very small, probably 10,000 if that, located in the southeastern part of the country.

Q: So you don't have that...?

DODD: These is not a problem of how to integrate or how to give autonomy and self government to an Indo-American population.

Q: Well then, let's take some of these things that you were talking about. One is the deconstruction of the Cold War, the mines, the facility. What had happened and what were you trying to do?

DODD: Basically what had happened is that Costa Rica was the only country in the area without any significant - in fact, no significant - civil wars or conflict within its border. As a democracy, it became the haven of political exiles from other Central American countries like the Sandinistas who actually formed their government in Costa Rica before going back to Nicaragua in the summer of 1979. It was also a base for our operations, the United States' operations and assistance to the Contras. So Costa Rica then became essentially the locale for political groups vying for power in their respective countries. A

free press there allowed them considerable liberty and independence to propagandize their positions. Second, Costa Rica, along its northern border specifically, was heavily mined by both Contras and Sandinistas, an armed border, not two countries poised to go to war but basically two countries whose competing forces in Nicaragua were using Costa Rican territory.

Q: You didn't have a Costa Rican military?

DODD: Didn't have a military, so landing strips and roads were built along the northern portion of Costa Rica with easy access to Nicaragua. So, again, it was essentially a haven basically for contending and competing forces, the Sandinistas and Contras, in Nicaragua and in El Salvador to some extent between the FMLN and the competing government forces. So the demining process became one of the most important jobs I had to undertake, to demine those areas along Costa Rica's and Nicaragua's borders, with the Organization of American States and Costa Rica's security forces. It was a very difficult job, because, of course, it takes a great deal of expertise. I finally resorted to the strategy of publishing funny books, comic books, in Spanish about the dangers of walking through mines for high school and grammar school kids in villages along the Costa Rica border. We distributed them up there. I can't tell you honestly whether it had any significant effect, but it certainly raised essentially the dangers on much of the land around the Rio San Juan river which divides those two countries, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. We still have more to do up there. I got something done, but there's still more to do. I can't give you percentages and I'm not certain exactly what the estimates are off the top of my head, but there may be as many as 1,200 mines still to be identified, but that's an educated guess.

Q: Did you have any residue - this would be true, I guess, of all of Central America - of kind of free-booters, guys with AK47s or American automatic rifles or something? This has been a way of life for some time, and we're still sort of wandering around the jungles. Was that a problem?

DODD: Not really, not during my tenure there, but certainly it's a good way to describe it historically. Central America's always been a land of free-booters, from William Walker in the mid-19th century on. Yes, there were conscripts, of course, but there were also volunteers from all over joining up with wars for liberation as well as becoming participants in paramilitary forces to contend with those new insurgent and revolutionary forces. But I didn't have that problem. Things had calmed down by then. I was doing the cleaning up essentially, demining.

Q: Of course, you were up against an even more insidious force than anything else, and that is the drug business. You're not that far from Colombia and you're on the route. Tell me about what the situation was.

DODD: When I arrived in 1997, all the estimates that I had been briefed on was that the drug trafficking by land, sea and air had passed the danger point in Central America and could easily transit by land, by sea, along both coasts of Costa Rica and its neighbors. At

that point in 1997 there had been preliminary discussions about negotiating a bilateral ship rider agreement which would allow United States Coast Guard and naval vessels to enter Costa Rica's territorial waters to pursue fast boats from Colombia coming up both the Atlantic and the Pacific coasts and getting into the rivers and estuaries of Costa Rica, unloading their drug supplies to local drug dealers. I didn't fare very well initially. In fact, when I first looked at polls that we had issued to be done, well over 75 or 76 percent of the Costa Rican population opposed any kind of ship rider agreement that gave the United States the right to jointly pursue fast boats from Colombia within their territorial waters. Lawyers, judges, members of the National Assembly were all opposed to it. Then something very interesting happened. The Minister of Public Security, a man named - I had enormous respect for him - and I became good friends. I liked him. He was a nice person. He liked history, and we used to trade stories together. But to get to my point, I give him really great credit because he realized that the drug trafficking using Costa Rica as a transit site was having a profound and significant impact on drug consumption by Costa Rican college, high school, and grammar school kids. He did his own poll and discovered it was more alarming. It had reached an epidemic stage. What Lizano did - and our strategy was basically that I would not as U.S. ambassador try to turn around public opinion in Costa Rica by saying they needed a treaty. On our urging, he went to the National Assembly, briefed members of that body on drug consumption in Costa Rica. He turned the issue around. We were able to negotiate a ship rider agreement. We got the full and unqualified support of members of the National Assembly and press. His ministry signed an agreement allowing U.S. Coast Guard and Naval ships to come into those waters. What I had to do was every time a U.S. Coast Guard ship approached the territorial waters of Costa Rica following or pursuing a fast boat, I had to get on the phone, call the Minister of Public Security and the President of the National Assembly to get their approval. Now we were given four months to six months without permission to go ahead approval to one of those vessels to pursue a joint operation after a United States vessel entered territorial waters. I can tell you, sadly, fighting drug interdiction was not my favorite subject by any means, but I have to tell you we were able to reduce drastically the shipment by sea, by fast boats from Colombia to Costa Rica's coastal waters. What was happening was El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras were, when I left this year, negotiating, in a process negotiating with those countries to sign ship rider agreements, too. My hope is that all of these Central American countries will combine these bilateral agreements with the United States into a regional compact of some kind and have joint action, so once a fast boat, if it did escape, left Costa Rica on either one of its coasts and went to Nicaragua's coast, the Nicaraguans could pick up the operation and do so based on a bilateral ship rider agreement or a joint drug interdiction operation. So, again, not a very nice subject, but obviously we had to deal with it and confront it. It was not easy for me because Costa Rica without armed forces, without military services, any agreements, contracts or whatever with our Navy or Coast Guard conjured up there the worry that it's territorial sovereignty would be in jeopardy. In fact, today Costa Rica has a small academy at work creating a professional coast guard prevent not only drug trafficking, but to protect marine resources of Costa Rica. The tuna and the other resources of Costa Rica's coast now have been taken or seized by this small but growing coast guard force that can capture poachers and seize ships and sell them and make money on it. So it's more than simply drug interdiction, although that was the principal

objective; it was also to help the country capture and control its vast marine resources and protect them.

Q: Since Costa Rica has become sort of a haven and has more potential and doesn't have as much sort of underclass as some of these other places, was Costa Rica at all a place of immigration, too, from other countries? Was that a problem?

DODD: A tremendous issue and problem. The population of Costa Rica is about 3.5 million; it's under 4 million. There were estimated - I'll give you the high number - 800,000 Nicaraguans who have fled to Costa Rica since the Sandinista revolution, originally political refugees, now more economic refugees. The low figure may be 200,000, but even that's substantial. They moved into Costa Rica and basically have taken on what we would call for lack of a better word, the menial jobs, housekeepers, construction workers. They have found work. But of course it has put a heavy strain on the Costa Rican state-owned, state-managed agencies such as the pension system, the welfare system, the hospitals, schools. We built several hundred classrooms in communities where Nicaraguans have moved and settled. That's, by the way, through the regional AID project. It was one of the most successful programs I've seen in the post-Cold War era. We put up literally hundreds of classrooms in these schools in areas where Nicaraguans have moved most recently. The great drought now in Central America has posed the possibility of another wave of immigrants from El Salvador and Nicaragua. Costa Rica and, of course, become politically viable and contentious should they accept more Nicaraguans and, of course, Costa Ricans have tried to get help from the United States on dealing with this migration issue.

Q: How about the other way? Were Costa Ricans going to the United States to immigrate or not?

DODD: No. There are maybe two communities in the United States of Costa Ricans, one in New Jersey and one in my state of Connecticut. But they are mostly (Connecticut) professionals, doctors, lawyers and so forth, and in New Jersey they are people who migrated for work and send remittances back home. Costa Ricans who travel to the United States do so for education, learning English, and simply vacation. And they come up in great numbers. So we don't have that issue that other Central American countries have with the United States.

Q: How did you find the media there?

DODD: The media was tough, very tough. *La Nacion* was the major newspaper. My relationships were always good, but they never covered as much as I thought they should about the U.S. But the media was difficult, and I'll tell you why and where. There were substantial numbers of expropriations of U.S. property during the Contra period and in the post-Contra period, so I had to adjudicate those and clean them up. But equally important was the great problem of squatters. It's a problem for Costa Ricans, dealing with squatters. If you don't occupy and effectively control your property and develop the land, squatters can come on, and in different departments in Costa Rica, maybe in 30

days if you don't remove them or if they move on your property and settle there in 30 days it becomes their land for use and in some cases ownership. In other words, the laws are simply a patchwork and a quilt of different regulations and statutes. When I first arrived, an American, a man named Dalton, who owned property in southern Costa Rica was killed, allegedly by squatters who came on his property when he tried to remove them. So this was a contentious issue. Of course, I had to look out for that family's interest to find out exactly what the causes were and to get that case adjudicated. But the press was tough saying. I was wrong and the squatters were right in several instances. So I had a lot of work to do. I had a lot of explaining to do. It was not a friendly press to the United States, but being a historian, Stu, at least I could understand why. It didn't take me very long to figure out that the U.S. ambassador who had been a proconsul for so many years was not really trying to meddle in their politics but was simply trying to represent American citizens whose property had been taken over. So I had a tactic. I developed a strategy for dealing with the press in the capitol city. I made trips all over the country and deliberately tried to explain my position, Washington's position, to local and regional press and radio and television stations in the interior. I certainly got our story out a lot better. I just did an "end run" on their national newspapers located in San Jose, went out to explain really what I was going to do. I'm not saying it worked, but certainly we did finally settle many of these cases, these squatters and one or two cases.

Q: You were there during a very embarrassing time for the United States, and that was when your Georgetown colleague, President Clinton, got himself involved with a nice little intern and there was impeachment. In the first place, this must have been just bloody embarrassing, wasn't it?

DODD: I always describe it as both difficult and embarrassing, but then again, in Latin American countries historically they're culturally macho. Culture says, well, men are about those kind of activities all the time. I think what puzzled them the most was how the press in the United States could get so interested in the private life of a person, and they treated it at that level: what's going on up there and why is it creating so much interest and attention when a matter of that kind is not in Costa Rica. Then on another level, yes, when you talked to people, they, of course, wanted to know how and why the President of the United States would get involved in this kind of activity. It obviously affected and had a great impact on his moral suasion here as the chief executive. So I had to deal with those on two levels. The government was not interested or concerned about it. They simply said that's usually the business of most men anyway worldwide, so why are you so worried about it in your press and public? But on another level, if you talked to people, yes, they were concerned about it.

Q: But even beyond that there's the impeachment. Looking back on it, it's really amazing that the damn thing even got going.

DODD: Then, again, two levels on that I had to deal with. The impeachment process for most Costa Ricans, government and public and private sectors, was, "Why would you get into an impeachment process over the moral or personal conduct of an individual, President of the United States or otherwise." But second, they did discuss editorially in

the press, radio and television that our Constitution can work and function; that is, there is a process of both Congress' inquiry and the President's right to defend himself if he has to with his partisans, lawyers and members of Congress. So they saw institutionally a process that was set into motion without violence, not coup d'états and the like.

Q: How about with communications? You know, much has been made about how people in Washington can pick up the phone and the Internet and all that. Did you find as the ambassador this became a problem to be either bypassed or to people beating down your shoulder?

DODD: I describe it basically during my four years there, the opening and the burgeoning of diplomacy. Non-governmental organizations, environmentalists for example - there are so many - business sectors all conduct their mutual interests outside of the operations of the United States embassy. In other words, for a U.S. ambassador today in Costa Rica the conduct of diplomacy is multifaceted. It's commercial diplomacy, it's environmental diplomacy, and it is something that simply broadens, widens and deepens, of course, the issues that you have to contend with as a chief of mission. It's no longer your despatches or maybe e-mail alone to the Department of State reporting politically on what's going on. But now you have to keep your eye on the new channels of communication between government agencies and non-governmental groups. So the job has become not impossible, it's just become more complex, and you have to be infinitely more attuned to and careful and aware of what the trends are in the relations growing out of the communications revolution.

Q: One of the things that happens with other governmental agencies is they tend to go towards regional places, and one always discovers that the most pleasant capitals in an area seem to attract them. They don't go to where maybe their problems are but where the living's easy. I would think that San Jose would have meant that you ended up with quite a few centers of American governmental activity.

DODD: I did, but I also have to add another element: the schools are good, your children are safer, your spouses, husbands or wives, can walk the streets and feel more secure. Yes, the quality of your life is good. But in no way did the attraction of San Jose to U.S. citizens and other departments or agencies of the United States detract from their constant travel to other countries from the base of a true democracy and stable South. For example, my agricultural attaches were some of the most outstanding people I ever met. They not only educated me on the importance of products and protecting them for the United States but also here on the trends in Central American economic integration and problems. If my agricultural attache, he called me on the phone and said, "Mr. Ambassador, I've got a rice problem," I usually had him upstairs to my office faster than sound could travel, because a rice issue or potato crop problem in the United States, that is, exporters from our country who couldn't get into Costa Rica while potatoes rotted at the port, it could hurt other bilateral relations.

Q: What were the major exports and imports of Costa Rica?

DODD: Basically, as I mentioned here, there are two sectors: the high tech from Intel, Abbott Laboratories, gave but bananas and coffee still remain a major export. Coffee reaches selected markets in the United States, so do non-traditional agricultural products, canned foods, for example. So the Costa Ricans were always looking for that niche in the United States market. Our exports to that area ran from onions, rice, potatoes, so we also exported agricultural products, not simply high-tech industry. I had to deal basically in several areas with high tariffs and an interesting cap that Costa Ricans placed on the importation of many of our agricultural products, allowing Costa Rican producers to have preferential treatment in the domestic market. So I was always waiting for the cap to hit Costa Rican production and consumption to allow United States exports in. But the biggest issue that I faced in dealing with imports/exports basically was the Caribbean Basin Initiative of the Caribbean countries and Central America to allow Costa Rican textiles into the United States in December of last year. Finally the Caribbean Basin Initiative in Congress was approved so that in several areas, specifically textiles, Costa Rica could export to the United States using U.S. woolen products but allowing, as I say, the production of textiles in Costa Rica to be exported to the U.S. market.

Q: Did you get involved at all in the banana war that was going on?

DODD: Yes, I did. The banana war basically was to allow U.S. companies like Dole and Chiquita in Costa Rica to get into the European Community market. The European Community, European Union, gave preferential treatment to former British, French colonies, states, in the Caribbean to the European market over Latin American exporters, like Costa Rica and Ecuador obviously banana exporters in Costa Rica were excluded from the European market. It was a constant issue and battle, and we, of course, pressed changes. Ultimately the World Trade Organization was going to review that; they were going to review it this year, 2001. Some opening had finally been provided to allow a quota system to begin at some time, I think, 2002, if I'm not mistaken.

Q: What about Cuba? How did our policy with Cuba play?

DODD: Basically the Costa Ricans were, as I would describe it, watchful waiting. I was constantly queried by the Foreign Minister and other cabinet officers as to when United States policy would change with respect to the embargo. Of course, I didn't know. Costa Rica is one of the few countries in Latin American that does not have diplomatic relations with Cuba. They have a commercial representative in Havana now, a consul there to handle commercial affairs. So what Costa Ricans are doing basically is watching the United States carefully to see for any changes. They don't want to be left alone in the Western Hemisphere as the only country that does not have diplomatic relations with Cuba. There were some cases, yes, of Cuban refugees coming to Costa Rica, seeking exile. On several occasions we helped the Costa Ricans get them settled in. In fact, there's a network of Cuban exiles in Costa Rica that generally have made their settlement easy and comfortable, so that there aren't major waves difficulties like the Mariel exodus, for example. Nothing approaches that in Costa Rica. So I've described it as watchful waiting. They along with the United States are the only countries in the Hemisphere that do not have relations - I'm not sure about Argentina, but in any case the only one in

Central America.

Q: It wasn't one of these things that people would twit you on all the time?

DODD: All the time. Basically, how long will the embargo endure? When are you going to change this policy? I had to do a lot of education explaining basically that foreign policy is the projection of domestic interests, that essentially the Cuban-American community, with Senator Helms and the Republicans in control of the Congress, there could be no change. Yet Republicans from Iowa and Kansas, concerned about their agricultural exports, wanted an opening. But during my tenure basically Costa Ricans were essentially asking me, "When will this change? Give us the inside track when it happens." I said, "It's an open, contentious domestic debate."

Q: Was the Catholic Church the predominant church there?

DODD: The Catholic Church is the predominant church although there are large and substantial and growing evangelical Christian groups - it's substantial, Stu - not only in Costa Rica but throughout Central America.

Q: And actually in Latin America.

DODD: In Latin America in general, absolutely, in South America. The Catholic Church in Costa Rica is strong. It's not just in its educational system and parochial schools but even in the public school area. For example, in most of your public schools you'll see crucifixes on the wall. Catholic religious holidays are celebrated by the public school. The papal representative, the representative of the Pope, is the dean of the diplomatic corps, but I understand in most Latin American countries the dean of the diplomatic corps is always the apostolic delegate. There may be exceptions; I'm certain Cuba would be one, and there may be others. But the Catholic Church has a very, very significant role in Costa Rica; there's not question about it. It's a voice on social issues, economic issues. The Archbishop, Arieta, speaks out all the time and will criticize the government on social issues. The Catholic Church has had a good record in Costa Rica. It's always been essentially a pioneer in the areas of focusing attention on the need for social justice and economic reform. This goes back to the 1930s, and there are several very significant prelates who were right in the forefront of the Christian Democratic Party, all coming out of Rarem Novarum of the 1930s. Some of the significant labor legislation in Costa Rica began in the 1940s under Rafael Calderon, who was a Christian Democrat. So, again, the Church has had a good record on those issues. It has not been identified as an ally of the rich, the landed coffee barons.

Q: How about with all these missionaries, particularly the evangelical ones and Bible society groups and all that? Were they kind of doing their thing, or did you have problems?

DODD: No, we did not have problems. They all functioned very well and actively all over the country. What these evangelical groups do - and I think it made them attractive -

is that they deal basically with community needs, economic needs. These evangelical groups will open up a hospital or a clinic or build a school, and this is precisely what these communities need. The evangelicals have. The evangelicals have given structure to communities that have not received help and assistance from the government or directly from the Catholic Church. There's another element. I always used to point out to colleagues. Evangelicals give great emphasis on the Bible and reading the Bible and making it germane and pertinent to what they have to do. In the more extreme cases, of course, in Nicaragua and El Salvador the evangelical groups were associated with people who were politically active in defending their barrios against Somozas and others. In Costa Rica they deal more with community work, and this obviously makes it very appealing.

Q: How about Americans coming down, being this sort of island of tranquility? Were you having Americans coming down and taking a modest pension and turning it into living nicely there?

DODD: Yes. Again, my estimates are risky. We don't have any figures on the number of U.S. citizens there, but it may run to 35,000 Americans.

Q: That's significant.

DODD: That is significant. Many of them, a substantial number of them, have retired here, come down with pensions, started up businesses, small businesses, and have been very successful at it. The American Chamber of Commerce - it's called the American-Costa Rican Chamber of Commerce - that our pensioneers, *cum* business people, have brought in Costa Rican counterparts in joint ventures. I would say that the American community retired there, works there, lives there, retired there are very, very active in local government. I used to travel around and bring my consular officers with me to see them, an American association in different parts of the country, because they know a lot of what's going on in the community. They are involved in the development of several communities in Costa Rica.

Q: A question I forgot to ask: With the drug traffic, was drug corruption, which is the real poison of this whole thing - with people getting addicted to drugs, it's a tragedy, but almost greater is the power of money that corrupts things - was this showing its head?

DODD: No, it did not. We simply did not have a problem of drug barons appearing in Costa Rica. The problem in Costa Rica was transit, getting it to the bigger and more lucrative markets north, Guatemala, Mexico and, of course, the United States; and second, it was the growing domestic consumption in Costa Rica. Now you're looking down a road. I don't know, we don't know, the answer to that, whether it will create a culture of drug barons, but certainly not in Costa Rica. Corruption in Costa Rica was minimal and low, low level but not in any case alarming. Although through our public diplomacy, public affairs section, we worked hard with the judiciary in anti-corruption efforts, at least creating safeguards to prevent this kind of thing, such as money laundering. While I suspect it was going on, it was an area that the embassy was just

beginning to look at with the Treasury Department, for example.

Q: You mentioned when you arrived that Costa Rica was on the Security Council. I'm told this is the equivalent to an earthquake, and what you want to do if you're in a small country, for God's sake, keep them off the Security Council - talking about for the ambassadors.

DODD: Oh, there's no question: I was a very busy person the first year I was there. As you can well imagine, every issue that came up on the U.N., whatever it was, sanctions against Iraq, yes. I lost count of the number of demarches I had to get down to the Foreign Ministry. Frankly, I was delighted when they got off and got back down to local business. Then I could obviously deal more comfortably with our bilateral issues.

But your question points something out that's really very significant, Stu, and that is that a country like Costa Rica, a small country, today in the world of multipower-centered interest, small countries can turn us down and turn us aside and say, "We'll go elsewhere." In other words, if Costa Rica turned me down or said they were not going to support us on a vote, in the Security Council, for example, I couldn't threaten reprisals. Because a country like Costa Rica has access to many different resources today for financial help and support. But the point is you can't take even the smallest country in the world today for granted. The Cold War is over. They don't need us as much as they did before.

Q: One of the great movements going on today is - I don't know what you want to call it - multinationalism. We're having protests in the streets about international market and all that. From the point of view of the Costa Ricans, what was their feeling towards this?

DODD: Well, I'll tell you: a mix, and I should say at different levels. An effort on the part of the present government, Miguel Angel Rodriguez Echeverria, to create concessions, another word for privatization of the telecommunications industry, was approved by the National Assembly. But as soon as the provisions of that privatization of the telecommunications was proposed and made public, street demonstrations occurred, not riots but demonstrations, and the bill was withdrawn. My point is that efforts to privatize the state-owned, state-managed entities and make them competitive worldwide has created immediate negative reactions in Costa Rica. But at the same time for the educated of Costa Rica, if you talk to most people, they see the need for updating, modernizing their telecommunications industry. The whole gamut of government operations have to become competitive, and to do so they've got to be placed in the arena of competitive free markets. But again, like all good politicians, the leaders of the National Liberation Party, the center left party, have been a bit cautious because their constituency, a working class, are more critical of privatization and more cautious in their approach to opening their markets to a global free market system. So, interesting, a small country, politically stable, socially stable, has tried to deal with the fissures that have emerged in their society as the country edges into a global market. It's small; it can't compete in most of its exports, bananas, coffee, and so forth, so it's got to move cautiously and very carefully. It's not easy to simply say, "Come in and buy whatever

you want or sell whatever you want," because obviously it's affected deeply and very quickly by world price changes.

Q: Is it a member of the World Trade Organization?

DODD: Yes.

Q: But does that make a difference...?

DODD: Not really, because simply the WTO, the World Trade Organization, is only just beginning to function. What Costa Rica has really preferred to do is to deal with the United States directly on these issues of finding a niche in the United States market - put very directly, to try to get into NAFTA or to become really the beneficiary of Mexico's membership in NAFTA. So Costa Rica is doing this: it's negotiating and concluding free trade agreements, bilateral free trade agreements, with Mexico, Chile, the Dominican Republic. It is trying to get into the world market by selecting countries they can be reasonably assured of, that their exports will sell and sell competitively but at a good price.

Q: We mentioned at the end of the last interview about your spouse. You said, "Let's talk about that in Costa Rica." We're interested here in how people in American foreign affairs work as a team, and they often do.

DODD: Yes, and we did. Molly basically had been teaching school, high school, students for several years here in the District of Columbia in an area called social justice and had a regular program for bringing her students into the District of Columbia, into the soup kitchens, homeless shelters, dealt with street children. I said to her before we got down there, "Is this something that you would be interested in doing, working with charitable organizations, state or private, in Costa Rica?" and she did, working very closely with many different organizations, both state and private, in Costa Rica dealing with intercity youngsters, specifically youngsters. That was her major project. In so doing, she organized, was able to organize successfully, programs for several orphanages for young girls, mostly abused children. This was her major work, and on a volunteer basis she got a great deal of help from people in the U.S. embassy, but also Costa Rican people helped her in this area. She worked on social justice issues as she did at home, and I think she was immensely successful. Molly arrived speaking no Spanish. She had a working knowledge of the language and worked at it. I think, like so many experiences you have, the very fact that she showed an interest and took classes and tried to use the language, that was flattering and I think it conveyed the impression that, if you're learning a language, you must be interested in the culture you're living in at the time. She was immensely successful, I think for that reason.

Q: In the Latin American context, what about voluntary organizations? These are the guts of the American system. We all use volunteers, including in our program right here; we have a volunteer corps and all this. What about what you were seeing in Latin America, obviously in Costa Rica but other places?

DODD: Volunteerism is simply not a popular way in which communities, local and national, play a role in these countries. Traditionally it has never been that way. The state welfare system really dominated the area of dealing with problems laid outside basically what would be called the private sector initiative. It is changing somewhat, but my wife found it particularly difficult to organize Costa Ricans in the area of providing time, money, whatever assistance unless these Costa Ricans had lived or worked or studied in the United States. So what she did basically was shift in the direction of getting help from Costa Rican citizens who had not necessarily been volunteers in the United States but at least were familiar with it. But overall, to answer your question, no, volunteer organizations are not prevalent, and I don't see any sign of it changing except maybe what influence we may have on Costa Ricans who come here to live and work and do go back home and say, "Yes, this is important. In lieu of government assistance, we have to do something." But I can't say honestly that I saw any significant change in this area in Costa Rica other than basically the initiative of private individuals like my wife.

Q: What was your impression of the Costa Rican diplomatic service, particularly their representation in Washington? Do you feel there was a good communications channel between the foreign ministry and the embassy? What was going on?

DODD: I would describe it unqualifyingly: the Costa Rican foreign ministry deals with Washington and the embassy there in a very open and effective way. I preferred working with the Costa Rican foreign service professionals. During the President Rodriguez administration his foreign minister, Roberto Rojas, who was a businessman, has made a special effort in recruiting, training, and creating really a professional foreign service there, and only during my time did this happen, or at least any noticeable development in that area. Number two, I also learned - and I noticed that this was a major change - that the Costa Rican embassy here in Washington, whether represented by a professional ambassador or a political appointee, certainly knows how to operate in Washington, and maybe a little better than its neighbors - I can't make a judgment there. For example, the Costa Rican embassy during my four years always worked very closely with the U.S. Congress, sometimes to our annoyance. Because the Costa Rican embassy would invite members of the U.S. House of Representative to Costa Rica and we didn't know about it. The Department of State didn't know about it. And it was very annoying, I can assure you, to run into a Congressman walking around Costa Rica in a souvenir shop. He was down there not just to play golf but on business, to learn more about the drug war, interdiction, or to look at a land expropriation case. Those were matters that were my responsibility. I should have known about it. So I'm revealing here a complaint that they were very good at it. But sometimes I think they stepped over the line. Of course, I had to know, the embassy had to know, if a member of Congress went to Costa Rica on a matter that we were dealing with - if it was to go down to play golf, that was their business, which they did do. The Costa Rican embassy is very good at that. They get their message out, and they didn't wait for the U.S. embassy down there to help them, and sometimes our messages were at cross-purposes. In so doing, as I say, there were sticky times, but I guess you might say they're just getting better at what they do. You can't blame them. That's what the ambassador's job is up here, just to get his message out, but it sometimes

gave me heartaches.

Q: Let me ask this. You had leader grants and all that. Did you inform the Costa Rican embassy?

DODD: Yes, as a matter of fact, we did. I know it works both ways. We worked very carefully with them. But I must say too that the staff here, the DCM, whose name I forget now at the moment, were very good people and I worked very well with them. They were first class, as a matter of fact.

Q: Both at the university and often in the foreign ministries in Latin America - we've talked about this before - if you're going to be an anti-American, be a Marxist. You get it at the university, and those that don't become captives immediately on graduation end up in the foreign ministry; and it's carrying out a sort of residual anti-Americanism. Did you find any of that?

DODD: I honestly didn't. Most of the anti-Americanism I found - as you say, residual - I always described as more historic. I was always reminded that William Walker invaded Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Well, I can live with that. In other words, as an ambassador there I didn't run into any opposition to United States' policies except maybe the privatization, the competitive global market, but I said that's not a product of our doing. This is what's happened in the world. So very honestly I felt going out to the universities - and I did a lot - I said, "What are your complaints?" I sometimes had to go look for them. That was one of them, as I say, the competitive world market, but I said, "I can't control that." The U.S. government can't control that. It's the world today. But I was, of course, reminded of U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic and Panama, and I said it was Cold War diplomacy. I said, "Yes, we made mistakes. We intervened and then we forgot about you. It was a mistake. We should have had a more consistent kind of relationship with you." I said, "I think that was a fault," and I was very open about it and willing to discuss it. But I also said that much of our foreign policy over the years was a product of domestic pressure groups. We weren't always of one mind in things that we did in Latin America or didn't do, but I also sometimes was pointed in my references to the fact that Latin Americans have got to do more too to give direction and purposes to what it wants and it's got to make sacrifices and not wait for what we do all the time and then react to it. But honestly, Stu, I think in retrospect being an academician really gave me a distinct advantage in these two posts, because academicians in Latin America "go to the head of the line." They just do, whether you're a Foreign Service representative or a business person, whatever. If you have academic credentials and you've been a teacher, you have some credibility.

Q: You did find though in Uruguay, if I recall, you had problems with the university...

DODD: I didn't get into the national public university. I was told simply not to go.

Q: But in Costa Rica...?

DODD: I went to the University of Costa Rica, the Universite Nacionale, maybe two or three times a month. I gave a lecture, or there was always something out there to do or go to, or maybe I had the president of the university at the residence for lunch and we had different projects.

Q: So it was a completely different atmosphere?

DODD: Entirely different.

Q: I take it then there wasn't this residual Marxist...

DODD: There was some but...

Q: You hope for that.

DODD: Sure, you want some criticism, of course, you do, debate, discussion - it's fun - but not this contentious, confrontational thing. I didn't want to go out to the university in Uruguay and create a riot for something that we had done 25 years ago. It just was not necessary. I didn't need that; the embassy didn't need that. There's one area - if I may just take the initiative - I haven't discussed with you, and that's environmental diplomacy in Costa Rica. It's a major subject, and I'd hate to let it go by. When I became chief of mission in Costa Rica in '97, the Department of State created what we called environmental hubs. There were, I think six or seven worldwide. The U.S. embassy in Costa Rica was the hub for Latin America. I think subsequently now another one has been created in Brazil - I'm not certain. But it was a major, major opening dealing with environmental issues in Costa Rica, which is of paramount interest to them. I've described it here as environmental diplomacy. We had to work at the international level with Costa Ricans on environmental issues, global warming, carbon dioxide emissions and so on. I just want to reflect on several of these things. We dealt with environmental issues in Costa Rica and the hub - dealt with Central American and the Caribbean - as much for self-interest, enlightened self-interest. For example, fires in Guatemala and Belize affect the crop growers in Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi. My point is to protect U.S. industry through better environmental conditions abroad. Pollution over fishing in the Caribbean off the Central American coast in Central American waters affected U.S. fishing interests in coastal states like Florida and Louisiana. In other words, I looked at environmental issues as much for U.S. interests as I did for Costa Rican interests. We helped them mostly working with non-governmental organizations. So infertile fields, polluted areas, river streams create pressures for Central Americans to come to the United States. In other words, if working conditions or economic conditions aren't good, they're going to leave and create pressures here. It's enlightened self interest basically, what we touched on on a very important issue with Costa Ricans, because we dealt with environmental issues globally, regionally - in other words, Central America and the Caribbean - and directly with Costa Rica. The embassy set up seminars every month at the residence. We invited representatives of environmental organizations in Costa Rica, sometimes the rest of Central America, to simply discuss amongst themselves some of the key environmental issues. I didn't go in with a blueprint to tell Costa Ricans

how to deal with environmental issues, but when the opportunity came, of course, we explained what our position was on an issue or maybe how we could be helpful on an issue. But it was basically to create a forum to get environmental groups within Costa Rica, Central America and the Caribbean to meet and talk and to discuss these issues. It was truly one of the most interesting parts of my assignment there. I spent a quarter to half my time on it, along with drug issues. The Biodiversity Institute dealt with the environment. The pharmaceutical companies in the United States like Abbott Laboratories looked at plant life for future work on medicines, drugs for health purposes. It was a fascinating part of my job. Larry Gumbiner was the hub environmental officer there, the first one there, a splendid human being. He did a first-rate job and had a great staff. Thinking back now, it was one of the most interesting parts of my assignment.

Q: Let's look at Costa Rica. What were they doing in this regard?

DODD: Basically in this area they created essentially one of the most developed, highly sophisticated national park systems in the Western Hemisphere (maybe the world). They claim - and I think the percentage is fairly accurate - about 26 percent of their land mass, which is about the size of West Virginia, is in national parks. They were especially interested in preserving those parks and extending the number of national parks by working with neighbors in creating what is called a meso-American corridor, that runs through Central America, to create not just park lands but to protect the flora and fauna that can be so valuable, absorbing carbon dioxide emissions. So the country was really at the forefront, I would say, in Central America and the Caribbean.

Q: What about industries they already had? Were they pretty good about pollution controls?

DODD: Yes, fairly good, certainly not vehicular emissions in Costa Rica. they were working on that when I left. But with certain U.S. companies like Intel, Abbott Laboratories, Proctor & Gamble, any one of the U.S. corporations who come to Costa Rica, environmental issues are uppermost in their planning. Then taking it on a regional but a global level, the Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, Timothy Wirth, played a very important role in helping me get these issues here right on the forefront, taking Costa Rica as a model on environmental and global affairs.

Q: How did Costa Rica deal with the Nicaraguan government and the Panamanian government?

DODD: Let me take each one. The Costa Rican-Nicaraguan relations were contentious on several levels. I mentioned one just a while ago, the Nicaraguan refugee issue. Costa Rican-Nicaraguan relations deteriorated, not to the point where ambassadors were recalled. The San Juan River, which is the boundary between the northern boundary for Costa Rica and the southern boundary for Nicaragua, became a major bone of contention. The San Juan River is under the sovereignty of Nicaragua. It is not a river at a certain point which divides the boundaries of these two countries. Costa Rica wants to allow its security forces to patrol the rivers. Nicaragua has respected this.

Q: That's sort of like the Potomac, which the District has up to the Virginia shoreline...

DODD: And this is correct in the sense with Nicaragua.

Q: It's a pain in the ass.

DODD: It's just a nuisance, because what happened was during my time [was that] Costa Rican national security forces needed to use the river to visit Costa Rican towns along the estuary and, in so doing, on several occasions the Nicaraguan security forces stopped the Costa Ricans from using the river. Under the Treaty of 1888, Nicaragua was recognized as having sovereignty over the river but subsequently had given Costa Rica the right to use the river for security purposes. So it became very, very, very contentious. And a debt issue also was on the agenda here, the Nicaraguan debt to Costa Rica ran somewhere about 300 to 400 million dollars. The Costa Ricans wanted that paid off. But the Nicaraguans wanted debt forgiveness and so forth. Relations were not good, but not to the breaking point.

Q: Was it sort of a personality thing, too?

DODD: As a matter of fact, the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica, Roberto Rojas, was a very good friend of the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister. On the contrary, Lino Gutierrez, who is now a deputy assistant secretary of state, knows that area better than I do. When I was brooding over this conflict, said, "Tom, stop worrying about it. Central Americans know each better than you or I will ever understand them," and I think he was right. So they knew each other. They may not have gotten along all the time, but they could talk to each other a lot better and more effectively that I could. But relations were not good. They were testy but not at the breaking point. Then looking south, relations with Panama were good. But I always explained that there were really no issues, border issues, that were irritants. Panama's relations usually run east and west, of course, with Washington but not contentious with Nicaragua, except the drug issue, but not contentious. We always were trying to find ways to cooperate with the Panamanians on drug issues in the overland transit route.

Q: Did Costa Rica get any benefit by being on both coasts, the Pacific-Caribbean thing, or not? Does it make much of a difference?

DODD: There are several things, I suppose, you could raise. The east coast of Costa Rica is black; it's African Costa Rica, and these people are of West Indian origin. They came there to build the Panama railroad and settled there, but also they helped build Costa Rican railroad too, in the late 19th century. Their connection is to the Caribbean, black Caribbean, and to some extent the United States. But that area of the east coast needs economic development. Limón is the major port for imports and exports to Costa Rica, but only on the planning stage have efforts been made to build a port. It's a major tourist attraction. At least that's where the tourist boats go to. On the west coast, the Marriott Corporation, for example has a resort on the west coast. There are several new hotels

opening up along there for U.S. tourists, moved from Mexico, high crime, costs, have moved now to the Costa Rican west coast. So in that sense, yes, you might talk about the east and west coast with advantages but more with different characteristics and looking in different directions. To talk about the west coast and Asian trade, no, that would be pushing the issue, that's not a factor; or east coast trade, the Afro Costa Rican with the West Indies, no, that's pushing the issue, because tourism and commercial interests are tied to the United States.

Q: Does Mexico play any role in this area, the colossus to the near north?

DODD: Mexico plays a major role in Central America, it has historically. But very specifically during my tenure, Mexico played a major role: Taking the cultural assumptions that, of course, Mexico has with the area, language and the Indo-American culture, but Mexico being a member of NAFTA is Central America's hope for getting into free trade agreements or maybe getting into NAFTA so countries like Costa Rica and what is called the northern tier of Central America, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, have signed free trade agreements with Mexico. Mexico is sometimes referred to as the colossus of the north but more now in the context of being really the friendly neighbor that may open the possibility of getting access to the North American Free Trade Agreement. But Mexico matters. The Mexican ambassador in Costa Rica is a major player in diplomatic circles, much more so, for example, than the Brazilian or the Argentinean or Chilean diplomats.

Q: Is there anything we haven't covered?

DODD: I mentioned the environmental issues because I wanted to get that up-front for you, because not to talk about 25 percent of my work there would be a gross omission on my part. But I would say really the area of foreign policy that was of great interest to us was the issue of human rights. Costa Rica was always the mediator, the arbiter of international disputes. With no armed forces it's posed some problems, as I mentioned, in the ship rider agreement. But the biggest challenge really for me and the embassy was to help Costa Rica redefine the word 'security' and to help Costa Rica modernize its security forces. Sixty percent of the police consisted of political appointees. You have to professionalize this institution with better pay and training. We were trying to work with them in modernizing their state structure. I'm not saying we're pushing them to overturn policies dealing with the role of the state in the society but trying to help bring them up to the 21st century on security issues, redefining security issues. It's not the Soviet Union anymore; it's drug consumption and it's street crime. These are the things that are of concern to them and to us. Domestic issues in Costa Rica and the U.S., like so much in the Western Hemisphere, are converging. We all have the same problems.

Q: Then you left, as ambassadors do, after four years.

DODD: Yes.

Q: A good four years?

DODD: They were truly, I think, the best years of my life. As I mentioned several weeks ago in my interview with you, when one of my students said, "Why doesn't he put his money where his mouth is?" I felt that I had done something that I was somewhat hesitant to do eight years ago, but I found that I could do it. I worked with some wonderful career people, and we got some things done. I put teaching Latin American history to the test!

Q: Great. Well, I think we'll stop at this point.

End of interview