

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

AMBASSADOR ROBERT T. HENNEMEYER

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INTERVIEW

Q: Bob, what attracted you to foreign affairs?

HENNEMEYER: I think several things, but perhaps most importantly the fact that my father was foreign born, and that my grandparents, who lived in Germany, came to visit us while I was a small boy, and invited me to visit them in Germany in 1937. I think that got me used to a foreign environment, interested me in living and working abroad, so that much, much later, although I had made about three career changes, I eventually ended up in the Foreign Service. I first thought I was going to follow in my father's footsteps and be a physician, but after one semester in pre-med, I was drafted in the Army during the war.

Q: A lot of careers were changed because of WWII.

HENNEMEYER: That's right. When I came back two years and some months later, I had changed my mind. I thought I would be a history teacher and was for a time, but then when an old friend took the Foreign Service exam, that sort of reawakened this latent interest, I guess, and so I tried the exam and came in.

Q: 1937 was a very interesting year in Germany. Of course, you were young. Where did you go in Germany? Did you get any impressions that this was an odd country in the time of Hitler?

HENNEMEYER: The memories are still quite vivid. I was just 12 and a half, but I remember quite well. I spent most of the time in Berlin because that's where my grandparents lived, and I was staying with them. There were some extraordinary things happening. The campaign against the Jews was in full swing. I remember shops with the word "Judo" written in large letters on it, some of them with S.A. brownshirt troopers in front, fighting customers away.

1937 was the 700th anniversary of the city of Berlin. I recall reading in the German press just a couple of years ago that they made a big thing out of the 750th in 1987. There was an enormous set designed, a celebration done in the electric stadium, the stadium in which the Olympics had just been held the year before. It was very interesting. It was a historical tabloid of the history of Berlin done with people marching around the stadium. I remember a group showing the black death, another group showing the Thirty-Years' War, things like that. But the highlight was during the speech, and I remember he was wearing a white uniform, the stadium was darkened, and there was a single spotlight on him. He looked for all the world like a large white balloon.

But at the end of the speech came the traditional playing of "Deutschland, Deutschland uber alles" and I knew enough that I was supposed to stand up when another country's national anthem is played. But I was becoming so unhappy with what I had seen in Germany up to then, that when they played the Party song, whereupon I sat down, the only one in the stadium of about 50,000 people. I was with my grandfather, who spoke no English, so we could only communicate in German. An S.A. man behind me told me to stand up, and I pretended that I spoke no German. Then he told my grandfather, "You'd better have him stand up." The embarrassing thing was that my grandfather had to tell me,

in German, to stand up, otherwise we'd both be in trouble. That was my minor ineffectual protest. (Laughs)

Q: You took the Foreign Service exam and passed it.

HENNEMEYER: In 1951. I was teaching.

Q: Where had you gone to college?

HENNEMEYER: I went to the University of Chicago and took a Ph.B. in 1947. Those were the days when after high school you could get a bachelor's in two years, but then if you wanted to get a master's, it took you three. So the net result was five years, which was the same as anyplace else. So I took an M.A. in 1950.

While working on the M.A. and after, I taught in Chicago public high schools. Then the last year I taught in Chicago City Junior College. That's what I was doing when I took the Foreign Service exam.

Q: You entered in 1952. I noted you spent quite a bit of time, more than most, right in Germany. How did that happen? According to what I can ascertain from the records, you went to Bremen in '52, you were in Bremerhaven in '53, you were in Bonn in '54, and then you were in Munich from '56 to '57.

HENNEMEYER: Yes. I think it was because of the language. I had German when I came in the Service, partly because of the four months I spent in Germany with my grandparents, which is where I first learned it, and then it was more or less dormant for some time, although I took it in high school. Then when I was in the Army, I spent a fair amount of time in Germany and using German, both interrogating German prisoners when we were going through France and Belgium, and when we got into Germany, I was used as an interpreter, informally, by our colonel, because I was the only one who spoke German. When we were going to take over property for a certain period, I was the one who often interpreted. So I got back into practice. So when I came into the Foreign Service, my German was fairly good.

Although despite that, my first assignment was actually supposed to have been to Surabaya, but my father died just then, before I could go, and I had drop out of circulation for a while and help at home. When I was ready to go, they had filled that post and they asked me to go to Bremen.

I know that they transferred me from Bremen up to Bremerhaven, which was a one-man post, because I had German. I think most of the subsequent assignments, both during that holding period and then later on, was in good measure because I knew German.

Q: Did you want to be a German specialist?

HENNEMEYER: I hadn't planned it that way at all, but as it worked out, I was comfortable with it. I developed an interest later in Africa, and then much of my career was spent, following the tour in Germany, having a tour in Africa, or working on African affairs in the Department. So I was quite happy with that dual specialty of Germany and Africa.

Q: You left Germany in 1957 and went to the Department. What was your assignment there?

HENNEMEYER: I was assigned as Assistant Chief of Protocol for State Visits. You may remember the unhappy history of Vic Purse, who was deputy chief of protocol.

Q: Was this a Buick convertible?

HENNEMEYER: I know the story only secondhand, because I came into protocol after Vic had left. But the conventional wisdom was that this was in the aftermath of a trip by _____ that Vic Purse's wife was given, as a gift by the King, a yellow Oldsmobile convertible.

Q: You recall that it was yellow, part of the folk history of the Foreign Service. (Laughs)

HENNEMEYER: That's right. Obviously that was something one should not do, and Vic, I believe, was summarily removed from the position of Deputy Chief of Protocol. That meant that Clem Conger, who gained great fame later as the creator of the eighth floor of the State Department, who was Assistant Chief of Protocol, moved in as Deputy Chief. I filled in behind Clem and was in charge of state visits. I did that for a year, which was the earliest I could get out of it.

Q: How did you feel about that assignment?

HENNEMEYER: It was extraordinarily interesting, and it gave me a fund of cocktail-party stories, extraordinary things that I participated in or was a witness of. I worked on visits of Nkrumah, then the president of Germany, a little bit on the De Gaulle visit, a little bit on one of the Shah's visits, a little bit on the Mamumba visit. So I saw a lot of interesting things. But in those days, Protocol was a very small shop. We used to try to run far too many visits during our year, with the result that the few of us who were doing it would be on the road maybe as much as a third or half our time. The result was that I was almost never home, and this got to be a little wearing with a young family.

So after the Nkrumah visit, where I got to meet Joe Palmer, then the Assistant Secretary for Near East and African Affairs--the African Bureau didn't exist then--he told me that they were going to establish a new bureau and offered me the job of desk officer for English-speaking West Africa, a small bureau, I was glad to take it. But I asked him if he would clear it with Wiley Buchanan, who was then the Chief of Protocol, because I didn't

really want to walk out on Wiley. He'd been very kind to me. So it was cleared, and I took the job.

Q: Since we are going to be talking quite a bit about African affairs, is there anything you'd like to say about the visit of Mamumba and of Nkrumah when you were there, these leaders of newly emerging countries?

HENNEMEYER: For Nkrumah, it was a triumphal return. As you know, he had been a student at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, as Dr. Izekway from Nigeria had been before. In fact, "Zeke" was helpful to Nkrumah in getting into Lincoln and getting some financial assistance. This was in the glory days of newly independent Africa. Everybody was upbeat, very optimistic. It was an era of good feeling about Africa. Nkrumah came really to a very, very happy kind of homecoming, saw a lot of old friends, was able to present newly independent Africa in a very attractive setting, and it was all very upbeat.

I remember a couple of minor glitches, where some very bitter black Americans, who resented the fact that Nkrumah was paying a visit to all Americans, were a bit bitter about their efforts to corral him for themselves. I can remember one or two minor unpleasantries, but by and large, it was a triumphal procession with a lot of good feeling on all sides. I remember that period rather fondly.

Q: What about with Mamumba?

HENNEMEYER: First of all, I was not primarily responsible for the Mamumba visit as I was for Nkrumah's, so my acquaintance with him was peripheral.

One of the revelations I discovered, while working in protocol, was how the U.S. Government handles problems of a state visitor or members of his entourage who are looking for female companionship.

Q: This has always been a puzzlement.

HENNEMEYER: Well, it was a puzzlement to me, too, and I thought probably, if I thought about it at all, I was aware, of course, that other governments who had been doing this sort of thing much longer than we, probably had sophisticated means of taking care of this sort of thing. But I was pleasantly surprised to discover that we were also fairly sophisticated, in that it can honestly be said that no federal government official was ever involved in such arrangements. But there was an understanding that if the question arose, there was a sergeant of the Washington Metropolitan Police who was stationed in the vicinity, and when such conversation began, you referred the questioner to that sergeant, and the problem went away.

Q: So with Mamumba, you had very little involvement?

HENNEMEYER: Very little. This was a man, clearly, who had good qualities, had real qualities of leadership. He was impressive. He was even impressive when, as happened from time to time, as you would expect since he had not been exposed to this sort of thing, when you saw that he was out of his depth and was very inexperienced in dealing with the problems he was confronted with. But even at that, he was impressive in the way in which he took it with good humor. So he was not an unattractive personality. In retrospect, a tragic figure. He obviously didn't deserve what happened.

Q: What moved you to African affairs? You came from this German concentration, with a glimpse of protocol, and you became rather an expert on Africa.

HENNEMEYER: I can actually date the occasion, because it was an unusual evening. When I was vice consul in Bremen, I had been in the Service for less than a year, I was invited for dinner one evening to the home of Prince Louis Ferdinand, the heir to the German Imperial Throne, had there been one, the youngest son of the last Kaiser, and Princess Kyra, his wife. They had, as another dinner guest, the legendary Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, the elderly German Army officer who led the German forces into East Africa during World War I, and whose forces were the last German forces to surrender, even after the Armistice in November 1918.

At any rate, I had a very interesting evening with him, and that got me interested. I subsequently read his memoirs and read some other things about East Africa. That actually was my first real interest in the area.

Later, when Joe Palmer asked me if I would like to join him in the Bureau of African Affairs, my interest then had been deepened by having worked on the Nkrumah visit, which I found fascinating. So I accepted that with great pleasure and had two very interesting years being--this is a measure of how small the bureau was in those days--desk officer for Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambia, and Cameron.

At the end of those two years, I got a real opportunity to get more deeply involved, in that I was invited by the British Government and concurred then by FSI, that Lew Hoffacker and I would be the two who would go to Oxford for African Area Studies for a graduate year. That was a wonderful opportunity, and that sort of sealed my fate, as far as Africa was concerned.

Q: I'd like to talk about that time at Oxford, but before that, what was the American interest in the west coast of Africa?

HENNEMEYER: First, in keeping with our ancient traditions, it was a very benign and helpful interest in making the path to independence for these countries as smooth as possible. This included some difficult moments with some of our closest allies in trying to persuade them to hasten the pace of independence. I can remember a rather acrimonious meeting with a Belgian colleague from their embassy here, when we thought we had some very solid intelligence reports of coming disorders in the Congo. This was

pre-independence. We urged him to tell his government that some early concessions would be in order. He didn't agree with our diagnosis at all. But our posture in the Bureau of African Affairs was one of, while obviously retaining friendly relations with our allies, was to hurry the process towards independence along. This sometimes put us at odds with our own colleagues in the bureau.

Q: This went on for years, really, and used to be called "the battle of Africa," which was fought between the Bureau of African Affairs and the Bureau of European Affairs, each with its own point of interest. Did you get involved in any of this?

HENNEMEYER: Some of that, although my territories, except for Liberia, were former British territories. While the British didn't move with the speed that the Africans would have wished, still in comparison with the other European colonial powers, they were more forthcoming. But I do recall some very serious disagreements with friends on the French desk, the Portuguese, and Belgian desks, as well. But those were not my countries. I was involved peripherally, or when I was filling in for a colleague who wasn't there.

One little example might be of historical interest. In 1959, I made a trip through the area, a rather lengthy trip, in which I helped open some posts out there. One stop was in Freetown, where I worked with Tom Reiner for a few days, helping to get our consulate open there. I was invited to dinner one evening--I was the only one invited, as I recall--with Somoris Dorman, the British governor general, at which occasion he told me that he thought the independent state would come the following year, 1960.

When I got back to Washington, I reported that, of course, and also reported it to our British colleague, with whom we dealt very closely, Douglas Williams, who then had the title of colonial attaché. He was quite upset by that information and said it couldn't be true, that I had misunderstood. Well, as it turned out, it was exactly right.

Q: Going to Oxford, did you find that there was a particular slant that was different in African studies than you would have gotten in the United States?

HENNEMEYER: I think it was different, but I don't think it was different for political or ideological reasons. I think it was different because the Oxford approach was far more historical, whereas ours tended to be either more sociological or more political-science oriented. It was a very good program. I shouldn't call it a "program." There were a lot of very able people in the field, and you just went around and picked their courses or tried to get in their tutorials. I was fortunate in that there were some first-rate people there at that time. Vincent Harlow was the old imperial historian, and you needed what he had to say as kind of a base. Marjorie Perrem was the great biographer of Lugar, a wonderful scholar, and a very good lecturer. Then there was Kenneth Kurkwin at St. Anthony's, who brought a more anthropological and sociological approach. George Bennett, who, unfortunately, died very young, was a first-rate political scientists who did a lot of work on Kenya. He was also very lively and very interesting, and he was my tutor. So I thought

the program was excellent. It's a program you have to create yourself, but the resources were there in high-quality people.

Q: When you came out, you were really put into a very critical position, weren't you? You went to Tanganyika. How did you get the appointment?

HENNEMEYER: I don't know how it happened. I received orders while I was at Oxford that I would be going to Dar es Salaam, which then was still a U.N. trust territory under British trusteeship. Therefore, our post was a consul general. Red Duggan was our consul general, and I was to go there as his number two.

There was one very fortunate thing that happened and one very sad thing that happened. The fortunate thing was that while at Oxford, I met four Tanganyikans who were studying there. All four, within a couple of years, became Cabinet members when they returned, and this gave me a set of contacts that was almost unique, because while at Oxford, we were very close. That was a very positive thing and gave me a leg up in starting at Dar es Salaam.

The sad thing was that Red's eyesight was failing very rapidly, and just after independence in December of 1961, within days, Red's eyesight failed completely. He had glaucoma. He had to be Medevaced. Then I was chargé for an extended period. It would have been better had Red been able to stay on, because he had a wealth of knowledge of the post. He had been there for several years, a very able man. But it didn't work out that way.

Q: Could you describe the situation when you first arrived? This was still colonial in 1961.

HENNEMEYER: I got there in July of 1961, and independence came that December. So it was an atypical colonial situation in that it was a honeymoon period. The agreement on the date for independence had been reached. The British were doing their best in a short period of time and in an orderly fashion to phase out. The Tanganyikans were very, very upbeat and happy about the coming independence state. It was a real honeymoon. Nobody was complaining about anything. The only complaints I heard were from the British, who were grouching a bit about how many positions they would have to continue to staff at the Tanganyikans' request, because they didn't have enough people to take over. So it was not an atmosphere where they would be pushed out at all.

Q: Also, Tanganyika was somewhat different in that it had been a German colony. The British roots, I assume, weren't as deep there as they would have been in Kenya and other places.

HENNEMEYER: That's true. The British settler community was minuscule, unlike Kenya. So they were not really a political factor at all. Well, that's an overstatement. They were a minor political factor.

There were times during the inter-war period when British governments in London sought to merge Tanganyika with Kenya and Uganda into a greater East Africa entity on the Kenya model. Some governments wanted to encourage large-scale British settlement in Tanganyika. But interestingly enough, there were British governors general during that period in Tanganyika who reminded London that this was initially a League of Nations mandate, and subsequently a U.N. trustee territory, and that didn't accord with the conditions of the mandate, and resisted the idea of British settlement. So there's some unsung heroes there, because rather than a Mau Mau epoch as Kenya experienced, Tanganyika had none of that. The very few British settlers who were there, Derek Brycesen was one who became Minister of Agriculture in the first government, and Lady Mariam Chesham, another settler, an American by birth, married to a British subject, who remained after independence and became a member of Parliament. So it was a very amicable transition.

Q: How did the story develop as you saw it and may have experienced it?

HENNEMEYER: The first couple of years of independence, I stayed until July of 1964, exactly three years. The first two years went fairly smoothly, the transition where more and more Tanganyikans took over senior positions. One noticed that it didn't always work as well as it had in the past, but on the other hand, they were trying to do more difficult things and they were trying to do it with relatively inexperienced people. But it went along fairly well, and relations with the remaining British were quite good, and our relations with the government were excellent.

Q: They didn't have the feeling that the United States was being a bit starry-eyed about this new independence, whereas the British were saying, "Well, you know, this isn't going to work," sort of dog in the manger?

HENNEMEYER: No. I'm sure that was an attitude in some other places, but I think because of the fact that the colonial civil service who went to Tanganyika always knew that it was a different set of ground rules, a mandate or a trust territory, and that this did not have a colonial future, I think that was understood. They were a different breed of cat from colonial civil servants that I had met elsewhere. I admire them. For the most part, they were very good people with a clear understanding that their role was a temporary one, and that their task was really to work themselves out of a job. So I found very little of that. I'm sure some of them thought that the Americans were starry-eyed, but I didn't find the dog-in-the-manger attitude.

Q: Ambassador Leonhart was there.

HENNEMEYER: Right.

Q: He's been known to be a difficult character. You were his number two, the DCM. What was his style of operation?

HENNEMEYER: I'll answer that, and then I'd like to go back a little bit and tell you how Bill Leonhart came to be named ambassador.

Q: Why don't we start there?

HENNEMEYER: All right. I was chargé for only a month or so when I got an instruction from the Department to seek agrément for John Kenneth Emerson, who was then our consul general in what was then Salisbury.

Q: He was a well-known Japanese hand, wasn't he?

HENNEMEYER: He was a well-known Japanese hand, but he had African experience. He'd been consul general in Lagos before he went to Salisbury. I was delighted, because I knew him and respected him greatly. This must have been the fastest agrément in history, because I received the telegram the very day I was invited to dinner at the governor general's. Julius Nyerere, as premier, was also at that dinner.

After dinner, I was able to take the governor general and _____ over to one side, privately, tell them about the request I had received. They asked me about John Emerson, did I know him. I said, "Yes, I know him personally. We are very, very fortunate. He's an excellent man." I gave them a sales pitch, and both the governor general and _____ said immediately, "You have agrément." So the next morning, bright and early, I sent the telegram in.

Then for a long time afterwards, nothing happened. During this kind of limbo, my eldest son developed a growth on the bone of his arm, which was diagnosed as possible cancer. There were no facilities there, and my wife, for medical reasons, does not fly. So with the Department's permission, I had to turn the post over to Don Smith while I flew home quickly with my son to have this bone problem taken care of.

I had a little cubbyhole in the Department while I was waiting for this. My son was at Children's Hospital. I was sharing it with John Emerson, who was waiting for when he was going to go to the Hill. I think the story is widely known now. The then-Senator H_____ decided that John Emerson was part of the old China crew who had lost China, and that he would oppose the nomination. In those days, senatorial courtesy being what it was, John's processing was going nowhere. I remember he came back from a meeting with the Secretary at that time, saying, "They're going to fight it out. Bob, isn't that wonderful?" I remember saying to John, "I wish I could believe it, because I don't think they fight it out on issues of this kind." Unfortunately, I was right. John did not go to Dar es Salaam. He was given, I think, as a bobby prize, something he liked very much, and went as minister to Tokyo, a position which was occupied by Bill Leonhart. So suddenly I got a request for agrément for Bill Leonhart.

Back to your question of how Bill and I got along. Bill did have that reputation of being very difficult, and he was not an easy man to work for, but he and I got along very well, and we're still good friends. So it stood the test. Bill is an absolutely first-rate political analyst and a meticulous drafter. I knew the place a lot better than Bill. Obviously, I'd been there longer and I knew the players. I think Bill and I complemented each other. That is, I think I was better able to find out a lot of what was going on and better able to see people at different levels than Bill.

At any rate, we reached a kind of accommodation. I would find out things, put a draft together, and Bill would, I must say, approve it greatly, then give it a twist that he thought would gain a readership for this bit of information in the Department, so he made the message a much better one. Then in time, Bill developed his own contacts and we operated at different levels. I think Bill used me well, and I think I served him well. Personally we got along fine.

Q: These interviews are sometimes read by people who aren't familiar with how things work within the Department of State. Often the point is that we use the shortcuts, like saying so and so is a good drafter, which means they draft a telegram or a dispatch well. But you were emphasizing the point of not only saying it nicely, but also to look towards the audience and how you attract their attention to your particular problem and make them pay attention. This is an extremely important area, isn't it?

HENNEMEYER: You're right. That's something that most of us take a long time learning, because it's not easy. Some people are very good at it; most of us are not. Right up front, you've got to answer the question of the reader, as to why he should be reading it. That's got to be clear right away, why it's important for him to read this message, because anybody in a position of responsibility in the Department can only read a small percentage of what lands on his desk, read it through. So in the first couple of sentences, you've got to tell him why he's got to read that message, and while he's reading it, why this message is of interest or importance to the U.S. Government. That takes real skill. That means finding that particular point, that particular nuance of what might have been a long conversation with a minister, that is the kernel, what's really important, and put that right up front and make it eye-catching. That takes a special skill.

Q: And he had it.

HENNEMEYER: Bill Leonhart had it in spades. He did it very well. His stuff reads extremely well.

Q: Going back to the situation in Tanganyika, it is now Tanzania.

HENNEMEYER: It became Tanzania after the federation with Zanzibar. It never was a merger.

Q: Could you talk about your relations and your observations of Julius Nyerere, who is, of course, a seminal figure in the African scene?

HENNEMEYER: First of all, on a very personal level, an extremely likeable man, not pretentious, not full of himself at all, enjoyed a joke, a person who was pleasant to be with. He was also a great political theorist and, unfortunately, economical theorist. I think as a manager he left much to be desired. He was a charismatic figure on the stump, a great leader of his people. I don't believe for a moment that he meant anything but to do the best he could for the well being of his people.

But I guess the best way I could put it is that during early 1963, Nyerere decided that the party, TANU, Tanganyika African National Union, was not functioning the way it was supposed to. It wasn't really mobilizing the masses for new initiatives and so on. So he decided he would give up the premiership and go out in the boonies, revitalize the Party, and he would turn to Rashidi Kawawa to be acting premier. He was a minister--I've forgotten of what, a very small man but well known because he had been an actor in Swahili-language films. So everybody in the country knew him.

At any rate, Rashidi Kawawa was no great political figure at all, but within days of Julius' departure for the boonies, one noticed a difference in the way government functioned. You got answers to questions, decisions were made, and it was simply because Kawawa was not theorists, didn't spend hours and hours talking about the future of the world with visitors from other parts of the world, but instead came to his desk promptly early in the morning, looked at his "in" box, took things out of his "in" box, made decisions, and put them in his "out" box. It made a world of difference.

Q: Bob, what was the situation with Nyerere? How did you see him?

HENNEMEYER: As I mentioned, one could not help but like and respect him as a leader. Clearly he was a world leader, not just an African leader. But he was not really one who enjoyed the nitty-gritty of government, and he was not very good at it. He tended not to empty his "in" box, and that was a complaint I heard from his ministers and so on. That was not his strong suit. The result was, of course, that since this became a one-party state and became highly centralized in his person, when he didn't empty his "in" box, a lot of things didn't happen.

Q: You saw him as the leader who was going to be around for some time.

HENNEMEYER: Oh, yes, no doubt. He was unchallenged.

Q: As the United States representatives there, did you find yourselves being concerned about the fact that he seemed to be off, you might say, on the left-wing socialist side, both for our own political interests, but also for concern about the economy?

HENNEMEYER: That wasn't so apparent during the time that I was there. We did have some concern about the speed with which he was trying to develop cooperatives as an alternative to the Indian middle class, which had a monopoly of commerce. Obviously there was a political imperative for him to involve his own people, to involve the local

people in the economy. That had to be done. But some of us had some concern about the pace and the method. But that didn't really become an acute problem until after I left, until the Lusaka Manifesto and things like that.

Q: We had no real commercial interests there, did we?

HENNEMEYER: Almost none. There was a time some years earlier when the U.S. automobile industry had some major exports to Africa, but by that time we had been displaced largely by Peugeot in East Africa, and I suspect they've been replaced by the Japanese since then.

Q: There are schools that say that American policy is driven by economics and trade and all that, but in many cases there just isn't that much at stake there. You didn't feel anybody breathing down your shoulder on that?

HENNEMEYER: No, not at all. No, that was not a major factor at all. I think we started out with a lot of genuine good will towards Tanganyika and Nyerere as a leader. I think as time went on, our concern was that the Soviet bloc or the Chinese not acquire undue influence there. We wanted to keep Nyerere basically Western oriented; that was our objective. I think, with minor glitches, that was successful. He never really went over to the other camp. He flirted, but I suspect some of that was tactical, and some of that, of course, was dictated by the fact that he saw one of his major roles to be a haven for those who were trying to free from colonialism the rest of Southern Africa.

So one of the more interesting aspects of my time in Dar es Salaam was the presence there of major Southern African liberation organizations or political parties. ANC was there, BAC, Felimo. In fact, I knew Eduardo Monley quite well. That gave the place certain spice that it would not otherwise have had.

Q: What was our attitude? What were your instructions on how to deal with Felimo? We're talking about the early sixties.

HENNEMEYER: That's right. We maintained close and friendly relations with them. By this time we had on our staff a very, very able first-tour officer, John Blacken, who is now our ambassador in Guinea Bissau. John and I worked very hard to maintain close personal relations with Sam Dejoma, who was there at that time, and with a great many others. We would invite them to our homes, we would see them in their offices. What some of them wanted very much--they realized soon that that was not in the cards--was military assistance from us. It just wasn't going to happen.

Q: You made that quite clear?

HENNEMEYER: Well, that had to be made clear right away that we weren't going to do that. What we did try to provide them were educational opportunities, believing that while eventually they would succeed in governing their own countries, in the interim it

might be very worthwhile for some of their better young people to acquire skills that would be useful in an independent non-apartheid South Africa.

So through AID, we contracted with the African American Institute. Pat Murphy was then the director of the program in Dar es Salaam, and we ran an active program of providing scholarship opportunities in the States and elsewhere in the west for exiled Africans, if you will, and we established a small school, also under African American Institute auspices, funded by AID, for Mozambican government. However, at the same time, we were aware, of course, that they were receiving military assistance. I remember one case where a ship from Algeria came in with a great deal of military equipment for Felimo and other organizations. So others were doing that, but clearly that was something we could not do, but we felt it was important to maintain contact with these people and, in the area of education, to do something constructive for them for their future. I think even though some of them are rather high-powered in their rhetoric of criticizing us, I think some of them are really aware that what we did at that time was helpful.

Q: How about Nyerere? Back to him for a minute. What was his attitude toward the United States?

HENNEMEYER: I think it was very friendly. I thought his attitude toward the United States was generally positive. I think there were times when he felt that we were neglecting Africa, other times that he felt that we were excessively preoccupied with the Cold War, but I felt that, too.

Q: How about the situation in Zanzibar? That became rather volatile while you were there.

HENNEMEYER: Yes, it did. That happened in January of 1964. To me it came as a surprise, although, in retrospect, Fritz Picard, who was our consular there at the time, was aware of growing unrest. I don't think any of us predicted what finally happened. Yes, I remember very well. Then the press descended on Dar es Salaam to try to find out what was going on in Zanzibar. But we had no special brief for the Sultan's Government in Zanzibar. In fact, as you recall, the election, which had confirmed the Sultan's Government in power, was one that was a very dubious affair, and nobody was really happy with the result. It was clear, I think, to most observers that if it was going to survive, it was going to have a lot more representatives, and it didn't have a chance to do that.

A lot of people have forgotten what a bloody affair that was--there were several thousand people killed, Arabs driven down to the beaches and slaughtered at the beaches by the insurgents. There was an Italian photographer who chartered a plane from Mombasa, flew down there and got some extraordinary footage of the slaughter on the beach.

At any rate, our concern was exactly the same as the Tanganyikan Government's concern, and that was to contain the rebellion on Zanzibar and direct it to a more constructive end.

That is, it accomplished its immediate purpose--that is, it brought a black African majority group into power. But then the question arose for Tanganyika's own security: What kinds of relationships would that new government have? As you know, very early on there was a fairly strong East Bloc presence, and that concerned us and the Tanganyikans.

So very quietly and discreetly we worked with the Tanganyikans to help them establish a police presence initially on Zanzibar, and we encouraged Nyerere in his efforts to develop a cooperative federal arrangement with the Zanzibar Government. That succeeded to some extent, although it never worked the way it was supposed to. But in time, the red house on Zanzibar, for whatever reason, calmed down and it never became what some sensationalists predicted, the "Cuba of Africa."

Q: Did you have any part in dealing with it? At one point, Picard and the others were actually under arrest and they had a problem extracting.

HENNEMEYER: That's right. I was involved in the call. There was a U.S. Navy ship in the city. At that time the Navy ran periodic cruises around Africa. I think they were called SoLant Amity at the time. The ship was the USS Manley, I remember very well, was visiting Mombasa at the time of the Zanzibar revolt. Picard and the other Americans there, particularly the Project Mercury people, which was a NASA project, a tracking station for NASA's satellite program, most of them were contract employees of Bendix, as I recall, they were literally trapped on the island. There came the question of trying to get them out. Fritz Picard, with great courage, persuaded Karomi and the revolutionary council to agree that the Americans would leave.

Ambassador Leonhart and Jim Rookte, who came down from Nairobi to help us out, and I, we succeeded in getting in touch with the Manley and got approval for the Manley to come down. I believe Jim flew back to Mombasa, boarded the Manley, then went with the Manley into Zanzibar. Fritz, at great personal risk, succeeded in getting everybody on the ship. He and maybe Dale P____, stayed behind. I can't swear to that. But Fritz stayed behind. I remember Fritz's wife, Shona, and their son came and stayed with us. Fritz came out later, but I've forgotten how. He also came to live with us.

As you know, he was quite ill at the time. He had what seemed to be a kind of nervous breakdown. No sooner did he arrive with us than the Tanganyika Army mutinied Fritz thought he was back on Zanzibar, and this was Zanzibar happening again. So he was very difficult to control for a few days. Unfortunately, during some of that time, I was under arrest by the mutineers, and after that, trapped in our embassy, in the chancellory, for a while. So I was unable to assist my wife in trying to manage Fritz. It was a very difficult time for her. Shona and Hoge, the boy, we had gotten out earlier before the mutiny, and they had gone to Nairobi.

At any rate, the mutiny burst on us completely unprepared. We didn't know that was going to happen. I realize now what the immediate causes of it were, and it was one of

these unfortunate management glitches which occurred on Nyerere's watch. There was a program for Africanizing the Tanganyika rifles officer corps. The non-commissioned officers and the enlisted personnel were all Africans. This was supposed to be phased in over a period of time; I've forgotten how long it was. It was a three- or four-year period.

In the meantime, Tanganyikan African officer candidates were being sent to Sandhurst, the British military academy, for the short course, and as they returned, one more British officer would return to his regular regiment. In the process, however, not all billets were slated for Africanization in the near future. In a few of those cases, some British officers were being replaced by British officers. This was misunderstood by many of the Tanganyikan non-commissioned officers who thought that meant that Africanization was being abandoned. The reason they thought that was that Nyerere made a speech that because they had moved too quickly in Africanization, there were a number of economic activities and other government activities that had suffered in the process, and therefore they were going to have to reschedule this and draw this out. This coincided with three new British officers arriving. Mind you, we're dealing with a fairly small universe. A number of senior non-coms decided this meant that Africanization of the officer corps was being abandoned, and they had pay demands, as well, and so on. Within a couple of nights, the mutiny was plotted.

The first inkling we had of it was when I got a call in the middle of the night from an African officer, Alex S_____, one of the first commissioned officers, later became commanding general, saying that the troops had mutinied, that many of the officers had fled, and that some of the British officers had been captured up at Koletto barracks, north of Dar es Salaam, were being held prisoner, and he was saying, "You should keep your people off the streets." That's what his message was.

So I called Ambassador Leonhart. We had a warden system, and he agreed to implement the warden system and tell people to stay home. I agreed I would go down to the chancellery and get a message out. So I started driving down. It must have been about 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning. I decided I would drive by State House to see if anything was going on, or if Nyerere was up, I'd talk to him. I got there just in time to see a group of soldiers breaking down the front gate, while being resisted by a group of police. So I decided not to stop there, and drove down to Zania Front, which was the street right on the harbor in the center of town, where the old German bungalows were, which housed some of the ministers.

I saw, on the street corner, my British colleague. He was the number two, but was then serving as chargé, Steven Miles, and the Minister of the Interior, Joe Lucindi. So I stopped. We were chatting, trying to put together what was happening. Just then an Army jeep Landrover pulled up with a group of soldiers on it, and they grabbed the three of us and threw us in the back of the Landrover and drove off with us, not far, a few blocks away to the post and telegraph building, where they put us up against the wall and held us there. This group was rather disorderly. Some had been drinking, and some, I think, had been smoking bang, a type of hemp. Some were sort of in bits of pieces of uniforms. All

of them had their new British-issued rifles that they had gotten to replace the old Lee Enfield 303s. They had their new SLR NATO-type rifles. Periodically, several of them would say they were going to shoot us, and they'd level their rifles at us. One, the only who I think was not drinking, a corporal, kept saying, "No, no, they're not British officers." Well, they knew who Lucindi was, but they thought Miles and I were new British officers who had come. The others kept saying we were, and we should be shot.

I remember one imaginative young soldier taking the clip out of his rifle, taking the cartridges out of the clip, sharpening them on the sidewalk of us, reloading, pulling the bolt, and putting the muzzle right up against my nose, and saying, in what English he knew, "Time is finish. Now is time to kill." At any rate, this went on all night. I remember I turned to Joe Lucindi and I said, "What are we going to do about this, Joe?" He turned to me and said, "It's better if we don't know each other." So we three tried to stay as quiet as we could while this internal debate went on. I remember sometime during the course of the night, a truckload of soldiers came by and said that they wanted to take us along. Our guys said, "Go find your own prisoners." At any rate, it was a long and difficult night.

Q: In a situation like that, all the diplomatic niceties and everything else go by the boards, because there's nowhere to go or to protest or anything else.

HENNEMEYER: No, and I tried a diplomatic nicety, but it didn't work. I didn't know how to say I was deputy to the ambassador in Swahili, but I knew how to say "ambassador." So I told them I was the ambassador and I was going to my office. One said, "No, I've seen the ambassador, and you're not the ambassador." So I just made my case more difficult.

At any rate, this went on in this vein, with them being ugly and calm at intervals, until about 7:00 in the morning, I guess, when they suddenly said to me, "Quinda." "Go." I started to walk down the street, making myself walk very slowly. I turned around and I saw that they had their rifles leveled at me. I don't know if that was to see if I would run or what, but at any rate, I walked down the street, and when I got to the first corner, I ducked around it, only to find two more standing there saying I couldn't go that way, I had to go back out in the same street.

At any rate, I walked down the length of the street, turned the corner, and got over to the chancellory, where Bill Leonhart was waiting and very anxious about what had happened. He asked, and I said, "Well, the mutineers took me prisoner." I remember he said, "Good. You can try to finish this cable." He handed it to me. He was trying to describe what had happened, and thought that since I had been with them, I could finish it.

I sat down to try to write it. Just then, the reaction set in. I couldn't write, my hand was shaking so. That lasted only about a half-hour or so, but at any rate, we got the word out. That was my little adventure.

Then came the problem of what to do, because some of the mutineers were getting out of hand, there was a little looting. Although in retrospect, I have to say, given what I've heard of since, it was a relatively orderly mutiny.

Q: It wasn't of the scale, say, of the Force Publique, which was full of killing and looting?

HENNEMEYER: No, no. There was a little killing and a little looting, but by and large, as I say, in retrospect I have to say that it was a fairly orderly mutiny.

As soon as we could move around a little bit, which took a day or so, in the meantime, the mutineers decided that there might be a landing and that they would take my house as a stronghold to defend against the expected landing. My wife and our two very small children were surrounded by these soldiers, who didn't harm them, but it was frightening for them.

Then came a rather confused several days where we were consulting with our British allies, trying to figure out what to do. Basically, this was Bill Leonhart's responsibility, with the British chargé, to persuade Nyerere to ask for British assistance. That proved to be rather difficult, but eventually he did agree. At that time, the British aircraft carrier, the HMS Centaur, came in from Adana with the Royal Marine commandos. There were some extraordinary events, some of which I heard about, some of which I saw, of getting Brigadier Patrick S____ Douglas, who was the deposed commander of the Tanganyika Rifles, out to the Centaur to lead the Royal Marine commandos. That was accomplished largely, I think, by the NI-5 man at the British High Commission, a gentleman by the name of Jacobson.

There were a few of us who knew that the Royal Marine commandos were going to come in to Koleto barracks the next morning very early, and as I recall, those of us who knew agreed to stay in the chancellory or at the High Commission that night so there would be no leak. They did come in. They had a bombardment of blanks first, artillery blanks, over the barracks, then came in with helicopters. Douglas landed first and told them to surrender, identified himself. There were a few shots fired. The Marine commandos then fired a bazooka, shot through the orderly room, killed a few of the mutineers, and then the others ran. They ran to the bush, and the helicopters rounded them up. Most of them were taken prisoner. They were picked up over a period of days. I think the following day, Royal Marines flew to the other garrisons. I think there was one down at Iringa, one up in Moshi or Arusha, I can't remember where, and one in Tabora. They took their surrender, so that ended it.

Then subsequently there was a Commonwealth arrangement whereby the Nigerians came in and replaced the British. The Nigerians maintained order until Tanganyikans were able to reorganize another force.

Q: Did Nyerere come to you or to our embassy, or did you go to them as being a party off to one side?

HENNEMEYER: Nyerere was in hiding during this week. Subsequently, I learned that he was held very closely, and I was not involved with the negotiation with Nyerere, so I didn't have to know. But I've learned later that he was in a convent on the south end of the harbor, the other side of town. But he was reachable. It was, I think, mostly Steven Miles who conducted the negotiations.

There was some criticism of Nyerere at the time for being in hiding. I guess one has to respect his judgment. It was Oscar Camona, the Minister of Defense, who went out on the streets and tried to get the disorderly elements of the troops to go back to their barracks, and who then went out to the barracks to try to free the British officers who were being held prisoner, for which he was beaten and pretty roughed up by the soldiers. At the time we thought Camona showed great courage, and it contrasted with Nyerere's being in hiding. But there may have been more important reasons for that. I'm not suggesting Nyerere should have gotten out on the streets. He might have been killed, and the sole rallying point for the country would have been lost. But I think it hurt him somewhat politically and probably led later to the quarrel with Camona, which resulted in Camona being exiled. I believe he's still in exile in London. I think from that time, there was ill feeling, but I'm speculating here. That was the conventional wisdom.

There was considerable disorder and considerable confusion. I remember the chief of protocol was also chief of the secret police. We were friendly. He came to my house to warn my wife that he feared the next day there would be kind of a "night of the long knives" against the wives. This allegedly because the dock workers union, the leadership of which had been East German-trained, had made common cause with the police, and they had decided that they would also mutiny. The police, by the way, had more or less disappeared when the Army came, with the exception of the prison wardens out at Morogoro, who decided to march on Dar es Salaam to combat the Army, which would have been very foolish because they didn't have the weaponry at all. Fortunately, somebody stopped them before they got there. At any rate, these are random bits and pieces.

Q: What was our embassy role at the time? Was it basically one of reporting?

HENNEMEYER: It was basically one of reporting, and supporting our British colleagues, who were the ones directly involved in trying to bring some order out of the chaos. We supported their effort to get Nyerere to agree to ask the British to come in, because the alternative was anarchy. So our role was a support role, not a lead role.

Q: That was just before you left?

HENNEMEYER: This was January 24th, within a week of the Zanzibar events.

Q: When did you leave?

HENNEMEYER: I left in July. The rest of the time following the post-mutiny events in Tanganyika and the negotiations that Nyerere was having with K_____ to establish Tanzania, one of the concerns of the Tanganyikan Government, which was initially allowed to send a small police contingent over to help maintain order in Zanzibar, was allowed by the Zanzibari Revolutionary Council, was that compared to the Zanzibar rebels, they did not have the same fire power at all. So we were of some assistance in getting the place some hardware which they could then give to their force in Zanzibar. That may or may not have played a role, but ultimately, as you know, the negotiations were successful. I think April was the date when Tanzania was announced. It was a very, very loose federation, indeed, with a good bit of friction between mainland and island. But it did, I think, mark the high point of what could have been potential disorder from the island to the mainland. From then on, things gradually got under some degree of control.

Q: You left Dar es Salaam and went to the Naval Academy.

HENNEMEYER: I want to tell you about Ollie North and Jim Webb being in my class at the Naval Academy. I was the first Foreign Service officer detailed to the Naval Academy. I was told, when I went, that I would be replaced when I [received] recommendation. During the two years I was there, I succeeded in getting the thing structured, so I thought it was worthwhile keeping the Foreign Service that is half-time teaching, half-time other things like advisor to the Foreign Affairs Club, advisor to what they used to call the counterinsurgency course, director of an annual conference they now call NAFAC, Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference. Those were unique contributions I felt a Foreign Service officer could make, and the job eventually was structured that way. There's still a Foreign Service officer there.

I did write the syllabus and gave a course on contemporary African problems, and two of my students were Ollie North and Jim Webb.

Q: Jim Webb later became Secretary of the Navy. Ollie North right now is a cause célèbre as far as his dealing with what has become a blip on the historical scene, but right now is the headline man about the Iran contra affair, which he was involved in from the White House staff.

We're talking about 1966 to 1968, when you were in personnel.

HENNEMEYER: That's correct.

Q: This was a time of considerable turbulence. The Vietnam generation was moving in, young officers were wanting attention paid to them. How did you deal with this? What were you doing, and how did you see this?

HENNEMEYER: Specifically what my jobs were during that two-year period, actually I had three. I came in to be deputy to Jules Bass, who was director of a thing called the Functional Personnel Program, which was the one part of personnel that was still centralized and which handled placements for all non-geographic jobs. That's what it basically did. Jules left soon after I got there, and I replaced him as director.

Then in a personnel reorganization, that Functional Personnel Program was abolished, and I became Special Assistant to the Director General, then John Steeves, and to Howard Mace, who was Deputy Director General.

As to the two major things going on at the time, one, you're quite right, was the turbulence created by Vietnam and the fact that those who were doing placement for Vietnam had what was, in effect, a hunting license. They could, to a considerable degree, tap anybody they wanted. There was very little, if any, [supervision], very little. As we knew then and are even more aware of now, this caused a good bit of heartburn and a lot of bitterness because of those who escaped it, bitterness because of those who went because they wanted to and then, despite promises made at the time, were not really taken care of afterwards, and bitterness on the part of those who went and didn't want to go at all and were profoundly opposed to the war. So it was an unhappy period for the Foreign Service.

Another thing that was going on at the same time, although it was just tailing out at that time, was the effort to bring almost everyone under the Foreign Service Personnel Plan. That is, people who had civil service status were being urged--and in some cases almost dragooned--into accepting Foreign Service status, the objective being that eventually the Department of State would have everybody under their own personnel plan. That broke down for a lot of reasons, and eventually was reversed by the Foreign Service Act of 1980, although I never felt that the Act of 1980 was required to reverse it. The mischief was done with the powers of the Act of '47, and could have been undone with the powers of the same Act. Others didn't agree with me.

Q: Let's skip on a bit. You were Chief of the Political Section in Oslo from 1968 to '71. What were your prime interests in Norway? It seems like a pretty stable, solid country.

HENNEMEYER: My prime interests were skiing, sailing, fishing. (Laughs) It was a wonderful place. I loved it. The prime professional interest, one was to keep Norway as a fully active partner in NATO, because there were always the pressures. Norway traditionally had been neutral. NATO was the first alliance they had joined. There was pressure from Sweden that Norway should emulate Sweden's example. And then there was a tradition within Norway manifest to a considerable degree within the Labor Party, which was [evident] while I was there, that Norway should not so much leave NATO, but maybe didn't have to be as active as we would wish. So there was that tension. It was a friendly tension, but it was always there. There were a variety of issues where that manifested itself.

This was the period when Norway was engaged in its great debate as to whether it would join the Common Market or not. While the U.S. was not directly involved, it was an important political issue, and we followed that with great interest.

Also, Norway was one of the spots where we were attempting to make contact with the North Vietnamese, which led eventually to the Paris talks and the end of the war. It was done with the cooperation of the Norwegian foreign office, but it was kind of a back-alley effort where messages were passed. We were doing that in other places, as well. Norway was a peripheral area of activity. It was simply one point where we could contact.

I think probably the continuing NATO activity and the Common Market debate were the two principal interesting subjects while I was there, and the discovery of oil, which occurred while I was there, which had far-reaching effects, as you know.

Q: Then you went back to your first home, really, in a way, Germany. You went to Dusseldorf.

HENNEMEYER: That's right.

Q: Can we put Dusseldorf and Munich together, do you think, and describe what a consul general does?

HENNEMEYER: Sure.

Q: I'd like to move to a subject which is quite an important one, and that was your work in consular affairs. When did you go there?

HENNEMEYER: From Dusseldorf I went to the Senior Seminar. Then I joined the Bureau of Consular Affairs as deputy administrator. Under the legislation at that time, the bureau was called the Bureau of Consular and Security Affairs, and the head of it was administrator, although, in fact, security was no longer part of the charter and had become part of the Bureau of Administration. It was really only consular affairs, so it was something of a novelty.

While I was there, new legislation was passed that made it the Bureau of Consular Affairs solely, and the head of that was an assistant secretary. I was the senior deputy and became a deputy assistant secretary.

Q: Who was the head of that at the time?

HENNEMEYER: When I first went in, it was Len Walentynowicz, a political appointee from Buffalo, New York, a Republican. Then with the beginning of the Carter Administration, Barbara Watson came back, because she had held it in the last part of the Johnson Administration. She came back as assistant secretary, and I remained as her deputy.

Q: Why did you go to that job? You were obviously a political officer, and all of a sudden you're over in consular affairs.

HENNEMEYER: True. A lot of my experience had been political, but I also had been a consular officer in Bremen and Bremerhaven. For four years I had run the consulate general in Dusseldorf. Although it was a high-volume post, as we say, with 50,000 to 70,000 visas a year, the staff wasn't all that large, and I did get involved a great deal in consular work. But basically, I think by that time what they were looking for was somebody who knew something about consular work, but also had had management experience. I think that's what they were looking for. Barbara was a very strong political leader, very charismatic in her desire to make the consular corps believe in itself and not keep thinking it was a second-class citizen in those days, and to change the perceptions of the rest of the Service, as well. So she wanted somebody who would relieve her from some of the management chores, and that essentially was my job.

Q: Could you compare and contrast Walentynowicz and Watson, as far as management styles?

HENNEMEYER: Len Walentynowicz was an attorney and had been a district attorney in Buffalo. He came with a good legal background, but he didn't understand very much at all about the Foreign Service and very little about consular work. So I think he found his assignment a very frustrating one. Senior people in the Department who should have consulted with him didn't. I must say he was treated rather shabbily, so I think he found his time frustrating, and I don't think he felt that he was really doing anything.

Barbara Watson, on the other hand, as a lady of some substance in her own right, as a leader in the black community, was someone that you couldn't treat that way. So both from the point of view that she had held a job before and, therefore, knew what she was about, and because she was the person that she was, they couldn't go around her. The result was that Barbara succeeded, I think, in getting the consular work at least some of the high-level attention it should have gotten.

Q: For the person who may be unaware of what the situation was in the State Department in 1976, could you give an idea of what the problem was with the consular operation in the Department of State, both overseas and within the bureaucracy that Barbara Watson felt she had to address?

HENNEMEYER: Just as a historical reference point, we have to go back to 1924, the Rogers Act, which merged what had been until that time two separate services, the consular service and the diplomatic service. During our entire history before that, they were two separate services. Diplomatic officers did not serve in consular assignments, and consular officers did not serve in diplomatic assignments. So our being together in the whole sweep of our history is relatively recent.

Some of that separate tradition hangs over today. The British used to have a similar system. They used to have an A service and a B service. B service people tended to be administrative officers and consular officers; A service were diplomatic officers.

Q: There was a time when I used to have a test. I told anybody they could call the British Embassy and tell whether they were talking to A service or B service by the accent they could hear, whether it was an upper-class accent or a non-upper-class accent.

HENNEMEYER: That was generally true, that's right. Some of that still remains. In our service, while they were merged since 1924, in folklore and in tradition, the merger was never complete. So you would find the kind of thing Barbara Watson had to fight.

I'll give you a very practical example. There was a perennial shortage of consular officers, particularly as visa loads grew and grew in some of our high-volume posts. It was a job that the bright, young, new Foreign Service officer who thought he was going to start making policy the first day didn't like, because it was rather tedious and onerous. There was a time in the Service where it was accepted that a first-tour officer had to get that. In a way, it was a good first tour because of all jobs in a post, it gave you the most opportunity to use your language. Second, it gave you the greatest exposure to local people. Third, it teaches you a very hard lesson that some people who have not had the experience never learn, and that is how to say "no."

So I thought there was nothing wrong with a consular tour the first time. It was rather unusual, but nevertheless, it was standard practice. I think it's good training. But a lot of people didn't like that, so it used to be resisted. The resistance and management's willingness to not impose discipline resulted frequently in shortages of consular officers. People would come up with ideas about how to solve that. One of the standard ones that comes up all the time is, "Let's make our wives consular officers. They can take care of that routine sort of work while we concentrate on high policy." Well, you can imagine what that would do to the morale of a career consular officer who believes, rightly, that there is something very special about his work, that requires some very, very extraordinary skills, that it involves probably more management responsibility than any political officer gets to exercise. Obviously, he's not going to like it, and you're not going to attract good people to a Service that's treated that way.

That was Barbara Watson's battle. I'm giving it to you in shorthand. It had many ramifications. That's the one I helped with, despite the fact that my background was more political than consular. It was a fight that I was glad to fight in good conscience, because I thought it was a real one, the issues were real, and it was worth doing.

Q: How did this thing resolve itself in the bureaucratic context of the State Department? How did you fight this battle?

HENNEMEYER: First of all, it's never resolved. You beat this idea off for a while, and then it always comes back, because the roots of the problem are still there--namely, a

perception, which is, I'm afraid, frequently proven by the realities of promotion boards and by assignments. Success in promotion frequently follows an assignment, and the right kind of assignment goes to a person in the right kind of cone, whether political, economic, or consular. So there's enough truth to the mythology that consular officers will usually be shot upon. There's enough truth in it to dissuade the very good people from following that line of work, even though they might like it. It therefore makes the battle a continuous one. So I believe anybody running that bureau, anybody speaking for the consular side of the house, is going to have to fight the same battle over and over again. He or she will win it during one administration, and then, as is our wont, we invent the wheel all over again every four years, and the idea you beat down four years ago comes back again. I don't think it goes away.

Q: Can you think of any examples of battles that you or Barbara Watson became personally involved in, in the Department of State, to further the cause of upgrading the consular service?

HENNEMEYER: The one I mentioned as an example, "Let's make our wives consular officers," we beat that one down, with some exceptions. At that time we stopped it completely. It crept back again, as you know.

Q: It still surfaces every year.

HENNEMEYER: That's right. That's why I say that fight is never going to end. I think a major contribution that was made on Barbara Watson's watch, and which she and I strongly supported, but the credit for which belongs to a consular officer, was the creation of ConGen Rosslyn, a unique training environment and training system for consular officers, which the other functional cones are to emulate now. But I think that did more for effective training of consular officers and, hence, their prestige in the field, because the product we sent out was a better one, than almost any other innovation.

Q: Could you describe that for the record? Who was the originator of that idea?

HENNEMEYER: I guess there were two--John Kauffman and _____. What it tried to do was give a real-world environment for consular training. That is, one of the duties of a consular officer is to visit and assist, to the extent he can, any American who finds himself in a foreign jail. Well, to emulate that, we had role playing. We actually had a small simulated jail. One of the trainees would play the role of prisoner, the other would play the role of consular officer. You would act these things out. It made it a far more realistic kind of training. The same was done with playing visa applicant and visa officer. It was a well-designed, structured, real-life training experience. It took a set of training rooms over at the Foreign Service Institute, turned them into a consulate general, and tried to emulate what really happens in a consulate general. I think it's a very successful training program.

Q: Basically hands-on training. ConGen Rosslyn stands for Consul General Rosslyn.

HENNEMEYER: That's right.

Q: How effective was Barbara Watson within the Department of State and elsewhere?

HENNEMEYER: I think she was quite effective. As you know, she died tragically very prematurely. She was a lady of imposing stature, very tall, had a genuine calling for what she felt was a maligned and disadvantaged consular service, and when given a good issue, she more often won her battle than lost. I think she was respected by the leadership of the Department. They would talk to her, whereas they would snub Len Walentynowicz.

Q: She also had quite a bit of clout in Congress, too.

HENNEMEYER: She did, for some of the same reasons. She was very good when testifying, and she had a lot of good friends on the Hill.

Q: After you left this job with consular affairs, where did you go?

HENNEMEYER: I went as consul general to Munich.

Q: We'll talk about Munich, but you can also refer back to your time in Dusseldorf. What does a consul general in a German post, particularly Munich, do? What were your responsibilities and concerns at the time? This was from 1978 to 1981.

HENNEMEYER: Very large consulates general, which most of the German ones are. In terms of responsibilities and size of post, somebody once did the arithmetic for me, and I have no reason to refute it, which said that the consulate general in Munich, in terms of personnel, was larger than 75% of our embassies.

Q: I can very easily believe that.

HENNEMEYER: The responsibilities for the consul general were very similar. The consul general in Munich had a discrete consular district of the old kingdom of Bavaria, which in German is noted for feelings of separatism and differentness from the rest of Germany. Of course, prior to 1871, we used to have a legation in Munich. So there is a tradition of an American diplomatic presence, if you will, in Munich.

Obviously, the consul general's writ extends as far as the ambassador decides to let it, but in my time, working in Dusseldorf when the ambassador was Martin Hillenbrand, and working in Munich where the ambassador was Walter Stoessel, both of them dear and old friends of mine, I was given to understand that I was their pro consul. They told me in general terms what they wanted, and I had a free hand. This was important, because in both posts, I had a variety of representatives of other government departments that I was supposed to supervise. There was not only the usual U.S. Information Agency apparatus involved, but in the case of Munich, there was a DEA contingent, a large Commerce

Department presence, a very large CIA process, an enormous one, principally because the German equivalent of CIA is located in Munich, not in the capital. There was a Justice Department representative, an Army intelligence representative, a representative of the U.S. Chief of Forces in Heidelberg also there, not to mention a large Voice of America office housed in the consulate, and a watching brief which I had over Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. So it was an enormous American presence, and one that required the same kind of careful care and feeding that an ambassador has to employ to keep all his representatives of other agencies pulling together.

Q: Let's say you felt the USIA, or it could be one of the other agencies, was getting off base. What could you do about that? Do you have any examples of where you thought they might be misdirecting their efforts?

HENNEMEYER: I never had any problem with USIA, especially in Munich, because the public affairs officer was one I chose myself and brought there. But I did have a potential problem when the Commerce Department decided to maintain a separate overseas presence and to have their own commercial reporting service. One of the early suggestions made by a senior commercial officer in Bonn was that since they were now separate, the commercial officers in Munich, the three that I had, would no longer be subject to the usual consular duty roster. That is, they wouldn't have to pull weekend duty, as all other officers of the post had to do, including the USIA officers. That was solved by my responding to the commercial officer in Bonn, "Well, in that case, they wouldn't require consular titles, and I would so inform the Bavarian Government." He immediately dropped his idea.

Q: Bavaria, of course, as you pointed out, has always had its own _____. It's the equivalent to a state such as Texas or something like that. It's related to Texas, isn't it, as far as its having its own policy?

HENNEMEYER: A German _____ actually has many more powers than an American state.

Q: Were there any particular concerns at the time you were there that kept you quite occupied in the political contacts of Bavaria?

HENNEMEYER: Yes. The most interesting thing going on while I was there was that Franciso Strauss, the minister of Bavaria, and the leader of the Christian Socialist Union, which was the sister party of the Christian Democratic Union, was the candidate of both those parties for election as chancellor of the republic. So much of my time there was following the election campaign and maintaining very close relations with Strauss, because what he had to say, both publicly and privately, on a variety of issues were of great interest to Washington, since there was a very real possibility that he might be the next chancellor.

Q: What was your evaluation of Strauss? He was minister of defense and finance, too, wasn't he?

HENNEMEYER: That's right.

Q: He had quite a few positions there. You saw him towards the end of his time. How did you evaluate him at the time?

HENNEMEYER: Actually, I knew him before when I served in Munich in 1956. I saw him from time to time over the years. First of all, an extraordinarily intelligent man and a real leader, a very powerful personality. The Germans have an expression, one who had a serious fault in that he was sometimes b_____, that is, unpredictable. He would sometimes not be as politic as a politician should be. The famous Spiegel affair, for example, when he was minister of defense, when he ordered the arrest of certain editors of Spiegel magazine on the charge of publishing classified material, exceeding his authority, which resulted eventually in his departure as minister of defense. But a highly intelligent man, perhaps the only German prominent politician of that time that I knew whose only intellectual equal was Helmut Schmidt. In fact, Schmidt, when Strauss left the national Parliament and went to Munich as minister-president, Schmidt publicly expressed his regret, saying that the Bundestag wouldn't be as interesting anymore, because they were intellectual equals in debate.

His public image was that of a bull in a china shop, the robust, rough-and-tumble politician. His private image was of a highly intellectual, very well-read man, who had a considerable ego and was difficult sometimes to get a few words in, his conversations sometimes tended to be monologues, but a very interesting man. He was never boring. I rather liked him.

I think since we're recording this, I'll say something that nobody else knows. He gave me the usual farewell when I was leaving Munich, and surprised me with a decoration, which we're not supposed to accept when we're on active duty. But I didn't know it was coming, so I couldn't ask and couldn't turn it down.

After that formal farewell, I think literally the day before I was leaving, he called and asked me to have lunch with him. He wanted to talk to me. So we had lunch, just the two of us, in a restaurant. He had arranged that nobody would be seated at tables near us.

He unburdened himself about the election campaign which he had lost and about the opposition party propaganda, which portrayed him as a kind of unreconstructed Nazi. It was clear that this had hurt him deeply. He went on and on about this. I think our lunch lasted about three hours. He went on and on about this, saying, "They painted me brown," referring to the Nazi period. He said, "When everybody who knows me, knows I was always black," meaning very Catholic. It is a fact that Strauss was never a member of a Nazi organization, unlike some of those who were using that charge against him. I remember he said to me, "This was grossly unjust, and the real browns profited by painting me brown." That's the way he put it.

This is not something I've told anybody. I think it perhaps sheds another light on Strauss.
Q: Then you received appointment as ambassador to The Gambia.

HENNEMEYER: I came back to Washington from Munich in 1981, with the very informal understanding that I might be tapped to be ambassador to Iceland. This was understood by a number of people, but not by the White House, so that didn't happen. So I was kind of high and dry, and I was assigned as a senior inspector for a brief time, about six months. I found it very interesting. I took a team to Colombia for inspection, and then I took a team to Cuba.

While I was in Cuba, the then-Under Secretary for Management, Dick Kennedy, assigned me as Executive Director for Management, with the task of pulling together all the small separate administrative staffs in the management and administrative area into one single staff, and bring about some personnel centers. That was one of the hardest jobs I ever did.

Q: As an aside, Bob, you have a reputation for having management skills, which is something that is grossly lacking in most people who have had many of the positions you've had as a political officer. Do you feel this is innate, or had you had to learn management skills?

HENNEMEYER: I don't know that I'm all that great a manager, but people did give me assignments because they thought I could manage. I don't have any special management training. If management skills is anything, I think it's listening to everybody, but then make a very clear decision. I try to do that and, so far, with some success. Maybe there isn't any great secret; maybe it's only that. But have a concept, discuss it with everybody, and then when you do something, make it clear.

Q: What was the problem in the State Department that you were brought in to draw things together?

HENNEMEYER: Basically feudalism. A number of small offices had their own little administrative staffs, and the head of that small office, whether there was a small bureau or whatever, is very comfortable with having his own administrative officer, because nobody else is competing for that administrative officer's time. So if he says, "Bring me a new chair," it's done immediately. Whereas if he had to go to a central office, it might take 24 hours. So there was great resistance to that, but eventually it got done. I think after a year or so, people said, "It was better when I had my own guy, but this does work."

Q: This was basically a straightening out of some untidy practices that had developed over the years.

HENNEMEYER: Untidy and wasteful practices that had developed over the years, that's right. The purpose of the exercise was maybe a little more efficiency and to save some positions, and we did that.

Q: How did your ambassadorial appointment come about?

HENNEMEYER: That came because of the next job. While I was Executive Director for Management, Bill De Pree was serving as Executive Assistant to the Under Secretary. That's always been a job that has a reputation of being a power locus. I remember Bill Galloway had that job, and Jules Bassin had it. Bill was going to leave to head MMO, management operations, and a new Under Secretary was coming in, Jerry Van Gorkom, a political appointee, an old friend of Secretary Shultz's, a businessman from Chicago. Bill wanted to make this move.

Van Gorkom asked me to take a trip with him right at the beginning of his tenure, to familiarize himself with the overseas operations, and we made a quick trip to Moscow, to Madrid, and to _____. Then Bill made his move over to MMO, and Gorkom asked me to replace Bill as executive assistant. I was still there in that job. Van Gorkom didn't last quite a year and left over an argument about space, and felt he was not supported by the Secretary, which he was not, after the Secretary had promised support. Ron Spiers came in to be Under Secretary, and I stayed on as Executive Assistant to Ron.

It was during that time that I told Ron that I felt I was getting near the end of my career, and I really would like to finish up with an embassy if that should be possible. Ron said he would see what he could do. The Gambia came up. He said, "You can take it. My advice would be to stay with me for a while and I'll get you something better."

I said, "No." In fact, I went home that night, talked to my eldest son, who now works in Morocco for Catholic Relief Services, and I said, "This is the offer. I can have Gambia or I can wait a while."

My son said, "Dad, take The Gambia. After you retire, six months later, nobody will remember where you were ambassador, they'll just remember you were an ambassador." And he was very right. He was absolutely right.

I took it. As it turned out, it was a thoroughly enjoyable assignment with some interesting things going on. My wife and I spent a very happy two years-plus there, so I was glad to have done that.

Q: What were our concerns in The Gambia?

HENNEMEYER: The U.S., of course, had no great interests in The Gambia at all, other than to do what we could, minimally, not to let that place become a source of instability in the area, because there were more important countries around there, of course. Its neighbors were Mali, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, of course, on three sides. In 1981, The Gambia had had a very bloody attempted coup, in which the hand of North Korea, Libya, and the Soviets were apparent.

Q: It was a very odd situation, wasn't it?

HENNEMEYER: It was very odd. Apparently Colonel Qadhafi saw that since The Gambia was 95% Moslem and very poor and relatively defenseless, he saw this as a possible springboard for creating his Islamic empire in West Africa. The Soviets, I think, were just making mischief. The North Koreans, even more so.

At any rate, there were apparently three separate groups centered around those three paymasters, and when the thing was kicked off by what we think was the Libyan movement, the other two joined. Basically it started, as it did in Dar es Salaam, as a mutiny. They had no Army; they had a police field force. By the time the thing was over at the end of about two weeks, when the Senegalese Army came in to put it down, over 1,000 people had been killed. So it was a very, very serious affair.

I think basically what we were trying to avoid was something like that happening again, and the logic of the situation meant that without making any big commitment there, we would try to do what we could to ensure stability.

Fortunately, The Gambia, since 1965, has had the same president, but unlike most of its neighbors on the continent, he held elections when he was supposed to, opposition parties could function and, indeed, were represented in the Parliament. There were no political prisoners. So economically the place was at bedrock, but politically one could almost say it was a very small showplace. The people were incredibly nice, a tradition of hospitality and friendliness, but the economic situation was going from bad to worse for the usual reasons--overblown bureaucracy, inefficient government, too many people stealing, unwise loans and projects pushed on them by international lending agencies. It wound down to the point where they finally were literally bankrupt.

The exciting part of my time in The Gambia was working with my British colleague, a very, very able man, serving then as High Commissioner, he's now British consul general in Houston; a very able lady official at the World Bank, Barbara B____; a sympathetic IMF official, Donald Donovan, an Irishman; and an able aid director on my staff. Together we got a rescue plan put together and, against all odds, sold it in London and in Washington. Everybody threw something in the post. The Gambia got even with IMF, which opened the door for some bridging loans for them. In exchange for that, they did some draconian things in reduction of the civil service, freeing of rice price levels, what have you, a lot of very painful things, which was only possible because [Dawda Kairaba] Jawara was willing to put his own prestige on the line. He went around the country explaining, "It's going to be awful, but we've got to do it." And he was so respected that with a minimum of disorder, little things, it was done. Today the place is never going to be prosperous, but it's no longer bankrupt.

Q: You can in at a time when you felt you could really have some impact.

HENNEMEYER: Exactly. Fortunately, in a place that nobody was really watching, so you had considerable freedom in putting something together.

Q: How did you find your team there?

HENNEMEYER: I was very fortunate. The State Department component was tiny. It must be one of the smallest embassies in the world. There was myself, my secretary, our communicator, an economic officer, a consular officer, an administrative officer, and a GSO. I was basically DCM and political officer, both. I had a very able aid director, who had a staff of about 20, and a very unusual, dynamic Peace Corps director, because we had from 50 to 70 Peace Corps volunteers in The Gambia. The public affairs officer was my wife. So it was a good team. We got a lot of good things done. My wife set a record in getting exchange visitors from The Gambia to Washington; we've never gotten so many before. She did her homework and chose good people.

We took advantage of the human rights legislation that provided funds for human rights-related training programs. We got funding for training of all local magistrates in the country, got a law library for the Minister of Justice. We got an IMET program to train Gambian military officers in the United States. We got some help from the Department of Defense to refurbish the Gambian Navy. This sounds like a joke, but they had two patrol craft, which usually were out of operation because they didn't have spare parts. But they had very rich fisheries offshore, which everybody was poaching--the Soviets, the East Germans, the Japanese, the Senegalese. Everybody was poaching, and the Gambians couldn't do anything about it because they couldn't get their patrol craft out there. We got those operating for them, and they began to make people get licenses and get some revenue from the fisheries.

These are all small things, but they were positive things and things that pleased us. We got some very good aid projects off the ground, and we got away from the kind of big high-tech project that had persuaded the World Bank and others to steer clear of them, too. That was another thing I should mention. We had a very good, active aid donors' committee, which met at least once a month, sometimes more often, where we educated each other on the kinds of projects that worked and those that didn't. As a result, we got away from these things that had high-import components, like expensive pumps for irrigation projects and so on, and got things that the Gambians could maintain.

I left there with a very good feeling. To indicate that the Gambians seemed to feel that way, too, I was notified the other day that I'll be receiving a high Gambian decoration.

Q: The Gambia had been a British colony, but it sounds like we were taking over, really replacing or supplanting the British.

HENNEMEYER: No, no, not at all. The largest bilateral aid donor remained the British. They were trying to get out of it at the time that my British colleague and I first started working on the problem. The message in London--and I can confirm that, because I went

to London and talked to the people involved--was, "Let Senegal take it over. Let's cut our losses and get out of here." The only hitch in the thing was that the Gambians didn't want to be taken over, and felt that they had as much right to be their own country. There are smaller countries. The Gambians have a population of about 900,000, but there are countries that are smaller. They felt they had a right to be their own country, and they felt that Britain had an obligation to help. My British colleague felt the same way, so we were not supplanting them. He and I worked as a team, but the largest contribution was made by the British.

Q: Then you retired?

HENNEMEYER: I came back, served on a selection board, and then retired.

Q: Bob, there are two questions we ask everybody in these interviews. Looking over your career, what do you feel, for you personally, was your greatest accomplishment?

HENNEMEYER: I don't feel that I had a personal greatest accomplishment anywhere. There were some things that I was a part of that I liked and I felt good about.

Q: Then something that you were a part of.

HENNEMEYER: The Gambia rescue effort, I feel good about that.

I think I feel good about the period I served in Munich, in that I developed a personal relationship with Strauss that I don't think anybody else had, and it was more or less accidental because we both liked to go hunting. So we would go sometimes together. I should explain that as the American businessman plays golf, the German businessman and many German politicians go hunting. I learned that while I was in Dusseldorf, because the principal mission in Dusseldorf was to know the Ruhr moguls, who runs _____ and who runs _____ and so on. I knew them all.

Once in a while you had to use that. For example, the Secretary of the Treasury, Kennedy, your namesake, was due to arrive on three-days' notice and wanted to meet with everybody important in the Ruhr. Well, if I had to go through their protocol office and assistant secretaries, we'd still be working on that. But I had their private numbers because I went hunting with them. When he arrived for lunch at my house, there was Dr. Oberbeck of M_____, there was Dr. Gino of Kluckner. They were all lined up and ready to talk to him. So that's a small thing.

Q: But it's important, and it's part of what we hope in these interviews to describe--the modality of diplomacy. In the Far East, golf is very important.

HENNEMEYER: Of course.

Q: A young person comes up to you and asks, "Ambassador Hennemeyer, would you recommend the Foreign Service as a career?" How would you reply today?

HENNEMEYER: I tried to interest my sons, not pushing them in any way, because that's the wrong way to do it, but I tried to interest both my sons. Neither was interested. Maybe they saw it up too close or whatever; I don't know. There are a lot of things about the Foreign Service today that aren't as much fun as it used to be. I think there was more freedom formerly. There was more room to be yourself. I think personal initiative, while still of value, it's riskier now than it used to be. I think if the goal ring you're after is that ambassadorship, to get it in these days, where the competition is so tough and so many outsiders get the better positions, you've got to focus yourself so narrowly that your career might not be very interesting.

Ideally, if I was speaking to a young person going to the Service right now who said, "My sole objective is to get an ambassadorship as early as possible," then I would say, "Accept no departmental assignment, except as special assistant to a seventh-floor principal, and accept no field assignment except as political officer." But that makes a very dull career.

Q: I thank you very much.

HENNEMEYER: You're welcome, Stuart.

End of interview