

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

AMBASSADOR EDWARD GIBSON LANPHER

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is June 25, 2002. This is an interview with Edward Gibson Lanpher. You go by "Gib." This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Let's start at the beginning. Tell me when and where you were born and then we'll talk about your family.

LANPHER: I was born December 8, 1942, in Richmond, Virginia. That is a year and a day after Pearl Harbor.

Q: Where does the name "Lanpher" come from?

LANPHER: It's a French Huguenot name. My father's relatives traced it back. They left France for England many years ago and then they were early settlers in Nova Scotia and drifted down the coast of North America and eventually settled in Maine. From there, they moved further south over the years. My father's father, Henry Staples Lanpher, owned granite quarries at Tenant's Harbor, Maine, and used to barge [the] granite paving blocks down [over] to Brooklyn, where he had the contract to pave the streets of Brooklyn around the turn of the last century. My father was born in 1896 in Brooklyn and grew up in New Jersey where his parents settled.

Q: Did he go to school? What was he involved in?

LANPHER: He had a very checkered career. He grew up in quite a well-to-do family and he and both his brothers went to Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. He dropped out in about 1916 and went to France with the American Field Service allegedly to drive ambulances before the U.S. got into the war. He confessed later he drove a lot of ammunition as well. When the United States got into the war, he came back and I guess through family connections got a commission in the U.S. Navy and became a U.S. Navy pilot in the first world war flying anti-submarine patrols off the East Coast.

Q: After the war, what did he do?

LANPHER: After the war, his father died and he inherited a considerable sum of money. I don't know how much it was, but for those days, it was a lot of money, maybe \$100,000. His mother was then living in Providence and he didn't like his Providence relatives. They were all conservatives and he was sort of a wild young man. So, he took his money and drove to California, where he proceeded to lose it over the next 10 years in real estate, the Depression, and the stock market crash. With that, he went back to school, UCLA, and finally got his degree there, and went on to get a master's and Ph.D. at the

University of Chicago.

Q: What field?

LANPHER: Social work administration. Then he was a professor at Louisiana State University. He happened to be teaching at William and Mary's Richmond campus at the time I was born. After that, halfway through World War II, he went to work for the Department of Justice and retired from there in 1958.

Q: And your mother's background?

LANPHER: She was born in Scotland in 1910 and immigrated to Canada with her parents when she was about 10 years old. Then they moved from Vancouver, where they had settled, to Los Angeles, and she grew up there. She graduated from UCLA, got a master's at Berkeley, and was working on her Ph.D. at the Library of Congress when she met my father in the elevator at the Library of Congress. They were both working on their Ph.D. dissertations. She married my father, who was 14 years older than she was. She gave up her Ph.D. and had boys instead.

Q: What was her dissertation on?

LANPHER: She was a romance language specialist. She was a brilliant linguist, spoke five or six languages. It was something to do with French, I think.

Q: Was your father moving around or did you stay in the Richmond area?

LANPHER: My parents moved to Washington in about 1943, when I was about a year and a half old. We lived first in Washington and then moved to a house in Alexandria in about 1944 or 1945. I grew up in Alexandria.

Q: Where did you go to school?

LANPHER: I started off in school at a very progressive school in Northern Virginia. My parents were among its founders. It was called Burgundy Farm Country Day School, the first integrated school in Virginia, public or private. I stayed there through grade three and then I switched to public schools in Alexandria for grades four through eight. Then because of the quality of the education and, I suppose, my behavior, my parents organized it for me to go off to boarding school starting in 9th grade.

Q: Let's talk about elementary school. Were there any things you were particularly interested in?

LANPHER: Yes. I always had an interest in history and biographies of interesting people. We managed to travel across the country by car several times and that peaked my interest. I was an early student of American history. Math didn't do much for me; still doesn't.

Q: When you were switched over from the country day school to the Alexandria school, I take it it was quite segregated in those days.

LANPHER: It certainly was. And the quality of public education in Virginia in the early to mid-'50s was terrible. Now 50-odd years later Northern Virginia has one of the best public education systems in the country, if not the world. In those days, Fairfax County was dairy farms. Alexandria was a slow moving, segregated southern town. The state and the city didn't put much money into education. I always remember being in sixth grade in a classroom at George Mason School in Alexandria where there were 46 kids in the class, one teacher, no teaching assistant. It wasn't a very good education. So, when I went off to boarding school, I was ill-prepared.

Q: Were you getting a good solid dose of Dixie in Alexandria? Was this a southern school?

LANPHER: Yes. I had a history teacher in 8th grade. She was from Georgia and her ancestors had been overrun by Sherman.

Q: My grandfather was an officer with Sherman.

LANPHER: She and her family had never gotten over it to the point where I was once sent out of the history class for referring to that war as the "Civil War" as opposed to the "War Between the States."

Q: Here you have two people, one with almost a Ph.D. and the other with a Ph.D. Did you have brothers and sisters?

LANPHER: I had a half-sister who was about 14 years older than I was. She didn't live at home at least that I recall. She would visit on school vacations. Then I had a younger brother about two and a half years younger than I was.

Q: Were there talks about world affairs around the table?

LANPHER: Oh, absolutely. My parents being well educated had a lot of friends around Washington in the diplomatic service and in the diplomatic corps here in Washington. They always had close friendships with people in the British embassy. I learned a lot over the dining room table and my parents always included us in dinners and other social events that they'd have. I met lots of economists and government workers.

Q: Did you pick up the habit as a kid of looking at the newspaper?

LANPHER: I not only read the newspaper thoroughly but starting at age 9 ½ and until I went off to boarding school at age 14, I delivered the "Evening Star." I thoroughly read the paper before I delivered it.

Q: Where did you go off to boarding school?

LANPHER: I went off to Philips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts.

Q: This is also the home of two of our presidents, including our present one.

LANPHER: That's right.

Q: You were at Andover from when to when?

LANPHER: 1957-1961.

Q: What was Andover like at that time?

LANPHER: Well, it was an all boys school. It went co-ed about five or eight years after I left. They absorbed Abbott Academy. It was about 850 boys in four grades. It was tough. Coming from Virginia public schools, I was the anchorman in my class the first year - the anchorman who was allowed to come back for a second year. To give you some idea of Andover and how tough it was in those days not only academically but in terms of rigorous enforcement of rules, there were 125 people in my entering freshman class and on graduation day there were only 81 of them left to graduate.

Q: That's remarkable.

LANPHER: They gave you a blue rule book the day you arrived at school. It had the rules written down. They told you at the first night assembly, "You break one of these four major rules and you're gone." There was no argument. It just happened.

Q: How about there? What sort of courses did you take?

LANPHER: You had to take a lot of required courses. But their history courses were remarkably good. I didn't do very well in the math or science, but I did quite well in the history. Their American history course was a famous course, probably the best American history course at high school level. Nearly everybody who took it got advanced college placement.

Q: Did you feel you were entering an American elite?

LANPHER: Not really. Andover was always different than a lot of the other famous boarding schools, prep schools, in New England. They always accepted people based on their academics and their personalities and what they could bring to the school and only after acceptances did they ask parents if they could afford it. Andover had a huge endowment. It was very diverse even then. It's more diverse now in terms of the student body. My roommate, for instance, sophomore year was a black fellow from Petersburg, Virginia. Curiously in those days, because the state of Virginia's resistance to integration, both of us got scholarships or subsidies from the state of Virginia for not going to Virginia public schools. One of the unintended things... My father probably got \$500 a

year and this black fellow's parents got \$500 a year for sending their two boys to private schools. We were rooming together.

Q: Was there much social life there?

LANPHER: We'd have dances occasionally. There was a spring prom and people would invite girls from neighboring girls schools. But there wasn't a whole lot of social life in those days.

Q: I'm 14 years older than you and went to Kent, which was run by Episcopalian monks, and we had one dance in four years. I spent the summer of '45 at Andover, lived in Day Hall and took a physics course in order to enlist in the Navy.

LANPHER: I lived in Day Hall my senior year.

Q: I got a nice taste of it. Of course, they dropped the atomic bomb and that took care of the physics problem for me. I went on to college and got caught later on. While you were there, were you getting a taste of the Cold War?

LANPHER: Oh, yes. I was there for Sputnik and Gary Powers. I had always been interested in national and world affairs growing up in the kind of family I did. So, I remember early on watching the Democratic Convention in 1952, having won my first bet on Truman's election of 1948, watching the McCarthy hearings in the early '50s. By the time I got to Andover, I read a paper or two every day. Things like Sputnik caught everybody's attention at a place like Andover. We were all glued to the television watching that event and the reaction to it. We all remembered the 1960 presidential debates with Kennedy and Nixon.

Q: Did Kennedy spark much response at Andover?

LANPHER: I think he sparked a lot of response. If there had been a poll – maybe there was one – at the time of the 1960 election, I think he would have easily gotten 2/3-3/4 of the school. Nixon wasn't a very appealing character to young people and there was something dashing about Kennedy. I never had the sense that Andover was a tremendously Republican school. We had kids from the slums of urban New York on a scholarship there. We also had one of the sons of the Bass clan from Texas there. I thought that Andover with a tremendous faculty had a fairly liberal tendency.

Q: How about your family? Did they fall into one of the political channels?

LANPHER: Yes. My mother had always been a Democrat. My father's family had always been Republicans and that's one of the reasons that he left Providence in 1920. He was kind of a radical. In fact, he never voted for a Democrat until I persuaded him to vote for Kennedy in 1960. He had always voted for Norman Thomas.

Q: He was a radical socialist candidate.

LANPHER: But I told him in 1960 that he was wasting his vote and since he hated Nixon so much he better vote for Kennedy and he took my advice. After that, he voted Democrat.

Q: While you were there, what were you pointed towards as far as further education?

LANPHER: Our family had some roots in California. My mother's mother continued to live there. When she died in the mid '50s, my mother inherited from her \$40-50,000. My mother took it and built a house in the mountains of California east of Yosemite National Park at about 8,000 feet. I now own the house, but I worked on the house, helped build it. My mother died about two years ago. I jointly inherited the house with my brother and then bought him out. We built the house the summer of 1960 and I was so keen on California and the house that I applied for early decision at Occidental College in California. I liked the idea of Occidental, a small liberal arts. But then my senior year, about three months after I had been accepted at Occidental, one of my father's brothers died. He had been a dean at Brown. It's too long and complicated a story, but I wound up going to his funeral and my great aunt, who was a friend of the president of Brown at that time, Barnaby Kaney, said to Barnaby Kaney that weekend, "Edgar has died. He has lived in my house for the last 30 years. The house is right on the college green at Brown. I want my nephew to come and occupy his room, so therefore he will be accepted at Brown." There was considerable family pressure on me to do this. So, I went to Brown, never having applied.

Q: You were at Brown then from '61 to '65?

LANPHER: I took a little longer to graduate. I dropped out for a semester at one point, so I graduated in 1966.

Q: During the summers during this period, did you have summer jobs?

LANPHER: I worked every year of my life since the age of nine. I did newspapers and then when I was at Andover I did camp counseling. I did construction work in California. I worked a couple of summers for the Forest Service as a jack of all trades in the national forest near our house in California, everything from cleaning outhouses to fighting forest fires. But every year of my life since the age of nine.

Q: Was this instilled in you or did you do it because of great need?

LANPHER: I don't know where it came from. I suppose it was instilled in me. My mother was Scottish and kind of frugal. She had always worked all her life. My brother and I grew up with the expectation that we would work. I delivered newspapers after school. My brother sold donuts door to door after school. This sort of thing. Yes, there was an expectation that we wouldn't be couch potatoes. But it wasn't laid down as "You must." It just flowed naturally.

Q: Brown. What was Brown like in '61-'66?

LANPHER: I thought it was a good school. Coming from Andover, I didn't find the freshman year terribly challenging. I made up for lost social time. Certain subjects turned me on and certain subjects turned me off. I liked history and political science and wound up majoring in political science. It was sort of a combined international relations/political science/history sort of major. I didn't have a very good academic record at Brown. When I took the Foreign Service exam my junior year at Brown, I passed the exam and the following summer between my junior and senior year, I took the oral exam with no expectation of passing it. I passed it and the chairman called me in afterwards and said, "For God's sake, Lanpher, go back to Brown, finish your senior year, and try to get your overall average up to at least a gentleman's C. We're embarrassed. We like you as a candidate but your record is the worst we've ever had presented to us and we admire your audacity to even apply." Socially, I had family in Providence, so I would go to debutante balls and fraternity parties. I was a member of the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity there. My father and both his brothers had been Alpha Delta Phis at Brown, so there was sort of a family tradition there. But Brown got caught up in the early '60s with the civil rights movement, the early days of Vietnam. By the time I left, it was an activist sort of campus, maybe not as activist as some others, but it was fairly active.

Q: Brown today has a reputation of being on the cusp of political correctness. Was there something in the Brown psyche that was noticeable even then about activism?

LANPHER: I think it was appreciated and encouraged. It certainly wasn't discouraged. They worked hard for that time, early '60s, in terms of diversity. They had relationships with historically black colleges in the South and they had exchange visits and this sort of thing. I thought it was pretty progressive for that time. It's certainly gotten more progressive since I left. My oldest son went to Brown and graduated about four or five years ago. Certainly in his time it was more progressive than when I was there. Everything has changed over that amount of time.

Q: Were you able ever to get abroad?

LANPHER: Yes. I first went abroad in 1956 with my parents to visit England and Scotland. My mother still had relatives in Scotland. Then when I dropped out of Brown in '63, I dropped out for a semester. I had made too much money as a construction worker. I went off to do a semester overseas. I was planning to do a year, but my draft board came after me. I went to Europe and did Europe on a motor scooter. It was an eye opening experience. I was in a small town in France, for instance, in November 1963 eating dinner when the word came over the radio that Kennedy had been shot. It was very interesting, the reaction of this town. This was a town about 100 miles east of Paris. I spoke a little French; adequate French. I was eating alone in this restaurant, but all 20 people in the restaurant knew I was an American. I stood out. I was about to turn 21. Somebody came into the restaurant and said, "John Kennedy is dead." People asked me, "What does this mean?" My first reaction was that his young son had died. Then the French people said, "No, no, it's the President. He's been shot." The reaction was quite

incredible. That week after Kennedy was shot, I traveled quite widely around Europe. I was in West Berlin when they had that ceremony honoring Kennedy a week to two weeks after he was killed. It was quite a moving experience.

Q: Did the taste of Europe whet your appetite for this type of existence abroad?

LANPHER: I think I always had it in mind to join the Foreign Service. This probably contributed to it. But my father had been a public servant and I always thought in terms of public service. I had grown up in the Washington area and had several friends and my parents had friends that were in the Foreign Service. This is something that appealed to me. I took the exam my junior year at Brown.

Q: Do you recall any of the questions put to you in the oral exam?

LANPHER: Yes. When I took the oral exam, I was working on a summer internship at the State Department. I went over to the examining room and there were three senior Foreign Service officers on the panel. I had some sense that it wasn't what you knew so much as they were looking for character. They were reasonably satisfied. I always figured that if you passed the written exam, you had the smarts and the knowledge sufficient for the Foreign Service and that the oral exam in those days was to test your character. At one point in the oral exam, they asked me about 10 questions in a row that I didn't know the answer to. I answered honestly, "I don't know the answer to that." I think they appreciated the honesty; that I wouldn't try to bullshit them. One of the questioners asked me, "What do you do in the evening? What do you do with your time after work?" This must have been July of '65. He said, "Do you go to movies? Do you go out to dinner? Do you watch television? Do you read books?" I can't remember my specific response. They said, "Well, what do you do?" I said, "I got married a month ago. What do you think I do?" That sort of put a smile on their faces and they dropped that line of questioning real fast. I think they were looking for some humor. I think they appreciated the fact that I always worked during the summers, that I had been everything from a paper boy to a camp counselor to a construction worker to a firefighter. I think they were looking for a varied background. I was surprised when they passed me and was a bit embarrassed by my academic transcript. They said, "Fine. Go back to school and we'll see you next June." That's when I joined the Foreign Service.

Q: You got married while you were at Brown.

LANPHER: Yes. I got married in June 1965.

Q: Where did you meet your wife?

LANPHER: She went to Penbrooke, graduating in '65. But I had to do another year.

Q: What was her background?

LANPHER: Her father was a professor. Her mother was from a wealthy family. They

lived outside of Philadelphia.

Q: You graduated in June '66. Then what happened?

LANPHER: I was actually sworn into the Foreign Service in early June. In fact, Brown had to mail me my diploma.

Q: Was the draft in action?

LANPHER: I had a draft board in Alexandria, Virginia, that very much wanted to put me in uniform. They didn't think the Foreign Service was such a good idea. They were going to draft me that spring of 1966. They went so far as to send me down to Providence Navy Yard for a physical at 6:00AM, standing in line with a couple of hundred other naked fellows. They determined that I had flat feet. They didn't want anybody with flat feet in the U.S. Army. So, they made me 4F and I joined the State Department. I still have my 4F card. But they were very much interested in drafting people at that time.

Q: You came in in '66 then. What was the composition of your basic officers course? What was it like?

LANPHER: First of all, at that time, June '66, the government worked on a July 1st fiscal year. I guess the State Department had some extra year end money that they could obligate. So they took the biggest class in the history of the State Department, the June '66 class. There were about 90 people in it. That included the USIA contingent. It was such a big class that they had to break it up into two sections. This was when the Foreign Service Institute was in the basement of Arlington Towers in Rosslyn in a garage. It was an interesting sort of place to... We went through eight weeks of basic orientation. That was good and informative. I had interesting classmates.

Q: Who were some of your classmates?

LANPHER: People like Arnie Raphael, who was later killed in a plane crash with the president of Pakistan. In the class, a kid from South Dakota named Steve Haukness, was killed in Vietnam. There were just a whole bunch of good folks.

Q: While you were there, did you have any feeling of what type of work you wanted to do and where you wanted to work?

LANPHER: In those days, they took you in as a Foreign Service officer un-coned. But my natural inclination and preference was to work on the political side. I thought my background fitted with that better than the consular side. That was my expectation. In those days, officers were generally sent out on what they called first tour rotational tours. That was fine with me. Very interesting.

Q: So what did they do with you?

LANPHER: They tried to teach me French after they gave me the consular course, but at the end of the basic course, we all got to sit down with our counselors and say where we'd like to go and I said, "I'd like to go to Africa." I'd written a paper at Brown on the Belgian Congo's transition to independence. I thought Africa sounded fairly exotic and interesting. Or, I said, the Middle East. I didn't want to go to the developed world. I didn't want to go to Europe as a junior Foreign Service officer. I had some sense that junior officers there were down at the lower end of the pole, not very exciting work for a junior officer, and a heavy dose of consular work. At the end of my eight week course, they announced everybody's assignment and I was assigned to Tel Aviv and told to be there the second week of January 1967.

Q: You went to Tel Aviv in '67. You were there until when?

LANPHER: Until July 1969.

Q: Interesting time.

LANPHER: Very interesting time.

Q: Before you went there, were you getting any scuttlebutt about what it would be like to serve in Israel?

LANPHER: I guess so. I took the area course. We were given a lot of reading, which I tried to do a lot of. It sounded pretty exciting. I had followed the Middle East war in 1956. This was an interesting part of the world and sounded like fun. I was 23 or 24 years old.

Q: When you got out there in January '67...

LANPHER: Yes. In those days, they were encouraging classes as a subsidy to the maritime industry to take a ship. So, about 40 of my junior officer colleagues and I got on the SS United States and had a stormy passage in the North Atlantic in January to France. Then I took a plane from France to Tel Aviv.

Q: Let's start when you arrived there. How was the embassy set up? Who was the ambassador?

LANPHER: The ambassador is somebody I'd like to talk about later. His name was Walworth Barbour, a real legend. A fellow named Bill Dale was the DCM. Heywood Stackhouse was the political counselor. I can't remember who the economic counselor was. I was assigned for the first part of my rotation to the consular section. The consul general was an old veteran named Cliff English. It was set up as a traditional embassy with a public affairs officer. I can't remember how many Americans there were, but we had six or eight Marines. It was a traditional embassy.

Q: When you arrived in '67, what was the situation there?

LANPHER: When I got there in January, there were reports about incursions and [whatnot and] firings across the line between Israel and Syria around the Sea of Galilee, but everything was sort of under control. The thing I remember most about the early days, January through March of 1967, was, Israel was in a deep recession. People were fairly blue. It was a pretty heavily socialist country in those days. It wasn't working economically. I saw this on a day to day basis because I was assigned when I got there to be the immigrant visa officer, my first job. I saw a steady stream of Israelis coming in to try to get visas to the United States. I interviewed them and they were leaving for economic reasons. The country was dispirited. It was a good education. It was a good way to start out in the Foreign Service.

Q: Had these immigrants come there for religious reasons?

LANPHER: It's hard to generalize. There were some Sabras and many, many Israelis have relatives in the United States. It was a question of petitions from brothers and sisters. But there was also in the '50s and early '60s a lot of immigration to Israel out of Eastern Europe. To a certain extent, these people showed up in Israel and with the tough economic times, they couldn't get jobs, they couldn't sustain themselves. So they looked to relatives in the United States to petition for them and showed up in my office.

Q: Coming out of Eastern Europe, this must have complicated your life because of connections to communist movements in all these countries they came out of?

LANPHER: Yes, but these weren't political types for the most part. I don't recall any great problem with that. I had a very good staff of Israelis that did most of the filling out of background check forms and fingerprinting. The day I showed up first thing in the morning after I arrived at night, I walked into the embassy and I guess I was told I was going to be the immigrant visa officer. The consul general took me down to the section and introduced me to my chief assistant, Mrs. Hoffman. Mrs. Hoffman's first question to me was, "What year were you born?" I said, "1942." She said, "I went to work for the U.S. government in 1938." She put me right in my place. It was quite a stunning thing when I realized what she was doing. She was very good.

Q: You said Cliff English was running the consular section. How did you find him? He was one of the old line consular officers.

LANPHER: He was a character. He let the consular section pretty much run itself. He was there. He was sort of a curmudgeon type. For some reason, he took a shine to me. That's probably because the chief of the visa section was a woman officer that he didn't get along with.

Q: Who was that?

LANPHER: A woman named Sarah Andren. But she and Cliff didn't get along very well. But he kind of liked me. He was in his late 50s. I guess he probably looked at me as sort of the son he always wished he had and never had. He had a daughter and not a terribly

happy marriage. So, he'd disappear for the afternoon and go play golf at Israel's only golf course. I think it was after the Six Day War that he used to call me up – I was no longer in the consular section – and say, "What are you doing this afternoon?" Usually this was a weekend. I'd say, "Nothing." He'd say, "Well, let's go out and shoot some birds on the green line." So, we'd go partridge hunting out on the green line, the old demarcation line between Israel and Jordan that disappeared in the war. It was kind of a difficult area. The birds knew it was the safest place to be because of the minefields out there. Cliff thought he knew where most of the minefields were, so we'd go out and shoot birds. Cliff had an old friend, an Israeli... I think Cliff had been in Haifa in 1948 at our consulate. It was sort of a homecoming for him to be consul general in '67. The old friend was Moshe Dyan. They were very close friends. Cliff wasn't a political officer. This wasn't an intelligence relationship. They were just close friends. After Cliff and I'd shoot a bunch of partridges, we'd go over to Moshe's house. Moshe loved partridges, so we'd give him some of our partridges and sit down and have a cold beer with him. An interesting anecdote.

Q: Did you and your wife find yourselves pretty well absorbed into Israeli society?

LANPHER: Very much so. We had quite a social life. We lived in a rented house in a suburb just north of Tel Aviv. We had Israeli neighbors. We weren't in any sort of U.S. compound. We had friends in the embassy and we had friends in the Israeli community. So, that worked very well. We were very active socially. We were in our mid-20s, and had a heck of a good time. We traveled a lot around Israel. We didn't have any children at that time. Weekends, I remember going over to the old city of Jerusalem before the war and going through the Mandelbaum Gate and driving with a couple we knew from our consulate in Jerusalem down to Aqaba and Petra, spending the weekend in Petra, sleeping in a cave hotel down there. This was all before the Six Day War. We had a lot of fun. You could go to the Galilee for the day. You could go to Nazareth. There was plenty to see and do in Israel.

Q: I'm told that it was both fun and exhausting to be in Israel. The political discussions and the arguments were really exhausting but interesting.

LANPHER: I found that to be very, very true. It's one of those places where everybody talked about the problem all the time. You couldn't go out to a dinner or have a social event without the problem being on everybody's lips.

Q: And the problem being...

LANPHER: Arab-Israeli. If you were an American embassy official, which I was, junior as I was, but later on I was the ambassador's special assistant, so I was even more targeted, whether it was official or private Israelis, they wanted to be assured of at least 150% U.S. support. 100% wouldn't do. It was draining at times. You just couldn't ever relax. You were always on show.

Q: Was it possible or even thinkable at the time to talk about the Palestinians having rights? Those were the days of Golda Meir, weren't they?

LANPHER: The prime minister was Levi Eshkol. When he died in 1968, she replaced him.

Q: Were Palestinians considered a separate people or were they something over in Jordan?

LANPHER: There were a lot of Israeli Arabs, but they were strictly second class citizens within Israel. There was no talk about letting refugees back in. To be an Israeli Arab was not a treat. There wasn't much concern for them among the Israelis that I talked to. This was a Jewish state and that's the way it was going to be. The Embassy did maintain good contacts with the Arab community.

Q: We were going through a real civil rights revolution in the United States during this time. Part of this time, I was in Yugoslavia. I couldn't help beginning to relate the problem of what now is known as the Kosovars to the blacks in the United States. I was told, "These Kosovars don't work much and they like to eat watermelon and they like to dance." I said, "You know, we've had those two." You were beginning to look at our own country and see it in others. Was this something that we were looking at?

LANPHER: Not really. These were the days before human rights reports. Our preoccupation, rightly or wrongly, was with the security situation. The Israeli preoccupation was with their neighbors. They weren't introspective internally. At the same time, to put it bluntly, there was sort of a 51st state aspect of serving in Israel because Israel was so political in the U.S. At the same time, at home, we were preoccupied not only with civil rights but also the Vietnam War. It really wasn't a focus. Subconsciously, we all knew that Palestinians were treated badly by Israelis, but then you'd turn on Arab radio stations in the Middle East or your shortwave radio and you'd listen to some of the most horrific language you've ever heard spilling out of Cairo, out of Damascus, even Beirut and Amman. The preoccupation was external.

Q: Was Nasser considered the boogeyman?

LANPHER: I guess so. Going beyond where we are now, from about May 1967 onward, about Israeli independence day, the Arabs managed to whip themselves in a real frenzy and that led to war. They were certainly never trusted by the Israelis. I think the Israelis always felt they had a relationship – and in fact, they did – with Hussein over in Jordan. But with Nasser, I don't think so.

Q: You moved from the consular section when?

LANPHER: I was still in the consular section for the Six Day War, which was interesting.

Q: Why don't we talk about the Six Day War?

LANPHER: As things heated up and the rhetoric started flowing out of the Arabs and they blockaded the Straits of Tiran, there was definitely an increasing prospect of war. The last week of May the U.S. government put out a warning to American citizens to not travel to Israel and, if you're there, get out. Cliff English put me in charge of the evacuation of American citizens, including repatriation loans. I worked my butt off for 10 days and we got a lot of American citizens out of the country between then and the fifth of June.

Q: Were there a lot of Israelis getting out? After the Yom Kippur War, there was a lot of talk about all the religious getting the hell out.

LANPHER: I saw a lot of that. Of course, you have a lot of people in Israel that are dual citizens. So, I had people lined up outside my office and down the block outside the embassy. I had people with side curls and I had people that were clean shaven. These were only American citizens. They may have been Israeli citizens as well, but I was only doing American citizens.

Q: Was there a sense of panic?

LANPHER: I wouldn't call it panic. I would call it anxiety. People were being bombarded by propaganda out of the Arab radio stations and it was pretty bellicose. If you looked at the numbers in terms of the forces arrayed against Israel in 1967, manpower, airplanes, tanks, whatever, Israel was vastly outnumbered. There was always the question of whether Israel could fight a more than one front war. One has to remember that in 1967 Israel didn't have any equipment in its military inventory from the U.S. It was mainly French. The only thing U.S. was second hand reconditioned World War II era Sherman tanks and armored personnel carriers (half tracks) that Israel had bought surplus and reconditioned. The Israeli air force, aside from a couple of Cessna spotter planes and a couple of old DC-3 transports, was almost entirely French.

Q: Was the embassy saying something was going to happen?

LANPHER: Progressively we saw very clearly that this thing was getting worse and worse and worse. We also realized that consideration was being given to a preemptive strike. We, together with Washington, got all our dependents out about a week before the war. My wife was evacuated to Rome. All our other Middle East posts were evacuated to places like Athens and Rome. It was clear the war was coming. The intensity of the diplomacy - and I wasn't directly involved, but I was certainly well informed about it. I learned a lot more about it subsequently. You had the Israeli foreign minister, Abba Eban, traveling to Paris, London, and Washington. You had Lyndon Johnson deeply involved, as well as Dean Rusk, then Secretary of State. Despite Vietnam, this was a priority. There was also the Soviet angle, the Soviets with Egypt and Syria. So, it was a pretty fraught time diplomatically. But in the event, I was in the embassy on a Sunday night, the fourth of June, and the Israelis had lulled people into thinking things were cooling off a little bit by giving well-publicized leave to their soldiers at the weekend. But as I drove home from work about 10:00 on Sunday night, I saw troops by the side of the road getting picked up by cars, busses, everything. They were remobilizing in a hurry.

I called the political officer when I got home and the defense attaché and said, “They’re getting picked up. I think it’s tomorrow morning.” As I drove to work the next morning at about 7:00-7:30, down the coastal road from where I lived towards Tel Aviv, you could look out over the ocean and see the Israeli air force about 12 feet off the ocean headed for Egypt. They flew in under Egyptian radar, caught the Egyptians with their pants down about 7:45 Egypt time in the morning. They knocked out 18 Egyptian airfields in the first strike.

Q: What were you doing since you were at war?

LANPHER: I still was looking after American citizens. There was no transport in or out. Civil aviation was closed down for the war. So, it was largely handholding and doing whatever anybody else in the embassy wanted me to do. The first night of the Six Day War, a Monday night, I was the embassy duty officer. Of course, we were all in the embassy. The air raid sirens went off. The Ambassador and DCM and everybody went down to the third basement, the garage underneath our embassy. Although there wasn’t an air raid, there was artillery shelling going on from the Latrun salient, about 12 miles away from Tel Aviv in Jordanian territory. So, everybody else in the embassy got to go down to the basement. I had to go up to the roof of the embassy and sit with a special communications team that we had brought in from Germany, a backup or high speed communications team, a U.S. Army unit. There were four or five of us on the roof listening to U.S. supplied artillery shells going over the roof of the embassy. Luckily, they missed the embassy. But the embassy was right on the beach, the waterfront, and they were going over the roof and into the sea.

Q: Did you find that all of you were seeing this as a just war?

LANPHER: I think we all thought it was probably a just war in the sense that Israel didn’t really have much of an alternative. I don’t think we spent a lot of time pondering that question. We were all too busy. Our ambassador, Ambassador Barbour, was probably the most plugged in American ambassador there ever was. When the first air strike went off on Monday morning, he was invited to the cabinet room and sat with the rest of the cabinet for a briefing on it. He was like the 21st member of the cabinet. That was the nature of the relationship. So, we were very well informed. With the Egyptian air force out of action, the war was essentially won in the first hour. The rest of it was on the ground as the Israelis blitzed with their tank force through Gaza and into the northern Sinai. I was one of the first Americans down into the northern Sinai after the war. The devastation of the “blitzkrieg” was quite incredible.

Q: What was the impression of the two armies that you were getting from the attaches, the Egyptian and the Israeli armies?

LANPHER: The Israeli army and the Israeli air force were exceedingly well trained and maintained their equipment well. They were much smaller, but man for man probably 10 times as effective. Our attaches thought they were damned good, but you never know until you’re tested. Looking ahead, after the war... At that time, the biggest tank battle

ever fought in the world was done in the central Sinai, over 1,000 tanks engaged. It was near the Mitla Pass.

As soon as the war was over, within days, everybody in the U.S. Army and Air Force wanted to come out to Tel Aviv and debrief and get the story on the war, which was seen by our people as just incredible. The tank tactics and the air tactics, our experts and intelligence people wanted to get in very early. Our people wanted to get into the Sinai and wanted the Israelis to give us Egyptian surface to air missiles, which were Russian, the same things that the Vietnamese were using against us in Vietnam. There were a lot of exchanges after the war. I'll never forget a U.S. Air Force team coming out – I guess I went with them – for debriefing the Israeli Air Force. By this time, I was in the political section doing a lot of handholding of visitors. I went out with this Air Force team to one of the big Israeli air force bases. The commander gave a briefing and our guys asked a lot of questions. One of our guys said, "You just said you were getting six or seven sorties a day out of your aircraft. That's impossible. We can't do that." The Israeli said, "Well, that's what we did. We've got excellent ground crews and we can turn a plane around in X minutes and get it fully armed, fueled, and everything." Our guys just were astounded and they challenged the Israelis, saying, "It can't be done." So, the Israeli commander trotted out a ground crew, a plane, and demonstrated just how they did it and how fast they could do it. Our Air Force people still didn't believe it. They said, "Look, we have a demonstration crew at our place and we do dog and pony shows. We have a prize crew that can do this." The Israeli commander called out all the ground crews and said, "You pick as many of these as you want. They can all do it." Our guys finally believed him. But it was quite an incredible military performance in the eyes of our professionals. When you see the Golan Heights and how the Israelis went up the Golan Heights and took the Syrians on with their World War II Sherman tanks, it's quite incredible.

Q: Was the entry of Jordan into the war and the occupation of the West Bank considered to be a temporary thing?

LANPHER: My recollection is not perfect. The Israelis did not expect Jordan would enter the war. I don't think they wanted Jordan to enter the war at least in the military sense. One front with Egypt was enough. But they were prepared for the contingency of Jordan entering the war. I think they were disappointed in King Hussein, who got caught up in the momentum or whatever it was of the Arab rhetoric. At that point, the Israelis said, "Okay, he wants to play. We'll take him out, too." So, they took the Old City and the West Bank. But I don't think it was part of their plan. I think they had a contingency. Certainly they had troops deployed on the green line and in Jerusalem, but their focus was Egypt.

Q: How did the ambassador use the embassy? Did you feel he was off doing his thing or were you pretty well informed of what was going on?

LANPHER: We were pretty well informed, but with the caveat that Ambassador Barbour had an extraordinary relationship with the Israelis, with the Israeli prime minister, with the Israeli cabinet, with the Israeli defense forces, and most importantly, with the

President of the United States. He was what an old style ambassador really was. I can go into this now or later, but I think in the Six Day War context, it's important to understand the dynamic here. Walworth Barbour was appointed by President Kennedy. He had been minister, number two, in London for six years before that. He was appointed to Tel Aviv in '61. So, by the time the Six Day War came along, he had been there six years. He went on to stay there 11 years. He was a career Foreign Service officer. He was Class of '30 at Harvard. He was a bachelor. He was a big man, 6'4", probably weighed close to 300 pounds. He worked for the President of the United States. He went back every August. I got to know him very, very well later when I was his aide for about a year and a half. He went back to the States on holiday every August. He had a home in Worcester, Massachusetts. While he was home, he'd go down to Washington for a couple of days every year and sit down one-on-one with the President of the United States. And that's where and when he got his instructions. Sure, the State Department would send him cables and instructions. But he felt he could ignore messages from the Secretary of State, even FLASH NODIS messages, because he worked for the President of the United States. He got his overriding instructions from the President of the United States.

Q: We'll talk about Barbour in the next session. Let's talk about the war right now. Did you feel pressure from American Jews from the United States who wanted to get where the action was?

LANPHER: In the weeks before the war, a number of American Jews did travel to Israel to volunteer. But once the war started, there was no way they could get there. There was no civil aviation for that six days and for weeks afterward. It was only gradually restored in the weeks following the war. But what the American Jewish community certainly did, and the world Jewish community, was to finance the war. The biggest percentage donors were from the South African Jewish community. They raised money and poured it into Israel. The war was a very expensive undertaking and was basically financed by gifts from the world Jewish community here in North America and South Africa.

Q: Prior to the Six Day War, did you get involved with American Jews coming to Israel on tours or this sort of thing?

LANPHER: Oh, yes, before and after the war. In fact, more after the war than before the war. There was a tremendous amount of Jewish tourism to Israel. Everybody that was ever a duty officer at the embassy said you'd have Jewish tourists dying, for instance, having a heart attack in the Hilton Hotel in Tel Aviv. So, you came into contact with American tourists all the time in our consular section. I did a stint in Citizens Services or filled in for somebody and I had an irate American Jewish tourist come in and complain to me that for all these years he had been donating money to buy trees for forests in Israel, part of Israel's reforestation project. He said, "I came all the way out here to see my trees and nobody can show me where my trees are with my name on it. I want you, my government, to make them put my name on my trees." I said, "We can't help you."

Q: Did you get involved with the religious side of the Israeli society? I'm thinking of the more orthodox.

LANPHER: Yes. Anecdotally, before the Six Day War, if you wanted to get to the

Mandelbaum Gate and go across on Saturday, you had to drive through the religious quarter of Jerusalem and you had to drive very fast and very quietly or you'd get stoned by the religious kids trying to enforce the no driving on Saturday law. I went to seders, bar mitzvahs, and all the Jewish holidays with my neighbors. I went to weddings, funerals, circumcisions. I was exposed to all that. But most of my personal friends were not the ultra orthodox. The ultra orthodox, the fellows with the side curls and the black hats and the beards were there and had a political presence. A lot of them were American citizens from Brooklyn, ultra Hasidic. Believe it or not, I had friends in the Israeli internal security service, the Shinbet, who told me the biggest crooks in Israel were the religious guys. They'd tell me, "Just because the guy looks religious doesn't mean he's a decent human being. There are some real crooks there." I couldn't prove it.

Q: Was this a society where the ultra orthodox was set off to one side, one that was looked down upon?

LANPHER: I don't think they were looked down upon. Some people looked down on them and thought they were nuts, but they were definitely an influential minority. The people that ran Israel at least when I was there were primarily secular Jews of Eastern European origin who were much more into socialism and Zionism than they were into religion. They'd all celebrate seders. They didn't forsake their religion, but they were largely secular.

Q: Was there any feeling that this European socialism, which was part of the Labour Party's mandate, didn't work very well?

LANPHER: No. At that time, mid-'60s, the state of Israel was less than 20 years old as a state. It had grown up going back into the previous century with small Jewish settlements, agricultural settlements, kibbutzes. That was the image of Israel. Just as we talk about our pioneers in our Conestoga wagons and the trek West and our homesteaders, there was much of that spirit in Israel. That was the root of Israel. So, when I say in retrospect that the model didn't work, I can say - I haven't been back to Israel since 1969 when I left - but everybody tells me the kibbutzes are still there but they've moved off the socialist model. Israel is doing a lot better than a lot of other places. There was a romanticism about the kibbutz. It was probably the right thing at the time they were established.

Q: It caught the spirit and got people engaged.

LANPHER: Yes: remember, the kibbutzes were set up, a lot of them, back in the British mandate period, the Ottoman Empire era. The kibbutzes were small outposts of Jewish civilization, self-sufficient, agriculturally based. Interesting.

Q: I think this is a good place to stop.

Today is July 1, 2002. You were in Israel from when to when?

LANPHER: From January 1967 until July 1969.

Q: You started on the Six Day War. Now why don't we talk about the Liberty and your take on that.

LANPHER: During the Six Day War, which went from Monday, June 5, to Saturday, June 11, it was very hectic in Israel and throughout the Middle East. There was a heck of a war on three fronts. As part of our monitoring of that war, and I was not aware of it at the time, the National Security Agency had sent an eavesdropping ship to the Mediterranean that was apparently positioned very close to the Israeli forces in the northern Sinai to eavesdrop presumably on the communications during the course of the war as part of our overall monitoring effort. On the Thursday of the Six Day War, that ship, which was close to the Israeli coast, within eyesight, came under attack by Israeli forces - air force and navy. Before I left the embassy that afternoon, I had heard about this attack on this ship. I don't think anybody in our embassy was aware that that ship was in the area. But we certainly heard about it as soon as the attack had taken place. The ship wasn't sunk and it managed to limp off but there were heavy casualties, something in the neighborhood of 16-20 dead. When I got home to my house in the Israeli suburb north of Tel Aviv that evening, and my wife wasn't there because she had been evacuated, my neighbor, Oded Vered, came over to my house and said, "I need to talk to you. Something terrible has happened." He proceeded to tell me that he, as an Israeli naval reservist, had commanded one of the motor torpedo boats that attacked this ship, the Liberty - he didn't even know the name of it and I didn't know the name of it at the time - along the coast that afternoon. He told me that as they approached the ship, the ship was not flying any flag and that there was no identification on it indicating that it was a U.S. ship or a U.S. naval ship and that he as commander of his motor torpedo boat had gotten on the signal lamps and flashed repeatedly the international signal asking "what ship where found." There is some sort of international code about all these things. They never got a response from the ship and they proceeded to attack it with, I guess, torpedoes and machine guns. He was very distraught about this because they subsequently discovered that it was an American ship. But the damage had been done. After he left, I immediately contacted our assistant naval attaché, Lieutenant Commander Allan Wile, who later worked for the State Department in INR, and Captain Ernie Castle, our naval attaché. They were very interested in the information that I had gotten from this fellow and gave me a lot of questions to go back and ask him further. By the time I was able to talk to him the next day, he had obviously been told by his commanders to say nothing. The lid had gone on. There was no more discussion. I had talked to him right after the incident, as soon as he got home, and he had been so upset by this whole thing that he had blurted this out to me. But then the lid went on and he would never talk to me again about it. We remained good friends, traveled around Israel together, but that was it.

Q: What was the attitude within the embassy?

LANPHER: People in the embassy had been unaware that the ship was in the area and were incredulous but I think the consensus as best I recall was that this was a tragic

accident in the heat of the war. You had war going on on three fronts. Everybody was tired after three or four days of the war. The Israeli navy had not had an appreciable role in the war. Everybody wanted to be a part of it. There was overeagerness, trigger happiness, whatever. But accidents do happen in war. Witness, recently two of our planes managed to kill a bunch of Canadians in Afghanistan.

Q: We shot down a Canadian airliner.

LANPHER: That's right. I think the consensus in the embassy was that it was one of those tragic acts of war. There was absolutely no logical or rational motivation for the Israelis who had our support in the war to go out and shoot up an American ship. If they had known it was an American ship and if there had been coordinated consideration, they would have come to the embassy and said, "Get your ship out of our area! You're in a war zone. Get out." But the heat of battle sometimes leads people to make decisions that aren't coordinated.

Q: On a global commander level, you've got problems.

LANPHER: Yes. So that's my take on it. Subsequently, I learned from our naval attaché that the ship had in fact been sent a message some days earlier by their headquarters, NSA, to get the heck out of the area, move away from the coast, get out of the war zone. According to him, the message was never received by the ship because it was missent in our archaic telecommunications system to the American embassy in Seoul, Korea. So, I think there was plenty of blame. It was certainly sad that so many people were killed, but I see no logical reason for the Israelis to go out in the midst of a war with three countries, Jordan, Syria, and Egypt, and shoot up a ship belonging to its prime backer.

Q: Was there a point when the Jordanians and the Syrians came in? Were there real concerns that things would go bad for Israel?

LANPHER: Not really. There was great apprehension before the war started that things would go bad for Israel. They were clearly outnumbered and outgunned by any order of battle information – number of tanks, planes, etc. The idea of a three front war was something that had everybody worried. We were worried ourselves because we had evacuated all our dependents. We told American citizens to get out of Israel a week or 10 days before the war started. But in many respects, the war was over in the first hour when the Israelis took out the Egyptian air force and sent their tank columns into Gaza and into the Sinai. That was a rout. That was an unbelievable rout. The Israelis were just very, very good. Tragically, the Jordanians and the Syrians got sucked into this, but by the time they got sucked into it through their own propaganda and beliefs, the Egyptians had been pretty thoroughly trashed and the Israelis were on the Canal in no time. There were some big battles in the central Sinai. But the Israelis were able to shift a lot of forces to the Jordanian and Syrian front in the latter days of the war, so it wasn't really a three front war 100% from day one.

Q: What were you doing during the war?

LANPHER: In the prewar period and also during the war, I was doing a lot of handholding of American citizens, acting as duty officer, backup political officer. I was a junior officer, a jack of all trades. As it turned out, as soon as the war was over, I was assigned liaison responsibilities for all the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine, all the refugee camps in Gaza. Where the liaison had always been with our embassy in Cairo up to the Six Day War, we had to take it over in Tel Aviv, so I did a lot of that work. I was the first American into the newly occupied territories under those auspices.

Q: At the time, as the Israelis rolled into the West Bank and into Gaza, was it felt that they were going to stay? Was there any concern about their staying? What was the feeling in the embassy?

LANPHER: We simply didn't know. Of course, as the war went on, and it was only a six day war, but in its aftermath, the focus shifted to New York, Security Council resolutions, and Jarring missions. We were also involved in the year after the war in trying to broker secret peace negotiations between Israel and Jordan. We were involved in peacemaking efforts. I don't recall whether we thought the Israelis would stay on. The Israelis lost over 600 dead in the Six Day War. At that time the country had about 2.5 million people. That was a terrible amount of casualties for them to take in a small country. So, there were very strong feelings certainly on the Israeli side that they weren't going to give up anything that they had taken except in return for real peace. They were very adamant about that. On the eve of the Six Day War, at its narrowest point, the Jordanians were within 17 miles of Tel Aviv on the coast. That doesn't give people a lot of sense of security if you're in artillery range of somebody who says they want to kill you and take you over. From the Israeli perspective, I think they had a case. But I don't recall whether we had any absolute policy on the Israelis getting out of that territory.

Q: What about the Arabs within Israel? The Israelis were watching them. Were we watching them?

LANPHER: My recollection is that it was pretty quiescent. They weren't any sort of fifth column. They didn't do any sabotage during or after the war.

Q: Were you working with Barbour at that point?

LANPHER: I saw quite a lot of him during the war period because I was duty officer and running messages back and forth to his residence. I only went to work for Barbour as his staff aide about the end of 1967. I worked for him for about a year and a half.

Q: Let's talk about our relations with the consulate general in Jerusalem before, during, and after the war. Was there an antagonism there? What were you picking up?

LANPHER: I'm not sure "antagonism" is the right word, but there was forever a tension between the embassy in Tel Aviv and the Consulate General in Jerusalem, which did not report to Washington through the embassy in Tel Aviv. As far as the Israelis were

concerned, Jerusalem was their capital and the Embassy should have been there. The Israelis perceived the Consulate in Jerusalem as an anomaly and one where the staff spent a lot of time with the Arabs, avoided the government of Israel, and had offices on both sides of the city which was divided before the war. Some of our staff assigned to Jerusalem at the time and historically had been very much pro-Arab, which really got under the Israeli skin. The Israelis were always after Walworth Barbour to move the embassy to Jerusalem. Of course, he didn't. But they even offered to build him a golf course near Jerusalem so that he could indulge his golf. He used to play at Caesaria on the coast, the only golf course in Israel at the time. There was always a tension.

Q: During the war, did that come up at all?

LANPHER: I think everybody was keeping their heads down because there was a lot of shooting around the city of Jerusalem and in the area where our consulate was located on the Arab side, the eastern side, which was very close to the Mandelbaum Gate, maybe 100 yards away. In fact, the consulate took some hits.

Q: We'll come back to that. Why don't we talk now about some of the immediate threats that you were perceiving both in Israel and also our embassy at the end of this war? Was it seen as a time of great triumph?

LANPHER: I think there was great relief that the war was over, that the shooting had stopped. We had all been aware of our colleagues in the Arab world who had very hairy experiences of the evacuations of Alexandria, Cairo, Aleppo, Damascus, people going out the back of buildings on ropes getting rope burns on their hands, people as far away as Libya that barely survived. There was certainly a real sense of relief that it was over. I wouldn't have called the embassy in Tel Aviv pro-Israel in that sense. But there was a certain sense of relief that if you're going to be in a war, it's probably better to be on the winning side.

Q: Oh, yes. You can't help but, wherever you are, identify with the country, particularly in times of tension.

LANPHER: Yes. And we had all obviously in the days and couple of weeks preceding the war been tuning into the Arab broadcasting services, whether it was the Royal Hashemite Broadcasting Service or Radio Cairo or Radio Damascus, and listened to the vitriolic propaganda coming out, "We're going to shove Israel into the sea and all the Israelis will die." So, there was psychologically very much a sense of relief that that hadn't happened to us or to the Israelis.

Q: After the war was over in the immediate weeks and months, do you recall people within the embassy and maybe with your Israeli friends going through a feeling of "now what?"

LANPHER: I don't recall a lot. There was heavy focus on UN resolutions in New York and where do we go from here. But I don't think anybody had a plan at least in any

immediate sense because nobody anticipated the war until a couple of weeks before the war and nobody had a plan for what you'd do if you occupied all this territory. The Israelis, if they had wanted to, could have gone to Cairo during the Six Day War. They could have crossed the Canal. The Egyptian army had evaporated. The Egyptian air force was finished. But what do you do when you occupy that much territory? There was that question. I think we raised it with the Israelis during the war itself, saying, "Hey, don't go to Cairo. Don't go to Damascus. What are you going to do? How do you administer it?" So they stopped at the Canal. They were stopped by President Johnson when they had taken the Golan Heights and they were poised to go down the road to Damascus. They could have been there like a knife through butter. Everybody had run off. So yes, they didn't have a plan for what was next. It sort of evolved. They were in place and nobody was talking to them. Nobody was going to make peace. We made great efforts, especially with the Jordanians in the year or so after the war, a special NODIS series of messages that I was privy to, trying to sort out something between the Jordanians and the Israelis. Golda Meir was heavily involved. She was foreign minister before she became prime minister. She'd travel incognito. Moshe Dyan and others were involved. We certainly encouraged these efforts and brokered and transmitted messages back and forth between the two countries. We were a post office.

Q: Did you sense a change in our relations with Israel?

LANPHER: That evolved. Before the Six Day War, we had no military supply relationship with Israel at all. In the immediate aftermath of the war, we were very eager to get our hands on a lot of the equipment that the Israelis had captured, Russian equipment that was of great interest to our intelligence community and our military because it was the same sort of equipment that the North Vietnamese were using against our forces in Vietnam. So, we were very eager to get a hold of this. The Israelis were willing to share it with us, but they extracted a price, things like sidewinder missiles. For weeks and months after the war, we were sending in transport aircraft to pick up SAM missiles that the Israeli's had captured. We flew them back to the U.S. and our intelligence people exploited this trove. Our army and air force in particular flocked to Israel to learn the lessons of the Six Day War, things like tank tactics. The biggest tank battle in the history of the world was fought in the central Sinai. The Israeli tactics were brilliant and our people wanted to talk to them about it. But we first got into a real military supply relationship the following year, 1968, when we negotiated the sale to Israel of combat aircraft. It was a subsonic A4 Skyhawk. The Skyhawk had originally been a carrier ground attack plane. The Israelis were very happy with this deal. We sent Israelis to the States to train. I can't recall exactly how long it took before the first A4s arrived. This relationship exists to this day.

Q: What about your contact with the Israelis, your neighbors? Did you sense a change in them?

LANPHER: Yes. Between January '67 and March or April, I found Israel quite a depressing place. There was an economic recession. People were leaving the country. People were despondent. They were questioning whether the country had a future. After

the Six Day War, they were totally energized. They felt that they were more secure. The economy started to turn around. They had been on the winning side and it gave a great boost to national morale. It was a much more positive atmosphere. Also, tourism started to come back a couple of months after the Six Day War. The world Jewish community had poured a lot of money into Israel, and basically paid for the war.

Q: Particularly the American Jewish community, did you find many coming from the U.S. to bask in the spirit?

LANPHER: It wasn't so much basking, but there was a great spirit of solidarity. They had sent money. There was a handful of volunteers who had come out from the U.S. in the weeks before the war just as the American Field Service had gone to France in World War I in advance of the U.S. getting into the war. My father had been one of those. There was that sort of solidarity and "this was the right thing." But it wasn't to gloat.

Q: In this period, what were you doing until you took over the staff aide job?

LANPHER: I worked in the political section for the political counselor, Heywood Stackhouse, an excellent officer. I learned a lot about political reporting. I had a particular brief as a junior political officer together with my refugee hat. I did a lot of reporting on the occupied territories. I traveled to the Golan Heights, to Gaza, to the West Bank quite a lot and did a lot of political reporting in a way that our officers from the consulate in Jerusalem could not because of the way the Israelis felt about them. Being from the embassy in Tel Aviv, I had easier access.

Q: Did you sort of coordinate?

LANPHER: I coordinated informally with our consulate in Jerusalem. But our consulate in Jerusalem basically had a brief only for Jerusalem and the West Bank. They didn't have any historic brief for the Golan Heights or for Gaza for that matter.

One of the other things I did, and it was rather curious but it's an interesting sort of aside; one of the responsibilities of embassies everywhere is to ensure that delivery of veterans and Social Security checks. Several weeks after the war was over and I was in the political section and one of my beats was the Golan Heights, we got a message from some Druze villagers that they were missing their Social Security and veterans checks that they had always gotten from our embassy in Damascus. This message came to us via the Israeli defense forces; occupation forces up there. We looked into it and communicated with our embassy in Damascus and Washington. Sure enough, there were a handful of recipients, World War I veterans, up there in a village called Magdal Champs, on the slopes of Mount Hermon. So, after some back and forth with Washington and Damascus and the Veterans Administration and Social Security Administration, we actually got some checks to deliver to these veterans. I was anointed because it was my territory to go up and deliver them. So, I had to work it out with the Israeli defense forces. I went in on half track with a large security detail. I was greeted like royalty in this little village high up on the slopes of Mount Hermon. They killed a sheep and I was

treated to the sheep's eye. Since I did the first one so well, they gave me a second. That was a very great honor for a 24 or 25 year old junior Foreign Service officer.

Q: As you were going around... Let's take Gaza first. What were you seeing there? Was Gaza crowded at that time?

LANPHER: It was very crowded and very depressing. When I first went there in the days immediately after the war, the carnage, the wrecked tanks and vehicles and bodies, and shell holes and everything, was pretty bad. There is no such thing as a good refugee camp and Gaza was just one big refugee camp. Certainly the images you see today on the television, how packed and shabby the place is, it wasn't quite as big because more people were born in the last 30-odd years. But it was a pretty depressing place. People without a future, no economy, living on the dole. Very sad.

Q: Was there any feeling in the political section and the embassy of, "Oh, my God. Why did the United States..." Did you see this as a place of interest or was this just a depressing adjunct to your work?

LANPHER: I don't think I ever thought about it that way. This is the hand we were dealt. If it hadn't been for the war and before the war, officers from Cairo would come over periodically and visit the Gaza Strip, part of their oversight... They'd visit Rafah and other places in the northern Sinai. It was kind of a romantic journey out of Cairo. But, no, I never thought about it that way.

Q: As a political officer, who were you contacting?

LANPHER: I was contacting officials, and trying to gauge the mood of people in the occupied territories, Palestinians. There weren't any Syrians to talk to on the Golan Heights because they had all fled towards Damascus. There was no population left up there except these Druze villagers. In the West Bank, basically the population didn't flee to Jordan but stayed in the West Bank. For the Gazans or the refugees in Gaza, there was no place to go. So, there were people to talk to. And talking to UN officials, cease-fire monitoring officials from the UN Truce Supervisory organization for Palestine. There were a lot of people to talk to. Particularly with the Jordanians, we were trying to gauge the mood of the West Bank population, which had always had tensions with Amman. But we tried to keep our fingers on the pulse of opinion there because we were trying to promote this Israeli-Jordanian dialogue after the war.

Q: Was there any talk about Palestinians per se? I am told Golda Meir would say, "There is no such thing as Palestinians." Were you getting any feel for this?

LANPHER: I really don't recall. I never heard her say that and I saw her quite a few times. In the early years after the war, there was no Palestinian Authority. There was no Yasser Arafat. There was no PLO. That all happened after I left Israel.

Q: So as you were talking to people, these were basically an unconnected people there

with no...

LANPHER: To a certain extent. You'd talk to shopkeepers, but you'd also talk to the "Arab elites," the mayors of towns in the West Bank, whoever the senior people were in the social and business hierarchy.

Q: Was the hand of the Israeli occupation heavy at that point?

LANPHER: I think it was rather benign. The Israelis were preoccupied with securing the cease-fire lines. There were forces along the Syrian line on the Golan Heights. There were forces along the Jordan River in the valley. There were forces in the Sinai, but there was nothing to worry about down there. In terms of internal security, I remember some checkpoints going through and roadblocks where people would check your identification, ask you why you were going someplace. But I didn't find it oppressive the way it apparently is now.

Q: Prior to this occupation, there had been no basic connection between the population of the West Bank and Israel.

LANPHER: That's right. But there had been the old green line. Nobody crossed it. In fact, after the war, labor started coming over from the West Bank into Israel. An economist could probably argue that this supply of cheap labor led to the industrialization of Israel in a way that it had not known before. And they were contributing also to the economy of the West Bank in terms of wages.

Q: Prior to that, it had been stagnant almost on both sides.

LANPHER: Yes, certainly on the West Bank. Israel had seen its ups and downs, but the West Bank was an olive grove and remittance economy. A lot of West Bankers worked down in the Gulf and sent money home and built summer houses in the West Bank, Hebron, Ramallah, that sort of thing.

Q: Were you picking up any feelings towards Jordanians? We're not too far from the Black September of 1970. It was a different crew, but still, relations between the Bedouin and others, King Hussein, and the Palestinians weren't great. When the Jordanians had run that whole area, were you picking up things? Were local people saying, "Thank God those Jordanians are gone?"

LANPHER: No, but there was clearly a tension between the Palestinians and the East Bankers (we called them the East Bankers, the Bedouin Hashemite Kingdom). It was an unnatural act, Jordan. But I never heard anybody say, "Thank God we've been occupied by the Israelis." They were in limbo. Nobody likes to be in limbo. But from the Israeli perspective... And the reason they worked so hard at it, albeit unsuccessfully, in that period after the war, at achieving some sort of an accommodation with Jordan, is that the Israelis always kind of liked Jordan, always kind of liked King Hussein. Maybe "liked" is too strong a word, but they always believed that they could do business with Jordan and

that Jordan was dragged into that war against its real will and that it was always caught in a bind within the Arab world for being moderate. So, I think there was at the official level in Israel and also on the street more sympathy for Jordan than for the Syrians and the Egyptians. And Jordan never constituted a genuine threat to Israel, whereas Syria and Egypt did.

Q: You became staff aide to Ambassador Barbour.

LANPHER: Yes, around the end of 1967/beginning of '68. I did that for a year and a half.

Q: This is a very interesting period. Please describe your duties and then talk about working with him.

LANPHER: Walworth Barbour was kind of an old fashioned diplomat. He looked to the DCM to run the embassy, manage the embassy. He wasn't big on embassy details except making sure that nobody got between him and his car. He handled that with Washington himself. On his staff was a staff aide and a secretary. He relied heavily on the staff aide to make sure he had his secretary and was scheduled properly, that he was kept informed as to what was going on. He very much looked at his staff aide as somebody who had his eyes and ears open in the embassy and somebody who was totally discreet and who worked for the ambassador. He generally wanted the staff aide to know what was going on in the embassy, organize his telegrams, be at his beck and call 24 hours a day, which was a pleasure. And somebody that he could totally rely on.

Q: Was there a Mrs. Barbour?

LANPHER: No. He was an old bachelor Class of '30 from Harvard. He had pictures of two women on his desk. One day after I had been working for him several months, I asked him who the women were. He said, "You'll meet one of them. That's my sister. The other picture is a woman I met in Cairo when I was minister to some exile government during World War II, some European government." I said, "What about her?" He said, "Well, I kind of fell in love with her, asked her to marry me, and she said, 'No.'" Twenty years later, he had her picture on his desk still. A very interesting, very smart, very astute man. There was no Mrs. Barbour. I'd organize dinners for him and he was an old traditionalist. He had a table for 24, so we always had 24, 23 plus himself. I had to do the seating plans and I had to do things in protocol order. We always invited a couple people from the embassy. Because of protocol, they always sat in the middle of the table talking to each other, not getting involved with the Israelis at either end. I'd be at home the night of the dinner party and he'd call me at home saying, "One of those Israeli wives dropped out again. Could you get your wife gussied up and send her over? I have an empty place at the table." I'd send my wife off to fill in the dinner table. He was very sharp, knew the Israelis extremely well. By way of background, he had been our DCM or minister in London for six or seven years before President Kennedy asked him to go to Israel in 1961. By the time of the Six Day War, he had been there six years. Johnson asked him to stay on and later Richard Nixon asked him to stay on. So, he

eventually spent 11 years as ambassador to Israel under three presidents. He very much felt that he worked for the President of the United States. That was his boss. The Secretary of State was out there somewhere. He took his instructions from the President. Every year, he would go home for the month of August. He would take the month and go home to Worcester, Massachusetts, where he had a house across the street from his sister. She was also a single lady. During that month of August, he would always go down to Washington, pay his respects at the White House, pay his respects at the State Department, go over and have a one-on-one chat with the President of the United States. That was where he got his overriding instructions. So, he felt very comfortable and secure having the confidence of three presidents in ignoring instructions from the State Department. This used to plague me because they would send him night action cables or FLASH cables. I'd give them to him and he'd just throw them on the side of his desk and ignore them if he didn't think the instruction was right. For days after one of these incidents, and they were fairly frequent, I'd be getting calls from Washington. They wouldn't dare call him directly. They'd call me and say, "When is Ambassador Barbour going to act on our instruction?" I'd always say, "I don't know, but would you like me to put you through to the ambassador?" "Oh, no, no, no, we don't want to do that. But can you encourage him to act on it?" After these phone calls, I'd go in and tell the ambassador, "Mr. Ambassador, I got a call from Washington about that cable again." He would just chuckle. He was a crafty old gentleman and a genuine gentleman, dignified. But he had his little games and one of them was, when he got an instruction that he didn't much care for but he knew he had to do something about, he'd get the instruction, "Go see the Prime Minister and make the following points," which he didn't think were right for the issue at hand. He'd get his secretary to line up his driver and call the Prime Minister and tell the Prime Minister he was on his way to Jerusalem. And he could see the Prime Minister anytime he wanted. He'd say to me, "Gib, I'm going to Jerusalem." He rarely, if ever, took a notetaker along. He'd get in his car and go to Jerusalem. But as he left the embassy, my instructions from him were to go down to communications and tell the head of the communications unit to send a service message back to Washington saying that "REFTEL (the instruction telegram) had come in garbled" and to ask for a retransmission. So, by the time he got back from Jerusalem, we had had a retransmission and he'd start his reporting cable, "Unfortunately, your cable arrived in garbled form, but nevertheless, I saw the prime minister today. This is what I said. This is what he said." One of my other tasks that he told me about the first or second day I worked for him was, "Gib, these fellows back there in Washington have been trying to sneak into this embassy for years one of those newfangled devices, one of those secure voice telephones, and I don't want one of those things." I asked him, "Why not?" He said, "If I had one of those things, I'd have all those goofies back in Washington giving me instructions over the telephone. I don't want that. I want my instructions in writing." So, I was always on the lookout for these guys and he had caught them on several occasions before and had thrown them out of the country.

Q: Did you get any impression of the Israeli leadership? What were you picking up on Moshe Dyan and Meir?

LANPHER: Lebi Eshkel, who had died in 1968, about March, was replaced by Golda

Meir. But yes, I saw a great deal of the Israeli leadership. They were very open, accessible. When I was in the political section, I'd go off with the political counselor and see people like Yigal Alon, Shimon Peres. I first met the current prime minister, Sharon, at a dinner at the ambassador's house when he was the leading crossborder retaliation for the Israeli army. I used to see Moshe Dyan when I'd go with Cliff English, the consul general, to deliver birds we had shot to him and drink beer. They were amazingly successful. Golda Meir was an incredible character. She was a real presence. If she walked into a room, she was certainly not the world's glamour girl by any means, but she had a voice and a presence that was astounding. She walked into a room and you could hear her talking in a quiet voice on the other side of the room and you knew she was there. She was one of about six people I've met in my life that really had a presence. She was an extraordinary woman. She was very close to Walworth Barbour. Before she became Prime Minister, she and Wally, as she called him, had a warm personal relationship. She'd come down from Jerusalem and go to his house, just the two of them, for dinner. When I went in and told Barbour that I just had a call from Jerusalem saying Prime Minister Eshkol had died, he was very moved. He liked Eshkol and was very saddened by it. Then he asked me, "Gib, who do you think's going to be the new prime minister?" There were a lot of people who would be logically under consideration, people like Shimon Peres and Dayan, and several others. I said, "I think it's going to be Golda." He said, "Oh, no." I said, "I thought you liked Golda." He said, "I do like Golda, but I have a hard time dealing with women." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Sometimes when I've seen Golda, when she was foreign minister and I had to deliver a tough message, she cried and I don't know how to deal with that." But he was very fond of Golda and they worked well together. But he was a bit uncomfortable. It wasn't part of his life experience to deal with a woman.

Q: That's wonderful. Did you see any of their workings together?

LANPHER: I saw the results. I never sat in on a formal meeting. When he went off to see the Prime Minister when she was Prime Minister, he didn't take a notetaker. But I saw the results of their meetings. He was on the phone to her all the time.

Q: Some of these people don't take notetakers and don't really leave much behind, so you don't know what happened. Was he pretty good about reporting back?

LANPHER: Oh, absolutely. He had two ways of reporting. One, if it was during working hours, he would dictate to his secretary as soon as he came back in the old fashioned way. He would dictate quite long cables full of flavor. If it was at home in the evening – and we had lots of evening work because of operational things – Israeli raids into neighboring countries, retaliation for this or that – one night I made six round trips of 20 miles each way between the embassy and his residence with cables back and forth. He'd be sitting on his couch with a yellow pad and he'd write out his cables long hand. I'd take them in and the communicator would send them out, just type them on the teletype machines right off his draft. He was a good writer.

Q: On the personal side, what did your wife think of all this?

LANPHER: She was amused as any young woman of 24 or 25 years old... She was very flattered by Barbour. She thought he was old fashioned. She was always amused when he'd get on the phone and say to her, "Can you get yourself gussied up?" She could get herself gussied up. She was flattered. And he was a very warm, if shy and reserved, man. I had great affection for him. You always knew when it was May 1. He'd show up in the embassy because that was the beginning of summer, as he saw it, in his panama suit, his white shoes, and his straw hat.

But when I referred on the last tape to having learned a lot from him, let me share with you a couple of things. During the Six Day War, when the Israelis got to the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Suez and stopped, they didn't stop altogether. There was an American offshore oil rig working in the Gulf of Suez pumping oil. I believe it was owned by Amoco. It was an Egyptian concession area, quite close to the coast of the Sinai south of the Canal. The Israelis occupied that oil rig and started to pump the oil because Israel needed oil. Well, it took a while, but Amoco came into the State Department eventually and protested this because they weren't getting the revenue anymore. The State Department sent Barbour a cable saying, "The Israelis are clearly in contradiction to international law and we're in the process of preparing a legal brief which we in due course will present to the Israelis." Barbour sent a cable back saying, "That's not the way to go with the Israelis. If we want them off that oil rig and it returned to Amoco, we do it politically. You give me instructions to go in and tell them to give it up. Don't file a legal brief." Well, I didn't question his judgment on this, but the State Department said, "No, we've got a solid legal case. We're going to do it." So, eventually they called the Israelis in in Washington and gave them this legal brief. The Israelis accepted it and said, "We'll be back to you." Within a matter of days, they had a photograph of their soldiers on the rig, dated on the photograph, before the end of the war, before the cease-fire went into effect. We had no legal case against them. They sent a very chagrined cable out from Washington back to Barbour. I said, "What do you think of this?" He said, "It's what I always say. If you have an important issue in diplomacy, don't let the lawyers anywhere near it." I said, "Why not?" He said, "The other guy's lawyers are always better than ours. If you want results, you go in at a political level." I learned that lesson and it's one that stuck with me.

Another thing mightily irritated him. He was very much a bilateral diplomat, had great skepticism about the utility of the United Nations. He recognized that the United Nations was important and served our purposes sometimes. But he was very frustrated by the amount of time that was spent in New York on resolutions of this and that. His observation to me, which stuck with me, was, "You never want to go work up there in New York." He was sort of a father figure. I said, "Why not?" He said, "Well, you've been watching all this stuff going on. Those people that work up there in New York at the end of the day, all they care about is "resoluting" something. They don't care what they resolute, but they want to resolute something, not solve something. Any important issue you keep out of their hands and do it bilateral." I learned those two lessons. There is a lot of wisdom in that.

Q: Oh, yes. Did you get a feel while you were working with him about his relations with the consulate general in Jerusalem?

LANPHER: To be perfectly frank, Jerusalem was a burr under his saddle. He generally ignored Jerusalem. He could be very imperious. He didn't let Jerusalem bother him. He basically thought they were inconsequential.

Q: Did he ever in your presence talk about the reporting about our ambassadors in the Arab world? Did he see himself as "us versus them?"

LANPHER: No. He had a very polite and very professional dialogue in cables. They'd make an argument. He'd argue back. He had no animosity. He regarded them as professionals. He didn't think they were right a whole lot of the time. But he was absolutely thoroughly professional. As you mentioned reporting, he knew Israel so well and he knew the U.S.-Israeli politics so well that he kind of drove his political section crazy in that he wouldn't let them report political gossip, who was doing what to whom in Israeli politics. He valued his relationships in Israel and he had his own personal relationships everywhere. He didn't want a lot of cables going back to Washington reporting political chit chat. "Those cables always leak back in Washington. My name is on the bottom of it. They get back to the Israelis one way or another." He would share with his political counselor after he had had a dinner party or something like that, if he had heard something interesting. He would sit down with his political counselor and give him chapter and verse, including all the gossip, but he wouldn't let the political counselor report it. He said, "What use is reporting it? It's only a liability out there." This was kind of astute.

Q: Knowing how the system works, it's the sort of thing that we end up as... Political reporters love to get this but it doesn't go anywhere and it can hurt your relations.

LANPHER: Exactly, and he saw this perfectly. He let the political section report all sorts of stuff out there on the occupied territories and moods in Israel and polls and press and everything like that. But when it came to the juicy political gossip, he would share it with them and he thought they needed it for background to put things in perspective, but don't put it back to Washington. He also had because of his techphobia a great concern about his telegrams, especially his NODIS telegrams somehow winding up "in the Bureau of Fisheries."

Q: Speaking of gossip, Moshe Dayan was a figure larger than life. Were you picking up much about him?

LANPHER: Oh, yes. There was always gossip about Moshe Dayan and Moshe Dayan being a womanizer. We kept that out of the reporting. But quite a few people, including the ambassador, had a good relationship with him. Moshe Dyan was a very interesting character. I think he was too loose a cannon for being anything more than Minister of Defense. But he did a good job.

Q: There was no concern about him becoming a man on horseback?

LANPHER: Not that I can recall. It was up to the Israeli political system to use his talents where they were best applied. But he wasn't out of the old hardcore labor movement, the Labor Party, and I don't think there was ever any serious consideration given to him as Prime Minister.

Q: From Barbour's perspective, did the Likud raise any blips on our radar? Did he do anything with them?

LANPHER: He would talk to everybody in Israel. He'd invite orthodox and religious types to receptions at his house. But you have to remember, going back to the '60s, the Labor Party was the Labor Party and they ran Israel and there had never been an opposition party that was the government party. The politics of Israel were the politics of the Labor Party for the most part. Sure, there were splits but always within the Labor Party as between the Ashkenazis and the Sephardic Jews, Jews from North Africa, Iraq, and Yemen. It was politics within the Labor Party.

Q: Speaking of the wide dispersal of the Jews in the world, particularly after the war, did you spend a lot of time arranging for American politicians, leaders, and others to come to Israel or was this not as much as it is today?

LANPHER: That's a very good question. The embassy did almost nothing in that regard. We sent Israelis to the United States, International Visitors Program, young political leaders as we do all over the world. But the Israeli government took the lead on the other side. In fact, they devoted enormous resources, time, energy, and access to inviting American politicians to visit Israel. In fact, in the two and a half years I was in Israel, I was control officer for over 60 CODELS. It was not as strenuous a job as that might imply because the Israeli government made all the arrangements, provided transportation, actually was the one who invited these men and women from our Congress to come, and other political leaders. In terms of American politics, they always say, "Israel, Ireland, and Italy" are the countries that count. We had an enormous number of visitors and the Israelis were very sophisticated in terms of handling them. They gave them a tour, took them to the Sinai, the Golan, the occupied territories, they made everybody in the government available to people up to and including the Prime Minister. This is where their bread was buttered and they worked very hard and very effectively at it.

Q: Did you at the embassy try to give a balanced account, not to give the right side as opposed to the wrong side, but to give the American side of how we looked at things?

LANPHER: Absolutely. And Barbour was very astute on this. We assigned a control officer to every CODEL that came in that we were aware of. Sometimes we were unaware of them. He would see any and all congressmen that came through. He'd have them out to his house for drinks or give a lunch for them and try to expose them as broadly as possible. To the extent that we could, we tried to give them a balanced view. But they didn't always want to hear it. A lot of American politicians, sadly, visited Israel to get their ticket punched to get votes back home and they weren't going to rock any boat. Most of them were there for U.S. domestic political reasons.

Q: Were there any issues at that time where we saw particularly our relations with the Arab states that we should be doing thus and so but the Israelis from their perspective didn't want us to do thus and so? I'm thinking about arming or supporting this or that group in the Arab world. Often it had to do with military equipment and there was great pressure brought from the politicians in the United States not to do something. Did these issues affect you?

LANPHER: No. Bear in mind that I left Israel two years after the Six Day War. The kind of issues you described came later. They weren't issues at that time. In the time I was in Israel, the only military deal we did with Israel was the A4 deal, which was kind of modest and that was sometime in 1968. We'd had a long-term military to military relationship with Jordan and had previously supplied modest amounts of military aid to Jordan. So, there was a precedent in the region for it. The issue was within the U.S. government about a military supply relationship with Israel. We had never had one before. So, this A4 deal in 1968 was precedent setting. We didn't even have a framework with Israel to put in place a military supply relationship. Before we can transfer military articles to a country, we have to go through lots of bureaucratic steps to certify that country as being capable of protecting our equipment, internal security surveys, at conference tables when we were negotiating some of these things trying to insure ourselves and go through the bureaucratic steps that Israel could protect what we were about to supply them.

Q: Is there anything else we should talk about?

LANPHER: Yes, one of the dumbest things I ever did. About two or three weeks before the Six Day War, there I was, 25 years old, and I developed a friendship with Walworth Barbour's Irish butler, John. It turned out that John was a fly fisherman, too. One day, he said to me, "I've fallen into Israel's biggest secret." We used to drink beer at the ambassador's pool. John said, "I found a river in Israel that's full of rainbow trout that haven't been fished for years and the river is full of them." I said, "Yeah? Let's go." So, one afternoon two or three weeks before the Six Day War started, but the war clouds were certainly gathering, we took off from Tel Aviv in my car with a cooler full of beer and our fly rods. We drove up to northern Israel, the upper Galilee, to the base of Mount Hermon, where the Dan River flowed out of the base of Mount Hermon and down towards the Sea of Galilee. For two or three, four, miles, despite the heat, the water was cold enough to sustain a trout population. It had been planted during the British mandate period, probably by some British officers. We got up there and only then did John tell me that this river, the Dan River, was the cease-fire line between Israel and Syria. He said, "We've got to be careful. There are machine gun nests on both sides." So we waded out into the river between machine gun nests with guys peering at us on both sides. We caught trout like hell. For a very good reason, nobody had fished it for years. The machinegunners on both sides didn't know how to deal with two fellows out there flicking fly rods at this water and catching trout. In retrospect, it was one of the dumbest things I ever did.

Q: In 1969, you left.

LANPHER: I left the summer of 1969. I had been due to leave in January 1969, but Barbour insisted to Washington at his behest, not mine, that I stay at least another six months because he didn't want to transition to another staff aide just then. We had a new administration in Washington, the Nixon administration. As an aside, Nixon had visited Israel while I was there and when he was out of office. Barbour had been very cordial to him, gave him a complete briefing and a meal. When Nixon was elected in November '68, a few weeks after the election, Barbour got a message from Nixon asking him if he'd be willing to go as Nixon's ambassador to Moscow. He had served previously in Moscow at some point in his career. Barbour sent back a message saying, "I'm very flattered, but at my age (He was in his mid-'60s), I think I'm too old to take on a new post like Moscow and do the kind of job I'd like to do. So, thank you very much." Nixon took it in good grace and picked Jacob Beam, who happened to be a friend of Barbour's. Barbour didn't offer any advice as to alternatives. But shortly thereafter, Nixon sent him back a message saying, "Thank you very much. I appreciate your reasons, but would you stay on as my ambassador to Israel?" He said, "Okay" and he did.

Q: How was your career going?

LANPHER: It had gone very well, but I was still on language probation with a 2+/3 in French and I wanted to get to a French speaking country so I could get off probation. So, in July 1969, I went on direct transfer from Tel Aviv via Paris to Libreville, Gabon, out of the pressure cooker and into tropical equatorial Africa. I was there for about three months and went on deferred home leave, took some more French, and got off language probation.

Q: You just stayed in Gabon for three months?

LANPHER: Three months and then took home leave, took my French exam, and went back to Gabon. I had a two year tour.

Q: You were in Gabon from when to when?

LANPHER: July 1969 until July 1971. I was away from Gabon for two or three months doing home leave and French training.

Q: Talk about Gabon when you arrived there in '69.

LANPHER: Compared with Israel, Gabon was a low pressure, high heat place. When I got there in 1969, there was a very small embassy. For a couple of weeks, there was an ambassador named David Bain. Counting Bain, I had three ambassadors and three DCMs in the two year tour. Very small post. I was the political officer, the economic officer, and the consular officer. I remember when I got off the plane being struck – having never set foot in Africa before – this was tropical equatorial Africa. When the plane door opened in Libreville, the overwhelming smell of mildew. It was quite extraordinary. And the heat and humidity. Libreville got 120 inches of rain a year and it was green and moldy as it

could be. That was the initial impression. There were so few new arrivals in those days that somebody invited my wife and me to dinner that night. I remember being offered French fried elephant trunk rings at this dinner. I was told that the trunk was the best part of the elephant to eat. One of my predecessors had shot an elephant. My predecessor was long gone. There hadn't been a consular or junior officer there for two or three months when I arrived. The next morning, I remember going into the DCM's office to get my marching orders. He was a very nice guy, Harvey Nelson. He said, "There is one pending problem on the consular side aside from the fact that no consular officer has issued a visa or passport for months. We had an American oil worker from an oil rig off the coast pitch up dead and he's been in the embassy deep freeze for the last two or three months and we've got to get his body out of here and back to Oklahoma, but it's a very complicated process and we just haven't had time to get around to it with the government of Gabon, which insists on all sorts of certificates and otherwise because of the climate the bodies of dead people be buried the day they die or the day after." It took me two or three months and ultimately the signature of the President on the export forms for this cadaver. But that was a big difference between dealing with the problems of Israel and the problems of maintaining an embassy and a presence in Gabon.

Q: Who was your first ambassador?

LANPHER: They were all three career fellows. The first one was David Bain. The second one was Richard Funkhouser. The third was John McKesson. Then I had three DCMs - Harvey Nelson, Frank Crigler, and Steve Lyne - all in two years. The most interesting thing going on in a political/diplomatic sense was that at the time, 1969, Libreville was one of the two exterior bases of operation for the Ibo/Biafran opposition in the Nigerian civil war. So, all the dogs at war were in Libreville. Planes were coming in and out every night transporting arms, ammunition, fuel, into Biafra from Libreville and bringing out Biafran refugee orphan children, nurses, and teachers. So there were refugee camps around Libreville. I was asked as the political/economic and junior officer, jack of all trades, to monitor this flow for Washington. We didn't have a defense attaché or a CIA station, so I was basically working de facto for CIA and the intelligence community. I would monitor the airport morning and evening to see which planes had moved. I had a constant tail from French intelligence watching me. The Israelis, South Africans, and Rhodesians were there, everybody that was supporting Biafra. So, I met some of the dogs of war. It was a very small town, so you'd go to a restaurant and you'd wave at the thugs.

Q: Were we doing anything on the Biafran war?

LANPHER: We were monitoring it. We didn't support Biafra. They were eager for our support but we didn't give it to them. And the other countries that gave support gave it covertly. But in Libreville itself, we did a lot and did a lot of support for the refugees from Biafra that wound up there, orphan children. They set up camps for these kids. Biafran nurses and teachers came out. We provided a lot of food assistance, some shelter. We didn't have an AID mission, so I did the coordination. Most of this aid came in through NGOs.

Q: NGOs today are quite a well oiled machine, but in those days, there really wasn't much of a cooperative...

LANPHER: There weren't so many of them. There were a few out there like Catholic Relief Services, the Lutherans. But a lot of the aid went in through the UN refugee service. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Ali Khan, came out and I met him. I guess we put a lot of our aid in through them. It was food aid and shelter. It wasn't big money.

Q: This was a rather peculiar situation where the Biafran war... In the United States, you had very strong supporters of the Biafran movement in Congress mainly more young staff aides who were pushing this, and also the glitterati from the Beatles to others. Biafra was sort of a cause. And also from the Catholic Church because the Ibos have a lot of Catholics in there. Also, they were damned good propagandists.

LANPHER: Yes, and Biafra, the eastern region of Nigeria, was, number one, Christian, predominantly Catholic. And it was probably the best educated region of Nigeria thanks in no small part to outfits like the Holy Ghost Fathers in Ireland that had been involved in the eastern region of Nigeria for a century. In fact, I met a lot of the Holy Ghost fathers who would come riding in and out on these munitions planes. This was DC-4s, DC-3s, Super G Constellations and that sort of thing. These Holy Ghost fathers because I had to keep my eyes and ears open, I got to know a lot of them. They'd come over and drink my whiskey and eat my good food. That's one of the ways I'd get my fingers on the pulse of what was going on in Biafra. But it was certainly not State Department policy to support Biafra. The reason was that we believed that the lines of independent Africa had been drawn haphazardly but we weren't going to be a part of changing them.

Q: When you look at it, it's disintegrating into different groups and wouldn't work.

LANPHER: It would be a Godawful mess. Plus, Nigeria was a very big country with the biggest population in Africa. It had emerging oil wealth, which was why the dogs of war were there in Libreville. They wanted the oil out of the eastern region, a very prolific oil producing region.

Q: At that point, were you in communication with our consulate in Biafra?

LANPHER: We didn't have a consulate in Biafra. We had no representation there. I was in touch and I'd send all my reporting on Biafran issues to Lagos.

Q: At one point, we had a consulate in there which was in practically revolt against the embassy because they had to be ordered out.

LANPHER: If we had had a consulate, it was gone by the time I got to Libreville. Enugu would have been where it would have been. That was the biggest city in the eastern region.

Q: Probably by the time you were there it was gone.

LANPHER: It was gone. There was no consulate there. Yes, there were heated battles between the pro-Biafra and the pro-maintain unity and support the Lagos government view within the State Department. But I wasn't back in the State Department. I was in Libreville and had plenty to do without getting involved in the battle. I didn't see it as my role. I was there to report on this and nobody in Libreville was going to make Nigeria policy.

Q: What was the government of Gabon like?

LANPHER: Pretty dismal and, very much despite having achieved independence in 1961 a French colony or neocolony. Gabon is a tropical rainforest with oil off its coast, manganese and uranium in its interior, a big lumber tree exporting country. The population at the time I was there was probably no more than half a million people in the whole country, a country about the size of Colorado. Dense rainforests. Twenty miles of paved road in Libreville and Port Gentile to the south. Those were the two commercial locations in Gabon. This was the country where Schweitzer had had his hospital. There was still in 1969 a French person, a man or woman, behind every cash register in the country. The Gabonese were not very energetic. The president had clearly been anointed by the French. Both the first president and then the second president. The second president was appointed a year and a half or two years before I arrived and is still the president today. His name is Bongo. When I was there, it was Albert Bernard Bongo. He changed it to Omar and went Islamic after the '73 war in the Middle East and his joining OPEC. He's still in charge today. It was sort of the butt of regional jokes among other Africans. You'd travel north to Cameroon and the taxi driver would say, "Where are you from?" I would say, "I'm living in Libreville." The taxi driver would giggle. But it was in its own right and as a second tour it was an interesting assignment. I traveled into the bush with a French ethnologist once for a week, serving no real U.S. government interest except showing the flag in the deepest, darkest rainforest in Africa. But it was an adventure. It was great when I was 25 or 26. I wouldn't want to go back there today. But we did have a U.S. economic interest. The U.S. Steel Corporation at that point got a lot of its manganese, an ingredient in steel, from Gabon. They owned a huge and impressive manganese mine, very rich deposits. The French also got all their uranium for their "force de frappe" out of Gabon.

Q: What was your impression of our relations with the French? With so many of these countries, former French possessions, the French looked upon us as trespassing on their private preserve.

LANPHER: Yes. The expression was "chasse gardée." My relations with the French were at the official level in a small town like Libreville correct. Our embassy's relations with the French embassy were correct. That said, the French were apprehensive about our even being there, small presence that we had. The French had a nasty habit. When they'd get into a spat with their clients, the Gabonese, they'd always point the Gabonese at us and say we were responsible. In the initial Kennedy years after independence, we had

established a Peace Corps presence in Gabon. The French ran into a problem in about 1967 with the Gabonese and denounced to the Gabonese that Peace Corps volunteers out in the interior were fermenting revolution. The Gabonese promptly threw the Peace Corps out. Partly with that history and partly the fact that I was, at least for the first six or eight months until Biafra collapsed, monitoring the activities of the French and others vis a vis Biafra, going to the port and watching the stuff come off French ships and go out to the airport on French army trucks and go into these ragtag planes and being monitored by French intelligence, I had my problems. And also my propensity to travel out into the countryside whenever I got a chance because I was young and adventurous... At one point, the president called my ambassador and complained about my activities and ordered that I be restricted to the city limits of Libreville. That was done at the instigation of the French, I'm sure. They also complained to us. After I was denounced to the president as a CIA agent, my ambassador naturally said, "He's not a CIA agent. We don't even have a CIA agent or office here in our embassy in Libreville." The president got very upset about that and demanded that we have a CIA agent in town because otherwise Gabon would not be regarded as important.

Q: What about your restriction? Did that hold?

LANPHER: It lasted a month or two. It was the last two or three months I was there. It was more annoying and amusing than terribly substantive.

Q: Speaking of relations, how did you get along with your ambassadors?

LANPHER: The first ambassador, David Bain, was only there for three or four weeks after I got there. I found him a very genial, relaxed, appropriately relaxed given what Gabon was, a very nice man. I would have enjoyed working for him.

The second ambassador, Richard Funkhouser, I was less enamored of. He was basically a Europeanist and really had not done Africa. I suppose this ambassadorship was a reward for having been whatever he was in Europe. He didn't really seem to have much interest in the country. He only stayed about a year and he went off to Vietnam as a provincialCORDS director.

The third ambassador was very good, John McKesson, an Africanist that spoke lovely French and understood Africa and cared about it. He was a pleasure to work for.

Q: How about with your wife and yourself? How about the Gabonese and social life?

LANPHER: The Gabonese didn't mix very much. Aside from formal receptions, there was very little interaction with the Gabonese. Most of the social life was with the French expatriate community, the other expatriate community, which was relatively large given the small size of the country. We had two or three American oil firms represented in Libreville with small offices. I think they were Texaco, Mobil, and Gulf Oil. There was a UN office. There was a small diplomatic community. That was pretty much it. There was not a whole lot in Libreville. You'd play tennis, but you could only play for about a half

an hour at a time because of the heat and the humidity and then you'd sit out half an hour and then play another half hour. And God knows there was a lovely beach. The embassy had a guest house across the estuary. I remember being at that guest house when our man landed on the Moon for the first time and hearing it on the radio. The embassy had a boat and I used to go out and catch barracuda and have barracuda barbecues. It was fine for a young officer.

Q: You had two experiences, one in the Middle East in the center of everything and the other an African experience, certainly not a particular center of anything. Whither Gib Lanpher at this point?

LANPHER: I think I got the most I could out of and enjoyed both tours. I recognize that one job, one posting, had been far more central to the U.S. diplomacy than the other. But hell, I was young. I enjoyed the adventure of Gabon. When I left Gabon, I came back to Washington. I hadn't been penalized for my service in Gabon. I was assigned to the Operations Center for six months and then S/S for a year and a half. I was a line officer. So, when I came back to Washington, I was back in the thick of things. I had gotten off language probation. I was pretty rapidly promoted and was quite happy with it. I enjoyed the variety. S/S was good.

Q: We'll talk about your time in S/S in '71.

Today is August 21, 2002. Gib, you were in the Ops Center. How was it working when you were there in '71?

LANPHER: It was a far different Ops Center than it is today, far less modern in terms of communications capability. There were no computers. The phone system was 1971 as opposed to 30 years later. But we performed many of the same sort of functions trying to keep on top of breaking events. We did summaries morning and afternoon. We were sort of the linchpin of the Department and the interagency process. For instance, we were in the thick of things transmitting orders when President Nixon wanted to do some bombing in Laos and this sort of thing. We were on the phone to ambassadors and transmitting instructions. It was kind of exciting.

Q: Did you get involved in any particular incidents?

LANPHER: I think probably one of the more interesting times was the India-Pakistan war in the fall of 1971.

Q: This was the Bangladesh war.

LANPHER: Yes. We tilted in favor of Pakistan. But it was interesting being in the Ops Center for that war because of the time difference between Washington and South Asia, 12 hours. So the war was being fought in daylight hours out there when it was the middle

of the night in Washington. So, being on the midnight shift during that period was quite interesting.

Q: William Rogers was still Secretary of State in this period.

LANPHER: That's correct.

Q: While you were in the Ops Center, how was the National Security Advisor's office tied in? Did you have special connection to them?

LANPHER: We did. And my recollection isn't great, but it was clear that Kissinger was running a lot of things out of the National Security Council and that Rogers was being bypassed or ignored. I saw it more clearly when I was on the line.

Q: You were on the line from late '71 until '73?

LANPHER: Until mid-'73.

Q: Is there a specific job that you had?

LANPHER: The line was set up in those days where there were seven or eight of us as line officers and we all had particular bureaus assigned to us – they had to run their papers to the seventh floor through us. My bureaus were ARA and East Asia. At one point, I also had the Economic Bureau.

Q: I understand that there is nothing like being on the line in S/S to understand how the Department works, who does what to whom. What was your impression of the Secretary's office as opposed to the National Security Advisor?

LANPHER: My impression is that the State Department and the Executive Secretariat tried to put the best face on the fact that the Secretary of State was not a heavy hitter in terms of the foreign policy councils of the government at that time. It was a bit of an embarrassment to the institution that Rogers was such a non-player. There was a subtle effort to try to make the Secretary look as good as possible, although we all knew that at the end of the day he didn't count for very much.

Q: I've heard various accounts about the different bureaus. What was your impression of the product of ARA?

LANPHER: ARA was a backwater in those days. The focus was on East-West relations, Vietnam, East Asia. ARA sort of did its own thing. Nobody on the seventh floor paid a great deal of attention to it. It was kind of frustrating. Sometimes when I'd get a paper from ARA, it was almost as if it had been written in Spanish and then translated crudely into English. Subsequently after I left S/S in '73 and Kissinger came in as Secretary, replacing Rogers, Kissinger ordered that the house be cleaned in ARA. I think it was well overdue. He called it "GLOP." I guess it was prompted because Kissinger had gone on a

trip to Latin America and asked somebody about SALT and nobody in the room understood what SALT was.

Q: Dealing with the East Asia Bureau, there must have been a Vietnamese suboffice.

LANPHER: It was the focus of the East Asia Bureau. We were in a war. It was the primary focus. There was a bit of focus on China because of Nixon's and Kissinger's opening to China. But the name of the game was Vietnam and it was a very well staffed bureau reflecting the priorities of the time. The other interesting thing about being in S/S was that we did as line officers travel quite a bit with the Department's principals. We got involved in a lot of travel. I recall one 17-day trip that I took with the Treasury Secretary. Treasury had asked us to travel.

Q: Who was that? Was it Connelly?

LANPHER: No, Connelly was the Secretary for part of the time I was there. I didn't travel with Connelly. One of my colleagues did, Parker Borg. But I traveled with George Shultz, a fascinating, lovely man, my favorite Secretary of State.

Q: What sort of things did you do on this trip?

LANPHER: Making sure the trains ran on time, that whoever the principal was had briefing papers, that he was properly scheduled with hotels, motorcades, you name it. It was partly substance and partly administration. Shultz was a jewel to travel with. Some of the others weren't.

Q: Who were some that you didn't care to travel with?

LANPHER: I didn't care to travel with the Secretary of State at the time, Henry Kissinger, or Rogers. But Shultz was simply a very decent fellow. He cared about staff.

Q: I would think Rogers, being relatively low key, would be easy to deal with.

LANPHER: Most of us found him quite remote, isolated in his own small world.

Q: In '73, whither?

LANPHER: In '73, my then wife and I were expecting our first child. When somebody made me an offer – I think it was Harry Barnes, who had been a deputy executive secretary of the Department – said, "Hey, I'm in Personnel now. I'd like you to come and counsel the junior political officers," it sounded like a 40 hour a week job. It sounded pretty good to me after two years in S/S with bizarre hours. So, that's what I did for the next two years. It was quite satisfying.

Q: Personnel in a lot of businesses is sort of a clerical job, but in the State Department, it's part of the substance of the thing and is really quite important. How was the system

working in the '73- '75 period?

LANPHER: I actually stayed in Personnel for three years – two years as a counselor and then I was asked by the new Director General to be her special assistant. That was Carol Laise. Personnel was struggling to get with the late 20th century. The State Department had worked on an old boy networking basis. There wasn't a lot of transparency in the personnel process. The process basically was one of assignments. Counselors like me didn't have much to do with the promotion system because we didn't write peoples' efficiency reports. But assignments were crucial. There wasn't a lot of transparency. It was easier as a counselor for junior officers to try to get the right officer in the right job at the right time because they were pretty much unknown quantities. By that I mean first, second, and third tour officers. And there were a lot of pressures on the State Department and its personnel system at that time in terms of being more sensitive to women, more sensitive to minorities, and eventually when Carol Laise came in as Director General and I was part of her task force, we developed what is now known as the "open assignments system." This meant that all officers would have available to them a list of jobs that were coming open so that they could bid with some knowledge. That had never been done before. It was all word of mouth and hush-hush. It was a transforming time. It was also a time when the women officers who had married Foreign Service officers were allowed to come back into the Service. Until about 1971 or '72, women officers had to resign if they married a fellow officer. One of my counselees, for instance, as a junior officer coming back in was Phyllis Oakley, who later went on to be ambassador and Spokesman for the Department.

Q: While you were in Personnel at this time, were you paying particular attention to making sure that women were getting their fair share of political officer assignments? One of the charges has been that women who came into the Foreign Service were put into consular and administrative jobs much more than would be warranted statistically.

LANPHER: I suppose that's right. I looked at all my officers as being people. I think I was as unbiased as you could be. My objective was to try to get the right person into the right job and make sure it was a good fit. The way our junior counseling office was broken down, I was responsible for people who were political officers. When I joined the Foreign Service in '66, there was no cone system. The cone system had come in by the time I got to Personnel, so people that I was counseling were coned as political officers. I had no responsibility for how people were coned. This was the hand I was dealt with. I was responsible for these officers. So, I had men. I had minorities. And I had women. All coned political officers. I had a certain number of political jobs to fill and to negotiate. I think I treated everybody fairly.

Q: Did you have a problem with the European Bureau, which had a tendency to try to select and run its own show?

LANPHER: Oh, yes. The European Bureau was unbelievable, old school. I remember, the assignments officer for the European Bureau would say quite righteously in panel meetings, "That officer is totally unacceptable to EUR." We made him eat some officers.

But there was a tension, particularly with the European Bureau.

Q: Did you find a developing cadre of political officers who wanted to go to Africa? Or was it hard to get them there?

LANPHER: No. I had some success. I was working with or counseling junior political officers. For the younger officers, I thought it was a pretty good sell. "Take this job in Abidjan or Johannesburg. You're going to be a much bigger fish in a smaller pond and you have a chance to prove yourself and show yourself off as a junior officer rather than be buried as the number seven political officer in London." I think a lot of the smarter junior political officers took that advice. So, I had no problems filling political jobs in Africa at the junior level.

Q: How about ARA? Did you find that this was an enclosed area and it was hard to break out of it?

LANPHER: Not so much in terms of the junior officers. Especially after GLOP there was some sort of regulation put in that people had to serve in more than one area of the world. So, especially at the junior level, there was a willingness to go places in the full knowledge that you could get out of those places. I think there was more resistance at the more senior level of the various bureaus, the EUR club or the ARA club. That's been pretty well broken down now. And it started in the '70s.

Q: How was Carol Laise?

LANPHER: She was quite a lady. She was the first woman Director General. She had joined the U.S. government during the second world war as a civil servant. She was a career federal employee. She was a woman of remarkably high standards. She had a huge sense of humor. She had her frustrations. Sometimes she felt she wasn't taken as seriously as she should have been because she was a woman, but at the same time, she used to close the door and just talk with me – we were quite close – about her frustrations with the growing women's movement in the State Department. She was one of those women who had made it on her own in a tough man's world. She had earned everybody's recognition. She got quite frustrated and spoke to me about her problems with "this new generation of women" who expected rewards just because of their sex rather than their performance. So, she had her own private views, but at the same time, she was Director General, so her public persona was fully in support of diversity, women's rights, everything.

Q: How did "diversity" go in those days? This was really getting minority officers, African-Americans... Was that going anywhere?

LANPHER: It was going places but it was going very slowly. I don't think the Department did a splendid job on the recruitment side. And even now, 25 years later, you see the focus of the Department personnel system, the Secretary of State even, is now 25 years later focused heavily on recruiting minorities. It's taken 25 years to get to the point where we're doing a much better job. I don't think we were doing a very good job in

those days.

Q: When you were counseling, were you seeing a problem of maybe a minority would be recruited and then in their jobs there really wasn't any mentoring or something to make sure that this group who was sort of coaxed into the Foreign Service was being mentored at least to begin with to make sure that they began to adjust?

LANPHER: It's hard for me to recall specific cases, but I think the lack of mentoring was more widespread than simply minorities. I think it applied across the board. The counselors in Personnel did a pretty good job of mentoring, but when an officer is 5-10,000 miles away, there is only so much you can do. You can talk on the telephone, which we did. When people had problems, I told them, "Give me a call and let's talk it through." But in terms of mentoring by supervisors, it was very much a hit or miss thing on a worldwide basis and irrespective of race or sex.

Q: It really depends on a personality whether somebody would talk to you about a career or not. I can recall long gaps in my service where I heard nothing. The rest of the time it was, "You're doing fine" and then you're just sort of left out there.

LANPHER: Yes. It was very much on an individual basis. The institution, although people are the State Department's only resources, they weren't managed very well.

Q: Yes. You hire good people and throw them out there.

LANPHER: Yes. It was sort of sink or swim with very little follow-on guidance.

Q: On the political side, how about the Near East? Did the Near Eastern Bureau handle its own?

LANPHER: The Middle East and South Asia Bureau was kind of a little bit different. Esoteric languages drove it to a certain extent whether it was Arabic or Hindi. But it was also driven by the Arab-Israeli thing. So, it was different. It stood out. The people tended to stay in that bureau for their careers. And in a certain way, it may have been a good thing because one of the complaints I had when I eventually went into the South Asia Bureau at the end of my career as the sole Deputy Assistant Secretary, having never served in South Asia, was that when I came in in '95, I was quite shocked to discover what a small stable of experienced South Asia hands we had to draw on within the service, people that you could go after and assign as a political counselor or as a DCM. The old hands had all been retired. They had gone out on early retirement or early mandatory retirement. It was a reflection of that that I was asked to serve as the Deputy Assistant Secretary, never having served in that part of the world before. It was difficult. And there is a balance that needs to be struck between the old clubs that control various bureaus and not having enough experience and talent. I'm speaking particularly at senior level jobs, counselor jobs and above.

Q: You must have run across a real problem on the collapse of our position in Vietnam.

You were there when all hell broke loose. That must have thrown an awful lot of officers out into the hopper to look for jobs.

LANPHER: That's true, but by the time of the collapse in Vietnam in the spring of 1975, I was just about to leave the counseling and assignment process and go to work for Carol Laise. But yes, there were disruptions because we had a flood of people coming out that needed jobs. I think the system did a pretty adequate job in terms of finding interim assignments and training assignments. It wasn't as disruptive as it could have been. By 1975, we were down in terms of American personnel and State Department personnel in Vietnam to much less levels than in the late '60s where you had these hordes of people in CORDS.

Q: Going back to the women problem, one of the complaints that women had lodged with justification was that there were all sorts of jobs that the old boy network said, "Well, we shouldn't have a woman being political officer in Addis Ababa because the society won't accept it," which really limited the choice.

LANPHER: I guess there was some of that, particularly in the Middle East Bureau. But even by the time I went into Personnel in '73, people had become more sensitive to the issue and if they felt that, they didn't articulate it very often. In my job, if an assignments officer had told me, "I'm not going to take a woman for that job," I would have said to him, "Can I quote you on that upstairs." That sort of thing usually worked. Once again, when you're talking about junior officers, first, second, and third tour, it was very tough for somebody to make a case against a junior officer.

Q: In '76, having been in Personnel, one of the gifts of being a personnel officer is, you usually have a pretty good chance of getting an assignment that you'd like. Did this happen to you?

LANPHER: As a matter of fact, it did, but not because I was in Personnel. In 1975, I had applied well ahead of time and had been selected to be an American Political Science Association congressional fellow for the year '75-'76. When Carol Laise came in as Director General in the spring of 1975, I had already been selected for this fellowship and she asked me to put it off for a year and be her special assistant for a year. This was something I had always wanted to do. I said, "Okay, I'll be your special assistant for a year" with the understanding that I could pick up the fellowship the following year, which I did.

Q: From '76-'77, what did you do?

LANPHER: The way these fellowships worked in those days, you did sort of a two month congressional relations study program with fellows from all over the country, many of them academics. There were two, maybe three, from the State Department. There were people from other agencies in the government. There were about 50 total. We had sort of a two month seminar at Johns Hopkins here in Washington. Then we went up to Capitol Hill and solicited jobs, went around visiting various members of Congress and their staffs and committee staffs, saying basically, "I'm a freebie. I'd like to come and

work here. Would you consider taking me on as an intern?" The way the program was set up, you were supposed to work for a member of the House or in the House for three or four months and then three or four months in the Senate so you'd get both perspectives. As it turned out, I wound up with a job with a congressman who had a great reputation for every year taking a congressional fellow, who cared about the fellowship program. He was a congressman from New Jersey who was quite a character. This was Frank Thompson, who, sadly, went to jail over the Abscam thing some years later. But he asked me to work for him. It was an interesting experience. He gave me a desk in his own private office. He said, "You're here to learn. I know you're from the State Department, but don't give me any advice about foreign policy or how I should vote on foreign affairs. I want you to work on some domestic stuff for me. Learn how this place really works." I said, "Tell me why you don't want me to comment on foreign affairs." He said, "I've been in this place for a long time. I've learned that the best thing I can do on foreign affairs, and that's not my specialty, is, when I go into the House floor, I look up at the wall and see how Lee Hamilton voted. I always vote the way Hamilton votes and I've been happy with that and don't trouble me with foreign affairs." I thought that was very interesting and part of the education there that foreign affairs is a very, very small part of the Congress or congressmen's agenda.

Q: What was Congressman Thompson's district like?

LANPHER: It was Trenton, New Jersey, inner-city democratic Trenton. But he also sort of represented Princeton. He had been a close friend of President Kennedy and was one of the major players in getting the Kennedy Centre built. His main committee was Education and Labor. He was very close to labor unions. He was very close to the academic community, particularly at the university level. The arts, labor... He was also one of the key people in the passage of the civil rights legislation in the mid-'60s. Although he came from New Jersey and represented Trenton, he had gone to Wake Forest College and was one of those few northern Democrats who had relationships with the "Dixies." But an utterly fascinating fellow. It was quite an experience. The year I went to work for him, he became chairman of the House Administration Committee, replacing the late unlamented Wayne Hayes. Hayes had hired a woman as a secretary who couldn't type but did many other things for Wayne Hayes.

Q: She had one of the larger bust measurements.

LANPHER: Yes.

Q: It was somebody else who got involved with a stripper.

LANPHER: That was Wilbur Mills.

Q: Fanny Fox.

LANPHER: Yes, that was it. Anyway, House Administration Committee had jurisdiction over election laws. Thompson said one of the things that bothered him was the low voter

participation in U.S. elections. This was something of a major issue for him and quite rightly. He thought that our voter registration system was partly at fault for this, that it was overly complicated, overly bureaucratic, and that there needed to be federal legislation on this. So, he asked me to draft a bill, which I spent the better part of the year on. I never moved to the Senate because of this. It called for people to be allowed to register and vote on election day at the polling place. This involved my working with local and county officials all over the country. The then Vice President, Mondale, was also very much interested and supportive of this effort, so I met with Mondale and his staff all the time on this. My fellowship was extended by three or four months because of this. The Vice President's office intervened with the State Department and said, "Hold an assignment for Lanpher because he's working on a piece of legislation that I feel is crucial." In the end, we never got a vote because we could never get a head count on the bill that would show that we would win. We were very close, but it was a real revelation to me that I had written so many anti-fraud provisions into the bill that a lot of congressmen privately didn't like it because they would no longer be able to do the things that had gotten them elected in the past. I remember one very senior Republican on the House Administration Committee telling me, "Gib, that's a great bill." I said to him, "Does that mean you're going to vote for it?" He said, "Oh, no." I said, "Why not, if you think it's a great bill?" He said, "Well, if that bill passed, how could I vote my illegals?" It was an education.

In the fall of '77, I went back to the State Department.

Q: Then what happened?

LANPHER: The job they had saved for me was a job in Congressional Relations of all places. I was assigned as the legislative management officer for the Africa Bureau. I did that for two years. It was a very interesting time to be in Congressional Relations. We all had our areas of specific responsibility, but we also all worked together on major pieces of legislation and lobbying.

Q: This was the Carter administration.

LANPHER: Yes. And we had things like the Panama Canal Treaty, SALT, and I had a particular issue that fell to me. I worked on all these issues, but my particular issue of major importance was the issue of Rhodesian sanctions, very controversial. In the 1970s, there were more votes in the Congress on Rhodesia than on any other foreign policy issue.

Q: Why?

LANPHER: There was a civil war going on in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. There was a white minority in Rhodesia clinging to power and two black guerrilla armies trying to win a civil war. We and the rest of the world had imposed sanctions on the Rhodesian government but there were a lot of people in the U.S. Congress, led by the likes of Jesse Helms and others and some of the domestic steel industry very much favored lifting the

sanctions on Rhodesia. So, there were a series of votes on this issue. It was usually cast not in terms of vital minerals, although that came into it, but white folks out there facing up to these godless communists. It was a very rugged issue. At the same time, the administration, particularly the Carter administration, was working closely with the British government to achieve a negotiated settlement. Lots of initiatives... The Carter administration, led by the Assistant Secretary for Africa, Dick Moose, and our UN ambassador, Andy Young, and Don McHenry and others, Tony Lake, were all very much involved, including the Secretary of State, Mr. Vance. It was a high priority issue. Vance was remarkable as we had these congressional challenges to the policy from the likes of Helms. I must have been in Vance's office on the average of once or twice a week for policy meetings on Rhodesia and how we'd handle not only the substance of the policy but also how we managed it with the Congress. I was a great admirer of Mr. Vance.

Q: How did you find working with Congress? How did you do this?

LANPHER: On any issue in the Congress that the State Department is serious about, you have to recruit members as allies to lobby their colleagues. You're not going to be able to lobby every member of Congress on every issue. There simply isn't the interest in Congress nor the manpower in the State Department to do that. You have to identify on any particular issue a handful of people in both the House and the Senate who are sincerely interested in the issue and support it as your core team and work through them to the other members of Congress. This is what we did and what I did. I had a core team of people that were interested in the Rhodesian issue and supportive of the administration's position and I worked with them. The same thing in the Senate.

Q: Would you work with the staff?

LANPHER: In some cases, it was the staff and in some cases the members. Usually in the first instance, the staff. But I had very close relations with Senator Clark and later Senator McGovern. Clark was the Africa Subcommittee chairman. Then he was replaced by McGovern. I worked with those two, but I also worked with Senator Case's staff and Senator Javits' staff. They took an active interest in the issue. Same thing on the House side.

Q: Did this issue fall along party lines or was this more North-South?

LANPHER: I don't think it was a straight party line. For instance, two of the most helpful members in the Senate were Republicans, Senator Case of New Jersey and Senator Javits of New York. Same thing over on the House side. The leading opponent of the administration's policy was a Republican, Helms, of North Carolina. In the House, we and the administration had the total support of the congressional Black Caucus. But the support went much further. We were in a stronger position in the House, relatively speaking, than we were in the Senate. But it was an emotional issue. Ultimately, we were successful in holding the line on the sanctions. But I remember one vote we lost in the Senate by about 75 to 25. That was a long, discouraging evening.

Q: It's sort of ironic as we talk now, 25 years later, to talk about sanctions against Zimbabwe over the doings of the dictatorial president, Mugabe, and what he's doing to the white farmers.

LANPHER: Yes. I suppose we'll get to that. But as part of that Congressional Relations job, I traveled to Africa several times with members of Congress. I first met Mugabe in 1978 in Mozambique. Later in my next job, I was the American negotiator to the peace conference in London, the Lancaster House conference. So, I've known Mugabe for a long time.

Q: Were there strained relations between Congress and the State Department feeling that the State Department wasn't very responsive?

LANPHER: I didn't run into it very much when I was in Congressional Relations. I think that period, '77 to 1980, was a particularly good time in terms of State Department relations with the Congress. I attribute that to a number of things. One, this is what Mr. Vance, the Secretary of State, wanted. Two, he had as his Assistant Secretary a fellow named Doug Bennett, who had been a senior staff member for Senator Muskie and he had a Deputy Assistant Secretary named Brian Attwood, who later headed AID in the Clinton administration. The Bureau was dedicated to working with Congress. There was a great openness and Bennett made sure that all of us went to our bureaus in the Department for their morning staff meeting. There was no "cops and robbers" played. The word was to all the bureaus, to the Assistant Secretaries, to the desk officers, "Develop your relations with the Congress. We're not the traffic cop. We're here to advise and help and build relations." I think it worked very well. In many later administrations, and I don't know how it's going in the Bush administration, but certainly in the Clinton administration when I was the Deputy Assistant Secretary to South Asia, the people in Congressional Relations were control freaks. "You will not talk to the Congress. You will carry out all your communications with the Congress through us. You are not to go to Capitol Hill when somebody asks for a briefing unless accompanied by somebody from Congressional Relations." That isn't the way Bennett ran the place and I think it paid off. He got the Canal Treaties through and relations were good.

Q: From what I've heard, I think we've even established a liaison office in Congress on the Hill for the first time, a fully staffed office. Powell has said, "Go out and talk. You know what our policy is. You go talk. If you're out of line, we'll tell you."

LANPHER: This is basically what Mr. Vance wanted and did. He didn't have the resources to open an office on the Hill. I've been retired for two years. Clearly, Powell understands the importance of congressional relations. He had the Pentagon experience where the services have always had offices on the Hill and it worked for them and he brought the concept over to the State Department and got the resources to do it. My hat's off to him. I hear there's great openness now. But I've seen congressional relations between the time I was in Congressional Relations and the time I retired just as poisonous.

Q: How involved did you get on the Panama Canal Treaty?

LANPHER: I was a foot soldier in that. I lobbied people I knew on the Hill on that. But there was a special task force set up to lobby for those treaties. Of course, Carol Laise's husband, Ellsworth Bunker, who had been a negotiator of this, was a key player in that and what a wonderful man he was, probably one of the most sparkling senses of humor I've ever run into. But that was a pretty well run task force. It was a unique approach on a congressional issue. The administration threw all its weight behind that issue and was ultimately successful. They had never used a task force approach before and it was very good. They brought in some extra talent. There was some Washington lawyer, Ambler Moss, who was brought in to be the staff director of the task force. They had working groups doing talking points. Any time there was an objection with something, they had 100 people writing the justification for it.

Q: And there were teams going out and if the anti-Canal people were talking, they'd be out there-

LANPHER: Yes. It was a PR effort and a lobbying effort. It was a full court press. But it was successful.

Q: You moved then when?

LANPHER: Mid-'79. At the end of 1978, I had been traveling with George McGovern and a couple members of his staff in Africa for about three weeks. We had been all up and down Africa, including to Rhodesia and Angola and all sorts of places. But we finished up that trip in December 1978, passing through London. McGovern and I went in to brief our then ambassador in London, Kingman Brewster, on our trip because he was keenly interested particularly in the Southern Africa dimension because it was a big issue in the UK. The Africa fellow in London in the political section was an old friend of mine, Ray Seitz, who later became ambassador to London. Ray and Kingman took me aside after our meeting and said, "We'd like you to come to London next summer and replace Ray Seitz," who had been there four years. I said, "Well, that sounds kind of attractive." They allowed as how they had been plying this for some time and had the concurrence of the Assistant Secretary for Africa. So, it was sort of a done deal. It was a surprise to me. But as it worked out, I did go to London in August 1979 about two weeks before the Rhodesian negotiations began in September.

Q: You were there from '79 until when?

LANPHER: '82.

Q: Let's talk about it. What was the status when you got there of the Rhodesian negotiations?

LANPHER: We had been working very closely with the British for at least three or four years. As I arrived in London in August 1979, because of all sorts of pressures – the war

was dragging on – the British had convinced all parties to come to London in September for an all-parties negotiation of a settlement. Those negotiations began about the 10th of September and they went on for 105 days, morning, noon, and night, weekends, no time off. My role was to represent the United States. We weren't a formal part of the Lancaster House Conference in the sense that we were not a direct party. It was chaired by the British foreign secretary, Lord Carrington, and all the Rhodesian parties, black and white, were represented at the conference. Our role was to be supportive of the British toward the edges of the conference and to intervene where we thought it was the right thing to do and in support of the British. So, I was the American in London during that period. It was literally a 24 hour a day job. I'd be out meeting with the various African parties and representatives of Rhodesia's neighboring states, the Zambians, the Mozambicans, or the South Africans, in the middle of the night in strange places around London. I think we played a fairly major and key supporting role at that conference. And the British were devoting 100% effort to this conference. They were going to put Rhodesia behind them one way or the other. So, Carrington did nothing but Rhodesia for three or four months. Mrs. Thatcher had to be kept on board. She was the Prime Minister. She didn't much like black communists, as I recall. But the British ran a very clever and very tough conference. They brought all their intelligence resources out of Africa and devoted them to working the streets of London. They tapped everybody's phone. They were on top of this like a blanket. There was an impasse over the issue of the future constitution in the first part of October. At this point, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, who was keenly involved, Sonny Ramphal, called me up and said, "Come over. I need to talk." He said, "I've been in touch with all the parties. The British are being too tough and this conference could break down. I think it's time that the United States made an intervention here with black parties." I said, "Okay. Let me talk to Washington." At the same time, the British came to me and said, "We think we're having a bit of a problem here. Maybe you should intervene." One of the problems was on the issue of land and aid to a future independent state. Working with Washington over a period of about 48 hours, working closely with the Africa Bureau, Tony Lake, Andy Young and the NSC, we put together an intervention instruction that was actually signed off by President Carter. I was asked to deliver it to Mugabe and Nkomo, which I did in Sonny Ramphal's living room in his private house. I had no notetaker with me. Kingman Brewster was entirely supportive of this whole effort and I kept him closely informed. He offered his help in many occasions. When people got out of line in Washington, he'd call his college roommate, Mr. Vance, and problems were solved back in Washington. I sat down with Mugabe and Nkomo and made this U.S. offer, if you will, the essence of which was, "If this conference is successful and a new democratically elected government emerges, we will be very, very generous in terms of aid." It was conditional. It had to be a democratically successful outcome and everything like that. I remember Mugabe and Nkomo questioning me closely on this. They said, "This aid, will you buy out the white farmers?" I said, "No. We will be very generous in terms of reconstruction aid, clinics, hospitals, schools, cattle dips, and development assistance, but the American taxpayer was not going to be in the business of buying out white farmers." They didn't like that answer. This must have gone on for an hour and a half and they came at me every which way. I said, "Well, President Carter has instructed me to make this offer. We're not going to be in a position to buy out white farmers." This stuck in their craw. Finally, I had to ad

hoc it and explain to them in very simple terms that to the extent that we are supportive of building schools and hospitals and everything else, “Your people won’t. That will free up resources from the new government of Zimbabwe to do with what you want.” The fungibility concept. Half a light went on and then it got fuller and fuller as they understood what I was saying. It had never occurred to them. I guess way back in about 1975, Kissinger had talked about setting up an international fund, supported by the U.S. and others, to buy out white farmers. This had stuck in their minds all these years. They kept asking me about this Kissinger fund. I said, “Understand, gentlemen, Henry Kissinger is not Secretary of State today. That idea is dead. I’m representing Mr. Vance and Mr. Carter.” They got it and it gave them enough of a hook and a sense of commitment that about two days later they agreed to the British constitutional proposal. In their public statement, they said some flattering things about the U.S. having given assurances that made this possible or words to that effect. Our intervention was constructive. Ultimately after independence, in the first four or five years of independence, we did deliver over \$350 million worth of aid.

Q: What was your reading of Mugabe and Nkomo?

LANPHER: Let’s start with Nkomo. His movement had been based on primarily the Ndebele people of southwestern Rhodesia. He had been based in exile. He was an old union leader going back to the ‘50s and ‘60s. He was an enormous man, huge, tall, fat, everything. He had been based in Lusaka, Zambia, and supported heavily by the Soviet Union and other countries, but primarily the Soviet Union. I first met him in March 1978 on a visit to Lusaka just after he had survived an assassination attempt by the Rhodesians. Joshua was a wheeler dealer. They used to say facetiously about Joshua that you can’t buy Nkomo, but you can rent him on a short-term basis. But he was a wheeler dealer and somewhat of an opportunist. He was a grand old man of the liberation movement.

Mugabe, by contrast, had spent a lot of time in Ian Smith’s jails. He got out in about 1976 and fled the country, went to Mozambique. His party, the ZANU, had had a fairly stormy history of people getting killed, assassinated, within the party. There were constant fights for control of the party. And Mugabe emerged as the leader in ‘76/’77. I always thought he emerged because he was the most acetic of the bunch. The others were sort of boozers, womanizers, and some of them thugs and not terribly articulate for the most part. Mugabe was acetic. He wasn’t a womanizer or a boozer. He was very articulate. But he wasn’t a politician in the way most people regard a politician. He had real problems, and I observed this throughout my association with that country... He was always very formal. He didn’t appear to have any close friends. He wasn’t a back slapper or a schmoozer. I always guessed that he emerged because he was the cleanest of the bunch. But he was also clearly ruthless. He had enemies eliminated. There were allegations going way back that he had enemies within the party silenced. But I never had the sense – and this is with the benefit of some hindsight – that he was in any way committed to a democratic outcome. I think he was committed to achieving power by whatever means. I think a democratic election was very definitely a second best alternative from his point of view. He would rather have come to power through the gun, the bullet, as opposed to the ballot. But as it turned out, he was compelled. The British put a squeezeplay on. Everybody put

a squeezeplay on. The neighboring states, particularly Mozambique, where Mugabe had been in exile in the end, put the squeeze on Mugabe and forced him into signing this Lancaster House accord in the middle of December.

It really got down to the end in early to mid-December. Everything had been agreed and we all thought that we were going to have a signing. Everything had been agreed to the point where the British had come to me about two weeks earlier and said to me, "We think we're going to make it, but if we're going to make it (and there was an elaborate transition period built into this draft agreement), we're going to have to get our troops and the Commonwealth troops there in a hurry for this transition period and election monitoring period. We can't lose any momentum. But we don't have the airlift for it. Can we get airlift from you all?" I said, "I'll find out." We organized a military airlift and had all the planning begin and everything. We told the British we'd have to charge them for it and they said, "Fine." But we gave the okay in principal. But we got down to the last week and Mugabe and his party began to balk. They were unhappy with this and that. Finally, I recall, it was a Friday night in that Christmas party season, and I was at a Christmas party, I guess at the embassy, and my beeper went off and I had two phone calls, one from Sunny Ramphal, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, and the second from the British, saying, "It looks like things are falling apart. Nkomo is now threatening to walk out. Mugabe is threatening to walk out." Ramphal said, "You need to see Joshua Nkomo as soon as possible. Find out what's bothering him. See what you can do about it." So, I asked the British, and I guess I must have talked to Washington as well, and I had some very good, supportive fellows back in Washington. One was Jerry Funk at the NSC, the Africa guy there; and country director for Southern Africa, Paul Hare; and then Moose and his people. I spent most of the night on the phone. I worked it out so that I would see Joshua Nkomo first thing on Saturday morning at a hotel where was staying. I went to see Nkomo. It was just the two of us. He was sitting there with his chief stick, pounding it in his hand. We went back and forth for the better part of an hour. He was grumbling about the British and these pressure tactics. Finally, I don't know exactly what I said, but I talked a good line, "You can't sacrifice the boys in the bush just because of some petty issue. Peace is still important and the future of your country is too important." The usual. Finally, I got down to business with him after letting him blow off steam and said, "What is it that you want that will make it easier for you to sign this agreement on Monday?" He hemmed and hawed. Finally, I got his bottom line, which was, one more assembly point for his guerrillas in the central part of the country. The way it had been agreed at that point was that these assembly points were going to be on the periphery. Thinking politically, he wanted to have an assembly point in the center. So, I said, "Fine. I'll see what I can do about that." So, I went back to my office in the embassy. It was kind of a dramatic weekend. I was exhausted. When I got to the embassy, there in the lobby was the chief of protocol for ZANU, Mugabe's party, with a wad of passports, about 15 of them. I said to him, Peter Chenetsa, "What are you doing here, Peter?" I knew all these characters by this time. He said, "We're leaving the conference. We want visas to go to New York to present our case to the United Nations." I said, "Peter, that's a mistake." But he wasn't a policy official. I said, "That's a big mistake. You'll have to come back on Monday. Our consular section is closed down – can't issue visas over the weekend. We have rules against that." I was sort of gilding the

truth here a little bit. But I got rid of him. I went to my office and called the British and told them what I had gotten out of Nkomo, his bottom line, and that the ZANU were serious about leaving, that I had just thrown their chief of protocol out of the embassy and that they had to get on to Mugabe and stop this nonsense. The Brits were very appreciative. They instructed their then-governor and military chief, who were already down in Salisbury, Rhodesia, at this point, to go to the Rhodesians and get one more assembly point. The British later told me it was very difficult down in Salisbury, but they prevailed and got the assembly point. As far as Mugabe was concerned, the British did a very wise thing. I can't remember if I recommended it. I think I did, but I think they would have figured it out on their own. And that was that they had to get the Mozambican president, Samora Machel, to intervene with Mugabe and tell him to sign the damned document. The Mozambicans had a 28 year old diplomat in London who was probably the best diplomat in London at the time, Fernando Honwana, who I had introduced to the British and they had worked very closely with him. That Saturday afternoon, the British got onto Honwana, told him what the situation was, and asked if he could get his president to intervene. As I learned later, that's exactly what happened. Honwana called Machel and Machel got on the phone to Mugabe and said, in essence, "If you don't sign, all you'll have in Mozambique is a house in exile. You will sign." And they initialed the agreement on the Monday and the formal signing was set up for the Thursday. And it worked. The Mozambicans played a very key role. This young 28 year old, who I had gotten very close to – I'd be in his hotel room late at night and the phone would ring, Machel asking, "What the hell's going on? Give me a progress report." He was that close to his president. Sadly, both this young fellow, Honwana, and Machel died in an air crash in 1986. Very sad.

Q: How about the Ian Smith side? Did you have much to do with that?

LANPHER: I didn't have a lot to do with them. Number one, that was the side of the negotiations that the British handled pretty exclusively. This was agreed. The Smith people were pretty hostile to the U.S. One of the interesting vignettes out of Lancaster House was that Jesse Helms back here in the Senate didn't much care for what was going on in London and he didn't want to see his white friends there disenfranchised. So, Jesse Helms made every effort he could to play a spoiler role at that conference. It was quite incredible. One day coming back from lunch at the foreign office I looked out the cab window and saw two of Jesse Helms' key staff members, John Carbaugh and Jim Lucier, on the sidewalk right outside the Ritz Hotel. I got the cab to stop and jumped out and went over to these two, who I had known from my battles on the Hill. I said, "What are you guys doing here in London?" They said, "Oh, we're here to advise Ian Smith and his side. We don't want to see this conference succeed." I said, "We're on opposite sides of the fence on this one." But there they were in London. I called the British and said, "Are you aware?" They said, "We've just become aware that they are here. We want them out of here, but we can't do much about it." So, I went back to the embassy and sent a cable back to Washington, one of these NODIS cables, "These guys are here trying to play a spoiler role. Is there anything we can do to get them out?" I had a call that evening or early the next morning from Dick Moose, the Assistant Secretary, saying, "When your cable on Carbaugh and Lucier hit Mr. Vance's desk, he had to be scraped off the ceiling."

He was hopping mad.” He was following the negotiations very closely, reading every cable out of London and everywhere else. Vance had had problems with Carbaugh and Lucier on the Panama Canal treaties, on SALT, on Central America policy, and other things. And here they were, screwing up Rhodesia. But according to Moose, and I don’t have this except by heresay, apparently, Vance just went ballistic. He was a very calm man. I had known him for several years. He had offered me the job as his executive assistant on one occasion when I was in Commercial Relations. But he apparently told his staff to clear his schedule, get his car, he was going to the Hill. He went up to the Hill and grabbed Senator Javits and maybe a couple of others and briefed them on what was going on and got the Senate to get to Jesse Helms and order his aides out of London. It was a personal intervention by Vance that got them out. That’s just a vignette.

Q: This was the time of the Cold War. There was always this thing about Africa about communist influence and red arrows pointing from Africa from one country to another. How seriously was the communist/Soviet issue during this? How were we treating that?

LANPHER: With the benefit of hindsight, certainly we got fairly worked up as a country, as a government, over Soviet, Chinese, and Cuban activities in Africa I would say in about 1974 or in ‘75 with the collapse of the Portuguese empire in Africa - Mozambique, Angola - the Soviets, East Germans, Cubans coming in. I think Kissinger as Vietnam disappeared from the landscape or into the wreckage and as SALT - this was 1975 - wasn’t going to happen on his watch, problems with the Soviets... Kissinger fastened on Africa and the Soviets and the Cubans - this was in 1975 - and got fairly deeply involved, made several trips to Africa and was quite serious about containing this menace. If you recall, and I worked on it later when I was country director for Southern Africa in the late ‘80s, we finally in December 1988 achieved an agreement on Angola that had the Cubans withdraw. They were there a long time. They were in Ethiopia. But we got them out of Angola. I think we signed the agreement at the UN a day or two days before Christmas in ‘88. That was in the Reagan administration.

Q: During these Lancaster House negotiations, were the Soviets playing any role?

LANPHER: I didn’t talk to the Soviets in London. I was aware that there were Soviet diplomats chasing after, presumably advising, or at least staying well informed particularly with Joshua Nkomo’s ZAPU party. British intelligence was watching the Soviets very carefully and were monitoring whatever they could monitor in London at the time. The Chinese and others were advising, consulting with, staying abreast, of what was happening in Mugabe’s party. The Chinese had been primarily supportive of ZANU. But the British stayed in pretty firm control. The long and short of it is, I’m not sure what the Soviets and the Chinese did in terms of influence with either ZAPU or ZANU at Lancaster House.

Q: But anyway, they weren’t a major factor.

LANPHER: I don’t think so.

Q: After this time, I hope you got a day or two off to meet your family again.

LANPHER: Well, it was interesting. As a matter of fact, the agreement was initialed on a Monday, and the formal agreement was to be signed on Thursday. In the natural course of events, I would have been at the signing ceremony. I was invited. But as soon as we got the initials on the agreement on Monday, the British wanted to launch the airlift. We got an execute order. It would have been on the Tuesday night, the first of our planes came into RAF Brise Norton northwest of London up in Oxfordshire. The Brits had all their gear and their people ready to go. I was asked to go down on this airlift. We had a liaison fellow in Salisbury. I was to go down and liaise with him and the British governor, Lord Soames. Our man in Salisbury was my old friend Jeff Davidow, who's now just leaving as ambassador to Mexico. So, I went up to Brise Norton and rode down to Salisbury on a C5 Galaxy with six big helicopters in the belly of the plane and 60 crewmen upstairs. It was quite a sight to have a C5 land in Salisbury. I think it was 26 or 28 flights into Salisbury within 36 hours and Salisbury had never seen a show like that.

Q: You're pointing out one of the foreign policy weapons that we had, which was the ability with the U.S. military to call upon these airlifts. It's not just there but all over. Nobody else can do this. Way back in the Congo when they did parachute drops of Belgian paratroopers in Operation Dragon Rouge, there were American planes. The airlift capacity is a significant part of our foreign policy in so many places.

LANPHER: I think you're right. Certainly the British when they came to me two or three weeks before the end of the conference and said, "We just think we might," but for budgetary reasons, we got rid of their Britannias, their long-range RAF transports. They said, "We got rid of our Britannias back in the early '70s or something like that. We don't have the lift capability. The biggest planes we have now are C130s. We've got to move a lot of men and a lot of equipment very quickly. We just don't have the capacity to do it." If they had done it by ship or by slow plane or whatever, they would have lost the momentum and they thought it was very important to have the momentum, outnumbered as they were going to be, with a show of force right up front. It was an impressive show of force. There were 5,000 people out at the Salisbury airport that weekend with their jaws hanging down. When a C5 comes in, it kneels down, the front comes up, and out come six helicopters ready to go. One of the first planes in this was an Air Lift Control Element plane. A C141 comes in and sets up satellite dishes and drags a Coke machine out from the belly of the plane. The Americans are here and they're in charge. They know what they're doing. It was the British in charge, but we made it possible. And it was an impressive show as those planes rolled in. They had never seen anything like it. And it sent a message that this is a serious operation. So, I think you're right. The fact that we do have that lift capability... Well, we see it in Afghanistan. We've seen it every place.

Q: This is a good place to stop for now. We're in December of '79.

Today is September 5, 2002. We've got you in December 1979. You have landed in

Salisbury. What were you up to?

LANPHER: I was sent down there basically to hand the baton over to our man in Salisbury who was there sort of officially, sort of unofficially. He had been there for about three or four months. This was Jeff Davidow, who currently has just left his post as ambassador to Mexico. I went down and it was kind of an impressive show of force at the Salisbury airport. It was an auspicious beginning. Anyway, I passed the baton to Jeff, briefed him on a lot of the ins and outs of the Lancaster House conference, who was up, who was down, who the key players were that he should be working with. I was there for two or three days. Jeff and I went and called on the British governor, Lord Soames, and his deputy governor, Sir Anthony Duff. That was about it. I went back out to the airport two days later and grabbed a C141 to go back to London. After a refueling stop in Kenya, in Mombasa, we headed towards Cairo for our next refueling stop. This is a sidebar. But I heard a pop when I was sitting in the cockpit. I said to the pilot, "What was that?" He said, "That was one of our engines blowing up." I said, "Well, are we going to turn around and go back." He said, "We'll go into Cairo." About half an hour further along, I heard another pop and I said, "What was that?" He said, "That was another engine blowing." I said, "Now what are we going to do?" He said, "We're going back to Mombasa." Anyway, I wound up getting back to London on Christmas Eve, so that was a good thing.

The transition period was set for about two months with elections to be held at the end of February. It was a short electoral period. The British wanted it short, knowing it was going to be very difficult to keep all the parties in the agreement. When they saw how they thought they were going to do on the ground, somebody might back out, and go back to the bush. So, it was a very tense time. The British did an admirable job of what you and I would call "deception." They lied to all the parties. They'd meet with the parties separately and say, "Our polls indicate that you're going to win." Then they'd tell the next guy, "You're going to win." But ultimately, they kept all the parties in, although it was very close at times. And they had other problems like getting the South Africans out of the country. They had some troops in Rhodesia. The British conduct of the transition period raised a lot of hackles among the frontline states like Tanzania and Zambia. The British were very tough. They weren't nice. They were going to put this problem behind them. There were any number of Security Council meetings on the conduct of the transition period. There were resolutions condemning the British in the Security Council. We really got into it with the British because my ambassador and I in London knew, and our man in Salisbury, Jeff Davidow, knew full well that there was no alternative to the British conduct of this transition period. Whatever the British did, we had to back them up, that was our view. There were people back in Washington, however, people like Don McHenry, Andy Young, Tony Lake, and Dick Moose, who took a different view. We really got into it with Washington over these Security Council resolutions. We unfortunately abstained on a resolution and let it pass rather than vetoing it, which I believe we should have. I'll never forget, the next morning, I got a call from the deputy acting head of the Rhodesia department, Charles Powel, who later went on to become Mrs. Thatcher's national security advisor. This was the morning after this vote. He said, "The Secretary of State, Lord Carrington, has asked me to pass along a message to you

from him and asks that you pass it on to Washington.” It was words to the effect, “I see you joined up with the fucking Tanzanians.” I passed it on to Washington in a NODIS message. In the end, the elections were held and Mugabe won. There were 80 contested seats and he won 57 of them. Joshua Nkomo won 20. Muzawewa won two or three. That was about it. They had a midnight flag lowering at the Harare, then Salisbury Stadium, Rufaro Stadium, and that was it. Soames did a good job of working on Mugabe when the election results were announced. Mugabe - that was then, not now - was persuaded to give a speech of reconciliation. I was in London for that period. It was as difficult in many ways as the Lancaster House conference had been.

Q: At least from the perspective of London, did we get involved in nation building in Zimbabwe?

LANPHER: Yes. Following up on our pledges at Lancaster House that if the process were successful we would move fast and with lots of money in terms of reconstruction assistance, cattle, schools, clinics, you name it. So, I had a steady stream of visitors from Washington as we tried to put some flesh on the bones and worked with the British on this and with the other members of the Commonwealth. Starting with the transition period but over the next six months until we got an AID mission established on the ground in Harare, much of that activity, discussions, coordination, took place in London. I was heavily involved in that.

Q: What else? You had other things on your plate, didn't you?

LANPHER: In my job as political officer there in London, it was the Africa position. But after Zimbabwe was gone, I volunteered to take on the center of British politics, the Liberal Party, which merged later on with the Social Democrats and was an attempt to have a third party. That was kind of interesting. I met a lot of interesting people, visited a lot of constituencies, and did the normal job as political officer. I continued to do the Africa beat. There were other interesting things. In December 1980, in the post-Idi Amin era in Uganda, I worked with the British and the Commonwealth on getting elections organized in Uganda. At the fairly last moment, they discovered in Uganda that they didn't have any tamper proof ballot boxes. They ordered some quickly from a British company, aluminum boxes, but at the last moment they discovered they had no way of getting the ballot boxes to Kampala in time for the election. So, the British and the Commonwealth came to me and said, “Can you guys supply some airlift?” I asked Washington. We found some human rights or democracy money and hired two U.S. Air Force C141s to come into Gatwick Airport south of London. They actually came in the morning after my father died. I had heard on a Friday night and they came in on a Saturday morning. I was down there at Gatwick helping them put thousands of these ballot boxes on the 141s. But I stayed busy in London. I guess my last six months in London... I left in June '82. I had a three year tour. It was originally going to be a four year tour, but I curtailed to three years in hopes of putting my hat in the ring for the DCM job in Harare. I was due to leave in June '82. It was February '82 that the Falklands War began. I was taken off the Africa beat and everybody in the embassy on the political side devoted just about full-time to the Falklands War.

Q: Except for the ambassador.

LANPHER: He didn't come back right away. He was on vacation in the Bahamas. The DCM, Ed Streeter, briefed him by phone. He thought he'd finish his vacation. His name was John Lewis, a nice man but not all there. But it was quite an experience to watch the British government twice in a three year tour devote all their efforts to a single issue, absolutely focused.

Q: Did you feel our administration... Here you are in London. First, what was the impression you and your colleagues had about the Falklands situation and what to do about it? And what was your perspective on Washington?

LANPHER: Yes. It was kind of difficult at times. The British were determined to take it back. They lost the Falklands. They had no garrison there.

Q: They had a constable.

LANPHER: Yes, but it was not much. But they decided that they were going to take it back. They knew they couldn't without a lot of support from us on the logistics side and weaponry and so on. So, there were very tense debates back and forth between Washington and London. The embassy was involved in a lot of this. There was a loud public debate back in the United States. I think the champion of the Argentine lot against the British was Jeane Kirkpatrick, our ambassador to the UN.

Q: She seemed to have an affinity for Latin American dictators.

LANPHER: Yes. Well, anyway, in the end, good sense prevailed in Washington. Our oldest and most reliable ally, the British, we helped them immeasurably. As a matter of fact, the day I left London was the day the British retook Port Stanley. Watching the British government twice in three years turn all energies, drop everything else and focus on an issue in a way that I think we would have great difficulty doing...

Q: Would you ascribe this to the discipline of the party system?

LANPHER: I'm not sure I could ascribe it to anything. But their bureaucracy, once they got their marching orders, was amazingly disciplined. Their armed forces were amazingly disciplined. When I say they pulled out all the stops, they were censoring the press, they were doing everything.

Q: What was your impression of the Liberal and then the Social Democratic parties?

LANPHER: They had a lot of enthusiasm, small numbers in Parliament, maybe 20-25 seats at most. The leadership, when you had people like David Steele, a Liberal who's quite an interesting border Scot, and then Shirley Williams and David Owen, former foreign secretary, Lord Roy Jenkins, there were some people with some real substance,

real brains. But in political terms, they were just nice people. They weren't tough, bare knuckled politicians. I never thought they'd go very far, but I thought because of the stature of some of their leaders they did change the nature of the debates a bit in a positive way as between the Tories and Labor.

Q: In '82, you left in the summer.

LANPHER: I left in the summer of '82 and went down to then Harare, formerly Salisbury, to replace Jeff Davidow as DCM.

Q: Who was our ambassador?

LANPHER: Bob Keeley, a career guy.

Q: He had Uganda experience and all this.

LANPHER: Yes. And I think Mauritius as well.

Q: You were there from when to when?

LANPHER: I was there from July '82 to July '86.

Q: Wow, a long time.

LANPHER: Yes. Four years.

Q: What was the situation like when you arrived?

LANPHER: When I arrived, I overlapped with Jeff Davidow for about a week. Keeley was on vacation. I went around and met a lot of people. A lot of people I had already known from Lancaster House. Then Jeff left and I was chargé. I was chargé until about the end of August. After I had been there on my own for about 10 days, we had a very bad Friday. First, I got word that a group of tourists had been taken hostage on the road between Bulawayo and Victoria Falls. There were British, Australian, and American tourists. The next day, the women were released and sadly, the six young men who were on one of these trucks, safaris, through Africa, we never found their bodies for about three years. That consumed an awful lot of time over three years.

Q: What was the motivation? What was going on?

LANPHER: I don't believe it was political. I think it was criminal. But there were armed bands of people left over from the war. There were a lot of guns in the country. It turned out that it was a bunch of bad guys that did this. We didn't find them for three years. We worked closely with the government of Zimbabwe. We had outside advisors hired by the parents of the American young men. I worked with the central intelligence organization in Zimbabwe, met with them daily and weekly for three years on this and turning over

every rock, nook, and cranny. It was very sad. Finally one day three years later, I got a phone call from CIO saying, "We think we've found the bodies. Come with us." We went down into the most desolate part of Matabeleland, where there was still a bit of an insurgency on. We went in with an armed group and found the shallow graves that the hyenas had gotten into and there were bones and skulls and everything scattered over about one acre of this desolate bush country. They finally caught up with the guy who had been leader of the gang and put him on trial, sentenced him to death. One morning I was sitting in my office and my deputy director/CIO, a friend of mine, one of the old whites still in the organization, called me up and said, "Come on down to Harare Central Prison and help us hand the fellow." I begged off. I said I had had a bad Friday. That same Friday night, a commando group came in from South Africa to the central part of Zimbabwe and destroyed most of Zimbabwe's air force on the ground with satchel charges.

Q: What the hell was that about?

LANPHER: I don't know. I don't know why they did it. This was 1982. South Africans were in a pretty bloody minded sort of mood. They were messing around in Angola, of course. They didn't like the rhetoric coming out of Harare. There were some planes sitting relatively unguarded, the Zimbabwe air force on the ground, and they took them out. So, it was a bad beginning as chargé on that weekend.

Q: How did you find the government there at the beginning?

LANPHER: This was '82. The government was doing pretty decently. They still had a fair number of the old whites in the civil service. It was running fairly efficiently. Our aid program was up and running and running very well. We coordinated well with the government. And relations between the U.S. and Zimbabwe were pretty good. They could be inept, the Zimbabweans, but overall not bad. In fact, overall, pretty good. Things went downhill a bit progressively between then and the time I left as DCM. The Zimbabweans started to feel their oats on things like supporting Danny Ortega in Nicaragua, later on Grenada. They were feeling their sovereignty on the international scene rather than minding the store at home progressively. They made some unfortunate remarks and took some unfortunate steps. When we had the 241 Marines blown up in Beirut, we (the embassy) and the bishop of Harare organized a memorial service and invited the diplomatic corps to it. The Zimbabweans, unfortunately, called around to other missions and said, "Boycott. Don't go. We haven't sanctioned this" as if it was their business. We had some progressively difficult times with the Zimbabweans. And we also got into a situation, rightfully so, where we were properly critical of the way they were handling what they called an "insurgency" in Matabeleland. It was pretty brutal repression and we said so. We put it in our Human Rights Report and we documented things pretty well. They didn't like that.

Q: Did you or Keeley have any sort of solid relationship with Mugabe?

LANPHER: No. I'd seen Mugabe quite often during the Lancaster House period. Nobody

in the diplomatic corps had an ideal relationship with Mugabe. Yes, we had meetings with him. But they took a long time to arrange. He didn't see a lot of diplomats. He probably saw us and the British High Commissioner more than anybody else. But Mugabe was always a very formal, very correct fellow, very articulate. We took a number of congressional visitors in to see him and he was invariably polite, well dressed, and well mannered. But nobody had a warm and fuzzy relationship with Robert Mugabe. A distant, remote man.

Q: What about the people around him?

LANPHER: I researched this constantly trying to find out who was really close to him. I had my CIA station working on it. I went as far back as going back to talk to people who had gone to high school with him. As far as I could ever find out, he didn't have any close circle, a real kitchen cabinet. He didn't have a group of advisors either official or unofficial who at the end of the day he'd kick back with, put his feet up on the table, and ask them, "How am I doing?" He wasn't a boozier or anything like that, so there were no cold beers at the end of the day as far as we could ever tell. And I think that's true to this day. He has associates and he has people. But friends? Real buddies? I don't think so.

Q: What was your impression... Were we concerned about the writ of Harare getting out and around? Was the government imposing itself on the country?

LANPHER: He was elected in 1980. The election was about as free and fair as you can get. There was intimidation. He and his party had clearly put the word out at the time of the election that "If you don't vote for us, we're going back to war." But it was still an accurate reflection of popular sentiment. He had a lot of popularity. He had won the war. He was the leader. And there was never any question as to his popularity at that point. It was primarily based on his own Shona tribe and three or four subtribes within the Shonas. But his percentage of the vote roughly equaled the Shona percentage of the population. Joshua Nkomo's party, their roughly 20 seats, represented the fact that they were about 20% of the population.

Q: What about the white farmers?

LANPHER: The white farmers at least through '86, if not through '98, were perhaps the chosen group in that society. The government didn't seriously mess with them. The white farmers up until '98 never had it so good, far better than during Ian Smith's time. There were occasional problems, but they made more money, they were secure, and the government was better. They'd buy their new Mercedes every year. They had tractors that they were getting through a commodity import program that we sponsored, brand new John Deeres with air conditioned cabs in one case that I recall. They would put up local currency and we would bring the tractor in. They lived terrifically well. Their tobacco auction floor was a model for auction floors elsewhere in the world. They computerized it, did everything. It was quite incredible. They did very well. I had a lot of friends in the farming community. I was invited countless times to go and talk to their monthly local meetings in outlying districts. Quite a remarkable community. I think

during that period, up until '97/'98, although Mugabe would harrumph a lot about the land issue, he never really did anything about it. The government bought land on a willing seller-willing buyer basis. When a farm came up for sale, the government had the right of first refusal. Sometimes they bought it and sometimes they didn't. But it all worked pretty well. He was never into land reform. This is partly with the benefit of hindsight, but partly at the time, Mugabe, although he was not a chief in the traditional sense, viewed himself as a traditional chief/leader. In the traditional world, there was no free hold title. The chiefs controlled the land. Mugabe could never come to grips with the idea of free hold title deeds and everything that went with them. So they never really got into the land reform. They resettled about 50,000 people in 12 years on state land. But that was a drop in the bucket. He just wouldn't come to grips with the issue of title deeds. It was part of his chieflike patronage mentality, which continues to this day through all this problem. Of course, in the real world of real agriculture, if you don't have title to your property, you don't have any collateral and nobody's going to lend you any money for seeds or tractors or anything else. So, he was definitely part of the problem.

Q: How about the issue of Angola, South Africa, and all that? Would Zimbabwe turn on itself? Was it considered a frontline state still?

LANPHER: Very much so. Rhetorically, Mugabe was one of the lead South Africa bashers, but in point of fact, he did nothing about South Africa. In fact, I asked him once way back at Lancaster House in one of the few semi-casual conversations we ever had, "Assuming this process here at Lancaster House is successful and you get elected as the president of the new Zimbabwe, how are you going to deal with South Africa? Are you going to allow the South African ANC, the South African exiles, to establish guerrilla bases in Zimbabwe across the border from South Africa the way the Mozambicans let you operate bases from their territory?" I can't remember his exact words, but in effect, he said, "No" and went on to say, "In this world, you can pick your friends, but you have to live with your neighbors." So there was a degree of realism about what, if anything, tangible he could do. He also understood, and maybe not in the sort of detail you and I would understand, that because of its landlocked status and the turmoil in Mozambique, Zimbabwe was totally reliant on South Africa for imports and exports. Everything for Zimbabwe came in through Durban or Port Elizabeth, came up by train. Zimbabwe in those days - I talked to all the experts on this - needed about 20 trains a day from South Africa just to maintain its economic status quo.

Q: Did you get involved with South African diplomacy there?

LANPHER: Yes. We talked to the Zimbabweans about South Africa, tried to tell them what we were doing, what we were trying to do in South Africa in terms of affecting change. I wouldn't say it was terribly active. Of course, the South Africans had an embassy in Harare. We were more focused on seeing Zimbabwe succeed as a multiracial democratic state as an example for a future South Africa. That was sort of our thinking in those days. So we concentrated very heavily on that aid program. We more than lived up to our commitment at Lancaster House. In the first five years of independence, we put over \$350 million into Zimbabwe, a country at that time of about 10 million people. That was a lot of money. And those were bigger dollars in those days than they are now. And

we thought our aid program was very successful and so did the Zimbabweans. We built teachers' colleges, hospitals, grain silos. We did good work.

Q: Were the Soviets messing around there at all?

LANPHER: It's funny, we opened our embassy the day the British flag came down. We had had people there on the ground, an interests section type of operation. The Zimbabweans didn't let the Soviets open an embassy for a bit over a year after independence because the Soviets had supported Joshua Nkomo and the ZAPU party. The Soviets never played much of a role after independence. First of all, they had no money for aid, so they weren't players there. The Chinese were much more influential and did have an aid program. The Cubans and all the other bad guys came in, everybody from the PLO to the Libyans to everybody else. But none of them really amounted to very much. The Chinese perhaps, along with the British and us, were probably the biggest and most influential. Also, as AID donors, the EU and World Bank were very important..

Q: Did these gestures of not supporting us on various things get shrugged off?

LANPHER: Well, for a while, they were shrugged off. But progressively they got under our skin in a pretty big way. I can't remember what the date was, but when that Korean airliner was shot down, Mugabe happened to be in the United States or traveling to the United States. There was a Security Council resolution pending. We pulled out all the stops to get Mugabe to vote with us on that issue. This was the Reagan administration. We got Andy Young to lean on him, to lobby him. Secretary George Shultz, after Mugabe had had a meeting in the White House, went to his hotel and asked for his vote. And Mugabe blew us off. After that, our aid levels started rapidly going down. The incident in Beirut, Danny Ortega, began to be an accumulation of "in your face" behavior that got to us.

Q: What was the Danny Ortega...

LANPHER: He was a Third Worlder and Mugabe was in lock step. We were trying to get rid of him and Mugabe was solidly in his camp. And Mugabe did gratuitous things like go to Havana and thumb his nose at us. It was just annoying. He didn't play his cards very well. He could have gotten a lot more aid out of us if he had behaved himself a little better. And the final thing which led to a cutoff in our aid happened about a week or 10 days before I was to leave Zimbabwe in mid-July 1986. I was the chargé and had been chargé for over half the four years I was in Zimbabwe. On the Fourth of July 1986, I was having my usual July Fourth reception. Because it was winter and there was a chance of bad or cold weather, I always had it at the big hotel in Harare in the ballroom at lunchtime. I was never much for these receptions, but we did it out of tradition. Coincidentally, I got word that former President Carter was going to be in Harare on a visit. He played a very important role at Lancaster House. He was sort of one of the godfathers of Zimbabwe's independence. So, I informed the ministry for foreign affairs he would be at the reception. The Zimbabweans had also organized an appointment for

Carter for about 11:00AM with President Mugabe. Because the Zimbabweans had had at that point a recent history of sending ministers to speak at national day receptions and say stupid things, gratuitous things, I negotiated with the permanent secretary for foreign affairs an agreement that there wouldn't be any speeches, simply an exchange of traditional toasts and that Carter wouldn't be speaking, I wouldn't be speaking, and he agreed that the Zimbabwe side wouldn't speak. So, I had 350 people in this ballroom. Carter and his wife and daughter were there. It was one of those happy occasions. The manager of the hotel had had a cake as big as this table baked in the shape of the United States. Everything was very nice. Bars were open and booze was flowing and a happy time was being had by all. About a half an hour into it, I decided it was time that we did these toasts and got that over with. So, everybody did their toasts. I did a toast. Carter did a toast. I'm still up next to the podium. Carter and his wife had moved across maybe 20-30 feet away to be in the front row of the audience. And a Zimbabwe minister got up. I thought he was going to do the Zimbabwe toast to the good health of the people of the United States and so on. But he drew out of his pocket a sheaf of paper. He obviously had a prepared speech. This guy was the minister of youth, sport, and culture. He stood up and said he'd be delivering a speech on behalf of the foreign minister. I turned to the foreign secretary, Alex Mashangazi, and said, "Alex, we had an agreement: no speeches. What's going on here?" He was standing next to me. All Alex could do was look at his shoes. This guy started to speak. It was a prepared text. It was a vile diatribe against the United States, against the British, going after things that had been of interest to Carter, like Afghanistan, you name it, he threw the book at us. After about five minutes, I said to Alex, "This is nonsense." We were all sort of stunned. Finally, I looked across the room at Carter. I was hot. People who know me know that I don't have a huge temper, but when I'm angry, I go cold. I looked at Carter and gave him a cold look. He caught my eye and he was steamed up, you could see. I nodded my head towards the door and Carter nodded back. So, I left. The podium was on the far side of the room from the door. I started towards the door across this open space in front of the podium. As I got even with Carter, he and Rosalyn fell in behind me and everybody else in the room, save a few people that had probably had enough to drink, followed us out. And the minister kept speaking, droning on and on with this diatribe. So we walked out of our own July Fourth party. It was an incredible scene. It made the front page of all the British press. It made the front page of "The Washington Post," and "The New York Times." Both their reporters were there. And the Reuters guy and the BBC guy. The BBC guy called me up at the office later in the afternoon and said, "Thank you, Gib. That was the first time I've made the BBC domestic service in many years." But it was quite an event. We also got lead editorials out of the "Post" and the "Times" on subsequent days commending what we had done, having stood up for America. I suppose it probably helped get me promoted that year. Then 10 days later, I left the country. But I should say I went back to the office and obviously called Washington and sent in a written report of what had happened, what I had said, and the fact that I had communicated with the government that I expected a formal apology right then and that absent an apology, I would not be signing two aid agreements totaling \$16 million which I had been planning to sign the next Wednesday. I put this in a cable to Washington. It was one of those "unless otherwise instructed, this is what I have done and what I intend to do" and I never heard from Washington except by phone saying, "Hey, we're with you, man." So, I didn't sign over the aid. As a matter of

fact, Washington decided to totally suspend our aid program. It stayed suspended for about a year, a year and a half. I, actually as country director for Southern Africa, which was my ongoing assignment, got the aid program restarted. But it turned out that as far as we could tell, and I had our intelligence people look into this, we came to the conclusion based on all sorts of information that Mugabe had had no wind of this speech, hadn't authorized it, and that this had been the work of his foreign minister, a complete idiot. I discovered years after I retired from the service, on a later trip to Zimbabwe for the International Crisis Group as a consultant, who had written that speech that was read that day. It turned out it was a white in the foreign ministry that was still around. He was a very skillful writer.

Q: What was his motivation? I assume he was British.

LANPHER: I think he was born in Zimbabwe. In fact, certainly in the year 2000, he was still in the government and had risen to the rank of Secretary for Commerce and Industry or something like that. He had been a member of the old Rhodesian foreign service. Quite incredible.

Q: If you don't sign an aid agreement, what happens to the aid apparatus and all that?

LANPHER: In this case, we suspended our aid, suspended any new aid. But we had a lot in the pipeline that had already been signed over and we continued to deliver that aid. We had already cut our aid program back quite substantially, but we had ongoing programs such as family planning, child spacing. It was a very effective program. So none of the ongoing programs were stopped cold. We just didn't put any new money into anything for about a year and a half.

Q: At that point, AIDS...

LANPHER: As I was leaving Zimbabwe in '86, maybe '85, we first started hearing about AIDS. It was a big thing in San Francisco in those days. But we weren't hearing very much locally. Yes, there was some AIDS. But it wasn't a priority for us. We didn't have an AIDS program. I will say, when I went back to Zimbabwe at the end of 1991 as ambassador, I quickly discovered how many of my old contacts were dying or had already died of AIDS. I told my AID director then in the first week I was back in Harare in November 1991 that we were going to have an AIDS component of our AID program or we weren't going to have an AID program, period. It was clear that the disease was galloping. Parenthetically today, somewhere between 25 and 30% of the adult population of Zimbabwe is HIV positive, really tragic.

Q: You came back in '86. What did you do?

LANPHER: I got on a plane one day in Harare and got off the plane the next day in Washington and went right to work as director of Southern African Affairs working for Chet Crocker, the Assistant Secretary.

Q: You did this from '86 to when?

LANPHER: To the summer of 1989, three years.

Q: Southern Africa included what?

LANPHER: Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Angola, and still not independent Namibia.

Q: What was the status of... This was a period of very active negotiation, wasn't it?

LANPHER: Yes, and great tension. As soon as I got back to Washington, I was in the midst of the great congressional debate on sanctions in South Africa over apartheid. The Reagan administration, which I was working for, was against the sanctions. Congress in its wisdom, and I think probably they were right, thought that the Reagan administration wasn't being tough enough on South Africa, so by God, they were going to be tough on South Africa. So they did pass the sanctions in September 1986. It was a pretty furious debate.

Q: What did they use you for? I assume you were thrown into the battle.

LANPHER: Yes. Well, I was writing talking points and going to the Hill. I had a pretty large staff in the Southern Africa office. I had 15 or 18 officers. We were busy. We were busy the whole three years I was there routinely working a full day on Saturday. Not only did we have the South Africa, we had a civil war in Mozambique, a civil war in Angola, protracted negotiations for Namibia's independence, and our grand plan was also to get the Cubans out of Angola. We had great leadership with Chet Crocker, who many people in Congress and in the press wanted fired, dismissed. But he had a 100% loyal backer in Secretary Shultz, who took a great interest in Southern Africa and backed Chet to the hilt. I used to go up with Crocker to see Shultz probably about once every 10 days and Shultz would hear us out and say, "Keep up the good work." It was kind of the Lord's work. It was not easy and we weren't making much progress until about the fall of 1987. Up until that time, the Soviet Union had been staunchly supportive of Angola and the Cuban involvement in Angola, but we started to get signals in the fall of 1987. This was coincidental with all the changes then taking place in the Soviet Union. The Soviets, until the fall of 1987, used to come to see me in groups of two or three, somebody watching everybody else. These weren't very productive meetings. But in the fall of 1987, a Soviet diplomat called me up and invited me out to lunch one on one. This developed a pattern of every couple of weeks, he'd call up and say, "Let's have lunch." Gradually, I sensed that the Soviets were getting fed up, wanted to cut their losses in Angola and were searching for a way out of it. The Soviet diplomat started saying disparaging things to me about their Angolan allies they'd stuffed to the teeth with money and military equipment and disparaging things in a subtle sort of way about the Cuban involvement there. I told Crocker about this. It jibed with some other signals we were getting. For the rest of '87 and all of '88, we really pushed up the pace of our diplomacy because we were beginning to get results. We had countless meetings of all parties concerned, which was the most

disparate grab bag you've ever seen - the Soviets, the Cubans, the Angolans, the Namibians, the South Africans, some of whom we didn't even recognize, like the Angolans and the Cubans. But we sort of chaired these meetings, Chet did. We had them in strange places. We'd do it at the UN in New York. I had a great deputy who was sort of my team leader, Larry Napper, who really was the backbone of the team. It was led by Chet, but I minded the store and Larry went to the meetings. But we'd have meetings in strange places for a good reason. Like Brazzaville. You don't have serious meetings in places like Geneva because people enjoy it too much in Geneva or Paris. So we always chose out of the way places like Brazzaville, where people would come, do business, and then try to get the hell out of town as fast as they could. It worked. We achieved a settlement in getting the Cubans out of Angola, Namibian independence, and the whole package deal of South African withdrawal from Angola as well. The package deal was signed just before Christmas 1988. It was a great success for American diplomacy.

Q: How did you work with the UN?

LANPHER: My recollection, and maybe it's not very good, was that we didn't work with the UN very much at all. We talked to the guy who was the designated UN commissioner for Namibia, Marty Atasari, who went on to become president of Finland. But we didn't, shame on us, keep our UN folks very well in the loop.

Q: At one point, the UN wasn't a focus during the Carter administration.

LANPHER: Well, not necessarily. On the big issues of the Carter administration, such as Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe's independence, that was pretty much run out of Washington. Yes, Andy Young was a part of the team in his Washington capacity, not in his UN capacity really. And the players in Washington on Zimbabwe were Dick Moose, Tony Lake, who was head of Policy Planning, Don McHenry, and Andy Young, and of course the Secretary himself, Vance, who took a great interest in things Southern African and Zimbabwe in particular.

Q: Dealing with the South African government, how did you find their representatives?

LANPHER: The ones we saw were the ones from the South African embassy in Washington, of course, and they were pretty good, pretty professional. And then the senior people in the foreign ministry in Pretoria were pretty professional as well. They were preposterous in a sense in that their positions were indefensible but in professional terms they were competent people to deal with. The foreign minister was a blowhard named Pik Botha. But he had some very good civil servants underneath him. The ambassador in Washington for most of that time was a political appointee but his professional staff and his DCM were very good, capable people.

Q: How about the Cuban delegation?

LANPHER: You mean to these talks on Namibia?

Q: Yes.

LANPHER: They were pretty good. They had very senior people including very senior intelligence people on their delegation. I should say, we had our problems in the Africa Bureau on this because our ARA bureau, to put it diplomatically, was far from enthusiastic about our dealing with the Cubans on any issue. I remember, they wouldn't even let the Cubans from the Cuban Interests Section in Washington come to our offices in the Africa Bureau. If we wanted to meet with the Cubans from the Interests Section, we had to do it in the lobby of the State Department, which was kind of absurd. Then when things really got close to the end and when success was in sight, one of the pieces of frosting on the cake to put it over the top was, Crocker went to Havana. The Latin American types just went ballistic over this. "How can you deal with the enemy." We patiently explained to the ARA bureau, "You've been fussing about the Cubans in Africa and Angola in particular for years and we're getting them out of there." It was kind of amusing. But in the end, we won.

Q: Were you picking up vibes that the Cubans were getting tired of being there, too?

LANPHER: I didn't have that many direct contacts with the Cubans. But my deputy, Larry Napper, was getting those vibes on the sides of these meetings that we'd have in strange places. You'd have to get him in here. He'd be worthy of an oral history on this.

Q: Is he retired?

LANPHER: I don't think he has retired. I think he's still on active duty. Larry Napper went out to Angola on some sort of mission. This would have been late 1987 as we were intensifying our diplomacy. He wound up on the beach in Luanda jogging with the chief of Cuban intelligence. I think he got some real hints that the Cubans were giving serious thought to seeing how they could reduce their presence in Angola. Larry was a very funny Texan. He came back from that trip just before Christmas and said in the senior staffing meeting, Crocker said, "Well, what's it like in Angola?" He said in his Texas way, "Santa Claus ain't going to Luanda this year." Chet said, "Why not?" Larry said, "Worried that they'd eat his reindeer."

Q: Were there any problems in other states?

LANPHER: There was a civil war going on in Mozambique, which was sort of a low level, not so low level, insurgency between the government and an outfit named Renamo. We tried to stay on top of that and tried to encourage settlement efforts. I wasn't very directly involved in that so much as I was trying to be helpful with our aid mission and helping the UN in terms of all the refugees from Mozambique that came into Zimbabwe and Malawi, which was a fairly massive outflow of people from Mozambique. So, that was of continuing importance. Of course, the whole South Africa account, my office was responsible for implementing the sanctions against South Africa, so that was kind of... But that was more administrative at that point.

Q: What was our reading on the sanctions and their effectiveness?

LANPHER: This is hotly debated. There are a lot of people with the benefit of hindsight that say that our sanctions were the crucial step that brought the South Africans to their senses and eventually to the bargaining table and relinquishment of power. Those arguments are made most strongly by the people in Congress that voted for them and their outside supporters. My own view is that the sanctions we imposed, business sanctions and others, were more symbolic and convinced a lot of American companies to divest from South Africa. People like Mobil Oil threw up their hands and walked away from it. I think the most effective and telling sanction was imposed before the congressional sanctions, that one that really woke up the South Africans, although they were slow to acknowledge it. That was when our major banks, Citibank and Chase and other major international banks, refused to roll over lines of credit. This would have been in '85 and early '86. That sent a far stronger message than our sanctions did. We also worked behind the scenes, as the British did, to try to get Nelson Mandela released from prison. This was part of the ongoing dialogue. He was still in jail the day I walked out of Southern African Affairs in June/July 1989.

Q: Was Zimbabwe in your area?

LANPHER: Yes.

Q: How were things going there?

LANPHER: They were going reasonably well. We got the aid program restarted in early 1988 at a much lower level than it had been before. It was doing alright. Nothing terribly wrong going on. We had our usual little bilateral incidents. One was a situation that demanded a lot of time but where we had a Zimbabwe diplomat in New York who was abusing his son. Welfare people in New York took the kid in. The Zimbabweans went ballistic. We wound up having to get child psychologists involved and I had to make a special trip as country director out to Zimbabwe to quietly resolve this. The father and mother had gone back to Harare and the kid was still in New York. It was just one of those messy things. But that's part of the life of a diplomat, I guess.

Q: Was Namibia taken care of?

LANPHER: Yes. We signed the agreement in December 1988. I guess the elections and formal independence for Namibia came in 1989.

Q: What was the prognosis for Namibia? Did it have any real future?

LANPHER: I don't know. I think it's done fairly well. It's a huge area. It's rich in things like diamonds. The northern part of the country is pastoral agriculture. But it has a tiny population. It's about the same size in population as Botswana, about 1.5 million people in an area the size of maybe bigger than Texas. To a certain extent, when you look at some of the other problem areas around the world, one of the advantages of southern Africa is, it's relatively underpopulated. Sadly, AIDS is underpopulating it even more. If

you take the example of Zimbabwe, when I left in 1995, the life expectancy was projected to be about 60 and now they're talking about it maybe going to 40 within the next five years. AIDS is the biggest killer of kids under five. As many as 43% of women tested in antenatal clinics test positive.

Q: Were you getting any reading about the ANC? What were we looking at as a change of regime in South Africa? Or were we looking at a change of regime?

LANPHER: Well, I probably should have mentioned this earlier. When I came back in 1986, at that point, we had no relationship with the ANC, the exile liberation party umbrella organization. In fact, successive administrations had had a total ban on any contact with the ANC. We made a quiet effort to open a window to the ANC just as the Carter administration was ending. I was involved in that. That was in the last weeks of the Carter administration, January 1981, when I was still in London. But the Reagan people came in and put a stop to that promptly on Inauguration Day. So, we had no contact with the ANC. So, when I came back in 1986, I talked to Crocker and Crocker was persuaded that we needed to open a door to the ANC to find out what they were thinking and be able to talk to them as well as we talked to the South African government. He got Secretary Shultz to say, "Okay." I remember going over to London with Chet and two other people and we brokered this out through the ANC representative there. We had a meeting in London. It wasn't at our embassy. It was under somebody else's roof. But we had a sitdown with the ANC, which was interesting. They showed up with a whole phalanx of people, including all these Indian South African communists who drove Chet Crocker crazy. But we had a good meeting. We started a dialogue. Finally, in about December of 1986, I was sent out to be joined by our ambassador to Zambia, Paul Hare. The two of us went to the Botswana Sun Hotel in Gaborone, the capital, where we met for three days with Thabo Mbeki, now the president of South Africa, who we had known before, with one other ANC fellow with him who's died in the last year, a guy named Steve Tschwete. We sat around the pool for two or three days and worked out a visit for the president of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, to come to Washington and meet with George Shultz. That meeting took place the following February, but we worked it out. I think that was a considerable accomplishment, especially in the Reagan administration. I don't happen to believe that there are many real communists in Africa. Nationalists, yes, but communists, no.

Q: You mentioned there were Indians on the delegation. Were they just being argumentative?

LANPHER: Yes, just being goofy socialist communist lefties, argumentative.

Q: Did you find the leadership of the ANC to be solid? Did you feel you had people you could deal with?

LANPHER: Yes. I can't comment on some of the nonsense he's been up to in the last year or two on AIDS, but I got to know Mbeki when I first met him in London when I was there during the course of the Lancaster House conference. We happened to show up

in the same hotel and had coffee together. I thought pretty highly of him. He was very bright, sensible, and well educated, articulate. I thought we could do business with him. Subsequent events bore that out. He was clearly a favored guy within the ANC, favored by Nelson Mandela.

Q: Did you have the feeling people were waiting for Mandela or was he sort of a cipher?

LANPHER: I don't think he was ever a cipher. He may, while he was in jail, have been a symbol. The British probably played the most important role. We worked at it, but the British were crucial in getting Mandela released from prison. It was clear to everybody who worked on the issue of apartheid and how to get rid of it that there was no way that anything was going to happen as long as Mandela was inside. He had to be brought out and brought into a negotiating process if it was going to work.

Q: You left there when?

LANPHER: I left Southern African Affairs at the end of June/beginning of July 1989.

Q: You left on a rather positive note, didn't you?

LANPHER: Yes. It was positive. We had succeeded and accomplished quite a lot in the three years that I'd been there and in the eight years that Chet Crocker had been Assistant Secretary. I was very pleased.

Q: How did Chet Crocker operate?

LANPHER: Intensely. He was very much a hands on guy. He both had vision and strategic thinking. He knew where he wanted to go, what his objectives were. Frustrating as it was, he stayed on top of things and kept plugging away, master of all the details, used his staff extremely well, backed his staff up and they loved working for him. He was a real manager. He had the vision and the stamina and patience for the details. It took a lot of patience.

Q: This is probably a good place to stop. In '89, whither?

LANPHER: I had thought as my tour in AFS was winding down, I had been told by Chet Crocker and by Larry Eagleburger that I was going to be the Department's candidate to go back to Zimbabwe as ambassador in 1989. I was pleased about that. I thought that sounded pretty good. But then one day in March '89, late in the assignment cycle, I got a call from the sitting ambassador in Harare - and he knew I was going to be replacing him; he was a political appointee and a good friend of mine - saying he had just had a call, "Hey, Gib, I thought you were going to replace me, but I just got a call from the White House personnel office saying somebody else is going to replace me, a political appointee." I said, "What?" I was a bit surprised. I went upstairs and said, "Chet, I just had this phone call. What the hell's going on?" He said, "I don't know anything about this." Chet went up to see Eagleburger and Eagleburger said, "What? What's going on?"

It turns out that President Bush had offered the job to a young lawyer who had been on his domestic policy staff when he was vice president. So, there I was, jobless, in March '89. So, I asked around about what was open. I ran into a friend of mine in the hall, Stape Roy, who was then a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the East Asia Bureau, and he said, "Hey, I've got a political appointee going out to Australia who's interviewing eight or 10 people to be DCM. Do you want to go on that list for Australia?" I said, "Sure." So, I interviewed with this ambassador designate to Australia, convinced him that I was the right person even though I had never been in East Asia in my life to be DCM. So, that's where I went the summer of '89.

Q: We'll pick this up then.

Today is September 16, 2002. Gib, you were in Australia from '89 to when?

LANPHER: It was July '89 until the end of June 1991, two years.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

LANPHER: The ambassador was a fellow named Mel Sembler, a large campaign contributor to President Bush. He was a Florida real estate developer, a very wealthy man. He was one of those fellows - this was in 1989 - whose confirmation was held up by Senator Sarbanes, the accusation being that he bought the job. This was a subject of a long series of Doonesbury cartoons. Mel, who was a very nice, very wealthy man, resented this. He said to me once afterwards, "What do they mean? I only gave George Bush \$126,000 and helped him raise \$30 million for the inauguration, but that's chump change." I actually arrived in Australia in July 1989 and took over as chargé because Sembler was held up until October or November.

Q: What was the status of American-Australian relations at that time and what were the issues?

LANPHER: U.S.-Australian relations, I quickly learned, even though I had never served in that part of the world before, were exceedingly close. A lot of this goes back to the fact that we are perceived, and rightly so, to having saved Australia in the second world war. Northern Australia was being bombed by the Japanese; The Battle of the Coral Sea stopped the Japanese advance southward. They still commemorate Coral Sea week every May all over the country and we participate heavily in that. We're feted. Our navy comes in to Australian ports. They love us. They get irritated with us now and then, as all our old friends do. But it was very interesting to go to a country where we were so universally liked and where we had such a dependable ally. We did have irritants in the relationship, which was unfortunate. One of the things I quickly realized, having gone out to Australia as DCM/chargé, was how Australia and New Zealand were sort of the orphans of the East Asia Bureau. They spoke English. They weren't really Asian. So, it was quite hard sometimes getting the East Asia Bureau's attention back in Washington. Fortunately, Australia is the apple of the eye of the Defense Department and especially

our Pacific Command in Honolulu. In fact, the Pacific Command, when they heard I was coming out to Australia, insisted that I stop by in Honolulu for three days of consultations, meeting all the top brass, lunches, dinners, briefings, you name it. The basic message was, "You're going out to our favorite country in the world. Don't screw it up, young man." I understood that. Before I left Washington, I had also had an invitation to lunch from the director of the National Security Agency. This message was, "Australia is my crown jewel. Take good care of it." So, that was the nature of the relationship when I went out there.

What was interesting was, when I arrived in Australia, the former political appointee ambassador had just left about a month before I arrived, and I found a very demoralized embassy and mission staff. I had not only the embassy but I had four consulates in Australia. I also had the overriding responsibility, although not day to day management, of a collection of U.S. bases and intelligence facilities in Australia. It was a big management job. I should say that this former ambassador, also a very wealthy man, had been a cheapskate, to put it bluntly, and somewhat of a tyrant. He was abusive of staff. He also used almost all the travel and representation money for himself, which meant nobody in the embassy was entertaining or traveling. When I discovered this after I had been there a couple of weeks and thought about it, I gave Sembler a call back in Washington. I said, "You're going to have your work cut out for you when you get out here. I'll lay the groundwork, but here is the situation." Sembler, to his credit, said, "You're my CEO. I want you to take care of this problem. Do what you think is right. If you think people have been deprived of representation or travel money, you allocate the money as you see fit. Allocate some to me, some to you, spread it around. When I run out of my money for travel, representation, whatever it is, I'll pay the rest out of my own pocket." I said, "Fine." And he did. He ran out of his travel and representation money after one month at post and he paid for everything else out of his own pocket. When he finally arrived and we met him at the airport with his official car, an Australian-made Ford, right hand drive, we took him to his residence. Our agreement when he recruited me for the job was that he would consult me on everything, I'd give him straight advice, I'd keep him out of trouble and pointed right. He came into my office the second or third day and said, "Gib, there's something that's bothering me." I said, "What's that, Mr. Ambassador?" He said, "This official car of mine." I said, "Is something wrong with it?" He said, "No, it's a fine car. But I haven't driven in a Ford in 30 years and I just don't like driving in a Ford. Can I get another car?" I said, "Well, that's what's been assigned to the post." He said, "Well, what happens if I buy an official car for myself, pay for it myself." I said, "As far as I'm concerned, that's fine. We can put a security radio in it if you like that." He said, "Fine. What kind of car can I get?" I said, "What do you want to get?" He said, "I've always wanted to have a Rolls Royce." I said, "Mr. Ambassador, there is only one Rolls Royce in Canberra and it belongs to the Governor General of Australia and I think it might not look good if you got a Rolls Royce." He said, "Oh, I understand. What about a Jaguar?" I said, "The British ambassador has a Jaguar." He said, "Oh, I don't want to upset him by getting a Jaguar." Then he brightened and said, "What about a Mercedes?" I said, "Look, there will be certain people who will be critical of you for driving a foreign car, but as far as I'm concerned, that heat is very little, it's your own money. Fine. A Mercedes is okay." He said, "Can I get one here in town?" I

said, "I think so. I'll get my administrative counselor to take you out this afternoon." He said, "Great." My administrative counselor came back that afternoon after he had been to the Mercedes dealer and he said, "Gib, you wouldn't believe what the ambassador just did. He bought himself a Mercedes 560 or 640, the biggest damned Mercedes you've ever seen. But that's not all. He bought his wife a Mercedes station wagon and his political appointee special assistant a little Mercedes." I said, "Three Mercedes." My administrative counselor, who was a very good guy, said, "Yes. And he sat there and wrote a check. He couldn't get it duty free, so he had to pay the duty and everything else." I said, "Well, how big was the check?" He said, "\$450,000." That's the kind of fellow Mel Sembler was. He was a terribly nice guy and always consulted me on everything, let me run the embassy in terms of substance and management. He did a lot of entertaining, a lot of travel. We kept him supplied with speeches. He was an outreach kind of guy. But he was a splendid political appointee, not long on the substance, but long on graciousness, entertained well. Essentially, he was an excellent manager - giving good guidance and knowing when to delegate when others could do it better than he.

Q: If we had a difficult thing to put forward, which you always have, something comes from Washington, would he do that?

LANPHER: He would go, but he always took me with him to assist in the heavy argumentation. Sometimes when the Australians had something that they really wanted to complain about, they didn't like to offend him because he was a good guy and they didn't want to put him on the spot. They'd sometimes wait until he was out of town on a speaking trip and I'd be invited over quietly to come and have a chat with the Prime Minister. "Sorry your boss is out of town, but this was so important we thought we'd better raise it right away."

Q: You were the designated hitter.

LANPHER: Well, I worked well with the Australians and they worked well with me and felt that they could talk straight.

Q: What was your take on the Australian government?

LANPHER: The prime minister was Bob Hawk for all the time I was in Australia. He was overthrown in an internal coup in his party about six months after I left Australia. I knew it was coming because I had been tipped off. But he was the prime minister and a real character. A decent, straight fellow. He had flaws in his character, as he would admit, but he was a down to earth guy and had a very good staff. He also had, for the most part, good ministers in his government. It was kind of an open and raucous affair. It was a parliamentary system. They had question time in parliament, which is a couple of hundreds of yards from our office. I used to go over and be entertained for an hour in the afternoon listening to question time. It's outrageous the sort of questions and responses. I remember once going over... The finance minister was a guy named Paul Keating. He got a question from the opposition one day that was sort of snarky. His response was, "That's exactly the kind of question I'd expect from a dirtbag like you." So, there was an

openness and it was kind of refreshing.

Q: Where was this government coming from? Was it labor, liberal, conservative...

LANPHER: It was a labor government, but it was one that had gotten over its socialism to a large extent. It was quite a pragmatic government. They valued their relationship with us. For a country of 18 million people and a land mass about the size of the continental United States, 10 times as many sheep as people, they wanted to pull their weight in the world. They wanted to have a voice. And they worked with us. We had our differences on things like chemical weapons and we had some difficult issues with the Australians in terms of trade. For all our talk about market economies, we drove the Australians crazy on our protectionist trade issues and our subsidies in agriculture, a problem that continues to this day. Australia didn't subsidize its agriculture. Because we did, we hurt them badly, particularly in two or three commodities. One was wheat. We undercut their markets by dumping our subsidized wheat on the world market. The same in sugar. Australia is a very efficient, low cost producer of sugar. Of course, our sugar quotas kept them out of our market, which hurt them. Also, we had quotas on beef. Australia is a big producer of beef. We had a quota which I thought was pretty high. But the Australians wanted more. Australia produced a lot of commercial grade beef in their northern territories, beef that you couldn't cut with an ax but our fast food hamburger outfits liked to import it because then they'd blend it with our high fat content beef. If you go to Wendy's or McDonald's, you're probably eating a percentage of Australian beef. These were contentious issues. The Australians felt, given the amount of cooperation they gave us in the political, security and diplomatic areas, that we treated them badly on these trade issues. I spent an awful lot of time on those, going out and talking and trying to explain our policies in farmers meetings.

Q: This brings up an issue. We talk out of two sides of our mouth on this. We're talking about free trade and all that and yet we have this if not closed, limited market which is very protectionist. How did you explain this?

LANPHER: I tried to explain it as honestly as I could. I labored on speeches on our Export Enhancement Program, which was kind of code word for "screwing the Australian wheat industry." Of course, the Europeans were bigger offenders than we were. I tried to lay a little off. But I never gave a dishonest speech. I'd lay it out, "This is the way it is. I'd like to do something about it." We would argue as an embassy with Washington, but we were up against the farm lobby and Congress and politics in the United States. Everybody wanted the sugar money out of Florida and Louisiana and the beet sugar industry and you name it.

Q: Did the ambassador have any clout in Washington?

LANPHER: He had the contacts with the President and he could see the President when he came back and always got a picture taken with the President.

Q: This was George Bush Senior.

LANPHER: Yes. But in terms of having any impact on substance on these difficult trade issues, for instance, no. We were pissing in the wind.

Q: That's a good diplomatic definition. With a labor government, particularly in New Zealand, coming out of England, there were some really dedicated left-wing labor types, the kind that sit around and sing "The Red Flag Forever."

LANPHER: I never met any of those guys in Australia.

Q: They had been eliminated?

LANPHER: Yes. And the Labor party was dominated while I was there by some really bright and tough minded people - the "New South Wales Mafia." These guys were tough and pragmatic and they weren't misty eyed English style labourites. If you really wanted to get punched out, you'd suggest that they had some affinity with the British Labor Party.

Q: Did you have any problems with these big monitoring stations? We have some pretty big stuff out in northern Australia.

LANPHER: Not really. We had quite a few installations. They had been a contentious issue at times in the '80s. It became an issue of sovereignty and the Australian left raised a lot of hell about these. But the labor government in about 1986/'87/'88, before I went to Australia, came to Washington and said, "We've got to manage this better. We understand that these installations are in both our interests, but we're getting a lot of heat politically on this and we have to manage this better." Our agencies, the National Security Agency and the CIA, were not very happy with the Australian proposals, but slowly, slowly, they came around to the Australian view. And the Australian view was that these needed to be "joint facilities," not unilateral U.S. facilities, and that they could sell that to the Australian people. This effort on the part of the Australians was led by their defense minister, a fellow named Kim Beasley, a great friend of the United States, a man of considerable intelligence and, by the way, a U.S. Civil War freak, and an awfully good fellow. He sorted this out. By the time I got there in 1989, we had no problems and in these installations which I visited, they were manned jointly by the Australians and the Americans sitting side by side at computer consoles and whatever. To this day, I can't tell you what all these facilities do for reasons of classification. But they are very important to the United States, incredibly important, and they played a very significant role later in my tour during the Gulf War.

Q: You were there during the Gulf War, weren't you?

LANPHER: Yes.

Q: How did that play out? Or should we talk about other things before we get to that?

LANPHER: Why don't we jump to that? Then I've got a couple of topics that I think ought to go on record.

Our consultations were intensely close. The Australians immediately sent a couple of destroyers to the Persian Gulf. They were with us, worked very closely with us diplomatically and on the ground throughout the Gulf War. We kept the Australians extremely well informed. My wife recalled to me last night when I told her I'd be talking about Australia today and I asked her, "What were some of your memories?" She said, "I'll never forget the dinner at the ambassador's residence the night before the air war in the Gulf War began." The equivalent of the Australian Joint Chiefs of Staff were there, the head of the army, the chairman of the Joint Staff, the head of the air force, navy, were all there. The minister of defense was there and there were six other senior Australian military and diplomatic officials. It was a dinner for about 20 people and their wives. My wife said, "It was quite incredible. Everybody in that room knew the war was going to start the next morning and nobody said a thing about it." We were as one. Everybody knew what was going to happen and everybody kept their mouths shut, everybody was discreet, and everybody had a hell of a good evening at Ambassador Sembler's house. She said it was quite surreal that we all had such an evening. I remember being in the embassy the following morning. A friend in the prime minister's office called and said, "Turn on your CNN in about 10 minutes because that's when the first Cruise missiles are going to hit." We were that tight with the Australians.

Q: Was there any problem with people in Australia - it's an immigrant nation to a certain extent - did the Gulf War cause any problems?

LANPHER: We had intelligence information and the Australians did. We had a very sharing intelligence relationship across the board with the Australians. There were threats of Iraqi terrorism on a worldwide basis. We had several close calls, including one in Zimbabwe, but another one in Indonesia, the Philippines, Greece... There were threats in Australia. There was intelligence information suggesting that there might be a threat, that there might be a sleeper Iraqi cell somewhere in Australia. So, for about six months, the Australians insisted on putting a policeman on my property at my house and he basically lived in my garage for six months on around the clock basis, which really impressed my little boys. He went through a lot of coffee and cookies that we kept him supplied with. I was never personally concerned. But the Australians went out of their way to provide protection to me. The ambassador lived in a secure compound, the embassy compound, but I lived off the compound. But nothing happened.

Q: Working out of Canberra, I would think that there would be a problem in that it's somewhat isolated and the real political life would be taking place in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth, and elsewhere. Did you find that you had to rely on your consulates to supply you with the real meat of what was going on in Australia?

LANPHER: Not really. Canberra has this image among Australians and outsiders of being a sheep station. In 1960, the population of Canberra was 59,000 people. By the time I got there in 1989, there was about 300,000. Government had gotten a lot bigger. Canberra was a very pleasant place to live. It had achieved by that time a critical mass.

There were business representatives, there were lobbyists, there were politicians from all over Australia that basically lived almost full-time in Canberra and would go home on weekends. I found I could stay pretty well plugged in. I had some very good contacts. I had some very good reporting and development of contacts done by our consulates, particularly in Melbourne and Sydney. But I thought we were pretty well informed. We had a relationship with the government both with the governing party and the opposition. I think we were sufficiently well plugged in even though Canberra was a small town away from the coasts. The ambassador traveled quite a lot. When I wasn't minding the store in Canberra, I traveled quite a bit as well. I would have liked to have traveled more, but he traveled a lot and somebody had to mind the store in Canberra. But I got to Brisbane, to Perth three or four times, to Darwin, Hobart, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, all these places more than once for most of them. Adelaide only once and Hobart only once. I think we stayed pretty well plugged in. Australians like to talk and they liked Americans. There weren't very many secrets down there that they didn't share with us. I got a heads up from within the labor party that "We're going to roll Bob Hawk." Just before I left, they tried it for the first time. But I had had a month's warning and I was able to tell Washington ahead of time that, "Our good friend Bob Hawk is in trouble and there are elements within his own party that are out to dump him."

Q: What was your reading on how Hawk was as a political leader?

LANPHER: I thought he was good. I think he was well liked and he was a popular figure. You could go to the racetrack in Canberra and he was a man of the people. He would be up there at the betting window along with everybody else with a pint of beer in one hand and putting down his bets. I think the real reason he was eventually dumped in favor of Paul Keating, the finance minister, was that there were a number of people within his party that were younger who felt that Hawk had had his eight years and it was time for somebody else. That's sort of the head kicking nature of democracy in Australia.

Q: There were several things you wanted to talk about.

LANPHER: I already mentioned the spirit of the Coral Sea. That impressed me.

Q: That's a battle that few Americans even think about.

LANPHER: Yes. But we as a government pay attention to it because it's important. We always send a senior delegation out for Coral Sea Week. We've sent Vice Presidents and everything else out because it's so important to the Australians and important to the relationship. But I never realized it myself until I went out there just how important we were. At times during the second world war, there were more American servicemen in Australia, up to a million at one time, than there were Australian men at home because the Australian men had all gone off to fight in North Africa and Europe. Then you go up and down the west coast of Australia. These little fishing villages were all home ports to American submarines who were the most effective force against the Japanese, sank more than anywhere else in the world. You find the intermarriages and the descendants of these World War II submariners all up and down the west coast of Australia. I once had a

phone call from the governor general of Australia who said to me, “Gib, all my friends, fellow politicians and everything, have been invited out to visit a U.S. carrier battle group and I’ve never been invited.” I said, “Well, I’ve got a battle group coming in in 10 days time out to Perth.” This was the Carl Vinson carrier battle group, 10,000 men and 10 ships. I said, “I can fix it up that you can go out and land on the carrier, be blasted off by catapult.” He said, “Can you really do that?” I said, “Yes.” I got a hold of my naval attache and said, “We will do it, won’t we?” Of course, the Navy loves to do this sort of thing. So, the governor general and his wife and my wife and I, as chargé at the time, flew out to Perth. The Navy met us in Perth and took us out to this carrier and we landed and the tailhook caught the wire. We had a day on the carrier. We were royally treated. We watched air exercises. We had lunch with the admiral and the captain. Then they blasted us off and sent us back. The Governor General was absolutely thrilled. And the Navy did just a first-class job. Then the next day, the carrier battle group steamed into Fremantle, the port of Perth. Ten thousand sailors came ashore and were royally greeted by the Australians. They had a “dial a sailor” thing set up right in the harbor. Sailors called and got dates. My wife was just taken aback by the reception our guys got. And that helps. For the U.S. Navy, Australia is the port of call. It doesn’t matter which port. It’s their favorite country. It’s an intangible, but it’s quite important.

Another event I recall... Again, I was charge. My defense and air attache came to me and said that the head of the Australian air force (a fellow I knew well) had come to him and said, “Look, one of our units that fought alongside your guys up in Darwin against the Japanese during the second world war was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation by President Roosevelt for their valor and heroism back in 1942. The citation was never delivered. All these guys in this unit, the few that are left, are getting old and wouldn’t it be a nice thing if we resurrected this thing and had a ceremony up in Darwin?” I said to my attache, “That’s a great idea. See what you can get out of the Pentagon.” We got the citation and whatnot. The head of the Australian air force flew everybody, all the survivors from all over Australia, up to Darwin, including my wife because, for dumb reasons, my wife was not allowed to fly on our attache aircraft. She went up on a 707 or something like that. We went up and it was the most lovely ceremony at dusk on the tarmac at Darwin where all these planes had taken off from during the second world war with these guys coming by on crutches and canes. I gave a little speech and the head of the air force gave a little speech and we had F18s streaking by in the sunset. It was quite a moving ceremony to see these old guys out there. It speaks to the history of our cooperation and why we have such reliable allies. They still care.

As I was saying, this relationship with CINCPAC and Australia is intense. Everybody from CINCPAC comes down to Australia at least twice a year. We do joint exercises with the Australians. Shortly after I arrived, I went up and participated with the number two in CINCPAC in a joint exercise. We had 24,000 Americans down in the Northern Territories swatting flies and doing the bush and whatever you do in joint exercises. But I must say, any time I had a problem with the State Department in Washington, all I had to do was call CINCPAC and outline the problem and they’d say, “Gib, we’ll take care of it.”

Q: Did you get any reflection of the relationship with New Zealand? We had had distant relations with New Zealand because of their government saying, "You can't bring nuclear ships in."

LANPHER: Yes. This was a chronic problem in the ANZUS relationship. It really got under the skin of people in Washington, not only the Defense Department but also many folks in the State Department. We had any number of conversations with the Australians about the New Zealand problem. Just for the record, we have annual AUSMIN talks where the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense in alternating years come out to Australia for three days of talks or the Australians come to Washington. This was always on the agenda in the two years I was there. But I would also get separate instructions to talk to the Australians about it. As an anecdote, I went in to talk one on one with the prime minister, Bob Hawk, about this one day on instructions from Washington. I was basically trying to get him to help us think how we could approach the New Zealanders once again. We talked for about half an hour and then finally he said, "Don't take notes of this, but the fundamental problem here is the Kiwis have shit for brains." I thought I would fall out of my chair. All I could do was chuckle. It was what I would call a hearty perennial. I think in retrospect this was sort of a declaration of independence by the New Zealanders. It was a question of principle and politics in New Zealand. I think we made too big a deal out of it ourselves because we didn't really need access to their ports for our nuclear powered war armed vessels. We had Australia. We didn't need New Zealand for that. But it's one of those things that countries get into a snit over and don't know how to get out of. We had far more important issues with New Zealand in the area of trade, I always thought. But be that as it may.

Q: What about relations between Australia and Indonesia?

LANPHER: The Australians were always concerned about Indonesia. It was a big country to the north, a huge number of people. The Australians devoted a lot of time and energy to it. A lot of their intelligence service was devoted to Indonesia. I think we talked with the Australians quite a lot about Indonesia and they talked to us more than we talked to them. I didn't have much direct dealings on Indonesia. This was usually done by my political section and our intelligence communities working together.

Another thing I'd like to mention... I've said how close our defense relations were and how much that paid off. Things weren't always so good on the diplomatic side when I was there. Their foreign ministry was a bit less pragmatic, a little bit more dogmatic, and left-wing politically correct with the Third World and the developing world than the military was. Plus, they had a foreign minister, Gareth Evans, who was very bright, very energetic, but very tempestuous and who made his name back in the '60s leading anti-American anti-Vietnam protestors in Melbourne when Australia was with us in Vietnam and had troops on the ground. I don't think Evans had ever gotten over his anti-Americanism. He tried to cover it up as best he could, and he did for the most part. But I saw it on several occasions during these Australian-U.S. ministerial talks. One year, Dick Cheney, our Secretary of Defense, and Jim Baker, our Secretary of State, came out for these talks. The formal talks were in Sydney, but they also came to Canberra. But it was

quite clear that there was an antipathy between Baker and Evans that was just quite incredible. Everybody liked Dick Cheney. Cheney and the Australian military got on very well. But Baker just couldn't stand Evans. Evans was pretty nasty to his own staff. When you get a ministry talking out of school about their foreign minister, as they used to to me, it was uncomfortable. The relationship survived that, but it was a strain, the fact that Baker didn't like Evans and I think vice-versa.

Q: How did you find the Australian media?

LANPHER: Very often and for the most part pretty responsible. They had their tabloids, but we didn't have any major problems with the media. In fact, some of my best contacts and sources were the national media, the national political and diplomatic correspondents. They were good.

Q: Were any island issues coming up? Australia and the U.S. overlap dealing with some of the South Pacific islands.

LANPHER: We didn't have much of a problem. The Australian concern was Papua New Guinea. They had a lot of nationals, a lot of investment there, and the place was a real mess. We had a very small embassy there, but that was basically their sphere of influence. Whatever they wanted to do, we were generally supportive.

Q: How about China, Vietnam, and Japan?

LANPHER: Once again, there were trade issues. Actually, we were quite helpful to Australia in terms of muscling the Japanese and the Koreans into, for our own purposes, opening up their markets to our agricultural products. But Australia received quite a bit of benefit from the opening up that we forced on those people, so they were quite happy about that, although they were unhappy about our market being relatively closed.

Q: As an observer of Australia, my impression is that it's still a very male dominated society. Were you seeing any changes on the female side, a womens movement? Were they looking to the U.S.? We were putting quite a bit of emphasis in the United States in bringing women more into the body politic and other things, sports, etc.?

LANPHER: Not as much as I would have liked. Your observation that Australia had that image at least at that time, '89-'91, and I haven't been back so I don't know if it's changed. I and my wife were quite taken aback by how much the sexist male dominated society. I think that was really quite true as a generalization. There were lots of exceptions. But I recall one conversation my wife had. This was out in Perth when we went out for that carrier battlegroup visit. As part of that, once the ships were in port, we were invited to the Officer's First Night Party at the Hyatt Regency in Perth. The ladies of Perth have a group that sponsors these things. The ladies, as my wife learned, pay about \$10 a year to be on the list of invitees. The American officers coming ashore from all these ships chip in \$50-100 a piece for this party and they rent the grand ballroom. So, we showed up at this party. My wife hadn't seen anything like this since a college mixer.

She was in college in the '60s. My wife being a good journalist, at that point on a leave of absence from the "Wall Street Journal," just couldn't believe what she was seeing when we went into this ballroom, so she separated from me and went over to a group of these ladies and had a conversation. The ladies were adamant that this was on the up and up, that there were no hookers, there were no transvestites, these were all proper ladies. My wife said, "Well, why do you do this? What do you see in our guys? I'm not against our Navy officers and I'm sure they're nice enough fellows, but why do you do this?" One of the women said, "You don't know our men." My wife said, "What do you mean?" The woman said to my wife, "When an Australian man invites us out on a date, he'll call up and say, 'Meet me at the pub.' He won't come pick you up. You go to the pub. He says, 'Hi' and then he goes over and stands with his mates drinking beer until he can't stand up and then you're expected to put him in a cab and send him home." My wife was astounded and said, "And our guys?" This woman said, "Your guys are perfect gentlemen. They say 'please' and 'thank you.' You don't have to send them home in a cab. They behave themselves. They're nice guys." Out of every one of these carrier battlegroup visits, probably three or four marriages result.

Q: Back in '69/'70 when I was consul general in Saigon, our military men used to get R&R. The ones who went to Australia were just delighted. They'd come back and say, "Here are these beautiful, wonderful ladies, and these stupid Australian men don't understand what they've got. This is paradise." They enjoyed the company of women.

LANPHER: Yes.

Q: And we're all trained to be kind of nice to women and it's a good deal.

LANPHER: Exactly what my wife found. But leaving that aside, the Australians are a very welcoming people. They're a tremendous ally and lots of fun. I'm a trout fisherman and I soon found some friends in Canberra who had properties up in the hills outside of Canberra where I could go trout fishing. When Cheney and Baker came out, I got a backchannel phone call from the Pentagon saying, "Cheney really likes trout fishing. Is there any way on that Sunday that they're going to be in Canberra that Cheney and Baker could get a morning of trout fishing in?" I said, "I think I can arrange it" and quietly arranged it with a retired navy captain friend of mine, an Australian. It was kind of a hoot. The captain said later, "I took them up there, but they brought all these security people up who were scaring the sheep and everything else. But you know, that Cheney is a world class fly fisherman. Baker's got a lot of learning to do."

Q: Any other issues?

LANPHER: One of the things that people don't appreciate always is how burdensome management can be. I'd been a DCM before, but being a DCM in Australia with a huge mission spread over a huge country was kind of a challenge. It took up a lot more of my time than I suppose I would have preferred. It was my job, so I did it and I did it faithfully. But there were so many substantive issues that I would have liked to have gotten more immersed in. I got into the agricultural and military security issues. But

management took up an awful lot of time. When you have four consulates and a big mission, you spend a hell of a lot of time doing things like efficiency reports. Because my ambassador was not a writer, I had to write all of his. So, I did all the consuls general. I did all the review statements. I did all the section chiefs and service chiefs and everything else. It took a while. On top of that, I had the unfortunate experience of having to have to send a consul general packing for loss of confidence. As a lot of people in the service know, to do such a thing, you really have to spend a lot of time documenting it.

Q: Without going into names, how would this problem manifest itself?

LANPHER: I started and some of my section chiefs in Canberra started to get phone calls from the consulate in question about the competence and erratic behavior of the consul general. This sort of built up. I had met the consul general, who had been directly assigned without consultation with the post by the Director General. It built up and I finally decided, one, that I had to start documenting what I was hearing, which I did. Finally, I went out and did a personal three day inspection of the post in question, talking to everybody from the American officers to the local staff down to the drivers and also to people in the local community who interacted with the consul general. I came away after three days saying this person had to go. I told the person this. I was threatened with lawsuits, but I said, "That's the way it is." I went back and wrote a seven page cable and had notes to document every conversation. The Director General was a little bit unhappy because he had personally assigned this person out there, but in the end, this person was pulled.

Q: Was it a personality problem or was it alcohol?

LANPHER: It was personality. Sadly, and it's a sad commentary on our service, the problems that this person showed at this post had been problems that had been manifest before and nobody had ever had the guts or the will or the time to take it on frontally and do the right thing. I did. I never had more thanks in all the time I was in the service. I had personal notes from people in the consulate afterwards about, "Gib, thank you very much. You showed real guts in doing it."

Q: Did you see any other things? By having all these people at these different posts, were you seeing any signs of new trends or things that were happening within the Foreign Service?

LANPHER: It's difficult to make a generalization without sounding like an old fart. And maybe I am an old fart. But I thought I was seeing starting in Australia sort of a bit of a breakdown of the sort of discipline that I had been accustomed to when I came into the Foreign Service back in the '60s. And it manifested itself in small ways. When I came into the Foreign Service, I was told, "If you're invited to a reception at the ambassador's or the DCM's house, one, you go; and, two, you get there 10 minutes ahead of time so you're there to help out with the guests and you mingle with the invitees, not your fellow Americans." I saw quite a bit of a breakdown in Australia on that score, people declining invitations, not RSVPing an invitation, not showing up on time. I saw that later when I

was ambassador in Zimbabwe to a certain extent. My wife, who was late joining me in the Foreign Service, my second wife, noticed this as well to the point where in Zimbabwe later, she said, "We will not invite that officer to our home again." But again, I'd rather not sound like an old fart.

On the other hand, I think, certainly reflecting on the last 10 years in the service, the management of the State Department got to be pretty bad and was not as supportive of the troops as it should have been. This led to a certain malaise in the Foreign Service. I know I came back in 1995 from Zimbabwe after essentially six years away from Washington. I'd go in on a Saturday morning as I had always done. I was a Deputy Assistant Secretary. But I'd be virtually alone in the State Department, where it used to be a bustling place on a Saturday morning. There was nobody there. I used to counsel junior officers. I detected much less of a sense of a career commitment. "If I like it, I'm going to stay, but there are other things to do and I'm not wedded to a career in the Foreign Service."

Q: You left there in '91.

LANPHER: Yes.

Q: Whither?

LANPHER: It was sort of funny. After a year in Australia, it would have been September 1990. I got a phone call about 2:00AM from Washington. Nobody in Washington knows that Australia is 12 time zones away, so this was a regular routine, being woken up at 2:00AM. A fellow called me from the Africa Bureau at the State Department. It was Jeff Davidow, who was the Deputy Assistant Secretary. He said, "Gib." I said, "Jeff, do you know what time it is here?" He said, "No." I said, "It's 2:00AM. This better be important." He said, "Well, it sort of is. How would you like to be ambassador to Zimbabwe?" I said, "Hey, it's 2:00AM. Your new ambassador just got out there four or five months ago." He said, "But he be gone real soon." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "You're right. He's been there four or five months and he'll be resigning for personal reasons very shortly and I just wanted to know if you'd be interested in going to Zimbabwe." I said, "Of course I would." It took a couple of months to formalize this and move it through the White House. But by December, I was getting all the papers to fill out to be ambassador to Zimbabwe. I left Australia in June of the following year to come back, I thought, for confirmation hearings. I guess my appointment had been announced. But I got back to Washington and everybody in the Senate was too busy to have a hearing in July. Then they went on vacation in August. Then the Clarence Thomas hearings held things up.

Q: This was a nominee for Supreme Court Justice who was purported to be sexually harassing... He was the subject of a rather sexy set of hearings which went on and on and on.

LANPHER: Yes. Anyway, so there I was with a wife, two kids, both in diapers, in a

rented apartment from July until I was finally confirmed and sworn in about the first week of November. Off we went to Zimbabwe.

Q: You were in Zimbabwe from when to when?

LANPHER: November '91 until March '95.

Q: A good solid period. What had happened to the previous ambassador?

LANPHER: The one who had a short tour?

Q: Yes.

LANPHER: I never asked because I didn't want to address the issue in a hearing. Nobody wanted to tell me. I subsequently learned that he had been caught having cocaine shipped to himself through the diplomatic pouch. That's why he was asked to resign.

Q: Talk about no-nos. It's almost unbelievable.

LANPHER: I pieced it together later that that's what it was. He also in his brief four or five months made quite a local splash.

Q: We're talking about '91. You had to bring yourself up to speed again on the area. What was the situation in Zimbabwe at that time and what were the issues that you had on your plate?

LANPHER: I got to Zimbabwe in November. There had been some concern back in Washington in connection with my prospective nomination to be ambassador to Zimbabwe, that somehow I might have problems getting agrément from the government of Zimbabwe, agreement to my assignment, as a result of that July 4th party in 1986. The State Department raised this with me and I said, "I don't think that will be a problem." I said to them that that incident was caused by the foreign minister and that we had heard indirectly that the president was mightily embarrassed by the whole thing. In fact, there was no problem. As soon as the agreement request went in, it came back. I arrived on a Saturday morning in Harare with my family from London. On Monday morning, I was told by the government that President Mugabe would accept my credentials on the Tuesday. This was extraordinary. Most ambassadors wait two or three months in Zimbabwe to present their credentials. We hadn't leaned on the government or anything like that. When I went in, I presented my credentials and we went through the usual little ceremony. Then the two of us went into a private little room, me with my DCM and Mugabe with somebody from the foreign ministry or the presidency. There were just four of us in the room. He beamed at me and said, "Mr. Lanpher, welcome back. It's nice to have a familiar face." We'd known each other off and on since 1977. He said, "And the reason I'm accepting your credentials today is that I wanted you to get right to work." So, he couldn't have been more gracious and welcoming. There was no reference to the July 4th thing.

Q: Could you quickly reprise what had happened on July 4th?

LANPHER: The July 4th thing happened two weeks, 10 days, before I was to leave after four years as DCM in 1986. I had a July 4th reception. Former President Carter was there and in violation of a no-speech agreement, a Zimbabwean minister stood up and gave a diatribe against the United States and Britain and Jimmy Carter and I walked out of our own July 4th party, setting a diplomatic precedent that will probably stand for all time.

In any case, Mugabe and I had a nice talk. He said, "We have good relations. Let's keep it that way." I, of course, said that was my intention. At the time, Zimbabwe was beginning to launch on an economic reform program, one that we were very much encouraging, one that the World Bank and the IMF were very much encouraging. Relations were quite good. They were quite good to the point where shortly after I presented my credentials, probably early December of that year, late 1991, we were having tremendous problems up in Somalia. The UN hadn't gotten involved. Washington was determined to put together a multinational force even prior to formal UN involvement in Somalia. I had a phone call from Washington in early December saying, "We've had this military training program with the Zimbabweans for almost 10 years. You know all about it. Our guys think that Zimbabweans are pretty good soldiers. Do you think there's any chance we could encourage the Zimbabweans to join with us in Somalia?" I thought about it for a couple of seconds and said, "I think our relations at this point have reached the level of maturity that it would be worth a try to ask them." They said, "Do you have any ideas?" I said, "I think President Bush ought to call him (Mugabe) and outline his concerns, our concerns." Bush I, who was a terribly good diplomat and had met Mugabe in the fall 1982 when I was there as DCM, had visited Zimbabwe, thought he had a personal relationship of sorts with Mugabe. Mugabe certainly thought he had a personal relationship with Bush as a result of that visit. Well, Bush called and Mugabe said, "Yes, because Somalia is an embarrassment for us Africans and we ought to be participating in doing something about it." I thought that was quite incredible and sophisticated and we were obviously very pleased. The decision having been taken at that level, we all had to get to work to implement it. This took about a month. I'll never forget the day out at Harare Airport - and I've got photographs to prove it - we had two C5 Galaxies and a C141 come in to pick up the advance elements of a Zimbabwe battalion to fly them up with their gear to Somalia. On the morning that these planes came in, I called up the Zimbabwe minister of defense and said, "A plane is coming in this morning. Your guys are all ready to go. Wouldn't it be nice if you and the president were out there on the tarmac to see your guys off? I'll be out there." He said, "That's a good idea." So, he got the president and there I had the president and the minister of defense going in and out of these C5s out on the tarmac at the airport. I was there with my two little boys. I've got photographs of this. It was quite a sight.

Q: These are the largest cargo planes, the C5s.

LANPHER: Yes. So, off they went. The Zimbabweans did a terribly good job up there. I had phone calls from Somalia from whoever the Marine general in charge was saying,

“Do you think we could get some more Zimbabweans? They’re doing a hell of a good job up here and we’d like to send some of these Europeans home.” The Zimbabweans did do a good job. They deserve a lot of credit for their professionalism. They did some neat work up there.

Q: Just for the record, please give a brief summary of what the situation was in Somalia.

LANPHER: There had been a complete breakdown of law and order. We were on the verge of that tragic thing where we lost the 18 Special Forces guys. We were trying to restore order and decency in Somalia.

Q: There had been mass starvation which had brought the UN and everybody in because of the breakdown.

LANPHER: Yes. And it was kind of a mess. As Mugabe said to Bush, “It’s an embarrassment to us Africans.” And it was.

Q: Mugabe right now in 2002 has stayed on in power too long and is not a name that has much positive resonance in today’s world. How did we see Mugabe in ‘91-’95?

LANPHER: I think we saw him pretty positively. He was behaving internationally and regionally much more responsibly. Domestically, he was at least giving grudging support to the economic reforms that his finance minister and others were pushing. The human rights situation was improving over what it had been in the early to mid-’80s. The country was at peace with itself. It was behaving pretty responsibly in the neighborhood. Things were getting better, were headed in the right direction in South Africa. Mandela had been released. Negotiations to end apartheid were underway. Tragically, in January 1992, southern Africa was afflicted by a cataclysmic drought, which, believe it or not, the American embassy was the first to recognize even before the farmers in Zimbabwe, that the rain stopped around Christmastime of 1991. I saw it. I could feel it. I could watch the corn wilting. This was in the height of their growing season. It was a devastating drought. We called on January 5th and gave Washington an early warning, sent a message from the embassy, “Watch out. There’s going to be a severe drought here in southern Africa. We’re going to have to start lining up food aid.” We made the point from our embassy that it was absolutely imperative to be ahead of the game and not have dying kids on CNN, let’s do it right this time and not have an Ethiopia or a Somalia. Well, it took a little persuading on our part. I made a lot of phone calls. But I had some allies in the Department of Agriculture that I cultivated before I went out as ambassador. Indeed, there was a devastating drought, be we lined up food aid, we got it on ships, and we got PL480, we got GSM102 (a commercial sale financed on long-term low interest rate debt by the Commodity Credit Corporation, which is a subsidiary of the Department of Agriculture). We got literally hundreds and hundreds of thousands of tons of maize into Zimbabwe and throughout the region. It wasn’t just Zimbabwe that was suffering. They had a nil crop that year. They only harvested about 25,000 tons of maize in the whole country versus a usual harvest of 1.5 million tons. It was just a wipeout. But we got a lot of credit for that from the Zimbabweans. It was a dreadful situation. Our embassy got

extra people in and worked with the NGOs. Nobody starved. It was a dreadful situation but satisfying to see our response to it. And the Zimbabweans were very pleased. But it did set back the economy a bit. Looking ahead to '93, '94, the Zimbabwe economy came back from the effects of this drought. They had good rains. The economy by the time I left had opened up and liberalized considerably to the point where, for instance, you could go into a grocery store in Harare and buy American whiskey or a new car in an automobile showroom, you could buy South African wine. It was bubbling along. Real growth in the economy was running between six and seven percent by the time I left. It was a pretty darn happy country that was looking up. The region was looking up. There was peace in South Africa. Apartheid was over. I was so happy with Zimbabwe when I left I was considering buying a retirement property there. I didn't, but things were very positive.

Q: How were relations? What was the political situation of the white farmers?

LANPHER: It was terrific. They had never made more money in all their lives, driven newer Mercedes in all their lives. I suggested in an earlier tape, in many ways, they were the fair haired guys in Zimbabwe. Mugabe at that stage in his life had not except occasionally rhetorically pushed land reform for reasons I've talked about before. In fact, Mugabe was wise enough to understand that the commercial farmers were really the geese that laid the golden eggs. They were the backbone of the economy. It was their \$500 million worth of tobacco exports that gave Zimbabwe the money to do things that they wanted to do. So, nobody was really rocking the boat during those years. That came later after I left.

Q: How about the Congo or Zaire at that time? There had been incursions in the Shaba. Was anything going on there?

LANPHER: No. Put it this way: as of the time I left in March '95, Zimbabwe was in no way involved in the Congo. Yes, there was traffic, commercial road traffic, that ran from South African ports through South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and into Shaba province in the Congo. But there was no government involvement. As far as I was aware, they were transporters that were making money. It was commercial in nature and that was it. All the bad things in Zimbabwe and its involvement in the Congo didn't begin until the end of 1997/1998. But up until that point, things were looking very promising. I remember as I was leaving in March 1995, I wrote a series of "end of tour" cables prognosticating about where Zimbabwe was headed. I remember one of them addressed the politics of Zimbabwe. I observed that Mugabe had been president at that point for 15 years. I thought his leadership was getting a little tired. There wasn't any visible opposition to it. I could see four or five contenders to succeed him within his own party. I said in that cable that Zimbabwe was a de facto single party state. It had a patina of democracy. But I used the phrase "managed democracy" to describe it, not real democracy. The cabinet was basically the same faces for 15 years. I said what I thought Zimbabwe desperately needed in the near future, putting it diplomatically, was "generational change," that there was an upcoming post-independence generation of middle class, educated blacks in their late 30s to 50s that ought to have their chance at running the country and that, sadly, without generational change (i.e., some of these old

boys kicking the bucket), I didn't see much hope for them because the old boys didn't want to share or give up power. I think my observation was right and, sadly, here we are in 2002, the old boys are clinging desperately to power and ruining the country.

Q: Was there a group of discontented former freedom fighters or people without jobs... These are the ones who had been handed over who sort of are taking over the white property and not really maintaining it today. Did you see this as a group?

LANPHER: I'm not sure I'd agree with your description of who's taking over what today. There were war veterans from the liberation struggle. A lot of people claimed to be veterans who weren't. The number of real veterans was actually quite small. But they were supposed to get state funded pensions. They didn't cause any trouble during the years I was in Zimbabwe. They began to cause problems. First of all, it was a small number. Their pension funds in the late 1990s after I left were basically looted by corrupt administrators and politicians. The whole system of pensions and a support mechanism for the war veterans was corrupted mightily. They got angry. But the "war veterans" that raised their head late in 1997 were much more political and less war veterans. And this coincided with a change in Mugabe's outlook. I don't know exactly what triggered it. But the so-called war veterans who are occupying white farms and not doing anything with them today are not real war veterans. They're urban, unemployed thugs who've been recruited into Mugabe's political party, promised everything. But the real objective is to keep Mugabe in power. It's not genuine land reform. As people repeatedly say today, not just whites but the black opposition party in Zimbabwe, the issue is not land: it's power. Mugabe doesn't want to give it up and he's corrupted the society, he's corrupted the war veterans, he's corrupted the justice system as to the law and order, the police, the army, all recruited into the cause of staying in power. And it's ruining the country. In contrast to when I left economic growth at six to seven percent, the last two years' GDP has gone down 10% a year.

Q: You were there on the arrival of Nelson Mandela in South Africa and the peaceful takeover and change into South Africa. Did that have any effect in Zimbabwe?

LANPHER: Yes. I talked about this transition in South Africa with three or four members of the Zimbabwe cabinet who were sort of friends of mine or people I could talk to and some members of the senior civil service and the intelligence outfit in Zimbabwe. I said, "How is this transition and Mandela going to affect Zimbabwe?" Two or three of them wisely said to me, "Gib, if we thought our situation was difficult with a white ruled South Africa, it's going to be even more difficult with a black ruled South Africa." I said, "Why do you say that?" They said, in effect, "If the white ruled South Africa twisted our tail, we could always go to the UN or the West and say, 'The South Africans are beating up on us. You've got to do something about it.' You guys would. You'd get the South Africans off our case. If a black ruled South Africa wants to twist our tail, nobody's going to pay any attention." This was quite interesting. More importantly was what Mandela's ascendance to power did to Mugabe psychologically. I worried about this at the time, but my worries were confirmed to me after I retired and went back as a consultant to Zimbabwe twice in 2000. I tried to get to the bottom of the

change in Mugabe. Three of my good black contacts said, "This change in Mugabe, much of it goes back to Nelson Mandela coming to power in South Africa." I said, "What do you mean?" They said, "While Mandela was in prison and apartheid was on in South Africa, Mugabe was, in effect, the coq of the walk in this part of the world. He was the hero. He was the person who the world looked to as the spokesman for southern Africa. He had liberated his country. Once Mandela got out, people forgot about Mugabe. Mugabe was president of a country of 10-12 million people of little real worldwide consequence. South Africa is a country of 40-50 million people and Nelson Mandela... This really got to Mugabe. He had gotten used to being feted around the world. The spotlight went off him. Psychologically, he couldn't take it. He had to do something to get back in the spotlight." Two or three of these fellows attributed the Zimbabwe entanglement, intervention, whatever you want to call it, in the Congo to this, that this was his way of getting back in the spotlight. There were other factors - corruption and profits. But I think the psychological thing can't be underestimated. And I believe these black friends of mine who were talking discreetly and one on one.

Q: Were there any other issues while you were there? Were there any presidential visits?

LANPHER: Aside from that drought of '92-'93 and its consequences, things were pretty darn smooth. We didn't have any major blowups in U.S.-Zimbabwe relations. I thought my so-called stewardship of the embassy had been pretty successful. I remember saying to one of my two assistant secretaries for Africa at the time... We had had a couple of regional ambassadors meetings, one back in Washington, one at my residence in Zimbabwe. I said to the Assistant Secretary, "I never get any instructions from you guys about Zimbabwe. I kind of address the small problems that we have out here on my own and tell you what we are doing, but I'm just wondering." The Assistant Secretary said, "Gib, you know more about Zimbabwe than anybody back here in Washington. As far as we're concerned, everything's going fine and just keep us informed of what you're doing." I said, "Thank you very much." That was pretty much the way it was.

Q: About the food distribution, were there any problems? Did it work fairly well?

LANPHER: It worked splendidly. Nobody died. The food got around the country. And the government bureaucracy at that time - they had a grain marketing board and a distribution system and they used commercial channels as well as government channels - worked very well. The nice thing about that drought is that we never had a starving kid on CNN, no pot bellies. This was quite a remarkable achievement.

Q: This had been a staple whenever there was something and caused us often to-

LANPHER: And AID, which deals with this sort of disaster around the world all the time, kept pointing to their response and the U.S. government response to that southern Africa drought that year as being remarkable. And they learned a lot of lessons from it in terms of early warning.

Q: What about AIDS?

LANPHER: AIDS got progressively worse. By the time I got back in 1991, it was very, very apparent to me almost overnight how serious the AIDS problem was in Zimbabwe. People I had known, contacts of mine from the '82-'86 period, had died in my absence at very early ages. People were dying. The biggest growth industry in Zimbabwe in a way was the morticians business and they were running out of space in cemeteries. It was clear that it was going up and up and up. Within a week or two of my arrival in '91, I got together with my AID director and said, "We have to have as a component of our AID program an AIDS program. I don't care how you do it, whether you build it onto our family planning program or what, but we're going to have an AIDS program or we're not going to have an AID program." He got my message. We had an AIDS program. We had some very good contractors working on it from Johns Hopkins and elsewhere. We tried to do innovative things. We didn't have a lot of support from Mugabe. He stayed silent, as so many Africans did, on AIDS. We had positive opposition from the vice president, Joshua Nkomo, who would get up on national television where we were sponsoring and paying for ads on television for condoms and recruiting the national soccer team as role models and me going out and giving press conferences around the country (some of them fairly graphic) and say, "Condoms are not part of our culture." I went and saw him privately about this. I had known him a long time. I said, "Mr. Vice President, you and I have known each other a long time. I don't like to hear what I'm hearing you say about condoms not being part of your culture." He huffed and puffed and said, "Well, they aren't." I said, "I know they're not part of your culture, but neither was AIDS." But I can't say we made a lot of progress. By that time, sadly, AIDS had reached that critical mass in terms of percentage of people infected that it's going to probably take another generation. We were doing surreptitious studies in ante-natal clinics showing pregnant women were showing up as high as 43% positive for HIV. It's only gotten worse since I left. Probably the most difficult thing in the world is to change people's behavior. I lost any number of good black friends in Zimbabwe to AIDS. Perhaps my closest friend I lost to AIDS. He died of AIDS six months after he became minister of finance in 1995 just as I was leaving. It's terribly difficult. You've got to have an all-out campaign. Even in places like Uganda, which are pointed to as a model, it's very tough. I spent a lot of time. I did press conferences that were graphic, putting condoms on my thumb. I had great support from Washington and encouragement. People like the Under Secretary for Humanitarian Affairs kept patting me on the back saying, "You're my kind of ambassador." This was Tim Wirth. But there's only so much you can do. We were as imaginative as we could be. We hired playwrights to write skits that could be played in villages. We hired the national soccer team and put them on television and championed condoms. But Joshua Nkomo was kind of right. And there was one part of the culture and men were the problem. Men didn't like condoms and women had no voice. It was the same on birth control. We had the best family planning program in all of Africa, the highest contraceptive prevalence rate in all of Africa. But we couldn't nudge that prevalence rate above about 45% because of the non-cooperation of men.

Q: Did AIDS cause a problem in the embassy? I would think people would be nervous about being in an accident because of the blood and intermingling and things like that.

LANPHER: Let me answer two ways. There was some anxiety but less so in Zimbabwe - and this is up until the time I left - than in some of the neighboring countries because Zimbabwe had a reputation for having a very good national blood service. Our medical people would come in from State and say, "These guys are doing a darn good job on their blood," unlike a lot of other countries in Africa. Number two, people in our embassy had the confidence that if they had a problem, we would evacuate them as quickly as possible to South Africa where we had access to excellent medical facilities or we would evacuate them to the Army hospitals in Europe. I never ran into a real morale problem. I don't know what it is today. But as of '95, I didn't sense it. What I did sense fairly acutely is that AIDS didn't stop at the embassy door and I was losing local employees; they were dying.

Q: Did we have a Peace Corps there?

LANPHER: We did. They have been withdrawn in the last year and a half. The first Peace Corps volunteers arrived in Zimbabwe shortly after I arrived as ambassador. It had taken 10 years to negotiate a Peace Corps agreement with Zimbabwe because they had bought the line that Peace Corps were spies. It took a lot of time to overcome that. Our program wasn't very large. We had 60-70. But they did splendid work. My wife and I supported them wholeheartedly. They were mostly teaching math and sciences in high schools in rural areas. They just were a terrific bunch of people. I had them of all ages. I had all the Peace Corps to Thanksgiving dinner at my house every year I was there. The first batch came to my house two weeks after I arrived before they had actually gone out on their assignments. But they were terrific and did good work. With this downturn in security over the last two years, they were recalled, which is very sad.

Q: You left there in '95. This is probably a good place to stop. Where did you go in '95?

LANPHER: I went back to Washington thinking, as somebody told me by phone from the State Department, that the Department was pushing my name to be vice president of the National Defense University. They had to clear it with the Defense Department. I said, "Fine, I'll just go on home leave and take my boys skiing at our house in the mountains of California." When I came back from California at the end of March/beginning of April, they still hadn't gotten DOD clearance. There wasn't going to be a problem. It was just bureaucracy. I was walking down the hall one day in the State Department doing my exit consultations from Zimbabwe when I ran into the Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs. She said, "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm waiting to go to the National Defense University." This was Robin Raphel, the Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs. She said, "You don't want to do that. I'm looking for a Deputy Assistant Secretary." I said, "Well, look, thank you very much, but I've never been in South Asia, never wanted to go to South Asia, never was attracted to that area." She said, "Oh, then you're just right. I want you." Six weeks later, I started working as Deputy Assistant Secretary for South Asia.

Q: We'll pick it up then.

Today is September 27, 2002. Gib, you were dealing with South Asia from when to when?

LANPHER: From May 1995 until July 1999.

Q: Okay. When you got there, was the South Asia Bureau new?

LANPHER: It was quite a new bureau. It was created in 1993. It was created as a result of an act of Congress. The State Department didn't want to have a South Asia Bureau because the various bureaucracies in the State Department resisted change. But it was lobbying by the U.S. South Asian community and a handful of members of Congress that created it. The State Department had to swallow it. When I got there in May 1995, it was a very small bureau. There were people in the building that still wanted to get rid of it. By a small bureau, I mean we only had 17-18 officers in the whole bureau. It was the only bureau in the whole State Department with only one Deputy Assistant Secretary. In the last year, they've created a second position thanks to September 11th. But it was a very small bureau without its own executive office. We had to use the executive office of the NEA Bureau. In Department terms, it was kind of an orphan. At the same time, not knowing anything about South Asia, never having been involved in South Asia before, the bureau made a lot of sense to me. South Asia, which represents about 20% of the world's population, had always been sort of an afterthought for the NEA Bureau, which concentrated, understandably, on the Arab-Israeli problem.

Q: Even Iran and Iraq are sort of afterthoughts.

LANPHER: Yes. In fact, there were various debates and the Inspector General came around to see me a couple of times when I was in that job wondering, one, whether they ought to advocate abolition of the bureau, or, two, expand the bureau. I said, "I don't think it's realistic to abolish the bureau, having created it. We would needlessly offend the Indians and Pakistanis and their constituents in the U.S." On the question of increasing the size of the bureau, I said, "That makes a certain amount of sense to me, but I wouldn't want to see it happen until we normalize our relations with Iran because Iran would logically be part of the South Asia Bureau as opposed to the NEA Bureau." I thought an expanded bureau, assuming normalization with Iran, would also include the Central Asian Stans, who really don't fit in the European Bureau. I think that's still a work in progress today. But it would make some sense.

Q: Yes. There is more of a unity there.

LANPHER: As we've discovered with post-September 11th Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Q: Which countries did your bureau cover?

LANPHER: The two big ones were India and Pakistan. Then we had Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, the Maldives, and Afghanistan. But the bulk of the effort for

most of the time was focused on India and Pakistan.

Q: Now, Iran was being covered by NEA still?

LANPHER: Correct.

Q: But was the thought that it would eventually move over?

LANPHER: Nobody really talked about it. When people talked to me about it, I said, "I don't want that country in my bureau until we have normal relations with it." It would have been just a headache, no joy.

Q: When you arrived in '95, what did you see as the area in which the U.S. was particularly concerned?

LANPHER: Let me start by saying, being new to the area, I tried to keep my head down and educate myself for the first two or three months. Obviously, I got thrown into operational things, but I sort of kept my mouth shut in terms of policy for the first two or three months and learned and developed an appreciation for the area and the issues. One thing that struck me almost immediately was, here is a part of the world that's 12 time zones away from the U.S. with an enormous population, 20% of the world's population. And as I saw it our relations with India and Pakistan and the region as a whole, looking back over the history, had been episodic and not permanent engagement such as we have with most of the rest of the world. South Asia, as of 2002, is fairly inconsequential in economic terms to the United States. Yes, we now get a lot of low priced clothing out of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka. But for instance, India's two way trade with the whole world - and we're their biggest trading partner - only amounts to about 80 billion dollars a year. That compares to a worldwide revenue of General Electric Company of well over a hundred billion dollars a year. India does less two way trade with the world than Singapore. So, South Asia is sort of a pimple on the ass of the world economy, to put it crudely. That meant that it was harder in the Washington context to get people's attention focused on South Asia. It was sort of benign neglect. When you go back in history, yes, we got involved with the India-Pakistan wars. We reacted when India tested a nuclear device in 1972. The India-China war in 1962. Starving India in the '50s and the green revolution and the aid programs and new seeds and everything we did. But it was episodic. It wasn't a continual engagement. When South Asia raised its head over the parapet, yes, we engaged. But for instance, in the case of Pakistan, once the Afghan-Soviet thing of the '80s was over, we walked away from Afghanistan, we walked away from Pakistan, and let them just churn. This was an impression that I formed early on. At the same time, it was clear that there was a growing South Asia constituency in the U.S. The Indians in particular certainly worked closely with the Israelis to find out how the Israelis got so much influence in the United States, a growing Indian population, and a growing Pakistan-American population. There are probably two million South Asians in the United States today. In terms of immigrants, they're the most economically successful of all our immigrant populations in terms of wealth. If you look at Silicon Valley, if you look at the motel industry in the United States... As the population has grown and their wealth has grown, their activism in American politics has grown. They make

contributions. There are over 100 members of the House who are members of the India Caucus, which is something most of us weren't aware of. So, that's sort of the context. What disturbed me was the lack of broadbased engagement with South Asia by the United States government. It sort of was aberrant to my experience in other areas of the world.

Q: How did this manifest itself?

LANPHER: We tended to be single issue focused. When I got there, the focus as far as our relations with India and Pakistan was almost exclusively on the issue of non-proliferation, which I thought was a bit bizarre. As I got more deeply into it, I engaged in what some would call "constructive dissent on this," arguing for broadbased engagement and not to look at South Asia simply in terms of nuclear and missile non-proliferation. At the time, though, that was the issue, led by the Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, and his sidekick from the Political-Military Affairs Bureau, Robert Einhorn. They basically dominated the agenda in South Asia. The South Asia Bureau resisted and argued for broadbased engagement. Specifically, I had a private dialogue with Strobe Talbott, memos outside the system, arguing that, "This focus on non-proliferation strikes me as totally unrealistic. Here you have two countries, India and Pakistan, both of which have the scientific ability to develop nuclear weapons, both of whom have a national security interest in having them because they have an implacable enemy on their border. Here we are, 1995, they've each spent billions of dollars developing their nuclear capability and we're telling them and lecturing them and hectoring them and telling them they're small brown boys and they should not have nuclear weapons and that they're naughty and we will sanction them and withhold computer technology from them and do this and that." We basically shook our finger at them, drew, as they say in the non-proliferation language, "red lines that thou shalt not cross." I argued to Strobe that this struck me as an unnatural act. People don't spend that kind of money developing those kind of capabilities without eventually testing their effort. I further argued that I thought it was totally unrealistic to think that any sovereign country, especially sovereign countries as big in terms of population as India and Pakistan, would ever compromise what they perceived as their national security for the sake of better relations with the United States. I said, "That's an unnatural act." Would we have ever done that? Would the Brits, the French ever have done that? How do we deal with the Israelis, who clearly have a nuclear and missile capability? It was sort of a standoff. We weren't able to get our policy changed. But it was a constant thing where we would accuse the Pakistanis of lying to us about their nuclear development program, their uranium enrichment program. And I'd have to say to Strobe, "Did we ever lie to the Russians about our capabilities? Let's be serious. I don't think the Pakistanis have lied to us. They haven't told us the whole truth, that's for sure, about what they're doing, but I don't think they've lied to us."

Q: So often a policy like this is driven by politics of power within Washington. It's kind of easy to beat up on a country that's far over the horizon. It's not going to make any difference one way or the other in the short term perception.

LANPHER: I'm not sure I know the origins of this non-proliferation focus on South Asia as well as South Asia as well as I should. My sense is, yes, it had always been an element of our policy ever since India tested their device in the early '70s. The Pakistani reaction in the early '70s - Prime Minister Bhutto said, "Even if we have to eat grass, we will develop a nuclear capability." I would have taken him at his word that they were not going to be deterred from that objective. We turned a blind eye on Pakistani efforts for the most part during the 1980s. We knew that they were up to something, but we sort of turned a blind eye because of the essential Pakistani support for our efforts in Afghanistan. As soon as Afghanistan was sorted out in the late '80s, we started to turn back to the non-proliferation issue. There were key members of the Senate, people like Larry Pressler and in particular Senator John Glenn, who got legislation passed putting on stringent sanctions on countries that were naughty on nuclear issues. In 1991, as a result of this legislation, President George Bush was not able to certify to the Congress that Pakistan did not have a nuclear weapon. As a result of that, we closed and cut off our aid program in Pakistan and crucially important, we cut off Pakistani access to International Military Education and Training [IMET]. Pakistani officers for almost half a century had been going to West Point and through all our military schools. We had excellent access to the Pakistani military, which is the major institution in Pakistan. We cut ourselves off from that institution by stopping that program in 1991. Among other things, I argued for exceptions. Let's get some amendments to this legislation so that we can get that military training program started again because we're losing access to a whole generation of potentially fundamentalist Islamic officers in the Pakistani military. That had a lot of resonance at the Pentagon, but much less in the State Department. But we did make an effort on the Hill to do this sort of thing. Another thing I observe is that with the collapse of the Soviet Union, that whole phalanx within the U.S. government, the NGO community, the academic community, non-proliferation experts who built up this expertise starting with the beginning of the Cold War and through SALT and everything else with the Soviets, had no place else to go other than South Asia. As an old friend of ours, Chas Freeman, a former ambassador, was asked at a National War College talk where there were Pakistani and Indian officers present, "Why is it that you guys just nag us constantly about nuclear missile issues?" Chas said, "You've got to understand. South Asia's a theme park for the functional bureaus." I thought that was a great line. In a way, it summed it up. We didn't care enough in terms of overall national interest in South Asia to have the kind of broad based engagement that I thought was the right way to go. Because we didn't, it was open season for the functional bureaus as opposed to the regional bureau calling the shots. So, it was quite frustrating, but very illuminating, very educational. When India tested five nuclear devices in May of 1998, our staff assistant walked into our morning staff meeting in the South Asia Bureau and said, "I've just seen on CNN that India's tested five nuclear devices out in the desert in Rajasthan." Everybody in the room except me was surprised. I wasn't surprised. I had been predicting that they were going to test for years. There was real anger in the administration. We had been "deceived." We had been "misled." We had been this and that. We immediately imposed serious sanctions on India called for by the Glenn legislation and made an all out effort to get the Pakistanis not to respond by testing. We made a real good effort. But in the end, they just couldn't not test. About 30 days later, they did their own test. So, it was quite a discouraging period. Even Senator Glenn had misgivings about these sanctions.

The intent of his legislation, which called for sanctions in such a situation, was, going back to its origins, to deter India and Pakistan from doing what they'd done with no expectation that they ever would do it. The sanctions were fairly shocking to a lot of people. It's interesting that within two months of their being imposed, there was an exception voted on Capitol Hill to exempt agricultural trade from these sanctions because the state of Washington and Montana exported such a huge amount of their wheat to Pakistan. Very interesting. With the benefit of hindsight, after September 11th, when we once again needed Pakistan, very much so, and also the movement had started before September 11th in the Bush administration, those sanctions have all disappeared. We're back into an aid program with Pakistan. We're back into IMET programs with Pakistan. We've also relaxed our sanctions on India. And we're now engaging in what I would call broad based relations or working in that direction.

Q: Did you get involved in the Arms Control Agency?

LANPHER: Yes.

Q: Obviously the Indians couldn't care less about us. If nothing else, they take a certain traditional delight in sticking their thumb in their eye, sort of like France. So, the idea that you're going to get them to do anything is almost ludicrous. With Pakistan, under the gun, you can understand that Pakistan is essentially a military country that has been run off and on by the military most of its time; they just can't sit back and let the other guy have a weapon they don't have.

LANPHER: I think you're absolutely right. What I tried to sketch out earlier was this profound sense I had after a few months in the South Asia Bureau focusing on those issues just how unreal and unrealistic our approach was. I think it was driven by this arms control, non-proliferation establishment, which included the Political-Military Bureau at State, ACDA, and pockets of these people in every agency in the government just about - CIA, DIA, Defense Department, and whatnot. And here you had a cottage industry which with the fall of the Soviet Union had lost its raison d'être. I don't mean to be too critical of them. They were real true believers, ideologues, with the best of intention, but totally out of touch, I thought, with the realities of South Asia and what drove people there. The very idea that we could shake our finger at somebody and say, "Thou shalt not do this because we don't want you guys in the club" just didn't ring a bell with me.

Q: Particularly on the Indian side, did Israel get thrown in your face a lot?

LANPHER: Not really. Israel had developed some semi-covert military trade with India. Pakistan as a Muslim state would give a periodic rhetorical blast at Israel. But it wasn't a big factor.

Q: The most non-secret secret is the fact that Israel has a substantial nuclear capability.

LANPHER: Going back to my first tour in Israel in the mid-'60s.

Q: Yes. And yet we keep quiet about that.

LANPHER: Yes.

Q: I was wondering whether the Indians said, "Okay, if you get Israel to disarm, we'll disarm" or something like that.

LANPHER: As I recall, it came up periodically. I may have raised it a couple of times. If turning the other eyeball away from, it's okay for us with Israel, what's the difference with India and Pakistan? But people really didn't want to discuss that. Israel was and has always been in a compartment of its own.

Q: What was the Indian reaction to our sanctions?

LANPHER: They were bitter. The Indians are very good at feeling aggrieved.

Q: It's a national trait.

LANPHER: Yes. So, it was a predictable negative reaction. With the Pakistanis, it was more a sense of fatalism. They had been under sanctions, after all, for the better part of 10 years by us. We had cut off our aid program. We cut off the military training program in the early '90s. So, there was a sense of fatalism. In the case of Pakistan, here was a country that really liked the United States and had had this on again, off again, relationship with us. But there was increasingly a sense in Pakistan and the Pakistanis I talked to - which were the elites - when I traveled out there, which I did periodically and talked to the Pakistanis here in Washington, was, "We want to be your friends. You use us when you want us, when you need our help, and you abuse us when you don't need our help." But it was always more in sorrow than in anger. I talked to senior military people in Pakistan, including the present prime minister, President Musharraf, and his predecessor's chief of army staff, both very fine, decent fellows... The former chief of staff, a fellow named General Karannet, is on the wall at Fort Leavenworth as a distinguished graduate of Fort Leavenworth. They had a special ceremony in his honor. But we haven't managed our relations well, if you look back over the 55 years since independence, with those two big countries in the sort of professional, broadly engaged way that we've handled relations with other countries in the world.

Q: You came there not too long after the fall of the Soviet Union, which had been the partner - not the friendliest of partners, but the partner - of the Indians, the place where they got their military equipment and this sort of thing, and all of a sudden, this is gone. Were the Indians looking around for somebody else or were they saying, "We're big enough. We can do it on our own?" What was happening?

LANPHER: The collapse of the Soviet Union did not lead to the end of India's dependence on Russia for its military supplies. India still buys virtually all of its equipment from Russia. I think it must have been a bit of a shock for the Indians. I wasn't around when it happened. But probably more importantly for the Indians was that their economy was in such dreadful shape that they had to reverse course and at least

rhetorically open up their economy, liberalize their economy. This began in '90/'91. This was a country that had nationalized IBM and Coca-Cola in the mid-'70s. Starting in '90/'91, they went out to liberalize their economy or said they were going to liberalize their economy; they were going to attract foreign investment. Sadly, in contrast with China, which I visited while I was in South Asia, the Indian liberalization was much more rhetorical than it was in fact. There is a great inertia in India, bureaucratic inertia, unions, politics, whatever you want to call it, against liberalization. So, here we are about 12 years after the beginning of liberalization and much talk, but they've only in those 12 years attracted something less than 15 billion dollars in foreign direct investment. This is in contrast with China, which averages about that much foreign investment per month. One of the interesting questions I used to get when I'd go to India and talk with people outside the government and sometimes inside the government was, "Here we are, the world's biggest democracy and you pay more attention and devote more of your efforts to China. Why?" Well, I've got my doubts about Indian democracy, which I think we oversell to our peril. But my answer to them was, "Come to the United States. Go into Walmart. Go into Home Depot. Go almost anywhere in the United States and you'll see 'made in China' on almost everything. You look around and you find very little made in India." I said quite brutally, bluntly that we pay attention to China because China counts. Sadly, that's the case. The Chinese have genuinely opened up and become a factor in our economy, a major reason why over the past 10 years we've had such low inflation, and why we've had so little labor unrest. Our working class in the United States can go to Walmart and find reasonably well made goods at very reasonable prices. That counts in our system.

Q: As a new boy on the block, what was the problem with India? They were talking about it... During your sojourn in South Asia, '95-'99, what was the problem?

LANPHER: Well, this is strictly personal, but I came away with the sense that India with its population of over a billion people and, as they would constantly tell you, "We're a great country, a great nation, the world's biggest democracy, we've got 5,000 years of culture and history," I came away with the sense that India's problem was that they had a world class entitlement mentality. Because India was India, it was entitled to things without having to work for them, without having to make tough decisions such as on really opening up their economy. The politics of India, the caste system of India, I thought were all constraints on their living up to their potential. Going back over 50 years of U.S.-India relations, the one word that keeps cropping up in speeches was "potential." That potential hasn't been realized. Fifty years after Indian independence, India's still a country with a 50% illiteracy rate. Democracy? Yes, maybe for the upper classes, but for the lower classes, democracy is not delivered in terms of health, education, jobs, the economy. But it has this entitlement mentality. "The world owes us something because we are who we are." And the world doesn't work that way. I also had the feeling that India expected the world to go on hold while they caught up. Well, the world doesn't work that way. You look at India and China. China, which I'd never visited until December 1998, but many friends and my wife had visited China... My wife had gone there as a journalist in about 1981, the first journalist from "The Wall Street Journal" that the Chinese ever let into China. She spent six weeks there. She said it was a horrific

place. She had a minder with her day and night, 24 hours a day for six weeks. The country was going nowhere. Well, that was just about the time, according to my Foreign Service friends who were assigned to China at the same time, the Chinese decided to open up. When they decided to open up, they did it with a big bang. China's quite an eye opening place. If you ever want to have a revelation, you go on a trip that takes you to both Beijing and New Delhi. It's a real eye opener. India is going to fall further and further behind China.

Q: What about this development of good technology, particularly in the computer field, Banglador Silicon Valley and all that? Does that hold any promise?

LANPHER: It holds some promise, but I don't think it's going to change India all that much. Yes, they have a very well educated elite in India, very technically proficient. They speak English at the elite levels. We have call centers and research institutions all over Bangalore. But interestingly, the cream of the Indian crop comes to the United States, where their entrepreneurial skills flourish. They don't flourish so well in India. India's biggest and most important export to the United States is its people, who have made a real contribution to the United States and a contribution that has been recognized more here than at home. Quite a sad commentary on a stifling, stultifying environment.

Q: How did you find the Indian embassy worked? Some embassies know how to play the Washington game and some don't.

LANPHER: I thought both the Indians and the Pakistanis were well above average as far as Washington embassies go. They had pretty good ambassadors always. They had pretty good DCMs, although I had a couple of rows with some of their DCMs. But they got around town pretty well. They got up to the Hill pretty well. I thought they were reasonably effective. They got to the Pentagon, the State Department, Treasury... Being a foreign embassy in Washington has got to be one of the more difficult jobs in the world for any country.

Q: It really is. I've heard people describe Pakistan sometimes as almost a failed state. They go from civilian rule, which tends to be quite corrupt, to military rule, and then back again. It's not a very edifying progression of governmental rule there. What was your impression?

LANPHER: I think the "failed state" is putting it too strongly. I ran into this constantly over the four years I was the Deputy Assistant Secretary. Certainly failed in the sense that it never lived up to its promise or potential. It had certainly not done the sort of things over a period of 50 years that they should have done in terms of health, education, economic development. Yes, it was in many ways a corrupt place and in many ways it was still, as they themselves would call it, a feudal place where the big landlords controlled all the wealth. The modern industrialists and the military industrial complex and whatnot. But I was always struck by the number of people that would tell me "Pakistan's going to collapse sort of like Chicken Little's going to collapse" and it never does. Something holds the place together.

The strongest institution in Pakistan in my view was certainly the military. It had credibility. It wasn't seen as corrupt, although there were corrupt people, individuals, who were identified over the years in the army. But it did have credibility. The civil institutions in Pakistan, the bureaucratic structure that Pakistan had inherited from the British, had pretty much failed. It had been politicized and corrupted to the point that it really didn't work very well. I left the South Asia Bureau in '99. There have been major efforts to clean house by President Musharraf. They are having some success. But I don't think Pakistan is simply going to collapse.

Q: States sort of don't collapse, except for Somalia or something like that. Tell me, during your watch, how did you find the role of religion in Pakistan?

LANPHER: We were following it fairly closely. Starting back in the late '70s/early '80s, there was a lot more support for Islamic fundamentalists in Pakistan. The religious fundamentalists achieved a lot more support and freedom from the government until about 1980. This I get from people who know the country better than I do. Pakistan had been a militantly secular Muslim Islamic state. It became increasingly open to fundamentalists. That I don't think has been a very positive development. Certainly efforts are being made by the Musharraf government to get this back under control. And the religious parties in Pakistani elections make a lot of noise but they haven't had a tremendous impact on the politics of the country. But yes, we watched that very carefully.

This opens up another line. That is Afghanistan and Islamic fundamentalism in Afghanistan which certainly has spilled back over into Pakistan. Pakistan was a sanctuary for these crazies.

Q: I want to go back to the time you were there. The fact that you had this extreme fanatic fundamentalist movement in Afghanistan, was this playing back into Pakistan?

LANPHER: Yes. A lot of this goes back to the early '80s; I suppose I wasn't involved. I don't know all the details. But I think we bear some responsibility. Our objective in Afghanistan was to beat the Soviets, to get them out of there. We didn't care very much about Afghanistan, but we cared a lot about the Soviets. We slept with a lot of devils in that effort. We poured money in. We got the Islamic fundamentalists out of Saudi Arabia and all over the Arab world and funneled them through Pakistan. We worked with the Pakistani intelligence service. There was no guy that was so rotten that we wouldn't support as long as that guy was fighting the Soviets. When we walked away in 1990 after the Soviets withdrew, all these bad guys were left behind. During my watch, '95-'99, we would constantly talk quietly with the Pakistani leadership about their need to get a handle on these fundamentalists who were also supporting the Kashmir insurgency, support for the Taliban, and links to Bin Laden. Our line quietly and at senior levels was, "You keep supporting these people and turn your cheek the other way and they're going to come back and bite you. You're eventually going to reap what you sow. This is not going to be good for Pakistan and the Pakistani state." At senior levels, you would get a

lot of nods of understanding on this point. That was an issue before September 11th of last year. But it was too tough to tinker with. They knew they had a problem but they were sort of paralyzed to do anything about it.

Q: What about the Kashmir issue? Did we get involved during your time?

LANPHER: We got involved constantly whether it was kidnaping and murder of American citizens, which happened early on my watch-

Q: What happened?

LANPHER: Four Americans were taken captive and have never been found. They were eventually killed. This was in Kashmir. They were taken by separatists. There was an insurgency in Kashmir that's been going on since the late '80s and as we speak, killings every day, cross border shooting...

Q: Were these tourists who were just picked up?

LANPHER: Yes, they were hikers, trekkers. It was a very sad development. We made every effort to bring a lot of intelligence resources to bear on that. Sadly, we've never even found the bodies, but they're certainly dead. But the Kashmir problem has been going on since partition in 1947. It's a constant thing between India and Pakistan. The Indians never allowed a plebiscite as was called for by the United Nations back in 1949 or '50. The sheer of the matter is, it's an emotional issue on both sides. It goes to the heart and soul of both countries. India won't give it up. They see anything like that as leading to potential dissolution of India. The Pakistanis want Kashmir back. It was a majority Muslim state. The reality of it is, India is not going to give it up and Pakistan can't take it back. We kept telling them, "You've got to settle this. It's a diversion of two great countries' wealth and effort. It's a waste of time, money, and lives." But it's very emotional. There are still in India, 55 years after partition, people who fervently believe that partition should never have happened, that all of Pakistan should be part of India, that Pakistan is not a legitimate state. So, it's sort of one of these things that's going to go on and on.

Just as my watch was coming to an end, in the late winter/spring of 1999, the Pakistanis infiltrated a force into the high mountain areas during late winter which India had vacated on their side because at 17,000 feet it's not a very nice place to be in the winter. The Pakistanis went in and occupied some high ridges in an area known as Kargil. I learned later after I left the South Asia Bureau and went back out to Pakistan that the Pakistani reason for doing this had its roots way back in 1985/'86 when the Indians occupied an area to the north of Kargil called the Siachin Glacier, caught the Pakistanis by surprise, embarrassed the Pakistani officer corps by catching them off guard. For years, the Pakistan military had been plotting to get even and embarrass the Indians for this affront at Siachin. So, in the late winter of 1999, they infiltrated all these people. The Indians never knew about it. It was a massive intelligence failure on the Indian part. We didn't know about it either, by the way. Finally, in late April or May, suddenly an Indian patrol

at the end of the winter was going up to reoccupy their historic positions on their side of the so-called line of control and they were ambushed. There was an entrenched Pakistani force. The Pakistanis said it wasn't regular army and denied this and that. But it was. This led to a major blowup. The Indians were determined to take it back. We had visions of this escalating out of control and leading to the potential (both sides had tested nuclear weapons the year before) of a nuclear exchange or the whole thing getting out of control. So, we got very much involved in this. I know I drafted a number of letters for Clinton to send to the Indian prime minister and the then Pakistani prime minister, Sharif, and back and forth. We got back these elliptical assurances and threats. This went on for about six weeks. Finally, about mid-June 1999, I wrote a letter that Clinton sent saying to Sharif, "You've given me certain assurances about ending this problem, but I need a lot of clarification which I'm not getting. So, what I would like to do is send the head of my Central Command, General Anthony Zinni, out to meet with you and the head of your army." The head of the army was General Musharraf, now president of Pakistan. We sent that letter on a Saturday. Clinton was in London or somewhere in Europe for a G-8 meeting. The letter went off. I was sent by the State Department down to Tampa, Florida, to go out with Zinni on this mission.

Q: Tampa being the headquarters of the Central Command.

LANPHER: Yes. I flew down there on a Sunday morning and saw Zinni on Sunday and then spent all day with Zinni on Monday and Tuesday. We didn't get a reply and didn't get a reply. Zinni was a bit anxious about this. He had always maintained good contact with the Pakistani military. We just waited and waited. Finally, we got a reply from the Pakistanis. It would have been at midday on Tuesday. We jumped on Zinni's plane and flew all the way to Islamabad with aerial refuelings. We got in there about 11:00PM on Wednesday night, something like that. Zinni and I talked a lot about this. What a fine general, what a fine human being, and what a fine diplomat he is. I had trouble with Washington on that trip. When I was in Tampa, I kept getting phone calls from Washington saying, "We want to see General Zinni's talking points. We want to clear on them." I had to keep telling Washington that General Zinni didn't do talking points. That drove them crazy in Washington. We talked this issue through with his political advisor, who is a guy you ought to interview someday: Larry Pope.

Q: I've written a letter. I know Larry. We served together in Vietnam.

LANPHER: He was General Zinni's political advisor down there. Larry was a fine guy, very supportive of my coming down. Zinni couldn't have been more gracious. We spent the Thursday in Islamabad in a long three hour meeting with General Musharraf, his head of intelligence, and his chief of staff, and a brigadier, just four of them on their side. We had Ambassador Milam, a very fine American diplomat, Zinni, Larry Pope, and myself. We went back and forth out at army headquarters and over a meal through three hours. Finally, Musharraf conceded that perhaps these insurgents could be persuaded to come back from Kargil, never acknowledging that it was regular army and that they had made a mistake. Zinni was very tough. Musharraf kept wanting to put it on the context of an overall Kashmir settlement. Zinni said, "No, no, no, no. I've been sent out here by

President Clinton to talk about Kargil, not overall Kashmir.” This went back and forth. Zinni would give him a couple of shots and then he’d turn to me, “Gib, would you like to add anything?” I’d remind the Pakistanis that they were totally isolated in the UN and their traditional supporters like China weren’t having anything to do with it, the well was dry, and that they had to get out.” Finally, Musharraf after about three hours conceded that perhaps something could be done. But then he said, “I’ll have to check with the prime minister.” Zinni said, “Fine. I’m going back to my hotel. I’ve asked for a meeting with the prime minister, but I’ve gotten no response. (This was 4:00 or 5:00PM) I’m leaving tonight if I don’t have an appointment fixed with the prime minister. I told my plane crew to get ready, that I’m leaving.” We got back to the hotel, about a 40 minute drive away, and Musharraf was on the line saying, “You have an appointment tomorrow morning with the prime minister.” Zinni and I had dinner and finally he said, “I’ll see you at the ambassador’s residence tomorrow morning.” Zinni and Milam were quite pessimistic that we’d get the right answer. They seemed to think that this was too tough for the Pakistanis. I argued over breakfast. I said to Milam, “Bill, I think we’re going to get the right answer from Sharif today.” Milam said, “No, he’s not going to go along with it.” I said, “I’ll bet you dinner tonight.” The idea was that Zinni had to go back to the United States and I was going to stay behind and go to India to brief the Indians on whatever came out of these talks. Zinni was very skeptical. Milam accepted the bet. He said, “Why do you say this, Gib?” I said, “I’ve worked with the Pakistanis now for about four years. The Pakistanis, unlike the Indians, are invariably gracious.” He said, “What do you mean? How does that figure?” I said, “Look, the Pakistanis know you. They respect you. You’ve visited them here in Pakistan despite the lack of a military relationship, despite the lack of military education and training. They respect you and they respect Bill Clinton. The reason we sat in Tampa for two days waiting for a reply as to whether they would receive you was that they were having a mighty big fight among themselves as to whether to receive you, but it came down to substance. They would not receive you if they weren’t going to give you the answer you wanted. They’re too nice. So, the fight was over Monday and Tuesday. What we’re engaged in now is pushing the Pakistanis back who, having made the decision to withdraw these folks up there in Kargil, want to see how much more they can get out of us in return, a overall commitment to work for an overall Kashmir settlement, whatever.” Zinni said, “Okay, we’ll see.” We went in and saw Sharif and Sharif had his entire national security team there. This was going to be a collective thing. It was the whole array - head of intelligence, head of the military, foreign ministry, etc. There must have been eight or 10 people on Sharif’s side. Zinni and I went back over the same ground we’d been over the day before with Musharraf with Sharif. Musharraf was there. We kept beating them back with the same points, the same everything. Finally, Sharif, who I didn’t regard as being a very strong figure, said in half exasperation, he turned to Zinni and said, “Well, what is it you want me to do?” Zinni said, “Get them out of there.” So, Sharif basically repeated the formulation that we had had from Musharraf the day before, saying that he’d talk to these people and see that they got out. Well, Milam bought me dinner that night. Zinni went back to Washington. I went to India to brief the Indians on this, saw their national security advisor and foreign minister. But nothing happened for four to eight days. We were picking up no signs of this withdrawal. We started hectoring them with more letters. “You made a commitment. Live up to it.” Sharif finally on Saturday morning, July 3rd,

obviously going back to the bazaar and seeing what more he could sugar coat this bad pill with, because he knew he had made a commitment, picked up the phone and called Clinton and said, "I need to come see you." This is Saturday morning. Clinton said, "Okay, I'll see you tomorrow afternoon. See you at Blair House." Sharif jumped on his plane and came over. Here was a meeting with the heads of state and no preparations to be done. I did a one page briefing paper and that was it. Clinton, who was a consummate diplomat, charmed Sharif. They talked for two or three hours. Clinton gave him nothing but some soft points, broke off the meeting at one point to go talk to the Indian prime minister on the phone. The long and short of it was, our efforts to diffuse this crisis led the Pakistanis to get out. A nice piece of successful diplomacy.

Q: Was there an effort on the other side to make sure that the Indians didn't posture?

LANPHER: That's mission impossible. The Indians were slowly and at a huge cost retaking Kargil. Our efforts were very much appreciated by the Indians because we saved them a lot more body bags going home back to villages around India. It was appreciated. I think that Kargil thing helped to put our relations with India on track. When I went over and briefed them on our talks, they were intensely skeptical. The Indians have always seen us at the end of the day in the Pakistani pocket. We were very tough with the Pakistanis. "You've got to get out. There is no sugar coating this one. You made a mistake. You goofed. Get the hell out of there." The Indians had a hard time believing this. But they were eventually persuaded. Very tough.

Q: Turning over to Bangladesh, was there much going on there except for flood relief, which I suppose is a perennial thing?

LANPHER: Not much. I only went there once in four years. It's a staggering sort of country about the size of Wisconsin. Most of it is below sea level and it has a population of 135 million people. You go to Dakka, the capital, and this is rickshaw central. It's quite a horrific place. Global warming, if it comes to the dire forecast, is going to put that whole country under water. What are you going to do with all the people?

Q: The Indians must be quite worried about this. The natural place would be to go back into Bengal.

LANPHER: I guess. I went to Sri Lanka once and there was that long running, 15 year civil war insurrection, the LTTE versus the government with the Tamils versus the other side, the Sinhalese. That one was not going anywhere. I didn't devote a whole lot of time to that. Aside from India and Pakistan, and I did have a business advisor political appointee who as de facto second deputy Assistant Secretary looked after Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the aid type issues, and human rights issues, I found that I was pretty much preoccupied with the security and political stuff.

The other area would be Afghanistan being of some interest. We were not happy with the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan. There was a civil war going on in Afghanistan when I arrived in the bureau that had been going on for a number of years, people shooting each

other up, warlords, etc. Finally, the Taliban took over Kabul and achieved de facto control over 3/4 of Afghanistan. We didn't recognize them, but we did talk to them. For a while, we sent people up from our embassy in Islamabad to Kabul and Kandahar and places like that. It was very difficult to talk to them, but we had issues that we wanted to talk to them about. In the first instance, it was drugs and human rights, particularly women's rights. But after they established themselves in Afghanistan, we also talked to them about terrorism and Bin Laden. Increasingly, those talks took place in Islamabad. I made at least two trips myself out from Washington to talk to the Taliban in Islamabad about these three issues. Increasingly, the focus was on Bin Laden, especially after our embassies were bombed in Dar es Salaam and Kenya in August of 1998. Talking to the Taliban was perhaps the most difficult kind of discussion one could have as a diplomat because it was like trying to talk to somebody from the 12th century. How do you relate to people on a specific issue, on Bin Laden and terrorism and giving sanctuary to Bin Laden? We were asking them to turn him over to us, turn him over to somebody, get him out of Afghanistan, and we won't have to get our hands on it. But they had this bizarre view that "He's a guest in our house and we don't turn a guest out of our house. This is our traditional hospitality." I confess I didn't make any progress, but I sure labored long and hard at it, making arguments like, "Well, if you have guests in your house and he's in an upstairs bedroom and he's throwing rocks out the window at passers by on the street, do you still have to respect that hospitality? Can't you do something about it?" They'd sit across the lounge in the Taliban embassy in Islamabad with this far away look. If my points registered, I sure didn't get any kind of response that was worthwhile. But we made an effort. We did the best we could. At the same time, we leaned very heavily (This was obviously pre-September 11th) on the Pakistanis to get a grip, one, to stop supporting the Taliban and to use their obvious influence with the Taliban to get them to reign in Bin Laden, turn him over, turn him out. I made one trip out to Pakistan with the head of our Counterterrorism Office in the State Department, Mike Shehan. We flew out on a C141 just to talk to the Taliban and the Pakistanis, their intelligence service, the prime minister, the head of the army, about this, using some of the arguments I mentioned before, "These guys are going to come back and bite you. You're going to be paying the ultimate price on this." But it was just too tough for them at that time. Things have changed with September 11th.

Q: You must have been there when we launched some Tomahawk missiles at the Bin Laden camps.

LANPHER: Yes, I was in the South Asia Bureau.

Q: What was the feeling and reaction when that happened?

LANPHER: I thought I might be able to duck on this one, but since you've got me on tape... After our embassies were blown up in August 1998, there was a hunt on clearly for the perpetrators and it was fairly clear that it was Bin Laden's organization. We were mad and we wanted to do something about it. One day, a Wednesday, the head of my Pakistan/Afghanistan directorate, Mike Malanowski, and I both saw a piece of intelligence come in suggesting that there was going to be a meeting with Bin Laden and al-Qaeda's high command at a certain training site in Afghanistan about eight days down

the line, the following Wednesday or Thursday. When both of us saw it, we said to one another, "If we're seeing this intelligence, somebody else in the U.S. government is going to see this intelligence. Watch that date and watch that place." Well, that was a Wednesday. On Friday evening, I was at home washing up the dishes after dinner, when the phone rang. It was the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Tom Pickering. He said, "Gib, how many American citizens do we have in Afghanistan at the moment?" I said, "I think it's somewhere between seven and 12, but I'll have to get back to you tomorrow morning." Well, I called some people and we got together our best estimate. I was pretty much in the ballpark. I got back to Pickering on Saturday morning. I was in the office. I called him up and said, "What I told you last night is pretty much it" and gave him some details. Well, that Saturday evening, I'm again at home. The phone rings. I think it was Pickering himself. For some reason, I was the acting Assistant Secretary at the time. I guess my boss was off on August vacation. I had taken my vacation in July. He invited me to a meeting in his office at 10:00AM on Sunday morning. I pretty much had a good sense that it was going to be about this issue. The head of Counterterrorism was there and people from the Management side. Phyllis Oakey, the head of INR, was there. There were about eight or 10 people. Tom, who was one of the more democratic and open fellows I've ever met in my life and knew reasonably well, said, "This meeting is about evacuating all our dependents out of Pakistan and doing it now, getting them all out by Monday night." This was Sunday morning in Washington. We sort of gulped. I gulped. Phyllis Oakey said, "Well, why are we doing this?" Tom uncharacteristically said, "I'm here to give orders" or words to that effect. I went downstairs and alerted my people to come in after this meeting.

So, we got to work on it. I had my executive people and my Pakistan desk people and we did telegrams and this and that. We got the management side of things organized. Got an airplane chartered. We got our people out. They left Monday night. Mike Malanowski, the director for Pakistan and Afghanistan, and I both knew what it was. I did go back to Pickering on Sunday afternoon and said, "I understand the decision and we're implementing the decision, but some of us are not oblivious to what's going on and we think quite rightly we ought to be brought into it because we might have some ideas." He said, "These are absolute orders and that's that." So, I clicked my heels like a good soldier and we did the necessary. Tuesday morning at about 5:00AM, I was out at BWI airport greeting this plane. To his credit, Tom Pickering and his wife were out greeting the plane as well. His daughter was on it. Her husband was a political officer at the embassy. The missiles went off Wednesday or Thursday, fired from submarines in the Arabian Sea. They hit the camp where the meeting was to have taken place. But sadly, at the same time they hit the camp where the meeting was to have taken place for reasons that are unfathomable to me, we decided to take out a suspected chemical weapons factory, a pharmaceutical plant, in Khartoum, the Sudan, at the same time. There was concern, I am told - and I have this on hearsay - that they wanted to do both at the same time and they wanted to avoid civilian casualties at least in Khartoum. So, they timed the missile strike to hit Khartoum after working hours. This made it approximately 10:00AM local time at camp in Afghanistan, by which time the meeting had been over for hours. There were a few stragglers and camp attendants still present, but all the bigshots had left. So, we broke up a lot of rocks with those Cruise missiles. Later indications we had

was that maybe eight to 20 Kashmiri insurgents had been in the camp and had been killed. But we didn't get any of the big boys. I would argue to this day that if people with knowledge in that area in the world, such as Malanowski, had been brought in on the decision making, he would have been able to say something like, "Hey, if they're having a meeting at this camp, they'll have it in daylight because they won't have any electricity in those camps. They'll all be back in their caves by 10:00PM. The time to hit them is when they're having a noon meal and doing their noon prayers."

Q: This is one of the things that strikes me. So many times, when decisions are made in Washington, the people with local knowledge are moved out. "This is too important for you to do." It's sort of the Washington operators. There have been times when someone said, "This can happen" and somebody who was there said, "You know, there isn't a road from there to there" or something like that. Somebody who knows how things work. This often happens.

LANPHER: It's usually done in the name of "It's got to be closely held. We can't have this leak out. We've got to keep it secure." I would argue that there has to be a line drawn somewhere on the security side of things, but I think one has to be conscious that when you draw that security line, you may, in fact, be cutting yourself off from expertise that you actually need to have brought to bear on an issue. I'm not saying if we had been brought into it, we would have been able to convince the powers that be, the national command authority, the President of the United States, to hit that camp at noon. But we would certainly have argued that if you're going to hit that camp, hit it when you're going to have the most likelihood of success. Two, there was absolutely no operational reason why missiles had to hit that camp and that pharmaceutical plant at the same time. It just made no sense to me. Mike and I were disappointed with the outcome. At the time political Washington was consumed with the Monica Lewinski thing and accusations flying around that this was the tail wagging the dog and so on. I think based on what I knew and what I had seen that there was a very good possibility that there was a legitimate target out there but we just didn't do it the right way. Who knows? I don't know if these guys all showed up at noon on that day at that particular camp. There is always second guessing. We may have signaled our punch by drawing down our embassy in Islamabad - something we could not keep secret.

Q: Was there any reaction in Islamabad?

LANPHER: We just took out the women and children. We left the officers in place. I don't recall.

Q: While you were in the South Asia Bureau, how were you served by intelligence, the CIA, the NSA, and INR?

LANPHER: I've been reading intelligence or had been for close to 35 years. I thought we had reasonable intelligence on South Asia. You can always say you can do better. I used to tell CIA, and I used to have regular meetings with them, what I was looking for and where I'd like to see them direct their efforts. Certainly, the commentary after the fact of

the Indian nuclear testing in May 1998 was that this was a massive U.S. intelligence failure that we didn't see this coming. I'm not persuaded by that. What if we had known the date and time of the test? Would the Indians have tested if we had gone to them and said, "Don't test?" I don't know. In a sense, if there was an underlying analytical failure on our part it was to think that we could deter India or Pakistan from testing, that was a failure of analysis as opposed to a failure of intelligence. I told our CIA people both here in Washington and the station chief in New Delhi, who happened to have worked for me once before, that I thought we ought to spend more time focusing on Indian politics in terms of our understanding of Indian thinking, that I was far less interested in the bean counting of how many medium range missiles the Indians had, where they were in storage, when they moved, etc. I said, "That is nice to know, but my interest is far more on people's intentions and what the politics are and their strategic view." That's a failing that we have not only in South Asia but elsewhere, counting beans and not looking at the forest.

Q: It's easier.

LANPHER: Getting inside somebody's mind is pretty hard to do.

Q: Sure. Saddam Hussein invading Kuwait the way he did in retrospect shows that the guy makes really stupid decisions. Invading Iran was a stupid decision, but-

LANPHER: He did it.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover in this period?

LANPHER: No. I think we've hit the highlights.

Q: In '99, whither?

LANPHER: After four years in the South Asia Bureau, I knew I was going to have to retire the following year. So, I managed to get myself invited over to the National Defense University to the Institute for Strategic Studies. I worked on South Asia over there from September until I retired the next June. I was there from September until I went into the retirement seminar. I retired on June 2, 2000.

Q: What have you been doing with yourself since you retired?

LANPHER: I made two trips out to Zimbabwe as a consultant for the International Crisis Group because of that country's deteriorating situation. I wrote some reports for them, made recommendations that if they had been followed by world governments two years ago, the situation might be different in Zimbabwe today than it is. But be that as it may, I continue to follow that and give pro bono advice to the State Department on Zimbabwe.

Q: You might mention what the problem is.

LANPHER: In Zimbabwe, it's President Mugabe, who's been in power since 1980. His grip on power began to loosen in 1997 and he's pulled out all the stops since then to keep himself in power. He's really hurt his own people terribly. He's driven the white farmers off the commercial farms, destroyed the judiciary, law and order, the country is on the brink of starvation... He's just taken a mighty fine country and ruined it. The world has stood by and his neighbors have stood by pretty much and let him do it, which is quite sad.

Aside from that, I'm one of these old farts with a second wife and 13 and 14 year old boys, so I do a lot of car pooling. My mother died. I worked on her estate, including a nice house in California. So, I'm enjoying retirement.

Q: Great. I want to thank you very much.

End of interview