

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

**JOHN T. McCracken**

*Interviewed by: Harold L. Davey  
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[Note: This interview was not edited by Mr. McCracken.]

*Q: It's April 11, 1997 at the home of John McCracken. You can begin now, John. Where were you born?*

McCracken: Fairview, North Carolina.

*Q: When did you come to the Washington area?*

McCracken: 1959.

*Q: Where did you take your college?*

McCracken: The University of South Carolina.

*Q: What was your major there?*

McCracken: History and Economics.

*Q: Did you have graduate work?*

McCracken: In Economics.

*Q: Was that also South Carolina?*

McCracken: Right.

*Q: So you came to Washington what year again?*

McCracken: 1959.

*Q: Fifty-nine When did you start with the Labor Department?*

McCracken: 1959

*Q: That was your first job. Were you in the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) from the beginning?*

McCRACKEN: Yes.

*Q: Through your retirement which was last year?*

McCRACKEN: January 3, 1996.

*Q: So you just retired a little over a year ago. Now you were in BLS. At what point did you get into the international work in BLS.*

McCRACKEN: 1965, originally.

*Q: In what office?*

McCRACKEN: That was the Office of Foreign Labor and Trade (FLT).

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

McCRACKEN: Bill Shelton.

*Q: Oh, yes. Bill Shelton. Then the office reorganized.*

McCRACKEN: Right.

*Q: Different titles. You became the director of*

McCRACKEN: No. I left. In 1971 I left the office of Foreign Labor and Trade just as it was about to be reorganized, and went over to the office of Data Collection.

*Q: Okay.*

McCRACKEN: I was in charge of training and data collection there.

*Q: Until what time?*

McCRACKEN: Until 1976.

*Q: And then what position did you receive?*

McCRACKEN: I went and took over the division of International Technical Cooperation (ITC), which I headed until I retired.

*Q: Now, I guess it was in this latter capacity, but certainly in your earlier capacity, you would have come in contact with Foreign Service officers?*

McCRACKEN: Right. I did.

*Q: —they would be coming over for training.*

McCRACKEN: Beginning in 1966.

*Q: So you've had a chance to observe a number of these labor attachés. Shall we discuss those you've had earlier contact with or do you want to discuss them in some other way? Or as labor attachés that you've known?*

McCRACKEN: I'll discuss any of them.

*Q: Any that we have in mind? I have a list here, a historical roster, of all U.S. labor attachés. Now this is a very extensive list so a lot of them you would not have ever heard of I'm sure. But you could, if you want, run down and every time you get to one which rings a bell we can discuss him.*

McCRACKEN: Okay. Orulyan.

*Q: Lois Orulyan.*

McCRACKEN: She was a pretty sharp person.

*Q: That shows; she went on to Africa, didn't she?*

McCRACKEN: Yes. Shows her in Morocco in '88 and Kenya in '92. I worked with her more in Kenya than I did Morocco. I remember she was meticulous. I thought she did get the reports in front of you. She did a lot about reaching out to our former participants who had important positions in the government of Kenya.

*Q: I know that's a thing you would make available to the new labor officers in training or consultation, a list of the—it would seem like it would give them a leg up when they arrived in the country. As I've noticed, they uniformly have a very favorable impression of their time with BLS.*

McCRACKEN: Is this Herb Baker?

*Q: That was Herb Baker.*

McCRACKEN: I remember him. Not very specifically. I remember he was a very active guy who carried a lot of weight.

*Q: He did. Now I guess you would work a lot with those in developing countries?*

McCRACKEN: Yes.

*Q: Herb's most experience, at least the time you would know him, would be the developing countries. So you wouldn't have much experience with him early on when he was in some countries that were still developing. I'm sure he had contact with the BLS, more than he did later on.*

McCRACKEN: I remember Bazan.

*Q: Oh. Joaquin Bazan. Did you know Bazan as the area advisor in ILAB (International Labor Affairs, Dept. of Labor) or as the labor attaché in the Dominican Republic?*

McCRACKEN: Labor attaché in the Dominican Republic but I don't remember a great deal about him.

*Q: All right. Is there another one in the B's there that looks familiar?*

McCRACKEN: I remember working with the Beckers but I don't remember a lot of specifics about them. Bouvine. I worked a lot with Bouv.

*Q: At which of those posts that he was in did you work with him.*

McCRACKEN: Israel, Switzerland and Mexico. I worked with him very much. We sent a group of people over on a technical consulting assignment. I think they held a seminar there too.

*Q: Was this in Mexico?*

McCRACKEN: No. In Israel. I'm sorry.

*Q: In Israel. Okay.*

McCRACKEN: He was the fellow who took care of them. This was Jerry Mark and—

*Q: Oh, yes. Jerry Mark.*

McCRACKEN: ---those people. The dean also went on that trip. He was very supportive. He was very good in development and it was a very successful trip. I worked with him in Switzerland when I was the U.S. representative on the International Training Center in Turin, Italy. I worked through Bouv there. That was over a period of three years I believe. Two or three years. I would go over twice a year and what have you. I had a lot of contact with him. Boy was he supportive. He was very good.

*Q: That's good to hear.*

McCRACKEN: He made good contacts with the \_\_\_\_\_ when it was necessary. We had to make contacts from \_\_\_\_\_ when we weren't there. So he was very good.

And then again in Mexico. We had several technical assignments. In Mexico we were sending consultants down and we received people from Mexico. I worked through him there. And there again, he was very good. I'm remembering some of these other folks but not as specifically as these latter three.

Bumpas. I remember Bumpas.

*Q: In Brazil?*

McCRACKEN: In Brazil. right.

*Q: 1983*

McCRACKEN: I worked with him when the InterAmerican Statistical Director's Conference was in Mexico. I was in Brazil. I worked with him on that. We did a seminar or two in Brazil and worked with him on that. We received some people up to Washington for training and what have you and I worked through him.

*Q: As I recall he had quite a sense of humor.*

McCRACKEN: That's right. That's right.

*Q: When he was in the training program before he went out.*

McCRACKEN: The last time I saw him was in Brazil and that was after his assignment had ended in Brazil. He was sent back and I believe it was to observe an election.

*Q: Oh. Good for him.*

McCRACKEN: Marie Burtwry. I remember her.

*Q: She was in El Salvador but she served in ILAB as help with the area advisor role for a while.*

McCRACKEN: I first knew her when she was in El Salvador. I first met her in the labor attachés conference in Costa Rica. When was that? That was about—

*Q: It was about '76.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. Right. Yes.

*Q: Because I think in that year there was an election. That was the year Carter got elected and we had some of the deputy secretary of labor under the Carter Administration.*

McCRACKEN: What I remember about her was she was meticulous in learning about the countries she was assigned to. I remember she went out to California to talk to an expert on El Salvador. He lived many years in El Salvador. He was an American but he was an expert on El Salvador.

*Q: And she sought him out.*

McCRACKEN: I also remember when she worked on the Year of the Women. In fact we gave her a lot of data and what have you. We worked a great deal with her on that.

*Q: Now we're looking down the C's I think. Any there that stick out?*

McCRACKEN: Cierone. I remember contact with her but not specifically. Clear.

*Q: Jessie Clear.*

McCRACKEN: I actually saw him, met him in The Hague one time. I was over there and he made some contacts for me in the Netherlands, the central statistical office. As a matter of fact he went with me on an assignment or two.

*Q: That's on there too. When we were going on an export zone processing study.*

McCRACKEN: I remember Croom but not specifically.

*Q: Okay. Now we're looking at the D's.*

McCRACKEN: I remember Davis in Portugal. We had some contacts with him in Portugal. As a matter of fact there was a Latin American Statistical Director's Conference that was held in Madrid. The host for the statistical office \_\_\_\_\_ on Spain and he participated very much in that conference with us, which was very good.

I'm in the D's now. Dodd.

*Q: Peter Dodd?*

McCRACKEN: Peter Dodd. Yes. I had an awful lot of contact with him.

*Q: He had quite a few countries there. Norway, Indonesia, Philippines.*

McCRACKEN: I remember working with him on Indonesia a great deal and the Philippines. Especially on Indonesia. When he—

Dougherty.

*Q: That's John Dougherty.*

McCRACKEN: I don't remember a great deal about him.

Donnelly. I worked with Donnelly.

*Q: In Russia then?*

McCRACKEN: Oh yes.

*Q: Exciting times. He was there in '93 it says.*

McCRACKEN: Was that the beginning?

*Q: No. No. I think that was---it had sort of been Russia at that point rather than USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) I think by '93.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. But I mean was the year—

*Q: That's the beginning of his assignment.*

McCRACKEN: Beginning. Because I remember him in '95.

*Q: Okay. Yes.*

McCRACKEN: We had a great many contacts with the Russian Government through him. One, there was a conference we sponsored in Luxembourg for the Statistical Directors of the former Soviet Union countries. So we worked through him. We worked through him when we held a conference in Washington and brought the people from Russia to Washington. This was a conference of people from all the newly liberated countries, eastern Europe as well as the former Soviet Union countries. I remember I could call him any time. He was very responsive. He invited me to call him at home, which I did a lot. It didn't bother him at all.

*Q: That's some dedication on his part.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. He gave me terrific insights into the Russian officers. They had a dual statistical system. They tried to set up a system of all the former Soviet Union countries that would be under their aegis and then they had their own Central Statistical Office which was the real thing. The two of them kept getting in the way of one another. We had to deal with one or both of them; he was very good at guiding us through that.

Dortschner was very good.

*Q: Nigerian?*

McCRACKEN: Nigerian. You're right. He and Doubleday were both very good. We had \_\_\_\_\_ problems in Nigeria because they kept trying to send people to us and they would disappear. Illegal immigration and what have you. Obviously there was money involved in these things. So I had to depend on both of those fellows to screen them and they did.

*Q: Good.*

McCRACKEN: They contributed a lot of time that you wouldn't expect a labor attaché to contribute. Both of them were very good.

I remember Dramuge very well. It seems to me that he had a number of countries under him.

*Q: We just show Kenya and Australia---as a regional officer.*

McCRACKEN: As a regional officer—

*Q: He probably did have some regional responsibility there in Nairobi.*

McCRACKEN: What he did was he provided me a lot of background information on people that we worked with in all those countries and what have you. That's what I remember. I remember working with him a little in Australia. He was very effective there. We worked with the Australian Bureau of Statistics. He was very effective working with those people.

What Eldridge was this?

*Q: Let's see. Let me look him up. That's way back though before your time.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. I know.

*Q: I'll look under France here. I think it's Dick Eldridge.*

McCRACKEN: I've known of two or three Eldridges.

*Q: Clarence Eldridge, you and I knew.*

McCRACKEN: There was another Eldridge

*Q: Richard Eldridge. This is Richard.*

McCRACKEN: There was another Eldridge that was in Saudi Arabia, but that wasn't the one.

*Q: No.*

McCRACKEN: Now how many of these are labor reporting officers as opposed to attachés?

*Q: No; these are labor attachés.*

McCRACKEN: Are all these labor attachés?

*Q: Yes. Or assistant labor attachés, in the case of Falzone. He was an assistant labor attaché.*

McCRACKEN: Okay. I don't remember a labor attaché being in Bolivia. I remember him--was that a man or a woman in Bolivia?

*Q: Let's see. We'll look up Bolivia for his or her first name. Bolivia is Robert Featherstone. They had a labor attaché there continually from Cliff Finch in '59 all the way down to when they made this list. This is a '93 list so there they were. Tony Freeman had the job at one point. I remember this Mike Boggs, John Mamatza, Bob Snyder. Yes, I remember Enrique Perez a guy we recruited to go out, Charles Rowe, Harry O'Hara. Okay. So there's been a long list of labor attachés there.*

McCRACKEN: Of course I remember Tony Freeman. I remember when he was in Italy and I remember when he was in Argentina.

*Q: Okay.*

McCRACKEN: As a matter of fact, that's when I met him.

*Q: Right.*

McCRACKEN: As a matter of fact I first met him at that conference in Costa Rica.

*Q: Okay. They had a labor attaché conference in Costa Rica.*

McCRACKEN: I remember that he seemed to always be on top of everything when we worked with him in Argentina. We had contact with him in Italy because of work through the Turin Center.

*Q: Okay. Yes.*

McCRACKEN: Although that was primarily the labor attaché in Geneva's responsibility.

*Q: Geneva. Yes.*

McCRACKEN: We did some things there.

*Q: Now in the G's.*

McCRACKEN: This was the first labor attaché that I had any extensive experience with.

*Q: Foter? Was it Mike Foter?*

McCRACKEN: That was in the Soviet Union.

*Q: At that point it was still the USSR in 1990.*

McCRACKEN: But we started making contacts with them. As a matter of fact he was probably the one that arranged the trip to Russia for the USSR for Janet Norwood and Michael Moscow.

*Q: I'm sure he was. That was a very interesting trip.*

McCRACKEN: Yes.

*Q: Continuation of the G's.*

McCRACKEN: Now I'm not commenting on every one I remember because I don't remember a lot about some of these people.

*Q: Yes. If you don't remember a lot about them we can—*

McCRACKEN: I'm just talking as opposed—

*Q: —unless you have a specific recollection*

McCRACKEN: Like I remember Gwinn.

*Q: John Gwinn.*

McCRACKEN: Oh yes. I remember him very well. As a matter of fact, we had some ongoing programs with Mexico.

*Q: Yes. He was in Mexico in '85, starting in '85.*

McCRACKEN: Right. So I had to work with him. A very good experience.

*Q: I remember working with him more in Canada than—we had a lot of contacts with Canada.*

*Q: He was in Canada starting in 1981.*

McCRACKEN: Right. We worked with statistics \_\_\_\_\_down there, the Department of Employment.

*Q: Bob Hare?*

McCRACKEN: Bob Hare. My first experience with Bob Hare was in Switzerland.

*Q: He was at the ILO-U.S. (International Labor Organization-U.S.) mission to the International Organization. That was starting in 1982.*

McCRACKEN: Right. That's when I got to know him. This was at the International Conference of Labor Statisticians. We had a knotty problem. Janet Norwood, our commissioner, was the chair of that conference. I'm trying to remember the countries that wanted to censor her, wanted a vote of no confidence. We did have a vote of no confidence. I remember consulting with Hare about that coming up because I wanted to work with all the countries to make sure that she wasn't censored.

*Q: Right.*

McCRACKEN: It was the Algerian and Afghani.

*Q: I see.*

McCRACKEN: Was it Afghani? Yes. It was the Afghani.

*Q: What was the upshot of the vote? Was it almost unanimous?*

McCRACKEN: It was about 62 to five in favor of her.

*Q: Okay.*

McCRACKEN: One of the fellows from Algeria, as soon as the vote was over, raced up to Janet Norwood to apologize.

*Q: That's a very interesting insight.*

McCRACKEN: Harmon. Paul Helburn. Of course I've worked with him. Both in Switzerland, that's when I first worked with him and—as a matter of fact, I think that he went with me at least once down to Turin and we both represented the United States at the Board Meeting of the Turin Center. Then I worked with him when he was in Belgium because we had a lot of contact with European staff.

*Q: This was when he got moved from the Embassy Belgium to the USEC (U.S. Mission to the European Community) Belgium in '91.*

McCRACKEN: That's right.

*Q: When he took over \_\_\_\_\_*

McCRACKEN: Is he still in the department?

*Q: I think he's just retiring. I think he just retired last year \_\_\_\_\_).*

McCRACKEN: I remember working with Immerman in Japan.

*Q: Oh yes. Bob Immerman.*

McCRACKEN: We used to get a lot of Japanese for short term visits. I remember him telling me you could always set your clock by the time they arrive. If they were supposed to be there at 11:02, they'll be there at 11:02 exactly.

Alden Irons.

*Q: He had a labor reporting job also in Haiti.*

McCRACKEN: Right.

*Q: Is that the way you recall him?*

McCRACKEN: Yes. I remember working with him on Morocco and Haiti. Of course I remember when he was in Finland. I remember working with him in Haiti. I remember we had a participant disappear and I worked with him. I also worked with Alden when he was in—

*Q: S/IO (Secretariat/International Organizations).*

McCRACKEN: —S/IO. Yes. Boy was he good.

*Q: And he's still there.*

McCRACKEN: I always appreciated Alden.

*Q: We're moving down to the J's and then the K's.*

McCRACKEN: I've just remembered Keen in Argentina. I should remember in Peru but I don't. I don't remember anything specific.

I remember Kern in Barbados because I went down there on assignment and I worked with him there.

Of course this is our man Don. I remember him in Israel. Of course I remember him after he left Israel when he took over that training program.

*Q: Oh yes. The Labor Attaché Training Program.*

McCRACKEN: I guess Jim Madsen is doing that now right?

*Q: I don't know who's going to do it this summer but they contract it to different people.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. Right. Kimblood who was in—

*Q: Melinda Kimblood, I believe?*

McCRACKEN: Right. I really don't know—

*Q: In Tunisia.*

McCRACKEN: In Tunisia. I was going to say I remember in Tunisia I had to go there one time but I really don't.

*Q: Don Knight.*

McCRACKEN: Boy I remember him. His wife died, didn't she?

*Q: Yes she did. Wait a minute. I take that back. I'm not sure about his wife. I think he did remarry this woman who was a Colombian so I guess his first wife must have died. Then he went down to Columbia. He had to leave very quickly because of a security problem. So that would be his second wife I guess.*

McCRACKEN: See I worked with him on many situations beginning with Barbados.

*Q: Panama, Chile, Argentina, and Guatemala.*

McCRACKEN: Yes.

McComb. I worked with him in Poland.

*Q: Oh yes. Pat McComb.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. As a matter of fact, we went over to Warsaw in '91. \_\_\_\_\_ was in the bureau and we worked with him there. Again, he was very supportive of us. He did a lot of work with the Polish government for us, for our trip, and after we left. We had long term projects with Poland both financed by the U.S. government and also World Bank financed on World Bank loans.

Lamazza. I remember Lamazza.

*Q: John Lamazza*

McCRACKEN: Jim Leader. The first time I met him was in Venezuela.

*Q: Okay. In '77 he went there.*

McCRACKEN: Then I had a little bit of contact with him in India but it was Venezuela I really got to know him. I got to know what an unusual fellow he is, a unique fellow. He demonstrated in his retirement his concern about people.

*Q: That's right. He had a lot of connection with Judy Kidman too—*

McCRACKEN: Yes.

*Q: At BLS over the years—*

McCRACKEN: Right.

*Q: Other parts of BLS like foreign labor.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. Right. Licht.

*Q: George \_\_\_\_\_.*

McCRACKEN: No. No. Licht.

*Q: Oh, Licht.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. George Lichtblau. I knew him after—

*Q: Okay.*

McCRACKEN: —than while he was labor attaché.

*Q: On to the M's.*

McCRACKEN: I remember Mark Madden in Thailand.

*Q: Yes.*

McCRACKEN: We had a lot of good contacts with the Thai at that time. I remember working with him. He was also responsible for another country wasn't he?

*Q: I don't know if Bangkok had another one or not. It could have. I know he was active in the worker rights problems and so on.*

McCRACKEN: This is Greg Madsen, right?

*Q: Yes. That's Greg Madsen. The next one is Jim Madsen.*

McCRACKEN: Oh, yes. I know Jim Madsen. Greg Madsen—. We had a couple people from Greece in our seminars and that's how I worked with Greg. Of course Jim Madsen I remember from many different occasions.

*Q: Morocco, Lebanon, Belgium USEC and Germany. That Lebanon job wasn't regional, which would put other Arab countries—*

McCRACKEN: He was one of the better attachés I remember. I hate to say some of them are better because I thought as a group they were all very good. There were some that weren't but he was one of the better ones I thought. He was outstanding in many respects. Of course I first worked with him in Belgium.

*Q: There's a consensus about Jim, that he is one of the best.*

McCRACKEN: I believe he had been in ILAB before he went to Belgium.

*Q: Yes, he had a tour in ILAB as the NEA (Near Eastern Affairs) area advisor. Maybe on the Israeli program that you were working with he was involved. They did some—. A group went out to Israel but he was the NEA area advisor.*

McCRACKEN: Right. Right.

*Q: Which I think included BLS. That would be the time.*

McCRACKEN: Oh yes. I've worked with him in so many venues so to speak. Let's see. Let's get back to—

*Q: Madsen.*

McCRACKEN: Madsen. Yes. I remember even working with him in Germany. He would ask for information and data. Of course he would provide us with data. I remember he worked closely with Arthur Burns.

*Q: Oh, yes.*

McCRACKEN: Wasn't Arthur Burns the ambassador?

*Q: Ambassador. Yes. He was there. Yes. Famous Federal Reserve Board Arthur Burns.*

McCRACKEN: I remember McFarland in Ecuador but nothing specific.

*Q: Some of these M's I see are before your time. Way back in the '50s and '60s.*

McCRACKEN: Mospaul. I remember him.

*Q: Okay.*

McCRACKEN: But again, I just remember working with him.

*Q: Yes, right. Nothing specific.*

McCRACKEN: Like Millen. I remember this Millen.

*Q: The Colombian one.*

McCRACKEN: The other one was before my time.

*Q: Bruce. Yes.*

McCRACKEN: Murphy.

*Q: That's Jim Murphy.*

McCRACKEN: Jim Murphy. Yes. Jim. The first time I met him was in Costa Rica.

*Q: At the labor attachés conference?*

McCRACKEN: Right. Something about horses and Jim.

*Q: Yes. Right. He was into quarter horses I think. Down in Oklahoma after he retired anyway.*

McCRACKEN: I think he played polo in the Philippines.

*Q: Yes, you are right. He did. He did play polo in the Philippines.*

McCRACKEN: We had a lot of contacts with the Philippine government. I remember him in Australia also. You know we probably had more people come into the bureau from Australia than any other country over the entire period that I was there.

*Q: No. I didn't know that.*

McCRACKEN: Every year we received several people from Australia. Australia is an isolated country. It's an industrialized country in a part of the world that wasn't so \_\_\_\_\_ isolated. They know the importance of getting out to Canada and the United States and Europe. That's why they come. I remember working with Jim there. I remember he played polo, I'm pretty sure, in the Philippines.

Jack Muse. Where's Jack now I wonder?

*Q: Jack is still in, he's in Germany now. This doesn't carry it up to his last assignment.*

McCRACKEN: I guess I knew him before he went to Columbia.

*Q: Well, he was a short while in ILAB but he was in the AFL/CIO (American Federation of Labor/Congress of International Organizations) international trade union organization before that. But he came to ILAB for a year or two. Then he went down as the labor attaché in Bogota. You know he was there about five days before the ambassador and all the other diplomats were made hostage. So it was kind of a bad introduction to the Foreign Service when your ambassador is made hostage.*

McCRACKEN: I remember when he was in Belgium before France. What I remember specifically about France was an incident where certain people, dignitaries and agency heads in France, wanted to take Janet Norwood to lunch. She used to go over every year. She said, "Well, I'll give them an hour for lunch." Jack came back and said, "You can't do that."

*Q: You can't eat lunch in Belgium for an hour, huh.*

McCRACKEN: No, this was in France.

*Q: In France. Even worse. That would be an insult.*

McCRACKEN: She finally conceded two hours but he didn't think that was quite enough. That was one of the things I remember about Jack.

*Q: Good advice I'm sure.*

McCRACKEN: This is Jack O'Grady.

*Q: Yes, Jack O'Grady. He's deceased now.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. I remember. By golly, I met him in '76.

*Q: Okay.*

McCRACKEN: What job did he hold in '76?

*Q: I'm trying to think what job.*

McCRACKEN: He went down to Costa Rica for that meeting.

*Q: Yes*

McCRACKEN: The labor attaché meeting.

*Q: He was area advisor over at State Department.*

McCRACKEN: Okay.

*Q: Yes. And he would go down to that meeting. We don't show those State Department jobs on here even though they are labor jobs.*

McCRACKEN: Too bad. But anyway I remember working with Jack several times. He went away somewhere and then he came back. Did he leave the government and then come back?

*Q: Not that I know of. No. No. I think he stayed in the Foreign Service until he retired. He might have left labor work and went back to labor work.*

McCRACKEN: I remember he developed a close friendship with Michael Moscow. Remember Mike?

*Q: Well, Mike was the one I think who went down to the Costa Rica labor attaché conference we were talking about. Wasn't Mike the under deputy secretary of labor?*

McCRACKEN: Not at that time.

*Q: Oh, but he was—*

McCRACKEN: But he had been assistant secretary—

*Q: I think he had the job at the time of the labor attaché conference. I think Mike Moscow was our chief of the U.S. delegation.*

McCRACKEN: Right. I first got to know Mike when he worked over in the Council of Economic Advisors (CEA). He worked for Paul McCracken, who was the Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors under Nixon. That's when I first met him.

*Q: Now we're moving down to the P's.*

McCRACKEN: I remember going to Vienna relating to this person. Fotanel. What was the first name there?

*Q: We'll look him up. We have the full name: David Fotanel.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. That's right. Now this is—. What's her name?

*Q: Margaret Plunkett.*

McCRACKEN: Margaret Plunkett.

*Q: She was in Israel in '68.*

McCRACKEN: She was in Israel in '68 and I only remember her there.

*Q: Okay.*

McCRACKEN: I don't remember anything specific but I remember working with her somewhere else. She was somewhere else in the State Department or the Foreign Service. But I just don't remember.

*Q: I'm trying to think whether—. She retired out of Israel. In fact held up Lenny Sammons appointment because she wanted to have 30 years in the U.S. government. I think you might recall there was a controversy about her being reemployed in BLS.*

McCRACKEN: That's right.

*Q: She wanted to exercise her re-employment rights and due to a technicality, actually—*

McCRACKEN: She had been out more than five years.

*Q: And didn't get them extended.*

McCRACKEN: Right. Exactly.

*Q: Therefore it was State Department's fault because they did not request the extension when they extended her appointment. But, fortunately, it was moot in that she elected to retire but we were discussing that issue when she was in Israel.*

McCRACKEN: Pollick. Was he S/IL?

*Q: Yes. That's right.*

McCRACKEN: That's when I remember working with him.

*Q: And he died while he was in S/IL (Secretary's Office of International Labor)*

*Harry Pollick.*

McCRACKEN: His brother is Maury.

*Q: That's right. He used to work in BLS.*

McCRACKEN: That's right. He was a good man.

*Q: Well, we had our problems in ILAB.*

*Harry Pollick. He was a good man when he was in the field but when he came back to S/IL he fought the Labor Department. He wanted to control the labor attaché program completely by State without any input from Labor Department.*

McCRACKEN: Right. Povenmire I remember.

*Q: Dale Povenmire.*

McCRACKEN: Povenmire. I remember working with Dale in Brazil.

*Q: Brazil. He arrived there in '78.*

McCRACKEN: Okay.

*Q: Now looking at the R's. You probably had some dealings with Irwin Rubenstein?*

McCRACKEN: Oh, yes. In Mexico.

*Q: Mexico.*

McCRACKEN: Mexico but also Israel.

*Q: Israel. Oh yes. He went in '78. I guess you had some of your delegations probably over there.*

McCRACKEN: That's right. I remember personally working with him in Mexico City. He was an unusual fellow.

*Q: Irwin is an unusual fellow. That's right.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. I thought he was very effective. From my point of view he was very effective.

*Q: The AFL/CIO tried to block his appointment there.*

McCRACKEN: Is that right?

*Q: To Mexico. They thought he was too high key. They should play lower key. And his personality wasn't.*

McCRACKEN: Oh, no.

*Q: They should—Dom Fidel Velasquez would like somebody younger. Anyway after Irwin went there, his first visit, with Dom Fidel. He sent them a telegram, which described their visit and how well it went. It was extended to twice as long as he'd expected. At the end Dom Fidel gave him a box of cigars; I think they were Cuban cigars. This was sort of a message from Irwin to those in the State Department, AFL/CIO, that poses as "So there. I can be really effective after all."*

McCRACKEN: Right. He was there when the Mexicans were setting up a central statistical office. They didn't have a central statistical office and they came to us for a lot of information and a lot of support. We worked through Irwin on that.

*Q: Sure.*

McCRACKEN: As well as we had some visits there, that didn't apply to that but he was very effective, from our point of view, anyway.

*Q: Sandman. Lenny Sandman.*

McCRACKEN: Leonard Sandman, right.

*Q: He was in Barbados. You mentioned you had some contact with his successor in Barbados. Tony Kerr. Did you have much to do with him? He was India, Malaysia, Korea, Israel, Indonesia again, Indonesia—*

McCRACKEN: I had contact with him—

*Q: —in several places?*

McCRACKEN: Yes. I'm trying to remember—

*Q: —specifics?*

McCRACKEN: Maybe I should—I think—he—?

*Q: All right now further down the S's we have Roger Schraeder who was over in Geneva. I don't know if that was before your business to Geneva?*

McCRACKEN: It was. Yes. I don't remember—

*Q: —him there?*

McCRACKEN: —him there. I don't remember him any place, places.

Scott I remember in Indonesia. He also covered Malaysia—No. No.

Senser.

*Q: Bob Senser.*

McCRACKEN: I remember working with him in USEC and in Germany. But he was in ILAB for a while also.

*Q: Yes. He was.*

McCRACKEN: I remember more working with him in ILAB for some reason.

*Q: I think Bob was one of our NEA area advisors again like Jim Madsen.*

McCRACKEN: Right.

*Q: So you probably dealt with him dealing with Israel and so on.*

McCRACKEN: Jim Shaney.

*Q: Yes.*

McCRACKEN: May I ask as an aside how he's doing?

*Q: He's doing fine. He just got back last month from Argentina.*

McCRACKEN: I remember he was a very effective fellow. He made a lot of contacts in other countries where he impressed people.

*Q: He did?*

McCRACKEN: I remember them talking to me about him when they'd visit.

*Q: It's interesting in some countries where they have a half dozen labor attachés the one that would stand out for them would be Jim Shay.*

McCRACKEN: That's right.

*Q: I know he would use his sports knowledge, encyclopedic sports knowledge, to get in \_\_\_\_\_ and he'd learn the local soccer heroes and so on.*

McCRACKEN: I remember one time he kicked out the ball at the beginning of the major league soccer in one of the countries. I believe it was Brazil.

*Q: Wow!*

McCRACKEN: This is a great honor.

*Q: Oh would it be. Yes. It's like throwing out—*

McCRACKEN: Like the president. But he kicked it off or kicked it out. It was the opening of their season or something. I remember working with him. His wife was Italian.

*Q: Yes.*

McCRACKEN: She's not living is she?

*Q: Okay. Back on line here.*

McCRACKEN: I remember Singlave in Barbados. I don't remember specifically. I just remember it was good.

*Slezak. I remember.*

*Q: Slezak.*

McCRACKEN: Slezak.

*Q: That was in Japan.*

McCRACKEN: Was he in ILAB at one point?

*Q: No, I don't think Les ever served in ILAB.*

McCRACKEN: I remember he was in the United Kingdom.

*Q: Yes. Starting in '86 it says.*

McCRACKEN: He came on as a very erudite fellow, if I remember correctly.

*Q: I think Les is one of our labor attachés who came in through the music function, the people who've majored in music.*

McCRACKEN: Is that right?

*Q: We have a couple labor attachés like that.*

McCRACKEN: That makes sense.

I remember Snyder. [End of Tape 1 Side A]

Stevens. I remember Stevens in Chile. As a matter of fact, I think I went to Santiago for a conference. He came over and provided us with the support we needed and the explanation of the people who were involved. He went to Canada, didn't he?

*Q: Yes, he did I don't know why that doesn't show the Canada—*

McCRACKEN: Was his first name Jack?

*Q: Yes. Jack or John.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. Okay. I remember working with him for some reason while he was in Canada even though he wasn't a labor officer.

*Q: Of course maybe the index doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ —Maybe he went with his wife there and didn't have the labor attaché job. I think that was it. Maybe his wife was assigned there. He wasn't the actual labor attaché there. I think he went to Canada with her. That's relied upon as an extra, a retired Foreign Service officer.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. But I remember working with him for some reason while he was in Canada.

*Q: Now we're looking under the T's.*

McCRACKEN: Dan Turnquist. I first met him and worked with him in Caracas.

*Q: Oh yes. That would be back in '75 to '78.*

McCRACKEN: And it was '76; it was '77 when I worked with him. He was succeeded by Jim Leader. So in a way I've learned a lot from the Foreign Service and the Labor Attaché Program from Dan Turnquist, even though he was a young fellow. I think that must have been his first—

*Q: —labor job.*

McCRACKEN: —labor job. He hadn't been in the Foreign Service all that long.

*Q: No. He had one or two previous positions.*

McCRACKEN: I worked with Dan Turnquist in France and then Belgium and then Bonn. Now—

*Q: He's in London now.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. I was going to say he was in London. Is he a labor officer?

*Q: Yes. He's a labor officer of embassy there.*

McCRACKEN: But that was after this time?

*Q: After this was published.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. Right. I thought he was very effective. He developed a lot of contacts and developed— The people from other countries seemed to be drawn to him and have a lot of confidence in him. When he was USEC, that was when we were beginning to reach out to eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, Soviet Union USSR—

*Q: Right. Right.*

McCRACKEN: —and we worked with him on that. We had a woman who was a head of a high level agency in Guyana. I mean in Venezuela and I remember she kept contact with him long after he left Venezuela. We had them all here for dinner one night.

*Q: Looking at the V's, not many V's. A lot of W's though. Here's one you probably might have some \_\_\_\_\_ John Warnuk.*

McCRACKEN: John Warnuk. Now he went to London, didn't he?

*Q: Yes, he was there in '92.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. I see that in '92. I remember when he was in Japan. I remember when he was in France. I remember in Japan. I remember Janet Norwood. He took very good care of Janet Norwood when she went to Japan one time. He provided her with an awful lot of background and an awful lot of support, which was very important. In Germany, I don't remember specifically in Germany. But the United Kingdom, I do remember the United Kingdom. John Washburn in Indonesia. I remember waking him up one time at 4:00 in the morning. Someone kept insisting we had to get in touch with him and we couldn't wait. I've forgotten what it was. It may have been a problem with someone from Indonesia—

*Q: Oh, okay.*

McCRACKEN: —but I remember waking him up in the morning.

*Q: Like a foreign visitor or trainee?*

McCRACKEN: A trainee or something like that. It may have been an illness or something. I've forgotten what it was but I remember waking him up. He was very gracious about it, although at first it was a shock to his system. Then he went to the United Nations I believe. After Indonesia. It seems to me he went to New York after Indonesia.

*Q: Watson. I remember Watson in Nigeria I think he was there before Dortschner and what was the other fellow? Doubleday?*

*Q: Doubleday.*

McCRACKEN: I do not remember him participating in that screening process that we had to go through.

*Q: Like the others did.*

McCRACKEN: You know we used to get funny money from Nigeria.

*Q: It was tricky.*

McCRACKEN: When I say funny money they'd send us these checks: we're coming to your seminar and what have you. Would you notify your embassy we are authorized to come and that sort of thing. That's when I worked with Dorschner and Doubleday.

*Q: I see.*

McCRACKEN: Among other things we had many contacts with them. During the year we'd probably have 30 or 40 requests from Nigeria. Most of them phony.

Of course I know him but not as a labor attaché.

*Q: Yes. Maury Wise. But not while he was in India. Before your time.*

McCRACKEN: He ran the training program for a while.

*Q: Let's see the W's.*

McCRACKEN Let me say something in general.

*Q: Yes I would like your general comment about the labor attachés.*

McCRACKEN: The labor attachés as a group impressed me very much. Within me I developed a high respect for the Foreign Service. I understood—I'd always heard we have the best Foreign Service in the world. I really became a believer as a result of working with the labor officers and labor attachés. We worked with them in many different ways, in addition to collecting data. Whenever we had participants from their countries, we would send information to them. They would make contact. It gave them an opportunity to make contact with people within the government.

*Q: To be a source to them for information and support.*

McCRACKEN: That's right. And make contacts. Because all the time we'd have very high-level people in our seminars or high-level visitors that the labor officers or the American embassies knew little about. We would ask them to contact them, the visitor, after they returned to their country.

*Q: A follow-up program.*

McCRACKEN: Yes. I remember one time, there wasn't a labor attaché involved, but it was in Surinam. I was down there. We'd had a woman who had been a participant in our program. She was the cousin of the president. The labor reporting officer and the ambassador were—They were talking about how they hadn't been able to make contact with the president. He was a Chinese fellow. I said, "Let me introduce you to his cousin." So the ambassador right then and there asked if she could make an appointment for him with the president and she did.

*Q: That's a fascinating anecdote, but in general I was glad to get these comments on the utility of the labor attachés and the Foreign Service to you and BLS \_\_\_\_\_. Good to hear that program.*

McCRACKEN: You know I think we were the biggest users of the labor reports in the Bureau of Labor Statistics because the data that they provided us was important. It was extremely important.

*Q: Do you recall when we started using it for the Foreign Labor Trends report? We tried to beef up by putting a key labor indicator section in the report, which was a term BLS and others wanted. Because before that they would do an annual labor report and sometimes they would talk in comparative terms. They would say okay the wages went up four percent last year, but we'd get inquiries. People would want to know what was the wage rate predicted by occupation or something in absolute terms? So we developed those 34 indicators with some of those things that would be hopefully useful. So that the annual reports you were getting would be more useful.*

McCRACKEN: But the bottom line was they enhanced the bureau through our training programs and whatever, which were very important, but also our Foreign Labor Statistics Program. Many of the things that we have done and been copied by international organizations like EurStat and ILO and the ILO statistical office and what have you.

*Q: I always thought BLS had the best program in the world and therefore—*

McCRACKEN: Well, we were on the cutting edge.

*Q: Not surprising—Yes. Cutting edge. It's not surprising you were copied. Labor attachés would be one way through which and of course through your own individual contacts.*

McCRACKEN: Do you know George Stalutto?

*Q: Who?*

McCRACKEN: George Stalutto. He's the retired associate commissioner of BLS. EurStat is hiring him to come over and teach a seminar on a program that they want to adopt that we developed Foreign Cost Index.

*Q: Well, John, this has been wonderful. I appreciate your taking all this time out and what we're going to do, it might take a little while, is develop a transcript. It might take a year or two to get it typed up and to you but when that's available Don will send that to you for correction, addition and so on.*

McCRACKEN: I might like to add a number of things.

*Q: Go right ahead.*

McCRACKEN: You know as I reflect on this over the coming months.

*Q: Oh, you can add then. You can add. It's like the congressional record. You can add and embellish. Please do at that time. Because, as you say, things might occur to you that didn't occur now as you as you see it in print. Or look on something in your records. Please do.*

McCRACKEN: I miss my contacts with the Foreign Service. That's one of the down sides of retirement.

*Q: Well that's interesting. I do too. Okay, John. Thanks a lot.*

McCRACKEN: Sure.

*End of interview*