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

STANLEY MYLES

Interviewed by: Mark Tauber
Initial interview date: June 11, 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Washington, D.C.—Office of Aviation, Staff Officer 1979–1982
Regulatory Issues
Latin America Bilateral Negotiations
"Open Skies" Process

Khartoum, Sudan—Chief Economic Officer 1982–1983
Bad Reception
Early Exit

Washington, D.C.—Latin American Bureau, Regional Economic Office 1983–1985
Kissinger Commission
US-Honduras Economics

Washington, D.C.—Division of Aviation Policy, Deputy Division Chief 1985–1988
Reorganization
Computer Reservation Systems
Pre-Inspection Agreements
Promotion System

Paramaribo, Suriname—Deputy Chief of Mission 1988–1991
Early Crises
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
Chargé d'affaires
Military Coup

Brasilia, Brazil—Political Counselor 1991–1994
Nomination Struggles
UN Conference on Environment and Development
Collor Impeachment

Washington, D.C.—Summit of the Americas Office 1994–1995
Latin America Cooperation

Washington, D.C.—State Department Global Affairs, Special Assistant 1995–1997
Human Rights and Refugees
Summit of the Americas 1996

Retired from Foreign Service **September 1997**

Naples, Italy—"Consort" of the Consul General 1997–2000
Raising a Child Abroad
Studying for an MSM
Crime

Montevideo, Uruguay—Spouse of the Deputy Chief of Mission 2000–2002
Cost of Living Work

INTERVIEW

Q: Today is June 11, 2019. We're beginning our interview with Stanley Myles.

Stanley, where and when were you born?

MYLES: Okay. I was born in Lamesa, Dawson County, Texas, on August 20, 1947.

Q: Is that where you grew up?

MYLES: That's a very complicated question. You want the answer?

Q: Oh, sure.

MYLES: Alright. My father was a well driller. That means that he punched holes in the ground for whatever, anything. The technology involved, there's a spot, a certain depth where it moves from one kind of rig to another, and people think about well drilling, they think about the oil business; well, that's the other kind. This is everything else; water, air, ventilation, seismograph and cores. And because of that, his father, my grandfather was one of the premiere water well drillers in the expansion of the irrigated cotton county in Texas, West Texas, during the 1920s through 1950s, and my father followed him in that business. As a result of that, we moved from well to well. Sometimes I was in one place as little as two months. As a result of that, I probably lived in three dozen, at least, places in Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona, and I went to 10 different elementary, junior high and high schools total between 1953 and 1964. So, that's the long answer to where did I grow up.

Now, West Texas and the little cotton town of Ackerly- Lamesa was where the doctor was, where the hospital was, the county seat. The little town of Ackerly in the middle of the cotton field where my parents grew up across the street from each other was home base. Almost from the beginning I was farmed out to my grandparents most every

summer back to that little town of 600 people, so I still consider it home base, but people get very confused; as we move on you'll hear, if you want more about this, I will talk about living in all these different places, and they said well, I thought you were from Texas and I'll say yes, I am, *but*.

Q: So, how did your schooling work if you were going to different schools with, you know, I imagine the state of Texas had certain general learning goals that all the schools had to accomplish, but they all had different curricula; how did you manage it?

MYLES: With great difficulty. It was like a boomerang up and down. So, for example- The first thing that happened to me was in my first school in a little-bitty town called Dell City, Texas, which is about halfway between Carlsbad, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. It was a brand new town where they were creating irrigated cotton land out of the desert. It's near Guadalupe National Park. They had a tiny little school - first grade through high school - my mother had already taught me how to read and so, I went into the first grade and they said you've learned everything in the first grade already, so we're going to put you in the second grade. So, here I am, I'm six-years-old and I was in the second grade. Well, that was fine at the time but later that created complications.

Now, we went on from there to Lubbock, which is kind of the big city in our region, and I went to the third grade and then most of the fourth grade. No real problems, still within Texas, more or less the same environment, everything was fine. Well, in the spring of 1956 my father moved us to Birmingham, Alabama. An army buddy of his living there told him that things were really booming in Birmingham - jobs are plentiful, we're making a lot of money – so you ought to come over, and he did. We went to Birmingham, but a few weeks later the great steel strike of 1956-'57 took place; this is the one that credits Vice President Nixon with settling in 1957 when he was at the height of his popularity before he ran for president. And almost all of the curriculum at that Alabama public school in fourth grade I had learned in Texas in third grade. Okay?

Q: Yes.

MYLES: This created tremendous problems. I was bored as hell. I became a disciplinary problem. I saw the principal so many times I don't even know what to tell you. The only thing that was new that I took, and it was perhaps a significant academic factor, was Alabama state history. It was the only new subject that I hadn't already had, and I devoured it like a, you know, like a man with drink, right?

Q: Yes.

MYLES: And I still remember it all. And so, okay, so the strike comes in, and the Birmingham at that time was entirely a steel town. The place went dead overnight- I mean, you could have run a truck down the middle of the main street, and you wouldn't hit anything. So, we left. My father did a couple of wells as we headed back across the country during the summer of 1956. We were in New Mexico and then Colorado, but finally ended up in Moab, Utah in the middle of the uranium boom. My father was

drilling ventilation wells for the mine shafts in the uranium business. The boom had caused Moab to explode in population. At the beginning of the boom in 1955, when a Texan named Charlie Sheen discovered uranium in the nearby hills, Moab's population was about 1500. By the fall of 1956 the town grew to about 6,000. They had one elementary school. Fifth grade, Helen M. Knight Elementary. They had to have split sessions, and so I started at 7:00 in the morning and finished at noon, and then there was another session from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00. Utah schools were better than Texas schools and god knows better than Alabama, so I went from bust to boom. I had to struggle and catch up and all that, which I did.

Okay, they were furiously building a second school, so for the sixth grade in 1957 I started school in Moab but in a different school. Some disruption there, but most of the teachers and students I had known at the older school came over to the new school – Southeast Elementary. But I didn't have long to be comfortable - halfway through that school year, in January 1958, we moved to Casa Grande, Arizona, which is about halfway between Phoenix and Tucson, and they were expanding the cotton country there at that time. It's interesting because now it's all under houses because it's become a bedroom community for Phoenix.

Parenthetically, among all the other life-changing events, while we were in Moab my father decided to convert us to Catholicism, which occurred on December 26, 1956.

Q: Let me ask a question here, one quick question here before you go on. Prior to his conversion had you and your family been religious in a different denomination.

MYLES: Non-religious in a different denomination; nominally Southern Baptist.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: But that's a very long story, but my father's family was not religious; my mother's family was. But my mother was not religious the way her parents were for a lot of reasons. My mother's family was very, very, very, very, very devout. My grandfather was the head of the Baptist Brotherhood, a deacon in the church and all this; they were both born-again teetotalers. My father's family is from a cowboy orientation. Before my grandfather got into the drilling business through his relatives at the beginning of the 20th century, they had all been raising horses and had been forever, even before they had come from Alabama after the Civil War. My father used to say that his father wouldn't know the inside of a church if he'd seen it, but he also could identify the inside of any honky tonk and bar within 500 miles of Lubbock. Now, so it was a very different orientation, but common for West Texas at the time.

If you know anything about the Anglo culture of West Texas, the old white Southern bedrock of the structure there. You had two types of people; the cowboy people who came first and the farmers who came afterwards. So, my mother's family was from Arkansas, they came to West Texas in 1927, but my father's family had been there since 1869 and right there you had the two different groups. Well, the two different groups

ended up in this little town across the street from each other. And my mother's father was the postmaster; he was the rock. He was- there's another influence on me. He was the federal presence in a town of 600 people. He was the white-collar side, okay. My father's side was the blue-collar side. So, when I was growing up, when I would be there in the summer and Christmas and like that, before the post office department started these- hiring people for the peak periods and all that, my grandfather started that on his own. He put my grandmother on the government payroll as his clerk. He owned the post office building and rented it back to the post office department. It was all legal back in those days. He privately employed all his kids and all his grand-kids every summer and every Christmas so they could get the Sears Roebuck and Wards catalogs out. Because you can imagine what it would be like for a couple of people because in the old days Seats and Wards were Amazon. The catalogs would show up in a huge truck and they were, you know, that thick, and you just couldn't do it by yourself. So, I worked in the post office from the time I was nine until the time I was 13 every summer and every Christmas. And I always used to say later, when I ended up working for the federal government, I wish I could have had that time on my pension that I got unofficially from that.

Okay. So, that's how that worked. And so, that was, again, home base. But anyway, so my father met this priest who was the parish priest in Moab, and they were friends the rest of their lives. Moving forward, he comes back into the picture again. And so, my father was very influenced by him. So, when I was in the fifth grade, not only was I dealing with a split session at school, I was going from seven to noon, at 1:00 in the afternoon, the Catholic church being a couple of blocks from the school, I'd go to catechism class.

Q: Stanley, one quick thing. While we're recording, try not to make sounds like tapping the table and so on because it'll be hard for the transcriber to hear what you're say.

MYLES: Okay. I'll try not to be expressive.

Q: No, no. I didn't-

MYLES: I got it, I got it.

So, the point then being is that I'm in a new state, and in a new, and very different school - a Catholic school being run by Dominican nuns. The mother superior was an Irish missionary nun. This was very exotic to me. But it was an excellent school, very tough. And that raised my game a little bit more, okay? Okay.

Now it really gets worse. So, I graduated from there. The Arizona system, I don't know if it's the same now, but at the time was a one through eight and nine through twelve system. They didn't have junior highs. Kind of like most Catholic schools still. In this area, for example, that's the way it is in Catholic schools; you have now K through eight. We didn't have Kindergarten back then. That was one of those eastern things. And, when I graduated from the eighth grade we left again, went back to Moab. I started high school in Moab. Six weeks later we move to North Las Vegas, Nevada. My father was doing a couple of things for the Atomic Energy Commission. So, I went to junior high for six

weeks in Las Vegas. Excellent school at that time because of all the Atomic Energy Commission employees and the Air Force and all the rest. There was this federal impact money because there was so much federal activity that the U.S. Government was subsidizing the local schools.

Problem is, then after those six weeks we went back to Ackerly. And now, the little 150-student high school back in Ackerly was academically way below the school in Nevada. It was like holy moly. Now, worse than that, I was now 13 years old in the ninth grade. Oh, the other thing was, is that I, of course, in Utah and then in Nevada, started algebra. Now, we didn't have algebra one and two like they do now; just algebra. Okay. Ninth grade was when everybody was taking algebra, but not in Ackerly. In Ackerly, in ninth grade, instead you took agriculture.

Q: Wow.

MYLES: Yes. So, algebra waited for the tenth grade. But I'd been taking algebra for half a year already. They told me too bad, we're going to put you in the agriculture class. I wouldn't have known agriculture if it had come up and bit me.

Q: Right, right.

MYLES: So, my mother, used to being the daughter of the number one guy in town, told the school board that she'll sue, made a number of threats. And of course, here's the postmaster behind her, right? They relented and put me in the sophomore year algebra class, okay? Now, I did fine academically but there was now creeping up this other problem, which was I'm 13. Most everybody in the algebra class is 15. And some of the members of that class were extremely distracting to a 13-year-old. So, I had a number of problems focusing. This did not get any better as I continued high school a year younger at least than everybody else I was in class with.

Okay, at that end of that year then we move to Salt Lake City, Utah.

Q: Wow.

MYLES: Yes. My father then was working, doing things for Kennecott Copper and then later on he actually worked for the brewery there. People wouldn't know there was one, but there was, called Lucky Lager Brewery out of San Francisco.

Okay, now I'm in – Salt Lake City, the seat of the LDS Church. We've grown up with the LDS Church in the sense that both in Arizona and in Utah it's extremely strong; of course, it had been in Moab and the Mesa area; they have a temple in Mesa and all that. And so, I knew, I was prepared for it because we'd already, given how aggressive the LDS Church used to be about proselytizing, more than they are now, they still do it, obviously, you basically had to read the Book of Mormon to say to them yes, I read it, forget it, you know. And then, we get to Salt Lake and I discover that, of course, it may be the seat of Mormonism, but oh, by the way, only 22 years after Brigham Young

established Zion in 1847, Irish immigrants built the Union Pacific Railroad, showed up in Salt Lake City, and then they built the Denver Rio Grande Railroad too. And then, they decided to stick around. And they worked mainly in copper mining and gold mining and coal mining and all this. So, my high school is 100 years old. All these old Irish families and everything.

So, I found out when I got there that- at that time, Salt Lake City might have been maybe 70 percent LDS, but it was about 20 percent Catholic, including my high school. And so, anybody who knows Salt Lake who I remember talking to since, LDS or anything else, when I mention my high school, they'd go oh, yeah, you know. And we used to play sports against the public high schools, which were predominantly LDS, right? Like the crusades it was like. Because this is before the Second Vatican Council; there wasn't any kind of ecumenical movement going on.

So, I spent three years there. Best school I attended, bar none. Really, along with the school in Arizona and the Nevada one briefly, they really provided the bedrock of my education.

Q: Now, let me-

MYLES: Went to 10 schools altogether. There you go.

Q: That is a fascinating story. Let me go back a moment. So, your parents both lived in the same area and that's how they met in Texas.

MYLES: Across the street from each other, grew up across the street from each other, one year apart.

Q: And prior to that, the grandparents had sort of migrated there in the periods of migration as people went west and developed different lands for different things. Have you looked back before your grandparents to learn about ancestry?

MYLES: I have to laugh. You keep pushing the buttons that get the long answer. My wife always says to me, don't give them a long answer.

Q: No, it's fine.

MYLES: She always uses the example of when she asked me one time, many years ago, how many teams there were in Major League Baseball, and I started the conversation with - in 1876 the National League was founded. Yes. She tells me that all the time.

Alright. I am an amateur genealogist.

Q: Ah.

MYLES: I started in 1979 in the National Archives, pen, paper and microfiche. Okay? Been doing it ever since. I do it for other people. I don't do it for money, but it's a hobby. I've done it for other people. I've been a member of Ancestry since it started. In fact, the LDS tradition was an influence. My main interest started from the point of not only of discovering where everybody in the family came from, from West Texas since obviously we weren't Comanche, we didn't start there. Well, and then the name; I wanted to know how long it had been that my last name had been spelled in the less-common first name milieu. A lot of people over the years have thought that my name, Myles, was my first name. In fact, it's one of the oldest first names in the English language; it comes from the Latin, right? So, the same as- the same Miles as the unit of measurement; it's Latin for the unit of management and became a name too- it's old. Stanley is a last name. It got into my family on my mother's side when the explorer Henry Stanley was famous in the latter part of the 19th century. He found Dr. Livingstone, right?

Q: Okay.

MYLES: So, I've been backwards the whole time. My last name's a first name; my first name's a last name. And in high school they called me Myles Standish. Right? Okay.

So, I wanted to have some idea why it's "Y" and how long it's been "Y," so I had various motivations. Alright? So, I started when I had the opportunity starting in, like I say, in '79. I was here in Washington and I was able to go to the National Archives. The only thing I knew about my Myles great-grandfather was he was supposedly born mid-1850s in Mobile, Alabama. Okay? Well, I started going through the microfiche and unfortunately, Mobile was the largest city in Alabama in the 1850s. I searched line by line through the 1860 Census for weeks. No luck. So, I started with surrounding counties and lucky for me, I started with the smallest populated county across the bay in Baldwin County, Alabama, and eureka, my whole family was over there. My great-great-great grandfather came with his mother and his family to Baldwin County in 1801. And I know that because I have a document from the governor of the state of Georgia which, at that time, was administering Indian land in what later became Alabama; in 1801 it was the Mississippi territory, and giving my family a passport to cross Indian land to go to West Florida. West Florida, of course, wasn't part of that land. West Florida was, at that time, Spanish. But they didn't get all the way to West Florida; they got like five miles north of it in the northern part of what is now Alabama. Okay. So, I established that the Myles family was in Alabama before coming to Texas.

On my mother's side- my mother's maiden name is Rudeseal. It is an anglicized version, as I discovered, of a Swiss German name called Rudisuhli. Okay. Well, my grandparents knew nothing of this. In fact, their youngest son, my uncle, my youngest uncle, when he was in high school he had to write some kind of paper about the family and he asked my grandfather what the old country was, and he, of course, said Georgia, because that's the oldest place that he knew that the family had come from. In the 19th Century my great-grandfather had moved the Rudeseal family from Georgia to Arkansas, southwest Arkansas. Prescott, the county seat of Nevada County is the nearest town to where they settled. Nevada County is the county east of Hope, where Bill Clinton is from, and east of

Texarkana. Some of them had gone before the Civil War, some after, but they were originally from North Georgia, a town called Cornelia in Habersham County, which is "Deliverance" country.

Q: Wow.

MYLES: My grandfather's family was as cracker as you can get.

Q: And just a very quick thing, I mean, "Deliverance," the movie, the belief was it was going on in a different state from Georgia, it was-

MYLES: No.

Q: -West Virginia or something.

MYLES: No.

Q: No? It was Georgia?

MYLES: North Georgia is just as Appalachian as West Virginia is.

Q: Ah, interesting. Okay.

MYLES: The Appalachian Range ends just before you get to Atlanta, so if you go up to Cornelia, you're heading on up towards Clemson, South Carolina, you move on up towards Asheville, North Carolina; that's still, that's all part of the same thing. The Great Smokies aren't very far away and it's all Appalachia. Yes.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: It could have been anywhere in there, it could have been North Carolina, eastern Tennessee, which didn't secede, you know. President Johnson, the first one, was from eastern Tennessee; there were few slaveholders in that section of Tennessee. It was the Johnson City area, you know, his family were prominent there, that kind of thing. So, yes. Because when you're going- when you go down that way, once you left the Shenandoah Valley you wouldn't see another- they didn't have that many slaveholders in Shenandoah Valley, but they had some; once you went a little bit further that became West Virginia because they didn't have any slaves over there, right? And all the area of the Appalachians in Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina and Georgia and Huntsville, Alabama, were anti-secessionists. And in some areas they even provided some troops for the Union army, just like Southern Maryland produced all those troops for the Southern army, they just went across the Chesapeake and joined Virginia units.

And so, anyway, all Southern. When you go on back the rest of the way it's just a straight-line progression like so many others in history of the United States, they all came at various times as far back as the 17th century. I have a line that goes all the way back to

the original settlers of the colony of Maryland. My ninth great-grandfather was the colonial governor of Maryland in St. Mary's County in the late 17th Century, and then it goes on. I have ancestors who started in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Georgia, and South Carolina, and they all went west through various routes. And the only- and there's no real deviation from the point of view if you look at the South in the old sense when it included all the slave-holding states, including the ones that didn't secede, because even another of my great-great-great grandfathers was a founding member of the Republican Party in Missouri, and he had seven sons and three stayed in Missouri because they agreed with him and the other four went to Texas in 1859.

Q: Wow.

MYLES: And when the war started, they stayed in Texas. My great-great-grandfather joined a Texas Confederate unit that was basically a home unit because the frontier moved back 100 miles because as soon as the U.S. Army wasn't there anymore the Comanche's came back. So, they stayed out and fought the Comanche all during the Civil War. His daughter, my great-grandmother, was born on the frontier in Central Texas, right on the Comanche frontier. This is back before there was any West Texas at all; it was the last part of the United States to be settled because of the Comanche. The greatest unheard-of "Indian fighter" in America is a guy named Captain Ranald Mackenzie, who dismounted the Comanche at the Battle of Palo Duro in 1874 and got them resettled onto the reservation at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. And when that happened, then the ranches came, you know, XIT and the 666 and the Slaughter Ranch and all that.

And so, the farmers didn't show up until the 1890s and 1900s when they had high crop prices. That's when the antecedents of the Dust Bowl got started up in the northern part of the Panhandle and then to Oklahoma and Kansas, they started breaking up the prairie and growing wheat and all this kind of stuff. And that's why, in 1927, my grandfather on my mother's side, came to the Ackerly area to start farming. He had been in Texas before because the army had sent him there. He had joined the army the day after the U.S. declared war on the Kaiser, and he wanted to go to France but they sent him to San Antonio. Because of the Zimmerman telegram the U.S. thought the Mexicans might invade. Neither our government nor the German government seemed to completely understand that the Mexicans had no interest whatsoever in invading the United States. So, he went to San Antonio for a year and then, by the time they started to send him to France the war ended. Because you know, they thought that the war was going to last for a lot longer than it actually did. He, in fact, was on his way to the boats in New Jersey and ended up staying the rest of the time peeling potatoes until his hitch was up in 1920 at Fort Dix, Camp Dix as it was then. So, after he'd married my grandmother and started his family in Arkansas, he went back to Texas and worked in the oil fields to make enough money to buy a farm. But he turned out to be a not particularly great farmer, and so in 1935 he took the Civil Service test and got the postmastership, which ended up being a tremendous boon for him and everybody else because the farming would not have been as lucrative by any means.

So, certainly neither of my grandfathers was rich, but within the context of the time they were in the upper class of this little town. And it took me a while to figure that out. To me, it was just normal. But there were people with a lot less, a lot less. But it was up and down, you know what I mean? It was up and down, good years and bad years, which is what it was like. So, anyway, the end of the story is, is that I've researched the whole thing. I've gone back and found that- and then what DNA added to it, I am about 40 percent German, about 40 percent English and about- I like to say - 40 percent Irish.

Q: Okay. Alright. Now, other siblings besides you?

MYLES: I'm an only child.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: Which made it a little less complicated because if there had been anyone else that would, of course, complicated all the moves even more.

Q: Oh, yes.

Now, the interesting thing is, you talk about your father's work as if, you know, you have some understanding of some of the practicalities, the engineering aspects. Did you go out with him periodically to see how he worked, and everything operated?

MYLES: Absolutely. And the result of that was that I realized, relatively early on, that I was white collar, not blue collar.

Q: Ah-ha. Okay.

MYLES: You know, there are lots of people who prefer the outdoors and working outside. It's not a matter of hard work or not. I mean, it's just that I was my mother's child. I gravitated toward the same work that she did. She joined the Marine Corps in 1943 and they made her a mail clerk. Right?

Q: Right.

MYLES: That's what she'd done just before that, so they probably asked her, well, what have you been doing? Oh, well, I work for my grandfather in the post office. Okay, here you go. So, she went to Camp LeJeune, North Carolina as a mail clerk. Okay.

So, anyway, yes, so I had the opportunity to taste both sides. And as a result of that, I knew really pretty early on that I wasn't that much of an outdoor, blue collar kind of guy like my father was. Because you couldn't have put my father in an office more than 10, 15 minutes before he would become completely antsy.

Q: Okay, okay.

Now, the experience, then, you're going to school but then you're with your grandparents in the summers; aside from just the work, you know, working in the post office, were there other opportunities that you had to socialize and so on that also gave you a little bit of a knowledge of the wider world?

MYLES: Oh, yes. My grandmother on my father's side will have to come into this picture now. My grandmother, I used to call her the "Isadora Duncan of West Texas." She was liberated before anybody knew what that meant. She was born in 1884. She lied about her age her entire life to the point where she gave up some of her Social Security benefits to maintain the fiction. Part of it was because my grandfather was 12 years younger than she was. In recent years I discovered through research, that she in fact, when she was younger, had run off with a traveling gambler and they'd gotten married in Bakersfield, California, and then things didn't work out and she got the marriage annulled and went back to Big Spring and then married my grandfather six years later. My father's older brother arrived suspiciously soon in 1917, so who knows, but the fact was that she was 12 years older. But more importantly than that, she was extremely progressive, not only for the age, but also, especially for the environment, West Texas. Even though Big Spring, Texas is a cowboy town; never dry, except when it had to be during Prohibition. During Prohibition it was the home of countless bootleggers because the cowboy side of the equation wasn't accepting Prohibition. This was some crazy thing. And so, the centers in West Texas at that time for the bootlegging industry were Amarillo on one end and Big Spring on the other end, all because they'd been cowboy, ranch commercial centers before the farmers came. And then you get farther enough away toward Pecos and El Paso and down along the border, they just openly flaunted Prohibition. My father told me once that his father had seven bootleggers on retainer at all times; no matter where he was working in West Texas he would know where he could get something to drink.

So, you may know that in 1932 the Democratic National Committee was still being dominated by former New York Governor Smith, who had been the 1928 nominee and lost to Herbert Hoover. So, Franklin Roosevelt went out and did kind of what President Obama did in the 2008 and 2012 elections. He had this separate organization, about 50,000 campaign workers around the country, and my grandmother was one of them.

Q: Wow.

MYLES: So, she worked in his campaign in our county in 1932 and 1936. So, by the time I'm coming along and getting to be interested in all of this, she's the one that I would spend time with who would tell me all of the political history and what it had been like. My mother's father also was involved in politics at the time. He worked in the campaign of the winning candidate for the House of Representatives in 1934. So my grandfather on one side and my grandmother on the other side were political allies in those days. It was mainly conservative Democrats, but it was still Democrats, right?

Q: Right.

MYLES: When I would be in Ackerly I always stayed at my mother's parents because at this point my other grandmother had divorced my grandfather and she lived by herself. It had been decided I was too much of a burden to stay, but I often visited her and we talked politics the whole time. My only regret is I never got a chance, never occurred to me at that time, to ask her about her mother's family. That line is the only one I can't find in my research.

Q: Interesting.

MYLES: They came from Illinois of all places. I think my great-grandfather worked on the Santa Fe Railroad, which was being built in the area at the time that my grandmother was born, but we don't know. I always regret the fact that I don't have that research. But we talked politics.

Got to be 1960- her family's Irish; her maiden name was Connor. And it got to be 1960 and she falls in love with John Kennedy. And so, we gave her a television in 1960 and she was just glued to it, the whole thing, and we followed it together that summer.

And parenthetically also, my grandfather was a friend of Lyndon Johnson's. My father met Lyndon Johnson when my grandfather drilled some water wells for him on his ranch in '32.

Anyway, as I said earlier, my father's mother and my mother's father were political allies in the 1930s. But then, 1960 comes, and while she's telling me that we had to be related to the Kennedys because we both came from Ireland, my other grandfather has pamphlets on the coffee table talking about the pope is going to live in Washington. And I would say to him, he's got a nice house over there in Rome; why is it you think he wants to move to America? And when my grandmother found out that he voted for Richard Nixon for the same reason that he voted for Hoover in 1928, she told me - I forgave him then, but I won't do it now. So, that's- So, with all of the moving around, and all the different people who I met - Anglos and Mexicans and Native Americans - and my grandmother's influence, I knew a lot more about the world at my age than most people that were sitting in Ackerly, and had always been in Ackerly.

I don't know if you ever saw the movie "October Sky." It's by a man named Homer Hickam, who ended up being one of the chief engineers building the Saturn V rocket with Wernher von Braun in Huntsville, Alabama. He came from a town called Coalwood, West Virginia. His father was the mining superintendent of the coal mine at Coalwood. Homer gets out of this little coal town by being fascinated by rockets and by winning a science competition. And at one point in the movie, his older brother is recruited by University of West Virginia to play football. And Bobby Bouden, who was the football coach at West Virginia then is quoted saying that the only two ways you could get out of a town like Coalwood was the army and football. Right? Well, that's exactly what Ackerly was like. It was cotton, not coal, but the vast majority of kids there never went anywhere else, you see.

Okay. Now, of course, this leads me to one of the reasons why Foreign Service didn't become quite as alien a beast as you might have expected, even though the fact that at a certain point I was rebelling against all this and I'd say when I grow up, I'm going to stay in one place, and that's it.

Q: Yes.

MYLES: So, that's the background of the whole thing.

Q: Now, you mentioned Mexicans, so you had a little bit of exposure to a somewhat diverse community, given that there are so many reservations out there and so many Native American tribes, did you have experiences with them as well?

MYLES: Oh, yes. In Arizona, I played on Pony League baseball and we played on the Sacaton Indian reservation, which is just north of Casa Grande. And in Moab, we had the Navajos. They weren't really from right there, but just down South a little ways. And we had many opportunities to interact with them in their environment. You know, so much of the problem you hear about where that is either reservations are being mismanaged or they're out of their environment, and I never saw any of those kinds of problems. About the only social problem I ever saw was one time we were in Grants, New Mexico, which was having an oil boom, and that was in the summer of 1956, and there were a bunch of Navajos and Zunis who were working there and they were having alcohol problems.

Q: Ah, yes.

MYLES: They were away from home, working in the oil business. But yes, so yes.

Now I didn't mention African-Americans because there were relatively few in the areas where I grew up. The only time I ever saw Jim Crow was in Alabama. I had no idea what was going on. I thought I was on the back side of the moon. And I asked my mother why it was that there were two bathrooms and two water fountains and all that, and she was like oh, well, that's the way they do it over here.

And my mother was a major influence on me, too, parenthetically, because she was the person who was most negatively affected by our roving lifestyle. She was the one that had to quit every good job she ever had. She was a bookkeeper and a bank teller and every time she got into a position of any kind of authority, off we'd go. And that influenced me tremendously. I mean, when we left Moab, she was the head teller and she had to quit; when she worked in bank in Casa Grande, same thing; she'd moved up into a position, a supervisory position, had to quit. I found, even at that age and in that environment, it was the 1950s and what was expected, I thought it was appalling. And so, I am what was then, still am and continue to be the most obnoxious feminist you're going to find anywhere in the country.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: But yes, yes. I saw a lot of different diversity in my environment, which meant that when I entered the Foreign Service, the prospect of working in a foreign setting didn't bother me in any way.

Q: Now, you had mentioned, you know, you're visiting your grandmother in the early '60s when Kennedy was elected and so on, at that point, you're a teenager; were you also beginning to see the counterculture and was that having any effect on you?

MYLES: None. We didn't have it yet. It was a very conservative culture by today's standards.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: I've always said that the '60s, as they are usually thought of, didn't start until l965, when President Johnson escalated the Vietnam War, except in California and of course the civil rights struggle in the South.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: We were still in the '50s if you think of it in terms of both political terms and in cultural terms, music terms. I mean, the '60s music, the way people think of it, didn't start until that day in December when I first heard "I Want to Hold Your Hand," except maybe for the Beach Boys. The Beach Boys hit Utah in 1963 and immediately became the most popular thing there ever was. And they came up in the summer of '63 to give a concert at the amusement park between Ogden and Salt Lake and the place was completely jammed. They were the thing. That was pre-Beatles; that was the summer before the Beatles came. But otherwise, the music then was the do-wop groups and, you know, and Elvis, Roy Orbison, Paul Anka.

And of course, now we get to college. It's probably best to mention that now. I then went to school initially-

Q: Wait, wait, wait. One second before you go to college. The only other question I wanted to ask was going around to all these different schools, were you able to maintain any extracurricular activities, sport or scouting or anything like that?

MYLES: My father was the biggest sports fan in the history of mankind. And so, the go-to thing for us was sports. I wasn't any good at it. I was the back-up catcher, but I was mainly the statistician. Scorekeeper we called them then. And I knew how to use both the Wilson and the Spalding scorecards. So, in both what we now would call middle school now and in high school, I was the stat guy for everything. I started in the seventh grade and went all the way through high school I was the stat guy for everything. And it got to be kind of funny because when I was doing basketball stats, you can't do those by yourself. You have to have a team because somebody has got to do where the shots have

been taken from, somebody's got to count rebounds, somebody's got to do assists, and somebody's got to do turnovers. And so, when I was a senior, I sat at the scorer's table and I had this little group of freshmen and sophomores following me around. It was very exciting. Baseball is the only one you can completely- if you do it right, you can completely recreate an entire game and call the play-by-play from a sheet of paper, and you can't do that with either football or basketball. But I did all of that.

And in fact, I learned how to use a slide rule to do the averages and so, I was extremely popular because I could get batting averages and everything done much faster than anybody else. Tell anybody what a slide rule is now, right? And then, that was one.

And then, the other was relating back, was football. And that relates back to college in the sense that my father grew up as a huge fan of our local university, Texas Tech University in Lubbock. His parents would take him to games back in the 1930s when the coach at that time, Pete Cawthorn, who had been an assistant for Knute Rockne at Notre Dame, had put together a national schedule, mainly of Catholic schools that were powers of the time, like Marquette and St. Mary's and Santa Clara and the University of Detroit and Fordham, plus some local schools. And all during the 1930s they would go all over the country. Like, they were one of the first teams to use the airplane. In fact, the story goes that they got beat by the University of Detroit one time so badly and they were flying back to Lubbock, and Pete was in such despair that he said Lord, I wish this airplane would just drop out of the sky. In 1938, Tech had the tenth-ranked team in the country and got to go to the Cotton Bowl, so they were very, very popular. And that just stuck with my father. He eventually went to school there himself, although he didn't graduate. One of my uncles graduated from Tech in 1960 and I graduated from there in '68.

And so, any time that we were anywhere that we could get anywhere near a Tech football game, we went. And of course, we usually lost any time we were there. Like, we went to Tucson, Arizona, when we were in Casa Grande; we lost that game in '59 to the University of Arizona.

And he was even more huge on baseball. We go to baseball games of every kind at any level, anywhere, any time. I was on the high school teams, the American Legion in the summertime, all the way through high school. So, that was the driving force; football and baseball. Basketball not so much; not such a big deal in those days.

Q: And so, now you have mentioned where you went to college. Was the decision to go there basically because your family knew it and it was the natural choice?

MYLES: Again, not a simple answer. In 1963, when I was starting my senior year in high school, my father got a job working for the Cerro de Pasco Copper Corporation in Peru. Big money, big overseas job. My mother and I stayed in Salt Lake so that I could finish my senior year, and my mother continued where she was working at the time. The plan was that at the end of that year she would go to Peru and I would go to college.

So, it was decided that -- we were under the thrall of Catholic education at the time -- that I would go to a Catholic school in Texas so that my family there could keep an eye on me, because we weren't from Utah. And so, we decided on St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, which is a Holy Cross school; it was Holy Cross nuns who were half of the teachers in my high school. At that time, it was all men.

So, halfway through my senior year my father got altitude sickness, lost his job and had to come home. Initially it looked like we would stay in Salt Lake, so I applied and was accepted to the University of Utah. But instead my father got a job drilling water wells in Wisconsin, so rather than me staying on my own in Utah, my parents thought it best for me to go to Saint Edward's. So, I went there, fine, no problem. Good school. But it's a private school. My parents were hoping two things; they were hoping, one, that my father would get back into the usual routine of work and everything would be fine financially, plus they applied for additional financial aid. I had gotten a $500 per year loan from the old National Student Defense program, and my parents were hoping I could get more. Well, none of that happened. They went to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, my father did some work there but then for a while he wasn't getting any work. So, when the summer of 1965 came along, it was pretty clear that they weren't going to be able to sustain me going to that private school. Well, Tech is the family school and it's, you know, it's where we come from and it was an obvious solution for both me and my parents.

So, tuition at Texas state schools for a resident at that time was $25 a semester. Well, that's what happened. Financial reasons. Now, I was very unhappy about that at the time. Again, like my mother, you know, I'd joined the local service fraternity and I was kind of well known. It's a small school; I'd established myself and all that. All of a sudden, I'm going to school with 16,000 other people. And initially, because my father was out of work for a while, I had to live with my parents for the first six months I was there. It was one of the most miserable times in my life. Because I couldn't reestablish myself in the college environment living with my parents.

Q: Yes, yes.

MYLES: Well, then my father made a big lifestyle change that next year. He went from drilling wells to selling drilling equipment for a manufacturer called George E. Failing Corporation out of Enid, Oklahoma. And he went down to work selling drilling equipment at their Houston store, leaving me in Lubbock in the dorm. Liberation at last!

Q: At last.

MYLES: Indeed, everything was suddenly rosy. But my experience at St. Edward's had honed my interests a little bit because when I left high school, I had an interest in basically two areas, biology, and history/political science. And I went to St. Ed's without a declared major in order to consider both areas. At St. Ed's I determined that I liked certain parts of biology, particularly taxonomy and structure, paleontology, kind of historical things. But on the clinical side, not so great. I had an advanced biology class in

high school and I tried to draw a frog and it looked like an amoeba. I mean, I didn't have the knack for the lab.

And also, my interest in history had grown. That freshman year I had a Western Civilization class. That year the second session of Vatican II was going on, and already the ecumenical movement had opened a crack. So, even though our textbook was by a Catholic publisher with an imprimatur by a bishop, when we got to the Reformation the brother of the Holy Cross teaching the class allowed a more liberal interpretation than I had heard previously

This incident is important because it affected my thinking about studying history. You may know that during the Republic days, in the 1840s, the Republic of Texas had a big ad campaign in Germany saying: we've got all kinds of land here, come on over to Texas, it's going to be great. So, this whole belt developed that runs to the east and north of San Antonio populated by German immigrants, between San Antonio and Austin. And one of those cities is Fredericksburg, which is best known as the hometown of Admiral Chester A. Nimitz, fleet admiral of the Pacific theater in World War II.

Well, the town grew up on both sides of the main street and on one side is the Catholics and the other side is the Lutherans. And the Catholics had St. Mary's High School and the Lutherans had Fredericksburg High School and since it was public the Catholics helped pay for it. Well, we had a kid in my class at the time from St. Mary's High School, and when that teacher got to the Reformation and admitted that there may have been some reason for Martin Luther to object to Vatican policy but he was just misguided, this guy stood up and said Martin Luther was the Antichrist and he'd hear nothing else differently and walked out of the room. It was right about then that I thought, you know, maybe I ought to be learning history in a more secular manner. And so, when it became clear that that's what the direction was, that was something that stuck in my mind.

And so, I went on and I got a degree in American history and a minor in political science from Texas Tech. History had always been kind of the first with me. I mean, you can see, you know, it's my thing. So, because teaching was what I had experienced, I initially took secondary education classes. Well, at the end of my junior year I'd figured out that I didn't want to try to control high school kids, so I dropped that. But there still was the question of whether or not I would want to pursue college teaching or something else.

So, that leads to the Foreign Service, so that's where we are. Because now we'll come to my senior year and you'll find out why that process starts.

Q: Okay. One quick question before we go there; while you were at college, were you doing any other important extracurricular activities? In other words, something that also took up your time and attention?

MYLES: Yes. At St. Edward's, because I was considering secondary education, I joined the Texas State Teachers' Association chapter for students, Texas Student Education Association. Kind of the FFA (Future Farmers of America) for teaching. I went to their

state convention in San Antonio that year, was a delegate from St. Edward's. And so, I joined up again at Tech; I became their president my junior year.

Q: Wow.

MYLES: And I was re-elected my senior year, but I then resigned because I wasn't going to continue in secondary education. So, that was one thing.

And the other was, starting my senior year, at the point where my interest in the Foreign Service comes into play, which we'll get to, I joined Delta Phi Epsilon, which is the American Foreign Service fraternity, which started at Georgetown -- we had a chapter at Tech at that time -- mainly interested in foreign trade, foreign business.

Q: Interesting.

MYLES: But one of my pledge brothers and I are the only two people to ever go into the Foreign Service from Tech that I know about. Both of us were pledges the same year and I came in before he did. We are both retired, obviously. But that's another series of stories. And in 1968 we became very, very political in that organization because we participated in a mock political convention- at that time, every four years they did a mock political convention in which every student organization participated.

Q: Interesting.

MYLES: So, it was held March 1968, and it was always the party out of power, so it was the Republican convention, which is kind of ironic, given what happened eventually that year. And so, everybody got to choose a Republican candidate and that was very easy on our conservative campus – conservative groups ran Richard Nixon and Texas Senator Tower running as a favorite son. But for more liberal groups, such as the Students for Democratic Action and us, the choices were more difficult. So, we ran Chuck Percy, the then-senator from Illinois, who was a moderate. Since Nixon was the favorite, we set the goal to block Nixon from getting the nomination. We ended up winning best demonstration under the banner of our slogan, which was Percy Galore, a play on the name of a character in the James Bond movie, "Goldfinger.". And we succeeded- the convention ended up nominating Tower as the favorite son, so we felt like we had won a major victory.

A week after that convention, President Johnson withdrew and threw the whole thing into shambles. And at that point, I did some work as a student volunteer for the next couple of months, just flyers and calls and things, in the campaign of Robert Kennedy. At that time Texas had a convention system, and it was in May, and of course, Hubert Humphrey got all the delegations because President Johnson controlled the party in Texas. And the thing that was always so disappointing for me, parenthetically, about that, is a lot of the people I worked with said: oh, we can't possibly support Humphrey, so we're going to let Nixon win, and then we'll have who we want in '72. I said you're crazy; you're going to elect Nixon to be president for four years? Really? And they got their guy, Senator McGovern.

And you know how well that went. So, yes. So, those were the things I did in addition to the number one student activity at Lubbock at that time, which was to drive to Juárez, Mexico, where they wouldn't look for your i.d. when you were drinking beer. And it was only six hours away; for Texans that's nothing.

Q: Got it.

MYLES: I'd tell that story to people in this part of the country; that I'd drive down to Mexico for the weekend in order to drink, and the reply was: it's just like you're going to Maine; are you crazy? That was one of the ways I knew that the United States does have its regional differences.

Q: Exactly.

Now, okay. So, now, you graduate college in what year?

MYLES: 1968.

Q: Alright. Now you were beginning to talk about, at least being aware of the Foreign Service and joining that fraternity, so what happens next with graduation approaching?

MYLES: With what?

Q: With your graduation from college approaching.

MYLES: Well, alright. The elephant in the room throughout all this for any male college student in this period of time is the draft. Okay? So, that was part of it. My draft board in Lamesa, Texas, was giving deferments to the kids of farmers, farmer deferments. Which meant that if you weren't a farmer, you're in big trouble. And they weren't meeting their quotas before the lottery started in 1969. I registered for the draft in 1965 when I was 18 years old and got three deferments. Because I started college at 17. A year earlier than usual. So, it comes down to my senior year and a couple of things are important in the Foreign Service context. First thing was, my father had been working in Hermosillo, Mexico, and he got to be friends with the consul in Hermosillo. I think we still have a consulate there; I'm not sure, but I think so. And he told me about that, his experiences with the diplomats. And the other one was I took diplomatic history during my senior year.

Q: Ahh.

MYLES: And then, I joined the fraternity because of this interest; it wasn't the other way around. The academic interest was big because at this point, I'm thinking about, okay, graduate school. I'd gotten into graduate school and got a graduate assistantship at University of Houston for the next year. Politics, I'd just done some politics; that was interesting. It was obviously financially extremely long-term. And these are the kinds of avenues that I was thinking about, so I just added it to the list, and I said what the hell?

Because now, as you know, it's going to all depend on the exam. If I don't pass the exam, well forget that. So, I took the Graduate Record Exam the first week in December 1968 and I took the Foreign Service exam the second week. They were very similar at the time, but the Foreign Service test was harder. And three months later it came back and I had passed. So, this made a major impact.

Alright. And meanwhile, I'm talking to the Army and the Navy about officer candidate school because I'm going to be a college graduate, and I find out that everybody but the Army is able because of the draft situation at the time to limit OCS to people with 20/20 vision. To which I asked at the time, well, does that mean I'm ineligible for the draft because I wear glasses? And they said tough luck. You can't be an officer in the Navy, but you can still go in.

So, while I'm looking at all the various avenues the State Department comes back and says okay, great, we're processing you, you're going to graduate; but now you have to take the oral exam. I graduated from college on the first of June 1968; I went to Austin and took the oral in the office of the then-junior senator of Texas, Ralph Yarborough. I passed that. So, now they're going to process me for a junior officer class. That was June 2. These dates do not leave your mind. On July 23 this fat envelope from Selective Service shows up in the mail. And I called up all these various recruiters that I'd talked to and the Army said sure, go ahead on in and we'll convert you immediately into officer candidate school- So, technically, even though I was drafted, I went in as Regular Army.

Q: But you're going in, even though you're literally approaching the list for assignment with the Foreign Service?

MYLES: That didn't matter.

Q: Oh, wow, okay.

MYLES: You had to be in.

Q: Oh, wow.

MYLES: Yes. So, I got to basic training at Fort Polk, Louisiana. I get out of there and I'm up at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, learning how to blow up things; I was in the engineer corps. And the State Department letter comes, says congratulations, we want you to come in in November. Well, I went to the personnel sergeant in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and said: will you let me go? And they said you've got to be kidding. So, I went back and said I'm sorry, but unfortunately, you're a little late, and they said okay, yes, well, the law says we suspend your candidacy and it's waiting for you when you get back. That's the way the law was.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: Just frozen. It was just the timing.

Now, I learned later that, of course, if I had gotten in that class, they all went to Vietnam.

Q: Ah.

MYLES: They all went into the CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development) program, the nation-building program of the Agency for International Development.

Q: Right.

MYLES: And from my point of view that was actually worse because they had to care; they had to care about that whole nation-building program. I went in the army, blew things up, tried to keep my head down and get the hell out of there. I mean, so, from a certain point of view I was better off. Now, when I finally got in I had two years less time than some of these other guys did, so that was a disadvantage in the early years. Plus, quite honestly, don't think I could have learned Vietnamese. Of course, that might have kept me out of there, I don't know whether it would or not. But when I was in my early years as a junior officer I knew a lot of guys that had gone through this program, and by the time I actually got in in '71, we were into withdrawal from Vietnam by then and none of my class went there.

Q: Now, in the army, okay, you're in the engineering corps, but do you get assigned or deployed anywhere else besides this base, this first base?

MYLES: Well, I went to basic training, Fort Polk, Louisiana. I guess no army base is really a spa, but of all the ones you could go to, this was one of the worse. It's in a swamp; still is in a swamp. They called it Little Vietnam. Advanced training for the infantry was held there. Fort Leonard Wood is in the middle of the Ozarks and they used to call it Little Korea because it got so cold in the wintertime.

Q: Right.

MYLES: And I was at Fort Leonard Wood from October 1968 to March 1969. I took combat engineer training, eight weeks, and then they assigned me to teach land mine and trip wire warfare. And during the whole time I'm waiting for my class date in OCS. What had happened was that the OCS classes had been oversubscribed because, when Congress changed the draft law in 1967, at the beginning of my senior year, they took out graduate deferments. Going to graduate school was going to be the ticket to avoid the draft for huge numbers of people. So, that particular year, so many people who had intended to go to grad school signed up for OCS that the OCS classes backed up. They didn't give me an OCS class until March 1969. And the way the system worked was, when you enlisted, you got to select which branch of the army that you wanted to be in, and you went to the OCS that covered that branch. Well, my military aptitude was pretty low, and I was very self-aware of that, so I chose the Adjutant General Corps, which is paper pushers, okay? Headquartered at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis, Indiana. Perfect. Well, the OCS

for that branch was, at the time, engineer OCS at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Right? So, that's how I ended up in engineers because that was the conduit to go to the Adjutant General Corps.

So then- that's four months in enlisted training, and then OCS is five, and then a two-year commitment after commissioning. So, that's two years and nine months. My class would have started in April 1969. And that meant that I'd be in the army all of '70 and '71. Well, I'd learned several things that I didn't know when I started basic training. First, I found out being an enlisted man was not as bad as I had feared. Second, I learned that being an officer is a great idea if you want to be making a career out of it; otherwise the extra money's not worth it. And certainly not when we're all going to Vietnam anyway, with a few exceptions, and I'm doing what they call bad time, which doesn't change when your hitch is over. Still going to be five months and two years. So, now I can say: okay, I'll go to Vietnam now for a year and so it's one year versus two years and five months. Not a hard decision. The only one that was disappointed with that decision was my father, who was also in the Corps of Engineers in World War II, because he thought he was getting an officer in the family. I said to him, "I'm sorry, but you know, I don't want a career in the army." So, I had a little bit of regret about that but not a whole lot because again, I had determined that this was just not my career path. I'd also determined that Vietnam was a mistake- I hadn't even got there yet and I could just tell from talking to everybody coming back, this is crazy. And so, low motivation was the name of the game here. So, I dropped the OCS; two weeks later I got my orders. I'm going out there, I'll blow stuff up. Not exactly the greatest situation, but okay.

So I get to Vietnam. I get to Long Binh, U.S. Army headquarters, and assignments were done by paper back then, no computers. They say alright, kid, you're off to Pleiku, Central Highlands, to the 937th Engineer Group, and they'll give you your onward assignment when you get up there. I get up to Pleiku, I've got my personnel folder with me, I report to this Quonset hut; 937th Engineer Group was the administrative umbrella for all these different companies and battalions. And I swear, it seemed like every personnel sergeant in the United States Army at that time was from Alabama. I handed him the file and he looks at it and he said: well, son, we don't need any EOD today -- that's Explosives Ordinance Demolition -- because it turned out they had double-billeted the job.

Q: Ah, yes.

MYLES: And the guy had come in the day before, right? And the sergeant said: but we see here from your scores back at the reception station at Fort Polk that you scored well in radio. And I said: if you say so, Sarge; I said I don't remember anything about that 10 days of hell when I came into the reception station at Fort Polk. And he said: we're going to OJT you -- that's on-the-job-training – in radio down at Company D of the 20th Battalion. Okay, fine, off I go. And to give you an idea, you know, in the old army, they threw away a year's worth of training right there. Right? So, then I'm learning to use the radio, bur right away I ended up on the same mine sweep with the demo guy that got my slot, except I've got a radio there with an aerial next to me saying hi, Charlie, you know.

Q: Got it.

MYLES: So, I said to myself, I said if I ever see that sergeant again, I'm going to kill him.

Q: Oh, yes.

MYLES: So, I spent my year in Vietnam. There were four of us college graduates in the whole company except the officers, and that was the supply sergeant, myself, the company clerk and one guy that was one of these outdoor types who worked out on the line. I ended up being in charge of running the equipment back and forth; we're paving roads, we're building bunkers. I went on the mine sweeps for months. And we were support troops, so we only shot back when we got shot at. We didn't have to do all those search and destroy missions and other really dangerous things, which made a huge difference. We got shot at and we shot back, but we didn't go looking for trouble. And most of the time, because we were paving the roads; we never controlled Vietnam at night so the North Vietnamese army used the roads at night that we paved in the daytime. So, you know, it worked out. Although, again, luck and timing because I had a friend who re-upped for another year in the same company and they moved him to an area that second year where the North Vietnamese didn't want them to be and they had all kinds of trouble. So, it just kind of depended. It was that kind of thing, you know. Five kilometers one way or the other was a different war from five kilometers somewhere else. It was always like that.

And so, I was fairly lucky. It was a relatively quiet time; 1969-70, as opposed to, God knows, '68 with the Tet Offensive and all that kind of stuff. And a lot less than later when the withdrawal got started, it just barely had started when I was there. And then, it turned out they had a program that if your tour in Vietnam ended and you had less than five months left on your enlistment they didn't reassign you, they just let you go because it was less expensive than reassigning you. So, on April Fool's Day 1970, a very appropriate day I thought, I was separated from the U.S. Army at Fort Lewis, Washington.

Q: Wow.

MYLES: So, I did not have any romantic notion about the glory of war. I went- I didn't particularly want to go, I never sugar-coated or concealed the fact that if I could have gotten out of it, I would. But I did serve and now I get free dinners on Veterans Day and it says veteran on my driver's license.

Q: Right.

MYLES: So, you know. And while I was in Vietnam, I applied to several graduate schools seeking a graduate assistantship- I had to have a job because my parents couldn't

afford to send me anywhere. So, I got a graduate assistantship in the history department of Louisiana State University.

Q: Interesting.

MYLES: So, I started that summer, 1970, and was studying diplomatic history and the professor who I worked for is a diplomatic and military historian to this day at George Washington University, Dr. Ronald Spector. You may have heard of him. Ronald E. Spector. He wrote a book in 1985 called "Eagle Against the Sun," which is considered one of the best one-volume histories of World War II in the Pacific.

Q: Just a quick question here. You decide to go to graduate school even though your application to enter the Foreign Service had been frozen and theoretically you could have called them and said okay, I'm out, ready to join?

MYLES: No. Not that easy.

Q: Of course.

MYLES: Of course. When I left the army I immediately informed the State Department that I'm ready to come into the Foreign Service.

Q: Right.

MYLES: And I should have said this, you're right. The grad school thing was my backup. So, I'm thinking well, I'll never have to do that, but I had to have a backup. So, the Department comes back and says: yes, great, we'll unfreeze your application and start processing you. However, you have to have a new security clearance investigation done.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: Yes. Which I thought, of course, meant right away, you know. But everybody that got drafted two years earlier is getting out now, right? A lot of these guys had their applications frozen just like me are getting out, so the junior officer entry slots start backing up.

Q: Oh, boy.

MYLES: Oh, yes. So, for months I hear nothing. I go on to Baton Rouge in June. I go back to Baton Rouge in September. In October, they inform me that somebody is coming out to interview me for my security clearance. The guy comes, we sit down at the kitchen table in an apartment that I was sharing with this other guy, and it's the most amusing thing. His main concern was the fact that I had served in Vietnam. He didn't see it as a positive. So, what do you think he wanted to know? Well, he wanted to know about drugs.

Q: Drugs.

MYLES: He wanted to know if I had used drugs in Vietnam.

Q: Wow.

MYLES: And I said: well, sir, I know this is becoming a bigger problem now in Vietnam. You know, the heroin had started and other stuff, particularly in Saigon. I said the only really drug use I saw was some stoners who, when they were smoking marijuana, would go and sit in circles out in the field so they saw somebody coming that they didn't know, they'd get rid of their stuff. I said that never particularly interested me. I'm not a smoker of anything. Something I got from the LDS influence, because when I was in high school in Utah- when I was in high school, which is when the danger zone is?

Q: Oh, yes.

MYLES: You couldn't get it up there, right? It was illegal at 21 in Utah long before it was restricted anywhere else. And so I said: but, you know, drinking was another thing; is that a problem? He said no, we're not concerned about that. And so that started the process in October; I'd been out since April because, again, you know, they had limited resources, right?

Q: Yes.

MYLES: Okay. So, in January 1971, I get a letter asking if I could come into a class on the first Monday of March.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: So, I finished the semester and resigned my graduate assistantship, went to Atlanta; my parents were living in Atlanta at that time, same employer, bought a couple of new suits, and showed up at FSI (Foreign Service Institute) the first Monday in March 1971.

Q: Okay. Okay, so just before we go on with your entry into the Foreign Service, I wanted to just ask you, in your studies in high school and college if you had begun any foreign language training?

MYLES: Okay. This is the area where I was most nervous coming into the Foreign Service and the reason is the following. In some ways, English is my second language. My Texas accent was very strong, although not as much as many folks. My father's Texas accent was so strong that my wife, a native of Buffalo, New York, never could understand him on the phone at all. When I came into the Foreign Service I had to do like Dan Rather did and consciously try to moderate my accent. Even in my first post, Curacao, where English was widely spoken as a second language, they had tremendous trouble understanding me. Over the years, I've worked on it.

So, that was part of it. And of course, in the big old West, there was Spanish, but they were busy trying to speak English back then.

Then, this was compounded by- when I went into high school and was first faced with a foreign language requirement. I didn't have it in ninth grade, I don't know why, but when I hit tenth grade, the Catholic school in Salt Lake City had a language requirement and my mother was talked into having me go into Latin class.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: Which meant that my first experience with foreign languages is with a language people aren't actually speaking except in church and is way more difficult than modern languages, at least most of the European ones. Maybe not more than Russian and Polish, but anyway. I did not do well with that. It actually benefited me to some extent later, but it was not a good start. I would have been better off in Spanish. With that in mind, when I then hit the Spanish language requirement at St. Edward's, I took Spanish. Unfortunately, the teacher was Cuban, I do believe, and Caribbean Spanish is a bit of a problem, right?

Q: Oh, yes.

MYLES: Yes. Didn't know that, either, at the time, but I learned later. So, not a good experience. I then wasn't able to schedule second-year Spanish initially the way the registration system worked at Texas Tech at that time because sophomores registered last. And so, I waited a year and was advised by my academic adviser that I should be taking French instead. Another bad choice. I flunked it initially. I took it over again in a more immersive basis. Because the problem here is, is that, as you probably know, taking languages in a standard academic way is great for reading, but not for anything else.

Q: Right.

MYLES: So, the more immersive class I took in my senior year was a better choice and I got through it. It was an entirely bad experience right from the very beginning. Just bad luck all the way around. Bad advice, bad luck. And my MLAT (Modern Language Aptitude Test), or it's not MLAT-

Q: M-L-A-T, MLAT

MYLES: I took the MLAT during my first week at FSI. Turned out that my aptitude in foreign languages is higher than the general population but lower than the Foreign Service population. So, I needed the immersive method to be successful. So, that's the background. And I was very nervous about it because I knew that this was the area where I was vulnerable.

Q: Okay. So, you get the notification, you're going to join. You get yourself ready in Atlanta and you go up to Washington when?

MYLES: March 1971.

Q: Alright. And you look for your housing, you look for, you know, everything you need to get yourself together; when does your training class start?

MYLES: That day.

Q: Oh, that very- Wow. Okay.

MYLES: The A-100 course, right?

Q: Yes.

MYLES: The training started immediately. I made the mistake, because of lack of funds, to not go up a little earlier. I had a contact; my mother's brother's wife's sister. Kind of a relative, but there's no name for it in English. Her husband was an Air Force officer working at the Pentagon; they lived in North Arlington. So, they sent me up to them. My grandmother, my mother's mother, was very nervous because I was getting too close to those people; those people meaning Yankees, of course. And she said don't cross the river. So I totally understand where a lot of people are coming from down there, you know; I don't agree with them, but I certainly understand it.

So, anyway, so I contacted them, and they helped me get an apartment there in North Arlington on a monthly basis because we couldn't sign a long-term lease. There was three months of training and then you're going to go somewhere. So, they gave us the basic orientation training and then they gave us the consular training over three months at the old FSI building, SA-3, in Rosslyn. And then, they gave us a list of-

Q: Oh, before you get to your first assignment, talk a little bit about your experience in A-100; how large was the class and was it useful and so on?

MYLES: Yes. My class was very small. They were bringing in a class, at that time, every two months, and we were only 19. The majority in the class were Vietnam veterans, mainly officers. We had three African-Americans. The only two women in the class were African-Americans, and they had come in under what- I don't know if they called it Affirmative Action then- but they came in under a program by which they passed the oral and had five years to pass the written test.

Q: Huh. Okay.

MYLES: Two of which did so and the other never did. Most of us didn't know beans about the modern State Department. What many of us did know, we knew from academics - the glamorous exploits of John Adams and John Quincy Adams, you know, or foreign relations or foreign trade classes. But we were proud to have gotten into the Foreign Service. The African-American man in our class, at one point later on, when he

was comfortable enough to tell us this story, he said he walked into that class the first day, the same day I did, and he walked in and he saw "all these white guys with southern accents preening themselves with brand new suits with the tags still on them." He was from New York City. He said that he almost turned around and walked out. He said you guys have luckily not met my expectations. So, I always got a lot of perspective out of that.

So, in the first month we went around to the various offices in the Department. We got briefings about what the bureaus were and how things basically worked and all that before we started the consular training. We were all going out; at that time everybody was, I think it's still true. The consular training at the time was terrible. It was all basically reading manuals. And you know, they changed that completely about, I don't know, 10 to 15 years later and made it a really interactive experience and it's quite good, I understand.

Q: Right.

MYLES: I basically re-learned the consular job from my boss when I got to my first post.

Q: Yes, exactly, yes.

MYLES: Not unusual. A little bit like reading the law, you know what I mean? But there was the bonding going on, the 19 of us, of course, all knew each other the rest of the way through our careers. But our supervisory group found us- somebody in the class overheard them talking at one point- they considered the class "lumpy," by which they meant that the quality was very uneven. We ended up with five people selected out and four ambassadors.

Q: Interesting.

MYLES: I think 10 of us made it all the way to retirement, as I recall.

So, in the middle of the various trainings, they gave you this list. The way they did it at the time was, they first did interviews to discuss your preferences, geographic and subject matter. I was a political officer initially, you know, history and political science, but I had no strong geographic interest. I had no experience outside of the United States except Vietnam; other than Vietnam and my R&R in Australia I'd never been outside the United States except Juárez, Mexico. But, coincidentally, just coincidentally, at LSU I had taken a graduate political science course on the Middle East. And the only reason I'd done that is because that was convenient to my schedule at that particular point. So, they asked me a lot about that. I'd done a graduate paper on post-war developments of the Syrian political system that ended up with Assad's father taking over in 1949, and he was still there in 1971. I didn't think anything of it, you know, just part of the interview.

The list comes and you were asked to put down your six preferences in order. And I'm like, I don't know. So, for no reason that I can remember, other than it sounded

interesting, I put Curacao first, and put Tel Aviv second. And then other places. So, I got Curacao, and the next thing I know the staff is like kind of standoffish. I learned later that they had gone out, especially for me, and gotten the Tel Aviv slot, thinking from the interviews that that was my area of interest, which it wasn't. But because of my insecurity about my language ability, I was already nervous about signing up for an assignment that would require me to take Hebrew. So there was a disconnect. I was unhappy to learn that I had disappointed the A-100 staff, but worse than that, I had committed to an assignment at a non-language post, meaning that I wasn't immediately going to meet the requirement that you had to overcome your language probation within five years.

Q: Right.

MYLES: So, I made a mistake. It turned out to be a great assignment in every other way, but I had made a mistake with the language. Should have gone to Juárez; it was on the list. I put it down as like, number six. I should have gone there and gotten language training right then. I should have done that. But the language thing was a real impediment for me. And this kind of put a bad mark right in the very beginning.

So, that was the FSI experience. I don't think mine was any different, much, than it was for anybody else. One of my classmates ended up being ambassador to Lebanon. He was one of the finest Arabic scholars and speakers I have ever known. His name was Mark Hambley. And he went to the Tunis Arabic school, he was in Jeddah for quite a while, eventually became ambassador to Beirut but then he developed a heart problem, had to leave there. And he's like on the other end of the scale as far as a foreign language was concerned. So, as we'll talk about as we go forward, I struggled with the language thing my entire career. And I've always said, anybody that's asked me, I've said, you know, all the other things you can learn, you may have aptitude toward meeting people and doing reporting or administering programs, but if you're going to serve overseas, the language has got to come first. And I, whether as wishful thinking or whatever, they were telling me, you know, don't worry about it, we'll teach it to you, we teach everybody; well, there's a difference between being functional, as I learned four languages since and was fairly functional in all of them, there's a difference between that and the knack- being comfortable using the foreign language. My wife has the knack. Her knack isn't the greatest level of knack, which is when you can use several languages at one time, like Pope John Paul II or General Vernon Walters. Or the ambassador I had in Khartoum, Hume Horan, who spoke Arabic better than anybody in Sudan did. So, anyway, it was always something that impeded my career in my own view. So, anyway, that kind of started it. But that's where we are.

So, do you want me to go into Curacao?

Q: Sure. How long a tour was it?

MYLES: In those days everybody's tour was two years.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: It wasn't until the late '80s when they went to three years, initially for senior officers and then for everybody later. So, I get to Curacao and there was a 24-hour party going on. It was a time of high gasoline consumption. The refineries in Curacao and Aruba were operating at full capacity. The employment rate was negative because they were drawing people from other islands to go to work at the refineries. Tourism was going great guns. Everybody was happy. It was marvelous. It was one of those moments which you almost regret because I felt like my first post was the cherry on top of a subsequently increasingly disappointing sundae.

So, I was the junior consular officer. The post had four officers, and one staff officer, the admin guy, two consular officers, the economic/commercial officer and the principle officer. I had about the same portfolio as Ensign Pulver did in "Mr. Roberts," except for laundry, including youth officer, labor officer, non-immigrant visas and citizen services. Yes. So, this means everything from the prisons to going to parties with the youth and reporting on how they feel about the local situation. Well, there wasn't anything to report on because everybody just thought it was terrific.

Q: Yes, yes.

MYLES: And labor peace because we've got full employment, you know, wages are rising. When I left there two-and-a-half years later, in 1973, I got home just before the first oil shock and everything down there went to hell in a hand basket.

So, my only problem with my new job was that I very quickly learned that issuing non-immigrant visas is an impossible job. This has never changed. You're a human lie detector. You're trying to figure out, no matter how many documents you have, if someone wants to stay in the U.S. And of course, in Curacao you're close to the States; people can just pick up- just get on a plane and go – for little money. I remember telling this one kid, young man, unemployed, 18-years-old, just out of school, wanted to go visit the States, that you just can't because there's just no way our rules will let you do it. And he said well, that's unfair, and I said yes. So, I hated that part.

I loved everything else, all the rest. I loved going to the jails. The only bad experience I had was one time with a death case, a guy had died on a cruise, because we only had one undertaker that would embalm people and send them back to the U.S. And he would charge a fortune for it. The department later set up a whole system worldwide on this, a single source system that helped get lower prices. We didn't have it then, and so I had the wife of the husband who had died give me hell and later letters from her congressman because she'd paid so much money to take him back.

But then, I had to go down and adjudicate cases at the casinos. There were four casinos then where a lot of Americans would come down on these junkets and think they could gamble a little bit and then just drink for free and go out and do other things and then all of a sudden the casino management would tell them: you haven't been in the casino enough- they'd drag out the contracts and said you signed this thing, and down here in

the fine print that you can hardly read it says, you know, you have certain obligations. And I would try to help negotiate a settlement. I absolutely loved the citizen protection work. Passports, Reports of Birth. I actually got to sign off a ship one time in Aruba. Exxon transferred a tanker from U.S. registry to Panamanian and I took one of our consular staff with me and we signed off the U.S. citizen crew in gold, which was required at that time. I took the ship's logs and all its records, sent them back to the States. It was, you know, it was just all fun.

We could do passports for the American community in Aruba, which were mainly employees at the Esso refinery there. And all the jobs were great, the people were great. And, on my first day they handed me the duty-free liquor list and a liter of Bacardi rum was a buck and a quarter; you know, a liter of Jimmy Walker Red was a buck seventy-five. So, how can you beat it?

Q: Were you able to travel much while you were there?

MYLES: Yes. Another great thing was, we had six islands at that time in our consular district. The Netherlands Antilles has broken up since, but at that time there were six islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao along the Venezuelan coast and three islands up north, St. Maarten, St. Eustatius and Saba. I would go to Aruba every two months because they had that big American community over there. And I went up north twice. I met my first wife in a bar in St. Maarten.

Q: Really?

MYLES: Yes. It started good, didn't turn out so well.

Q: Okay.

Alright. Perhaps then, this is a good moment to pause because you've had an initial experience as a consular officer in a reasonable post, nothing gigantic or too challenging. And now, you're going to begin thinking about where you want to go next, so I figure we can pause here and figure out next session where we'll pick up.

MYLES: The last comment I'll make is, is that my boss, the Consul General, had been a CORDS province chief before he was assigned to Curacao.

Q: Interesting.

MYLES: And he got his consul generalship after having done that. So, we had in common the war and all that and that was very good. He was from South Carolina, but he was, like almost all the senior officers I worked for for the first 10, 15 years, an Ivy Leaguer; he had graduated from Harvard.

Q: Right.

MYLES: And I literally had to show him where Lubbock was on a map. Even though he was from South Carolina he had the same world view as that wonderful, famous "New Yorker" magazine cover that shows Manhattan and then the Hudson and then New Jersey and then there's California out there beyond a featureless expanse.

Q: Right.

MYLES: He literally had no idea. And this goes back to, the last thing I wanted to say in that part was, that the department was, at the time, being very proactive about diversification. And not only was it diversification the way we now define it, but at that time educational and geographic diversity as well, which we don't have now, specifically. In watching my wife's career, because she continued until 2013; her last job was deputy director of FSI. And seeing the junior officer classes that were coming in when she was there, you would still see geographic diversity but educationally they seem to be targeting what they consider to be "elite" schools. Tech now, of course, is not the same school that I went to. Tibor Nagy, who graduated from Tech in the '70s and was ambassador to a couple of African countries, established the international program at Tech from scratch, which did not exist in my time.

Q: Interesting.

MYLES: To us at Tech fifty years ago, international almost meant, you know, the "East," Illinois or New York. But Ambassador Nagy established a robust international program similar to those of a lot of other places. He did that from scratch over 20 years ago. And so, now I can see people coming out of that environment that are more naturally into the flow that you're expecting than when I was going to school. People who might have otherwise gone to private schools plus maybe the University of Texas at Austin. But for the first ten years of my career the people at the top that I worked for were out of the old environment, and in each of those cases, I caught a lot of flak.

Q: Interesting. Okay.

So, this recording is on June 17 with Stanley Myles as he is ending his tour in Curacao

MYLES: Okay. To sum up the tour in Curacao, the advantages were that I was doing what used to be called a rotational job without it being formally a rotational job. Because there were only four officers and one staff officer at post, plus what we used to call a Foreign Service secretary at that time, it meant that I was doing a little of everything; I was backup for everything else. And that was very valuable. Also, because of the inadequacies of the consular training at that time, received much better consular training from my boss, the head of the consular section, who was very good and had a very successful consular career. And so, that was all the good side. The bad side, which wasn't really bad, was that in comparison to going to a larger place, it was a small place and so there's some things you just didn't learn in a small place.

Now, during the time that I was in Curacao, I got married, and that was only a few months before I was supposed to rotate out and was right at the very beginning of the assignment process. At that time, in 1973, there was no open assignment process; the process was you wrote a letter to your career development officer, and then there was a conversation, usually by letter, depending on where you were at the time, and you didn't have any why to know what jobs were actually out there. You had to more or less rely on the career development officer to tell you what was out there. They were making recommendations; it was a little like dealing with a real estate agent. So, the person I had at the time comes back and I'd given her an idea of what I was interested in; I had decided, based on tasting all of the various parts of the process in Curacao that I was particularly interested in commercial work. At that time, State had both the economic and commercial function and so, I wanted to do something in the commercial field. I was interested in actually, against conventional wisdom, switching from political to economic/commercial, which was much easier than the opposite direction. But my career development officer was in the political cone, so she didn't have a lot of enthusiasm for my plan.

So, she comes back and says oh, I've got just the perfect thing for you, and that is to be a junior political officer at the embassy in Saigon. I went back and said two things: I said one, I just left Vietnam three years ago; second, I need to get language training at some point, and I know that your proposal that I take French and go to Saigon is a little limited. Certainly, people speak French there, but it's not exactly, you know, France. So, I said, you know, I really don't think so. Well, so fine. So, she comes back a little later and she says okay, well, you're interested in the commercial thing and so, what we have available now, and where we'll send you, under the State/Commerce exchange program to the Office of International Marketing in the Commerce Department in Washington. I said okay, and I agreed to that. I wanted to switch, so that sounded like a marvelous idea and so, that's how I was assigned to the Department of Commerce.

So, I got to the Department of Commerce and they told me okay, great, great you're here; we're going to assign you to do marketing to southern Africa. I said okay, great, I know nothing about southern Africa, but okay. What does that involve? Well, our market there is South Africa, but we can't market to South Africa. Because of apartheid we have all these restrictions. So, you're going to be marketing to Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. At that time in southern Africa there were no other countries that either were independent or were not under sanction in the entire region except for Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. So, I said okay, fine. And so, that's what I did.

And so, at the time the Commerce Department was running this large number of trade centers around the world in developed countries, but they didn't have trade centers in the lesser developed countries. They were very, very interested in having one in South Africa if things ever changed there because that was, of course, possibly the most developed country in the region. But in the meantime, we did, because we couldn't have actual trade shows in South Africa, we ran a number of different trade shows, traveling road shows with industry representatives. And then, we had a smaller alternative to that which we

also used, called a catalog show, in which an embassy would run a show for us using catalogs from various industries that we would provide.

We did hotel and restaurant equipment, for example, in Lesotho and Swaziland because there was and still is a substantial resort industry in both of those places and certainly was at that time when South Africa was under sanction. We ran mining equipment shows to Botswana and to Swaziland. And the interesting thing was is that even though South Africa itself was under restriction, South Africans were not under restrictions, so if a South African wanted to go across the border to a show we were holding in Botswana or in Swaziland, well, nobody told them they couldn't go. And so, obviously, the mining equipment shows that were held in Gaborone and Mbabane attracted mainly visitors from South Africa.

After I had worked at Commerce for nine months, I was still happy with the job, but I still had this problem about the language requirement. I have to have a language before five years is up. But I'm supposed to be there for a two-year tour. Well, I wasn't getting any particular response from State about all this, so I talked to Commerce. And I said well, you know, here I am and I'm doing this work and my bosses liked my work and I had a pretty good reputation, but I said you know, I really don't know what to do about this business with the language training, and right now I would have to break my assignment here and go back and renegotiate something with the State Department to get language training. And they said to me well, we have an alternative. We'll send you to one of our trade centers. And I said okay, that sounds great. And after some discussion it was decided that I would go out as a trade promotion officer, which was a Commerce job held by State officers at that time, in Milan, Italy. And I certainly wasn't unhappy with that idea because I'd get Italian and go to Milan. And so, I agreed to that, and Commerce got State to agree to that.

So, then I went back to FSI and I took Italian, and then off I went to Milan. So, that was my short Commerce tour, but it put me into the economic/commercial cone, and it put me in a nice place, and it took care of the language problem.

Q: And now, when did you go to Milan, what year?

MYLES: I went to Milan in the summer of 1974.

Q: And were you accompanied by your wife?

MYLES: Yes.

Q: Okay. And at that point, did you have any children?

MYLES: No.

Q: Okay, okay. And sorry, you said it was a short tour; how long were you in Milan?

MYLES: Milan was a long tour. The short tour was Commerce.

Q: Oh, oh, okay.

MYLES: Milan was actually extra-long. I can explain why. Not as long as I might have liked, but longer than two years by a little bit.

Q: Okay. Okay.

And you did learn Italian for the job?

MYLES: I did, that's right.

Q: Okay, alright. Yes, sure, go right on.

MYLES: Okay.

Alright, so I got to Milan and this was really great because I'd studied European history and studied European diplomatic history and British diplomatic history and all kinds of things involving Europe, but I had never been there. All of a sudden, here I am, and it's like being in a candy store because you know, all of a sudden I'm seeing all this stuff I've read about, and I got a chance to go visit places in Germany and Italy and France. And so, the off-duty part of the job was fabulous.

But the first problem I ran into when I arrived was an administrative problem. The year before, in 1973, the Nixon Administration had devalued the dollar. And so, the dollar wasn't buying what it had before and at that time the housing allowances were determined by the cost of previous leases. These were private leases- State leased quarters in the lesser developed countries, so if you were working in Africa or a lot of Latin America, parts of the Middle East and East Asia, then you might have housing waiting for you. And I don't know if they developed by that time but eventually these housing boards developed and all that kind of thing. Well, that didn't exist in Europe at that time. At that time, you had to go out and find your own housing, you signed a lease and you had a certain allowance. And the allowances were determined, basically, by the value of previous leases. But we're talking about a dollar that had stayed strong ever since 1945 in Europe and all of a sudden now it's not. And so, all of a sudden, the amount of money for these allowances based on previous practice were not adequate.

So, I looked and looked, mainly on my own time, for a place to live that was within the housing allowance. Meanwhile, my wife, then-wife, was a legal secretary and for professional reasons she had not taken any Italian training with me in Washington. She had continued to work until we left and therefore she wasn't able to help me look for a place. And so, I'm trying to do my work and looking for a place to live while staying in one of those residence hotels. Eventually the solution turned out to be a very interesting one. I finally found a fellow who had a large apartment, very nicely located in the center of town, very near the medieval castle that's in the middle of the city. And he was looking

to divide the apartment in half- live in one half and rent the other for extra income- but of course, he wasn't going to tell the local authorities about it. So, he agreed to sign a lease as required by the Department of State as long as no one in Italy knew about that, and I told him as far as I knew the lease was not being shared with anyone in the Italian government or anywhere outside of the U.S. Government. So, he agreed, I got a lower rent than average. Maybe that would be considered scandalous now?

And so, now I have to get the place painted and get our own appliances, which was usual for rentals in Italy. Some places you actually had to buy your own toilets and light fixtures, but in this case those were already in the apartment. But I had the devil finding an Italian painter that would give me the receipt I needed for reimbursement because, given the rampant amount of tax evasion going on, that was just very difficult. However, the effort greatly improved my Italian skills because I'm negotiating, in Italian, first with the landlord and then with an Italian painter in order to get them to give me the documentation required by the U.S. Government that they were loathed to give anyone in the Italian economy.

Q: Okay. Can you hear me?

MYLES: Yes.

Q: Okay. Let me just check the earphones. And you can hear me?

MYLES: Yes, I see you.

Q: Okay, great. Go right ahead, we're recording.

MYLES: Okay. Where was I when it stopped?

Q: You were talking about that your wife had not learned Italian and that you had gotten an apartment that was divided, not legally, and you were trying to get documents from the painter and I guess other tradesmen to give to the U.S. Government but they didn't want to because they wanted to do it all gray or black market.

MYLES: Yes. Okay.

So, before I go into the actual job, so now you've heard that I had all these receipts and I had all this stuff, and it turned out that the reimbursement regulations at the time didn't cover the appliances, the painting, the things that a landlord provides in the States that they don't necessarily do in Europe. So, I didn't get reimbursed for quite a lot of that, and so I charged it off my income tax as a moving expense. Well, I got audited for that and they held the audit until I went back to the States in 1976, and I eventually won the audit and proved to them that it was reasonable that that would be a moving expense. But I worked with AFSA (American Foreign Service Association); they were helpful. I went to them and told them what was going on and they were helpful to me in that process.

So, anyway, as far as the job was concerned, I got there and found that they had decided that one of the other officers there would be the trade promotion officer, the job that I was going to get, and make me the junior of the two commercial officers. Well, when I got to learn the jobs a little bit and worked with him and the other people in the trade center- it became quite apparent at that time they were right, because he turned out to be much better promoting the shows and dealing with Italian customers than I would have been. And meantime, my main job was to either conduct or supervise market research for the trade promotion activities, both for the impact of the trade promotion we were doing plus researching commercial sectors for future shows. I did some of it myself in the Italian market, and I supervised Italian contractors, and that job I actually enjoyed very much. I also did some standard commercial business facilitation work, but my boss did most of that. He did almost all the standard commercial work that would be done in the absence of a trade center and I did mainly trade center work. Our offices were in the trade center rather than in the consulate; the consulate was downtown, and we were located, we the commercial people, in the fairgrounds. It was about halfway out of Milan at that time.

And so, I did that for two years, helped out with the trade shows and did all this market research stuff and some other odds and ends. And everything worked out pretty well except I had one little small disaster that turned out to make it difficult for me. We had a congressional delegation come at one point and I was supposed to just simply get them to the reception that was opening up their visit that was being hosted by our big boss, the consul general, and one of the members decided that he didn't care when the reception was actually going to start, he would show up when he felt like it. And I made the judgment of waiting for him rather than taking the other two and leaving him, and it turned out to be the wrong decision. I never really recovered from that with the consul general.

So, other than that it was a very pleasant tour. I enjoyed the work, I enjoyed learning the language, and I enjoyed getting around Europe. I had enough time in-between the shows and the other things I had to do to go to other places. The only other little glitch that happened was that I had to go to Frankfurt to the American military hospital there, which is now our consulate general in Frankfurt, and I had to go up there because I had to be checked for diabetes. The reason was my father had gotten sick and he was diagnosed with diabetes, and there was the worry that I might have inherited it. So, I had to go up there to take these tests. Everything was fine. He didn't turn out to have it either, and so, that was the only other kind of strange thing that happened.

And so, we got to the end of the two-year tour and I was asked to stick around for a little while because the junior consular officer at that time wanted to try commercial work before he decided on what cone he was going to get tenured in. We were all coming up for tenure at that point, the five-year mark. And so, I stuck around, helped train him into that job. He decided he liked consular work better and he became a very successful consular officer. But because of that I stayed until November. And the other reason was is that I didn't have an onward assignment until January because I'd gotten assigned to FSI, to take the six-month economic/commercial course, which gave you a bachelor's degree in economics and six hours of graduate credit. And so, I had the time, and I stayed until

November 1976 and then went on home leave and when I finished home leave, I came to FSI and spent the next six months in that course.

Q: Just a quick question about Milan before you leave it. As a consular officer there, were you seeing any major new U.S. export trends to Italy, or was it still kind of too early, you know, Italy still really didn't have as strong an economy as it might to buy U.S. goods?

MYLES: Yes, indeed. We had two major, major, major things. At that time, the U.S. computer show at the trade center was the premiere computer show in Italy because in 1975, '74, '75, '76, we're way, way ahead of everybody else and this is on mainframes, minicomputers. We didn't have the PCs yet. And so, the trade center hosted the premiere show for Italians to come to see the latest in computerization.

Q: Texas Instruments and so on.

MYLES: Yes, that's right, and IBM and Data General and all the others that were in the field if you think back to the pre-PC days.

And the other bug show, kind of interestingly enough, was the hi-fi equipment show because at that time all of the high end, expensive stuff was dominated by the U.S. while the lower end was dominated by the Japanese. And so, the hi-fi show that we held every year was also the go-to thing for Italians who wanted to see the latest products.

We also were very, very strong in industrial products, machine tools and other non-consumer goods. But computers and hi-fi are the ones that stood out because we were just so dominant at that time in both of those fields.

Q: Were there any sales of the fast-moving consumer products like, you know, cigarettes or, you know, maybe whiskey, et cetera?

MYLES: No, we didn't do any consumer goods at that end of the scale, no foods, consumables of any kind at all. No.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: Now, another one, unfortunately, this is the time in Italy of the Brigate Rosse, the Red Brigades, and they're out kidnapping people. So, one of our most successful shows was professional and residential security equipment. We had them coming by the droves to look at everything from security cameras to Kevlar vests. And so, we were huge in that area as well.

Q: It's funny. I was almost going to ask you were you affected by the Red Brigades, but then I thought well, why would commercial work be affected by the Red Brigades? And naturally, it was.

MYLES: Yes, it was. And we, of course, had to be very careful.

Another story on the security side, just to show you how things were going there at the time. We, of course, had to be very careful and alert- we had avoid numerous political demonstrations, for example. Not too long after I arrived the Italian Communist Party was elected to run the city government. But at the time parking was an incredible problem, and everybody was allowed to park on the sidewalk. And usually, you wouldn't be bothered with that by the police. And at the time, Italy did not give diplomatic status to consular personnel, and so, we didn't have diplomatic plates. We had regular Italian plates and then you put a CC (Corpo Consolare) on the back of the car. That usually worked to deter the police from giving us tickets.

Well, at a certain point in 1976, the Brigade Rose's getting very active so the embassy security people decided that we were too much of a target with our CC stickers and made us replace them with the (I) Italian civilian sticker. Well, everybody started getting parking tickets. In addition, I encountered an unanticipated consequence of this decision when I traveled outside of Italy that summer. We had coupons to get tax-free gasoline in Italy, but we could also buy tax-free coupons from the U.S. military good for Esso stations in Germany and the Netherlands. And so, I was in Germany headed back to Milan during the time when I had the (I) sticker on my car and I've got my military coupons with me. I stopped at an Esso station to fill up, and my German was limited at the time to "40 liters, please." And so, I asked for the gas in German and the attendant filled the car up and I handed him these coupons. But he didn't want to take them. And he's giving me all this business in German about whatever, and I'm like, what am I supposed to do? The coupons have been good every other time. And at a certain point I'm getting frustrated. But then I take a look at the guy, and I think: he doesn't look like a "typical" German. So I ask him if he spoke Italian, and, sure enough he was from Sicily. And all of a sudden now I'm able to find out what the problem was. It turned out he knew that the coupons were supposed to be only for military personnel, and I've got this civilian (I) sticker on my car, right? And so, he's doing his job. So, I said, oh, okay, I understand. And I go get my diplomatic passport out of the car and hand it to him, he says "oh, *senor, scusi,"* and then we're just having the greatest time and everything's great. But you know, he was just doing his job.

Well, the number of parking tickets we were getting got so bad and there were so many complaints by the consulates that the embassy finally reversed their decision, but this is an example of how tense the atmosphere was. And we hadn't even got to the point where they had kidnapped and killed Aldo Moro. Yes. So, it was bad, but we took advantage of the climate to sell a great deal of security equipment.

Q: I understand, yes.

Now, during this time also, did your wife work at all?

MYLES: Yes. She took Italian classes, which helped her cope with everyday activities, and then she eventually started working in the consulate downtown. She didn't work with

the Italian public a huge amount, but she had enough Italian to do that too, and she got to know the other people around the consulate. So, yes, particularly the last year, year-and-a half, she was relatively content. It was a difficult transition for her, but the last year-and-a-half she did work.

Q: And I meant to ask you, was she from Curacao or was she an American you met there?

MYLES: American. I met her at a bar in St. Maarten.

Q: Okay, okay. Alright.

MYLES: She was from the Eastern Shore of Maryland. But she was a very good legal secretary, very career oriented. Kept her own name. In fact, she may have been the first spouse to ever get a diplomatic passport in her own name when we got married in 1973.

Q: Great. Great.

MYLES: I don't know if that's true, but it could have been because the rules on that were just changing at that time.

Q: Okay. So, now you are going back to Washington for the six-month economic course. Was there a reason or were they simply filling in half a year until they could put you into an on-cycle job?

MYLES: The reason was is I was going to be tenured in the economic/commercial cone and they said I needed to have an economics degree.

Q: I see. Okay. Okay.

So, what did you think of the course at that time, back in the mid '70s?

MYLES: It was very hard. It was very intense and very difficult. I started badly and had to work like the devil to catch up. I ended up at the end graduating with distinction; I was in the top ten percent of the class, but I was probably the last one in that group.

And the course was taught by professors mainly from Georgetown and George Washington plus a couple of other schools. Not being a traditional on-campus program always made it difficult to explain exactly where that degree comes from.

Q: But thinking back, was it helpful later on through your career, did it give you any skills or abilities that you ended up using?

MYLES: Absolutely. When we get down to my tours in economic affairs- as head of the economic section in Khartoum and then working in the regional economic office in the

Latin America bureau, I absolutely needed economic skills that I did not get in the commercial side.

Q: And then, just one other question about the course, since the number of students in it, I imagine, was relatively small, you got to know them, and you also got to know the professor. Were those connections helpful later on?

MYLES: Not so much. I didn't really keep up with any of the professors. The deputy head of the program was a Foreign Service officer, yes, definitely, he was the one that taught us all the math and a lot of us were very math adverse and he was able to teach us. And he ended up at a later time being the head of the part of FSI that dealt with professional training. So, we kept up with him.

Q: Great. Okay.

Then, how did you work out your next assignment after the econ course?

MYLES: Well, there was still no open assignment system, and so I was advised to go around and interview in various offices of the State Department during the latter part of the course. I eventually was hired by the Office of East Coast Affairs of the Latin America bureau, which handled relations with countries on the east coast of South America- Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Argentina, all of which had military governments at that time. And I was the economic officer for all four, so I had the regional economic portfolio. It was a very interesting arrangement they had at the time. The bureau had a separate econ officer in the office for Mexico and for East Coast Affairs, plus the Office of Regional Economic Policy. That office took the lead on economic matters, but we two in the country desks were expected to add a little more of a bilateral perspective to it because we were covering the big countries, mainly Brazil and Mexico. Argentina too but particularly Brazil. And it was there that I became pretty much into the Brazilian orbit; two tours, that one and one more. I did a lot of work on Brazil over the years and so that job kind of moved me in that direction, along with the Caribbean which I'd already done and would do again.

So, one factor important at the time was that the Latin America bureau had only recently been split out from the former Alliance for Progress joint organization with AID. The AID remnants in Brazil and the southern cone countries were being wound down and I got heavily involved in one of those, which I'll talk about.

So, at this point now the office is back to State only and, as I mentioned, there were economic officers in the Mexico office and in this office who worked closely with the regional economic office in the Latin America bureau, which was called ARA then, which means American Republics Affairs. It wasn't Western Hemisphere Affairs because Canada was then covered by the European bureau.

So, I was the economic officer for all four countries and, after I got settled in, in January 1978 they sent me on an orientation trip to all four countries. So, I went first to Brasilia,

then to Rio, Sao Paulo, Porto Alegre, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, and finally to Asunción. Three weeks. Certainly, that kind of travel doesn't happen anymore- there used to be lots more travel money in State.

On this trip I got to talk to a lot of people about the situation in the various countries- all four countries had military governments, all four countries were having problems with human rights to some degree or another, ranging from Argentina's dirty war through Paraguay's total dictatorship to the relatively benign military governments in Uruguay and Brazil. President Carter's administration had just come in; human rights had taken on a new importance and it was something I got heavily involved in.

And so, I went down and discussed economic issues, including trade and local economic conditions and such things, but also the issue of sanctions because of human rights violations. The Carter Administration had already put sanctions on all four countries. We weren't giving them foreign aid anymore, but we promoted sanctions on World Bank loans, Inter-American Development Bank loans, and other kinds of assistance as well as on trade issues, including sanctions on all kinds of sensitive equipment and even less sensitive equipment. So, I talked to people about where things were going in terms of the human rights developments and whether or not there was going to be any chance of a normal relationship with any of the four governments, and it became very clear that at least as long as our focus was on human rights issues, we were going to have lots of problems.

So, I went to Brasilia and had discussions along those lines as well as in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, and got to learn something about Brazil. I learned that they had a black currency market; although their currency was relatively stable at that point, much more than it became later. It was an enlightening time in Brazil, but relatively uneventful. I got to Uruguay and it became a little bit more interesting because Uruguay at the time had the largest number of political prisoners in the world.

Q: Interesting.

MYLES: Per capita. They had rounded up all of these Tupamaro insurgents and put them into prison. So, I'm having discussions with government people, some of whom I got to know again when I was in Montevideo in 2000-2002, interestingly enough, and the most enlightening thing I heard was, when I said, you know, we're really concerned about all these prisoners, one of the officials said to me well, at least we didn't kill them, by which they were referring to Argentina, because, of course, the Argentina military just made all their opponents disappear. Well, the irony is, and to Uruguay's credit, the irony is a lot of the people now in the government in Uruguay were political prisoners at the time, including the leftist president that came in at the time that we were leaving Uruguay, at the beginning of the 2000s. So, this was somewhat indicative of the milder Uruguayan approach to just about everything. But I said at the time: well, you're kind of missing the point. We'd like you to stop arresting everyone for political reasons. It's really nice that you're not "disappearing" them, but--

Then I went on to Buenos Aries and never have I witnessed a more oppressive atmosphere. There were soldiers on every corner. There was just the feeling of total fear; you could just feel it, you know. And the discussions with the Argentine officials were just completely unproductive and unyielding. I mean, they just basically said you know, we're doing our thing, we're under threat from all these terrible leftist people, and we're just not much interested in your opinion. One interesting anecdote from my visit was that I had heard so much about the heavy Argentine beef consumption and so, I was really looking forward to my first "baby beef," which is just an enormous roast that they eat in one sitting. And so, I was informed when I got there by the economic officer that was handling my trip, he said well, you're in luck; you're going to be going along with Ambassador Castro -- this is Raul Castro- not that Raul Castro- but rather the one who was the former Democratic governor of Arizona -- he said you're going to be going along with him to a business luncheon with bankers today, which should be very interesting. I thought yes, that's great, and then I thought: I'm going to get this great beef at this luncheon. Well, these bankers wanted to impress the ambassador and so they served one of the most expensive thing they have in Argentina, which, of course, was chicken! So, that night a bunch of us from the embassy went out and had the baby beef, but I thought I was going to get it for lunch, but from an Argentine point of view the chicken was special- because everybody had beef. I mean, that was, you know, the peasants even ate that, so you know, that kind of thing.

And so, at the end of this, this is now almost the end of the three weeks, and so now I'm going off to Paraguay, and the thing I always remember about that was when I went to the main airport. I had arrived from Montevideo at the small in-town airport right along the river in Buenos Aries, but the trip to Paraguay was out of the airport way out of town, kind of the Dulles equivalent. And so, I was picked up at the hotel at some horribly early hour; it was before dawn and all this, and I'm going out into the middle of nowhere, and while I'm in the taxi I'm thinking: do I really know who this taxi driver is and where are we actually going? I had gotten a little paranoid from the atmosphere there, I guess. But I got there fine and I got on the Paraguayan airline, LAP. Well, at the time LAP didn't have any jets. They had prop-jets, old Lockheed Electras. LAP was competing with Aerolineas Argentinas and Braniff Airways on that run, both flying faster 727s, and so they showed the same flight time on their schedule as the other two airlines but always arrived a half-hour late.

So, I got to Asunción and the economic officer from the embassy comes out to meet me and we say hi and got to know each other. And I'm waiting for the luggage and I said, well, what kind of schedule do I have here, because in Buenos Aries the economic section had given me this jam-packed two-day schedule with just absolutely no rest in it whatsoever, and she said well, we really don't have a schedule. And I said well, why is that? She said well, there's nothing going on here in Asunción; she says the absolutely only thing that you need to know about is the negotiations going on between the Brazilians and the Paraguayans about building of the Itaipu Dam, which was where Paraguay was working to get all they could out of their location because Brazil was going to build this dam on the river border between the two, a huge hydroelectric project, and Paraguay's only contribution to it was the fact that they owned one-half of the river. So,

the whole thing was about how much the Brazilians were going to have to bribe the Paraguayans to get this thing built, which they eventually did.

And so, basically, I had some discussions and really learned that the only thing really going on than the dam project was smuggling stuff into Brazil. At the time, Paraguay had the largest consumption per capita on an official basis for cigarettes, televisions and other consumer goods, all of which they weren't keeping in Paraguay. Because the Brazilians at that time had an import substitution policy with extremely tight import restrictions, and so all this stuff was leaking over the border out of Paraguay. And there were these shops and outdoor bazaars at the Brazilian/Paraguayan border where Brazilians were allowed to buy tons of stuff and carry it across the border.

So, that was my introduction to the region.

Q: A quick question about Paraguay. From time to time you hear Paraguay having relations with North Korea and being a location where North Korea can, I don't know, either earn currency or so on; was that a concern back then?

MYLES: No, not that I'm aware of.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: General Stroessner had been the long-time dictator there. As far as I know, he was not involved at all with any communist countries. He was very much a fascist. But the traditions in Paraguay are very much freewheeling about the rule of law, so even though the government has changed over the years, I can see that some connections to North Korea and others could develop. Of course, you know, they were almost wiped out by a war that they had with all three surrounding countries in the 19th century, and it's always been a kind of insular little place. But they have made great strides from what they were then, I mean, you don't have to go any further than their competition in men's soccer that they've become a power, you know. And back in the '70s they certainly were not.

So, I survived that trip, but I had learned an awful lot and I was quite happy about that because I had never been to that part of the world before. I'd been in the Caribbean, of course. But that was really kind of a milestone for me because it led to an orientation that I followed later on.

Well, I got back, and my main job over the rest of my assignment in ARA/ECA was to deal with the Latin America bureau's objections to what the human rights bureau wanted to do with trade and financing bank loans and such things in the region and in our four countries. The human rights bureau's basic approach was that there shouldn't be anything. And our attitude was that we should look at each proposed sanction case by case. So we had this committee called the Christopher Committee, which was named after Warren Christopher, who was the deputy secretary and the chair of this committee, which was divided into regional working groups. And I was the representative for our

office on the working level of the working group for our area, and I had these meetings at least once a week, sometimes more, arguing about everything about whether or not to give an import license for the very first version of Brazil's first commercial commuter aircraft, the Bandeirante 110. The problem was is that the manufacturer, Embraer, was a government company, as it still is, I believe, and so therefore it was seen as connected to the military and that was considered a problem, even though it was a totally commercial aircraft. So, the Latin America bureau recommended that we approve the license but the human rights bureau didn't. So we wrote papers and decision memos and all the rest, and one ended up on President Carter's desk. And President Carter, as you probably know, was known for being very detail-oriented and would get himself involved in a lot of issues down into the granular level. And when we got back the decision letter it had President Carter's notes in the margins, indicated that he agreed to let that airplane come in. So, the decision went all the way up, just on an airplane, a commercial airplane.

On bank loans we got hardly anything approved. It wasn't quite as bad as Chile, which was the worse; they got absolutely nothing. Luckily, I wasn't the one having to argue on Chile, but Chile was getting zero. But we didn't get much of anything, but that was my big job every single week.

I also did all the kind of usual things, working with the rest of the desk officers, and there was an assistant junior economic officer, and over time I farmed out to him most of the routine work for Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina while I kept Brazil. So, that's how that worked.

And so, some other interesting things from that tour- we had visits, CODELs, and we had to do lots of briefing papers and all those kinds of things, and the one that was the most significant was Vice President Mondale's trip to Latin America in 1978. We had to do all kinds of different papers for him, and he also required two by three note cards describing various scenarios of his activities. He put those cards in his pocket to remind him where he was and where he was going. So, we had to write all the note cards Well, at the time our word processing technology was something called the Lexitron, which was tape-based with a little cassette-based memory. It didn't paginate or anything like that, but it was a step above a typewriter. It was extremely slow, and so if you were looking for a document the tape would whir and it would whir some more and take seemingly forever to load a document. We'd be there like 2:30 in the morning doing all these papers and note cards and waiting for this machine to whir out the stuff we're looking for. It was very frustrating. And at that time a standard day in our office was 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; absolutely nobody left before 7:00 p.m., and for some of the trips we were there until, like I say, middle of the night.

And so, the one other interesting thing- I'd mentioned before this business about whether you'll ever get credit for something- while I was there we had the Beagle Channel crisis; the Beagle Channel crisis of 1978 involved Argentina and Chile, who were going to go to war over three small islands in the Beagle Channel next to Tierra del Fuego. And we had a meeting in our office talking about what we were going to do, what we were going to recommend and at one point somebody said well, the last time that Argentina and Chile

had a border dispute was when they decided on the last part of the border along the Andes, going down into the Tierra del Fuego region. But it still left this disputed area, but the one they had done this at an earlier time, and it had been mediated by, I think, King George V. British king, right? And we all said well, unfortunately because of the Falklands/Malvinas problem that obviously is not going to work this time. And half-jokingly, I said- and Pope John Paul II had just been elected- and I half-jokingly said why not the pope? And everybody said well, why not? And our desk officer at the time for Argentina wrote a cable, cleared by the Chilean folks across in the office of the southern cone and who knows who else, to our then-representative in the Vatican because we still didn't have an embassy there. And the Vatican responded you know, well hey, Pope John Paul is really interested in this kind of thing, you know. He's kind of a different kind of pope. And he mediated the crisis. And they resolved it. So, here I am thinking: where's my Nobel Peace Prize? But then one time when I told this story somebody observed to me, he said: well, it might not have turned out to have actually been such a great deal because it's almost certain that if they'd had the war Chile would have won, and then Argentina would never have been in position to invade the Falkland Islands.

But it was a great tour. It was a hell of a lot of work; it was a lot of work with a lot of extra hours but working on a desk was a tremendous learning experience for me and I learned a great deal and I was involved in a lot of very important stuff.

Q: Let me just ask one question. The suggestion that you made, well, why doesn't the pope try acting as the facilitator or mediator in the war, is a rather innovative and thoughtful kind of thing. Did you get an award for that?

MYLES: No, no.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: It's one of those dynamics where you're all sitting around brainstorming, trying to decide what we're going to do because we don't want these two countries to go to war. Certainly if you're going to be totally protecting yourself from an intellectual property point of view, you should have written it down in a memo or something. And I don't even know if the Argentine desk officer got any credit for it, you know; he was the one that wrote the cable.

Q: Yes. Okay.

MYLES: He ended up being quite a successful officer, by the way, but I don't know if it had anything to do with that or not. But it happens; you know, it happens all the time, you know. People don't necessarily deliberately steal intellectual property, but sometimes it gets out there in a way that you think in retrospect; well then, maybe I should have gotten this down in writing somehow; gone off in my room, wrote it up and then made multiple copies. But you know, that's not the way it works.

So, anyway. So, that was a great tour and that was from 1977 to '79.

Oh, and the other thing that happened during that tour, and it was important, was that the Commerce Department took over the commercial function in 1978. And something like 50 State officers who were actually involved in commercial work at the time, mainly overseas, were invited to switch over. Well, I was working in an economic job in the State Department at this point, so I wasn't one of those. I might have been interested; I don't know if I would have been or not, because I frankly didn't find my tour at Commerce to be compelling enough to make the switch. And even though I very much enjoyed commercial work, I wasn't given the opportunity, so I have no idea whether or not I would have decided to do that.

But anyway, I've had commercial experience and I've got this economic experience on a country desk, so I was advised that I really needed to go to the economic and business bureau. And EB at that point was really riding high, its reputation was very high, and it was really kind of important if you were in the economic cone to punch your ticket in that bureau. So, we still didn't have open assignments, but they gave me a list of vacancies coming up in the bureau for 1979, and I interviewed in several offices. And the job I ended up getting, it's so incredibly funny, was one of the remaining commercial jobs left in the State Department, which is there to this day, which is the Office of Aviation. Because State still has the lead on negotiating civil aviation agreements. One of the reasons for this was the regulatory agency still in existence at that time, the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB,) didn't feel that their rules allowed them to take that role. And then, starting in the '60s, the government had added to the mix the Department of Transportation (DOT.) So, we were kind of the mediator between them as well as with the foreign governments. And at that time, DOT had a fairly small international department, and CAB had a very large international department. But we were the lead and I started out in a kind of an introductory job dealing mainly with regulatory issues, where I got to know the CAB people very well. But the Carter Administration had started the deregulation of the civil aviation industry, so CAB was set to go out of business in 1984. So, that job was being phased out along with CAB.

So, after about six months they moved me to be the staff officer managing bilateral negotiations for Latin America. In that job I got to participate in the beginning of the deregulation or "Open Skies" process which began with agreements with Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium to deregulate flights and fares between those countries and the U.S. But the Latin American countries weren't yet ready to agree to open and liberal aviation policies despite our efforts to persuade them. So our negotiations with the Latin American countries dealt not so much with air rights as it was with "doing business" issues like airport fees and ground handling arrangements. So, that's what I did for that period, which was 1979 to 1982.

Q: Okay. Now, a quick question here. This is also a period when the administration is changing and had Deane Hinton as assistant secretary up until the Reagan Administration comes in and then Hormats. Did that change in the top individual make any difference in your daily life and the work you were doing in EB?

MYLES: No because the Reagan Administration basically continued the policy of Open Skies.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: There wasn't any significant difference in the policy between Carter and Reagan. Interestingly enough because you know, you think okay, now there are so many differences, right? But in this particular case, international civil aviation, it was somewhat more of a difference of tone, maybe not quite as much messianic zeal as it had been in the Carter Administration.

The bigger struggles had to do with some silly, really silly things, administrative things. One that took up a great deal of my time was the coffee issue. When our delegations went overseas, the foreign ministry of the counterpart country usually would host the talks and give the negotiators coffee for free. On our side, we would host the talks at State, but we didn't have a budget for coffee. And so, I was tasked with finding out a way to get the coffee done, because it was too expensive for us to have it brought up by the cafeteria. We couldn't get the secretaries to do it; they said making coffee wasn't in their job description. I came up with a system where whoever was in charge of that negotiation would make the coffee and put it into these big urns, these ones you push up and down, and that's how we solved the coffee problem. It seemed so incredibly silly, it was the kind of thing that foreign delegations expected and the absence of coffee would have been a negative factor that might have influenced the negotiations.

So, but other than those silly little things we made a lot of progress. Our office also dealt with problems with charter flights, problems with private aircraft. We had an officer whose job was entirely to work with the American Aircraft Operators Association people, dealing with international flight plans and all kinds of pilot welfare issues on the private side. I had a huge issue with a charter carrier that had gotten their plan impounded in Lima and all the passengers stranded. For a time I was on the phone day and night with the economic officer there.

But I loved the work, I loved the subject. I always had been interested in aviation. But in the larger foreign policy picture, aviation was a sideshow. We were the lead because that's the way historically it worked out and bureaucratically the way it worked out, but it was so far from the main job of what EB was interested in doing. On the one hand we had a pretty free hand, on the other hand, from a career enhancement point of view, it wasn't like being in the office that dealt with finance or trade. So, for all the fun involved with the job the downside was you got branded as a specialist and not in a specialty that was high up in the pecking order for the State Department.

Q: No promotion potential.

MYLES: Yes, that's it, although I did get promoted during my second tour doing civil aviation.

So, I'm coming up for assignment in 1982 and what I really wanted to do was to get one of the slots to go off to graduate school on the State Department's dime, and I put a lot of work into trying to get that but I didn't get it. So, I was assigned to be the head of the economic section at Tegucigalpa, Honduras. But, one day late in the assignment cycle, spring of 1982, the personnel people come to me and say: well, you know we have a little bit of a problem. The guy in Tegucigalpa who you're going to replace, you're supposed to replace, has gone to his ambassador and has told him that he'd like to stay an extra year. And the ambassador was very happy to let him stay another year, you know, because from his point of view he's got a known quantity and he doesn't know who I am and all that. So they said to me, it's up to you, you know. We wouldn't break this assignment just based on that. And I said to them, I know this ambassador and you're telling me I'm going to tell him no? He said he wants to keep the guy and I'm going to go down there and work for him and tell him no? Are you nuts? And so, I said I'm more than happily willing to withdraw, and so they kept the guy.

At this point my boss, the head of the negotiations division, who previously had been DCM in Khartoum, Sudan, recommended that I take the still-open assignment as the head of the economic section there. I had no experience in the region, I had no idea what I was getting into, but I trusted him. So, I took the job in Khartoum. But it did not turn out well.

So, I finished the work in the Office of Aviation, and I arrived in Khartoum in June 1982, and the first thing I noticed is that I'm not getting a very cheerful reception from the embassy leadership – the ambassador and DCM. Months later I learned that the guy I replaced in Khartoum had done exactly the same thing as the guy in Tegucigalpa and had asked the ambassador to stay on, who had agreed, but personnel said no. And apparently, though I've never had this confirmed, but I'm assuming that the personnel people, because they knew I would do the same thing again, they never told me, never gave me the chance to decide if I wanted to force myself on yet another ambassador. And nobody at post, including the ambassador and the DCM were aware that I had not been told about this.

Q: Wow.

MYLES: And so, they were assuming that I had refused to withdraw. It's likely that I had not been given that opportunity because the personnel people weren't going to risk a second overturning of an assignment. So, I've got a strike against me that I'm not aware of, that's first, and all of a sudden I'm in an area that I don't know and that I found I couldn't easily adapt to. I mean, the place was difficult, but that wasn't really the big issue. I mean, they didn't have any electricity a lot of the time, and we had these horrible sandstorms and the telephones often didn't work, I had to send my secretary around with notes on her bicycle to report to the ministries and things like that. Okay, those things were inconvenient, but I didn't like the culture. I just didn't. I mean, I tried to be as open as I possibly could, but I just didn't fit.

Q: And how about the rest of your family? Did they accompany you at this point or how did that work?

MYLES: Well, that was part of the problem. When I was assigned to Khartoum my wife said: oh yes, I'll come, but once I wrap up what I'm doing, and I'll come on out later. Well, she was involved in the savings and loan business. She started out as the secretary to the head of this little tiny savings and loan in Arlington just when the go-go savings and loan period got started. All of a sudden, business is going bananas and then they're starting to open more offices and she got promoted up eventually to the vice president in charge of building these new branches all over Northern Virginia. So while I'm working in Khartoum, her job kept getting better and better, more and more important. Not to mention the fact that I wasn't being particularly coy about my feeling about the post, that I'm being unappreciated in a place that I'm not appreciating, so she's got that in the letters, you know. So, this just made things worse. So, by the end of the first six months I'm beside myself; I've got the problem at home, I've got the problem at work, and I'm not feeling like I'm doing an good job because I'm just not getting into it.

And so, in December 1982, I went to a meeting on Sudan in Paris of the Paris Club, an intergovernmental organization where they negotiate government-to-government debt, official debt. And at this meeting Sudan was the first country to have its official debt one hundred percent rescheduled. It was a very big deal. And we had had a lot to do with it. In fact, I had written a message, a long message, back to the Department before that meeting recommending one hundred percent rescheduling, and everybody in the economic bureau finance office thought that I was crazy, and one of them said well, you should have sent that in and let us look at it before you actually sent it. Well, it turned out they did the 100 percent rescheduling. But even though it wasn't my idea alone because several of us in the embassy felt such action was necessary under the conditions, instead of it being a positive I got the reputation that here's this crazy guy who really doesn't know what he's doing, even though we ended up doing it.

So, at this point I've got the whole problem about the ambassador and the DCM being resentful of what they thought I'd done, which I hadn't, I've my wife, you know, not around and all of that. So, after the Paris Club meeting I took leave and went from Paris back to Washington where I, after consultation with my then-wife, it became clear that she wasn't coming at all and so, I decided to ask for a curtailment, which only infuriated everybody at the post even more. But I did get the curtailment on the basis of family, and so I left in the summer of 1983. For the rest of the time I was there I was a dead man walking, and I received evaluations that reflected that. So, Khartoum was a total disaster for me, and a disaster that followed me for the next several years. It was an unfortunate series of events, both official and personal, from which, because of subsequent developments- particularly the 1990s promotion crisis- I never was able to totally recoup.

So, while I was still working in Khartoum I'm discussing with my career counselor about onward assignments. This time the open assignment system is around and so I bid on a got an assignment back in the Latin America bureau and the regional economic office starting the summer of 1983. And they assigned me initially to the staff of the Kissinger Commission, which was going on at that time, which was the hearings and deliberations and discussions that took place around the development of the aid package for Central

America outside of Nicaragua because of the concern about the Sandinistas in the Reagan Administration. And so, and when that wrapped up and the Commission recommended that $6 billion be spent to help the Central American countries resist communism, the then-deputy secretary of state asked AID and our office to team up to do a report on how much of this money could be absorbed by the countries. So, everybody in our office got to go with the AID people who were leading this, as well they should, to go to every one of these countries in the fall of 1983 to do a report on how well the countries would be able to absorb and usefully use the money.

Now, I went to Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. We spent three weeks or so doing this. I was got to see these countries for the first time. El Salvador was pretty dangerous; Tegucigalpa wasn't so much at that time, and Guatemala was no problem. And Belize, there wasn't much to it.

So, we put together this report and it mainly said that most of the countries couldn't possibly absorb all of the aid without economic reforms. And we presented it and it certainly didn't change any basic direction of the policy. Maybe about the only thing it did was to reinforce the ongoing effort that we were doing to try to get some economic policy reforms. And so, this led to my other main job during that time- I was the staff guy supporting the economic deputy assistant secretary in ARA, who lead the U.S. effort for something called the U.S.-Honduran Joint Economic Working Group, which was coming up with proposals for economic reforms to be made by the Hondurans so that their part of the Kissinger Commission largesse would be successfully used. I went down to Honduras several times during the next couple of years.

As you might imagine, these are the precursors of what's going on right now because although there are a lot of other reasons, such as the collapse of coffee prices and such things, particularly in Guatemala, that are involved, the fact that this effort was not particularly successful when we had all that money shows you the direction that things went in Central America. And as was shown by the Iran-Contra testimony later on, the political structure, both in Washington and in Tegucigalpa, was much more worried about the Contras than they were about economic reforms. In fact, the Iran-Contra revelations led me to the conclusion that our work in the Joint Economic Working Group was just so much "window-dressing."

So, those were the main things that I did, and that job was from '83 to '85. There were other things involving the Central American countries, but those were the most important ones. That was the big project at hand during that entire period- all related to the Contras and the anti-Sandinista effort and all of that. So, that was that job. And it was fun, and I was comfortable with the region. Again, it was obviously reinforcing the fact that I really enjoyed working in the Latin America region, and so that was just part of that process. And so, my career was increasingly becoming binary between Latin America and then back to aviation.

In fact, in 1985 I was recruited to become the Deputy Division Chief of the Division of Aviation Policy, which, as I said earlier, handled multilateral aviation issues. The hot

thing that was going on when I came on board was aviation security. In response to a number of hijackings, Congress had mandated that FAA go out and inspect foreign airports and not allow U.S. carriers to go to places where there was a security issue at those unsecured foreign airports. And this is when the policy was if you had a hijacking, you didn't do anything, you just let them do that and then you sat there and waited until hopefully you'd be rescued and all that kind of thing, which was overturned by 9/11. But that had been the policy that had been established by all the hijackings to Cuba that had occurred over several years previously and was continuing to happen. But now we were insisting that foreign countries put in perimeter fencing, stronger x-ray machines, all the things that we've now moved even further into all started about that time.

In addition, our office did the private aviation stuff, plus airport fees and charges, customs and immigration inspection facilities, and the burgeoning new technology of computer reservation systems.

As this phase of my career started, I became more and more involved in management. The assistant secretary at that time gave me the job of reorganizing the Office of Aviation. And the reason was, the way the protocol worked, only the deputy assistant secretary, the office director, and the two division chiefs were considered senior enough to chair negotiations. At this point, the Civil Aeronautics Board is no longer there; their entire international section has gone over to the Department of Transportation. DOT is now the only other actor and so DOT is starting to question why we're heading negotiations instead of them. And so, it wasn't felt that we could have anybody lower than the division chief be the head of a delegation. And we were doing so many negotiations at this time it was getting to be extremely onerous. And so, the solution we came up with was to get the State Department management people to agree to raise the two divisions up to the office level. There wouldn't be an Office of Aviation anymore; there would be an Office of Aviation Negotiations and an Office of Aviation Policy. And I was the one who was supposed to get this done. And I did, through a lot of negotiation with State management. I also got agreement to convert the former office director of the Office of Aviation into a special negotiator under the deputy assistant secretary. The result was a deputy assistant secretary, a special negotiator, two office directors and two deputy office directors being able to share the negotiating load. And I got a superior honor award for that.

Q: Yes.

MYLES: Had nothing whatsoever to do with policy. But it was a totally bureaucratic administrative shift to solve the issue of not ceding the negotiating lead to the Department of Transportation.

Q: Just a very quick question. In doing that, did you have a lot of other stakeholders in the State Department that you needed to work with or whose blessing you needed to get?

MYLES: There were many within the management side of the Department. There was resistance to the idea of creating additional offices. Kind of a precedence issue. Because

supposedly somebody else could make an issue along this line in other offices, so you could have a proliferation of raising offices up, you know what I mean?

Q: Yes.

MYLES: Not many people in the State management side knew anything about aviation, anyway, and so we didn't argue the issue from that perspective. It was more like: is this a good idea just because you guys don't want to lose any bureaucratic turf. So, that was where the problem was, and we had to overcome that. I don't know if anybody else ever did it, I don't know, but we did that.

But as a result of the reorganization my substantive responsibilities dramatically increased. As a deputy office director rather than a deputy division chief I could now head up delegations. I was head of negotiations for one negotiation and staff director for two others- one was airport charges at Heathrow and Gatwick Airports. So, now we're dealing with the Brits, who are some of the toughest negotiators around. And that was in the Thatcher years; they were privatizing the airports. And so, to improve the bottom line they were charging these extremely high rates for transatlantic services, including to their own airlines, to cross-subsidize European airline operations. And this severely disadvantaged U.S. Airlines. We of course objected, and we negotiated to obtain reimbursement for seven years- I was long gone by then. The issue finally went to arbitration and we won, and we were helping out Pan Am and TWA when we started. and we were helping out United and America when it ended because Pan Am and TWA didn't exist anymore. The negotiation and arbitration together ran from 1986 to 1992, yes. I remember I was in Brasilia when I got a call from my colleague who was the head staff person for DOT on that negotiation. And she calls me up and says we finally won. I said well, I would call this somewhat of a Pyrrhic victory, but congratulations!

And other one where I wasn't the formal head but did a lot of the work on even though sometimes I would have one of my bosses take over for certain meetings was over computer reservation systems. We negotiated with the major European civil aviation powers collectively through the European Civil Aviation Commission (ECAC,) which is the regional organization of the International Civil Aviation Organization. At that time, computer reservation systems used by travel agents were dominated on the U.S. side by the ones owned by American and United Airlines, which were called Sabre and Apollo, respectively, and by the national airline in each European country. And the argument was about the algorithms involved with connecting flights because there was no issue about what showed up for non-stop flights. But the U.S. was particularly concerned about connections because they were much more important for us in a big country like that than it was for the Europeans, where flights were at that time concentrated mostly at major airports in places like London and Paris. And so, studies had shown that most travel agents wouldn't look for connections beyond the first screen of their computers; they're busy and they're not necessarily going to look at all the connections, they're going to look at just the stuff they see right away. We didn't deal with issues like rebates and other incentives that might have existed for these agents to use a particular carrier; we did not deal with that at that time. We dealt with these logarithms. And it was groundbreaking

stuff, it was really high-tech stuff at the time. To demonstrate that although U.S. algorithms might favor of the owners of the systems to show their connecting flights before their competitors, the European systems weren't showing any connections on competing U.S. airlines at all. So, we set up these huge screens and put up these computer systems on them to show how each of the systems worked. We did that in Washington, and we did that at ECAC headquarters in Paris. And as a result we got agreement on huge changes made on both sides.

And eventually the systems became privatized and American's Sabre system became Expedia and United's Apollo system became Travelocity. And the whole thing moved on over into the Internet and access to reserving flights became widespread, and now nobody uses travel agents for that kind of thing anymore. But at the time it was a huge thing. You went to your travel agent in those days because you didn't have a computer screen, you didn't have the Internet, and so you went to a travel agent and what was shown on their screens was extremely important. There were really huge bucks involved in the whole thing.

But meanwhile, the one negotiation where I had primary control over, involved pre-inspection agreements. For many years U.S. Customs and Immigration had their agents operate what's known as pre-clearance in several Canadian airports and in Bermuda, places where you have flights going to a large number of U.S. points. And having the pre-clearance facilities allowed those flights to go to airports that didn't have Customs and Immigration facilities in the United States. The system worked very, very well in Canada and in Bermuda and then eventually in Ireland. Anyway, it was all very good because Customs and Immigration felt comfortable that they could operate a law enforcement operation in those countries.

Now, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS,) wanted to expand pre-clearance into other countries where they were having problems with immigration because if people arrived a U.S. airport, they could apply for asylum. So, they wanted to have pre-clearance in all sorts of other places in order to have people interdicted and not ever reach the United States. But that was a law enforcement activity that also required confidence in the ability of host governments to back up the U.S. Officers in case of trouble.

So, Customs had no interest in doing pre-clearance somewhere where they weren't sure that they were going to be backed up by the local government. So, INS came up with an alternative- pre-inspection, which would involve immigration screening only. We did the first pre-inspection negotiation in 1987 in Aruba, and I was the head of that delegation of mainly INS people. And we set it up and it was all very successful with Aruba because INS was comfortable with the Aruban judicial and law enforcement systems.

And after the success in Aruba, we did an exploratory visit to see if we could do it in Jamaica. Well, that didn't work. We got to Kingston to have preliminary discussions with the Jamaican government and when several of us on the delegation decided to take a walk on a beautiful Sunday afternoon; we're attacked by a guy with a machete. Luckily, one of the INS officers was an instructor at the combined Customs-Immigration school down in

Georgia and knocked the guy down. And that convinced everybody that maybe this wasn't a good place to have pre-inspection. If there's been any expansion of pre-clearance or pre-inspection since, I'm not aware of it. It could be, but I'm not aware of it.

So, in addition to those negotiations I managed the office, with the exception of the lady that did the FAA work. She had started in civil aviation as a staffer at the Chicago Convention in 1944. She was Civil Service and knew FAA backwards and forwards, knew where all their bodies were buried, could probably blackmail them all. And my boss, the director of the Office of Aviation Policy, said: she's way too senior to you -- she was already in her 70s at that time -- so you manage everybody else in the office. She was absolutely the right person to deal with all the bureaucratics involved in working with the Federal Aviation Administration, but nobody my age, I was 38 at the time, a whippersnapper, was going to tell her what to do.

So, again, it was a wonderful job, totally off the radar with the system, but my reorganization work seemed to have been understood by the promotion board, and so I was promoted to O-1 in 1987.

Q: So, what year does this job conclude and you get the promotion?

MYLES: I got the promotion in '87. The job concluded in '88. So, now I'm an O-1 and so I'm competing in the '88 cycle at the O-1 level.

Q: You have reached O-1 relatively early in your career despite the problem that you had in Sudan.

MYLES: I reached O-4 in 1979 at the end of the Brazil/Argentina/Uruguay/Paraguay job. That rank became O-2 after the passage of the 1980 Foreign Service Act. So, because of Sudan I spent eight years as an O-2.

Q: From?

MYLES: 1979 to 1987.

Q: Okay, okay.

MYLES: That slowed me into competing with other O-1s for the practically non-existent promotions in the '90s, which of course, we didn't know in 1988 that that almost total promotion freeze was going to happen. And it wasn't just me, it affected everybody. So, it's just a matter of timing because, I have no way of knowing, but maybe if I'd had a successful tour in Sudan, I might have been promoted to O-1 after five years rather than eight.

So, there was a timing issue. I'll talk more later about the promotion situation in the '90s, but just to say now I don't have any gripe about how I'm going to be eventually treated, at least nor on an individual basis. But there was a collective gripe because a huge

number of us all got out careers cut short because of what was done with promotions during that period of time. It's just that I ended up in that zone. There's no way of being able to speculate what would have happened otherwise. When I was recommended for promotion into the Senior Foreign Service in 1991, they had already started restricting the number of promotions. Just a few years earlier, most everybody recommended to go in the Senior Foreign Service was promoted. So, we'll talk about that.

Alright. So, now we have an open assignment system and my deputy assistant secretary, the one who gave me the office reorganization job, tells me: you basically have got two ways to go from here. The aviation side is pretty cushy. You can be assigned to be our aviation guy at the embassy in Ottawa. It's very likely that after that you'll get to go to London or to Paris. But of course, that's it, you know. The end of the road. So, within the context of 1988, his advice was, if you want to complete your career in the aviation area, you're going to get five, six or maybe even eight years of really nice jobs and that's going to be it because it's a dead end. On the other hand, if you go out and use your management experience as a DCM your career prospects will be much greater. So, he convinced me to go that way, and I bid on the available O-1 DCM jobs and interviewed with several ambassadors. And so, I got the DCM job in Paramaribo, Suriname.

So, I went to Dutch language training but I was never really very good at speaking it, but I could read it fine.

Q: What year did you go to-

MYLES: 1988.

Q: 1988 you're going down as DCM in Paramaribo, Suriname?

MYLES: Suriname, yes. Former Dutch Guiana.

The new ambassador had no experience whatsoever in Latin America. He had been the DCM in Jakarta, Indonesia, and had worked mainly in East Asia bureau. He was an expert on Indonesian affairs. My understanding is that he had been promised to be the ambassador to Brunei, and for some reason having to do with the $10,000 that the sultan of Brunei provided to the contras, the whole thing with Elliot Abrams and all that, somehow or another he didn't get his ambassadorship. I never quite understood what the connection was. And supposedly, the ambassadorship in Suriname came into the picture on the basis that 10 percent of the population of Suriname is of Javanese origin.

He found himself in a very difficult situation because we had just gotten the military government under Dési Bouterse out of office in 1987. But the civilian government that came in was extremely weak and Bouterse was still head of the army. So, he's dealing with an extremely difficult situation and, most importantly, the human connections with the Latin America bureau aren't there. They don't know him; he doesn't know them. And to complicate matters, he gets himself into a fight with ARA about his house, which was, at one point, described by an outside commentator as the worst ambassador's residence in

the hemisphere. But his predecessor in the job was very unassuming, he didn't care particularly about the state of the residence. And that guy's DCM, the guy that I replaced, had six kids and, because the DCM's residence at the time was too small the DCM rented, with his boss's blessing, something larger for his six kids, much larger. When the new ambassador came in he made a stink because the DCM's residence was a lot bigger than his residence and a lot nicer. And so, he burned a bunch of bridges complaining about this house. And just before I got there, they made a face-saving compromise: the landlord for the Marine house took the house back, so they turn this large, relative palace into the Marine house. Shows you how big it was.

Now, the ambassador ends up staying in the house he's in, but they find a way to not make it look so bad. So, I come in in a situation where the bureau is looking to me to kind of regularize everything, to get the drama out of the office. But before I got very far we have a new crisis. The OIG (Office of the Inspector General) had done an inspection like two years earlier. And December 1988 an OIG team comes to do what was known as a compliance review, to see if the post had corrected the problems they had found in the earlier inspection. Instead, they did a new, full inspection. They didn't tell us they were going to do a full inspection. I don't know if they realized themselves before they arrived that they were going to do a full inspection. Their justification was is that there'd been such a huge change in the environment since the last inspection, a new, civilian host government, a new ambassador, and not enough had been done to follow-up the previous inspection, so they decided they might as well just do a new inspection.

And the sticking point was we had this incredibly horrible black market, which accounted for 90 percent of the transactions in the local economy. The street rate for the black market was 10 times the official rate. The official rate was being maintained artificially because Suriname was then and still is a major bauxite exporter and they were using the official rate to keep up their foreign currency intake from bauxite . But it meant that on the local economy something that was two bucks was costing $20 for us. Of course the black market wasn't legal, despite the fact that everyone was using it except ourselves and the Dutch. The Dutch, of course, are the big guys in town. They have a much bigger embassy than ours, and they solved the problem by taking out a loan in Surinamese currency and at the end of the tour they would sell everything on the local market, which is legal, and then pay back the loan. And I said that's great for one little, small problem. We have a capital gains tax and the Dutch don't, and we'd have to pay capital gains on the sale of all that stuff. So, instead we were forced by our own rules to use the official rate.

And these OIG guys came down and said that I personally, the DCM, was expected to enforce the rules and check the personal finances of everybody in the embassy. They basically accused everybody in the embassy of being in the black market. They honed right in on this issue of the black market. I was eventually accused of dealing in the black market myself because I had a friend who was the head of the local security company; he was an ex-Houston policeman. And so, I would go to dinner with the guy and he would pay. Well, I was told that doing that was dealing in the black market. It was bad.

So, this really poisoned the well because the ambassador was just beside himself. How could we be so humiliated. And our relationship was never really great after that.

Also, the rule had just changed extending two-year assignments in hardship posts to three-years for senior officers only. So, I was the only career person there, other than the ambassador, on a three-year assignment. So, everybody else is on a two-year assignment. So, the first two years I had some great staff people, I had a great admin officer, a talented tandem that were the consular/econ and political officers, and so other than dealing with the difficulties with the ambassador, everything else ran pretty smoothly.

So, meantime, on the way down there, I had gone to the management course for DCMs and Principle Officers. And part of that was to go off-site to a place called The Woods in Hedgesville, West Virginia, where we did these management exercises and got these management lectures and learned about the MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator). We learned all these management tricks and various kinds of things, including games that they had you play, team-building games and various things like that. And the officer who was headed to Porto Alegre, Brazil, as consul, principle officer, and I were the only two that were in the same MBTI group. After they gave us the Myers-Briggs test they said to everybody, if you're the same as another person of the 16 groups in the MBTI, get together with them to talk about what your similarities are and what your differences are. And there was this huge group in the classification of which somebody had done a study that showed that a clear majority of officers in the organizational culture of the State Department was of this one group. But in my group, ESFJ; there were only two of us. The situation provided an compelling explanation about why it was that I never felt like I meshed completely in the Foreign Service because my group, my MBTI preferences, how I felt comfortable, particularly on management and personnel issues and how to run things and all that did not mesh well with the organizational culture of the State Department, something I certainly didn't know before that.

And so, this one person and I were the only two and we talked about how we were the same and how we were different and some of the stuff that we liked to do comfortably and some of our philosophy and all that. And she went off to Porto Alegre and I went off to Paramaribo and then she came up to Paramaribo that October and I went to Porto Alegre that November, and we ended up going back and forth for two years, one of us coming across the continent every couple of months. And then we got married in 1990.

Q: Oh, wait a minute, wait a minute.

MYLES: That was my side job while I was doing all these other things; traveling from Paramaribo to Porto Alegre and back and there was only one flight a week.

Q: Wait a minute. I have to ask a question here. So, you were the only two with the same Myers-Briggs personality inventory.

MYLES: Yes, correct.

Q: And did you- okay. First of all, you seem to be compatible enough to get married, but second of all, did you find as time went by that this management tool, this personality indicator, was a reasonable predictor of things in your personal, you know, your interpersonal relations and so on?

MYLES: It's hard to say that MBTI is a predictor. It's much easier to say that it's a tool for you to be able to understand there's more than one thing to do things. And that also it's a good tool to know where you stand within the State Department organizational culture -- I also learned then that there's an organizational culture -- and also to learn that some people are more comfortable in some of these cultures than others, and that your preferred way of doing things can indeed affect, for example, performance evaluations which are often based on the preferences of the dominant organizational culture.

But, sometimes the MBTI does predict behavior.

So, for example, during this course we had a management exercise outside in the field and the organizers deliberately took the dominant cultural MBTI category of the State Department and made about four of these guys the heads of a group and then they took the ones that weren't in that group and blindfolded them and they were totally dependent upon the ones that were running it, who were from this major group, and they were supposed to get everybody across this imaginary creek, and there weren't enough resources. The guys running the show ended up triaging the blindfolded group based upon their unilateral decisions without consultation with the blindfolded people about who was going to get across the creek and who wasn't. And so, afterwards, when the instructors did the critique and these guys were told that they had acted predictably, they rebelled and would not accept the idea that they had acted in a way which was predicted by their type; they were tremendously hostile. And then, when they were told that the MBTI predicted that their type would be hostile, they almost went bananas. They just couldn't deal with the process anymore, right? So, a particular behavior may be predictable, but whether a particular person is going to be successful or not is another story.

Another difference is that people may change some over time. I think that many of the most successful people in the Foreign Service have learned to become comfortable with the dominant organizational traits to the point that their preferences have changed.

So, my future wife and I went back and forth across South America, and my ambassador was tolerant of that, which was nice, you know. I would be gone for a week because there was only one flight a week, and everything went fine. And then, he decided to leave after three years -- he was there '87-'90. So, he left in May 1990, and now I'm chargé d'affaires. His successor was named a couple of months later, and then his nomination got stuck along with a large number of others over some dispute going on between Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina and the administration, and despite the fact that this was a Republican administration under George H.W. Bush, Senator Helms held up the nominations for months. Eventually, the guy coming as the new ambassador to Suriname gets confirmed just before Thanksgiving of 1990.

And so, we had a consultation on the phone and he said well, you know, this is almost Thanksgiving, will it be alright if I don't come for a little while, and I said fine. And then he was going to come in January. Well, on December 24 -- Christmas Eve 1990, Dési Bouterse decided to overthrow the civilian government. Now we've got a military government that we don't recognize and consider illegitimate, so there's no way the new ambassador can show up and appear to legitimize this government in any way. So, I'm running this whole operation.

Before I get back to that – during the time I'm chargé, the number two guy is my political officer and he was an O-3. So, my future wife and I decided we wanted to get married, and we wanted to do it in her hometown in Buffalo, New York. So I asked the Latin America bureaucratic to let me take leave and I'm going to leave the political officer in charge, and the bureau says: No, he's too junior. The situation in Suriname is too sensitive. But then one of the guys in the Office of Caribbean Affairs volunteered to come down and spell me for a week, and the week he was supposed to come down there was an attempted coup d'etat in Trinidad and Tobago, and so he couldn't come because of that crisis. But later, we were able to get another guy who was a friend of ours in that same office to agree to come and he came down in August. But he can only be gone from his office for a week, and that included his travel time. And there's only one flight to the States every other day, and so the day I'm supposed to go to Buffalo the flight's late. Anyway, I got there; I got there with something like 15 minutes to spare before the marriage license expired, and we were there only three days, that's all the leave I had left, and we went back to Suriname.

Meanwhile, the honeymoon is postponed until some undetermined time. Alright. So, we're back in Suriname and this coup takes place and my backup communications is supposed to be provided by this satellite system that our friends in Langley are running; the coup happens and the military cuts off the telephone connection, which was our normal connection to get out of the country. The backup doesn't work. So, we're in a pickle. I finally arranged with our Dutch colleagues to use their facilities to get our messages out. It took three days for the Dutch to get us up and running again, and when we did, the first message I got was: We heard there's a coup; why haven't you answered our messages?

So, we spent the rest of my time in Suriname sending cable after cable after cable, making recommendations about how to get rid of the military government. And State ended up coordinating with the Venezuelans, then under the leadership of Carlos Andrés Pérez, to force the government out using pressure from everybody in the Hemisphere through the OAS (Organization of American States) and the Dutch played a big role also. And when, in February 1991, the military-dominated government announced that they were going to have elections, at that point it was decided that it would be okay for our new ambassador to come. He arrived at the international airport, made the official announcement that we're supporting the process to restore democracy, and said that he had come to help expedite that process.

Now the new ambassador had been a chargé for two-and-a-half years in his previous assignment because his ambassador had been thrown out of the country for political reasons. So he says to me: I know what it's like; you've been chargé for more than a very short time, well then you have no way you can return to your previous role. I'd been assigned to go to Brasilia already, so he said: You're going to go to Portuguese training starting in April, here it is February, go have the honeymoon you haven't had, then come back, pack out and go on to Portuguese training And I said that sounded good to me. Also, by this point, the second group of embassy staff had rotated in, and the new political officer was an O-2, so the ambassador was comfortable with making him acting DCM, and so the whole thing was set up. And we left and we did our honeymoon in Holland and Germany and then went to Washington where I was assigned to be the political counselor at the embassy in Brasilia, then I went to Portuguese language training.

Q: We'll pause here and then we'll pick up on Thursday. I think we've already made that arrangement.

Great. Alright, good. Very, very interesting up until now and we'll follow you to Brasilia in a few days.

Q: So, today is June 27. We're resuming our interview with Stanley Myles as he goes to Brazil in- Stanley, which post did you go to in Brazil.

MYLES: I went to be the political counselor in Brasilia, the embassy in Brasilia.

Q: Okay. In 1991?

MYLES: 1991.

Q: Okay. How big a section was it when you arrived?

MYLES: Well, first I'm going to give you the story of how I got the job.

Q: Oh, very good.

MYLES: Okay. I was an economic/commercial officer, but also they had come up with this brand new additional consideration in which basically you got two bites of the promotion apple with two different panels if you had served in a management position – your functional cone and the new multi-functional track. Because of Suriname I'm in that situation for the first time. And so, I was the candidate of the Latin America bureau because I was known to the bureau, I was known to the people in the Brazil office from working on the Brazil desk and from working with the Brazilians in Suriname. But when I went to panel -- nobody thought there'd be any problem -- except that it turned out that the personnel folks had some problems because I wasn't a political officer. And so, they put up another candidate, so there was a lot of back and forth about this, to which the bureau and I and others all said well, wait a minute, you're doing multi-functional and

I'm multi-functional I've just been basically doing the political job in Suriname for the last three years. And so, this big fight ensued. And the only way the fight was resolved was when the other candidate got the political counselor job in another post. But the point being was that somehow, I don't know whether it was because the political cone is, you know, kind of the privileged one or what and this wouldn't have happened any other way, but somehow because I wasn't a political officer, my assignment to be the political counselor in Brasilia was challenged.

Well, we won the battle and I went to Brasilia and I had a staff of four officers; a Foreign Service secretary, a local secretary and two local political specialists. It was a pretty good sized section. And soon after arriving, because of my DCM experience, the ambassador decided to make me acting DCM a number of times, which I did for all three years. The only problem there was that I wasn't a Senior Foreign Service officer. And the Senior Foreign Service officers in the other sections were very bent out of shape by all this, but the ambassador said to them: You have no management experience. I don't care what your rank is, you don't have management experience.

Q: And Stanley, just by the way, in most posts that I served in, and most ambassadors took the same view. So, in other words, if there was a senior political officer who had had management experience the ambassador would take that person as an acting DCM or they would turn to, perhaps, the communications officers if the communications officer had had management experience before.

MYLES: Absolutely.

Q: So, anyway, go on.

MYLES: So, basically the political issues of the day revolved around the one-year-old administration of the Brazilian president at that time, Fernando Collor. And Collor was, when I got there in 1991, still pretty popular after his election over Lula. But there were all these rumblings and rumors about corruption problems, even beyond the normal background of political corruption in Brazil. And we were hearing all these things about people being shaken down for contributions and various kinds of graft, and that Collor had a kind of bagman who was going around to the political and economic players to collect. Well, we started reporting all these rumors and that was kind of our number one activity, and it was all just rumors, nobody ever came out and said anything publicly. We reported from various sources with all of this. I had my four officers going around doing that and at the same time covering what was going on in the legislature; the usual stuff. And all this continued on for about a year.

And then, in June 1992, Brazil hosted a United Nations conference on the environment and development, which was at that time the largest-ever UN conference. And that was in Rio de Janeiro.

Q: In Rio, yes.

MYLES: And so, to support it, because Rio de Janeiro's consulate was much smaller than the embassy and couldn't handle the administrative requirements of that conference on its own, we basically moved the embassy lock, stock and barrel, with the exception of a skeleton staff, down to Rio for the whole period of the conference. This worked out fine for me because my wife had been assigned as the deputy principle officer in Rio. And so, we spent a year commuting back and forth between Rio and Brasilia, and so when this conference occurred, I didn't have to worry about having a hotel room; I just went right to her place.

Q: A quick question. Was it easy at that time for you and your wife to go back and forth through Rio? I have always heard that it's actually terribly expensive and not so easy to travel within Brazil using its domestic airlines and so on.

MYLES: The answer is absolutely yes for anywhere else in Brazil, but it was fairly easy to do it between Brasilia and Rio and between Brasilia and Sao Paulo. At the time nobody liked to stay in Brasilia over the weekends and the politicians went back and forth between Brasilia and Rio and Sao Paulo frequently. The only problem going to Rio was that, while the Brasilia airport was convenient, there wasn't service to Rio's in-town airport, because they were using jets and the in-town airport didn't have enough runway length. So they used the international airport in Rio and it was quite a distance out of town. And that was the main hardship – just getting in and out of Rio to the airport. So, yes, it was a bit of a pain.

So, my wife was heavily involved in all the admin stuff much more than I was because that's what the consulate staff were basically doing because they had the local contacts and they dealt with that kind of thing and there were all kinds of issues about space and about who was going to be in what hotel and all of those things, and the admin apparatus between Brasilia and Rio did all of that kind of work. And my primary job in the first phase, which was the non-summit phase, the actual working phase of the conference, was to handle CODELs.

So, this huge group comes down from both the House and the Senate, and the Senate delegation is led by Senator Al Gore and Senator Tim Wirth of Colorado, both of them prominent in the environmental orbit. There must have been 10, 12 senators altogether. I don't remember how big the House delegation was, but I had to have every one of my officers and every one of the political officers in Rio, and we had some over from Sao Paulo, just to have a staff to handle these people. You know, as you know, dealing with CODELs, they are very, very demanding, and on top of that there's the security problems in Rio- I mean, the Brazilian government had actually gone to the point of mobilizing the army to provide security for the conference and had closed all of the slums and locked them down. We gave the delegations a full briefing, you know, you really need to be careful and all that kind of stuff. And I had to put officers on as escorts with these guys because they were continuously going off to places they really shouldn't have gone, continuously doing this and that. About the best I could do was get the handlers on the Senate and the House side to tell us when they were going somewhere. And I would put somebody with them so that if something happened, they could deal with it because they

spoke Portuguese and the delegates didn't. And it happened; several times we had to get people out of scrapes of one kind or another, one kind of dispute or they went into some area which was dicey, and we dealt with that for two weeks.

Q: Did you have cellphones at that time?

MYLES: No.

Q: So, the radios made it even more difficult?

MYLES: No radios either. There were walkie talkies for some people, particularly on the law enforcement side, but we didn't have anything like that.

And then, the second phase was the summit. Now we've got President Bush and all the heads of state. Yes. And this includes such things as trying to find Secret Service accommodations and they ended up in a motel. I don't know if you know Brazil, but a motel in Brazil is a sketchy place. And that ended up getting into the papers, and so, that was kind of one of the interesting sidelines. Anyway.

Q: Hotel California?

MYLES: Yes. You can check in any time you like but you can never leave.

So, my job at this stage is to accompany our assistant secretary of state at that time, Bernie Aronson, and his job was to keep President Bush as far away from Fidel Castro as possible. In the meantime, he held a number of bilaterals with several Latin American heads of state, including Fujimori of Peru and some others. So, because we were really strapped, we enlisted the aid of our Federal Aviation Administration representative in Rio, resident in Rio, who spoke Spanish and pressed him into service as a translator for these bilaterals, and he did very well. In fact, he was very proud because he's coming out of an agency that doesn't have much to do with politics and kind of the grand nature of diplomacy and just was thrilled that he got included in some of this, really; big stuff. And that worked very well. President H.W. Bush, 41, was a gracious person and totally cooperative, totally without any ego whatsoever and it was just one of the most pleasurable experiences that I ever had with politicians. And it didn't hurt that Bush had been my congressman when I was in college – when my parents were living in Houston. And, in fact, years later I had the pleasure of having lunch with him when he came to Naples when my wife was consul general there.

So, the summit was a pretty good success. We got everybody through it without anybody getting into any serious problems. But, at the end, Fidel found his way to stand right next to President Bush when they took the final class picture. And Mr. Aronson was very mortified by that. But in the middle of the conference, President Collor's brother went public, accusing his brother of trying to seduce his wife. This led very quickly to kind of a break of the logjam of all the political corruption issues that had been held back, and within the next few weeks there was a flood of complaints. It wasn't so much that he was

corrupt; it was that he was more corrupt than was tolerated in the Brazilian political culture. He was more greedy. Like, as I said, he had this guy going around shaking everybody down, you know. It was one thing to have a kind of casual corruption, but this was systematic. And over a very short period of time his popularity rating just went to the floor and the Brazilian Congress started impeachment proceedings. And so, for the next several months our primary job was to report on the impeachment proceedings and what this meant and what would happen if Collor was thrown out.

And the tension was is that we were only, at that point, seven years past the end of the military government. The military government that ruled from 1964 had given back power in '85, so Collor was, in effect, the second president after that military period. He was actually third, but the first one had died soon after taking office in 1985 and was replaced by his vice president, who served most of the term. So, the concern in Washington was mainly: will the military allow this process to take place, and we in the embassy said yes, they don't want it back. They've gotten off the tiger now; they're not running the government anymore. And this was all reinforced by our military colleagues who were talking to their military people; they're reinforcing that they just weren't interested. The process was going to go forward according to the constitution; nobody in the military had any reason to keep Collor around as opposed to anybody else. But there kept being a persistent worry in Washington that every time we turned around somebody would be back saying oh, you know, is this going to happen or not. So, we spent months not only reporting but also reassuring Washington that this was going to happen. And it did, in December 1992, they threw Collor out of office and he was replaced by his vice president, who did a tolerable job, but we reported on that aftermath and all the rest of that, and then we started reporting on the next election, which was going to happen when I left in the summer of '94 but that hadn't happened yet.

So, it was very busy, very interesting. And I empowered my officers to do the reporting work. I saw myself as a manager and editor, to direct them about what we were looking for, as opposed to a lot of political counselors who feel they're, like, the senior political reporter and somehow they're supposed to be talking to the most senior people and all of this kind of thing. I did some of that, but I didn't do a lot of that, which was a little bit unconventional in a way and it wasn't received well by everyone; some more traditional people didn't like it. But that's the way I saw it because it was a big subject and we had a lot of people. But I figured, if I was running around out of the office all day, well then, who exactly would be managing the people who should be running around outside the office all day. That's the way I looked at it.

Q; Quick question. That's an interesting way of managing as a political counselor and that's fine, but really, ultimately, as political counselor you only need to make the DCM and the ambassador happy, and if they were satisfied with your management of the section, then, you know, old hands that might tsk tsk, well, you know, that's too bad.

MYLES: Yes. Yes. I agree. And so did the ambassador and the DCM. And it might have made a difference except that now we're into the period of the restriction of promotion slots, you see. So, as it worked out, it wouldn't have mattered if I pulled off the second

coming of Christ. So, in that area I had been recommended for promotion out of Suriname in 1991, but there weren't hardly any slots. And this actually got worse. So, it was getting to the point generally that people at the O-1 level and really at the counselor level, the OC level, were both pretty much starting to get the message that their work didn't matter much in terms of promotion because the evaluation system had, in my mind, and I think a lot of people agree with this, been set up in such a way, on a military kind of model, to be able to evaluate the pace of promotion. And it wasn't set up as a system for determining whether you were staying or whether you were going because traditionally, up until the '90s, for the most part, with the usual obvious exceptions, everybody kind of moved on up at some pace or another and the higher flyers might move faster and the lower ones not so much, but most everybody made it, and making it into the Senior Foreign Service as it was constituted after the 1980 Foreign Service Act. And when it became used as a way to thin the ranks, then it became a matter of almost theological because you had so few promotion slots. People's futures would end up being determined simply by who was on a panel against another panel, and this kind of thing, because you were looking at going through a door that was practically closed. And I think that was the thing that really caused a great deal of consternation generally at the time because everybody could see that- if they were at all involved in the process they could see that if you made it into the Senior Foreign Service anytime between about 1991 and 1998, it was just chance. I mean, some people were obviously deserving; everybody would say oh, yes, certainly that person, but then there were other people who would say well, how did he not make it, he or she not make it. It was, you know, capricious, and that made everybody pretty unhappy and cynical because what are you going to do? You've got this system that's been used for all this time, and all of a sudden it's going to decide you on time and class and you know, you got to the point where you didn't feel like you were able to influence that very much by your own performance. So, despite all this stuff that I did and all the glowing reports and all the rest, it all just kind of sunk into the system. So, when I left Brasilia in the summer of 1994, I'm still an O-1, and I'd been recruited to work on the Summit of the Americas back in Washington by the deputy director of that temporary office.

Q: Let me ask you a quick question here about Summit of the Americas. Obviously, it's a big deal, but on the other hand, my experience with that is it isn't particularly good for promotion because you're sort of working for many different people and your work is not necessarily well noticed.

MYLES: Well, that's right, but on the other hand, I'm still an O-1; there wasn't any O-1 jobs that looked good for promotion chances compared to the Senior Foreign Service job that I was leaving. And I thought that the Summit of the Americas job would do me as much good was any because there was a certain degree of visibility to it, and moreover I was interested in doing something like what I had done at the Rio conference. I must say, frankly, that I didn't think there was any way I could make any kind of rational decisions about what would get you promoted because nobody was getting promoted. So, I was asked to do it by an ambassador who I had worked with earlier, and I was interested in it, and we worked out butts off. I mean, it was a full-fledged summit of all the members of Latin America with a great deal of direct input out of the White House and the NSC

(National Security Council) and all the rest, so it was pretty high-level stuff. And while we had a huge staff eventually, we didn't have much to start. When I got there, we had two ambassadors and me, but we built up the staff and I took on more and more of the management responsibilities. We did all the briefing books, reams and reams and reams and reams of it, plus arranging all the preparatory meetings and the infrastructure at the Miami summit site. We had lots of contact at the very highest level, worked with all kinds of people in the NSC and the White House, and it was really right at the top of the chain in that sense, much more than a lot of other jobs would have been. But under the circumstances, promotions, well, who knows?

Now, and we did all of that, and so, we got to the week before we were supposed to go to Miami in December 1994 and nobody had agreed on the papers yet, on the briefing papers and the communiques and all that among all the countries. And so, it was decided that we would lock everybody up in a room, literally. We took all the delegations from all the countries and locked them at a place called Airlie House in Warrenton, Virginia. And we literally locked them up. And we didn't let them out until everything was agreed to, and so I was involved in all the particularly admin things, getting papers around, all that kind of stuff and redoing papers and getting them copied and getting them done with a huge staff down there, until we finally got everybody to agree. So, it was a huge thing but it was at the top level because my superiors were going back and talking to the secretary and in some cases all the way up to Bill Clinton; you know, what the hell's going down there; are we going to have this summit or are we not going to have this summit? And we got the needed agreements with a week to spare and then we all went to Miami. And the Miami summit itself was mainly ceremonial because all the stuff had already been agreed to at Airlie House. They had discussions among the heads of state and then signed the communique. It all went just fine because all the work had already been done and that's what a summit's supposed to do.

Q: What were the deliverables as you recall?

MYLES: Promises. Promises for international cooperation among the states of Latin America, promises to start doing things about the environment and trade and development. There weren't very many immediate deliverables; it was mainly to put everybody on the same page and to consult and to start a process, a Summit of the Americas process which would, in some ways it was almost like recreating the Alliance for Progress except this time we're pledging that it's all equals, it's all a consultative system. The OAS was to be strengthened, you know, we were talking to the OAS and the OAS would do actual meaningful things. That was the general idea. And for the rest of my time in that office during the next six months, we worked on setting up various structures to do follow-up meetings. Now, we did a couple of follow-up meetings, including one in Haiti; they actually opened up the Club Med to have the meeting and then they closed it down again and then we never had another meeting there. But that kind of thing. And that was the whole idea.

Q: At this- in 1994 Summit of the Americas, how did they handle the fact that the U.S. insisted Cuba could not be there?

MYLES: They accepted it.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: You know, Cuba wasn't suspended from the OAS anyway. There was some grumbling by some of Cuba's supporters, but there weren't as many supporters of Cuba at that time. There was nobody in Venezuela supporting them, nobody yet in Bolivia supporting them. The Mexicans a little bit because they'd always opposed the embargo. Canada was brought into it. This was another important thing. And that led to Canada being put into the Latin America bureau and changing it into what it is now, Western Hemisphere Affairs. So, Canada was moved out of the NATO-focused European group where it had been before and became part of the hemisphere; that was all part of that process.

Q: Were there any other deliverables as far as you recall that resulted in visible outcomes?

MYLES: There may have been in areas- some areas of AID. I'm sure in trade. Certainly, in the sense of improving our image of cooperation with Latin American countries. Not quite as dramatic as when we solved the Panama Canal issue, which was a big one, you know. So, I think yes, but I don't know chapter and verse how much it was, but I did become heavily involved in one part of it, which is my last two jobs.

So, I left the Summit Office. And now I'm about to run out of time-in-class, so what can I do? And so, I competed for several jobs and in the end I was hired by Senator Wirth, who at this point is the undersecretary of state for global affairs, as a special assistant. And global affairs meant multilateral topics that encompassed a lot of the globe or a lot of places, so that included narcotics, environment, human rights, and refugees. I spent one year, from 1995 to 1996, as special assistant on human rights and refugees, coordinating with the two bureaus responsible for those areas and doing briefing papers and working on Senator Wirth's various trips. And the highlight, or lowlight, of that time was during the government shutdown of December 1995. I was declared the essential person in G for the week between Christmas and New Year, and I spent the week alone at my desk. I was the only one in the office; I had to answer my own phone, there was almost no one in the halls, the cafeteria was closed, so I had to bring my lunch. Since he wasn't declared essential, Senator Wirth, stayed in Colorado. He hated it. He kept calling me, every single day, asking me: can I come back yet? I said sir, I'm sorry, but you can't. We're still closed down and you can't even use your own money to come back here. Maybe as a private citizen, but do you really want to do that? So, he stayed in his mountain retreat and waited, and waited, for the shutdown to get resolved. So, that was kind of the interesting thing that really happened during that year outside of the normal course of work.

Now in 1996 one of the Summit of the Americas deliverables, one of the things that was agreed to in 1994, is that the next full summit would be on the environment. The Summit of the Americas on the environment, 1996, to be hosted by Bolivia. So, after a year of

doing the human rights and refugee accounts, Senator Wirth asks me to set up an office to run the U.S. participation in this summit. The conference was to be held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, which at that time was still a relatively small town; today it's the largest city in the country. The Bolivians chose Santa Cruz as the site because they were worried that some of the more elderly of the heads of state might have trouble with La Paz's altitude, even though that's where all the hotels were. But the hotels were at 12,500 feet, and the airport was at 14,000.

So, this became a very pleasurable experience. Why? Because I'm setting up something that's temporary, it's not in the organization chart, and it's not subject to normal assignment rules. I mean, it's like liberation because I went back and recruited some of the guys who had worked on the first summit with me in '94. We got an Air Force officer who was a presidential intern. We got a couple of admin people from the environment bureau. We hired a couple of people on temporary funding. And I was able to make these selections based on their expertise on dealing with the first summit or on other conferences.

Q: But where did you get your money to do this? Who was funding it?

MYLES: G.

Q: Oh, okay.

MYLES: Yes. And we got office space in the Truman Building as it's called now. And at the height of the project I must have had about nine people. We then set up connections back to the White House and to the NSC and the environment and Latin America bureaus and the seventh floor.

So, our first crisis after we got organized was that the president of Bolivia at that time absolutely wanted President Clinton to come to the conference. But the problem was that the meeting is going to be in Santa Cruz. So, well before the conference was held I went down and surveyed the status of the hotels, and then I went back and reported that there weren't enough hotel rooms that were air conditioned and reasonably appropriate for the use of the usual US presidential delegation, much less the delegations of 32 states. And that wasn't the Bolivians fault, that was our fault because the nature of presidential travel demands such a large traveling party. Well, the president of Bolivia didn't want to hear this, so the next thing I do, I had to take Senator Wirth down to La Paz to sit in front of the president in his office and tell him it just can't be done. So, they came to a compromise - the head of the US delegation would be Vice President Gore, which made a lot of sense given his high visibility on environmental issues. The trouble was- and we left it unsaid at the time – even a vice presidential trip involved a lot of people; a lot less than a presidential delegation, but still, if you're figuring you've got to shoehorn 32 delegations into Santa Cruz, you are going to have a problem. But, later on, the vice president decided that he would only go to the closing session, and because he wouldn't stay the night in Santa Cruz, he wouldn't need a hotel room.

So then we did all the work like we'd done in the first summit, but this time all in the OAS. We didn't do it bilaterally this time because Bolivia is running it, Bolivia is the lead. And Bolivia didn't have the wherewithal to do it all on a government-to-government basis like we did in 1994. We spent hours, days, weeks sitting over in that building on 17th Street, sometimes into the middle of the night. I got to know the OAS building intimately over the next several months doing all the papers, the whole thing as before and all the arguments for what the papers were going to say, specifically, about commitments that might be made to try to improve the environment.

And at the end of the day everybody was onboard, we never had to lock them up this time, which was nice, except in some ways we locked them up in the OAS building, but we never really quite locked them up. We all went to Bolivia; we went to Santa Cruz. It was all set; everything was in good shape. We got there, the vice president's schedule is set, he's doing to come in, going to do the meetings and he's going to go home.

I woke up on the morning of the meeting to the sound of a torrential rainstorm. There was water running down the streets of Santa Cruz. They closed the airport. This is in December 1996. And the vice president's plane has been stopped to wait for the airport to open; he's sitting in Cochabamba almost all day. So, they finally got the meeting started but the VP missed most of that. But the president of Bolivia had really wanted Gore to stay over because he wanted to have him at this big dinner he was going to do at the end of the day. So, by the time they opened the airport again and the vice president's plane arrived; the crew rest requirements forced the VP to stay for the dinner and he left about 2:00 in the morning. And so, the president of Bolivia was very, very happy about that and it worked out.

So, it was successful, and everybody made all the promises about all the things they were going to do. We came back and during my last nine months, we started the process of follow-up, and moved it all into the environment bureau in the State Department. I wound down the office, everybody went off to other things, I went to the retirement seminar, and then at the end of September 1997 I retired because, of course, I never did get that promotion.

Q: Wow. Did you at least in this period of the many summits get an award?

MYLES: Oh, yes. I don't remember how many awards I got; I'd have to go back and look. I used to have them on the wall for a long time; I don't anymore. But we got a group award for the first summit. I got one for doing the office in the second summit, and before I retired I got was the secretary's career achievement award. And I have a picture on my wall of Senator Wirth and the then-director general of the Foreign Service giving me the award in the Jefferson Room during my retirement ceremony.

But my last three months before retirement weren't in G. As I mentioned, the last three months I went to the retirement course and it was the largest ever. The one I took in July to September 1997 was the first one ever limited entirely to involuntary separations.

Q: Meanwhile, was your wife still working?

MYLES: Yes. She went to the National War College in 1994-95, and after taking off a couple of months after giving birth to our daughter she went to work in the office of the director general. And by the time I retired she was already assigned to be consul general in Naples, Italy. She had already served in Rome before I knew her; she's fluent in Italian. So we went to Naples in October 1997. And since we have a two-year-old I started my second career as Mr. Mom to raise the child. So, I had a second career, a very busy second career. I took private lessons to refresh my Italian really got the language up to a level about as good as my language ability would allow. But my official title on my Italian diplomatic identification card was consort of the consul general of the United States.

Q: Yes, with a two-year-old or a toddler there probably wouldn't have been any other job you could have taken on at the time-

MYLES: Right.

Q: -but as your daughter grew up, did you work subsequently at other posts when your wife was the principle officer?

MYLES: Actually, I was able to work part-time later in the tour in Naples. The first year, when our daughter was two, she was in diapers still and we had a nursery school group run by some of the wives from the naval base, and they changed diapers at the school. But that school was only half-day, and during that time I would do shopping and other domestic tasks. My biggest job otherwise was the nighttime job of consort, and for that we contracted a babysitter because we were out on average five nights a week. It was a very big representational job for my wife.

So, the second year, now she's three, she's out of diapers, and therefore eligible to go to Italian pre-school, which she did for the next two years. So, now, I'm free for six hours during the day, and so I did two things. First, I started working on a master's degree online at the University of Maryland in management, specifically non-profit management because I felt that it would be useful for whatever activities I might do involving our daughter's education. I was also interested in the subject because of the management experience I had gotten in the Foreign Service. I was working on a master's of science in management, which is more or less an MBA for people that don't earn any money. The core program is the same as the MBA but at a certain point you study about what non-profits do rather than what for-profit private concerns do. And I worked on that while our daughter went to pre-school in Naples and then school in Uruguay and then back here; I finished that in 2004.

Q: Take one second to just describe how- what the key aspects are of managing non-profits. I think most people have a notion of what MBAs do, but how does the MSM differ?

MYLES: The non-profit revenue stream is entirely donational, so you're dealing with how to do fundraising. The tax requirements are different, the forms are different, all the financial issues are different. And then the really big difference, the really big challenge, is on the personnel side because you're trying to deal often with fairly low paid employees and you're dependent in most non-profits for programs to be run by volunteers who are receiving no money at all. So, you have an entirely different motivational system – they can always say to you: you don't pay me enough to do this job, you know. So, that's by far the biggest challenge – recruiting and motivating volunteers. Because you're dealing- whether a non-profit is religious or non-religious, you're dealing usually with altruistic motivation of one kind or another, where it's what they want to do and they're there because they want to make a difference. So you have to be able to satisfy that or they're just not going to be involved. I've been dealing with that for 20 years in Girl Scouts, which we can talk about.

So, while I wasn't studying and I wasn't going out for representational events, and I wasn't taking our daughter up to the pre-school on this horrible narrow street where I had to put her on my shoulders to keep her from being run over by the drivers, I did the price surveys for the cost-of-living research managed by the admin section. That was the only thing I did that was remunerative in Naples. I didn't have any more time than that.

Q: But I imagine that could have been interesting because you literally have to go around to every kind of store, learn a lot of the ins and outs of how things were bought and sold and so on, and you're also using your Italian in a lot of different and interesting ways.

MYLES: Absolutely. That's exactly what I did.

Q: Okay.

MYLES: Naples was also interesting because you had to become aware of your security on the street. We had an incident where a friend of ours came to visit and we were headed to the train station down the street from the consulate to get tickets to go to Rome. But he had forgotten he was wearing his $10,000 Rolex, and some petty criminals saw the Rolex and grabbed it. We reported it to the police but they couldn't find the thieves No one saw the theft. And the way it worked in Naples was, the local organized crime organization would put out franchises, little pieces of territory for each one of these usually teenage or young men to do these grab-and-go thefts. And so, when we went back to the consulate my wife called up her contact, the head of the national police in Naples, and he put out the word that oh, the victim isn't just isn't a tourist, but a guest of the American Consul General. Now, all of a sudden the perpetrators – who, before this, no one knew who they were and nobody saw where they went – were immediately apprehended. The attitude among the Neapolitans was, if a tourist walks around wearing a $10,000 Rolex and he gets it stolen, that's his problem because he's too stupid to walk around Naples like that. But one of the thieves turned out to be the nephew of our bread lady -- we went to get bread up in a shop near the consulate -- and this woman actually said to me: my nephew is so stupid that he was so busy going after that watch, he didn't see who you were, signore. So, the fault went over to the kid because you weren't supposed to be attacking

the local diplomat's husband. And it also broke all the rules set up by the protection operation, which did all the fencing of the stolen goods. The petty thieves got a cut and the crime syndicate got the rest of it and in return they protected you from the police. But the system doesn't protect you if diplomats are involved. I ended up having to go, I think it was about four times, to testify in court. So, yes, I'm using my Italian alright; I'm testifying in court about all of this, and every time I went, I sat with the bread lady's family. And they're just all apologetic and oh, my god, signore, we're just so embarrassed. I really became extremely immersed in Italian culture. The bread lady's nephew made as much restitution as he could, but the other guy, his other cousin, I think had to serve some time because I don't think he had the money to make restitution.

So, it was three wonderful years. It was terrific if somewhat exhausting because, again, we were out all the time. And the Neapolitan culture is very different from the North. In Naples, you could go to the best restaurant- a restaurant with a reputation that you could never get into it, but you could get into it at 8:00 pm, but you couldn't get into it at 9:30 pm. And whereas in Milan when I was there, if you tried to eat anywhere after about 10:00 pm you were out of luck. Just a totally different environment. Mediterranean. We would have functions go 'til the middle of the night and we would often be able to only get out of something if we didn't want to be there until 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning by telling the host that our babysitter had to go home.

So, after those three years, in the summer of 2000, we moved on. My wife was assigned to be the DCM in Montevideo, Uruguay. It was like going from one Italian country to another. And in fact, when we got there, we discovered an Italian restaurant run by people from Naples and so we just reconnected the whole Italian thing. And there, I did two things. I continued with the cost of living work with a private company and did that on contract with them for the two years I was there. But the big job was to reorganize the commissary there, and I ran that commissary for the next two years. So, that got to be almost a full-time job. And I did things like putting in coding for checking out and I had to redo all their books and computerize them. And there was less going out; there was still a good bit, but less of it than in Naples, and I had the challenge of trying to convert Italian into Spanish. I did the best I could, but I definitely was not in as much in a comfortable position with Spanish. In Naples I'd had all that instruction in Italian and I already had the background from Milan and it all kind of came back and I really was able to use at a high level. I was very comfortable in Italian but I never was that comfortable with the Spanish. I did the best I could with it and I could do well enough to go get the prices and all those other things and function at least adequately in the representational side.

But the big thing that happened during that time in Montevideo was 9/11. I was driving to the embassy to open up the commissary when the attacks took place, so when I got there, they wouldn't let me in, and nobody told me why they'd locked everything down. When I finally got in, I found out what had happened, and it had all already happened; everybody was watching the towers burn. And so, there was a great deal of security concern for the next several weeks before things went back to normal. During that time my wife was very busy.

Then in 2002 we came back to Washington. My wife became the head of the Office of Aviation, and she met many of the people I'd worked with before at the Department of Transportation because they were all Civil Service, so they hadn't retired yet. And every time she'd say who she was, every single one of them would say really? Are you related to Stanley Myles, Stan Myles? And this happened so often she got a bit resentful after a while. After two years in EB she went back to the director general's office.

In 2008 she was appointed by President George W. Bush to be US ambassador to Cape Verde. Because our daughter was in middle school at the time and there was no English-language school in Cape Verde, we decided that our daughter and I would stay in the States. During the next two years we went to stay in Cape Verde during the summers and holidays.

When she returned from Cape Verde in 2010 my wife worked in the OIG (Office of the Inspector General) and then became the director of the language school at FSI, and finally she was deputy director of FSI. So, she finished at FSI, retired in 2013. After retirement she did WAE (While Actually Employed) work for three years at OIG, so she did a number of-

Q: Inspections.

MYLES: -inspections in various places.

Q: But meanwhile, you're now back in the U.S.; were you able to use your MSM?

MYLES: Oh, yes. I was on the board of the PTA at our daughter's middle school and high school. At the high school level, I was the treasurer for a couple of years, where I managed a pretty good-sized budget. I luckily was never president of the PTA – that's a thankless job, but I was the vice president during our daughter's senior year of high school.

MYLES: But the non-profit activity that I've spent the most time on is Girl Scouts. When our daughter started kindergarten at the Uruguayan-American School in Montevideo, two of women at the embassy had started a Girl Scout troop at the kindergarten level; there was already one at the first-grade level. But after a couple of weeks one of the ladies dropped out and the other one asked me to fill in. Alright, I'm still doing work in Girl Scouting 20 years later. I was a leader at the Daisy and Brownie level in Montevideo, then we came back and after a year's gap my daughter joined another troop also on the proviso that I would become a leader because there's always this problem about volunteers. Everybody wants their kids to be in scouts, but nobody wants to volunteer to help. So, I was a troop leader from 2000 to 2013. Then, in 2004, the manager of the local Girl Scout administrative unit, called a service unit, which services a group of troops, got a promotion at work and had to quit because her job wouldn't let her do the volunteer job anymore, and of course, I got drafted for that. I did that job for six years and then because that job was term limited, I became the manager of the next level, called an association,

which is a grouping of service units. Then, when our daughter went into high school I got involved in administering Girl Scout's highest level award, the Gold Award, because she was going to work to earn that award and I was interested in that and I wanted to know more about helping her to get her Gold Award. I'm still doing it. I'm now the chair of one of the regional panels that interviews the girls for their proposals. Also, I'm the treasurer at the service unit level, and that means overseeing the financial management of 36 troops to make sure they spend their money on what they're supposed to spend their money on, that they keep internal controls; you know, all those good things I learned in management class. And the local Girl Scout council has been nice enough to give me six different awards now, including this year when I got the council's second highest award.

My biggest activity not involving volunteer work is in the sports area. As a natural consequence of our daughter and I both graduating from the University of Maryland, I have season tickets for Maryland football and women's basketball. For football I have a tailgate group and we go to the home games and sometimes to away games. And I will go to at least one of my undergraduate school Texas Tech's games a year. And I have had season tickets for the Baltimore Orioles since 2003.

Q: Yes. But now, early in the interview you also mentioned that you still do a lot of ancestry research.

MYLES: Absolutely. Not as much as I used to because there's only a few family lines left where there isn't a lot of information available online. For these lines I'm hoping something will come up online, or I'll find something somewhere in records not available online. I started doing genealogical research in 1979 at the National Archives, line by line with the microfiche and only a few indexes of the source material, so it was difficult. And all I had to start was the information on my grandparents and a little bit of information on a couple of the great-grandparents. And from there I've been able, particularly once Ancestry.com came in and so many materials came online, to take many of the lines back across the water and even further, particularly in England and Germany. Now I just have these few lines where the records peter out, one line as early as 1882, which I cannot believe why I can't find anything, and then some back toward the beginning of the 1800s. But based on what I have, with the exception of my great-grandmother in the 1882 line, I know from census records and other records that everyone in my family tree as of 1800, they're all in the United States. So, I have an old American genealogy which is almost all English, German and Irish, and all southern for the most part, except this one I haven't been able to trace back very far -- my great-grandmother, who is listed in the 1900 census as being born in Illinois, so that's the only one that might have a northern origin. Even there that line may have come to America through Virginia or Maryland. All the lines start on the East Coast, of course – mainly Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and Georgia – and then moved west over the years to end up in Texas eventually. Everybody in my family is in Texas by 1927. My mother's family was the last to show up. On my father's side the earliest ancestors were in Texas in 1849. I was always disappointed that my genealogy didn't quite get back to the Republic of Texas. I also had the problem that southern genealogies are tough because you don't have as many records, the literacy rate was lower, you might not have any relationship or didn't want a relationship with the

government, and then there's records in some areas, particularly in Georgia, that were destroyed during the Civil War. In the genealogy game they say that, in New England for example, with a greater degree of literacy and a friendlier relationship with government and better preservation of the records, it is possible with online records to start and finish a New England genealogy in less than a day. But I don't have that. I have nine great-great or great-great-great grandfathers who served in the Confederate army. I don't have anything other than distant cousins who were on the other side.

Q: Alright. So, now let me ask you some- where we've sort of approached the end of your post-State Department career, looking back, first as an employee and then as a spouse, how would you describe the change as you saw it in the State Department? Has it gotten more effective or efficient at carrying out its basic missions?

MYLES: Well, I think for a mission point of view less so because when I first started, for better or for worse, day-to-day foreign policy work was still more or less being done by professionals. Certainly there were political appointees at the ambassador level and that has been traditional, you know, especially to Europe. But day to day, country to country the Foreign Service was seen as the experts with a great deal of deference given to that. Technically things, of course, improved. The technical level of the office at my first post in Curacao was low even by the standards of the time. There was one electric typewriter – an IBM proportional-space executive typewriter that only the consul general's secretary knew how to use – all the others were manuals. We had a wire-based answering machine, which never worked right. We had a 3M thermofax copier that used that old coated paper that would go black after six months. It had a sign on it that said: Do not use for permanent records. We had teletype on a commercial line. Classified messages would be received in five-letter groups that had to be decoded by hand on what was known as the one-time pad. And the calculator was this big thing with a handle on the side and ten rows of buttons.

So, while I was there, in 1973, Héctor Cámpora became the president of Argentina, and he was the one that then brought Perón back. And Secretary Rogers went to Campora's inauguration and made a rest stop on the way back at the Hilton Hotel in Curacao. In preparation for that Washington sent down technicians to get our communications upgraded. The upgrade was the communications coding machine that the NSA had invented in 1948. So, we got a 1948 model, but we were automated for the first time; no more one-time pads. Also because of that stopover I got to meet my first secretary of state in person when he came up to the control room at the Hilton in his bathing trunks to thank us for our support. So, over the years the technical support slowly advanced. When I was working in the Brazil office, as I think mentioned before, we had this word processing machine that had a cassette tape memory that would go whirring around for hours looking for a file. When I went over to EB they had something that operated on the old five-and-a-quarter inch floppies, but it didn't paginate automatically and you had to be careful or you would lose the whole document. And so, when the Wang came in in 1980 it was like a revolutionary thing. It paginated automatically and saved files, right? I mean, it was the greatest thing in the world at the time, which was fine except we still had them 20 years later. In the aviation office, I had to set up a whole system by which I had

these junior officers running around the DOT and Civil Aeronautics Board in the first iteration to get clearances on classified cables because you couldn't use the unclassified fax machine. So, technically things got better and became easier as things went along. Eventually, after my time, the internet came along and they started doing both classified and unclassified email and eventually cables were used mainly for wide-distribution traffic. But I started out with dispatches and airgrams. About the only thing an airgram was used for was consular regulations materials; something to go into the Foreign Affairs Manual.

Q: I'll give you one quick exception. When you had something very long that you didn't expect anybody to pay much attention to, you could send it as an airgram.

MYLES: Right.

Q: And the only reason I mention that is because when I was a junior officer in Costa Rica my first tour, someone wanted to send a very long cable on the labor situation there, which my boss, the political counselor, thought was unsuitable for transmission, so the compromise was oh, send it as an airgram; no one will read it anyway.

MYLES: Yes. Sending a long cable was still pretty labor-intensive even with the first automated communications systems. You probably had either TERP 1 or TERP 2

So, from a technical point of view, things got better. But as communications got faster and easier over the years, the balance of power on the policy side shifted to the White House. I understand that in the last couple of administrations decisions really get made over there and even though they still want to know what the person on the spot has to report, but the people in the field have lost a lot of autonomy. It's kind of like when I mentioned about when I sent the cable in in Khartoum that the foreign debt people didn't like; when they said well, why didn't you send that to us back channel first? Well, there was no back channels when I first started.

And another part of it was the social side, of course, which I came in as an unwashed clodhopper from the sticks and all of that and I had to deal with that culture that had existed for such a long period of time in the first many years. That was pretty well gone by 1980 or so. The diversity continued to improve, so that was good. And then, the open assignment system was good because people had a better opportunity to know what was out there. And there was at least some attempt to deal with the previously unconventional subjects of single women and tandem assignments and family employment, which got to be a very big issue because more and more family members wanted to work and didn't take the traditional route that they had before of running a home and being involved in representational work, or doing things like teaching or writing. By the 1990s, that became a bit of a crisis in the department. And then you had the crisis the other way – all the spouses who weren't allowed to have those alternative arrangements during the '50s and the '60s and even into the '70s rebelling against the improvements and saying well, what about us. And one of the main things that they got, as I remember, was if you had 10 years of service overseas well, then they got half your pension unless you otherwise made

arrangements legally, and there was no provision in that for whether or not the spouse actually was with you overseas or not. So, in my case my first wife never served 10 years overseas with me and the only way I was able to keep from having to pay her half my pension is because she didn't want to wait until I retired to get the money because she had no idea when that would happen, but I ended up paying for it up front in the property settlement. But as a general matter as far as the work is concerned, I think definitely the balance of power has shifted into the White House.

Q: Now, what about the quality or the preparation, the ability of Foreign Service officers that you observed over time; how did it change, if at all?

MYLES: Well, I think the training improved. I think the development of FSI, the campus, the changes of the environment, the development of professional courses, there's certainly a huge difference between what you have over there right now and what they had at SA3 in Rosslyn when I started. So, there's no doubt that that side has been very helpful. I think the preparation, in-service preparation has been improving all along. I'm not sure there's as much motivation among the current generation to do overseas work as there was. But certainly during my career I found almost all the people that I ever worked with coming in weren't well prepared.

Q: And the training that you mentioned, that extended to both improvement in language training and leadership training?

MYLES: Yes. Certainly in the professional courses, a lot was done during my career. There were improvements to the consular course and other professional courses and certainly the management side courses, which accelerated as the FSI physical plant improved. Language training was always good – possibly the best – immersion was certainly the only way I ever learned. Although it's been never successful for everybody, when you compare FSI methods to the academic way of doing it, it's no contest. FSI has always been the model for that; most of the private language instruction companies talk about how they have the State Department model. I strongly support that and I've always told anybody that is interested in a career in the diplomatic service that language is the most essential tool and no matter what your substantive expertise may be, if you can't express it in the foreign language that you're going to be dealing with a tremendous handicap. I found the fact that I had less language ability relative to a lot of my colleagues to have been a big handicap, something I had to work on all the time. It could be very frustrating because the people that are really good at it, that just provides them with a great advantage- kind of like being a good swimmer; they get across the river a lot faster than the rest of us do. And so, if somebody says to me what do you think, should I go into the Foreign Service? I'd say well, how's your language ability, because I think that's so critical. And unfortunately language ability is really a talent; you can work on it, but it's a talent. And so, it's like saying: I really would like to be in Major League Baseball or in the National Symphony Orchestra, but if you can't play well enough, you're just not going to. So, that's what I found to be the most frustrating and biggest difficulty that I had. I had the management skill, I had the writing skill, the editing skill,

but when it came to reporting, the data collection side, I was handicapped by the foreign language proficiency not being where I wanted it to be.

Q: Now, what about, aside from the fact that, you know, they restricted numbers for promotion, how did you in general find the evaluation and promotion system? Would you make changes or improvements to it?

MYLES: I would love to make changes! if I knew what they should be. On the assignment side, providing more transparency has been tremendously valuable. It's not totally transparent even yet; the individual person may not know everything that's going on in the assignment system or whether to lobby for a job and who do you approach, but it's much more transparent than it was.

On the evaluation system, I have no faith. The way it works is not very good, never was. When I first came in, they had just gotten rid of the secret evaluations. The form being used in 1971 through '74 was the secret form, which meant that it asked the same questions twice. Under the previous system you got to see what was said five years later if you went in and looked at your file. The advantage of that system was that you might get more realistic evaluations. The downside of it was is you had no idea what the evaluation was because the part you got to see didn't necessarily have anything to do with the part you didn't get to see. Now, they changed that, they let you see your evaluation and give you a chance to ask for changes and make a statement, but as a practical matter, if you got a bad review, it wouldn't matter what your statement said, right? So, I think the system only works, as I said before, as an indicator of high flyers against not so high flyers, how fast you get promoted against not. I don't think it works very well as a way to determine who stays and who goes. But I don't know what you replace it with. Do you do like these 360 evaluations? What does that do? Is it very valuable? I guess it isn't just a Foreign Service thing. I don't think anybody has come up with a really good evaluation system. The military certainly hasn't. And in the private sector, well, really? You know, it's still pretty much what your boss thinks. And if your boss happens to be your uncle that helps a lot, you know. I mean, I'm not sure the private sector is better in any way. So, I would say it may be as good as it can be, but it's not very good. And certainly, when you decide that you're not going to promote hardly anybody and get rid of one-third of your workforce, it's effective for that. It was extremely effective in the '90s to get rid of one-third of the workforce. But which third? Totally haphazard. So, yes. So, I would say it's the weakest link in the personnel chain.

For example, they put in the system of review panels in bureaus and posts to check the quality of the EERs before they went to the promotion panels. The idea was that people closer to the actual work would help put out a better product. I was the chair of one of these in ARA when I was working on the summit. And there was this one officer, an ambassador had written his report and it started out saying: This is the finest political officer of his generation. And you know, you could say okay, fine, all I'm going to do is look for technical errors, I'm not going to question the substance. But I just couldn't let this one pass. So, I went to the evaluator and I said you know, you're not doing this person a favor with this sentence because nobody is going to believe it. So, they changed

it to something a little less hyperbolic. But yes, I'd say- in my experience at my time, the promotion system was among the weakest areas, along with the issues of tandem assignments and family employment.

Q: My last question is, if you were now advising somebody who wants to go into the Foreign Service, what advice would you give them?

MYLES: Well, we'd talk about languages to start with, talk about if you're not comfortable with it and you're going to have problems with it, these are the downsides. I probably also would say that you're not going to be an ambassador tomorrow; you're going to have to pay your dues in the visa section. Don't expect that you're going to be making policy right away.

We would discuss the differences among the approaches of the various administrations because that might be a factor. I personally, if I were 23 years old and like my daughter and working in the environmental area I wouldn't consider government right now. One would have to think about the political aspect because, I think, there's more politics in the job than there was when I was in. I had no problem with working for Reagan; worked all the way through eight years of the Reagan administration, although I certainly didn't agree with everything. And I didn't agree with everything in the Clinton Administration. But the degree of politics seems to have been lower. Like everything else these days, the partisanship, all this nastiness that seems to have creeped into the job, and that needs to be discussed if you're going to go work in the government now.

What's your attitude toward overseas life? What do you know about it, what do you think it's going to be like? We're living with a generation that's been overseas more than any other in history, and yet I'm not sure they know what living overseas is like because of another area that we have not talked about, communications. When I was in Milan, one reason you needed Italian is because there wasn't anything else. There weren't any cellphones and streaming and even cable news. Nothing. I don't know how anybody learns a foreign language anymore or at least maintains it because English is everywhere. CNN is all over the place and the BBC. So, you've got to wonder, whether or not they go overseas on vacation or even for schooling, if they really know what it's like to live overseas because it's just not the same. Just as I'm sure somebody would have said something similar in 1970 about what it had been like after World War II; you can just imagine. Well, in fact, one of my bosses in Curacao went to his first post on the USS United States to Rotterdam in 1954 and he still had the menu. You can imagine how that was, right?

Q: Wow.

Alright. So, to close the interview, are there- do you have parting thoughts that you would like to offer? Because I've completed all the questions that I typically ask retirees looking back on their time in the service.

MYLES: I think probably all of them have said that they wouldn't do anything else, this is what we enjoyed, and despite all the frustrations and I'm sure everybody had their ups and their downs, if anybody had a perfect career well, that's good luck to them. I think the basic thing is that most of us were in that big middle. It's a big middle that's perhaps a little different than the average big middle, but we did something that most people never have the opportunity to do. We are talking about a relatively few number of people. And then among that, those stars of the game are even a relatively lower number of people and more power to them; they're extremely exceptional and that's all great. But I think the big issue that your project can really illuminate is the everyday life of most of us who did important things but didn't get to be secretary of state or even an assistant secretary of state or an ambassador or all the rest of it. So, there are all these gradations, but I think in general we all feel like we did something a little more exceptional than average and that we would do it all again despite the warts, but that otherwise we're not that much different from anybody else and no, we didn't spend all of our time going to parties, no matter what the general public thinks.

Q: Right, exactly.

End of interview