

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

CHARLES A. SCHMITZ

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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is Thursday, July 29, 1993. The interviewer today is Samuel F. Hart. The interviewee is Charles A. Schmitz. To start the interview, Chuck, where are you from?

SCHMITZ: I was born in Kansas City in 1938 and spent my first 18 years there.

Q: And then off to school. Where was that?

SCHMITZ: I went to Yale College from 1956-60 and then to Yale Law School for the next three years.

Q: What did you do after you graduated from Yale Law School in 1963.

SCHMITZ: I went back to Kansas City to be a law clerk to a Federal District judge there, designed to be a place from which I could make judgments about the local law firms so I could find one to affiliate with.

Q: And then what happened?

SCHMITZ: I decided that I didn't really want to affiliate with one at that point. I hadn't been in the military. This was during the Vietnamese build up. I figured I had a couple of years to spend so I decided to spend them in a temporary job with the State Department.

Q: When did you come to the State Department?

SCHMITZ: I arrived in July, 1964 and entered on duty with the Office of the Legal Advisor.

Q: Could you tell us a little bit about your experiences there?

SCHMITZ: I went to work for Charlie Runyon, who was Assistant Legal Advisor for African Affairs. I spent a year in a fascinating time learning how the US was operating in Africa at a period during which we were very concerned about inroads there by the Soviets and Chinese. So we were fighting the Cold War in our policies in Africa.

That experience was punctuated by wars in the Congo; gun running into North Africa; concerns with what we were going to do when the International Court of Justice found in favor of the world on the Southwest Africa case, which we now know as Namibia; and major concerns in the Legal Advisor side with our economic assistance there. Particularly how AID missions would function in these various countries.

Q: You came into State as a lawyer. Was that as a GS? What type of appointment?

SCHMITZ: It was a so-called excepted position. The State Department's Legal Advisor's Office runs like a law firm. The Legal Advisor hires his lawyers. I guess it did have a GS indicator. I think it was a GS-11 that I entered as. I stayed there for a year, until I had managed to persuade my boss that what I would most like to do is to see how the world looked from overseas.

So he worked with Crockett, who was then Deputy Under Secretary for Administration, on setting up a system to allow some of the young lawyers to go overseas and serve in embassies as a kind of training ground. I thought it was the equivalent of taking your lawyer out to the mill to see how it worked so he would be in a better position to help you. To set it up so that we might go do something in an embassy for a year or so and come back better able to do our legal work.

Q: You entered as a lawyer and that, of course...the whole Legal Advisor's Office is one which you can get a lot of different opinions upon in the State Department, some of which

say that conduct of foreign affairs is far too much influenced by the lawyers. What would you say on that?

SCHMITZ: Well, first of all, my own bias, of course, was as a lawyer trying to have some influence on policy and the reason that I decided to come to the State Department instead of being in a law firm was because I felt that the world was in great peril. In fact, I think at that time, 1964, it probably was. One needed to make a contribution to the great issues of his own day. I felt that the greatest issue of the day was how we were going to keep ourselves from getting blown up or blowing up somebody else. So I wanted to bring what I thought was a legal perspective to the activities of the US in the world.

At that time the Legal Advisor's Office, under Abe Chayes was quite an activist office. It was a time we were trying to build the rule of law around the world. The US was a proponent of the growth and dedication to international law and regulations. We were trying to build the United Nations as another structure to get some form to the contest of sovereign wills around the world. I felt that, as a result of working for three years in law school and then the Federal District court...we are talking about lawyers being the people who work in the process of resolving issues, whether it is a formal structure as is the case in the federal legal system or whether as a good draftsman of contracts or treaties...which is to say how do you describe what it is you are going to do in a way so both parties will see that the result is in accord with their expectations and is fair.

These kinds of basic approaches to problems would have an application on the international scene as well and might therefore make a small contribution to making the world a little bit safer. So we, people my age and ilk in the Legal Advisor's Office, felt keen that there was a role for the legal trained mind in applying itself to some of the issues that faced us.

For example, in the war in the Congo, which was going on at that time, we felt it was very important to use the obligation of the Congo to adhere to the international laws of warfare under the ICRC convention. We made ourselves nuisances in the African Bureau by writing instructions to embassies, draft instructions, of course, or making suggestions, about how to get some moderation in that conflict through legal application.

A lot of that was unpleasant because our Foreign Service colleagues would keep us waiting in the outer room cooling heels, anything to avoid having to go over the issue again and we felt it was our job to sit out there and cool our heels until they would finally emerge and would have to talk to us.

Q: In this period in the Legal Advisor's Office, did you have any particular role models that you tried to emulate?

SCHMITZ: Abe Chayes, himself, I think was one of the best because he was very active and close to the then Kennedy Administration. He was articulate and forceful. He was succeeded by Len Meeker, a career person who had spent all of his professional life in the

Legal Advisor's Office. He knew everything cold about the post World War development in international law.

But my hero for legal advisor work was Jack Tate, who had been the Deputy Legal Advisor many years before under Dean Acheson and who during his time there gave a lot of structure to the Office of the Legal Advisor, to the approach by the State Department to international law.

When Eisenhower was elected, Jack's position was politicized. He was allowed to continue but he decided that he couldn't work under the Republican Administration. He wound up at the Yale Law School as Associate Dean and it was there that I worked for him on admission policies into the Yale Law School, as part-time employment. From him I learned that there was such a thing as the State Department, that it had lawyers in it, that it was a place where a young person could get a lot of responsibility early on and possibly make a difference in the world.

Q: So that is how your interest in going to work for the State Department started with you professor at Yale Law School.

SCHMITZ: Absolutely. When I discovered I wasn't ready to stay in Kansas City half way through the clerkship and I wondered what I could do to do something with my life that would make a difference, a feeling that probably would not be satisfied by my immediately joining a law firm and doing dog and cat law or even corporate law, I thought about the Legal Advisor's Office because of him.

Q: Had you ever thought about taking the Foreign Service exam and doing the regular career path?

SCHMITZ: It never crossed my mind. I never really thought about the Foreign Service as a career or an option. I think the first time I heard about the Foreign Service was when I was in college and we were doing a course on international relations. At that point I had a superficial notion of how the State Department worked.

Q: You came then and spent 1964-65, at least parts of those years, in the Legal Advisor's Office and then you were off to Morocco as second secretary in the political section. What do you particularly remember about those years?

SCHMITZ: First of all, the basic idea of this was to give me training in how an embassy worked. I thought it was going to be for a very short period, like a year. The Embassy said that it was not long enough, you won't be of any utility during the first year so you have to stay at least two.

I was impressed by two things. One was the silliness of an awful lot of what we did in the Embassy. At that point we felt that we needed to know everything there was to know about a foreign country, particularly one that we could describe as strategic...and we did

so describe Morocco. I had come now to believe that anybody can describe any place in the world as strategic and make the same justification.

But in any case, we felt that we needed to gather all kinds of data, no matter how irrelevant to any decisions that the US might have to make in its foreign relations. And we did. We did a good job of that. My own expertise was in the Moroccan educational system. I spent a lot of the government's time researching that educational system and writing an excellent report about it. Probably better than was given to the Ministry of Education in the country. In fact, to do the report I talked to the Minister of Education. For that I received a commendation from INR. In retrospect I thought this was a good example of how the US is wasting its time and energies because as far as I know there was never more than a modicum of reason in our wanting to know about that educational system. It had to do with maybe how we could help it so that its people would be more broadly educated and therefore more resistant to the seductions of communism.

It had a little bit, I think, too, to do with what we then called "nation building." An era when we thought we knew how to build nations. And that is my second point. I worked a lot with our AID mission in Morocco. The people were good. A lot of the programs were on their own terms excellent programs and yet I dare say that I don't think we did much at all to develop the economy of Morocco. I think what our program did primarily was to give Moroccans the sense that America was trying to help. It gave us a tiny bit of leverage, mostly represented by access of our ambassador and other officials when they wanted to see somebody because Moroccans thought we were important. But we were constrained at using what might have been that leverage in any really important situation because we thought if we used the leverage it would be seen as a condition on our aid or otherwise being stingy or mean spirited and that would eliminate the value that we thought we were getting from aid in the first place.

So we did spend a lot of our personal time and effort...most of the resources though came from our surplus grain supply which didn't cost us a thing.

Q: PL 480.

SCHMITZ: PL 480. But it also gave me great pause in thinking how useful this was for the real purpose of building the country. As I think back on the rationale that we made for it and the way we talked about it, it really had much more to do with fighting the Cold War in the third world than it did with our expectation that we were going to build the economy of the country.

Q: What do you think we should have been doing?

SCHMITZ: Now that I am in my old age, I believe that the parable of the fish and the fisherman is the right one. That is, if you give a starving man a fish you have saved his life and if you teach him how to fish you might have given him something to save his life for the rest of his life, is true. I think our willingness to provide assistance which

instigated willingness from other countries and ultimately from the UN, itself, to provide assistance, became a crutch that caused the countries we were trying to aid not trying as hard.

Q: When you use the parable of teaching a person how to fish rather than giving him the fish, what kind of things...did you voice these concerns and ideas in the Embassy at the time?

SCHMITZ: I don't think so. First of all, I am not sure I felt them as strongly while I was there. I was kind of picking them up as I went along. And secondly, I wasn't in much of a position to do it effectively. There is always a lot of carping in the political section and, I suppose, the general Embassy, about the AID mission--how much money it was spending and all these vehicles and buildings.

There were people who came out and knew nothing about diplomacy and although they might be skilled as technicians of one sort or another they offended our host officials and people by their rude behavior. That was really most of the discussion. I think very little of it was related to the utility of our programs to really develop the economy.

Q: Who were the ambassador and DCM?

SCHMITZ: The Ambassador was Henry Tasca, a career officer. He was an economic specialist who had worked on the Marshall Plan earlier on and therefore felt that he knew nation building. The DCM was Leon Doros, a very quiet man. He had to endure the Ambassador's dominant personality and he made his way primarily by keeping his head down and not doing very much. Therefore he wound up not being a very popular leader in the Embassy.

Q: So I take it you didn't feel like you accomplished very much during these years in Morocco?

SCHMITZ: Personally I did. But for the United States I think the results of my being there were highly questionable.

Q: So when you left Morocco...?

SCHMITZ: I came back to the Office of the Legal Advisor and wanted to be where the action was. Action at that time was in East Asia where we were fighting a war in Vietnam. So I asked for an assignment with the East Asia area in the Legal Advisor's Office.

While there we divided our clients into various categories. I wound up working on elements of the war in Vietnam, primarily what we called the status of the contractors in the country and to what extent they were controlled by military law. I dealt with some of

the hostages held by the Cambodians and issues of defoliation of Cambodia, trying to defend the value of the Laotian kip and things of that kind in Indochina.

But as that period developed I found myself being drawn more and more into the work of what I then considered a minor part of my area and that was Japan. I was drawn into it because the preliminary discussions leading to the Okinawa Reversion Treaty were going on. As these discussions proceeded, the issues changed from ones of large policy to ones of technical implementation. How would we square the resulting US presence on Okinawa with their existing treaties in Japan, particularly the Status of Forces Treaty. In the middle of that continuum, between those two extremes, there were policy questions which could take legal form having to do with issues such as how do we take care of the dollars which were being used as legal currency in Okinawa that would be picked up by the Japanese when reversion occurred in such a way that they would not become additional claims on the balance of payments problems of the United States. This was a matter of great concern at the time to the Nixon Administration.

Q: What did you see as the most important foreign policy issues you were dealing with on the Okinawa problem?

SCHMITZ: The principal issue was whether or not we could get the support of the American people to do it at all. We, who were concerned with it, were absolutely certain that it was the best thing to do. I and my colleagues had seemingly endless debates with Americans who thought that giving back Okinawa was a terrible mistake. We had, after all, fought and bleed and even died for it. It was important to national security and we couldn't trust the Japanese. In fact, we shouldn't give the Japanese a thing and we ought to just hang on to it and provide for ourselves.

Q: Did this cause you to have certain deja vu feelings later on when you worked on the Panama Treaty?

SCHMITZ: Yes. In fact, I think that experience had a lot to do with why I was working on the Panama Treaty later on.

There were some subsidiary issues in the Okinawa exercise having to do with what do we do with nuclear weapons, what about the American businessmen who were already on the island. What about American activities which were nonconforming under the Japanese Status of Forces such as our VOA station, Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, some of the special military operations we were running out of there, religious language broadcasting, etc. I think probably there were about a thousand issues that had to be resolved government to government in that negotiation.

Q: You mentioned special operations being run out of there, could you elaborate on that?

SCHMITZ: It is probably still too early to elaborate on that, but the category of things, of course, was having to do with how we used Okinawa in the Cold War context to advance

our purposes. We had there a major CIA installation and a black operations run, I think, by all the services, including the famous black bird itself, the SR-71, which operated out of Okinawa. Most of these things gave great concern to Japanese politicians and therefore to the Japanese bureaucrats with whom we were dealing primarily. And we had to make provisions for each one. And those provisions had to be basically whether they could continue or not, which was a heavy part of the negotiation initially.

And then secondly, if they were allowed to continue how would it be done, how would it be explained? Most of this happened after I had actually gotten to Japan which was a little bit after the time we are talking about.

Q: Was it a good treaty or not?

SCHMITZ: It took us the better part of two years to negotiate the treaty and its related arrangements and to make sure it came into effect in good form. It was for the United States one of the best deals we had made since, I think, the Louisiana Purchase, because we wound up yielding practically nothing. We made some adjustments, but those adjustments did not make it more difficult or more expensive for us to carry out our functions. We continue to this day to use Okinawa as a military staging base, something which in 1969 we weren't sure would last for even five years after Okinawa was returned to Japan. From that standpoint, any usefulness now of Okinawa for us is a big plus.

But in addition to being able to use it for almost everything we wanted to, we were relieved of the burden, financial and other, of occupying and running the island, which most Americans didn't realize was costing us millions and millions of dollars every year for doing something which we weren't good at and didn't need to do. Our continued government there made us look like imperialists, and that was causing us a lot of trouble throughout the rest of Asia. What we did in the negotiations was sell the effort that we had already put in to running Okinawa. Maybe was a contribution that I made, because I argued that once we had committed ourselves to giving Okinawa to the Japanese, we would in effect, in legal terms, be yielding our "future interests" to the facilities which we had constructed there. We would then be criticized by the US people or the Senate as it considered the treaty, for having disposed of American assets without making proper accounting of them.

I did a considerable amount of research on this and discovered that when NATO was thrown out of France there was a similar kind of negotiation when the French took over military facilities. The formula used then was to find the value of the facilities which the French accepted. And that value turned out to be something we came to call the "depreciated replacement value". That is, what it would cost today to build that same facility with the same amount of years on it as it had had. Obviously it is a purely mathematical construct, but it managed to take into account both the depreciation of the thing and the inflation, which had to be a major consideration. On that basis we calculated a value for these facilities and were able in various ways in the Okinawa

Reversion Agreement to have that accounted for by the Japanese and paid back to the United States, not so much in cash, but in very usable forms.

Q: What happened when the treaty went to the Senate?

SCHMITZ: The Senate committee asked for our explanation of what we had done. I prepared the materials for that, including a briefing book for our people with the horrible questions and the best answers that we could make. We were able, by signaling what those questions and answers were going to be, to avoid any difficulty whatsoever in the Senate consideration of the treaty. In fact, when the General Accounting Office, as a part of its responsibility to help the Senate decide what to do about this, asked us to prepare for an audit of the treaty dispositions, I supplied them almost everything we had in the book. They looked at our briefing book and wrote a letter saying that they had been prepared to spend two man years on the audit, but because they saw that we had been completely open with them and had foreseen and taken account of these issues, they gave the treaty a clean bill of health. They suspended the audit and told us we had saved the taxpayers a lot of money by not having forced them to audit the books.

Q: So the treaty had a very smooth passage once negotiated. Other than yourself, who were the major players in negotiating this treaty?

SCHMITZ: The principal player for the US was Richard Sneider, who had been on the Japan Desk when these negotiations first started and then he went to the NSC. When it became time to negotiate the treaty in Tokyo, he was our designated negotiator. It was he who hired me to go with him to Tokyo to do that.

Shortly after we had arrived and assembled the team, he was then elevated to be DCM of the Embassy. So while he could continue to watch over these negotiations, the day-to-day job of finding solutions to the issues in the negotiations fell then to me. I wound up be, in effect, the chief of staff for that work. He did the heavy lifting on the interagency concurrences and the initial work on Congressional approval of the treaty. He was a very aggressive man, especially relative to other Foreign Service officers.

Q: Type A?

SCHMITZ: Yes, type A plus. Type A with sharp teeth and sharp elbows. He was a man who was very effective in getting his way and obviously often bruised people in the process. The reason that I was able to exist under that was that early on we had a disagreement and I was lucky enough that that disagreement was on an issue in which I didn't have any choice. That issue was whether or not this agreement to return Okinawa would be done as an Executive Agreement, as we did in the earlier return of the Bonin Islands, which included Iwo Jima, or whether it had to be done by treaty. His assumption was that we could do it by Executive Agreement and he wanted it to be that way so you did not have to fool with Congress.

As I looked at the issue I easily came to the conclusion that Okinawa was a different kettle of fish qualitatively than Iwo Jima and the little bunch of islands about which nobody cared: that this agreement to return Okinawa was a matter of policy for the country. I argued that we could not win the legal argument that the precedent of Iwo Jima would apply, and therefore we had to go to the Senate with it.

Q: This was a legal judgment or a political judgment?

SCHMITZ: Well, it is one of those beautiful ones in which the policy is lying there but the way you decide the policy is that you ask lawyers for views. The Constitution says something about treaties and the implied Executive Powers of the President says something about Executive Agreements, but you then look to see what the precedents are. That is generally a lawyer's job. You look at the precedents, which was my job. I could see that if we were going to assert this was an Executive Agreement, we would have to make an argument about something more important than anything that had ever carried that attribution before; and that then becomes a policy question of whether we want to do it. But, as I told the policy makers, if we try to make that argument, when you turn around to ask your lawyers to help you out, you will see a whole bunch of people diving for cover. The Senate has lawyers too, and so do interest groups, so this is not the kind of issue that you can pass up. This is one of those cases we were talking about before where State Department FSOs, let's say, frequently say, "I could have done it quick and easy if it hadn't been for the lawyers mucking around with me."

Q: You feel in the end that Sneider accepted your views as being the valid ones?

SCHMITZ: Oh, more than that. He admitted that he was wrong. The reason he did that was because had he won, we would have lost in the negotiations because we had on our side in the negotiations a very powerful argument for nearly every one of these delicate issues and that was, "You might be able to persuade us, but how the hell are we going to persuade the Senate of the United States." So that in the theory of negotiations is the value of having an irrational partner. The person with an irrational partner almost always wins. In fact, that not only gave us that set of negotiating arguments, it gave the whole negotiation a visibility in the United States that clearly had an impact in the way he (Sneider) was regarded in the State Department through the United States Government.

So the effect was to benefit Sneider, benefit the Embassy, and benefit the State Department because this was a very important negotiation.

Q: Didn't he later on become Assistant Secretary for EA?

SCHMITZ: No, he became Ambassador to Korea.

In any case, as we had the discussion about this, he said, "You can not maintain that position. It is time for you lawyers to think politically." I said, "I'm sorry that I can't change this position because as far as I am concerned as a lawyer I can not make the argument that you are telling me I can make, and therefore it is really a question of shall

we take this together to our superiors and have it out." Sneider then threatened to throw me off the negotiating team if I didn't change my mind.

Well, if the issue had been tougher for me, I might well have yielded on that and I would have lost his respect, I think. I might have stayed on the team, but I would have been rolled over. But because the issue took the form it did, I didn't yield, and ultimately my view prevailed. The episode developed a sense of reliability that allowed him to turnover to me a lot of this negotiation while he could attend to the rest of the issues of the Embassy.

Q: Okay, we have the Okinawa negotiations completed and ratified and you moved on to...?

SCHMITZ: In the summer of 1972, when everything about Okinawa was pretty much concluded, I was asked to stay on at the Embassy to be Counselor for Political/Military affairs in order to provide some continuity with the negotiations. In part, this was because the Embassy felt that there might be a lot of loose ends to the negotiations and that maybe not everything would work well. Sneider was leaving, there was a turnover of ambassadors, and so I could provide the continuity. Moreover, since I had mastered the Status of Forces Agreement and all the military paraphernalia, it made a certain amount of sense that I do that.

So, for two more years I carried out that function, which had to do in part with making sure that our forces on Okinawa performed well and could do their job, and in part that the whole US-Japan security relationship, which at that time was changing radically because of the reversion, continued to function.

At the same time I could do things like assist in making sense out of adjustments in our military force structure in Japan, and when I had some spare time I could do some legal work such as what was required to clear the title of Embassy grounds so that we could rebuild the Embassy, which we did at the tag end of that period.

Q: Anything else that is particularly memorable from that period?

SCHMITZ: The most fascinating part of that whole thing was an issue which we called the Murasami Bashi problem. That was a problem involving our continuing to fight in Vietnam, very unpopular in Japan, and using Japan to support that fight. We did that in a noteworthy case by repairing tanks and armored personnel carriers at the Sagami depot in Japan. After these things were repaired they were put on big Army convoys and driven down to the piers in Yokohama to be put on ships to go to Vietnam. They moved visibly through the streets. Yokohama was then run by a Socialist mayor. There were lots of young communists. To see these things moving around in Japan they considered were going down to kill Vietnamese was anathema. There were demonstrations about these movements, and ultimately one day a convoy was totally surrounded by demonstrators and stopped. The police told us they couldn't interfere because the load limit of one of the

bridges turned out to be less than the weight of trucks in the convoy and therefore if they allowed the convoy to proceed, the police would be a party to a violation of the law, which they would not abide. The short of this was that 104 days went by before we were able to resolve the issue. I don't want to give the impression that the convoy sat on the street for a 104 days, it sat there for 25 hours surrounded by a howling mob with highly disciplined soldier drivers in the cabs of those trucks doing an excellent job. We finally decided to send them back to Sagami so that we would have some breathing room to solve the problem.

The solution of the problem involved excellent work from some of the finest career public service officials I have ever seen in my life. These were Japanese and they were what allowed the solution to materialize. This is a hot issue in the Diet and with the opposition parties including the Socialist mayor. The Foreign Ministry officials worked out a mechanism with the rest of the government and the political parties that would allow certain kinds of payments to flow into Yokohama, certain kinds of political statements to be made, and undoubtedly lots of other political payoffs.

The essential capability that would allow this to take place was the US Army's capacity every morning, around 2 am, to throw a Bailey bridge across the top of the existing bridge and rush the convoy across and down to the docks; unload the tanks and equipment onto the ships; turn around and get back across that Bailey bridge so that it could be taken down to accommodate the morning rush hour traffic that began at six-thirty every morning. It was an extraordinarily disciplined act by the Army engineers of throwing this bridge every morning across the weak bridge, allowing the convoy to rush in, unload and rush out, and deconstruct that bridge in time for the Japanese rush hour. They did an astonishing job of it.

The reason that all of this was important was that these vehicles had been promised to the South Vietnamese military as a part of their Vietnamizing the war and allowing us to get out of the war. This was an agreement negotiated by Kissinger. It had a special code word. It was critical to the political processes of a whole lot of countries, including our own.

Q: What year was this?

SCHMITZ: That was 1972, in the summer and fall.

So the US was under heavy pressure to solve this problem. Of course that translated right to the Embassy. I had the job. We managed to transmit that pressure effectively to the Japanese. They felt it and worked literally night and day, by themselves and with us, to get the thing done.

Q: During your period in Japan, both when you were negotiating on the Okinawa treaty and while you were Pol/Mil Counselor, what Japanese leaders did you have a good close

view of and which ones did you consider were either particularly able or particularly unhelpful?

SCHMITZ: I think probably the Japanese Prime Minister, Nakasone was one...I am not sure that I had a closer view of him than you could mostly get in the paper and by talking to people who worked with him, which was what I did. A very strong personality, hawkish, a great supporter, of course, of the US and security relationship. He was a powerful and effective man who like most Japanese politicians of that ilk gave rise to suggestions that he was not entirely honest. It is very hard to be entirely honest and be Prime Minister of Japan, I think, under those circumstances. I certainly feel that he was among the most able of all the prominent Japanese politicians.

But the admiration that I have for the Japanese is not so much for the politicians, they are really less of a leader than our politicians are in the US, but for the Japanese career service and many of those wound up in the Foreign Ministry which is one of the two or three premium ministries in Japan. The best of their people they put on the front line to deal with the United States, because we were their biggest problem. Therefore, I had the wonderful job, both in the Okinawa experience and the political/ military experience, of working with what surely was the cream of the crop of an entire generation of Japanese with any kind of public spirit.

Of them I would say that there were several that were among the very best public servants that I have ever seen. Particularly one named Matsuda who himself put together and pushed through, including in the Japanese Diet, the deal that made possible the resolution of this tank shipping problem.

Q: What about on the Okinawa side? Who sold it on the Japanese side?

SCHMITZ: Again the selling inside the Diet was done by these professional diplomats. They worked in a team. A lot of the work fell to their lawyers. They had three principal lawyers working on this while I was there. The two most active with whom I worked were Nakajima, who went on to become Japanese Ambassador to Malaysia and then China and is now on the Japanese Supreme Court, and a fellow who was then a youngish officer called Kuriyama, who now is Japanese Ambassador to the United States.

Q: You mentioned in the context of your time in Japan, the Vietnam war. Would you share with us your views on that whole time? What were your feelings and thoughts then and in retrospect?

SCHMITZ: I had not been in the military, and that was one of the reasons I felt I had a few years to come and give my time to the State Department, so I was looking at it as a civilian and a political analyst. I felt initially that what we were doing there was justified and congruent with US interests. As it became an obviously unwinnable war and we were beginning to use so much of our political integrity in doing it as well as our money, I thought it was imperative that we get out of there as quickly as we could with a shred of

dignity. I therefore was supportive of most of what I could see being done when I was in the State Department and was a little more privy to our policies than I am now. I thought that most of our people were working quite hard, first of all to try to win the war and secondly, when we couldn't, to Vietnamize the war part of which we had in Japan and thirdly to terminate our involvement in it just as quickly as we possibly could. Of course, not everybody seemed to be participating in all of that and I thought it was a brutalizing thing for us. It was causing a lot of our people to show their worst sides in public and in private.

Q: Any particular kind of examples?

SCHMITZ: Oh, I think of Foreign Service officers running war rooms and picking out specific targets to be bombed because we thought there were North Vietnamese forces there. The macho, cigar chomping, attitude of a lot of our military people at that time which tended to reduce non-Vietnamese issues to minor matters. The huge use of resources which then made it silly to try to save resources in any other way produced a very bad mind set. There was a swagger to Americans even in Japan where a lot of them would come back from Vietnam on R&R and we were out there applying the might of the superpower in Asia and we really came across not very sympathetic folks in the eyes of most of the Asians I knew.

Q: Was there any particular incident or event that kind of switched you from saying this was a war worth fighting to one in which the game no longer justified the means?

SCHMITZ: Yes, the thing that helped me along with that judgment was my participation as a lawyer into a claim from French rubber plantation operators in what was then Cambodia for defoliation of their rubber plantation by what they asserted was US forces. I got the job because I was working on Cambodian affairs at the time and did the usual work of asking around to see whether or not we had in fact defoliated anything and was told that we absolutely had not. Therefore, as a part of building our response to this French claim, I got a group of agricultural experts, three of them together, and sent them to Cambodia to examine this, being confident that they would be able to see that this, in fact, was done from the ground by people who were trying to hang this crime on the Americans.

I remember distinctly that when we had the debriefing session of that team when they came back, the leader of the team was irate. He said, "I want you to know that I do not appreciate having been asked to put my professional reputation on the line to go out there and decide whether or not this was done by the US forces or not when the US government knows perfectly well that US forces did, in fact, do that. We were being invited to provide a cover up for this illegal activity."

Of course we denied any activity in Cambodia at the time. I saw from their report that there was no way that this defoliation could be carried out by anything but us and yet the political requirement of the day was that we could not acknowledge it and therefore we

were not going to pay for the damage we caused, even if it was to French plantation owners.

Q: It is now August 3, 1993. We had a little break in the session. When we cut off last time you were talking about the poor French plantation owners in Cambodia who could not get anything but lies from the US government. Can we continue with that?

SCHMITZ: It was a matter in which the French plantations suffered great damages and had filed a claim against the United States. The issue for us was whether or not, as alleged in the claims, the US really did defoliate the plantations, or whether as argued by the US military, the plantations were defoliated by either the Khmer Rouge or the North Vietnamese and therefore we had no responsibility. As mentioned before we send a team to investigate and they came back and announced in a session that they were really disturbed, annoyed that they had put their professional lives on the line and it should have been clear to everybody...

Q: But when the response to the Frenchmen came out it was total denial.

SCHMITZ: Well, I had the job of responding to the claim and when the team came back and said this has to have been done by US forces, then we responded accordingly to the claim. Up until that time anybody in the executive branch of the US would have denied that we had done that.

Q: So the French plantation owners did get some compensation?

SCHMITZ: Not too long after we processed that, I was gone from that shop to go overseas, so I don't know how long it was before compensation was made.

Q: We are talking now about what year?

SCHMITZ: That was about 1969. I left that year to go to Japan.

Q: Okay, so we dropped back in time from where we had been at one time when you had finished your political/military tour in the Embassy in Tokyo after negotiating the Okinawa treaty. Let's jump forward again. The year is 1974 and you are back as part of the Legal Advisor's Office, specializing in Africa. Anything memorable about that?

SCHMITZ: In the negative sense, yes. Nothing was really going on in Africa or US attitudes towards Africa. It was a backwater. About all I could find to do there that made any sense was to gather all of the information about the treaties that we had with the various African countries and to look at the pattern of them and see if there were countries with which we ought to have some treaties, including extradition treaties, tax treaties or something fundamental to the way the US conducts itself in the world. I made a matrix of all the African countries and all of our treaties. Of course it was a big matrix. I brought that to the attention of everybody in the African Bureau and got big yawns as a result. I am not sure that would be the case today. I think more of our people recognize

the value of extradition treaties, for example, in just making sure that we can get something done. Cases in the recent past like abducting potential dependents from Mexico, for example, contrary to provisions of the extradition treaty come to mind. I think maybe now it would be better. But for that short period I was in African Affairs there really wasn't much going on.

Q: Let me go back for a minute to this Cambodian case you had. At any other time in your Foreign Service career were you ever asked by a superior to "lie for your country"?

SCHMITZ: Yes, several times. And as I thought about this since our last conversation, I think all the times I can remember had to do with national security issues. It really involved in having to deny the existence of something. In a couple of cases it was to deny the existence of secret agreements with a foreign country. In one case to deny any knowledge about how we solved a major problem because we had to solve it clandestinely.

So behind your question is whether I was uncomfortable doing this, my answer is I was plenty uncomfortable having to state something that I knew to be untrue, but I did not feel that this was an evil that my government was asking me to do. I felt, in particular cases where I had to make these denials, that this was a necessary part of the conduct of State policy involved in the Cold War and keeping the world on an even keel and that having to maintain some things in confidence was a necessary part of that.

Q: This was necessary other than a no comment type of answer?

SCHMITZ: Yes, because sometimes you had to actually deny the existence of a secret agreement. So I would do that. But I was never called on to do it as a cover up incompetence or bad policy decision which I think probably would bother me.

Q: In 1974-75 you were in the African section of the Legal Advisor's Office. Then you moved on to the Micronesia negotiation. Could you say something about that, please?

SCHMITZ: After the African stint I went to work for a short time on the Micronesia negotiations. It was an interagency operation. I was the deputy to Hayden Williams, who was the principal negotiator and as he liked to say, the personal representative of the President to these negotiations, although he was nothing of the sort.

The main things that were going on during the period I was there was to see if we could get the completed agreement with the Marianas through the Congress..

Q: Hayden Williams, wasn't he head of the Asian Foundation at one time?

SCHMITZ: Yes.

Q: I knew him when he was associate dean at Fletcher.

SCHMITZ: He did a lot of things. He was working with the Asia Foundation while he was doing this with one hand in Washington.

Our job was to get the Mariana Covenant approved by the Congress with both implementing legislation and agreement to a treaty, and we did that while I was there. So during that period the negotiations with the rest of Micronesia were kind of on hold except for a couple of times when I had to go to the UN and appear before the Trustee Council and tell them how wonderful our stewardship had been of all that.

The only thing memorable in that period was what caused my demise in that particular job. The head of the Office of Territories with responsibility for the Pacific Islands, a man named Fred Zeder, was a political appointee who in those more relaxed days didn't see too much of a difference between his business interests and his official interests. He was all for development of these islands economically. So one of the things that he brought about was a huge scheme to develop an oil tanker transshipment operation in Palau so that supertankers coming from the Middle East could go into the basin in Palau, inside the reef, and transship their oil into smaller vessels that could go to Japan and deliver the oil there. This would create a great deal of economic development in Palau.

I visited Palau a couple of times as part of what I was doing. I was a scuba diver and on one occasion went up to the place where this transshipment place was to be built. And to build it you were going to have to dynamite great acres of the bottom of the lagoon. I dived down into the lagoon where this was going to happen and I found that the bottom of this thing, the lagoon was very shallow, was covered with coral growth and on top of the coral were giant clams. These giant clams surprised me a good deal because I had read that they grow to a maximum of four feet but I dived on clams that with outstretched arms I could just barely reach from one edge of the shell to the other, which is about six feet. So in this place there is this extraordinary growth nursery for this kind of sea creature. With me was a man from the fisheries operation of the trust territories. He told me that Palau has about 300 species of coral which are unknown any place else in the world and probably 250 different kinds of fish. The breeding grounds for these fish are on the western end of Palau. The currents run from this basin area down the west coast of Palau. So if there were blasting and industrial activities there the result would be to put sediment all over the western side of Palau and destroy something of great beauty and scientific importance.

We had a duty under the trusteeship agreement of the United Nations to administer these places with care, to prepare them for independence and to do nothing that would harm the welfare of the inhabitants during that period. I was director of the office that had the job of going to the United Nations and defending our administration. So I took some steps to ask some people who were concerned about environmental consequences to help us look at this project and in the process to slow the project down and ultimately to kill the project.

When the project was being slowed down I was called on the carpet by my boss, Hayden Williams, for having created a problem with Fred Zeder, who was very concerned that we had stuck out nose into the administration of the territory and had caused this problem. Shortly thereafter Hayden decided that, as he put it, he didn't feel as though we were pitcher and first baseman on the same team and that was the way it had to operate. So he invited me to look around and see what else I might want to do. He did not couch it in terms precisely of that event, but I am sure in my own mind that that was a good part of the reason why I was asked to leave there.

Q: Were there any consequences of that?

SCHMITZ: There is always a consequence when you have to restart something and you leave under a cloud of some sort. I was sad to leave. It was a good job, a responsible one, and once we got the Marianas done we would have gone back to do Micronesia and since I had negotiated treaties of territorial succession, I would have been good at that. As it turned out the job that I went to popped open just at that moment involving the new grievance legislation for the Foreign Service and caused the Director General, Carol Laise, to be looking for a Foreign Service officer who could feel the effects of this legislation, but who also was a lawyer and could bring the legislation to life.

So, the next day after I was asked to look around for another job, I found one and immediately went to that job in the Director General's office.

Q: Would you tell us what it was like working for Carol Laise?

SCHMITZ: I liked her. She was a bright, sincere, pioneering woman, no nonsense, tough. She had just gotten married to Ellsworth Bunker at that time. She was about the senior-most woman Foreign Service officer in the United States. She was perfectly happy to have this grievance system be produced out of my office, which was the Grievance Office, working with one of her deputies. Therefore she was very gentle in any guidance she provided me. She was also very interested in social justice, justice in the work place, which is what grievances were really supposed to be about.

As we went through that process, it was an interagency process because AID and USIA had to be involved in that...then we had to negotiate with AFSA, write all the regulations and teach our managers about the regulations so that they wouldn't screw up. In those days we had some money, so I set up seminars around the world and had our embassies send their personnel managers or DCMs to them. We taught a day's school on how to stay out of trouble in their grievance procedures, how to save the government money by not letting these damn things get so big as to go through the grievance process. Each completed grievance I figured cost us about \$25,000 to process.

Q: Who were you dealing with in AFSA in those days?

SCHMITZ: I am not sure I remember in those days, it might have been you.

Q: No, I was on the Board but didn't deal with grievances. I think it may have been primarily staffers. We had a lawyer who was doing most of that. Was that your beginning exposure to AFSA?

SCHMITZ: No, I was exposed to AFSA before that from the time I returned from Morocco in 1968 and had all kinds of horrible things happen administratively after my return. So I became very interested in what was then called the bread and butter issues of AFSA. Reminding our managers in the State Department that they didn't need to resolve every single issue against the employee but sometimes they could look at the issue and make a judgment.

At that time Ed Peck was very active on the same little committee so he and I worked on some projects of the kind that produced ultimately the transfer allowance, which until that time was just a clothing allowance if you went through two or more clothing zones. The State Department had authority to actually pay some of the costs of the transfer...new carpets, rugs, etc....but hadn't asked Congress for the money. So we jumped up and down on that one and ultimately they asked for the money and we have had a limited transfer allowance since.

We worked on things like ways that we could actually help people move intelligently and save the government money. Giving them incentive not to use their very last pound of their weight limit. You could do that by sharing with them some of the benefits of saving the government money. It would have required legislation. The idea, of course, was immediately killed by our managers who saw anything that required legislation as something that was not desirable to do. They wanted to administer the regulations as they then had them.

Q: What do you see as AFSA's main worthwhile reason d'etre?

SCHMITZ: Well, there are basically two. One is to be the conscience of management in dealing with employees. That is more than being a Jimmy cricket. Sometimes it has to sting in order to make sure that is the case. I think that AFSA was at its best when it sued the Secretary of State over one of his procedures involving nominations of political ambassadors. The State Department, in a most conniving, almost criminal way, connived to keep from the public view the description of how bad a lot of these appointees were, in violation of the law. The law requires the State Department to issue a certificate of demonstrated competence for every ambassadorial appointee.

Q: This was required by the Senate, I guess.

SCHMITZ: Well, it became law. It is in the Foreign Service Act. It is much ignored, by the way. Pell required it to be written into the law, but then quit taking it seriously. Therefore, the certificate was produced in name only. It was not a certificate of competency at all. It was a brief, usually one page, description of what the person had done. A typical example was of the model...Mr. so-and-so has been a pillar of his

community, a successful businessman in running his used car dealership and therefore would make an excellent ambassador of the United States to Spain. It was so bad that these things were not even carefully done. They had typos in them. In one case the last line naming the country was the wrong country.

Q: And the worse thing was that nobody noticed it.

SCHMITZ: Nobody noticed it because they classified it. There is a little operation in the State Department that produced these things. They were not really State Department people, they were White House people sent over to write these things. There were two of them. They then sent them as confidential documents to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

That is why we sued him. We said that you can not classify somebody's resume. Under the National Security Act involving classification this is a violation of the act. We, of course, argued that point until we were blue in the face for months and months with the State Department in negotiations. They refused to move on it, so AFSA sued the Secretary of State in the Federal District Court.

Before the matter came to hearing, the State Department compromised and provided AFSA all of the documents which it had withheld until that point. It undertook to provide us the documents as the law should require and denied having done anything wrong.

Q: I take it from some of your answers so far, that one might conjecture that you believe there is some kind of virus or something in the water that causes State Department managers to behave in ways that are frequently ill-advised, sometimes illegal and sometimes just plain mean. Is that correct?

SCHMITZ: I am not sure I would limit it to the State Department. I think that all of these bureaucratic organizations, maybe any organization, needs to have constant course corrections in order to stay on track because there aren't any tracks. It is like being afloat in some place. And to maintain an ethical, mission orientation that makes sense for the United States, in this case for the taxpayers, means that there always has to be something coming out of the environment saying you are too far to the right or left or going too slow or too fast.

The problem with the State Department, I think, is the problem of any disciplined organization. I saw this happen in the Air Force too when I was working closely with them. It is disciplined therefore the top people can say, "Let's do this," and there is a tendency for the other people to say, "Sir" right away, "How quick, how fast and how far." There is no incentive for them to second guess the instruction or make a problem out of themselves. Therefore, unless something from outside does that, it is possible that an entire apparatus will go off into left field. It is one of the values that I think AFSA has, which is to be a bothersome bee to buzz around when the Foreign Service is not doing well.

There is a second element of it and that is the Foreign Service, a little bit like the Navy, which has ships at sea in which the captain is almost absolutely powerful. Lord Acton had it right about absolute power. There is an ego matter that somehow insinuates itself into ambassadors. As our people get closer to being ambassadors they tend to see that as all right, well and good. Anybody who has been promoted sees that his or her own promotion is certainly just, if not over due, and therefore are entitled to wear the mantle of infallibility just as they have learned the old timers did.

This would not happen were it not for the fact that ambassadors really are almost kings overseas. They are invisible for what they do internally in the embassy and so, unless a person comes with a very strong internal compass, it is easy to go wrong as ambassador.

Q: Have you had any personal experiences where that was the case?

SCHMITZ: Yes, sure. On both sides and that is why I tend to see it maybe in such black and white. It doesn't have anything to do with political versus career. It has to do with the inner character of the person taking the job. I think career people are as much given to the egomaniacal quality of being ambassador as some of the worst of the political appointees.

Q: What needs to be done about that?

SCHMITZ: Oh, I would like to see installed, as a professional matter, not as a legal matter, but just in terms of the profession of the Foreign Service, a mechanism to constantly remind our people of the need to do a veracity check from time to time, or a reality check from time to time. Maybe it is as simple as having one or two folks in the embassy whose careers are not totally at the mercy of the ambassador to be somebody like a Jimmy cricket.

Q: But in the embassy very few people's careers are at the mercy of the ambassador.

SCHMITZ: But those who are not come from other agencies. They are not the ones who pick up most of the nonsense that I am talking about. I am talking about the silliness of using the resources of the United States for personal aggrandizement of some sort. Whether it is just fancying oneself greater than all else and absorbing full visibility of the embassy into an ambassador when the work is really being done by others. Or whether it is this job is not good enough for me, I am really capable of much greater things and so I will spend my time out of the country or performing a hobby, or something of that sort.

Q: Well, let's turn this argument on its head a little bit. Is the ambassador ultimately to blame for this or is the generalized lack of spine in the more junior staff ultimately responsible? If you look at the Foreign Service over a period of time, people that you and I both know, who have chosen to rock the boat, provided they were right and did it in a way which was somehow in the general parameters, frequently found that although their careers may suffer a momentary setback, that some how or another there is somebody

around who valued that and will not only hire you but perhaps will allow you to do it. So I wonder if the perception that you intimidated, that being willing to be the burr under the saddle, being willing to stand up at a meeting and say, "Sorry, that is not right," is on the average not all that destructive to the ambition of the people as they may think it is.

SCHMITZ: Well, you have several issues there. One is the ladder. Do you still have a career if you do make waves. Second is that somehow it is the fault of the spineless juniors that seniors behave the way they do. And the third is what causes the pathology that I was talking about.

On the first one, I think it is possible for people to stand up and to survive and in fact even have their career prosper. It does, however, have to be accompanied by all those things you mentioned, including the skill by which it is done, because our age dislikes raucous, thorny, scratchy people. So somebody who does that with any frequency is easily going to be identified as a trouble maker and somebody who you don't want to have on your staff or serve with.

We do have some institutional protection for whistle blowers and dissenters. There is the dissent channel. But I think for most purposes these institutional facilities have absorbed some of the burden of that. So it is not possible in our system to speak up. But you wouldn't speak up about the ambassador's habit of telling his counselors that they need to open their houses to his friends and relatives who were coming to post for his daughter's wedding. That is not the sort of thing that you can speak up about, and yet, it is eroding the morale and undercuts...

[end of tape]

Q: We were talking about speaking up. I would say that you can never expect to reform all ambassadors to quit asking ridiculous things of the staff. But can't you educate the staff to say no or simply not do it?

SCHMITZ: I don't think you can do that as long as the incentives in the marketplace out there are so inclined against that. We know that selection of adverbs in the annual efficiency report is enough to sidetrack a career or delay or deny a promotion. The ambassador is going to write a reviewing statement and its got to be almost frantic in its enthusiasm for the officer for a promotion to take place. Now any officer has got to be just a little bit dumb or reckless with his career to take on his ambassador on a matter which is not of major consequence. So I think that is one reason why all these minor things go until they add up to being quite a lot.

Q: But you find you have the Ed Pecks, you have some other people we could name, who took on ambassadors and others on precisely these kind of issues and yet not only survived but prospered. You talked about the ambassador being the person who holds that cudgel. Actually the ambassador writes very few fitness reports. The DCM writes many, many more than the ambassador, certainly, and reviews them. It is the immediate supervisor in the final analysis who is crucial much more than the ambassador.

SCHMITZ: Yes. But I think the process is exactly the same. It is just as likely that the immediate supervisor or the DCM is going to withhold that frantic adverb because junior officer Smith stood up once and took a strip out of the ambassador. He is going to be marked down for judgment, comportsment, maybe dedication to duty, maybe his willingness to sacrifice personally for the good of the mission. Any of that stuff can happen.

Q: Then as you describe it the organization has a terminal illness.

SCHMITZ: I think it is maybe not terminal, I think it is like a virus that sits there and gives us the sniffles and a cold and keeps the organization from performing as well as it ought.

I happen to think that our embassies are important, that US representation is important and it ought to work just as well as it possibly can. I think it is not now working that well and partly because we, ourselves, tolerate this. In fact, AFSA, itself, for very good-intended reasons, has been a major part of why it is now so difficult for the institution itself to separate the good people from the bad people because the evaluation reports have to be now produced in peculiar ways which cause you almost to have to be a code clerk in order to decode what is really being said.

Q: On the question of trying to get people to express themselves, one of my great frustrations throughout the period when I had supervisory responsibilities, including as ambassador, was calling everybody in and saying, "Look, here is the problem. I have had certain thoughts about it, but I don't pretend to have all the answers and I am really groping for something which somehow is the best of the solutions. I want you people, not only on this issue, but in general, to always give me your frank, honest opinion. The most unpardonable sin is to allow supervisors to walk right off a cliff that you knew was there and because you were afraid to speak up he didn't know and walked right off of it. So please be frank." My greatest frustration perhaps was that it was a rare occasion when anybody would respond to that kind of stimulation.

SCHMITZ: I think you and I are looking at this from exactly opposite sides of the chasm. In one case did I have an ambassador who made that point clear in any embassy in which I served. And all other cases, which was six or seven ambassadors, quite the opposite was indicated by body language and word.

Q: Is it really that damaging for someone to speak up and take the contrary view, if you will, except in cases where the person is relying on a shoe shine and a smile to advance his career? What I am really suggesting is this reluctance to speak up, I think, is probably the strongest among political officers where one person's political judgment may be as good as another. At least you can't prove him wrong. Whereas if you have some other skill...very good B&F officer, or very good economist...you have a little firmer ground under your professional feet.

SCHMITZ: That may well be.

Q: Any other points to make on that general subject or shall we move on?

SCHMITZ: Let's move on.

Q: All right. You were now on the grievance staff and the years are 1976-78. Any memorable events?

SCHMITZ: Yes. I dreaded the assignment but I took it in part because I did need something to do and I was grateful to be asked to do something I began to be persuaded was important.

It was a dusty place. It had really not done very much. And the people in it showed that. There were almost cobwebs on them. I came in as the chief of that staff and never really had done any personnel work before. So a lot of the effort was to get people to apply some energy, to raise the octane of their application to process these things. At the same time to then to devise ways to complete the new regulations and then to get them promulgated in a way that would have them taken seriously. I had the usual difficulties in any kind of interagency negotiation in getting agreement on what these regulations should say. The problem then was to communicate this to our people in the field. And as I mentioned, I got some good cooperation from our B&F people in those days who made it possible for us to have these kind of high profile symposiums around the world to introduce this whole thing to our embassies. I think it is unrecognized in the Foreign Service that as a result of the process that gave us the new Foreign Service grievance system the Foreign Service has probably the most expensive grievance process in the United States government. It involves processing at so many different levels and has such procedural protections to the person finally getting through it and bringing his grievance before the Grievance Board, which in itself is a very expensive process.

So a lot of what I was doing was trying to keep as many of these from going through all that as possible. As you know I am a lawyer by training and in the function of being Chief of the Grievance Staff, I really was acting as a judge of the grievances as they were presented, which is not easy.

Q: Judge and jury.

SCHMITZ: Well, yes, judge and jury. Except the real court is a level above us. A grievant could always take a declined grievance to the Grievance Board. At that point I became advocate for the State Department management.

Q: Prosecuting attorney.

SCHMITZ: Well, a defense attorney because they were the plaintiffs. I will confess that I often enjoyed that process of being able to finally after maybe having worked with a grievance for a couple of years and maintained a judicial attitude towards it, to finally be able to cut, slash in a court of real law about the issues that were there.

Q: Do you think in most of the cases which you were in contact with in the end some kind of justice prevailed?

SCHMITZ: Yes, by putting weight on the words "some kind" that was true.

Q: Well, I don't mean Judge Lynch's kind of justice.

SCHMITZ: Well, I will give you an example of an unusual event. We got a complaint from a retired officer that the State Department, particularly Security forces in the State Department, continued to hound him after he had retired, because he had been thought to be homosexual when he was on active duty and he was in effect forced out of the Service because he was a homosexual. He had no pension.

Q: So he was not retired in the usual sense?

SCHMITZ: No, he was fired. He then went to law school for three years to become a lawyer and was then unable to find good employment. The circumstances of his being disappointed at these interviews were such that he became persuaded that it was because the State Department was poisoning his well in each case. He wrote a letter to the Secretary of State and it really called for an investigation of our Diplomatic Security people. They would normally conduct such an investigation, but in this case the Director General asked me to conduct the investigation. So I did that under cover of a writ really from Larry Eagleburger who at that time was Special Assistant for Kissinger.

Q: He was Under Secretary for Management.

SCHMITZ: He was, that's right. With that writ I went down and held little informal hearings and interviewed the security office and found out, as far as I could tell, that his complaint was not well founded. It was caused really by finding reasons to blame somebody besides himself for the failure to get the job outside.

But in the course of the investigation I found that the witness that the DS relied upon primarily was his secretary when he was on duty in a country in Latin America. She seemed to be quite central to this. She made the principal accusations using such observations as he wore a swimming cap when he swam in his swimming pool. We found his own complaint not well based and nothing we could do about it, but out of something, excess curiosity maybe, I asked for her records...the records of this witness...to be brought back from St. Louis where they had been sent and promptly buried. I looked in there and found one of the most horrifying stories that is an indictment of our system.

That story was that this was the second time she had made heinous allegations about one of our officers. The first time was when she was on duty in a border post in Mexico and there had been allegations made about the person she worked for of actually trafficking in American bodies... selling the rights to families to get them back from Mexico for proper burial. The State Department sent down a special investigator and the investigator's report was in her file. He said, "I have spent six weeks in this town. I have tracked down every source of these allegations and they all come from her. There is absolutely no truth in them. She did this as a malicious effort to ruin the career of the consul at this post. She should be immediately separated from the Foreign Service."

That recommendation went totally unheeded and she lay like a time bomb in the system for about 15 years until this other hapless guy came along with his bathing cap. She got him accused and worked over by DS in such a fashion that he never recovered from the investigation, even though DS cleared him of homosexuality. The experience had been so scarifying to this guy that he could never then perform in a way that allowed him to be written up decently.

Q: What were the years this was going on?

SCHMITZ: I conducted the investigation in the late '70s and I think he had been separated from the Service in the early '70s. The border incident was probably in the '50s.

Q: This raises an issue which I had no where written on my pad here about the State Department's attitude toward sexual preference. I suppose if you ever ran head on in some way or another with the security people, this became an issue, but in my experience over a long period of time, the prevailing policy in the State Department was pretty much like the new "don't ask, don't tell." That is, even though everybody might know or think they did that some member of the embassy was not heterosexual, absent something that was absolutely flagrant and outrageous, nobody said or did anything. What was your experience?

SCHMITZ: Mine was the same as yours. I never noticed anything about it except when you had to go through the interviews to get a security clearance and they asked if you were a homosexual. You had to say no in order to get the clearance. But when I was looking into this case and interviewed some of the DS people and, macabre almost, one of these guys was remembering in a nostalgic way the good old days. "In the good old days," he said, "we found five thousand homosexuals in the Foreign Service and got rid of them." Now five thousand is too big a number I think, which is part of the bizarre quality of this discussion anyway. But the fact is that he described to me the standard operating procedure for when somebody was accused of being a homosexual. It was a third degree operation. They didn't beat them with truncheons, but they sure as hell put them in a windowless cell, used all the FBI techniques of indicating the person is going to be drummed out of the Service unless he confesses. So, if you take somebody who is not absolutely solidly self-confident to begin with, that process by your thought employer for life, could have really deleterious effects on people's behavior and functioning. That I think I saw happen more than just this one time.

Q: Would it help in this whole process about how you get it wrong doing it, how you instill a greater integrity into the people in our personnel system, if there were an established channel to bring to light certain things that are going on where confidentiality is respected up to the point where it is reasonable and you have an impartial outside office like the Inspector General looking into things in a way which can generate a certain amount of confidence, both in management and in non-managerial parts of the system?

SCHMITZ: Yes, I think so. You know, in civil law there is a term called malicious abusive process. It is to penalize people who bring frivolous complaints or who use the process in order to just do harm without really moving the inquiry forward. We don't have that kind of thing, so far as I know, in the executive branch. It is important to protect whistle blowers and keep them from retaliation, but right now there isn't any real disincentive for somebody to let his or her imagination run pretty freely in deciding what somebody else has done and to write a complaint about it. Potentially that complaint can derail somebody's career or cause them great embarrassment.

Q: I will interject a personal experience here. Once upon a time someone I was supervising shortly after having gotten promoted to the old FSO-2, claimed that I had influenced members of the FSR promotion system against promoting him from FSR-2 to FSR-1 because I had known these people and told them under no circumstances should he be promoted. This person filed a grievance against me. People went out and interviewed a dozen people around town who were on promotion panels or in my car pool, etc. People started coming to me asking what terrible thing had I just done? In the end, of course, there was nothing to the complaint, but the people who got interviewed never knew. That doesn't seem fair does it. But then the world is not fair.

Okay. You went to the Senior Seminar after the Grievance Staff.

SCHMITZ: Well, it's, as anybody who has been through it knows, one of the better experiences in the Foreign Service because it is a paid year organized as a sabbatical in which you are invited to dine at a heavily laden table of delicious intellectual issues about our country. It was done in the most beneficial way, I thought, of providing us huge amounts of challenge for discussions with excellent folks, both in our own class and those brought in to help us; travel and then a six or seven week period for the writing of a paper on something in depth. I personally felt it was one of the best adult educational experiences that I ever have had. I think it is a magnificent luxury to have to train our people who we believe are going to be holding important positions in our Service. I am not sure how long it is for the world, in part because we have a certain amount of trouble in predicting who are the really good ones, and part because we haven't been able to persuade all of our people that it's that valuable, they really ought to have it, unlike the military services. I thought it was just splendid.

I did my own research on energy. This was during the early Carter period and the energy issue was a major one I thought. I thought it was important that we take a look and see what this country could do to lessen its reliance on hydrocarbon based energy and see if we couldn't improve our performance by at least taking a look at how the Swedes are able to turn out a per capital gross national product approximate to our own at a consumption of half the amount of energy that we use. And so, I did my research in Swedish energy conservation. I learned an awful lot and wrote a paper which I don't think was very good, but certainly my own understanding of the issue was vastly improved.

Q: Back tracking again. You mentioned Larry Eagleburger. Did you have a fair amount of contact with Larry over time?

SCHMITZ: No so much. He was, of course, Carol Laise's boss and would hear about him. Several times I would go up in his office with some other people when we were dealing with these issues. But not intensively, no.

Q: I ask because Larry is frequently cited as perhaps one of the greatest stars the career Foreign Service ever produced and other people have a very different attitude. I was just wondering if you had formed any particular judgment that you would care to share?

SCHMITZ: Well, I admire him more than I attack him. I admire his appetite for work, his absolute dedication to doing it and willingness to ruin his health and probably his family life to carry it out. Also, he's got a good breath and set of judgments about him on the issues that he has come to know well. Like the Yugoslavian issues, for example, where he was absolutely right at the closing days of the Bush Administration. He was refreshing, I think, in that he was so brash and frank, unlike the classic model of Foreign Service officer, that I felt better having him around.

Q: Was he brash and frank before he became a Kissinger protégé?

SCHMITZ: I didn't know him before he was a Kissinger protégé, so I can't say.

Q: Anything further on the Senior Seminar?

SCHMITZ: No. I had a great time.

Q: Before we move into the next topic on our list here, the Panama Treaty, since we don't have a lot of time left this afternoon, I suggest we call it quits now.

SCHMITZ: Okay.

Q: We will pick it up again at another time.

Today is August 6, 1993 and this is a continuing interview with Charles A. Schmitz. Chuck, now it is 1979 and you are in Panama in the Panama Treaty Implementation slot there. Tell us what was important about that.

SCHMITZ: The State Department worked hard to negotiate the treaty and worked, I think, even harder to get the Senate to give its consent to the treaty coming into force. It spent so much time worrying how to do that and mounting a big public relations campaign that it had not given a whole lot of thought to what we were going to do if the treaty was actually approved.

The day after it was approved I got a call from the Latin American Bureau asking if there was any pertinence of the Okinawa Reversion arrangements to Panama and, if so, whether or not they thought I could make a contribution to that. There was a great deal of pertinence to it because it is not very often that we transfer territory from one country to another and this was what was happening. It involves lost of state's succession and making sure that you have accounted for a whole lot of matters just to make sure everything functions right. Account for the legalities of the old and the new system and protect things like ongoing court cases, claims, and make sure that the fire department and police worked the following day, etc.

Q: There was also similarity that you had major military installations in both cases.

SCHMITZ: That was an additional kicker for both. I said that I thought I would be useful even though I was at the time in language training to go to Indonesia to be political counselor. But that assignment was broken and I was transferred to Spanish language training so that I could prepare to go to Panama, instead.

Q: How much Indonesian had you had?

SCHMITZ: I had had about 40 days worth of working during my lunch hour while at Senior Seminar so it wasn't a huge investment.

It may have been a mistake doing what I did because had I gone to Indonesia I would have been in the mainstream of the political system in the State Department Foreign Service and since there was no US domestic political issue about Indonesia at that time I would not have run the risk of winding up on the wrong side of a domestic issue. But in the case of the Panama Canal Treaty, which was President Carter's baby and probably his only real success in foreign policy...

Q: He would argue that Camp David counted too.

SCHMITZ: He would, but I am not moved by that argument. I guess it never occurred to me that anybody who was seen to be associated with the Panama Canal work would fall out of popularity in the State Department, but that is exactly what happened when Carter was defeated for reelection and Reagan was elected. While Reagan had not in the

presidential campaign made an issue about the Panama Canal Treaty negotiations, as he had four years previously, still when he came in and appointed his people to run the State Department, including Assistant Secretaries for this and that, it was natural that they saw it was important to pick people who had not shown a lot of sentiment for the previous administration. I think that was in part why I had difficulty in assignment after the Panama Canal Treaty work was over.

In any case, at the time I was happy to go. I thought that my highest and best use as a sort of combination lawyer and Foreign Service officer lay in doing precisely this kind of thing. I knew that just because we had signed the treaty there was no guarantee that everything would work smoothly in bringing the Canal Zone to an end and incorporating the US continued presence in Panama into the Panamanian system. And that is really the capsule of what was involved.

The problems were several fold. One was that there were involved three major elements of the US government... the Embassy, the Panama Canal Company, and the US military...and for the most part they did not see eye to eye on most things.

Q: Could you elaborate on that?

SCHMITZ: Sure. The first thing they didn't see eye to eye on was that the others should have much to say about what should be the future of either the Canal operation or the military operation. The Embassy was seen as interloper. It was really the exponent of the Carter Administration as far as the people who lived in the Zone were concerned...the Zonians. The Zonians despised the idea of the Panama Canal Treaties because of the development of the Canal Zone...

Q: Are you talking about the employees of the Canal Company or the US military?

SCHMITZ: Zonians primarily means those who spent a long time in the Canal Zone. So it is the employees and their dependents and contractors of the Canal Company. The military tended to rotate through there every couple of years so they weren't really Zonians, although many of them felt that it was a matter of national pride that we have the flag there and that we run the place. The Panamanians, of course, would not be capable of doing it, etc.

So you had basic attitudinal differences and the Embassy had a major problem in establishing itself as the exponent of carrying out the obligations of the United States and requiring the Panamanians to carry out their obligations. Ambler Moss, who had been an assistant to the negotiations and a former Foreign Service officer himself, was designated the US Ambassador to Panama. He and I were classmates in school and so we got along just fine. So that much was fine. He was an able ambassador, articulate in Spanish, affable and tried very hard not to make the usual ego related mistakes of ambassadors. But he did need to operate in this quite hostile environment in which to both the military and to the Canal Company, we who were associated with the Embassy were seen as being

the buddies and defenders of the Panamanians. So his arguments invariably broke down with us on one side and the other two on the other.

Q: This was a different situation than you encountered in the Okinawa treaty?

SCHMITZ: Yes. Considerably different. Part of it is in Okinawa we didn't have huge numbers of Americans residing there as though it was home. We had a small number who had gone out accompanying the military in one form or another and had stayed behind to open a hamburger stand or something. But in the case of the Canal Zone, people began living there in 1910 and so we had cases where there were three generations of Zonians. They had no homeland other than the Canal Zone, so there was a much more inflamed sense of territoriality.

The second thing was that the military in Okinawa had a sense of itself as being part of a giant American defense parameter of great consequence in the world and therefore could be generous on small things. The whole purpose of the US military in the Canal Zone was to defend the canal in ways which were obvious to anybody totally apposite to the modern methods of conducting warfare. It was really an army to confront guerrillas who might want to throw a grenade or something into a lock. You don't defend a canal by having artillery batteries at either end of it, which is how the US military inherited this position.

It was a little bit different for the Air Force, but even there there was no sense of it being a serious and global issue. It was really much more of a local one.

And the Navy, which should have been the most interested of all in the Canal, of course, had only a tiny little set of operations there devoted to protecting the mouth of the Canal from attack by small boats and nonsense like that. Their sense of unreality and being a backwater all intensifies small issues.

Appeasing the Americans residing in the Canal Zone was a major part of what we had to do.

Second was to insure that the legitimate concerns of the US were served under the new administration. A third was to insure that the Panamanians would do as they were required by the treaty or we felt by the treaty they were required to do. And it won't surprise anybody to know that there is considerable differences of view as to who had what obligation and how it should be worked out.

Over the period of time, the two and a half years I was there, the Zonians came slowly to accept their fate and, in fact, the officials of the Canal Company, soon to be known as the Canal Commission, threw themselves into their new kind of work with a good deal of professionalism and even involvement. They took pride in some cases of actually working themselves out of a job. They wanted to do it right. In some cases this was not short of nobility, I thought, on their part. They had fought against the treaty, against the Carter administration, against the State Department. Then they saw that the treaty had

become the law of the land and that to carry out their jobs as they considered themselves employees of the United States government, they needed to turn about and do something quite different. I was astonished at how almost universal the acceptance was of this new function. In the end the Canal Company did an extraordinarily good job of preparing for the treaty to come into force, preparing to train the Panamanians, preparing to hand over equipment, showing how the maintenance worked, doing the training, etc.

Oddly enough some elements of the military, these transient members of the Zone, caused some of the greatest problems. It is just astonishing how people can focus on tiny problems of their own and make them big problems for a government or maybe a couple of governments. My favorite example of that was the person we called the kitty litter lady. She was a person who was used to shopping in the special stores operated by the Canal Company and they had a brand of kitty litter that her cats had gotten used to. Under the agreement there would be no more stores run by the Canal Company, but Americans would be allowed to use the military commissaries and PXs so that their standard of living would not be affected. So the military would in effect take over the old Canal stores and administer them the way they do their own PXs and commissaries. Well, it turned out that the Army PX system had a different brand of kitty litter than the one that was used by the Canal Company.

So it was only a few weeks after the treaty came into effect that the woman began to object strenuously to this substitution of one brand for another and made it a federal case. She first called and met with the commissary folks and then wrote letters and went on the radio and came to visit all the installations and made a thorough and utter nuisance out of herself going to the extent of saying that if she didn't get action she was going to come in an dump boxes of used kitty litter on peoples desks to show how inconvenient it was.

The other major part of the problem was to get the Panamanians to take over some of the responsibility of administering this territory but not immediately the responsibility of running the Canal. They had a problem in doing that. The first problem was that they had seen it as a great economic boom to be given 500 square miles of territory worth...completed infrastructure, sewers, streets, bridges, telephones, etc. and much more land in places that could be leased for port operations, free zones, etc. So they set about to create a canal authority which had huge notions of what it should become.

Q: This was under Omar Torrijos?

SCHMITZ: Yes, while he was still alive, but he had sunk back into some obscurity in his determination to let the civilian, which he really had installed, actually govern. That government turned out to be not very decisive to the great frustration to nearly all of us that had to have some decisions. There was a tendency, that everybody had, to take things to Torrijos in order to get something done. Several times we did that with important issues. But usually he refused to do it. He said that it was important that the government do these things. In a way he was right. If he had continued to do everything, continued to

be the strong man, there never would have been a hope for the government. As it was, the governments, I thought, never did rise to the occasion. They left decisions unmade. After two and a half years of trying to resolve all of the issues coming out of the treaties, when I left there I left with two or three of significant importance still unresolved. Part of that was an unwillingness to grasp a nettle and make a difficult decision. So that was a big difference right there between the Japanese treatment of Okinawa and the Panamanians on the Canal Zone.

The Canal Authority was set up to be a big deal. It quickly became a political pork barrel with people being hired on there with nothing whatever to do with the function but were there just to be given a job.

Q: This was a Panamanian operation?

SCHMITZ: Yes, Panamanian. After a huge mushroom like growth, on one day it all fell apart. It was just abruptly terminated one day. At that time they had something like 360 employees scattered in three or four different buildings around town. I remember hearing that this was happening and I got into my car and went over and just walked around some of these places. I found the most amazing scenes of almost devastation in these offices of furniture upturned, papers all over the floor, most of the equipment gone, and people gone. It was as though a gang of furniture thieves had come through and cleaned these offices out.

Obviously since the Authority was an important element of the Panamanian effort to deal with us on the Canal's remaining issues, it took them a while to recover from that. In fact, I am not sure that they ever did recover from that. They didn't have the machinery available to them to really do their responsibilities and they failed to set up any machinery to substitute for the Authority. As a result, those of us in the Embassy who were working on these issues had to identify individuals and various Ministries around the government whom we thought might have something to do with the issue and then see in effect if we could open negotiations directly with them. It was a messy operation.

In any event, we achieved our principal objective which was to remove the Panama Canal as an issue that was an obstacle between bettering our relations with all of Latin America. You have to remember that everybody in Latin America had seized upon that issue, or at least had been unable not to seize upon it, to beat the US over the head for its colonialism in Latin America and as a sign of what our real intentions and nature were.

We removed it as an issue and with that gone it eased our conversations throughout the hemisphere on the US address to our neighbors. We removed it in such a way that the Canal would continue to operate at least until the year 2000 more or less as efficiently as it did before. And that is probably a pretty good deal for the US, although now as the year 2000 is right around the corner, it takes a different shape than the one it had in the 1970s when the treaty was negotiated. In any case, that Canal has operated beyond its anticipated capacity up and 'til now and undoubtedly will until the year 2000.

My own guess is that it will operate well beyond that. That is to say, after the Panamanians have full legal control over the Canal because it will be extraordinarily important to them to keep it functioning efficiently. It is no longer a monopoly on getting things from one ocean to another and they will have to insure, probably by hiring some of the existing talent, that it continues to function well.

Q: Was the Panamanian Treaty a good treaty from the point of view of the United States and in terms of being a well drawn piece of legal material which served the purposes for which it was intended?

SCHMITZ: Yes. The Treaty, itself, was drafted as an excellent piece of legal workmanship. The difficult parts were the parts that were added on by the Congress after the Treaty was drafted. Things that said, "Notwithstanding what the Treaty says, here is what we are going to do." Those were difficult like the Di Consini resolution that says, "Whatever the Treaty says, we reserve the right to come in and defend that Canal for whatever purpose." But the Treaty itself was fine. Our job was to do implementing agreements or carry out the meaning of the Treaty itself. The clarity of the original document made that part of our job quite easy.

We spent a certain amount of the time after a year and a half just designing the ceremony for the coming into affect of the Treaty. How that would be done. How we would symbolize the change of jurisdiction. How we would do honor to it from the US standpoint. And that turned into a huge side show in which the then Vice President Mondale came down to Panama with two 747 loads filled with folks who were out for a joy ride and had virtually nothing to do with the Treaty and who were rather an embarrassment to the United States in my judgment.

We, nevertheless, had to shoehorn this into the festivities and get them invited to dinners and participation in all the various functions that the Panamanians had wished to be smaller and more intimate. They had invited a maximum of five people from every other country and had intended to invite about 25 from the US and then wound up with about 179.

Q: It was my experience in dealing with the Mondale and Carter White House staff and travel staffs that they were the most inept and most difficult White House staffs during my Foreign Service career. Did you have a similar impression?

SCHMITZ: Yes. Maybe it is because I was more directly the target or object of this particular White House preparation than any other that I knew of. But I felt a lot of the injury that was being done by the advanced team to I thought US interests. It took a good six or seven weeks after the event was over of not only me but a number of us going around town just trying to smooth the feathers that had been ruffled in the process.

Q: They were arrogant and inept as I recall.

SCHMITZ: Arrogant, yes. Inept, I felt they were all together too competent in their arrogance that I saw. They were effective bullies and that was exactly the wrong image of the US to be showing at that time.

Q: You mentioned a while ago the lack of cooperation, the resistance, of the US military in the Zone. Who was the SOCOM Commander at that time?

SCHMITZ: I can't remember the name. There were several, at least two during that period. I can't remember their names.

Q: Did you attribute this reluctance of the military essentially to the SOCOM Commander or was it something that came from the bottom up?

SCHMITZ: I think it was from the bottom up. It was a conservative mood, really. It was: We don't like change. We don't like Carter. We don't like giving away US stuff. We don't like anything which might impede our security concerns and of course anything which allows somebody to do something where we previously were the only ones to do it would so impede they thought.

Q: Would this have been changed if there had been a strong and effective SOCOM Commander?

SCHMITZ: I don't know the answer to that because I think if a Commander tried to get too far out in front of his people he might have become in effect a tool in the process. My own view at the time was disappointment that neither the SOCOM heads, not just the Commander, but the others, nor the Canal Company leadership were more disciplined in accepting that even though they may not like it the policy of the US had been made and they should really salute smartly and get to it.

Q: I believe the SOCOM Commander after 1980 was Wally somebody. A great big guy.

SCHMITZ: Wally Nutting.

Q: He looked like a soldier and he didn't have a whole lot between his ears.

SCHMITZ: He arrived from NATO to take up that command. He was brand new to the hemisphere, to say nothing of Panama. I liked him because he was affable. He was friendly. His predecessor had not been affable and friendly and I thought, therefore, we might have better communications with him. He may not have been up to that kind of difficult job.

Q: When did General Torrijos die?

SCHMITZ: I am not sure about the exact date. It was after I had left Panama.

Q: After you left Panama.

SCHMITZ: Yes, in the early '80s.

Q: There was a lot of speculation about the circumstances of his death. Do you have any theories on it?

SCHMITZ: I buy the theory that we have put about which is that it was a helicopter accident in nasty weather. There is a lot of nasty weather in Panama and helicopters are flying low in mountains and storms are given to that sort of thing.

Q: So you are not part of the conspiracy theory?

SCHMITZ: No, not in that particular case. I don't even think Noriega would have done that.

Q: You were in Panama at the time of the change of administration in January, 1981. You mentioned hostility. When did you start to note this hostility from the incoming administration directed at you?

SCHMITZ: When I left Panama in the summer of 1981 without an onward assignment. When I checked to see what was available, I really found a lot of folks just not so interested in finding an assignment for somebody who had been working on the Panama Treaty. I realized that because when they had to go up to their new political bosses and explain who this person was, it might have put them in a difficult spot with their superiors.

Q: What grade did you have at the time?

SCHMITZ: I was at that time an O-2.

Q: What kind of job did you try to get?

SCHMITZ: Oh, DCM some place. I had spent three years working with about 25 different people in our Embassy to have a coherent Embassy unit for Canal Treaty implementation and had done apparently acceptable jobs with the usual sort of commendations and things of that sort. But everybody I had worked for and done a good job for, of course, was out. They just weren't around. So I felt that first when I left Panama in 1981 and felt it again when I left my subsequent assignment in 1985 and again was looking for a job and discovered that the people I had done a good job for were no longer in the system. The new folks tended to be pretty unsympathetic with anybody who had done a good job on Panama.

Q: Could you name some names of who you considered the new folks to be in that context?

SCHMITZ: I eventually wound up back in the East Asian Bureau and the then Assistant Secretary was Gaston Sigur who had arrived there having worked in the Reagan White House in the National Security Council. Sigur was willing to have me come aboard his Bureau because I had a lot of contemporaries and peers who had explained me to him, but I felt that he was giving us all a political evaluation whenever we recommended things or called things to his attention. His recommendations had quite a severely conservative bent to them, I thought. So I found myself not being able to do as much in that particular job as I had hoped I would be able to.

Q: How would you describe yourself politically?

SCHMITZ: Well, I have never been a partisan person and so neither Democrat nor Republican. I felt innately to have roughly even sympathy for them, especially as they came into office to redress what I thought had been some of the excesses of the previous administration. Philosophically I think of myself as a centrist. I don't think I am a liberal in domestic politics, but probably some think I am a liberal in international politics just because I believe it is important to keep talking and to avoid shooting as long as you possibly can.

Q: So you can't be labeled then.

SCHMITZ: I would not label myself, anyway.

Q: Eventually you went from Panama to be Political Advisor in the Air Force in Europe, in Ramstein. Anything noteworthy during that period of your service that you want to get on the record?

SCHMITZ: Yes, two or three different things. The first one is administrative. That is that these jobs of having our diplomats be invited into the high councils of our powerful military establishments overseas are very important functions. This is the place where if the State Department wishes to be effective in having the military understand what the political environment is, or even the economic environment is, these jobs are key. But we, State Department Foreign Service, have traditionally ignored that potential at least since the Second World War we have, or at least since Eisenhower was at NATO, and have not felt it a good thing to do and certainly not career enhancing.

I found it to be the opposite in all effects, except career enhancing. I found being considered a grown up, to have one's views of the world taken seriously by people with great power and authority without having to go through 35 different clearances or write memoranda on the like, seemed right for a senior officer of the United States State Department. Quite unlike, I think, working in a large embassy or the State Department itself.

I got, and I think none of us acting as POLADS did get, any instructions from the State Department. I don't mean just on specific issues, but on general approach. We were given no idea of what we ought to be trying to do at these military organizations. Now the case that I became associated with, the Air Force, it was scattered all over Europe. It was concerned, of course, with not only Western Europe, but Eastern Europe, and its jurisdiction extended to the Middle East and to the northern tier of Africa. So it was a huge extent. I have forgotten how many facilities, but it was 80 or 90 facilities in those areas.

Everyday they flew 500 sorties out of this thing and every one of them has the capability of causing trouble somewhere for the United States or for somebody else. And operating listening posts and huge logistic systems being the tip of the lance to defend Europe against Eastern aggression. Very powerful things. Much more stuff going on than was going on in a typical Foreign Service establishment. I think it was a mistake for us to have paid so little attention. I think a lot of things could have worked more smoothly during the Cold War period had we given more authority and attention to these positions than we did.

Q: You have as your model Robert Murphy when he was Eisenhower's POLAD?

SCHMITZ: That's right. Murphy made it possible for Operation Torch to succeed at relatively low loss of life because Eisenhower was smart enough to see how a political skill could be useful to the military. And then, of course, Eisenhower created these POLAD positions when he was NATO Commander. Then they fell into bad repute in part because the Foreign Service then started to use them as dumping grounds for guys who just wanted to golf their way quietly into retirement and had no particular interest in doing much.

Q: A place to put failed DCMs.

SCHMITZ: Yes, or even failed political counselors.

In 1981 I saw this in a different light for myself, although I began not wanting to touch it either for all the reasons we know about. Not career enhancing and good Lord I knew some people who did that and I did not admire them and I didn't see that people were rewarded for having done it. But in 1981 we had a big military buildup. It was clear to me that we were putting our resources into the military. That was where things were going to happen; that the focus of this was in Europe; that a major part of that was building up our tactical forces, our intelligence capacities and to put in a whole bunch of new weapon systems in Europe to compensate for the SS-20s the Soviets were putting out. And for the Air Force this turned out to be primarily an effort to put in the ground launch cruise missile which had to be installed in six different countries in Europe. And in every case the six countries had presented different political problems for the installation of these things along with the use of the land, the constructions, the huge number of people

that would be part of all this, the nuclear element of it...by the way the cruise missiles were emphatically and specifically nuclear and everybody knew that and that was the purpose of them. It made a mockery out of our neither confirm nor deny rule because you couldn't talk about them without noting their nuclear capability, but we couldn't admit it. We couldn't say anything about the nuclear business at all but yet in every single country the nuclear element was the most significant part. So there is a little bit of nonsense there.

In any case, the Air Force had the job of negotiating with six different countries about where these would be put, how it would be done, under what circumstances and the timing and the like. A lot of that was done in ways where a Political Advisor could be extremely helpful to his military colleagues. Sometimes I found myself really pretty much on the front line in helping that kind of thing work.

The run of the mill business there was to make sure that what the Air Force did made some sense for the host countries. Often there is not a whole lot you could do in the case of an airplane crash or an accident of some sort except to make sure that the reaction to it was sensible and sensitive and had to be sensitive in that context. What you did in Germany was different than what you did in the UK or in Turkey or Greece. So I thought a lot of my function was to help the military commanders in these various bases understand more about the environment that they were operating in.

Now the Air Force traditionally doesn't like to pay attention to the ground environment. They joke and say that the only connection we are likely to have with the ground is going to be bad news so we try not to do it. But in fact a base or operating commander has a big impact on surrounding communities and sometimes on even the national politics of the place where that base is. So, I spent some of my time trying to figure out how to bring this sensitivity home to these people.

I began in the usual Foreign Service way of writing good, interesting memoranda directed to my commander, the Commander-in-Chief of the US Air Forces and then, of course, the memoranda would be spread around the system.

Q: Do you recall his name?

SCHMITZ: Well, there were three that I worked for. When I first went there it was Charlie Gabriel, who later became Chief of Staff of the Air Force. A very nice man and very sensitive in himself. The second was General Billy Minter, a logistician who was trying very hard during the time he was Commander-in-Chief to be a good operations man, but it was out of character. And then a third was Chuck Donnelly, who was a tactical Air Force commander all his life and brought to the job a flare and kind of informality that was totally different from either of his predecessors.

Coming back to the business of writing memoranda, I found that nobody read the memoranda. I knew that because there would be an occasional exception when somebody

would call up from some base and say, "Hey, I read that and it was very interesting." But there was just not enough of it.

Q: Why is it that they don't read memoranda?

SCHMITZ: Well, to be uncharitable, I think it is because they don't read. I realized that what we have here is a culture gap between the Foreign Service and military.

Q: Would you expand on that?

SCHMITZ: Yes. The military does not communicate with itself by writing memoranda. It communicates with itself by giving briefings and talking and by looking at pictures. I realized that by sitting in on meetings myself, senior staff meetings three times a week, at which there would be no written materials at all except for charts and graphs up on the screen. But there would be a lot of young nicely uniformed lieutenants and majors with pointers speaking. As they spoke they would have a picture behind them. It didn't matter if it was weather or maintenance capability or intelligence or report of a base, there was always a picture and description. It was done concisely and tightly.

Q: Would you say this was true of the military in general or particularly of the Air Force?

SCHMITZ: It is certainly true of the military in general and inside that there may be different variations. The Air Force having an image of itself as being high tech and razzle-dazzle may have more of that. The Army, I think, does have more intellectuals in it...we call intellectuals people who read books, history, etc. And I would put the Navy probably somewhere in the middle. I have been briefed by all of them. I would visit all these headquarters. The basic method is the same.

So to be a part of this I felt that I needed to make the cultural leap, not they. I was the one who was supposed to be trained in cultural leap and I was aboard their organization, not the other way around. So I began to write less and create more events in which there could be more talk and shows. And I did that through visiting the commands and during commander calls; through a television program that I arranged to make and then we would put on the Armed Forces Network so that people could turn on their television and see things in their living rooms; and through the creation of what we called the Council on International Relations which began as sort of a social gathering for the young officers who wanted to talk to a visiting ambassador or minister and in the usual course of events never got near one.

So in these three devices I found very good reaction to them. At first the military officers thought that it was funny that I would stand up at a commanders' conference and throw some slides up behind showing in a funny way the political and dynamics of say, the Middle East. But I did that. I had color coded maps showing degrees of hostility of one country towards the other. And I showed them how you could drop the shape of the map

and just have the color and do matrix of the colors and after I did that a couple of times I could show the changes in the matrices by having a delta chart. All of this was conscientiously aping their own briefings to themselves about military preparedness. They used red, green, blue and yellow and orange to show degrees of readiness. A lot of them who knew me could not get over the possibility that this was all a joke and that I was really ribbing them when I did that. But all that helped the communication in any case because they thought it was funny. They thought that it might be appropriate to laugh at it, but they were nonetheless engaged by it.

Q: Over your career you have had a lot of assignments where you worked very closely with or for military people. Did you ever find that your own lack of military service was a handicap?

SCHMITZ: Sometimes I felt it was, but as I look back on it I think on the whole it wasn't. What that did was to make them feel that I was pure civilian and pure civilian, like being a foreigner some place, gets you cut a lot of slack. They say, "Okay, how could he possibly know?" They also have a lot of fun introducing military things to you because they choose to believe you know nothing about it so they can explain things in a very engaging way. So I felt that for the most part it was no problem at all and maybe I even benefitted a little bit from it.

Q: Would you make some general comment about how you perceived the leadership of our military with whom you came in contact with over the years? What kind of people were they and how skillful were they at their jobs?

SCHMITZ: Well, I found them to be of all different competencies and attractiveness. I had assumed at the start that anybody with an eagle on his shoulder and certainly anybody with a star was going to be a superior person of great discernment and judgment. I guess the first disappointment I had in that was when I began to deal with the military from my second and third day in the Legal Advisor's Office in 1964, to discover that there was a bellicose, bombastic, hostility to anybody who might interfere or influence in a non-military way any operations. I thought that maybe when you went up the ranks you would find more statesmanship. I think that is generally true, but what is astonishing is that it is possible for people to rise to high ranks in the military without having even a hint of statesmanship. Maybe it is because they are very good at driving a tank, a boat, or whatever they do, but I would say that there were a handful of two and three star generals and admirals that I had something to do with who I thought were disappointing people for the important jobs that they had and the power they could display. Not so dissimilar, I must say, from my attitude about our own ambassadors and other high ranking people in the State Department.

Q: That was going to be my next question. How does their senior selection process compare to the State Department?

SCHMITZ: The big difference that I noted was that the people they select are selected in part because they are leaders of their subordinates. That they really do, if not care about the welfare of their subordinates, they know that looking after them is a main feature of their mission. An example of that is the way the Air Force evaluates their people for promotion in their general officers ranks. They assign to the highest ranking general officer in a theater the responsibility of knowing personality every other general in that service and to report orally and personally to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force from time to time about how they are being developed and doing in their jobs. In the European Command, that I was associated with, the CINC, the Commander-in-Chief did that about once a quarter with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. I think that is good. We don't do that in the Foreign Service. We don't give responsibility to our senior most career people, even, in any area to look around to see how the other career people are doing and so we have a more brittle and, I think, less effective way of knowing how we can promote our highest ranks in any case.

I would like to make two more points about the Air Force in this period, the middle 1980s. One was that the NATO policy that we were supporting of getting these new missiles into Europe to counter the Soviets SS-20s, worked like a charm. Nobody, of course, knew that it would. We just hoped that it would. We did an awful lot of work and spent a lot of money to build these cruise missiles and to build the hugely expensive facilities in six different countries to bring them into Europe. They no sooner arrived at some of these facilities when the Soviets said, "Okay, we will take out our SS-20s if you will not deploy your Pershings and cruise missiles." And so in a way the missile system was the most cost effective weapons system ever developed by the U.S. Without firing a shot, it did away with the whole class of Soviet missiles. Probably as we look back on it that decision by the Soviets not to try to face us down in the heart of Europe, we will see that was an important turning point in the Cold War.

Q: Do you think what happened subsequently in the Soviet Union was linked to that directly?

SCHMITZ: Well, it certainly set up a lot of stresses in Soviet defense establishment. And, of course, whenever that happens, irritations under the surface can come to the top. I can't describe the dynamics with precision, but every time you punch the opponent, you are doing some good at persuading him to give up just a little bit sooner.

Q: Okay. You conquered the military and were in Ramstein for four years, 1981-85. And then the personnel system said that Chuck Schmitz deserves a reward and it gave it to him--a job with the Council of Foreign Relations.

SCHMITZ: I wish it had worked that way. In fact it was not true. The personnel system had utterly forgotten that I was there and what I was doing and I finally said, "If I stay here any longer I am going to be utterly ruined, so I've got to come home." They said, "Well, what would you like to do?" I said "Well, I think I would like to be a DCM or perhaps ambassador at a small post." I was offered an opportunity to go to Rwanda as

ambassador. At the time I did not see that that was the particular place I wanted to be so I probably made a mistake and said that I wanted to do something else. The system then lost interest in me totally and suggested about the spring of the year that I needed to come home in the summer and that I go into the President Executive Exchange program with private industry, which struck me as being a very good thing.

Q: If, indeed you were a serious candidate after being a POLAD in Europe then you must have been rehabilitated politically from your Panama experience.

SCHMITZ: I am not sure Rwanda counts.

Q: Yes, I think it does. I think even Cape Verde counts and Rwanda isn't as bad as Cape Verde.

SCHMITZ: Well it may be because I got over there and really dug in to do something with the military, I won back somehow some trust. But in any case what passed as the system said to try the President's Executive Exchange program. That sounded to me good. It was run out of the White House. It was a Reagan operation. I went there and found out that the thing had run out of gas, that it no longer carried much interest in the business community. They tried, I think, pretty hard to sell us to industry and industry, for the most part, was yawning, not interested. I went to interview several different companies that had some military connection like TRW, United Technologies, and finally decided on United Technologies. I went up there and received an offer from the International Operations at United Technologies to begin work on Monday. I had my family in Hartford who had pretty much just come off the boat and picked out school and house and sitting in a motel in Hartford and I got a call from United Technologies saying, "We are not going to be able to do this. We have just spoken with higher ups in the corporation and they have other priorities this year." So with virtually no notice, this was probably September, I had no job at all and, as far as I could tell, no prospects.

After some effort I finally got the nomination to go to the Council on Foreign Relations in New York.

Q: Is there anything you would like to say about that experience?

SCHMITZ: Again, I think it is a valuable experience that is underrated by the Foreign Service. It is underrated for exactly the same reason the POLAD experience is. That is because its main purpose is to put State Department and Foreign Service presence towards the public. The public can see it and respond to it. But you don't write telegrams back to the State Department and therefore as far as the system is concerned you are largely invisible. There is also no strong Bureau that supports that. This was done with the Bureau of Personnel.

In any case I was again cut loose to do anything I wanted at the Council on Foreign Relations. I found it a congenial place. I didn't get enough money to live in New York. I

lived in a hovel on Madison Avenue. I was embarrassed to tell people where I lived and couldn't invite anybody there. It was really a bohemian existence. My family stayed in Washington so I would quit working and come home on weekends. I enjoyed it. I did a paper on the connections of the Ford Foundation on international disaster assistance which I felt was good. It helped shake up a little bit the United Nations disaster assistance office in Geneva which was desperately needed then and still does now. I made a lot of good friends in the New York area and the outside world.

Q: Okay. Then it was off to the Director of the East Asian Regional Affairs Office from 1986-89.

SCHMITZ: Yes, that is right. I had hoped very much to do some more work with Japan. I was married to a Japanese and I did my best to keep up with Japan and hopefully have some involvement there. I was told that there wasn't anything open then and that I should come back some place in the Bureau and bide my time until something opened up. The place available was the Director of Regional Affairs. It was a backwater, very quiet. It wasn't very much. It had literally cobwebs in the office. It was an extraordinary thing. I was depressed when I saw it and my predecessors had all retired in obscurity. But I took it anyway because I hoped I could make something of it and felt that I would be able to do something especially useful in the political/ military side because of the huge military involvement we still had in East Asia at the time.

Q: And did you?

SCHMITZ: No. I was pretty much frozen out having anything to do with military matters because these were conducted in person by the Assistant Secretary directly with his counterpart in the Department of Defense.

Q: Who was?

SCHMITZ: That was Gaston Sigur, Assistant Secretary for East Asia, and he was dealing with Rich Armitage in DOD. The political/military thing was supposed to be in my jurisdiction, and my background by that time was pretty strongly political/military. So, I was not happy to be cut out of the State-DOD loop.

Q: You had a lot of experience over the years in political/military affairs. Would you like to discuss your views of the political/military affairs offices in the State Department?

SCHMITZ: Well, I guess there are a couple of things I could mention. One, as I mentioned, is that it seems to care a whole lot more about being strong administratively and bureaucratically at home rather than what it should be doing to expand the influence of folks who think diplomatically into US political/military policies. One example of that is the decision that was made some years back, it had been made several times, to reduce the number of people we have in our field positions in political/military affairs, and to bring them back and increase the number of people we have in Washington doing

bureaucratic matters. That actually did away with my previous office as Political Advisor with US Air Force in Ramstein. Not while I was there, but a couple of years afterwards. I was dismayed that that was the case because here as we are adjusting our status in Europe of course you run the risk of making a whole lot of mistakes in the way that is done and you need somebody with perspective outside of just the defense perspective to get that done. And the irony is that we pulled people back from those jobs to do arms control and arms negotiating jobs in the State Department at just about the same time those negotiations became irrelevant to the whole process of disarmament.

The other thing is that there is a practice that is common in the Department of State when we deal with other agencies rather than have our people trained in the substance of other agencies we bring other agency people into our home office as their experts and in the political/military field this is primarily, of course, bringing military people into the political/military office in the State Department. While this is an excellent practice from the standpoint of giving us access to the expertise that we need to speak the language, it is a self-defeating practice when it comes to the necessary bureaucratic tussle which at bottom and most importantly, is a tussle between diplomatic, civilian approach to problems and a military or a kind of strength support problems. I thought that we almost methodically gave to ourselves a handicap by having so many military people in our political/military jobs.

Q: I agree. And in regional offices, the same thing happened. In ARA we had a colonel who sat in our regional office.

SCHMITZ: I had a colonel in East Asia too. He was paid for by DOD and that is why we had him. Fortunately he was one of the more competent people in the office.

Q: Okay. Kind of last assignment at USUN as senior advisor to Dick Walters had to be interesting.

SCHMITZ: Yes. It had begun as an assignment for just the Fall General Assembly season. Again, I could have stayed in Regional Affairs, but I thought it would be devastating to my career if I spent more time there. I had tried for a couple of assignments that were breaking open in Japan and I was frustrated in not getting them when they went to others.

I discovered there was nothing else particularly open for me at that period and I had, I guess, already been notified that since I had been a class 1 minister-counselor for six years and was not going to be promoted to career minister or made ambassador anywhere, I would have to be leaving the Foreign Service within a year. So with that being the case, to spend some months up in New York with the US Mission to the UN seemed to be a decent use of my time, better than just sitting around in Washington doing nothing. So I did that.

There was nothing particularly noteworthy about my assignment. The major effort there was to increase the vote in the Kampuchea question by one or two more. That was about the only requirement that we had and I did that by another two votes over the year. That was a lot of fun doing the campaigning but very strange kind of thing and strange thing to be doing really.

Q: You didn't get to know Dick Walters very well?

SCHMITZ: I did not get to know him very well. Naturally I bounced off of him a number of times and did the usual thing of setting him up with appointments and sitting in while he...some would say mesmerized his audience, I would say not so much mesmerized as overwhelmed them with constant noise.

Q: And name dropping.

SCHMITZ: Yes, sure. A lot of name dropping, place dropping and a lot of repetitive commentary about countries which were lines that apparently worked very well. One of his lines which I think was flattering to anybody he talked to was: "You must have a place where you put your less than competent people in your country because every time I have been there I look around and just see the signs of competence all over. I wonder if you have any who are not so competent." He said that about almost any country in conversations that I was a part of. That he was able to dominant a conversation and artfully work in at some point the point that he needed, get that point and then quickly move on, was undeniable. And he was able, therefore, to get a lot done that even surprised the people who he was talking too. Before they knew it they had their wallets ripped right out of their back pockets and he was walking down the street. So we all admired that.

And we admired his strength at dealing with the Washington establishment. On the whole I think he was pretty good up there.

Q: After that you were back and the last thing before retirement you spent a year as the State Vice President for AFSA.

SCHMITZ: Right. I was asked to stay a bit longer at USUN because we ran out of East Asian specialists, we didn't have any. So I was asked to do that and Southern Asia things too. At that time it was Afghanistan, Pakistan. This was for a brief time, it was a matter of several months. At that point the State Vice President position was becoming vacant and I was approached to see if I wanted to do that as kind of a parting shot for my career, and I thought I would. It was a full time job and at that point the new Bush Administration was lining up its ambassadors and a large number of them, to my way of thinking, were not competent to be ambassadors. And I thought that was a matter on which the Foreign Service should take some sort of stand.

Q: And you retired in 1991.

SCHMITZ: Yes. Let me just say that the main thing that I did during my stint there with AFSA was to have drawn attention to the low quality of the political ambassadors at that point and focused attention on it by having AFSA sue the State Department for having falsely classified the certificates of competency of the nominees. Those certificates are supposed to be done in the State Department to assure the Senate that the people nominated have a certified competency to do what they are supposed to do. These things turned out to be laughable in practice. They were slipshod, superficially done, just marking the boxes. So we had to expose that in some fashion. And that was important that it was exposed and ultimately, as I said before, what caused a certain amount of embarrassment. This didn't defeat any of those nominees, but it may have had some effect on other potential appointees, or the nominators anyway who realized it wasn't going to be just a free ride to nominate anybody as ambassador.

Q: Am I wrong in detecting from the way you described these last few years of your career a certain amount of frustration or unhappiness over the way things were going?

SCHMITZ: Yes, I think you are right about that. Everybody, of course, coming into the Foreign Service sees himself after a couple of years maybe qualifying for some responsibilities. I never felt that I ever had any real responsibilities as we looked at them in the career service. I was never even a political counselor overseas. I certainly was not a DCM. I was not a deputy assistant secretary. The most responsibility that I ever had in the traditional service was office director for several different offices.

Q: Would you like to wax philosophical about your career or about the Foreign Service? What is the sum total of your experience?

SCHMITZ: Well, I am not sure that I am able to wax philosophical about my career yet, because first of all I haven't concluded that it has ended. The State Department, a portion of it, has.

Q: That is what I meant.

SCHMITZ: Well, once upon a time we thought we would come in and serve until we dropped in the harness and it was our life. But now, just as we are trying to demonstrate here with Global Business Access, that is not true. It can be seen in some respects as preparation to do some other things.

On American diplomacy, itself, you have to have some observations and those of us who have been in it, I suppose, would observe primarily that it is a frustrating thing to have done this at a time in which it seems that real diplomacy is very seldom practiced by the United States. One example is the phony diplomacy of conducting our international relations through special emissaries, who jet into a country and fix something with just a few hours of effort. This is exactly what has cost us so dearly in many of our relationships and yet we have the repeated Presidential "summits" now. These are considered to be the

great things in our diplomacy, but they are used to create decision-forcing events rather than to resolve the underlying issues themselves. At the other end, I think we do phony diplomacy by having our embassies indulge themselves in gathering not very significant information and then reporting on it in great quantity in a cycle which creates specialized readers at the other end who say, "That is great. I really liked your telegram because I spent a whole hour reading it and it filled my day." But in fact that kind of reporting system becomes an ingrained mechanism that simply bites its own tail. I don't think we do very much for the interests of the United States in having that kind of petty reporting activity as a center for what we do.

Q: If you had to do it over again, would you repeat your State Department career?

SCHMITZ: Yes, because I still feel that I was able to do a good deal of what I actually came into the Service to do. That is to bring a legal perspective to bear on a couple of the great issues of our day. The Okinawa issue, which was in a way "how do we keep Japan as an ally?" In the case of Panama, it was another example of how we could, by bringing legal talent to bear, knit up a raveled sleeve of empire, which desperately needed to be knitted up because it was causing us big trouble. In the case of our military confrontation with the Soviets in Europe, I felt quite useful there in doing the kinds of things that I did. Of course, I would have loved to have had a career that would be marked by recognition by the system, but there is a reason why people say that virtue is its own reward: sometimes it is the only reward.

Q: Do you have any people who you consider real heroes or real models in the Foreign Service? Who are the people you most admired?

SCHMITZ: Well, I think the best ambassador I worked for was Bob Ingersoll in Tokyo. He was a Nixon appointee, a businessman from Chicago. The reason he was good was that he was well traveled, bright, excellent manager, a statesman in his own expertise who realized when he came to a totally new calling that he needed to rely pretty heavily on his professional assistants. I thought he ran the embassy the way an ambassador ought, giving it some general guidance, depending on his staff for specific guidance and doing everything he could to promote morale and welfare of the people who worked for him. At the same time he did an excellent job of representing the interests of the United States. He was a well-spoken, obviously successful man, self-confident. He did not allow his ego, if any, to get in the way of conducting his mission.

Maybe it was consequential that I always thought his DCM was an excellent one too and that was Tom Shoesmith, an excellent career officer who was brought into the Foreign Service from the non-professional side years before, studied Chinese and then Japanese and ended up as DCM in Tokyo. He had a similar kind of inclusive managerial style. It was a relaxed one but still seemed to get the most out of the people who worked for him.

I felt that under that combination of Ingersoll and Shoesmith, we had one of the most effective embassy I had ever worked in.

Q: How about people you thought were particularly injurious to the Foreign Service?

SCHMITZ: I am not sure that I would say injurious to the Foreign Service, I would say disappointed in their leadership in the Foreign Service.

I came across a couple of those when I had a fishing license in Europe because my job was to keep in touch with all of our embassies. We had some political appointees in Europe who were absolutely disasters in countries where they were appointed. I don't mean disasters in just missing opportunities, I mean disasters in being an embarrassment to the United States.

In one case I think that I helped solve the problem by being the instrument that informed the IG of the State Department that there was a real problem out there. They had not been informed about it because our post was too disciplined. Our officers would not rat on their superior.

Q: Disciplined or frightened?

SCHMITZ: Well, I think it was disciplined. I did talk to a number of them about the problem and asked them why they don't just blow the whistle and the answer I got struck me more of a discipline answer than a fearful answer. They really did feel that they shouldn't do that. That they were working for that embassy to make it work best and could not bring themselves to turn in the top man. But I wasn't working in the embassy so I could and did.

Q: Okay. Thanks very much for the interview. In due course you will see it in black and white.

SCHMITZ: I don't look forward to that, but I thank you for spending all the time with me.

End of interview